

THE SCOTTISH  
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.

# THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.

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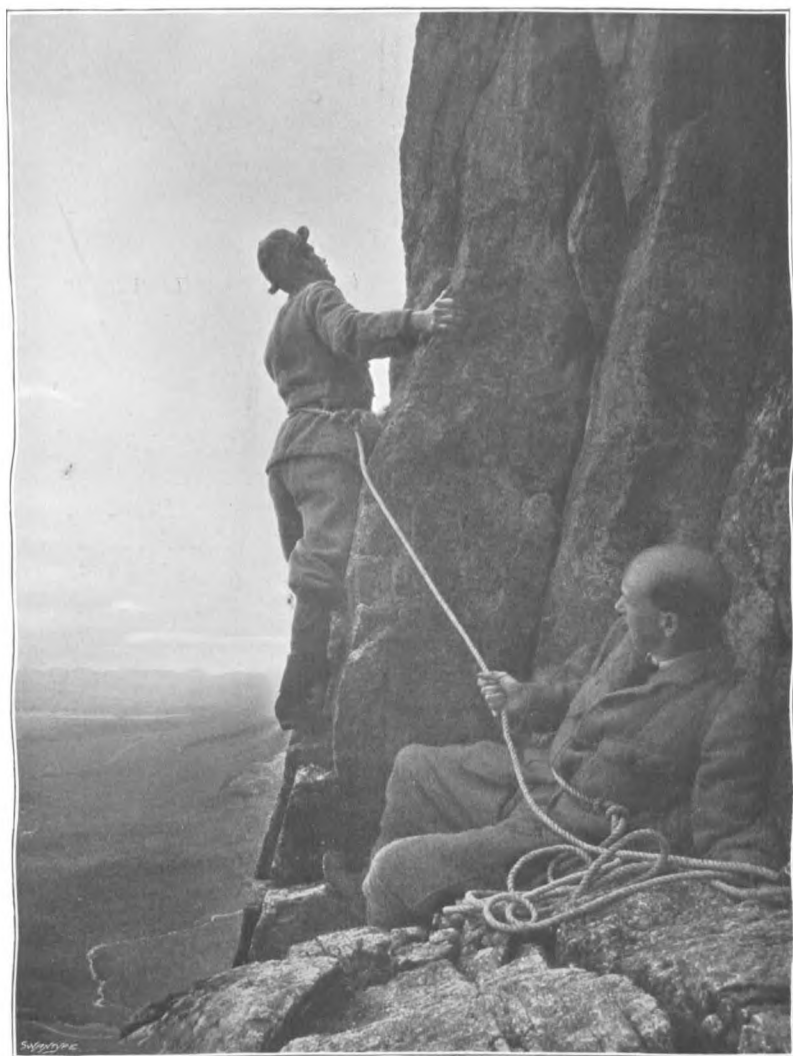
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*Aug. 1905.*

ON THE CROWBERRY RIDGE.

*A. F. Robertson.*

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## SOME HILL WALKS FROM TYNDRUM.

BY J. H. BELL.

MY wife and I spent three weeks at Tyndrum this autumn. Tyndrum is well known to most members of the Club as a climbing rendezvous, but perhaps its peculiar advantages as a cycling centre are not so obvious. Being as it is at the top of a watershed, and on two railways, it offers facilities for cycling runs of the most luxurious kind. One has only to go downhill in front of the wind in whichever direction it may be blowing, and return uphill and against the wind by train. In this way we had very enjoyable runs to Lochs Tay, Lomond, Awe, and Tulla. We had also several pleasant days on the hills, of which short notes are below.

*Wednesday, 6th September—Ben Dorain.*—My wife and I walked up to the watershed on the Bridge of Orchy road. At the top of the hill I got on to my bicycle and ran down the next two miles to Auch bridge in five minutes. Leaving the bicycle behind a wall, I breasted the hill at once, and crossing the West Highland railway line kept on straight up the steep grass and scree slopes. For about a thousand feet the slope is pretty steep and sometimes calls for a little foot and hand scrambling. After this first bit the angle eases off and it is very easy going to the top (3,523 feet), reached in exactly two hours from the road. The top was clear, but it was the only high

summit in the neighbourhood free of mist. Loch Tulla, Loch Lyon, and a bit of Loch Awe were in view, and also the lower slopes of Ben Cruachan, Ben Lui, Ben Heasgarnich, Clachlet, and half a hundred other mountains. There was very little wind, and half an hour was spent very pleasantly by the cairn over lunch and a pipe. The descent was made to the col between Ben Dorain and Ben Dothaidh and then to the east down Corrie Ghabhalach,—bearing gradually round to the south and striking the Glen Lyon track in Auch Glen about three miles from the road. By this time the mists had thickened and come to business, and a heavy wetting rain was falling. At Auch bridge the bicycle was found undisturbed, and thirty-five minutes' cycling saw me back at Tyndrum at 4.15 P.M.

*Friday, 8th September—Ben Dubhchraige and Ben Os.*  
—Ben Dubhchraige is the most repaying hill in the district for the hill-walker. The view is, I think, even finer than from Ben Lui, as it opens nearly the full length of Loch Lomond. Ben Lui himself, too, looks a very noble mountain as seen from this direction. The ascent to Dubhchraige is a very pleasant one through a wooded gorge with a stream forming several small waterfalls and ending in a rocky punch-bowl into which three streams tumble from the moor above. The weather had been very wet before my ascent so that the falls were in good form, and I thought I had rarely seen a more beautiful place than this secluded hollow lit by the sunlight and filled with the spray from the falls. The easiest way to reach the gorge is to follow the Callander and Oban line for a quarter of an hour as far as the Coninish road. After about two hundred yards of the road a faint track will be found over the moor to a rather rickety wooden bridge over the Abhainn Coninish. The bridge crosses the stream just below a small fall at a place where it runs through a little rocky gorge. After crossing the bridge a wooded height will be seen ahead. Keep just underneath this and angle through the wood until the stream running out of the Dubhchraige Corrie is struck. Above the punch-bowl it is easy going over gently sloping moorland until the ridge is struck at any point selected. Heavy clouds were drifting

over the ridge, so that I struck it at about 2,500 feet fairly well to the east with the object of getting the view to the south before entering the mist. As it proved this was an unnecessary precaution, for during my time on the mountain, though wild storm-clouds swept past on both sides of me, the summit of Dubhchraige himself was in brilliant sunshine. From the top was one of the finest views I have seen for years. To the south Loch Lomond and part of Loch Fyne were in sunshine, while to the east a dense black storm-cloud lay just touching the summits of the range from Ben More to Ben Lomond, and the straight vertical lines of the rain were drawn down in front of the hills, which appeared in outline silhouetted through the cloud. To the west another black storm-cloud enveloped the upper two hundred feet or so of Ben Lui and threw up to the greatest advantage his fine north-eastern corrie. An endless array of mountain tops appeared to the north. There was a cool wind on the summit, so that twenty minutes was as long as even such a view could detain me. I hurried down to the Ben Os col, and then steadily up the seven hundred feet or so to the summit of Ben Os. Probably the view from Os is little inferior to that from Dubhchraige, but as I saw it, it wanted the peculiar glory of sunshine and cloud. Part of the lower Loch Awe is seen, and also the two highest peaks of Cruachan, round the shoulder of Lui. Lui himself looks even more imposing from this nearer view point and perhaps finest of all from the Os-Lui col which was my next point. From the col I went down into Corrie Lui and back to Tyndrum by Coninish and the track, reaching the hotel after six hours of steady though not fast going.

Just before reaching the summit of Dubhchraige I sighted two eagles which flew off round a corner and I thought I had lost them, but on getting up another hundred feet or so and rounding a rock I saw one of the eagles close above me. Not fifty yards in front of me and right below the eagle was a mountain hare standing still, evidently completely disabled by fright, although there was safe shelter among the rocks not ten yards from him. I shouted and clapped my hands, the eagle flew away and the hare crawled into shelter; so the young eaglets lost that meal. I was

reminded of Mr Raeburn's story in the *Journal* of the power possessed by a stoat of paralysing a rabbit (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VIII., p. 11).

*Monday, 11th September—Ben An Dothaidh.*—With my wife and Messrs Peacock and Fairgrieve. Leaving Tyndrum by the 9.42 train, we got away from Bridge of Orchy at 10.30, after Peacock and Fairgrieve had put their gear on to a trap for Kingshouse. They were bound for that Mecca of the faithful, and had agreed to join us in a short day on Ben Dothaidh, and then tramp the thirteen miles as a wind-up in the evening. We struck straight up from the station for the Dorain-Dothaidh col. On Bartholomew's half-inch map this is marked 2,050 feet,\* but I think it must be higher. Fairgrieve's aneroid gave it nearly 400 feet more. Possibly the figures should read 2,500. The day was fine and warm, with some thin, innocent-looking mist drifting about. Unfortunately a cloud of this mist enveloped Ben Dothaidh just before we reached the top, and stopped there until after we had left. The top is of the expansive sort; several football fields could be laid out on the summit. We had some difficulty in deciding which was the highest point of the plateau. The first point we reached had no cairn, so we rejected it. Peacock set out in one direction and I in another to look for a cairn, and both of us shouted almost together that the search had been successful. The largest cairn was on the more southerly point towards Ben Dorain, and one of the aneroids made it the highest point by about ten feet, but the other aneroid had it about ten feet the other way, a peculiar difference, due no doubt to the effect of the ascent telling more quickly on one instrument than on the other. From the northern end of the summit ridge, we went down fairly steep broken rock, grass, and scree towards Coire Achallader, and after getting below the mist, followed a contour line to the west, so as to open out the view over our well-beloved Moor of Rannoch and Blackmount hills. As we got down,

[\* On the six-inch O.S. map the height of the col is given as 2,454 feet. The 2,050 feet height is where the Coire Ghabhalach burn branches out, east of the col.—ED.]

the mist cleared off Ben Dothaidh, who appeared to mock us, beautiful against a deep blue sky. Loch Tulla, glittering below, backed by Stob Ghabhar and his neighbours, was perhaps a sufficient compensation for the loss of the summit view. We strolled slowly in perfect contentment across the moor and down to the Achallader Castle road, which we joined about a mile from Bridge of Orchy. My wife and I said good-bye to our friends on the bridge. It was only four o'clock, and we had an hour to wait for the return train to Tyndrum. It passed very pleasantly on the heather by the river. Just south of Bridge of Orchy we saw a large herd of not less than one hundred deer on the low ground between the railway and the river. A week later, when cycling to Inveroran, my wife and I saw them still there. It is, I imagine, uncommon for so large a herd to stay so long on the low ground at this time of the year.

*Tuesday, 12th September—Ben Chaluim.*—This being a thoroughly bad day, there was nothing to be done on the low level, so I set out for some exercise on the hills. I followed the Crianlarich road for a mile to the Free Church, and then struck over the moor to the high railway bridge over the Allt Gleann a Chlachain. I found afterwards that the best way is to go up to the West Highland Station at once, and follow the railway to the bridge. Getting down from the bridge on to the right bank (true) of the stream I plodded steadily up the glen in the rain, and bore right round the shoulder of Ben Chaluim to the col, from which the Allt Chaluim flows down into Glen Lochay. This is a steady, and in such weather rather a dull grind, which took two hours and ten minutes from the hotel. It would, I believe, be the quickest way from Tyndrum to Creag Mhor or Heasgarnich, though involving a little more climbing than the alternative routes by Loch Lyon or by Loch Chailein. At the col I crossed the fence, and got on to the north face of the mountain, with the double object of seeing as much as possible of this face, and of avoiding the south-west wind, which was boisterous and cold. The north face is steep, but mostly grass and scree with some



rocks, and has one or two gullies, which might give a climb in winter. I kept about one hundred feet below the ridge, and so, sheltered from the wind, reached the top in tolerable comfort. Once on the top, it was a case of leaning into the wind, and ramming my hat tight on my head. The mountain has a minor top half a mile or so to the south, and also a long ridge running out to the east. Under the circumstances it was not easy to consult map or compass, and in descending I soon found myself in a pleasant calm, which was certain evidence that I was too much to the east, and must have higher ground to the west of me. I followed a contour line westward, and was not long in gaining the southern ridge, where the battle with the wind began again. Twenty minutes from the highest top saw me on the southern point, and then bearing slightly to the west of south, I soon emerged from the mist and saw the way clear to the railway bridge and Tyndrum. I had made no halts, eating my sandwiches on the move, and reached the hotel in the fairly good time of five hours for the round.

*Sunday, 17th September—Creag Mhor* (with Mr Raeburn).—As the day was fine and we had neither of us been up this rather remote hill, we decided to make the journey to Glen Lochay. With the wind behind and the hill in our favour we coasted very luxuriously on our cycles four miles down the Crianlarich road, and then taking the farm road to Inverhaggernie we crossed the railway and the Fillan Water—there being a bridge over the latter to the farm. Leaving our bicycles at the farm, we followed the Allt Inverhaggernie up to Loch Dubh, and then had a long trudge over the moor past Loch Chailein to Glen Lochay. We kept well up on the slope to the west and struck the Allt Chaluim in Glen Lochay at about one thousand feet, two and a quarter hours from the farm, half an hour more from Tyndrum. We got a really ideal place for lunch among some boulders by the stream, sheltered from the wind and in the sun. With the bracken waving and the stream glittering in the sunshine, the spot was a very allur-

ing one, and a much longer stay might have been made there had it not been for the 2,300 feet of Creag Mhor above to be ascended and descended and the return over the pass to be got over before dark. Hotel Sunday morning breakfast and my laziness had led to a late start at 10.15 which we now rather regretted.

We had brought a rope with us as distant views of the mountain had held out some hopes of a climb, but nearer inspection showed that there was nothing well defined and that any climb would be of a character for which it was hardly worth while to come so far. To get up Creag Mhor and down again was therefore all our ambition. Leaving our haven we angled across towards the Allt Ceothach and then up to the Sron nan Eun ridge which we followed to the summit of Creag Mhor. There was mist on the upper few hundred feet which thinned out now and again for an instant giving us momentary glimpses of Loch Lyon and Ben Heasgarnich close at hand. From the summit we struck straight down into the Corrie Ceothach, getting some scrambling in a gully. There were some steeper rocks to the west of us, but time and our inclination pointed homewards. We reached the stream in Glen Lochay in just three hours from commencing the ascent, and spent fifteen minutes there before starting off for the trudge through the pass. Had it not been for the waiting bicycles we would have tried the Chaluim-Cam Chreag Col route back. In returning we had kept still higher up Glen Lochay, crossing the stream at about 1,200 feet, so that we had nothing to rise until we reached Loch Chailein and then only the two hundred feet to the watershed. 6.40 found us at the farm, and by the aid of our bicycles Tyndrum was reached at 7.20.

*Monday, 18th September—Ben Dubhchraige again* (with my wife and Mr Raeburn).—As Raeburn had to catch the evening train we thought we could not do better than have a short day on this very enjoyable mountain. The day was warm and very still, but light clouds on the summit and on the tops of the surrounding hills prevented our seeing all the view. From the ridge below the clouds we had a good

view of the upper part of Loch Lomond, but Loch Fyne was not to be seen, and the distant hills were all masked. On the summit it was so still that a match burnt without protection. We picked up an eagle's feather almost on the spot where I had seen the eagles before, but saw nothing of the birds.

This was the last of our hill rambles this summer. Mr Raeburn left for Edinburgh by the evening train, and three days later my wife and I left Tyndrum.

*Note.*—It is recorded in the *Journal*, Vol. VII., p. 366, that Mr Goggs reached the top of Creag Mhor from Tyndrum in 3 hours 20 minutes by a fourth route *via* Gleann Choilleán and the north side of Cam Chreag. This was very fast going, and I think that going at the same speed Mr Goggs would be able to take something off even this time by the route *via* Glen Chlachain and south side of Cam Chreag.

## MORE MOTORING AMONG THE MOUNTAINS AND A KINGSHOUSE MEET IN JULY.

BY G. BENNETT GIBBS.

IT was not exactly with the lightest of hearts that W. A. Mounsey and the writer, at his invitation, left Sunderland at 4 P.M. on 14th July last in a 10-14 H.P. Renault car registered BR 68, and a prospective postal address of Alexandra Hotel, Fort-William.

Perhaps on some future occasion the Hon. Editor may place before the S.M.C. his editorial observations on "Mountaineering and Matrimony," but sooth to say, this subject affected the motorists, who, although bound for the north, could neither of them declare with the whole truth "My heart's in the Highlands"; yet a long-arranged holiday had to take the days set down for it or be altogether abandoned.

The following mid-day found us calling upon hon. officials in Edinburgh, and nine o'clock at night finishing the day's run at Dalwhinnie, being some miles short of our projected resting-place of Loch Laggan Hotel. We got there for lunch next day, 251 miles from home, after a rather exciting interlude at Breakachy, in passing a broken bridge by fording the stream and being bogged in the soft ground on the far side. We had kind assistance and advice from the people of the adjacent houses, one of whom did not "like to see any one in distress on the Sabbath." It was almost a case of spelling Strathmashie with a big S before the M.

On the 17th we set out for Choir Arder, with a view to a possible climb on its extensive rocky walls; being greeted by the tears of Creag "Meggie," and in soft condition ourselves, we climbed only the gully eastwards of the pinnacle described in Raeburn's article of Vol. VIII., p. 8. On the lady's flat head we admired the cairn, an ambitious work said to be due to a wheelbarrow and an exuberance of Celtic ardour in a man of Moy who wished to immortalise himself; indeed the name of the whole mountain, as ex-

plained to the writer, was more properly represented by an unspellable word meaning "a struggle," than by the map name "given to the sappers and miners by some one from the west." In the rain and cloud we lost some time in finding the "window," and were ten hours out and in to the hotel again.

The following day we went down to Fort-William and inspected the ferry at Ballachulish, as we hoped to join the Hon. Librarian and friends at Kingshouse the next week. The weather was lovely, and we felt it rather pitiable to be in the valleys taking our ease instead of on Ben Nevis for the sunset which favoured him that evening—chief excuse being the "heeled" condition of the writer. The chauffeur, however, took to the hills next day, and explored Ben Nevis and Carn Mor Dearg, being just in time to get a view from the summit of the former before the conclusion of a spell of clear weather of about thirty-six hours' duration.

BR 68 tried the shore road of Loch Eil in the evening, but found it suffering from repairs; moreover, the command of the Chief, "False wizard, avaunt!" weighing on our minds, we avaunted, and sure enough the wizardly car proved false, and the whole of the next day was spent over "sorting the magneeto."

Should it fall to the lot of other Members to be so held up, and a doubt as to there being any current passing, a finger-tip (somebody else's acts best) placed gently on the top of a sparking plug can be recommended as a satisfactory test! Motorists will appreciate our difficulties with incorrect "spares" from the makers.

When the car was once more in order the weather changed for the worse. A south-west wind prevailed to the end of the month, and overcame early in the mornings the drier northerly breezes which cleared the sky in the evenings. Then noon would bring a tempting improvement, and a hasty expedition be planned.

In this way we enjoyed a walk on to Mullach nan Coirean, ascending by the Vitrified Fort (where one small loose piece of this curious conglomerate was seen), being favoured with some very fine cloud pictures, and getting

home to a late dinner. Another day we went for the Tower Ridge, and taking the gully on the western side of Douglas' Boulder and the eastern side of the Tower, we reached the top of the Ben about 8 P.M. On the way down, emerging below the clouds, we were indulged with a most glorious sunset effect, caused by the reflection of the rays of the hidden sun on the surface of Loch Eil, which shone as a sea of scarlet and gold with filmy rose-tinted clouds floating above it.

One advantage of a motor car is the possibility of reaching some of the more out-of-the-way hills. Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour was blocked by the bad road round Loch Eil, but the way to Clunie Inn and Shiel was tried with success and much satisfaction, both to the driver particularly, as proving the reliability of the car, and jointly with the luggage (the "cork's cam oot," just now) by the sight of new and fascinating mountains.

Our first day at Clunie was spent in the ascent of Ben Attow, going by the Allt a Chaorinn Mhoir, crossing westwards of the Glen Affric Fords, and ascending the long ridge which starts from about that point. A north-east wind cheered us till noon, and was then sent packing by a wet blanket from the south-west, and we only reached the minor top which had been sighted, before descending straight down to Camban. The keeper there directed us to the pass which opens out directly opposite Clunie Inn, and in the north part there is now a well-marked track leading into Coire a Bhealaich, probably for the benefit of stalkers. Although the heavy rain had made the going rather too soft, the return by this pass was at least one hour shorter than the outward walk to Glen Affric.

Fair skies greeted us on the morning of the 25th, and we ran down as far as Invershiel, being much impressed by the Saddle and its comrades, and consoled by the comforts of Shiel Inn! The car took the road up again without hesitation, and we left Clunie Inn about 3.30, reaching Fort-William once more at 6.45 P.M.

Next day "we trussed up our fardels and gat to" Kings-house. It was a fairly exciting time; for on leaving Fort-William we found the horn, in being washed outside, had

imbibed about half a pint of water (not "Long John"), and our brayings to wayfarers were dismal beyond ordinary. Then came a maddened cart-horse with a timid or nervous man in charge; a drain, open nearly the width of the road, accommodated with a one-plank bridge, and then the Ballachulish Ferry. We had, as previously noted, investigated the method and the charge (1s. per cwt.), and had screwed up courage to risk the car on an apparently inadequate boat.

The confidence with which the operation was undertaken by the proprietor of Loch Leven Hotel was most reassuring. Two stout planks are placed abeam, resting on the gunwales of the boat; the car is run down and turned crosswise on the slipway by lifting, and then pushed on to the planks which project over the stones from the boat alongside. In our case, the forewheels rested exactly above the one gunwale and the back wheels over the other, being chocked with wooden wedges, but not tied down at all. The state of the tide was favourable, and the row across took about fifteen minutes. The slipway on the south side is not so wide as the one opposite, but the same tactics reversed saw us safely landed on the Glencoe road in twenty-five minutes from the start.

After lunch at Clachaig Inn, we put out for Bidean nam Bian determined to make the best of a fine day, and just on leaving, were told that some ladies from Kingshouse had called, informing the landlady that gentlemen of their party were climbing in the neighbourhood. Was this the Hon. Librarian's party or not? We hoped it was, and a quick-time ascent into Coire nam Beith and to the foot of the Church Door Buttress very joyfully set all doubts at rest, for there we found the Rev. A. E. Robertson in the very act of taking a picture of a Salvomontiac and an Ultravationist impaled together on Collie's Pinnacle. The "Meet" thus happily formed was peculiar, having two WAM's, two G's (=one geegee), and an AERIAL pilot to its composition, and proved somewhat frivolous!

The Kingshouse section had been delayed by the usual Glencoe weather, and had, it appears, been keenly arguing about starting the Church Door Buttress climb. Morrison

was outvoted in his proposal to start the climb at 4.30 P.M., Robertson and Goggs wishing to be sure of being back at Kingshouse at a reasonable hour. It was urged that the expected motorists would want to do it, and a joint party would be better. No sooner had this argument been put forward when lo! and behold the motorists appeared. It looked now as if Robertson and Goggs were in for a heavy defeat, but they rose superior to the occasion, and adopting feminine argumentative tactics boldly shifted their position.

The upshot was that the new-found WAM joined the writer in "having a look at" the Church Door in order to see if a return on a future day for a joint-climb was likely to prosper, and were "coached" by the "sky pilot." The men of papers and petrol respectively, bagged Bidean by the gully immediately to the east of the Church Door, which proved more dangerous than difficult owing to loose rocks.

The investigators, after a new route (not to be recommended) had unintentionally been made by traversing out of the crack above the first chockstone into a shallow corner and thence straight up, considered the first part of their climb feasible for Salvomontiacs. So the writer, encouraged by Morrison, proceeded to the next difficulty, and then the next (by which time the "coach" had started for Clachaig), and by dint of good fortune in finding out the general track of a climb new to both, and the fine dry condition of the rocks, we reached the top in about one and three-quarter hours and hurried down to the Inn, being only a few minutes behind the simultaneous arrival of the peak-baggers and the "coach." We quickly joined the others at tea where Mrs Robertson presided, supported by Miss MacDonald, of Edinburgh.

The Kingshouse party having departed on their cycles the motorists followed and overtook them, to be overtaken in their turn on the steepest part of the road round a bend past the Study, where BR 68 refused to mount on the loose surface until the baggage had been taken out of her, while a heavy shower and jeering cyclists added to the general joy.

Record of an interesting find on this day by Robertson

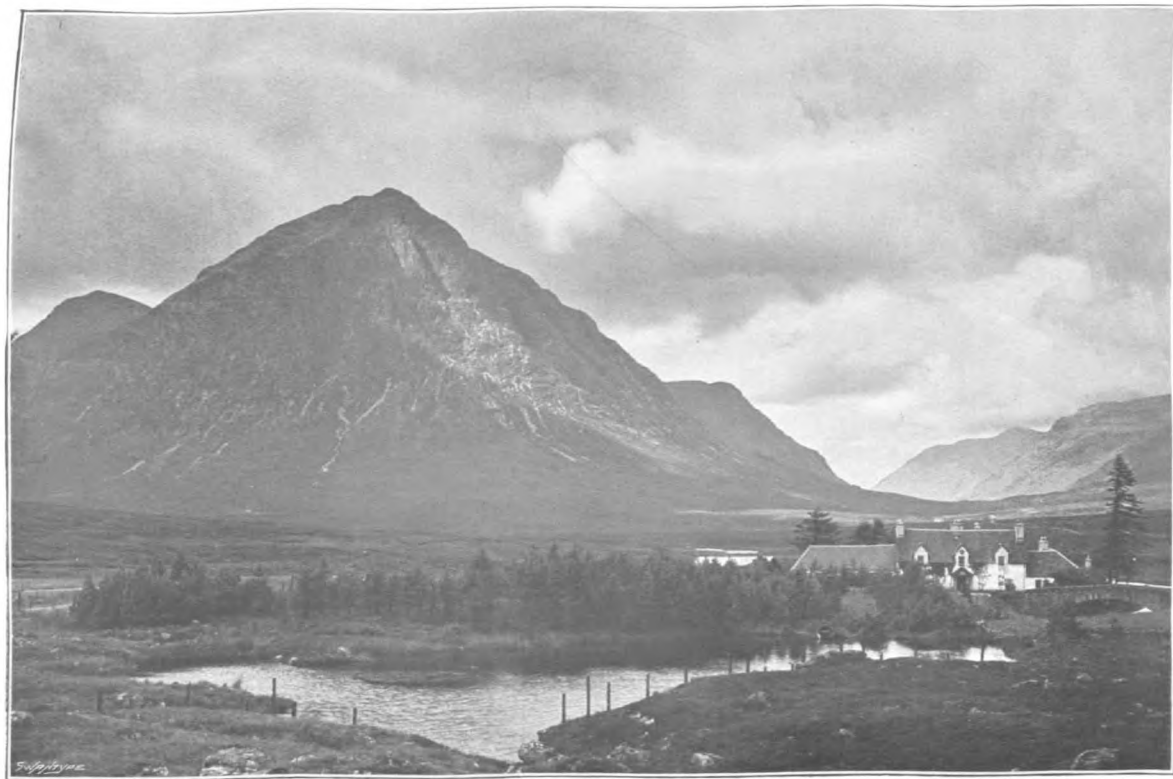


should not be omitted. Embedded in moss near the foot of the scree slope in Coire nam Beith, his eagle eye caught sight of a coiled rope, which was found to be of the genuine Alpine pattern, and in an excellent state of preservation, although a proposition to use it on the Church Door Buttress did not meet with that moral support which a rope is entitled to expect. A few cuttings of this rare exotic having been secured, it was finally laid to rest under a sepulchral cairn, which may prove a puzzle to future generations of climbers. Inquiries have since been instituted, and Mr Bell writes as follows:—

“It was our party, J. Napier, C. Napier, E. W. Green, and myself, who lost the rope when descending from our first unsuccessful attempt on the ‘Church Door’ in September 1896. Graham Napier was carrying it. It froze to a solid hoop and was in the way descending the crack at the foot of the ‘door.’ He threw it down on the scree, where it alighted on its edge, and the last we saw of it was bounding down the slope. It was a brand new 80 footer, so we looked some time for it but without success.”

The three Royal Residents had on the 26th July, under the leadership of Morrison, climbed the Crowberry Ridge of Stob Dearg from the slabs at the foot, avoiding Abraham’s famous pitch by making use of Maclay’s traverse, and on the day following the Bidean ascent, Morrison and Goggs kindly introduced the new arrivals to this very fine and satisfying climb. The former leader coached the writer, who also agreed in declining Abraham’s pitch when shown it.

It was agreed with singular unanimity that the pitch is not justifiable for the ordinary run of climbers. Morrison was let down from above, and although he climbed up with only the moral support of the rope, he concurs in the general verdict, and describes the pitch as 40 feet of “boulder” climbing, without the slightest possibility of safeguarding the leader after the first few feet. Maclay’s traverse was again followed, and found to be sporting and attractive. The summit was reached at 3.45, the climb from the foot taking three and a quarter hours. From thence the Librarian, armed with the “Meenister’s” aneroid, invited us to go with him to see how much



*August 1905.*

BUCHAILLE ETIVE FROM KINGSHOUSE.

*A. E. Robertson.*

below Stob Dearg the tops of Stob na Doire and Stob na Broige might prove to be ; and it is due to science to record the triumph of her disciple, for the pursuit begun in company ended in a solitary and damp expedition ; at first two, and then the last companion left him alone on the ridge, and deserted to the base as quickly as the nature of the slope admitted. The height of Stob na Doire is not marked on the six-inch O.S. map—a strange omission considering the prominence of the peak from several directions. In Munro's tables an estimate is made of 3,250 feet, but Mr Grabham of the Geological Survey, who happened to be at Kingshouse at the time of our visit, had made several observations, and as a result estimates that Stob na Doire is approximately 3,327 feet, which is only 18 feet lower than Stob Dearg.

On the 28th Mr and Mrs Robertson went down to Clachaig with the motorists, the others following on bicycles. The Church Door Buttress was again on the cards. The weather this day has been compared to jam pieces—a dry layer one hour thick, a layer of thunder plum one hour thick, and another dry layer ; indeed the day well justified the ingenious translation which has been put forward for Bidean nam Bian, *i.e.*, "The Pinnacle of the Pelts!" However, by converting the party into a case of "bottled imps" by making them squirm and wriggle under some large rocks while the jam was served, we arrived at Collie's Pinnacle dry but late—only a little earlier than on the former occasion. Morrison took the lead, and investigated the first crack for an easier exit than was used two days previously, and observed some jammed stones offering a route directly upwards from the middle of this letter-box ; wishing, however, to see more of the world, he went right through to the other end of the crack, and, climbing over the jammed blocks, landed on the top. The route is quite safe and not very exacting, but no doubt the quickest way to arrive at the same point is to climb up inside and about the middle of the crack. Possibly this is the original or orthodox way of entering the Church Door, but the absence of continuous nail-scratches left us in some doubt ; evidently worshippers are few and far between.

The "Meenister" would have photographed parts of the climb had not the rain-clouds descending on the hills made good work impossible, not to mention the difficulty of getting baggage through the first section—the service as yet not being open for Parcels Post—and with five climbers on 160 feet of rope, there was none to spare for hauling ; so the "bagpipes"—as the camera in a sack with short legs protruding was nicknamed—had to be left at the foot of the rocks with other impedimenta, to be called for on the return. As it happened, an eagle was the first to call on them, and we had a fine view of him from the "overhanging chimney" as he sailed into the wide gully and out of our sight beneath the crags, and then into view again and over the shoulder of the hill leading to Stob Coire an Lochan.

All the party were very pleased with this climb ; the difficulties are sufficiently exercising without being insurmountable, the variety of work allows of no monotony, and what may be called the rock scenery and arrangements are curious and wonderful, admitting in places of sensational peeps below.

The remark was made that in calling this buttress of Bidean the "Church Door," it must be allowed that the only fitting style of architecture is Gothic. In the details of the climb various periods and developments of this style can be noticed. The Early English (or Early Scotch, in this case) is found at the commencement in the narrow openings ; further on one comes to places of perfect balance, or the Geometric period. Then the Perpendicular style quickly comes into view, but is overtopped by the more florid French designs to which La Belle Écosse is usually believed to have had leanings, and even the extravagant Flamboyant period is represented in the neighbourhood of the traverse to the overhanging chimney. The only style applicable to the climber himself is Transitional.

It was 9 o'clock before we left Clachaig that evening, and dinner was served at 10.30 !

The 29th was uncompromisingly wet, and with three full days just passed no great exercise was indulged in, and the car and cycles received a much-needed sorting.

The next day was more promising with occasional sun-

shine, and while the indefatigable F.S.G. (Fellow Safe to Go) and Miss MacDonald ascended "Screwloose" (Beinn a Chrulaiste), others went to see the Boulders; and the chauffeur, assisted by a geologist, took the actual gradient of the loose metalled road in front of the hotel and found it to be much worse than that recorded in the Contour Road Book. It was about 3 P.M. when the car was packed and started for the return journey to Sunderland, with the driver only inside, our friends escorting us to the top of the hill, ready to lend a hand if needed. Fortunately no assistance was required by BR 68, and she got over the second rise also with equal ease to ourselves, but only to find others "in distress on the Sabbath." A motor party from Madrid who had suffered "something very serious" to their car were quite stranded, so we took one of them some miles on to Inveroran to get horses.

Our further run down Loch Lomond was rather spoiled by heavy showers; arriving at Balloch for the night, the skies cleared as usual.

We had a good run through Glasgow to Lanark and on to Peebles, and as far as Abbotsford when the "magneeto" failed again, and reaching Wooler at 9 o'clock we stopped for the night. Wet weather followed us next day into Sunderland, by which time we had run almost exactly 760 miles; a thoroughly enjoyable and successful trip.

On Monday, 31st July, the Edinburgh contingent, whose doings remain now to be followed, were called at 3.30 A.M.—quite Alpine—and the hotel people rose to the occasion with a table d'hôte breakfast. The "Meenister" escorted his flock to Bridge of Orchy *en route* for Fort-William, while Goggs and Morrison rode down Glen Etive to investigate a wonderful ridge which had been reported as a possible find by the party who had visited Mrs Stuart at Dalness at the New Year Meet, 1905. The Librarian gives the following description:—"On the southern face of Stob na Broige and immediately to the north of Alltchaorinn in Glen Etive one sees from the road what appears to be a fine ridge. We made straight for it up a steep slope of bracken and heather, but on nearing our goal found ourselves absolutely cut off from it by a gorge with straight water-worn sides.

What from below looked like a slit or two in the mountain side now developed into some seven or more distinct ridges with two fine waterfalls, one with a single leap of about 100 feet, and the other with four steps aggregating some 120 feet or more. The only route to the foot of the ridge was apparently by making one's way up the bed of the burn, and then the first 30 feet would be very slabby and water-worn. These preliminary difficulties conquered, the climber would have mixed rock and heather work of a not generally high order; one or two of the rock pitches might prove good sport, but it is safe to say of the ridge, as a whole, that it will not prove a great competitor to the Crowberry. We continued up the steep edge of the ravine which cut us off from the ridges till we reached an upper corrie composed of five ridges much broken up. We were surprised at the extent of the rocky surface furrowed by torrents, but came to the conclusion that although interesting scrambling could be had in great variety, there was probably no good climb of any magnitude. It is well worth walking up to the foot of the main gorge, some half-hour from the road, to see the waterfalls and the carved face of the mountain side."

Kingshouse welcomed our worthy friends after this preliminary canter, in a downpour as usual, but they tackled a heavy lunch with characteristic fortitude, and then took their thirty pounds apiece of kit down Glencoe to the Ferry, and so on to Fort-William, where they joined Robertson in the evening.

The programme for the next day was the Observatory Buttress, but the rain not "keeping up" the piper sounded a lament and took train for the east, leaving Goggs and Morrison to continue their harvest of the best climbing fruits, and they secured the North-east and Carn Dearg Buttresses and Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis and Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour—all in miserable weather. Finally human or climbing nature could stand the wet no longer, and a retreat was made to the other extreme—Edinburgh—where I am told a water famine existed.

## THE MOTOR IN MOUNTAINEERING—THE BRACK.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

IN former papers contributed to this *Journal* (Vol. VII., pp. 313-322; Vol. VIII., pp. 139-148) I have referred to the motor as an adjunct to mountaineering. One is almost afraid to propound such a heresy when in company with our friends from the west, for Edinburgh climbers have a bad reputation in Glasgow, because of their assumed tendency to drive to their climbs. On this occasion I wish to tell of a pilgrimage from Auld Reekie to the Brack in search of the undiscovered climbs reputed to be on that innocent hill. It was, however, more than a pleasure pilgrimage, it was a penitential one, not indeed barefoot, or in sandals, but in attitude of mind. Some years ago the writer was asked to write the guide-book article on the Arrochar peaks, and since then has added, as occasion arose, supplemental chapters (*Journal*, Vol. VI., pp. 172-191; Vol. VII., pp. 66-69; Vol. VIII., pp. 309-312) which, collectively, bring the information on the district up to date. Soon after the article appeared, Dr Collie, in conversation, made the writer shamefaced by saying that it was a scandal (yes, I think he used the word) that the S.M.C. should allow so noble a mountain as the Brack to remain unexplored, seeing that it possessed finer cliffs, climbs, and precipices than the Cobbler, &c. At that time, not being an Hon. Secretary, I did not feel that, officially, I was to blame, but I looked tenderly, time after time, to the foot of Glencroe and doubted if our learned Professor was not hawering. An undoubted rocky face was visible, but by all accounts the Brack was but an afternoon's stroll and could yield no sport. Later, in company with Raeburn and my wife, we drove up to explore Ben an Lochain, but passing mist veiled any precipices that might be on the Brack. Shortly before the Easter Meet of this year, a continuance of bitter and strong east winds almost prevented me from carrying out an important exploratory visit I had planned. There was defection in the camp, and when the early breakfast at Arrochar was despatched, my wife alone declared

that neither icy winds nor passing snowstorms would prevent her from sharing my expedition. The motor soon whirled us by the shores of Loch Long to Glencroe, where the giant whins were already glowing in green and gold, up the stony brae, and right past the foot of the Brack, uncertain where to attack the problem. We left our comfortable motor garments after reaching the central level, and, shivering in our mountain clothes, crossed the stream on stepping stones, and made for the western shoulder of the peak. On this several pinnacles stand against the sky, and these when reached, proved to be narrow ridges inaccessible on either side, but capable of being negotiated along the sky-line.

A glance over to the south showed that the climbs, if any, must face Glencroe, and we retraced our steps below the savage crags which rise nearly to the summit. Here there is a dark chimney or series of caves, well seen even from Arrochar, and unmistakable by any one exploring the corrie. The foot of the chimney is about 1,700 feet above the sea, and the rocks rise 700 feet higher. The conditions were trying and dangerous. To climb the chimney is impossible in the lower part at least, for a huge roof stretches out forming a great floor for a higher cave. At this time from the roof hung glittering icicles, and the walls shone with transparent ice covering every hold. At intervals avalanches of ice or snow fell from above, and after an attempt to ascend the almost vertical wall close to the cave, we retired to a safer route 50 feet more into the open, and reached a point almost on a level with the upper cave. As the ice conditions now became hopeless, we were glad to turn, and with considerable difficulty reached the frozen turf below. It is difficult to speak with certainty as to the feasibility of this route, although, from inspection from above, the way seemed clear. Turning now round to the left, where a couple of buzzards were flying about, we made our way to a wild and broken part hemmed in by vertical rocks. Here some hours were spent in exploring possible routes, several of which will be evident to climbers. The opinion arrived at was that the quality of the climbing was high. In many places even



very steep rocks afford firm and reliable foot and hand holds, but the absence of hitches must call for absolute confidence in the leader. Returning to the corrie we singled out a fine buttress rising above a mass of sheltered blocks, as the most definite probable climb, and finally reached the summit by the grassy recess or couloir facing Loch Long. Our intention was to return on the morrow, and with the full force of the family circle attack this the knife-edge arête of the Brack.

The conditions were, however, more Arctic than ever, and the cold so intense, that in climbing costume it was impossible to proceed, and we retraced our steps to the motor and back to Arrochar. The fine tempting spell in June offered its opportunities in vain, for the illness resulting from a chill at Sligachan held me a prisoner. The prospect of a Swiss holiday in August, however, made the testing of lax muscles imperative, and on 14th July it was decided to get the necessary exercise by a further attempt on the Brack. On this occasion the party consisted of my son and daughter who, with the writer, motored by Stirling and Balloch to Arrochar. How changed was the aspect of our Highland hills. No longer the rich browns of withered bracken and heather, giving that warmth to the mountain forms, so grateful to the eye. In vain one looked for the snow-filled corries, or the steep couloirs boldly pointing out the divisions of crag and slope. No snow-white ledges divided the rocky buttresses, but in the evening gloom, rocks and cliffs and grassy slopes merged into one uniform face, unrelieved by light and shade. Rounding the shingly bays and bold promontories between Luss and Tarbet, one could not but compare the spring with the summer aspect. From a near point of view the summer dress is richer and more beautiful. The rich undergrowth of fern and grasses and wild flowers, with the tall foxgloves peeping over hedge or roadside wall, are like the spangles which set off some costume. The trees, now fully endowed with their leafy garment, bewilder and rejoice with their dark avenues or wide-spreading boughs. On the other hand the gaunt branches, scarce wakening from the winter's sleep, rising

with strong effects of light and shade from the profusion of autumn leaves, the carpet of the forest, produce a more invigorating effect, possibly even a more suggestive effect, on the eye of the artistic. We had a very telling surprise where the bracken-clad slopes, in general dark green, stretched up from the water's edge to the hills above, for there the brackens, cut by the scythe and lying as they fell, had been withered by the summer sun and gave a glorious foretaste of autumn, in the gorgeous hues which delight our Highland painters. If then I must vote, I vote for the winter colouring of Scotland and the snowy summits piercing the blue skies. Give me the frosted grasses and the ice-spangled flowers, and the glittering cascades arrested by the magic touch of winter, and reflecting the horizontal rays of our northern sun. Then our Highland hills are at their best, and call forth our strongest and most fervid desires.

But, meanwhile, how did our party fare? Again the motor rolled up Glencroe, and stopping at the wooden bridge we left it to its fate. This was doubtful, as a herd of cattle proceeded to test the quality of the leather aprons. We were soon ploughing our way through the deep rushes and bracken which clothe the hillside. Our route was evident. Striking past the cottage, where a sheep dog barked its welcome, we made for the grassy pass lying between the Brack and the lofty buttress which rises from Loch Long. A turbulent burn comes down from the basin below the pass, and leads one conveniently up to a rocky bluff. This is passed on the right, and soon after the steps are directed to the foot of the cliff, where a huge rock fall has dislodged a mass of blocks. One of these, with very vertical edge and about 25 feet high, lies at the foot of the buttress we desired to climb. For want of a better name we may christen it the Knife-Edge Buttress. Looked at from below, the buttress is cut off on the right (north) hand by a wide gully, from which it rises in forbidding walls. On the other side it rises from the grassy couloir, which affords easy access to the summit. At the bottom it is easily recognised by a right-hand corner pinnacle or *arête*, with good holds in the lower part but overhanging above.

This is continued up more or less continuously for some 200 feet, showing a defined arête bordering on the gully, and high up terminating in the knife edge which gives the name to the climb. To the left are three clean rocky flying buttresses, very steep and difficult, with, between, steep walls of rock and fern some 15 feet high. We, attacked the problem at the third (or southern) buttress where just at the foot an overhanging chimney is crowned with an exquisite growth of *Polystichum*. It seemed almost a desecration to disturb the little garden, so luxuriant were the fronds. It has been my fate on many an occasion to be the down-trodden husband; but here the down-trodden father came to the front, and my children using my scalariform back, and planting their hobnailers on my shoulders, were, with impetus from below, soon launched on their upward course. For the last man the pitch is not easy, and sundry bets were forthcoming as to the possibility of joining the others above. But a greater problem was in store, reminding one of some of the cave routes on Cir Mhor.

Where the flying buttress terminates, a crack separates it from the main rock face, and the most convenient mode of progression is lying on the back to insinuate the head into the interior, and with sundry wriggles and turns to induce the remainder of one's body to follow suit. In spite of confident prophesying to the contrary, the writer was able, with difficulty, to follow the younger members of the party through this narrow way. (*N.B.*—The lunch packet was still in the rucksack.)

The direct route was now, standing on the flying buttress, with a long stride to reach the sensational arête on the main wall, where sufficient holds enabled one to enjoy a vertical though short climb. A little to the right an overhanging chimney, flanked by a prominent pillar of rock, led us into a corner where we felt confident of further progress. Here much time was wasted in endeavouring to ascend the slippery and hitchless chimney, but reluctantly, as it was now raining heavily, we were forced to retire, and eventually reached a point higher up, where a traverse to the "knife edge" was possible. The knife edge is narrow,

falling precipitously on either side and set at an acute angle, but the holds are excellent and safe, and the outlook highly sensational. A grass chimney enables this to be avoided if desired. The final wall affords good sport, the holds being numerous, though small, and the angle steep. Altogether the barometer indicated 400 feet from the bottom, with about one dozen difficult climbs *en route*. I have entered rather more fully than might be necessary into the details of this short climb, so as to indicate the kind of climbing to be met with on this interesting hill. We had taken four hours for the 400 feet, but of course might have found easier routes. Our experience confirmed the opinions formed at Easter, and shows that the Brack will well repay the climber who visits it. A hasty run to the summit enabled us to judge of the view obtainable. Of course that to the Clyde is the *pièce de resistance*, and the eye embraces Loch Goil, the hills of Arran, the Gareloch, and Loch Long, all of which are better seen than from the Cobbler. To the north and west the outlook is shut out by higher hills.

Returning to the motor, we started at 5 P.M. for Edinburgh, going by Balloch, Stirling, Airth, and Linlithgow. Owing to water troubles it was dark before Linlithgow was reached, and the law-abiding Hon. Sec. driving, as usual, well within the legal limit, was passing through Winchburgh, when suddenly six policemen's whistles broke the silence of the night, and six upholders of the law summoned your official to stop. But, though scoffers may hold different opinions, the sole cause of the arrest was the extinction of one lamp, owing to a broken glass; and the sergeant in command being satisfied of my connection with the S.M.C. and the importance of my mission, commanded his men to set me free. The minions of the law had been summoned by telephone to waylay me in this lonely spot. The utility of the motor was again indicated, and the Sabbath day unbroken, as we reached home before the graves begin to yawn.

# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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## PART IV.

THE first three divisions of the Guide Book have now been completed, namely :—

The Southern Highlands in 35 groups,  
The Eastern Highlands in 13 groups,  
The Western Highlands in 26 groups ;

and the Editor has to thank the following members for their contributions :—Messrs Inglis Clark, Duncan, Drummond, Fraser, Garden, Hinxman, Kynaston, Maclay, Munro, Naismith, Parker, Phillip, Raeburn, Rev. A. E. Robertson, Russell, W. A. Smith, Thomson, and H. Walker.

The Northern Highlands will be the next Division to be treated of, and this extends northwards from the Dingwall and Skye Railway. It falls into 24 groups, of which the following is a list :—

Meall a' Chinn Deirg.	Beinn Dearg.
Sgurr Ruadh.	Coigach.
Beinn Bhan.	Suilven.
Liathach.	Ben More Assynt.
Beinn Eighe.	Quinag.
Slioch.	Ben Hee.
A'Mhaighdean.	Foinne Bhein.
Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair.	Ben Hope.
An Teallach.	Ben Laoghal.
The Fannichs.	Ben Clibrig.
Fionn Bheinn.	Morven.
Ben Wyvis.	

The Fifth Division will be the Islands of Scotland, namely :—

Skye.	Arran.
Rum.	Outer Hebrides.
Eigg.	Orkney.
Mull.	Shetland.
Jura.	

The Sixth Division will be the Southern Uplands :—

The Galloway Hills.	Moorfoots.
Leadhills.	Pentlands.
Moffat Hills.	

The Editor will be glad if any members who have knowledge of these groups will communicate with him.

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## STRATHCARRON AND ACHNASHELLACH HILLS.

### (DIVISION IV. GROUP I.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 28' 30''$  to  $57^{\circ} 30' 30''$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 28' 20''$  to  $5^{\circ} 23' 20''$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 82. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

An Ruadh Stac (the red peak), 2,919 feet; 6 miles from Strathcarron Hotel, by Coulags and Allt nan Ceapairean.

Meall a' Chinn Deirg (hill of the red head), 3,060 feet; 1 mile north of An Ruadh Stac.

Sgùrr Ruadh (red scaur), 3,141 feet; 3 miles from Achnashellach Station by Coire Lair.

Fuar Tholl (the cold hole), 2,968 feet;  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles west by north of Achnashellach.

Beinn Liath Mhor (the great grey ben), 3,034 feet; 3 miles north-north-west of Achnashellach by Coire Lair.

The unpretentious but comfortable Station Hotel at Strathcarron, on the Dingwall and Skye Railway, affords a convenient centre for the exploration of this fine group of hills.

Looking north from the platform at Strathcarron Station, four conspicuous mountains at once strike the eye.

Loch Coire Iair.



*May 1905.*

SGURR RUADH—THE N.E. FACE.

A—ROBERTSON'S GULLY.

B—RAEBURN'S BUTTRESS.

*A. E. Robertson.*

Glasbheinn, on the extreme left, is not particularly interesting from a climbing point of view, though the cliffs on its eastern face that overhang the Bealach of Glaschnoc are bold and precipitous.

Further to the right, from behind the grassy slopes of Torr na h'Iolaire, rises the bare rocky peak of Ruadh Stac—the Red Stack, on this side a curious misnomer, presenting, as it does, a cone—in sunshine, uniformly white; in cloud, a melancholy grey. Ruadh Stac is one of the roughest hills in this very rugged region, and affords some interesting climbs. The ordinary ascent is best made from Coire Fionnaraich, following the path from Coulags bridge and turning off to the left a little beyond the curiously shaped standing stone known as Clach Con-Fionn (the stone of Fingal's dog), to which the legend tells us Fingal used to tie his dog when hunting in the glen. Leaving the path at the highest point of the col, and taking to the north-eastern ridge immediately above the highest of the three small lochans that lie in the intervening hollow, a rough but simple enough climb, mostly over rough blocks of quartzite, brings one to the summit (2,919 feet). From the cairn the view to the south and west is fine, particularly of the Coolins and the peaks of Kintail.

Another, and more interesting route, may be taken by the south-east face. Here long slopes of glistening quartzite, highly polished by ice action and dipping outwards from the hill at angles varying from  $40^{\circ}$  to  $46^{\circ}$ , have to be crossed by "crack" climbing. The shattered precipices on the northern face of the mountain look bad enough from below, but would probably yield to a series of careful traverses from ledge to ledge. The rock, however, is rotten and untrustworthy, and care would be required.

Immediately to the north of Ruadh Stac, and separated only from it by the gloomy tarn that fills the deep hollow of Coire an Ruadh Staic, rises its sister-mountain Meall a' Chinn Deirg (3,060 feet), whose name (like many other Gaelic place-names) loses considerably by translation. "The bald hill with the red head," as the vernacular has it, is more or less precipitous on its western and northern faces, and has one or two good rock chimneys, but will



not compare in interest with its neighbour across the way.

The long range that closes up the view to the north-east, and forms the farther boundary of the Coulags Glen, is really one continuous mountain ridge, a high col, over 2,000 feet, alone separating Sgurr Ruadh (3,141 feet), the sharp northern peak, from Fuar Tholl (2,968), the southern extremity. The latter is the mountain whose outline, seen from the west, is so suggestive of the profile of a late distinguished Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Both these mountains should be ascended from the eastern side, the slopes that rise from Coire Fionnaraich and the Coulags Glen being uninteresting alternations of grass and loose scree.

Taking the morning train from Strathcarron to Achnashealach (either at 6 or 11.20, according as the climber is a late or early bird), a path will be found crossing the railway a few yards west from the station. This leads up through the magnificent scenery of Coire Lair, closely following the course of the river Lair, a wild mountain torrent that flows for the most part through a deep narrow gorge overhung with fantastically distorted pine trees, and broken by foaming waterfalls.

Over the lower part of the glen frown the great precipices of Fuar Tholl, of which those that hem in the corrie of that ilk are "absolutely perpendicular." Absolutely perpendicular too appear to be the sides of the great buttress of terraced sandstone that hangs imminent over the little tarn of Coire Mainrichean, on the northern face of the mountain.

The higher part of Coire Lair forms a second corrie or inner chamber, in which lie the waters of Loch Coire Lair. Above the head of this lochan towers the fine north-east face of Sgurr Ruadh, which throws out several distinct buttresses separated by couloirs, usually filled with snow till midsummer. The most northerly of these ridges is the highest and finest, and stands out more as a definite arête. Towards the summit a steep dark portion stands up like a tower, and near the foot the buttress is split by a narrow and deep chimney which runs far up the cliffs. This portion

of the face is cut off from the two more southerly buttresses by a wide couloir, almost a corrie, steep towards the top, and with snow cornices under winter and spring conditions.

The southern buttress was ascended, partly by the rocks and partly by a couloir on the right, by the Rev. A. E. Robertson on 26th May 1898 ; the north-east buttress by Messrs Raeburn and E. Robertson on 4th April 1904. A description of the latter climb will be found at p. 223, Vol. VIII. of the *Journal*.

Beinn Liath Mhòr (3,034 feet), on the farther side of the glen, Beinn Liath Bheag, and the other mountains that stretch northwards towards Coulin, are more interesting geologically than from a mountaineering point of view. Composed of red Torridon sandstone and white Cambrian quartzite, folded and thrust together in extraordinary complexity, and generally devoid of all superficial covering or vegetation, they present to the eye a series of life-size geological diagrams, in which the outcrop of every bed can be followed from below through all its flexures and contortions on the bare mountain side.

It may be well to mention that nearly all the ground described above is strictly guarded deer-forest, where intruders are looked on with little favour during the later summer months. Up to mid-June, however—and on the west coast, April, May, and June bring the best chance of good weather—the climber is not likely to be challenged if he avoid the sanctuaries. A compensating fact exists in the system of capital shooting-paths—extending to upwards of sixty miles—that traverse the Achnashellach Forest in every direction. These are a great boon ; both at the start, when they save for the actual climb energy that would otherwise have been expended in toiling over the rough ground of the lower slopes ; and still more at the end of the day, when the excitement is over, and the long descent in the gloaming to inhabited levels has to be faced.

#### LITERATURE.

"Strathcarron as a Climbing Centre." Lionel W. Hinxman. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. III., p. 218.

"Strathcarron." J. Rennie. Notes and Queries. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. III., p. 163.

"Sgurr Ruadh and Coire Lair." Harold Raeburn. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VIII., p. 221.

L. W. H.  
H. R.

## APPLECROSS GROUP.

### (DIVISION IV. GROUP II.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 27'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 39'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 81. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 19.

#### *Beinn Bhan, Sgorr na Caorach, Meall Gorm.*

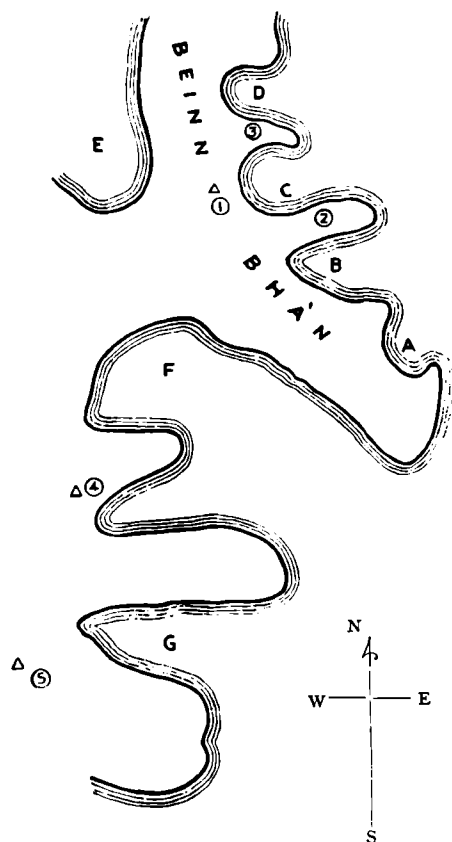
An elevated tableland of Torridon sandstone, occupying the south-eastern part of the peninsula of Applecross. It rises steeply from the northern shore of Loch Kishorn, and presents a bold and precipitous front to the east, but falls gradually to the north-west towards the valley of the Applecross River. The three mountains included in the group are in reality parts of the same plateau, but separated to some extent from one another by deep glens and corries.

The road from Kishorn to Applecross crosses the plateau, ascending the deep glen of the Allt a Chumhaing by a series of steep zigzags. It is almost the highest driving road in Scotland, and from the summit (2,054 feet) a splendid view is obtained of the Skye mountains, the peaks of Rum, and the wild ranges that stretch southwards from Loch Duich.

*Centres.*—*Strathcarron*, on the Dingwall and Skye Railway, where there is a comfortable hotel.

From Strathcarron a mail gig runs three times a week to *Shieldaig* on Loch Torridon (small inn). The road between these two places passes through Glen Kishorn at the foot of Beinn Bhan, giving fine views of the corries on its eastern face. *Applecross*, a small village on the western side of the plateau, with a comfortable temperance inn. It is somewhat inaccessible, but a mail car runs three times a week from Strathcarron.

BEINN BHÀN, 2,936 feet (*Ben Vdn* = the white mountain), forms the eastern and highest part of the plateau. The top is nearly flat, rising gently to the summit cairn, and sloping away gradually to the west. The east front presents a splendid series of deep corries, walled in by mural precipices that fall sheer from the brow of the mountain, and separated by lofty spurs with precipitous sides.



The principal corries are as follows, beginning at the south :—

- A. Coire an Eich (corrie of the horse).
- B. Coire na Feola (corrie of the flesh).
- C. Coire na Poite (corrie of the pot).
- D. Coire an Fhamhair (the giant's corrie).

B and C are divided by A' Chioch (2), a spur with precipitous sides. It can, however, be ascended by a stone shoot at the south-west corner of C, whence a steep arête leads up from the narrow neck dividing the two corries to the summit plateau, and affords a very interesting climb.

A great tower-like mass of sandstone known as A' Phoit (the pot) (3), separates C from D, and is connected with the main precipice by a narrow ridge. From the point of junction the cliff rises perpendicularly to the highest point of the mountain. There is no record of any ascent of A' Phoit, but a chimney formed by a weathered-out basalt dyke may afford a possible route.

SGORR NA CAORACH (sheep's scar), 2,539 feet, is separated from Beinn Bhàn by the deep glen Coir nam Faradh (*Coire Narra*=the giant's corrie). The summit is a flat plateau, but on the east it throws out two fine spurs with perpendicular sides of terraced sandstone.

The deep glen of Allt a Chumhaing (G), through which passes the road to Applecross, separates the southernmost of these spurs from Meall Gorm (the blue hill), 2,325 feet, which is also flat-topped, with precipices on the north and east.

L. W. H.

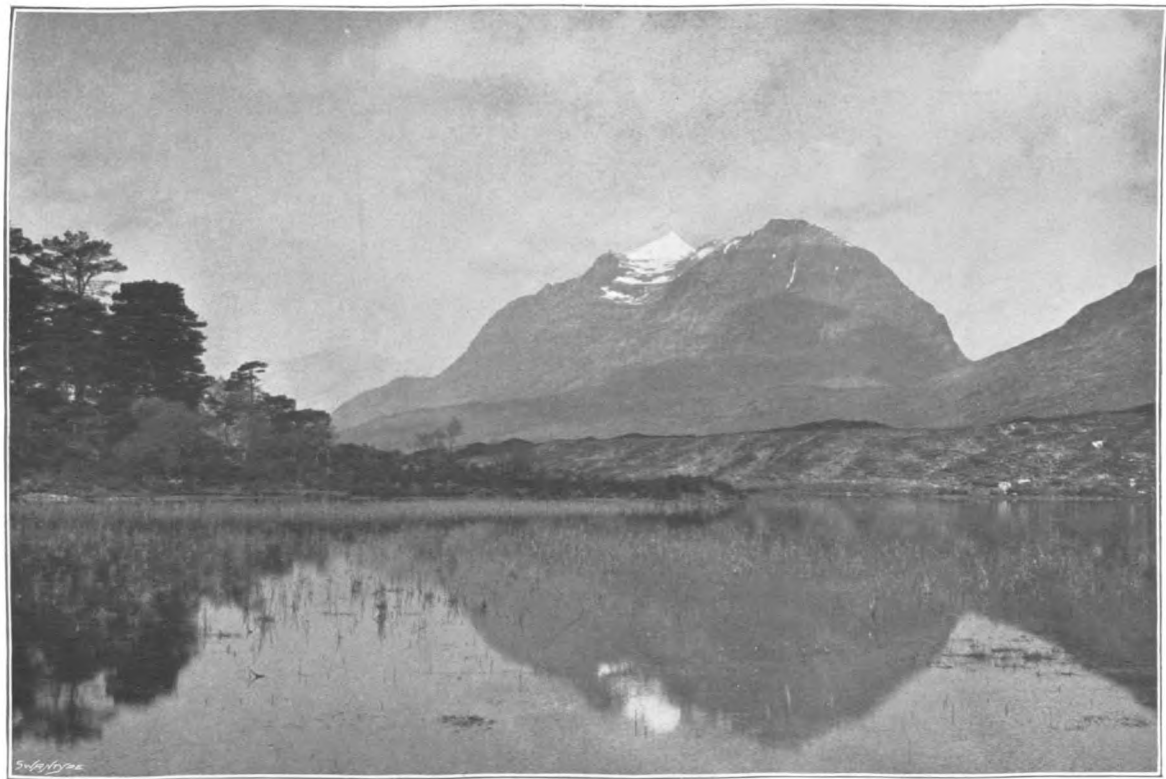
## TORRIDON GROUP.

(DIVISION IV. GROUP III.)

Lat. 57° 34'; W. Lon. 5° 28'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 81 and 82. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Nos. 19 and 20.

### *Liathach, Alligin, Beinn Dearg.*

This fine group, forming the Torridon deer forest, rises at the head and along the northern shore of Upper Loch Torridon. The regular and generally nearly horizontal bedding of the Torridon sandstone, of which these mountains are composed, gives rise to magnificent mural precipices, such as those which tower above Glen Torridon. They are seamed at intervals by deep gullies—waterfalls

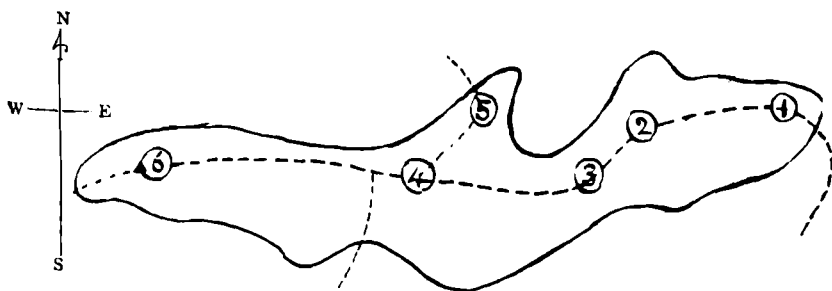


May 1905

LIATHACH FROM GLEN TORRIDON.

A. E. Robertson.

after heavy rain, but in dry weather forming chimneys by which the ascent of an otherwise impracticable face can often be accomplished. The sandstone is usually firm, affording good hand and foot hold, while the regular parallelism of the strata encourages a progress from ledge to ledge, by means of which difficulties, that at first sight seem almost insuperable, may be more or less easily surmounted. In the immediate neighbourhood of the larger faults, several of which cross the ridges, the rock is often much shattered, and the ledges are covered with fallen blocks, necessitating care and considerable trouble in clearing the way in the case of a first ascent.



#### LIATHACH

LIATHACH (*Leagach*=the grey one), applied generally to the whole mountain. The peaks are named as follows:—

1. Stùc a Choire Dhuibh Bhig, 3,000 feet app. (*Stùc a Horrie du Vick*=the peak of the little black corrie). The most easterly peak lies 1 mile east from the summit cairn.
2. Spidean à Choire Leith, 3,456 feet (*Spitean a Horrie Ley*=sharp peak of the grey corrie). The highest point of the mountain distant 7 miles west-south-west from Kinloch.
3. Am Fasarinen, 3,050 feet app. A range of pinnacles lying immediately south-west of (2).
4. Mullach an Rathain, 3,358 feet (*Moollach an Raan*=ridge of the horns). 1 mile west of (2).
5. Meall Dearg, 3,150 feet (*Meall Jerrag*=the bare red hill), immediately north-east of (4).
6. Sgorr a Chadail, 2,287 feet (*Sgur a Hādul*=scar of sleep), 1½ miles west of (4).

Liathach forms a long ridge extending for 5 miles in an easterly direction from the head of Loch Torridon to the deep glen of the Allt a Choire Dhuibh Mhoir, which separates it from Beinn Eighe on the east. On the south side the mountain rises steeply from Glen Torridon in a range of seemingly inaccessible precipices, while on the north the cliffs are even still more stupendous, those that wall in the gloomy depths of Coire na Caime (the crooked corrie) being absolutely perpendicular.

The east end of the mountain forms a steep bluff falling abruptly to the glen below. The three highest peaks are capped with white quartzite, which on (2) rises into a sharp symmetrical cone with sides covered with loose angular blocks. West of (2) the ridge for half a mile is very thin and worn into a series of pinnacles (3). To these succeed a broader grassy ridge leading up to (4). Immediately below the cairn on (4), a spur with a sharply serrated ridge and precipitous sides runs out to the north-east (5). West of (4) the main ridge continues as a smooth grassy slope, falling gradually to (6), and thence more abruptly to the foot of the mountain above Torridon House.

*Centre.*—The best centre for this and the other mountains of the group is Kinlochewe, where there is a good hotel. A mail car runs daily from Achnasheen (10 miles) on the Dingwall and Skye Railway. Accommodation, limited to two bedrooms, can also be got at the Temperance Inn at Fasag, at the head of Loch Torridon.

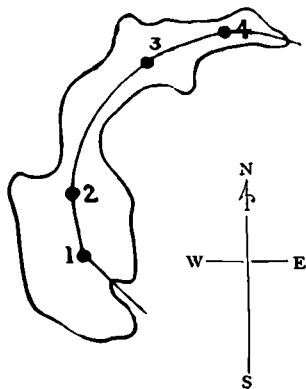
*Usual Route.*—Leaving the Torridon road at a point about 1 mile beyond the bridge crossing the Allt Choire Dhuibh and 7 miles from Kinlochewe, keep north up the slope on the east side of the Allt Gharaidh Dubh, and bear to the right through the broken escarpments to the foot of the rampart that crowns the east end of the hill. To pass this obstacle a judicious selection of the course is necessary, when a fairly steep scramble lands the climber on the debris slope that leads up to the top of (1). The sky-line can now be followed over (2) to (3), where the path along the bases of the pinnacles should be taken and the ridge regained between (3) and (4). From (4) an easy slope leads west down to (6) and the Coire Mhic Nobuil Glen,



or a more direct but much steeper descent may be made upon Fasag by the stone shoot, 2,000 feet in height, which falls from the ridge a quarter-mile west by south of (4).

*Climbs.*—An interesting variation can be made on the above route by keeping the sky-line over the tops of the Fasarinen pinnacles (3). Hand and foot holds are good and plentiful, and the climb is not difficult, but requires a good head, as the rocks on the north side fall sheer for a great depth into Coire na Caime.

*Meall Dearg.*—This ridge, the first recorded ascent of which was made in June 1894 by Messrs Rennie, Douglas, and Hinxman, affords a very interesting climb. It is for the most part exceedingly narrow and broken by six pinnacles which fall steeply on three sides. The chief difficulty arises from the unstable condition of the rocks, and will lessen with each ascent as the ledges become cleared of loose blocks.



ALLIGIN, on the west side of Coire Mhic Nobuil, presents fewer points of interest, the summit ridge and western side being for the most part smooth and grassy. Fine terraced cliffs, however, overhang Toll a Mhadaich, the great corrie on the east, and Toll na Beiste on the north, where also are several good rock chimneys leading up to the Rathains (horns) of Alligin. The view from this mountain is superb, extending from Cape Wrath to Ardnamurchan, and from North Uist to the hills of Central Inverness-shire.

Alligin (meaning unknown), applied generally to the whole mountain.

1. Meall an Laoigh, 2,904 feet (*Meall an Lui*=hill of the calf).
2. Spidean Coir an Laoigh, 3,021 feet (peak of the corrie of the calf).
3. Sgurr Mor, 3,232 feet, the highest peak; also known as Sgurr na Tuaigh.
4. The Rathains (horns) of Alligin, 2,840 feet app.

*Usual Route.*—By the road from Fasag along the shore of the loch, turning to the right, up the Diabaig path, close to the Lodge. Cross the Coire Mhic Nobuil burn, and leaving the path, bear north-north-west up the slope to the mouth of Coir na Laoigh, and follow the burn to the top of (1), 2,904 feet. An easy grass slope now leads over (2) to (3). Immediately below this, a tremendous gash plunges down with almost perpendicular sides for 1,800 feet into the depth of Toll a Mhadaich (pron. *Vaddie*). From Sgurr Mhòr the route is more interesting; to the east, over the tops of the three *Rathains*, and thence down into the *Bealach a Chomla*, on the opposite side of which rises the steep western face of BEINN DEARG, 2,995 feet (*Ben Jerrag*=the red hill), the ascent of which can well be combined with that of Alligin. Beinn Dearg presents a succession of precipitous escarpments on the west and south, but there are many rock gullies by which the summit ridge can be reached with more or less difficulty. The descent can be made from the summit cairn (2,995 feet) on the south side by either of the three chimneys which here cut through the escarpment, the spurs between affording an alternative route when the gullies approach too nearly the perpendicular. For an easier route follow the sky-line to the east end of the ridge, and thence down to the watershed at the head of Choire Dhuibh Mhoir, following the glen down to the Kinlochewe road at the bridge (Kinlochewe, 6 miles).

See "Beinn Eighe and the Torridon Hills," by L. W. Hinxman, *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., p. 187; "The Torridon Hills," by W. Brown, *Cairngorm Club Journal*, Vol. I., p. 117; "The Northern Pinnacles of Leagach," by W. Douglas, *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. III., p. 131; "The Northern Pinnacles of Liathach," by A. M. Mackay, *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VI., p. 87.

L. W. H.

## THE BEN EIGHE (BEN EAY) RANGE.

### (DIVISION IV. GROUP V.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 35'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 27'$  to  $5^{\circ} 22'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 82. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 20.

Ruadh-stac Mor, 3,309 feet (pron. *Roo-stac-mor*=the big red stack). Lies between the heads of Lochs Torridon and Maree.

Sail Mhor, 3,217 feet (pron. *Sail-Vor*=the big heel). Lies 1 mile south-west from Ruadh-stac Mor.

Coinneach Mhor, 3,130 feet (=the big mossy place). Lies  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile south from Ruadh-stac Mor.

Spidean Coire nan Clach, 3,220 feet app. (=the top of the corrie of stones). Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west-south-west of Sgurr Ban.

Sgurr Ban, 3,188 feet (=the white peak). Lies  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-west of head of Loch Maree.

Sgurr an Fhir Duibhe, 3,160 feet (pron. *Scoor-an-ear-doo-eve*=the peak of the black man). Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east of Sgurr Ban.

Creag Dubh, 3,000 feet cont. (=the black crag). Lies 1 mile north-east of Sgurr Ban.

This magnificent mountain range lies to the south of Kinlochewe at Loch Maree. It is bounded by Loch Maree on the north, by the great north walls of Liathach on the south, by Glen Torridon on the east, and by the Flowerdale Forest hills on the west. Seen from any point the range presents a most striking appearance—so bleak, barren, and sterile, yet with a certain weird beauty in the graceful curves of its stony ridges linking peak with peak; while the climber who penetrates into the recesses of the Coire Mhic Fhearchair will be rewarded by the sight of a wall of rock which can justly claim to be one of the grandest precipices in the Highlands. Lord Cockburn in his "Circuit Journeys" particularly well describes the impression Ben Eighe makes on one when seen for the first time. Speaking of the view from the head of Glen Docherty, he says: "All up this ascent, but particularly towards its height, there is a grand view of a range of monsters of hills, which I was told were about

the head of Loch Torridon. I know few such mountain prospects ; and one peculiarity in them arises from their being made of quartz. They are whitish, not white, but whitish—pepper and salt, with a great preponderance of the salt. There is a grand one near Kinlochewe called, I think, Ben Eaye ; it is literally powdered with its own dust. Except from snow, I never saw a whitish hill before.”

As Principal Shairp finely says :—

“ Benyea, magnificent Alp,  
Blanched bare and bald and white,  
His forehead like old sea-eagle’s scalp,  
Seen athwart the sunset light ! ”

The greater part of Ben Eighe (*i.e.*, the peak of the file, from its serrated outline as seen from Kinlochewe) is composed, especially the eastern peaks, of Cambrian quartzite. The western and northern peaks, on the other hand, are Torridon sandstone, capped in places with the quartzite. Thus it comes about that there is no good rock climbing on the eastern peaks : shingly scree slopes prevail, making the going both painful and tedious ; and even where the slope of the hill steepens into precipitous escarpments, as on the north faces of Sgurr Ban and Spidean Coire nan Clach, these had best be given a wide berth, for the rock is shattered and untrustworthy. Whereas, wherever you get the Torridon sandstone, as on the lower part of Ruadh-stac Mor, Sail Mhor, and above all the stupendous cliffs of Coire Mhic Fhearchair, you find good reliable rough rock and climbs of every degree of interest and difficulty abound. The terribly unstable scree slopes of Ben Eighe are a name and a byword to all who have trod, or rather slid on them, and the more one can avoid them the better. For as the Gaelic couplet current in the district hath it :—

“ ‘ Si mo run Beinn Eighe,  
Dh’ fhalbhadh i leam is dh’ fhalbhainn leatha.”

(My love is Ben Eighe,  
She with me and I with her would go ! )

Kinlochewe, one of the most delightful and charming of the old Highland inns, so few of which are now left, is, of



*May 1905.*

BEINN EIGHE FROM LOCH COULIN.

*A. F. Robertson.*

course, the place to stay at when exploring the Ben Eighe range. In this connection it may be mentioned that the very small Temperance Inn (2 bedrooms) at Torridon has this year passed into new and capable hands ; it has been furnished up, and is now quite a place where one may spend a night or two in.

The best way to approach the eastern peaks of Ben Eighe is to take the shooting path which leaves the main road a mile west from Kinlochewe, up to the bealach between Creag Dubh and Meall a' Ghiubhais (2,882 feet). Leave the path at about the 1,250 contour line, not before, and follow a west-south-west course over the easiest ground you can find to the summit ridge of Creag Dubh. Walking southward along the ridge, the going will be found fairly easy, but on nearing the next top, Sgurr an Fhir Duibhe (3,160 feet), the character of the ridge suddenly changes. Narrowing to a few feet it is cut into a series of sharp pinnacles locally known as Bodaich Dhubh Binn Eighe (the black carls of Ben Eighe). These pinnacles are not difficult to cross if the climber has some experience and exercises care, but to the non-climber they will seem sensational and difficult. The rope should be used unless the party are "experts"; there is no way round save by a long descent and tedious traverse. "Another and easier way," says Mr Hinxman, "by which this bad bit of the ridge is avoided, leads from the Torridon road at Cromasag up the south side of the burn to the foot of Sgurr an Conghair, and thence up the rocky arête to the top of Sgurr an Fhir Duibhe." There is a fall of 400 feet between Sgurr an Fhir Duibhe and Sgurr Ban (3,188 feet). From Sgurr Ban the ridge turns westerly, the going is rough but quite easy, and the next top, Spidean Coire nan Clach (3,220 feet), is speedily reached. From here one may continue on to Coinneach Mhor, or availing oneself of the path which here joins the ridge, may make an easy descent to Glen Torridon, joining the road near the watershed. This path should be carefully noted, as it forms a most valuable means of access to and from the summit ridge, and saves endless fatigue on the screes.

From Coinneach Mhor an easy ridge with a slight drop

leads north to Ruadh-stac Mor (3,309 feet), the highest top on Ben Eighe. Great care should be taken by any solitary climber not to descend the north or north-east side of Ruadh-stac. The first 200 or 300 feet is just an easy scree slope—the Cambrian quartzite which caps this peak. This might easily mislead one into thinking that it was all like that to the bottom, but quite suddenly it plunges down in terraced escarpments of Torridon sandstone,—only a place for a properly equipped party to find themselves in. In descending Ruadh-stac Mor, therefore, keep west. The whole west side sloping down to Loch Coire Mhic Fhearchair is just screes. The same is true also in descending from Sàil Mhor. Its north and north-east and east faces are wild cliffs of Torridon “red,” while its west side alone affords a safe descent in that direction.

Perhaps the best way of approaching the western peaks of Ben Eighe is by Glen Grudie. Drive or walk the six miles down the road from Kinlochewe to the Bridge of Grudie. Here a well-made path runs up the west bank of the River Grudie, which continues as far as the Allt Coire Mhic Fhearchair, coming to an end at the burn-side at a height of about 900 feet above sea-level. Having come to the end of the path, an easy walk over short heather in a southerly direction takes one to the foot of Sàil Mhor or Ruadh-stac Mor. The northern face of Sàil Mhor is very bold and steep. It is cleft in two by a deep gully—Morrison’s gully—in which the snow lingers far into the summer. The rocks on the east side of this gully were climbed by Lawson, Ling, and Glover in April 1899. They thus describe their climb: “Leaving Loch Coire Mhic Fhearchair at the end where the stream issues, a steep scree fan is seen on the south side. Going up this into the couloir above, the right-hand side, consisting of rock and grass, was taken to, and a ridge was reached some 600 feet above the loch; at one point a flat table of rock is reached, from which there is a magnificent look down into the couloir on the left-hand side. From the table the ridge steepens a good deal, but the rock is well broken up, although firm. . . . In a few hundred feet the cairn on Sàil Mhor is reached.”—*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. V., p. 264.



*May 1905.*

COIRE MHIC FHEARCHAIR, BEINN EIGHE.

*A. E. Robertson.*



And now we come to the cliffs of Coire Mhic Fhearchair (pron. *Corrie Veech-Errecher*=the corrie of the son of Farquhar). These cliffs are by far the finest of their kind in the district, and well worthy of many a visit. The pity is they are so far away from Kinlochewe, for one feels he has done a good day by the time he gets there. The easiest route is by Bridge of Grudie and up the path. Another way, shorter as the crow flies but much rougher, is by the path up to the bealach between Creag Dubh and Meall a' Ghiubhais; here the path stops and the way lies through the Toll à Ghiubhais and along by the foot of Ruadh-stac Mor, and so into the corrie, a very rough and trying walk, three to three and a half hours' good going from Kinlochewe. The cliffs encircle the loch (*vide* photograph), and are at least 1,250 feet high. There are three very distinct buttresses with two grand gullies dividing them. Only the middle buttress has as yet been climbed, and without doubt some splendid work awaits those who will yet further explore and open up this magnificent face. The climb on the middle buttress is described by Dr Collie in the *Journal*, Vol. V., pp. 99-102. He and his party appear to have first climbed up the gully to the west of the middle buttress for about 800 feet until stopped by a perpendicular and overhanging cliff at least 200 feet high. They then traversed out to their left on to the buttress, and time failing them, returned by the way they had come. Next day, ascending Coinneach Mhor *via* Glen Torridon, they descended the buttress to the point they had reached the previous day, thus completing the climb. The climb evidently is one of the very best and is most sensational, the angle of the last 200 feet being about 85 degrees, "not quite, but very nearly A.P."

The *Journal* contains many interesting references to Ben Eighe. Chief among these is that characteristic and charming article by Mr Hinxman on "Ben Eighe and the Torridon Hills" (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., p. 187 *et seq.*), also the article by Dr Collie already alluded to.

The whole of the range is under deer.

A. E. R.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

## GENERAL MEETING.

THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the St Enoch's Hotel, Glasgow, on the evening of Friday, 1st December, 1905 with the President, Mr John Rennie, in the chair.

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

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr Napier, submitted his statement for the past year, showing a balance in favour of the Club of £201. 19s. 3d. The Income of the Club had been £120. 19s. 9d., and the Expenditure £109. 14s. 3d. (of which £50. 17s. 7d. went to the *Journal*; £16. 18s. 7d. to the Club-room; £20. 11s. 4d. to Additions to Library, Lantern slide collection, and furnishings; £7. 18s. 11d. to the Club Reception; the balance, £13. 7s. 10d., being for sundry expenses). Besides the above account, the Treasurer submitted that of the Commutation Fund, showing thirty-one members had taken advantage of it during the year. Dealing with the Fund in the way proposed by the Committee appointed to consider the question (viz., to credit the account annually with interest at 4 per cent., and transfer to the Revenue Account 12s. for each surviving Life Member), he brought out a balance of £180. 9s. The Funds of the Club thus being at 31st October 1905, £382. 8s. 3d.—of which £360 has been invested in 4 per cent. South Australian Government Stock. The accounts were approved.

The Hon. Secretary, Dr Inglis Clark, reported that eight new members had been elected to the Club, viz., S. F. M. Cumming, W. G. Macalister, H. Macrobert, T. S. Muir, H. Stewart, J. C. Thomson, P. J. H. Unna, and R. W. Worsdell, and that the membership of the Club was now 162. At the beginning of the year the membership of the Club had been 160, of whom two had died, and four had resigned. He also reported and commented on the death of our esteemed Honorary Member, Cameron of Lochiel,

and it was resolved that an expression of regret be minuted, and a copy sent to Lady Margaret Cameron.

The Hon. Librarian, Mr Goggs, reported on the Club-room, giving details of gifts to and purchases for the Library, and mentioning that the number of volumes in the Library had risen from 430 to 600.

The Hon. Custodian of slides, Rev. A. E. Robertson, reported that over 1,000 slides were now in the collection, 107 being added to it during the year. He also stated that several members had taken advantage of the privilege of borrowing them, and that they had been shown several times during the year.

A grant of £7 was made to the Hon. Librarian for the purchase of maps and books for the Library.

A grant of £4 was made to the Hon. Custodian of slides for the upkeep of the slide collection.

A grant of £22. 10s. was made to the Hon. Librarian for the purchase of a complete set of the *Alpine Journal*.

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

Mr W. W. NAISMITH was elected as Vice-President in room of Mr James Maclay, whose term of office had expired.

Messrs A. E. MAYLARD and W. GALL INGLIS were elected to the Committee in place of Messrs A. E. Robertson and W. W. Naismith, who retired by rotation.

Messrs A. E. MAYLARD and R. A. ROBERTSON were elected Trustees for the Club Funds.

It was decided to hold the New Year Meet at Tyndrum and the Easter one at Glencoe.

The following alterations in the Rules were agreed to :—

Rule XV., third line, shall read :—

“ Not later than 25th October, or at least one month before any General Meeting, other than the Annual General Meeting in December, a list,” &c.

Rule IX., third line, shall read :—

“ Not later than 25th October to the Hon. Sec.”

The following alterations in the Rules were proposed, but were not agreed to :—

Rule IV., fifth line, shall read :—

“The Honorary Editor, the Honorary Custodian of Slides, and eight,” &c.

Rule VIII., seventh line, shall read :—

“The Honorary Treasurer, the Honorary Editor, and the Honorary Custodian of Slides,” &c.

It was, however, resolved that the Committee revise the Rules, and submit a proof to the Members in a complete form before the next Annual General Meeting.

#### SEVENTEETH ANNUAL DINNER.

At the close of the General Meeting the Annual Dinner was held in the same hotel, with the President, Mr John Rennie, in the chair. The members present were thirty-nine, and the guests sixteen.

The toasts proposed at this dinner were—

The King	-	-	-	-	Mr John Rennie.
Imperial Forces	-	-	-	-	Mr John Rennie.

*Reply*—Mr H. Walker.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club	-	-	-	-	Mr John Rennie.
The Alpine Club	-	-	-	-	Mr J. H. Bell.

*Reply*—Mr A. E. Maylard.

Kindred Societies	-	-	-	-	Prof. Bower.
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*Reply*—Mr A. Barran.

The Guests	-	-	-	-	Mr G. A. Solly.
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*Reply*—Dr Freeland Fergus.

#### RECEPTION.

Previous to the Meeting, and in the same hotel, the Club entertained its friends to tea, and Mr Gilbert Thomson conducted a very delightful exhibition of the Club's Lantern Slides for their amusement.

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

WE are now the proud possessors of a complete set of the *Alpine Journal* bound in the original cloth, and for the benefit of those of the members of the Club who are bibliophiles, we might mention that Vol. III. contains the famous Dragon plate. Having secured this set, the Librarian wishes to dispose of the duplicate numbers of the *Alpine Journal* now in the possession of the Club, as per particulars below, and will be glad to receive offers therefor.

No. 99, February 1888.	
„ 102, November 1888	} Vol. XIV.
„ 103, February 1889	
„ 104, May „	
„ 105, August „	
„ 106, November „	
„ 150, November 1900.	

Vols. XV.-XXII. inclusive, half-calf, in excellent condition.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
The Alpine Journal, Vols. I. to XXII. - - - -	Purchased.
New Zealand Alpine Journal. Parts III. to VIII. inclusive. (This addition makes the Club's set of the Journal complete) - - - -	G. A. Solly.
The Alpine Guide. Part I. The Western Alps. John Ball. (1877) - - - -	Adam Smail.
Guide to Inverness, Nairn, and the Highlands. Alex. Mackenzie. (1900) - - - -	„
Illustrated Guide to Rosslyn Chapel and Castle, Hawthornden, &c. Rev. John Thompson. 2nd Edition. 1893 - - - -	„
Rucksack Club. First Report. November 1903	Rucksack Club.
Twenty Years on Ben Nevis. Wm. T. Kilgour. 1905. - - - -	Purchased.
The Misty Isle of Skye. J. A. Macculloch. 1905	„
An Account of the Present State of the Hebrides and Western Coasts of Scotland, &c. James Anderson. 1785 - - - -	„
Days at the Coast. Hugh Macdonald. 1857 -	„
Blackwood's Magazine, May 1905, containing "Mountaineering of To-day" - - - -	„

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Symons's Meteorological Magazine, March 1905, containing "The Glacial Snow of Ben Nevis."	
Rev. R. P. Dansey - - - - -	Purchased.
The Voice of the Mountains. Edited by E. A. Baker and F. E. Ross. (1905) - - -	"
Manuel d'Alpinisme rédigé sous les auspices du Club Alpin Français. (1904) - - -	"
The Cruise of the Betsey. Hugh Miller - -	"
True Tales of Mountain Adventure. Mrs A. Le Blond (Mrs Main). 2nd Edition. 1903 -	"
Adventures on the Roof of the World. Mrs A. Le Blond (Mrs Main). 1904 - - -	"

## PHOTOGRAPHS.

The Summit of Ben Nevis - - - -	Rev. A. E. Robertson.
Buchaille Etive - - - - -	"

## FROM ALLT NA CRICHE.

"I TO the hills will lift mine eyes,"  
 Though clouds and darkness o'er them roll,  
 And storm-winds shriek adown the pass,  
 Yet constant will remain my soul.

For see the conquering sun leaps forth  
 With silver-flash in Larig Ghru,  
 And smites Braeriach's mighty flanks  
 And the black rocks of Sgoran Dubh :

While through the purple forest flows  
 The splendour of the new-born day ;  
 Morlich's white sand like diamond glows,  
 And Meall-a-Buchaille's face is gay ;

And far above the Eagle's Rest  
 Great Mona Ruadh cleaves the sky,  
 Red corrie with its snow-clad breast,  
 Bright dashing waterfall on high.

And so I sit in birchen bower,  
 Where heather blooms and burnies sing,  
 And hear, in winter's dullest hour,  
 "Eternal ditties to the spring."

## IN MEMORIAM.

JOSEPH COLLIER, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S.

JOSEPH COLLIER died on 13th October 1905, at the age of fifty. He was elected to the Club in November 1896. Of Scotch descent on the maternal side, he early gained a love of the Scottish hills, but it was not until Easter 1894 that he attempted any serious climbing in the Highlands. He was one of the party of three, led by Dr Collie, that came to the Easter Meet at Inveroran for one night, and then went on to Kingshouse. In a well-known photograph of the Meet at the hotel door, Dr Collier is visible by the corner of the porch, next but one to Professor Ramsay. From Inveroran the party went on to Kingshouse and made the first ascent of the face of Stob Dearg on Buchaille Etive Mor, and in the next few days they made five climbs, including the ascent of the Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis, as mentioned in the *Journal*, Vol. III., p. 158. It has been said that much of the modern form of Scottish climbing dates from the Inveroran Meet, and that these expeditions stimulated members to attempt and to conquer precipices and gullies that had hitherto seemed too difficult. Whether that be so or not, Collier always spoke of the week as one of the finest and most interesting holidays that he ever had.

Collier made several later climbing expeditions to Scotland, but the only other time that he came into contact with the Club was in Easter 1896, when he was one of the Alpine Club party at the Chevalier Hotel, the official Meet being at the Alexandra.

It must always be difficult to write of one of the truest and best friends of your life. I first met Collier in football days before either of us took to mountaineering. Then, after some years, we met again at Wastdale Head, when the now famous climbs in that district were being rapidly discovered. He was the leader in the first complete ascent

of Moss Ghyll, and came down last on its first descent. He led on the first ascent of Collier's climb on Scafell, on the ascent of Piers Ghyll, and on the buttress climb on the north face of the Pillar Rock, and, I believe, on other new climbs. Beyond Great Britain he was especially familiar with the peaks of Tyrol and the Dolomites; he was one of the Caucasus party in 1894, and he had climbed in the Lofoten Isles. It is easy to say that he was one of the boldest and best cragsmen that ever lived. He was more. He inspired you with confidence. You felt that he knew whether he was safe, that if he wanted help he would tell you in time, and that if it were unsafe he would come back. There can be no true comradeship on the cliffs without that feeling of trust.

But after all, mountaineering was only a small part of his life, though in a notice in our *Journal* it must be prominent. He was a brilliant and successful surgeon, and at the time of his death was one of the Honorary Surgeons of the Royal Infirmary at Manchester, and a lecturer in the Medical School of Manchester University. The same quick power of decision, and readiness of hand, connecting action with thought, that we admired on the mountains, helped him immensely in his profession. Whether we think of him in his happy home life, at his work in Manchester, or at play in the mountains he loved so well, we feel that we are better men for having known him. So long as any of the present generation of climbers remain there will be sorrow for the life so unexpectedly cut off, and the memory of "Joe Collier" will be held dear, as that of one of the most cheery companions and truest and most unselfish friends that ever lived.

G. A. SOLLY.

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#### ALFRED WILLIAMS.

The death of Alfred Williams has removed a personality widely known amongst those who take their pleasure in the mountains. It is the privilege of the artist to make friends whom he has never met and to establish ties of sympathy with those he has never known. This is not the place to enter into any discussion of Alfred Williams' merits as an



artist. His work remains, and the collection of paintings now on view at the Alpine Club shows him as a true lover of the mountains, equally attracted by the grandeur of the Himalaya, the beauties of the European Alps, or the subtle fascination of the mountains of Scotland. Any visitor, even though he did not know the scene depicted, would recognise that the drawings were truthful, thorough, and conscientious, and any one of Alfred Williams' many friends would bear witness that, as is the work, so is the man.

C. T. D.

## EXCURSIONS.

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

### , THE S.M.C. ABROAD IN 1905.

Dr, Mrs, and Miss INGLIS CLARK had a most successful holiday in August, for the most part, in the Italian Alpine valleys running up to the main chain. All the expeditions were guideless, save one, the Punto Giordano of Monte Rosa. The weather was changeable, with frequent storms which precluded high ascents. The route followed was from Visp by Saas Fee to Mattmark, climbing to the Zwischbergen Pass, thence over Monte Moro to Macugnaga, where the Faderhorn and Costa Cicusa were ascended. Over the Turlo Pass to Alagna, ascending Punto Giordano, Corno Rosso, and Corno del Camoscio. From Gressoney la Trinité, Fiéry was reached by the Bettaforca Pass. Here the party was strengthened by the arrival of Mr Jas. A. Parker. Owing to heavy snowstorms, climbing plans had to be abandoned, and the party crossed the Col des Cimes Blanches to Breuil, and the Cols de Dza and de Courrière to Prarayé, finally entering Switzerland by the Col de Collon. At Arolla bad weather continued and the Dent de Satarma alone fell to their credit.

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Mr DOUGLAS, with three Yorkshire friends, spent a fortnight during the early part of August in the Alps. The broken weather which then prevailed much interfered with the plans, and more than one expedition had to be abandoned. The Col du Geant was crossed both in going to, and in returning from, Italy. The Col de Lauzon was crossed from Cogne to Degioz, and the Gran Paradiso was ascended. The Geant and the Paradiso expeditions were made without guides.

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Mr J. W. DRUMMOND was climbing at Saas Fee, and ascended the Grand Combin from the Valsorey Cabane.

Messrs S. A. GILLON and J. W. BURNS had some climbing in Norway this summer, principally in the Horunger Mountains, making Turtegro their centre. Mr Burns climbed the Northern and Southern Dyrhoug, keeping to the ridge, and thereafter, having been joined by Mr Gillon, the following ascents were made, viz. :—Store Skagastölstind by Heftye's Chimney, along with Ole Berge as guide : the Skagastölstind Ridge, along with Herr Erik Ullen. This was a splendid climb—the only one under really good weather conditions—and embraced Mellemste, Vesle, and Store Skagastölstind, the V-gap, and the Patchell slab, the party returning by Vigdal's Chimney. Thereafter an unsuccessful attempt was made to climb Midt Maradalsind, along with Ole Berge, the climb having to be abandoned when within forty-five minutes from the summit, owing to very bad weather. A few days later, the weather having slightly improved, the Solei Ridge was traversed. The only other ascents made were the Peaks of Grotten which rise from the Jostefond, by Mr Burns while at Fjaerland, and Slogen by Mr Gillon from Oie, a mere walk, but yielding a superb view. During almost the whole period of the stay at Turtegro, viz., from 31st July to 8th August, the weather was of the most wretched description, making good climbing well-nigh impossible.

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Messrs T. E. GOODEVE and H. WALKER were in the Alps in August, and the following is a list of their expeditions :—

Crossed Col d'Herens and Col de Bertol to Arolla Aiguille de Satarna. Traversed Petites Dents de Veisivi, Aiguilles Rouges, Aiguille de la Za, Les Bouquetins. Recrossed to Zermatt by Col de Bertol and Col d'Herens.

Walker afterwards traversed Trifthorn, Rothhorn.

Weather very broken, never more than three consecutive fine days.

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Messrs W. N. LING, H. RAE BURN, and C. W. WALKER travelled to Dauphiné at the end of July. They made the ascent of the Lautaret Col per steam automobile—a great improvement on the old diligence—and walked by the "Sentier des Crevasses" to the Chalet Hotel de l'Alpe. Starting at four next morning, they crossed over to the new Ecrins hut, the "Ernest Caron," by the fine glacier pass of the Col Emil Pic (11,490 feet), also ascending from the pass the Pic de Niège Cordier (11,857 feet). Leaving the very small but clean hut next morning at 2.10, they ascended the Glacier Blanc by moonlight to the Ecrins, got on to the north-east arête of the mountain, and followed it to the top (13,462 feet), traversing the great tower near the foot of the final ridge, on the icy north face—angle of ice slope below N.E. ridge, 54° by clinometer. The descent

was made over the Pic Lory and down over the great bergschrund. Then by the Col des Ecrins, a steep rock climb, to the Bonne Pierre Glacier, and to La Bérade, finishing by a sporting passage of the bridgeless torrent of the Bonne Pierre. This was a very repaying day, the only drawback, the guideless climber's curse, heavy rucksacks. After ascending to the Promontoire hut for the traverse of the Meije, threatening weather caused the abandonment of this part of the programme, and the party passed by the Brèche de la Meije to La Grave.

Shifting camp to Chamonix, per steam auto, tram, rail, and electric rail, the party then walked up to Montanvert Hotel. Two days' bad weather and C. Walker was obliged to return home.

L. and R. then went up to the Refuge Charlet, the new hut on the Charpoua Rognon. Leaving next morning about 2.30 they climbed the Petit Dru (12,451 feet). The ascent is intricate, and in places difficult, and the party found themselves too late to get down in daylight, so had to spend the night out at 11,000 feet. They gited in a deep crack, and having taken plenty extra clothing—Shetland jerseys, socks, &c.—passed a good night, and starting at 3 next morning easily gained the hut at about 5. Leaving there a few hours later, they walked down over the Mer de Glace and to Montanvert in pouring rain.

The following day they had the pleasure of a call *en passant* to Italy, of the Editor, Messrs W. A. and J. I. Brigg and Eric Greenwood. Next day, Monday, was fine, and L. and R. in company with a lady went up the Petit Charmoz, R. also taking in the Aig. de l'PM., 15 mins. up and down inclusive from Charmoz Col. Tuesday was also fine, two parties returned from Grépon defeated by ice. Wednesday L. and R. went for the Charmoz. L., who had done it before and did not feel quite well, waited at the top of the Grépon Couloir while R. traversed the five pinnacles, including the weird "Baton Wicks." The return was made pretty quickly below the ever-threatening but seldom-falling seracs of the Nantillons Glacier to Montanvert, a little late for afternoon tea. Next day they had regretfully to miss the Grépon and return home.

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Messrs MACLAY, NAISMITH, SOLLY, AND THOMSON spent about a fortnight at the Göschener Alp in July, and from that quiet and delightful valley made the following guideless climbs:—Winterstock, by Winterlücke and N.E. arête; Dammastock by Damma Pass; crossed to Stein by the Thierberglimmi and Gwächtenhorn; returned over the Sustenhorn and Sustenlimmi; Moostock (twice traversed); the highest point of the Feldschyn group, by N. arête; the Alpligenlücke. Mr Naismith afterwards went to Grindelwald and climbed the Eiger guideless, and the Schreckhorn with Mr Rorie and guides.

Mr NELSON and Mr GROVE spent some days in August at Arolla and a few at Zermatt. The weather at both places was bad. At Arolla the Rousette was climbed by the N.E. face; the Pigno d'Arolla and the Aiguille de la Za were also ascended. At Zermatt the Riffelhorn was about the biggest thing that could be prudently accomplished while they were there.

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Mr C. W. NETTLETON spent the inside of a month in the Bernese Oberland and the Pennines in July and August, and despite the prevailing uncertain weather, apparently made the most of his opportunities. After a day or two spent in pleasant walks around Kandersteg, the Lötschen Pass was crossed to Ried whence the Bietschhorn was traversed to the Rhone Valley. At Zermatt the Rimpfischhorn, Wellenkuppe (in very bad weather instead of the Gabelhorn), Riffelhorn from the glacier, Lyskamm, Signal Kuppe, Parrotspitze, Ludwigshöhe, Schwarzhorn, Vincent Pyramide, and Balmenhorn (these last six peaks of Monte Rosa being traversed in a day) were climbed, and the Lysjoch crossed. For the third time, Mr Nettleton was defeated by weather on the N. to S. traverse of the Matterhorn. Then the Col d'Herens was crossed to the Bertol Hut, two fellow-members of the S.M.C. being encountered *en route*. It is amusing to relate that owing to snow goggles and tanned faces each party failed to recognise the other. From the Bertol Hut the Dent Blanche was successfully attacked, and with descent to Arolla proved a long, and owing to bad conditions, a not easy day. From Arolla, the Cols de Seilon and de Giétroz were crossed to Fionnay, where after three wet days a good finish was made with the ascent of the Grand Combin. Mrs Nettleton joined in some of the shorter of the above expeditions.

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Mr J. A. PARKER experienced very unsettled weather in Switzerland in the latter half of August, and only succeeded in accomplishing a very delightful walk from Visp to Sion *via* Fiéry, Valtournanche, and Arolla, the following passes being crossed:—Theodule, Col des Cimes Blanches (twice), Col de Valcournera, and Col de Collon. The portion from Fiéry to Arolla was done in company with Dr Clark's party. The accommodation at Prarayé was found to be much better than had been anticipated, and a fairly large hotel was being built there which is to be ready for next summer, and which should make this beautiful spot a pleasant resort to go to when one gets tired of the crowded hotels at Arolla.

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Mr RORIE spent a portion of July and August in Switzerland. He climbed the Schreckhorn with Mr Naismith, and then had a pleasant walking tour from Grindelwald to Meiringen by Great

Scheidegg, then to Ulrichen by Grimsel. The Gries Pass to Tosa Falls and Baceno, then up to Macugnaga, over Monte Moro, Saas, Stalden, Leuk, Gemmi to Kandersteg, Kienthal by Hohthürli Hut (Blumlisalp)—in all about 200 miles.

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Mr A. W. RUSSELL had some good climbs and walks in Norway, among the former were Store Skagastölstind (with Messrs Proctor, Main, and Priestman) and Store Dyrhaugstind (with Mrs Russell and Professor Proctor).

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Mr UNNA had a three weeks' holiday in the Alps this summer, and accomplished the following climbs:—Laquinhorn and Fletschhorn; Weissmies; Sudlenspitze and Nadelhorn; Egginergrat; Portiengrat; Riffelhorn by couloir facing the Matterhorn.

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Mr J. H. WIGNER was very unfortunate with the weather in three weeks' climbing in August. The only successful ascents of any note were:—Petit Vêlan and Grand Vêlan (traversed), Col and Pointe de la Galise, Tsanteleina, Grande Aiguille Rousse, and Col de la Vache, Col du Charforon, Grand Paradis, and Tresenta (traverse).

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COBBLER, NORTH PEAK.—In the *Journal* for January 1897, page 248, there is a note by the present writer on a visit to the Cobbler, 31st October 1896. On that occasion we, W. Tough and H. Raeburn, were stopped about half way up in the attempt to make a new route up the North Peak from the corrie. On 30th October 1904, a large and merry party, including two ladies, had the pleasure of completing the climb. Traversing round the foot of the cliffs west from Maclay's Crack, a large, partly grassy couloir is arrived at almost in a line below the easternmost "Beak." The top of this couloir appears to be a *cul-de-sac*, and at all events has not yet "gone," but a good though narrow grass ledge leads out on the left wall. This was the highest point reached in 1896. The party in 1904 traversed out on the left wall a short distance up the couloir—it might be feasible to ascend by this grass and rock buttress from the foot—and after a short scramble reached the grass ledge mentioned above. This leads into a steep and difficult crack or chimney, at the top of which the route meets the finish of Maclay's Crack, whence an easy scramble leads to the summit of the peak. The route forms one of the longest and best climbs on the Cobbler. While on the subject, it may be worth while to draw attention to a climb not far off, that on the Central Buttress.

It is the Maclay-Workman route, which joins the Raeburn-Rennie chimney just below the beginning of the interesting part. The climb starts from the screes about halfway down from the North Peak-Central Buttress col, by a step up to, and balance traverse along, a narrow grass ledge, and is full of interest to the summit.

Reference to this route will be found in the *Journal*, September 1898, page 141, and May 1904, page 182, diagram and photo.

H. R.

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#### CLIMBING NAILS.

Messrs RENDALL & SON, Bootmakers, 7 Buccleuch Street, Edinburgh, now hold a stock of these nails.

## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

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THE MISTY ISLE OF SKYE: ITS SCENERY, ITS PEOPLE, ITS STORY. By J. A. MACCULLOCH. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier. Price 4s. net.

To Members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, Skye must always be, in the words of the late Sheriff Nicolson, "dearest of islands." Innumerable articles in the *Journal* testify to the unique position held by that island in the estimation of climbers, who should heartily welcome and immediately possess themselves of this book, felicitous alike in its title, its descriptions, its appreciations, its criticisms, and its illustrations, even although it is in no sense a climber's manual.

The true Alpine climber is also a lover of mountains and hills in every shape and under every aspect, and he will find a kindred if less venturesome spirit in the writer of this book, who has long dwelt, year in, year out, amid the scenes he so happily describes.

We have waited long for such a volume. When we saw it advertised we were fearful of disappointment. It came; we saw, read, and were conquered. It is plainly the work of an ultra-Salvationist, but it may humble the pride of the stoutest Ultramontane, when he realises how much, notwithstanding the heights he has scaled, he has failed to see. It will encourage the hill-walker, too often deterred from visiting Skye from the mistaken idea that, the Coolins being for him "tabu" (to quote a favourite word of our author in his other and more erudite works), there is nothing attractive for the sole of his foot, whereas the rounded Red Hills, the lava terraces of Trotternish, the broad moorlands, and the undulating uplands of the west, all affording wide and delightful views, will more than compensate him for his inability to surmount the "Inaccessible."

Over the winter fire, as we read, the mists of Loch Coruisk, free from their wonted dampness, seem to envelop us, the winds of Scurran-Gillean, without their "tang" and bitterness, are once more in our faces, and the strange charm, fascination, and glamour of Skye, which must have been (as he gladly admits) upon this new Macculloch as he wrote, are again felt, although we are habited, not in wettermantel and hobnailers, but in smoking-jacket and slippers. If no longer "hitched" in suspense on the "Gap" of Alasdair or on the Third Pinnacle, we yet in fancy feel lifted up above the turmoil of the city, encircled as it



were with a fairy web woven by sympathetic insight and imagination, and, all gaps being filled up, as by magic threads once more attached to the well-known haunts or drawn to new and unsuspected sources of beauty by land and sea.

Nor is it the scenery alone which is anew spread out in fresh and glowing colours before us ; every aspect of present life in Skye and every leading incident in the past of the island are likewise treated of in these pages, and if at times with somewhat undue brevity it is the brevity of deliberation and condensation, not of lack of knowledge or of thought. The geologist, interested in the records of the rocks—and where can better examples of igneous rocks in all their forms be found?—the antiquarian, interested in the works of olden days, the student of Celtic poetry and folk-lore, the enthusiastic Jacobite and the more prosaic reformer will all find their favourite and varied subjects of study considered. The chapter dealing with the crofting system is specially noteworthy on account of the accuracy of its explanations and the aptness of its criticisms. It is difficult to depict Skye well on a small map. The one given is only fairly satisfactory, but it is high praise to the book to say that this is its weakest feature.

S. M. P.

## Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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### OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 1906.

<i>Hon. President</i>	-	THE MARQUIS OF BREADALBANE.
<i>President</i>	- - -	J. RENNIE.
<i>Vice-Presidents</i>	-	{ JAMES W. DRUMMOND. W. W. NAISMITH.
<i>Hon. Secretary</i>	-	W. INGLIS CLARK, 29 Lauder Road, Edinburgh.
<i>Hon. Librarian</i>	-	F. S. GOGGS, 25 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh.
<i>Hon. Treasurer</i>	-	R. G. NAPIER, 107 St Vincent Street, Glasgow.
<i>Hon. Editor</i>	- -	W. DOUGLAS, 9 Castle Street, Edinburgh.
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<i>Slides</i>	- - - {	Edinburgh.

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*April 1893.*

CORRAG BHUIDHE OF AN TEALLACH—FROM SUMMIT RIDGE LOOKING SOUTH.

*W. Douglas.*

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## RIDGE-WALKING ON THE COOLINS AT EASTER, 1905.

BY HAROLD RAE BURN.

IT cannot be denied that the southern peaks of the Coolins are among the least accessible of Scottish hills. Indeed, a London climber may complain that it is easier and quicker for him to ascend Mont Blanc and return to a comfortable sleeping-place than to traverse Gars-bheinn and Eag, and return to Sligachan before midnight. Of course the writer does not mean to suggest—he lays the blame of that on the London climber—any real rivalry between Mont Blanc by the ordinary route and the ice-clad Coolin arêtes in April. There is no doubt, however, that the inaccessibility of the Coolins is a disadvantage in some ways if an advantage in others, and quite accounts for the western and southern peaks having been so seldom visited. Ten miles of very rough going must be walked each way by the mountaineer who wishes to attack the southern climbs from Sligachan.

Unless one can “in the prime of the summer time” sail into Loch Scavaig in a yacht as did an S.M.C. party in 1896; carry or cause to be conveyed a tent to the shores of Loch Coruisk, as was tried not with much success by Gibson’s party in 1892, or establish a group of wigwams for a month at the head of Loch Coruisk, as was done by Messrs Brown, Douglas, and Rennie in 1897 (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. V., p. 1)—unless one or other of these plans is adopted, the English or Scottish climber visiting Skye will usually find that he

leaves the island with his knowledge of Gars-bheinn, Eag, and the Dubhs, as great a blank as when he arrived.

To the summer climber sweltering in the vaporious heats of August, these remoter summits are indeed a weary way off. At Easter 1905, however, as at Easter two years previously, thanks to the organising genius of the Secretary, Dr Inglis Clark, and thanks to the kindness of the proprietors and tenants concerned, arrangements were made that S.M.C. members and their friends could put up at Camasunary and Glenbrittle as well as at Sligachan.

With this comfortable and handy triangle of bases to work from, it was thus possible to lay out a "high level route," which would in three days carry the Coolin *gratwanderer* 'over the majority of the Coolin peaks. I believe that such a plan of campaign was formed by at least one member of our Easter Meet of 1903. Alas for plans of mice, men, and mountaineers, one element—if you can speak in the singular of the elements—that of the weather, was omitted from these calculations, and not even the organising genius of our genial Secretary could reduce this to smoothness. In 1903 the furious blizzards of snow, hail, and wind rendered it impossible on most days to stay long on an exposed ridge. In the corries even were we obliged to hold on to the rocks occasionally to prevent being blown away. The writer has a vivid recollection of being spread-eagled and clinging with every available portion of his anatomy to the ice-covered "easy" ridge of the "Inaccessible"—truly so to-day—while the level hail drove fiercely past, expecting every moment to see his legs raised in the air, his hobnailers crack together once or twice like the tails of a pennon, and then, converted along with his three companions, like the crew of the "Hesperus," into icicles, hurled away into Coruisk on the wings of the Arctic blast. Needless to say we did not get up, and were glad to find ourselves a little later cutting steps up the icy slope under the "Inaccessible's" lee. In 1903 we had snow down to sea-level every night till the last day of the Meet. The morning after it closed was a glorious one, and revealed the jagged peaks and ridges of the "Rocky Mountains of Skye," glittering in all their beautiful drapery of ice and snow, in

the bright sunshine of a perfect day. Easter in 1905 fell nearly a month later than in 1903, and we hoped for a corresponding improvement in weather conditions. The days were of course much longer and the temperature not so low, but the wind blew with almost its old violence, and except on the first day of the Meet the snow and ice conditions were even more severe. The Coolins in fact were extra-Alpine; that is, the climbing resembled that of the rock peaks of the Alps in bad condition. In 1903 the writer formed one of a party which had from Sligachan crossed the Drumhain ridge to Coruisk and then traversed the three Dubh peaks and Tearlach, Alasdair, and Sgumain to Glenbrittle. This year I was anxious to complete my knowledge of this part of the range by passing along the Gars-bheinn-Eag arête. My friend, Herr Erik Ullén of Upsala, who is a great authority on the Hörunger group in Norway, fine gabbro peaks much like the Coolins though two and a half times as high, was anxious to compare his Norwegian experience with Scottish climbing, and agreed to accompany me in a three days' trip round the range.

On Friday, 21st April, we had a first-class new climb, in the company of Messrs Slingsby and Solly, up the Harta Corrie face of the Castles, and that night found ourselves along with several other members sitting down to an excellent dinner in the pretty and snug shooting lodge of Camasunary so generously placed at the disposal of the Club by Mr Thomson of Eigg.

The morning opened with squalls of hail, brilliant periods intervening, as Ullén and I, with J. A. Parker and C. Clark, who were to make the Banachdich Pass to Glenbrittle, left at 8.30 the little oasis of Camasunary, with its few grass fields and sandy beach looking out to the wide waters of the Atlantic. The lodge stands close to the margin of the Abhuinn Camas Fhionnairidh, which issues from Loch na Creitheach and falls into the sea just in front of the house, and we had to walk about half a mile inland before finding a place where, as the water was low, we got over dryshod. We then followed the faint track which winds round the foot of Sgurr na Stri to the "Bad Step." The view here was strikingly beautiful, grand, and

wild, yet warm and sunny, and with enough life to relieve the feeling of utter desolation. We were at a sufficient height above the calm transparent waters of Loch Scavaig to look down into its depths and see the long fronds of the tangles fringing the rocky shores slowly waving in the current, to see the colour of the water change from dark-green to yellow above the shoals of brilliant sand. Flocks of common gulls with their sharp double note, "klee-ah, klee-ah," drifted about in the air between Scavaig and Coruisk, their snow-white bodies taking an almost rosy tint as the sunlight struck through their semi-transparent wings. Out among the little rocky islets several parties of eiders were playing; their low guttural call "oo-oo, oo-oo, oo," intensified by the towering rock walls above, the drakes resplendent in the full glory of their nuptial plumage. All was peace, warmth, and sunshine at this, the entrance to the Coruisk chasm, but looking up to the head in the direction of Ghreadaidh and Mhadaidh nothing could be seen of these peaks. Great masses of black and threatening vapours boiled furiously over the precipices, and presently from the tail of one cloud came rushing down on us a heavy shower of hail and rain; a few minutes' shelter behind a boulder and all was again bright. The "Bad Step" was passed easily enough, but in the dusk and with a rainful gale blowing this is not at all an inviting spot, and the rope is called for, at least should be, by prudent mountaineers. At 10, at the foot of Loch Coruisk, our party divided as arranged, and we bid each other *au revoir* at Glenbrittle, Parker and Clark walking up the east shore of Coruisk, while Ullén and I made for the foot of the Chruidh Corrie of Gars-bheinn, along the shore of Loch Scavaig. There is another and smaller "bad step" to pass here, a place something like "Les Ponts" above the Mer de Glace, without the iron rails. Shortly after passing the foot of the "Mad Stream" we turned up hill in the direction of the south ridge of Gars-bheinn.

At about 2,000 feet we reached the snow, soft at first, but hardening and steepening higher up. Quite a cannonade of stones came rushing down here whenever the sun emerged from the passing clouds, and to avoid these we

kept close under the cliffs of the ridge on our right. This ridge (no name) runs about north-east from the first top of Gars-bheinn. There are some good chimneys in it, and a very attractive pinnacle tempted us greatly, but the manner in which the hail now tore past over our heads made us consider it discreet to keep on the lee of the rocks as long as possible. After a short scramble up some iced gullies we gained the south arête, and a few minutes more up a nicely broken-up rock ridge placed us on our first summit at 1 (2,934 feet). Just below the top lay an eagle's feather quite recently dropped, and some fragments of prey on the highest stones.

We crouched for a while in shelter and consumed our mid-day meal. Rare visions of beauty rewarded our toil up the 3,000 feet from Scavaig. The showers here were thin and scattering, and we had fine views to the south and west to the islands of Rum, Eigg, and Canna, and to the mainland about Loch Houran across a sea flecked here and there by flying squalls.

From the depths of the Coruisk cleft came floating up a faint coo-ee which I endeavoured to answer with the "maniac yell," the final part of the Tyrolese guides' jödel, and the only part of that complicated noise I could ever learn. It was, of course, unheard below, but we afterwards learned that the coo-er was Ling, who, forbidden by doctor's orders from climbing, had taken a solitary walk over from Sligachan to view the famous cauldron of Coruisk.

Ullén and I now took in double reefs, battened down and made all snug, and prepared to fight our way to windward along the ridge, but how it was I do not know, whether broken by the great mass of the Dubhs, or deflected by curves of the main chain, the wind proved comparatively unfelt, and we progressed along the ridge at a rapid pace.

The two tops of Gars-bheinn were quickly passed, then came a considerable dip to 2,750, and a rise to Sgurr a' Choire Bhig (2,870 feet), another dip to 2,550, and we again mounted to Eag (1,552). This mountain has a double top, 3,036 feet and 3,020 feet, with a slight dip between.



The arête is narrow in places, but no serious climbing is encountered. The descent to the col between the north peak of Eag and Dubh an Dabheinn is, however, steep, and affords a little scrambling. We got here some neat standing glissades in very steep gullies. Passing the rock called Caisteal a Gharbh Choire on the right, we next climbed up the 530 feet to the top of Dubh an Dabheinn (3,069 feet), a steep scramble over huge boulders and small cliffs plentifully sprinkled with fresh snow. Here we rested a few minutes (2.53-3), our visible world now confined to our top and the spectral white-sheeted crags of Dubh Mor (3,089 feet), a short distance away to the east.

After finishing our afternoon meal of bread and jam, washed down with new snow, we left at 3 for Tearlach. By this the mist, hitherto intermittent, had become permanent, and the descent along the easy and broad ridge appeared quite considerable (actual 260 feet) before the rocks began again to rise and narrow in front. Presently we came to the awkward corner or tower leading up to the Tearlach Dubh "Gap," and here the look of its snow-plastered face plunging steeply down into nothingness caused me to call for the rope hitherto worn as a *negligé* scarf by Ullén. A little care and patience in scraping the ice and snow off its small ledges and somewhat unreliable holds—it is composed of trap of a loose nature in disagreeable contrast to the usual Coolin rock—and we were soon at the summit, and now gazed down into the "Gap," the one difficulty on this part of the ridge. It did not look an inviting spot under present conditions. It was now snowing very heavily, soft, sticky, large flakes that drove levelly through the cleft and quickly plastered even vertical rocks with white. It stuck also on our faces, filled up our eyes and ears, and drifted into our mouths whenever we ventured to open them. It was especially annoying to Herr Ullén, who is unfortunately obliged to wear glasses when climbing. Under the circumstances, unless I had done it before in weather little better, it would have been more prudent to have made the long detour by the "band" leading across Coire Ghrunnda to the Sgumain Ridge. However, that would not be playing the game. We held the trumps and

knew how to bridge the "Gap." The short descent on the Dubh side was easily done with the aid of a hitched rope, and we dropped on to the sharp snow arête of the col.

As very usual, however, the rope stuck, and I had to swing up again and release it. This wall is, I think, as nearly as possible vertical, if anything it is overhanging. The Tearlach side, though much higher, is not nearly so steep. The best way to climb it, the only possible way under such conditions as we had, is to take to a narrow chimney or crack slightly overhanging the gulf on the Coruisk side. This goes better without a sack. Good holds are to be found near the top of this, and one hand can be used to clear the ice and snow off the little projecting nose at the top of this vertical portion. This nose has just room for both feet when up that height, higher a semi-loose stone wedged in a crack gives assistance, and good standing ground is reached under a little overhang or cave. When the second man comes up the leader can then move on, and I have found it better in bad weather—I have never seen the place in good—to traverse out to the left as soon as possible, on to the sharp promontory running down from the Tearlach ridge.

In 1903 our party of four took one hour to clear the "Gap." This time two did it in thirty minutes (3.35-4.5); arguing from this ten minutes would be ample for a solitary climber, for the delay incidental to the use of the rope could then be eliminated.

As all climbers are agreed in condemning solitary climbing, this shows that for all climbs not involving a large amount of glacier work two is the ideal party. Three is allowable when all are good climbers, but four or more means defeat in many cases where time and difficulty are involved. The passage of the "Gap" was effected in gloves. I have noticed that many of the cases of frostbite in the Alps are due to the neglect or inability to wear gloves when climbing difficult rocks in bad weather.

A few minutes' steep scrambling above the "Gap" placed us on the summit of Tearlach (3,230 feet) at 4.20. At the head of the great stone shoot stretched between Tearlach and Alasdair a sharp snow arête considerably

reduced the descent necessary. Dropping down the Tearlach wall to its edge, we kicked steps along, and then went up Alasdair (3,309 feet) at 4.40. The snow ceased, though it was still dense mist, and we took off and coiled the sodden and half-frozen rope, but a short way down the descent to the Sgumain col resumed it again. However easy this place is in summer, it was not quite so now. Everything was covered with a thick coat of new snow which sometimes concealed plates of ice, the rocks are rotten and the ground steep. The overhanging part was passed in a few minutes, and shortly afterwards (5.15-5.20 P.M.) we found ourselves on our last—eighth—top, Sgumain (3,104 feet). We descended this under the arête to the first wide couloir which runs down to the foot of Coire Labain.

Here we had some short standing glissades through a wild *tourmente* of snow rushing up it. As the snow thinned beneath our feet, so thinned the mist and snow above, and presently we got below the clouds, and for the first time for several hours could see some of the surrounding country, the grey-blue indentation of Loch Brittle with its flat sandy beach, fields, and the trees round the welcome oasis of Glenbrittle Lodge.

For this we made a bee-line, and thirty-six minutes (6.14-6.50) after leaving the chaotic boulders of our couloir, we were greeting clubmates—among them Munro and Charlie Clark, who were to complete our party for next day—at the door of Glenbrittle House.

An early start had been arranged for the morrow, but fierce squalls of hail and rain kept us indoors for a time.

The writer has a standing engagement with Munro to personally conduct him over the "Inaccessible." This contract dates back to the unique and ever memorable sea Meet of 1897, when the S.M.C. made their attempted attack upon the Coolins by water. Bell, Munro, and I had put ourselves down for a traverse together of part of the Southern Coolins, to include the "Inaccessible." This, of course, never came off, for we never landed in Skye. Two years ago Munro, Campbell, and I had ascended Dearg

from Glenbrittle, but the "Inaccessible" was in such a condition, thickly coated with ice and a whole gale blowing, that we never even attempted the ascent. The present conditions were, if possible, worse, and Munro and I after discussion agreed that this ascent should be again projected into the future. We then settled that we should climb Banachdich, and take as much of the ridge as convenient on our way home to Sligachan.

In a temporary lull we at last got off, and with the wind at our backs ascended up into the Banachdich Corrie. Here the fascinating appearance of the steep gully leading straight up in the direction of the Banachdich col induced us to resolve to try the ascent, especially as we understood this gully had never been climbed, the col pass slanting away high above on the south in the direction of the Dearg ridge. Our attack failed, but nevertheless we had an hour's interesting climbing. At first up a steepening and hardening snow slope at the foot of the couloir. Then a formidable "Bergschrund"—a pitch here in summer—led across to a snowy icy wall. Above this more steep snow, then the direct route appeared impossible, but to our left a narrow chimney with rather loose holds and overhanging chock-stone allowed of our overcoming the pitch. The third pitch—there were apparently four—appeared the most formidable. We could ascend on a steeply sloping and undercut tongue of snow about halfway up, and it seemed just possible to effect a lodgment from a shoulder on the ice-covered wall on our right. The direct route looked also promising, cutting down into the "Schrund" and ascending the gully bed, but such a quantity of icy water was descending that no one's enthusiasm seemed warm enough for it, and we beat a retreat. This gully ought to be possible in summer, but the pitches would then be higher. Dry weather would be almost necessary.

Traversing a little to the south we ascended by a steepish scramble to the Banachdich ridge.

In the event we found that the traverse of the Banachdich and Ghreadaidh ridges filled our cup of content to the full. In places the ridge is very narrow, and in its icy and snowy condition was in many places almost as sensa-

tional and decidedly more difficult than the east ridge of the Weissshorn as usually climbed.

Several of the little cols had newly formed cornices projecting a good many feet over the Coruisk precipices. At others, arêtes of hard snow were met with, where we had to pass across with elegantly turned-out feet. The quantity also of ice met with was greatly in excess of that on the southern peaks climbed yesterday, possibly due to the thaw of that evening. To-day was dry and frosty, and if the wind howled and bit with its accustomed violence, we were in many places able to dodge along in shelter.

Passing over Ghreadaidh we had a fine view at close quarters of a golden eagle which sailed out of a deep recess in the Coruisk or sheltered side of the peak. The scenic views were fitful and partial, and the camera was, I think, only once taken out, a wide opening in the clouds giving us a splendid vision of the snow-clad peaks and ridges to the south as far as Dubh. Too soon this vanished, and again we were enveloped in the driving blizzards of hail and snow.

Passing the extraordinary straight-walled cleft called An Dorus (2,890 feet), we reached the col below the south peak of Mhadaidh. The Coruisk side was overhung by a huge cornice, and whatever it may be in summer, was impassable to-day, but the Coire Ghreadaidh side showed only a steep hard snow slope vanishing in the mist. At first, standing glissades, then a run, took us soon out of the mist and into the corrie. Here ropes were coiled, the afternoon meal consumed, and we made tracks for home, *via* the top of the Bealach a' Mhaim.

The writer's last day of the Meet was of a tamer nature. A company of five, Messrs W. and J. J. Brigg, W. Douglas, Eric Greenwood, J. Rennie, and I, camera and otherwise laden, strolled leisurely into the mist of Fionn Coire and up to the ridge below Sgurr a' Fionn Coire, a few steps nicked in hard snow near the top. We dropped into shelter on the south side and ate our frugal (how about those Yorkshire pies?) lunch in comparatively peace. The ghostly and ghastly vision—ghastly precipices is a favourite

Alpine expression—of the fearsome-looking pinnacle of the Bhasteir, with its uplifted and overhanging rock blade, threatened us the while across the mist-filled, fathomless gulf of the Bealach a' Basteir.

Like the lady of the Frenchman's apostrophe, it was "pure ice from top to bottom," great plates of fog crystals covering every available hold. Many a less impressive peak have I seen on the ridges of the high Alps. We crossed the ridge leading to Sgurr a' Bhasteir, and on a slope of hard snow walked across to the Bhasteir Cave. Here we were in peace and quiet, and could admire the beautiful curves and mounds formed by the snow drifted in, but thin black ice on one wall, faced by snow and fog crystals on the other, forbade all ascent.

Rapid, if bumpy and hard, standing glissades then carried us down to the little frozen tarn in the Bhasteir Corrie. Here a temporary clearing showed us the sharp outline of the Pinnacle Ridge looming not far above us. A timid suggestion of the writer's that we might take a run over it to warm ourselves, was utterly ignored, and we faced instead the much worse ordeal of Rennie's camera. Then we rattled down the rough ridge bounding the gorge on the right. A photo or two was taken of the gorge, and the party split up and took their own ways across the boggy moor to Sligachan, Greenwood and I holding well to the right to watch the beautiful evolutions of a pair of buzzards above the rocks of the Nid an Iolair.

The only successful climb of this day was the ascent of Sgurr nan Gilleann by the tourist route, by Munro and Macintyre, from which they returned late, having had a good and not too easy climb.

Such to me and to most was the experience of Easter climbing in the Coolins in 1905. Those members who stayed later have far other stories to tell; of balmy breezes and perfect conditions, where they were wooed almost to sleep by lightest zephyrs and warm sun, and where the whole of the Coolins were revealed at once in bright sunlight in all their dazzling beauty of new-fallen snow. Though we battlers on the blizzard-swept ridges had

merely the smallest glimpses of these bright possibilities, yet I for one, and I am sure every one of my companions will agree with me, look back upon our days with no regret, and hold them precious in our memories as beautiful days on the hills though they were something more than only that.

## THE TRAIN IN MOUNTAINEERING.

BY GILBERT THOMSON.

MOUNTAINEERING has always had its critics. One finds fault with the exertion, another with the risk, while another considers it "not nearly energetic enough—he would rather see a good football match." But no part comes in for more criticism from outsiders than does winter climbing, while there is no feature to which the Club has more firmly pinned its faith. The pioneers of Scottish mountaineering were much influenced by their Alpine friends, and it has always been the fashion to measure Scottish climbing by Alpine standards. Our Alpine enthusiasm indeed sometimes carries us beyond the ordinary canons of Alpine climbing, and leads us to attempt winter climbing of our finest rock peaks. Our Club qualifications insist strongly on snow; our authorities on snowcraft teach us to profit by it; and incidentally we have interesting discussions about their orthodoxy. To be quite candid, we all occasionally feel somewhat heterodox about the pleasures of snow, however much we may conceal the feeling.

On a Saturday morning in February last our party was a strictly orthodox one, and it was accordingly with feelings of delight that we stepped from the early train at Crianlarich into a white landscape. A vigorous breeze was blowing from the west, and heavy banks of cloud led us to indulge the dutiful hope that before the day was done we might have more snow. The expedition was promoted by an Edinburgh member, who holds that a day each month may reasonably be devoted to climbing, and who occasionally lures some Western friends to go with him. They joined him with greater readiness before they discovered that he was only an Edinburgh man by adoption, and had not qualified in all the judicious ways of the capital as regards easy locomotion. But they still join him—occasionally.

Some recent articles in the *Journal* had impressed on us the advantages of the motor in mountaineering, and it was unfortunate that, owing to the great press of business in the



motor works (and other reasons), not one of our party had got delivery of his motor in time for this expedition. We therefore fell back on the train (and week-end tickets), although there was an inconvenient want of "flexibility" in its movements. Accordingly, on the 17th of February, three Glasgow members mustered at Queen Street Station, waiting the arrival of the Edinburgh contingent, and of the other Glasgow man. By 5.50, when the train started, only half of their expectations had been fulfilled; something being rumoured, a few days later, about the misdeeds of a certain alarm clock. Those who had got up in time travelled to Crianlarich, stepped out as has been said into a white world, and hurried down for the breakfast which had been ordered in advance. But as the postman brought in the order when the belated breakfast was nearly finished, the arrangement (to quote an author well known to Club members) did not work smoothly, and the failure was visited on the head of the writer, who was told that he should have written sooner.

The original scheme, evolved by Goggs, had been to start the night before, get to Killin in the small hours, and traverse the length and breadth of the Lawers group. He was gradually coaxed down, *via* Ben More and Stobinian, to beginning with An Caisteal and Beinn a Chroin, with a promise, as a sort of solatium, that Cruach Ardran might perhaps be included.

We walked up from Crianlarich for about a mile and a half, over a moderate depth of slightly trodden snow, to the summit of the Glen Falloch road. Here we left the road, crossed the railway and the Falloch, and made our way up the long northern ridge of An Caisteal. The moor and the ridge were thickly coated with snow, and Grove was unanimously selected as the most effective trackmaker. As the elevation increased, he was cheered by finding that the snow had sometimes a crust very nearly sufficient to support him, and his enthusiasm was further warmed by the delight of his companions at each black bog and rippling stream which he discovered. After a while he rebelled, and a less efficient man had to take his place. On the higher ridge the promised addition to the snow

began to fall (if swift horizontal motion can be called falling), and we sought shelter behind some convenient rocks. Breakfast No. 2 was accounted for, and the summit of Sròn Gharbh left behind, before the addition was complete. Even then the clouds hung heavily round us, and we had only short glimpses of the distant view.

The broken ridge, with an easy rise, led us to the top of An Caisteal, and gave us a good view of Beinn a Chroin. The name naturally suggested our old friend Stuc-a-Chroin, and the winter ascent which was immortalised in an early number of the *Journal*. It would be too much to say that the Beinn is quite as good as the Stuc, although it presented to us a good rock face, liberally sprinkled with snow. It even seemed possible that on it might be found "breech-splitting strides and stomach-scrubbing heaves." Before we reached it we had a pleasant rocky descent, whose hardness was tempered by great wreaths of snow. The final part looked a little doubtful, but Nelson pioneered us down it gallantly, and we reached and crossed the col without adventure.

Once across, a difference of opinion arose as to the respective merits of two diagonal terraces or "rakes," but the embryo dispute was stopped when Goggs discovered a chimney which looked much more interesting than either. A short steep rock gully, followed by one of the above-mentioned strides; a stony slope apparently hard frozen; and a steep pitch of snow, led to what was evidently a regular pulpit, topped by a fringe of precipitous rock. If the lower part would go, the pulpit promised a safe starting-place for the attack on the upper rocks. The gully, the stride, and the stony slope all went with a little coaxing, the snow proved to be Scottish snow at its best, and in due course the leader was ready to "wag his pow in the poopit." But that congregation evidently never had a fire in the pulpit. The floor was of beautiful ice at a less beautiful angle; and on the second man coming up for consultation, it was agreed that while it would be most interesting to continue the climb, it would certainly mean a week-end at Crianlarich—to say nothing of the omission of Cruach Ardran. The temperature too was more Arctic

than Alpine, and the wind was far from balmy. A descent, a renewed discussion about the terraces (promptly decided in favour of the nearer one), and a somewhat careful but easy climb, brought us to the western summit of Beinn a Chroin. But the eastern end is somewhat higher, and in a mist which was now fairly dense we pushed rapidly on, gained the highest point, and began the descent—not towards Cruach Ardran. So dense indeed was the mist that on the way down an uneasy feeling arose that there might be a summit higher than the one we had reached, till a friendly break in the mist relieved our minds.

Beinn a Chroin stands right at the head of Glen Falloch, the upper part of which is at right angles to the main glen ; and the two main feeders of the Falloch start at the east and west ends of the mountain, joining at the base of its north ridge. The stream thus formed runs north-westward for about two and a half miles, and then, just where we had crossed it in the morning, it turns sharply southward to Loch Lomond. From the summit then, we had to descend the north ridge, cross one of the streams, and then make our way down the valley. Much of the ridge had been blown bare, and was fairly good going. The remainder was covered with snow, which (as we are told is suitable for the downward journey) was "fairly soft." We essayed a sitting glissade, holding our axes as recommended by the authorities, but we might as well have taken seats in Mark Twain's "glacier express." Deeper and deeper, and (if possible) softer and softer became the snow, and before we reached the stream we would have parted with our interest in "Scottish snow" at a low price. "Millions of snow for a few minutes of time" would express some of our ideas. We were too hurried to enjoy the crossing of a gully by a real, and very tender, snow bridge, or even to laugh at our neighbour's very hazardous and not very dignified progress. The most enjoyable time was that immediately after reaching each specially soft part of the snow-field, where one tumbled full length and enjoyed a few seconds' rest. On the way down the party became somewhat scattered, and ultimately settled down in military order as an advance guard (which committed the fault of losing touch), a main

body, and a rear guard. The main body plodded on in the track left by the advance guard, while the rear guard collected and voiced the opinions of the party on the subject of snow. Gradually these opinions became less and less audible, without losing much in luminosity. The main body reached the railway line, half-a-mile from the station, three minutes before the train was due, and prepared for a rush. But it had reckoned without the snow, which lay thick and slippery, making speed impossible. Even when the last curve was rounded, and it was seen that the advance guard had held up the train, the resulting trot was a sorry production. Just as the train moved we tumbled into the nearest compartment. The unfortunate rear guard was not in sight, but when it did appear a moment later, the train benevolently stopped and took it on board. Much Scottish snow had faithfully clung to us, till in response to the genial temperature of the West Highland carriage, it bade us farewell and spread as a miniature flood over the floor.

After all, was the experience so very unpleasant? At the time we had no doubt, and our only surprise at the anathemas had reference to their mildness. But that was a few months ago, the discomforts have sunk into oblivion, and their recollection only gives zest to our interesting day. If the whole truth were told, it would fall to be added that the expedition which has been described is the fourth in which the same party has been concerned, and that Blair Athole, Killin, and Tyndrum, as well as Crianlarich, have seen the finish of a race against time. And we all hope that the expedition will not be the last.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THIRTY-SIXTH MEET OF THE CLUB, NEW YEAR, 1906.

## TYNDRUM.

THE Club does not acknowledge that any of its Meets has ever been other than a success, for the purpose of the Meets is the overcoming of difficulties, whether due to land or water, cliff or cloud, and that purpose has always been fulfilled. The recent Meet at Tyndrum, however, is admitted to have been one of the Club's more conspicuous successes. Various circumstances favoured that result. New Year's Day in 1906 fell on a Monday, and the date encouraged the attendance of distant and busy members; the east wind had congealed the springs and soft ground, and had rolled back the mist and rain-clouds from the Atlantic, and provided clear summits and keen dry air that set the fires of life aglow. The meeting-place also was accessible, and the railways extended the range of climbs which a short winter's day allows. The West Highland line aided those who sought Ben Dorain and his kinsmen towards the north, to the east two lines gave access to Ben More, Stobinian, and Cruach Ardran, while Cruachan could be reached by the line to Oban. A further contribution to the success of the meeting was the accommodation in the Royal Hotel, and the diligence of Mr Stewart and his staff in attending to the wants of the company.

The evening of Friday, 29th December, found a company of some twenty assembled and engaged in planning the activities of the following day. Next morning most of them were ready for road or hill when the tardy day broke at eight o'clock. The Secretary and a party went, some by motor and some by rail, to the base of Ben More and Stobinian. On the latter they found a short but interesting rock climb where wind and icy rock put the party on their mettle. Another group, including the President and Editor, set out for a long walk southwards to the summit of Ben Dubh-chraige, and thence to the summits of Ben Os and Ben Lui. The snow was reached about 2,500 feet up, but was nowhere

deep or soft. At the cairn on Ben Lui they met Maclay, who had conducted a party up the corrie by a snow gully. Thorough step-cutting had been required to reach a sound foundation in the snow. The Librarian and a fourth section had the good fortune to get a lift to Gortan Siding, some 15 miles up the West Highland line, by the morning train, and made thence a long trek home by Ben Creachan, Ben Achallader, Ben-a-Chuirn, and Ben Vannoch. This party enjoyed the best views obtained on this day, but from all high points throughout the Meet the views were almost without exception repaying. Summits thirty miles off stood out clear in soft shades of pink, amber, or blue, and scores of lochs and lochans heliographed their presence as they reflected the low rays of the winter sun. The remaining excursion of the day was made by Macrobert and three companions to Stob Ghabhar.

A Ben, like a prophet of old, is apt to be without honour in his own country, and on Saturday it is feared that the Club was thought foolish by the people of Tyndrum in seeking the hill-tops and precipices, instead of reserving its admiration and attention for sheltered fields like the natives. On Sunday, however, the Club fell lower still in Highland estimation, for almost without exception it forsook church-going. One considerable section did Dubh-chraige, another Chaluim, and another Dorain, and were rewarded by stimulating air and good going, although there were remarks about the coldness of the wind on the ridges, and the amount of ice on the boggy ground. To reach Ben Dubh-chraige perhaps the best route is to follow the Callander line eastwards from the station about half a mile, turn on to the moor at the bridge over the line, cross the moor to a bridge over the stream, and thence to the top past the interesting old firs that stand as relics of the natural forest that once covered the district. To reach Ben Chaluim one also follows the railway eastwards, but for it the West Highland line is taken, and is left at the bridge over the Allt Gleann-a-Chlachain. Thence one goes up the valley following the left branch of the stream where it divides. It is at the point of division that the clachan stood from which the burn gets its name, but as in many a pleasant

spot in the Highlands, only crumbling walls and sheep are now seen where once men throve and children played. Ben Chaluum has more dignity and interest than Ben Dubhchraige, and affords some climbing practice especially among the rocks on the north. A descent may be made in a north-westerly direction to the glen between Ben-a-Chaisteil and Ben Odhar, and the Bridge of Orchy road struck about four miles from Tyndrum. Some more ambitious climbers took their Sunday outing on Ben Lui, among them Ling, Morrison, and Goodeve, who brought off a long and hard rock climb on the rib there. The expedition lasted ten hours, and the negotiation of the ice and frozen rock and turf demanded both skill and care.

Monday, 1st January, proved another admirable day for the hills, dry, sharp, and clear. Dorain, Chaluum, and steep snow climbs up the staircases now indicated by successive climbers on Ben Lui occupied most of the company. A variety was found by Raeburn, Ling, and H. Walker, in the form of a rock climb on Achallader, and another variation was an excursion led by Colonel Hill to Beinn a' Chlieb. This hill lies beyond Ben Lui, and its well-known neighbour has up till now intercepted attention from it; it affords, however, openings for climbing, and deserves further investigation. It is from Ben Lui that the Meet obtained the best of its sport and interest. This fine mountain provides both gymnastics for the climber and scenery for the pedestrian, and altogether is one of the most rewarding hills of the Southern Highlands.

Not many remained long enough at Tyndrum on Tuesday, 2nd January, to do climbing, but a few pleasant outings were obtained. The gathering broke up with agreeable recollections of what had been seen in intercourse with nature, and heard in intercourse with one another. May there be many other opportunities for the Club of beginning a new year as pleasantly, escaping the depressing festival that often falls to our lot then in town, and returning refreshed to a new cycle of duties.

Those who attended the Meet were—J. Rennie, J. W. Burns, W. Inglis Clark, W. Douglas, J. W. Drummond, F. S. Goggs, T. E. Goodeve, John Grove, Howard Hill,

J. Gall Inglis, W. N. Ling, W. G. Macalister, J. H. A. M'Intyre, J. Maclay, J. Macmillan, H. Macrobert, A. E. Maylard, W. A. Morrison, H. T. Munro, W. W. Naismith, Walter Nelson, H. Raeburn, A. E. Robertson, A. W. Russell, Gilbert Thomson, C. W. Walker, Harry Walker, J. J. Waugh, R. C. Workman—29 members; and 6 non-members: Clark, jun., Drummond, jun., Barry, Greig, Nelson, Young.

J. J. WAUGH.

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### THIRTY-SEVENTH MEET OF THE CLUB, EASTER 1906.

#### BALLACHULISH, CLACHAIG, KINGSHOUSE.

The splendid weather experienced throughout Scotland during the early days of April 1906, probably accounted for the large muster of members in the Glencoe district at the Easter Meet. Ballachulish Hotel attracted the largest number of members and guests, while Kingshouse Inn was taxed to the limit of its accommodation, and a fair number patronised Clachaig Inn. Altogether thirty-eight members and eleven guests—a total of forty-nine—attended the Meet. Mr Munro was the first arrival, reaching Clachaig on Tuesday night, and enjoying magnificent weather on Wednesday and Thursday. By Thursday night there was a large gathering of members, old and new, at Ballachulish and the other centres. The President was gratified at finding himself supported by a galaxy of past and present office-bearers, while members and friends from across the Border almost outnumbered the Scottish contingent.

If the weather during the Meet was not all that could be desired—and it wasn't—the party at Ballachulish Hotel was bright and cheery, and time did not lag. When it is stated that, despite the adverse atmospheric conditions which prevailed, no less than eighteen members and guests dined together at Ballachulish on Tuesday night, it may be gathered that the social attractions were not inconsiderable. Altogether it may be said that the Meet was



a great success, and the arrangements made for the comfort of the members by our indefatigable Secretary—who, by the way, failed to turn up at Ballachulish (was there a breakdown of the useful motor?)—were complete and satisfactory.

#### BALLACHULISH.

The members present at Ballachulish were—Messrs John Rennie (President), D. S. Campbell, J. N. Collie, W. Douglas, W. Garden, G. B. Gibbs, F. S. Goggs, G. F. Glover, J. Grove, W. L. Howie, W. G. Macalister, J. Maclay, A. E. Maylard, W. A. Mounsey, H. T. Munro, W. W. Naismith, W. Nelson, C. B. Phillip, F. C. Squance, W. C. Slingsby, G. A. Solly, G. Thomson, P. I. H. Unna, and R. W. Worsdell, twenty-four in all; and these guests—R. Almond, J. M. Longden, A. S. Macharg, G. F. Mounsey, H. L. Slingsby, Erik Ullén, and R. W. Walker.

On Friday two parties were out on the Beinn a' Bheithir range. Messrs Collie, Phillip, Slingsby, and Squance, after climbing one of the gullies on the range, walked to Clachaig and discussed the weather over a cup of afternoon tea. Messrs Douglas, Garden, Naismith, Rennie, Thomson, and Walker climbed the spur running from behind the hotel to Sgorr Dhearg, thence along the main ridge westward to Sgorr Dhonuill, and descended by Creag Ghorm. Weather wet with heavy mist on the ridge.

On Saturday there was a strong muster at Clachaig, parties driving to that centre from Ballachulish and Kings-house. The Bidean group attracted the larger number of climbers, no less than six parties being out on the hills on the south side of the glen, while three parties attacked the Aonach Eagach ridge from different starting-points. The latter ridge was traversed throughout by Messrs Douglas, Rennie, Glover, and Worsdell, and by Messrs Macintyre and Ednie. Messrs Campbell, Maylard, Parker, and Thomson ascended from the east margin of Loch Triochatan, and after gaining the ridge went on to Meall Garbh and Meall Dearg, descending from col a short distance east of cairn on latter summit by steep scree slopes to glen.

Messrs Ullén, Goggs, Ling, and Raeburn attacked the Church Door buttress of Bidean, but found the rocks in bad condition, and did not succeed in scaling the buttress. Messrs Gibbs, W. A. Mounsey, G. F. Mounsey, Munro, and A. E. Robertson attained Bidean by the gully to north of Collie's Pinnacle, descending by Coire nam Beith. Messrs Macalister and MacRobert ascended the same peak by Coire nam Beith, and joined forces with Messrs Grove, Macmillan, and Nelson (who had gone up by the gully immediately to east of Stob Coire nam Beith), both parties following the ridge to An-t-Sron and descending by a long glissade into the main glen. Messrs Collie, Naismith, and Slingsbys (*père et fils*) climbed the central gully on Stob Coire an Lochan. Messrs Almond, Garden, Macharg, Maclay, Solly, and Walker effected the most interesting climb of the day, reaching the cairn on Stob Coire nam Beith by a route (involving several traverses across short gullies) to the right of the climb made by the Abrahams in November 1900, and referred to in Vol. VII. (page 111) of the *Journal*. Messrs Phillip and Squance had an interesting circular tour by Gleann an Fhiodh to Meall an Aodainn and Meall Eilidh, then across head of Glen Leac na Muidhe and down the Allt Socaich to the slate quarries.

On Monday Messrs Almond, Gibbs, Grove, Longden, Naismith, Nelson, Squance, and Solly went up Gleann a' Chaolais to the prominent buttress of Ben Vair known as Sgorr a' Chaolais, which afforded an interesting scramble. At the col a little below Sgorr Dhonuill, the party separated, Messrs Grove, Nelson, Squance, and Solly descending by Coire Sgreamhach, while the others, led by Naismith, went on to Sgorr Dhonuill, thence to Sgorr Dhearg and Sgorr Bhan, descending the eastern ridge and returning by the slate quarries.

The weather was wet and mist covered the hilltops, and what little snow was lying in the corries afforded practically no scope for a glissade.

On Tuesday there was a general exodus homewards. Some of the contingent from England remained over. Messrs Glover and Worsdell had a good climb in one of the gullies on Stob Coire an Lochan. They found some

of the pitches difficult, and had five hours of step-cutting. As a result they did not put in an appearance at Ballachulish until 11 P.M.

W. N.

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CLACHAIG.

The members located at Clachaig Inn during the Meet were Munro, Burns, Howie, M'Intyre, Macmillan, A. E. Robertson, and Campbell, with two guests, Lieut.-Colonel Farquhar and Ednie.

The records of this section of the Meet contain no new climb and no sensational incident of any importance. Several expeditions were projected by the more active members of the party, which, if successful, would have been worthy of record, but the weather became so bad that these were abandoned for less ambitious performances.

On the Wednesday, 11th, Munro, who was alone, ascended by the Gearr Aonach ridge to Stob Coire an Lochan and Bidean, descending over Stob Coire Sgrenach and Beinn Fhada, and on Thursday he climbed Stob an Fhuarain and Sgor na h-Ulaidh. Both days were fine and intensely hot, so that an hour's rest on the topmost summit was enjoyable. The snow, nevertheless, was in excellent condition even for standing glissading. The distance was hazy.

Friday and Saturday were moderately fair, and most of the party were engaged on each of these days either in traversing the ridge of Aonach Eagach, or in ascending Bidean nam Bian by one or other of the favourite snow gullies.

Sunday was miserably wet and stormy, and the day was almost entirely spent under cover, but was fully and profitably occupied in the discussion of things temporal and spiritual, with occasional flights into the higher branches of philosophy.

The weather on Monday morning was equally hopeless, and in despair of improvement the whole party disbanded during the day either for Kingshouse or Ballachulish. At

Clachaig, as elsewhere, during the Meet, the excellent, if complicated, arrangements made by the Secretary for the comfort and convenience of the members worked out most smoothly, and were highly appreciated, the only criticism being that he should have altered the date of Easter this year, so that the Meet might have had the benefit of the magnificent weather during the previous week, which was practically wasted from the Club point of view.

D. S. C.

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#### KINGSHOUSE.

The following were present at Kingshouse during the course of the Meet:—D. S. Campbell, W. Inglis Clark, F. S. Goggs, T. E. Goodeve, W. N. Ling, D. Mackenzie, H. Macrobert, W. L. Howie, H. Raeburn, Harry Walker, C. W. Walker, J. C. Thomson, J. A. Parker—members; C. Inglis Clark, Lieut.-Colonel Farquhar, J. Macrobert, Erik Ullén—guests.

The majority arrived on *Thursday, 12th April*, by various methods of progression, horse vehicles, bicycles, and motor cars being all called into requisition. Campbell, Parker, and Ullén, and the Secretary with C. Inglis Clark, ascended Clachlet on their way over from Bridge of Orchy. H. and C. W. Walker took Stob Ghabhar from Inveroran, and then motored to Kingshouse; while Raeburn and Ling, having arrived at Kingshouse by noon, ascended Buchaille Etive Mhor *via* the chasm. Ben Chrulaiste fell to Mackenzie. It was a beautiful spring day, and quite warm even on the tops, but the views were obscured by the smoke from the burning heather.

*Friday* was a busy day for Buchaille Etive, the whole party of ten reaching the summit by various routes; but, unfortunately, the tops were veiled in mist, and no wide views were obtainable. The photographers were unlucky. W. Inglis Clark, Parker, and Raeburn, who selected the north buttress as their route, in order to photograph the Crowberry Ridge, were unable to get a single

view. They had, however, a good climb to compensate them for the loss.

C. W. Walker and C. Inglis Clark on one rope, and Ling, H. Walker, and Ullén on another, had a most enjoyable climb on the Crowberry Ridge, the excellence of the rock and the grandeur of the surroundings calling forth the warmest praise.

Campbell and Mackenzie joined the party on the summit.

*Saturday*.—The morning was fine but colder. One contingent, consisting of Goodeve, Parker, Campbell, Ullén, and Ling, drove, while Raeburn cycled and Macrobert walked, to Clachaig, where there can seldom have been such a gathering of mountaineers. Campbell and Parker followed the Aonach Eagach ridge. The rest ascended Bidean nam Bian by the couloir, and, together with Goggs, followed the ridge over Stob Coire Sgrenach and Ben Fhada, descending to the road, and walked home in a heavy shower.

Ben Starav was climbed by H. and C. W. Walker and W. and Charlie Inglis Clark, whose motors made light of the distance to the head of Loch Etive. They report a most enjoyable day, and were much impressed by the beauty of the peak.

Mackenzie ascended Buchaille Etive Bheag. The evening hours passed quickly in a variety of games, in which the Hon. Librarian added to his other honours the proud title of Frog King, while the Hon. Secretary expounded the laws of mountain etiquette on paper.

*Sunday* was a thoroughly wet day, with a strong south-westerly gale, and having had three good days, the party was content to leave the hills alone.

*Monday* was also very wet, and most of the party returned home. Raeburn and Goodeve ascended Buchaille Etive Mhor by the ridge left (true) of the chasm before driving to Bridge of Orchy, while Goggs and Macrobert crossed Stob Ghabhar to the same destination. Howie and Lieut.-Colonel Farquhar arrived from Clachaig in the course of the afternoon.

On *Tuesday* the weather improved, but only Howie and Farquhar were left to take advantage of it, Mackenzie and Ling leaving by the morning train.

Our thanks are due to Mr and Mrs Stewart, whose arrangements for catering and for our general comfort are deserving of the highest praise, and it may safely be said that, in spite of the two wet days, the Meet was an entire success.

W. N. L.

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

THE following volumes have been added to the Library during the past four months, and the Club asks the respective donors to accept its hearty thanks for their contributions.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Pictures in Tyrol and elsewhere. [Miss L. Tuckett.] 2nd Edition. 1869 - - -	J. W. Drummond.
Mountaineering in Colorado. F. H. Chapin. 2nd Edition. 1890 - - -	J. J. Waugh.
Guide to the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland. Part I. George and Peter Anderson. 4th Edition. 1863 - - -	Adam Smail.
Panorama of the Beauties, Curiosities, and Antiquities of North Wales. J. Hemingway. 3rd Edition. 1839 - - -	"
Topographische Mittheilungen aus dem Alpengebirge (with eight panoramas). G. Studer. 2nd Edition. 1844 - - -	"
Scottish Local Guide Books, <i>circa</i> 1862-1895. 30 vols. - - -	David Sime.
Reminiscences of the Lews ; or, Twenty Years' Wild Sport in the Hebrides. By "Sixty-one." 3rd Edition. 1875 - - -	"
Fish and Fishing in the Lone Glens of Scotland. Dr Knox. 1854 - - -	Purchased.
A Painter's Camp in the Highlands. P. G. Hamerton. 2 vols. 1862 - - -	"
Round My House. P. G. Hamerton. 1876 -	"
The Place-Names of Stirlingshire. Rev. Jas. B. Johnston, B.D. 2nd Edition. 1904 - -	"
Birkhill. C. R. B. M'Gilchrist. 2nd Edition. 1905	"
The Ruined Castles of Mid-Lothian. John Dickson. 1894 - - -	"
The Place-Names of Argyll. H. Cameron Gillies, M.D. 1906 - - -	"
The Highlands (poems). Rev. Jas. G. Small. 1843	"
Memoirs of the Geological Survey—	
The Geology of Mid-Argyll - - -	"
The Geology of the Country round Blair Atholl, Pitlochry, and Aberfeldy - - -	,

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Old Maps and Map-Makers of Scotland. John E. Shearer. 1905 - - - - -	Purchased.
Les Sports Modernes Illustrés. L'Alpinisme -	Harry Walker.
The Weekly Press. Christmas, 1905. Christchurch, N.Z. (containing, <i>inter alia</i> , a number of views of the N.Z. Alps) - - - - -	J. Rennie.
Rock-Climbing in North Wales. G. and A. Abraham. 1906 - - - - -	Purchased.
Visitors' Book, Sligachan Hotel - - - - -	D. S. Campbell.



# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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## SLIOCH AND BEINN LAIR.

(DIVISION IV. GROUP V.)

LAT.  $57^{\circ} 40'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 20'$ ; and Lat.  $57^{\circ} 42'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 23'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 92. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

Slioch, said to come from Sleagh, a spear, but the application is far from clear (approximate height, 3,260 feet \*),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Loch Maree.

Sgurr an Tuill Bhàin (3,058 feet=the scaur of the white hollow),  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile east of Slioch.

Beinn Lair (2,817 feet=the mare mountain), 3 miles north-west of Slioch.

The magnificent blunt cone of Slioch, rising with its eastern extension grandly on the north side of Loch Maree, is a familiar object to all who have visited that district. Its upper parts are formed of flat Torridon sandstone, while its base and its eastern shoulder consist of gneiss. The highest summit lies at the west end, from which the ridge extends due east at a nearly equal elevation for  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to Sgurr an Tuill Bhàin; while the south-east ridge, terminating in Meall Each (=the round hill of the horses), is the shoulder seen from Loch Maree side. These form a fine east-facing corrie, which is the sanctuary of the forest. The whole group is indeed under forest and jealously guarded even in spring.

The ascent is easily made from Kinlochewe Hotel over

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\* Both on the six and one inch Ordnance maps the only height given is 3,217 feet. On the one-inch map, however, about 200 yards E.S.E. of this point on which is the cairn, is a small 3,250 contour. Captain Kirkwood, R.E., made a note in the visitors' book at Kinlochewe, giving the height 3,260 feet.

either of the eastern shoulders, the southern being of course the shorter, or up the corrie, which has some good boulders in it. It can also be ascended from the Loch Maree Hotel at Talladale, but in this case the loch has to be crossed by boat to Letterewe and the south-western slope of the mountain attacked. The summit ridge is broad and easy, but falling direct from it to the north-west is a grand sandstone precipice on which, as far as is known, no climb has been attempted.

Beinn Lair, lying 3 miles north-west across the little Loch Garbhaig, is a long flat but broken ridge presenting on its south or Loch Maree side no outstanding features. To the north, however, for a distance of some  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles it throws down what is possibly the grandest inland line of cliffs to be found in Scotland. It is seldom ascended except by stalkers, but the summit can be easily reached from the Loch Maree Hotel by taking boat to Letterewe.

H. T. MUNRO.

## A'MHAIGHDEAN AND BEINN DEARG MHOR.

### (DIVISION IV. GROUP VI.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 43'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 20'$ ; and Lat.  $57^{\circ} 47'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 20'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 92. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 24.

A'Mhaighdean, approximate height 3,060 feet \* (pron. *Ah-vi-ce-chun*=the maiden),  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Slioch.

Beinn Dearg Mhor, 2,974 feet (=the big red mountain),  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-north-east of A'Mhaighdean.

The name A'Mhaighdean will be found in the centre of the "O" of Ross-shire on Sheet 92 of the one-inch O.S. map, on which only a 2,750 feet contour is given, while the six-inch map gives no height at all. The approximate height given above is, however, probably nearly correct.

\* According to careful aneroid measurements by H. G. S. Lawson, W. N. Ling, and H. T. Munro.

There are practically only two ways by which this mountain can be approached, viz., by boat from Loch Marce Hotel in Talladale to Letterewe, and thence over the west shoulder of Beinn Lair, or from Kinlochewe Hotel *via* the Heights of Kinlochewe and Gleann na Muice. The latter is recommended. The Heights of Kinlochewe, usually spoken of as "the Heights," consist of a few crofters' cottages by the burn-side, and are not in any sense on a height. Driving or bicycling is possible so far. At "the Heights" be careful to cross to the (true) left bank of the stream. From here there is a good bridle path as far as the south-east end of Lochan Fada, where it entirely ceases. The view from here up the loch is very striking. The north shore is then followed to the ruined shieling of Claona, the walk being a rough one. From here the ascent takes a little over an hour up the easy shoulder which runs north-north-west to the summit. The south-west face of the mountain is broken, and would doubtless give some climbing. No signs now exist of the track marked on the map from Claona north-west to the Fionn Loch. The whole district is under deer.

Beinn Dearg Mhòr, lying  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the north-north-east, is a fine, very steep, cone-shaped mountain. It is best ascended from Dundonnell Inn by the track that leads south through Gleann Chaorachain, but it is a long walk from anywhere.

H. T. MUNRO.

## MULLACH COIRE MHIC FHEARCHAIR.

(DIVISION IV. GROUP VII.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 43'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 16'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 92. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

1. Beinn Tharsuinn, 2,970 feet (pron. *Ben Tarsuin*=the transverse mountain). Lies 1 mile to the south-east.
2. Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair, 3,327 feet (pron. *Mullach Corrie Vic Kerrachar*=the corrie of the son of Farquhar).

Lies 7 miles north of Kinlochewe, and 9 miles south of Dundonnell.

3. Sgurr Ban, 3,194 feet (=the white mountain). Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to the north.
4. Beinn a Chlaidheimh, 2,960 feet (pron. *Ben a Clay*=the hill of the sword). Lies 2 miles north of Sgurr Ban.

This J-shaped group, with the long leg pointing towards the north, is for the most part entirely covered with broken blocks of Cambrian quartzite, which, carrying little soil or vegetation, gives to the mountain a peculiar white appearance, even when seen from a distance. It lies in the Dundonnell and Fisherfield deer forest, and its tops are seldom disturbed by the tourist; for not only does it lie far from the haunts of man, but the wild and desolate character of its scenery has not yet become popular. Long and steep scree slopes of dazzling whiteness are the features of this mountain group. At one place on the east side of Stob Ban there is a broad and exposed sheet of unbroken quartzite, dipping towards Loch an Nid at one uniform angle, and is as a curiosity well worth a visit.

*Usual Routes.*—(1.) From Dundonnell Inn go south for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles along the Braemore road, thence turn to the right at Corryhallie, and leaving the high-road by a cart track, reach in eight minutes Loch an Nid. Rounding the head of the loch and climbing east, either Sgurr Ban on the right, or Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair on the left can be ascended.

(2.) From Kinlochewe go north-east for 3 miles to the Heights of Kinlochewe, then turn north up Glen na Muice to Lochan Fada, and another half-hour takes one on to the lower slopes of Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair.

*Climbs.*—None recorded.

The two principal hills in this group were visited by Messrs King and Douglas in April 1893. They speak warmly of the beauty of the scenery of the high-level route from Dundonnell to Kinlochewe. Leaving at 8 A.M. they topped Sgurr Ban at 3.15, the Mullach at 3.55, and reached Kinlochewe at 8 P.M. (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 311).

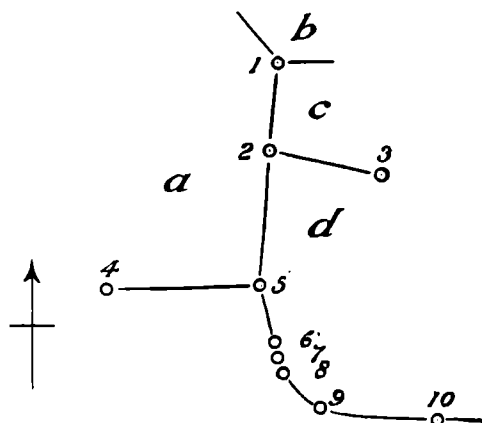
W. D.

## AN TEALLACH.

(DIVISION IV. GROUP VIII.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 48'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 16'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 92. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 20.

This celebrated group affords a magnificent example of Torridon sandstone architecture. It extends roughly north and south for upwards of 3 miles, and forms a crescent-shaped backbone from which two branch ridges project for about half a mile on either side. It encloses four corries in its embrace. In the west (*a*) Airdeasaidh; in the north (*b*) a' Mhuilinn; in the east (*c*) a' Ghlas Thuill



and (*d*) Toll an Lochain (see photo). The scenery of the last two is of exceptional grandeur, especially during the early months of the year, when the snow has picked out the horizontal lines of bedding by whitening their ledges and filling the perpendicular gullies with miniature glaciers.

Dundonnell Inn, 6 miles from Ullapool, is the most convenient point from which to make the ascent. It is a snug little hostelry capable of accommodating half a dozen climbers very comfortably. It can be reached by steamer from Glasgow or Oban to Ullapool, thence by ferry across Loch Broom and drive; or by rail to Garve, thence mail-



LOCH TOLL AN LOCHAIN, AN TEALLACH.

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

12—Buttress of Corra Bhuidhe.

11 10 8—Top of Corrag Bhuidhe.

7—Lord Berkeley's Seat.

6—Sgurr Fiona.

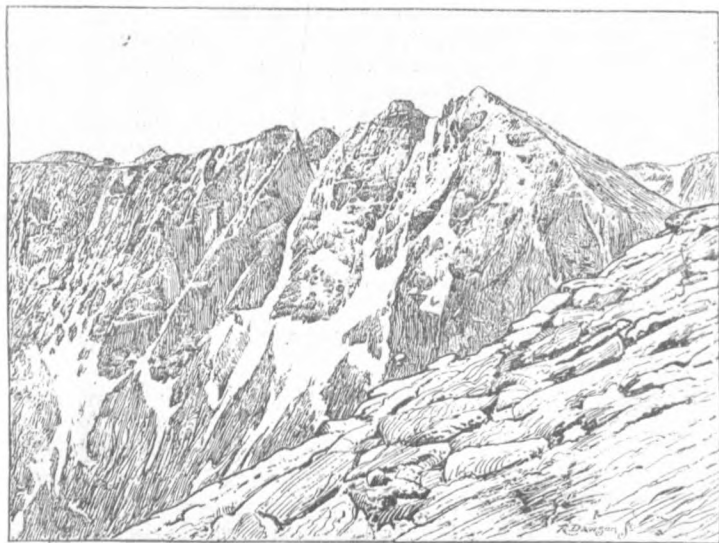
coach to Braemore and drive 15 miles. The following are the hills in the group. The name An Teallach = the forge, is applied to no one peak.

1. Glas Mheall Mor, 3,176 feet (pron. *Glass Mel Vore* = the great grey hill). Lies at the north end of the range, and hides from Dundonnell all the rest of the group.
2. Bidean a' Ghlas Thuill, 3,483 feet (pron. *Bidean a Glass Toll* = the little sharp-pointed peak of the grey hollow). From its top a branch ridge, surmounted by several pinnacles, runs east and ends in
3. Glas Mheall Liath, 3,080 feet app. (pron. *Glass Mel Lia* = the pale grey hill). This presents to the east a conical outline, and its summit is capped with quartzite.
4. Sgurr Creag an Eich, 3,350 feet app. (= the peak of the horses), is the westmost peak of the group and lies at the end of the ridge running west from
5. Sgurr Fìona, 3,474 feet (= the hill of wine). A beautifully shaped peak, pyramidal in form, and looks its best from No. 2.
6. Lord Berkeley's Seat, 3,325 feet app., is a little tower of rock to the south of No. 5, and is very conspicuous from Loch Toll an Lochain.
7. Corrag Bhuidhe, 3,425 feet (pron. *Corrag Bui* = the yellow finger). Consists of four towers of rock all about the same height and quite close together.
8. A buttress of Corrag Bhuidhe, 3,050 feet. Lies half a mile to the south.
9. Top above Cadha Gobhlach, 3,100 feet app. (pron. *Ca-go-la* = the forked pass).
10. Sail Liath, 3,100 feet app. (pron. *Sail Lia* = the grey heel), terminates the range to the south, and it is, like No. 3, capped with quartzite.

The summit ridge of the mountain towards the southern end narrows in places to a few feet and is cut up into huge pyramids of weathered sandstone, giving it an imposing outline of jagged peaks rising from precipitous sides.

*Usual Routes.*—From Dundonnell, follow the Allt a Mhuilinn (Voulin) to its head, then by turning to the left No. 1 is reached. Easy going all the way. Retrace steps for a short distance and circle round the head of Coire a' Ghlas Thuill to No. 2. Omitting No. 3 no difficulty is experienced on the way to No. 5. No. 4 is usually also omitted. The climb now becomes more interesting; the pitches are steeper and longer, the ridge narrower, and the surroundings grander. The hand-grips are not

satisfactory, for the weathering of the rock has rounded off all projections, but as the foothold is so excellent very little of the former is necessary. The only place where difficulty may be experienced is in descending on the south side of No. 8, but by keeping to the west face an easy route may be found. The crest of the ridge can be followed all the way over the tops of Corrag Bhuidhe to No. 10, but it is usual to return to the col between Nos. 9 and 10 and descend by the "Cadha Gobhlach" to the loch in order to obtain from it a view of the splendid cliffs that rise from its



BIDEAN A' GHLAS THUILL, FROM THE NORTH.

shores. From here a rough bit of moorland of some 4 miles—heather, bog, and stone—lies between it and Dundonnell. Ten hours at least should be allowed for the round. By reversing the route the monotonous walk across the moor will be got over early in the day.

*Climbs.*—None as yet have been recorded. Two gullies on the north face of Bidean a' Ghlas Thuill would give a splendid snow-climb during the early months of the year; and the cliffs of Corrag Bhuidhe above Toll an Lochain offer a grand field to the rock-climbing expert.



14

x

13

12

11 10 9 8 7



SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE MAIN RANGE OF AN TEALLACH.

*From Photographs by J. Rennie, 1st April 1803.*

14—Sail Liath.    x—Cadha Gobhlach,    13—Top above Cadha Gobhlach.    12—Buttress of Corrag Bhuidhe.    11, 10, 9, 8—Corrag Bhuidhe.    7—Lord Berkeley's Seat.    6—Sgurr Fiona.

See *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. III., p. 10, for a more detailed description of An Teallach, and for a sketch map of the range. See also the *Cairngorm Club Journal*, Vol. IV., p. 293, for Mr Geo. T. Ewen's account of Mr Baker's and his visit to An Teallach in Easter 1904.

W. D.

## THE FANNICHS.\*

### (DIVISION IV. GROUP IX.)

Lat. 57° 41' to 57° 43'; W. Lon. 4° 57' to 5° 8'.  
Ordnance Survey Map, one-mile scale, Sheet 92. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Maps, Sheets 20 or 24.

1. An Coileachan, 3,015 feet (=the cockerel), 2 miles north-east of Fannich Lodge, Loch Fannich.
2. Meall Gorm†=the blue hill (3,000 feet contour), 1 mile north-west of No. 1.
3. Meallan Rairigidh (3,109 feet),  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile west-north-west of No. 2.
4. Meall nam Peithireant†=shapeless hill (3,000 feet contour; approximate height 3,175 feet, aneroid measurement by H. T. Munro),  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile south by east of No. 5.
5. Sgùrr Mòr=the big scaur (3,637 feet),  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles north by west of Fannich Lodge; 3 miles north-west of No. 1.
6. Beinn Liath Mhòr Fannich=the big hoary mountain of Fannich (3,000 feet contour; approximate height by aneroid measurement of H. G. S. Lawson and H. T. Munro, 3,120 feet), 1 mile east-north-east of No. 5.
7. Beinn Liath Bheag=the small hoary mountain (2,173 feet),  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles east-north-east of No. 6.
8. Carn na Criche=the march cairn (3,148 feet six-inch map; 3,000 feet contour one-inch map),  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north-west of No. 5.
9. Meall a' Chrasgaidh (3,062 feet),  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile north-west of No. 8; 2 miles south-east of east end of Loch a' Bhraoin.
10. Sgùrr nan Clach Geala=the scaur of the white stones (3,581 feet six-inch map; 3,500 feet contour one-inch map), 1 mile south-west of No. 8.
11. Sgùrr nan Each†=the scaur of the horse (3,026 feet six-inch map; 3,000 feet contour one-inch map), 1 mile south of No. 10.

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\* The meaning of the word is obscure.

† These names are only given on the six-inch Ordnance Survey Map.

12. Sgùrr Breac=the speckled scaur (3,000 feet contour one-inch map ; approximate height by aneroid measurement of Mr Colin Phillip, 3,240 feet),  $2\frac{1}{4}$  miles north by west of west end of Loch Fannich.
13. A' Chailleach=the hag (3,276 feet),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of No. 12.

This beautiful group of mountains, familiarly known as the Ross-shire Alps, forms a striking feature in the view from many points in the neighbourhood of Inverness ; it is also seen to great advantage from near Ullapool. Rising on the north side of Loch Fannich, and bounded on the north-west by Loch a' Bhraoin and on the north-east by the Garve-Ullapool road, it covers a considerable stretch of country, extending from south to north a distance of 6 miles, and from east to west 10 miles. The main chain is in the form of an irregular cross. The body of the cross commences with An Coileachan (cairn), just above the east end of Loch Fannich, and extends in a north-westerly direction. Beyond An Coileachan there is a considerable dip, and then a rise to Meall Gorm (cairn), which is a mere spur of Meallan Rairigidh with only a slight dip between them. Beyond Meallan Rairigidh (on which is a cairn) there is a descent of some 300 feet, and a rise of somewhat more to Meall nan Peithirean (flat cairn). From this a long shoulder drops away due south, while to the north a steep pull leads to the summit of Sgùrr Mòr, the culminating peak of the group (large cairn). So far the ridge has been singularly uniform in character, grassy and easy, but sufficiently narrow to make it impossible to miss the way in bad weather. To the south-west gentle slopes descend from all these summits, but to the north-east there are fine ranges of cliffs heavily corniced in spring, forming some grand corries, each containing one or more small lakes, all of which flow south-east, and eventually fall into the Cromarty Firth. No climbs have been recorded, doubtless on account of remoteness, for these corries undoubtedly offer possibilities.

From Sgùrr Mòr, which stands on the watershed of Scotland, one arm of the cross extends north-east, rising to a height of (approximately) 3,120 feet in Beinn Liath Mhòr Fannich (cairn on summit, and another about 30



*May 1905.*

THE FANNICHS FROM FAIN.

*A. E. Robertson.*

yards below it to the north-east), and again to 2,173 feet in Beinn Liath Bheag, after which it drops down to the main Garve-Ullapool road. Continuing the main ridge, there is a rather steep and rocky descent from Sgùrr Mòr of some 700 feet (?), and a slight rise to Carn na Criche (cairn north of summit). Immediately to the north of this peak and 1,300 feet below it, lies the little Loch a' Mhadaidh, whose waters flow north-west into Loch Broom. From Carn na Criche careful steering is required, for the main ridge here bends sharply to the left at a right angle, and forms the south-west arm of the cross, which, in a mile, rises to Sgùrr nan Clach Geala, the second peak of the group. In mist one is apt unconsciously to follow this main ridge; it is therefore necessary, if the straight course is to be continued, carefully to consult the compass before leaving Carn na Criche. After a steep descent a rise of a few hundred feet places one on top of Meall a' Chrasgaidh, the northmost peak of the range, whence an easy descent to the north-east end of Loch a' Bhraoin.

*N.B.*—There is a bridge across the Abhuinn Cuileig just where it leaves the loch, but none across the burn which joins it from the south a few hundred yards lower; usually, however, it is fordable.

Returning to Sgùrr nan Clach Geala, the ridge continues in a southerly direction to Sgùrr nan Each, whence it drops away to Loch Fannich.

To the west of the main group, and separated from it by a col which drops below the 2,000 feet contour, a second group rises between the head of Loch Fannich and Loch a' Bhraoin. From the west end of Loch Fannich, a long shoulder rises at first north-west and then north to A' Chailleach, the principal summit. From it a northern shoulder drops down to Loch a' Bhraoin, while an eastern shoulder rises in  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to an intermediate peak somewhat below 3,000 feet. Here also care must be taken in mist, for the tendency is to bear round to another northern shoulder. An east-south-east course must be steered, and in another  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile Sgùrr Breac will be reached.

The whole range is given over to deer and is somewhat

remote, the nearest places of entertainment being Garve Hotel on the railway, and Aultguish Inn on the Ullapool road. The latter, though small, is very comfortable for two or three people. Opposite the bridge at the foot of Loch a' Bhraoin is a boat-house—formerly a lodge—with stabling, &c., and a carriage can be ordered to meet one here either from Aultguish or from Dundonnell Inn, a distance of some 10 miles. It should be borne in mind also, that the morning coach from Ullapool can be utilised to approach the northern side of the range. A good carriage road leads from Loch Luichart Station (no carriages nearer than Garve) to Fannich Lodge. The carriage should, however, be left some  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles short of the lodge, and the main range crossed to the boat-house on Loch a' Bhraoin, where a carriage from Aultguish should be in waiting. Next day the road should be left near Loch Droma, and the range crossed from east to west, dropping down from A' Chailleach to the boat-house.

The grand eastern corries can either be approached with the help of a bicycle from Garve Hotel *via* Loch Luichart and Loch Fannich, or from Aultguish to near Loch Droma, and then on foot up the Abhuinn a' Ghuibhais.

H. T. MUNRO.

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## FIONN BHEINN.

(DIVISION IV. GROUP X.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 37'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 6'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 82 and 92. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 20.

Fionn Bheinn, 3,060 feet (light coloured mountain).

This is the only hill of any height in a rather large tract of country, bounded by the valleys of Loch Fannich and Abhainn Bruachaig on the north, and Strath Bran and Glen Docharty on the south. From its central position it commands a grand and extensive view, particularly of the Fannich, Torridon, Loch Maree, and Dundonnell peaks.

Achnasheen Hotel is the best place to stay at, but it can also be reached by a longish walk from the comfortable hotel at Kinlochewe.

*Usual Route.*—Strike straight up the hill to the north of the hotel at Achnasheen, in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles reaching the south buttress of the hill, Creagan nan Laogh (2,101 feet = calf's rocks), thence in a long mile to top (3,060 feet). There is a deep corrie, Toll Mor (= "big hole"), on the north side. Kinlochewe can be reached by descending north-west into Strathcromble and following the valley down to the Heights of Kinlochewe, where a road leads in about 4 miles to Kinlochewe. This latter point affords fine views of Beinn Eighe and other picturesque quartzite mountains, and there is some fine river scenery and curious geological complications. The whole way from the top to Kinlochewe is about 10 miles.

*Climbs.*—None—a grassy hill.

C. B. P.

## EXCURSIONS.

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

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MEALL NAN TARMACHAN.—On 3rd March a party of five, A. W. Russell, G. Sang, A. R. Wilson, and two non-members of the Club, W. Fraser and A. B. Bell, ascended Meall nan Tarmachan from Killin. A start was made from the hotel at 10.15 A.M.; the weather was fine, but mist was driving rapidly over the higher hills. The road was left at Creagan Farm, and the ridge running south from the Tarmachan was followed to the foot of the corrie below the summit. Continuous snow was reached at 1,200 feet, which got rapidly harder as higher levels were reached. As a regular gale was blowing, a halt was made for lunch in the shelter of the cliffs at a level of 3,000 feet. The snow here was firm, and the "vegetable holds" on the rocks were hard frozen. At 1.20 a start was made up a wide snow gully which ended on the left in a steep cornice; a traverse was made to the right under the top, which was reached at 1.45, by cutting steps up a steep snow slope. The gale on the ridge frustrated any attempt to reach Creag na Caillich, so a descent was made by the same route, which gave about 500 feet of good glissading. The hotel was reached at 5 P.M. This face of the Tarmachan under snow conditions is certainly one of the most imposing mountain scenes near Killin, and with rather harder snow, should yield good sport.

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BEINN GHLAS AND BEN LAWERS.—On 4th March the same party drove to the junction of the Loch Tay and Glen Lyon roads, about four miles from Killin. At 9.45 a start was made up the Glen Lyon road, which was followed to a height of 1,100 feet, then a straight line was followed north to the ridge of Beinn Ghlas. This side of the hill had been blown nearly clear of snow till close to the top, and some of the going was very slippery over frozen turf and scree. The summit was reached at 12.15, and left at 12.35. The ridge between Beinn Ghlas and Ben Lawers was most Alpine in character, with deep snow and bunches of fog crystals on every rock. The col, reached at 12.50, was

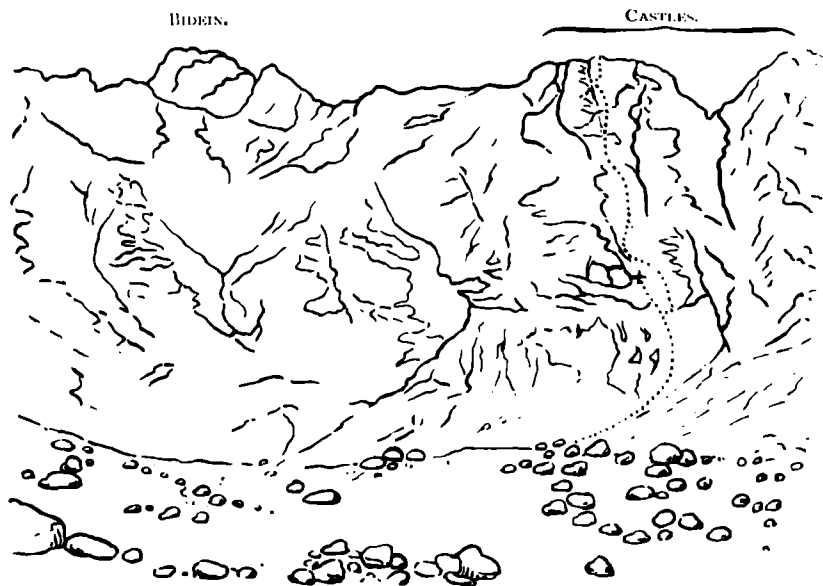


left at 1, and the top of Ben Lawers was reached at 1.30. The snow was rather soft on this side. The fog crystals on the cairn and all the windward side of the summit were remarkably fine. Shortly after leaving the top by the ridge running eastwards, the party roped owing to the hardness of the snow and the high gale which was blowing. A descent was made to Lawers Inn, which was reached at 3.45. Several good glissades, amounting to about 600 feet, were obtained, but under favourable conditions most of this side of the Ben should offer good glissading.

A. ROBERTSON WILSON.

SKYE—THE CASTLES FROM HARTA CORRIE.—At the Easter Meet of 1905, a party of four, Messrs Raeburn, Slingsby, Solly, members, with Herr Erik Ullén, guest, ascended the southmost castle, direct from Harta Corrie.

This climb was selected as one sheltered from the fierce north-west blizzard which blew all day. Leaving Sligachan at 7.45 A.M. on 21st



LOOKING ACROSS HARTA CORRIE FROM S. RIDGE OF SGURR NAN GILEAN.

April, the party walked round into Harta Corrie *via* the "Bloody Stone," ascended by two routes in passing, and reached the foot of the Castles at 10.45. Here fifteen minutes were spent over second breakfast. This south castle is split into three buttresses by two large gullies. The climb was commenced at 11 by way of the south gully,

but after about half-an-hour's climb up several minor pitches, a huge overhanging pitch was met with, which appeared impossible, and a retreat had to be made to the foot of the rocks again. At 11.40 the climb was restarted up the central buttress. This buttress, at first of low angle, rapidly steepened, and is here composed of enormous ice-smoothed slabs of gabbro. The rocks were at this level free from ice, clean and dry, and the leader removed his boots and put on Kletterschue. A traverse had soon to be made to the left, across and up some steeply inclined slabs. This, none of the party would have cared to attempt, and would have considered it unjustifiable to lead up in boots. With the cloth-solers, however, it was quite safe and went all right, and passing under the overhanging slabs, barring the direct route, the climbers found themselves above the great pitch in the gully on their left, which had stopped their first attack, and in a position from which access to this gully could be obtained. It was, however, resolved to continue on the buttress, and a neat little chimney parallel with the gully was found, which led above the overhanging slabs to easier ground, where snow was lying. This easier portion continues to the foot of the final wall of cliffs, about two-thirds up the face. These final cliffs are pierced by several narrow gullies or chimneys. Selecting the cleft nearest in line to the summit, this was climbed to near the top of the peak. Then, as the gully died out on the face, a traverse to right was made on to a narrow, well-broken-up rib. The chimney was steep and held a good deal of ice, snow, and water, and gave several opportunities to the climbers of showing their skill in evading and dodging the baptismal waterspouts. A few minutes up the ridge led to the summit, whence a wonderful and enchanting view of the snow and ice plastered ridges and pinnacles of the Coolins was obtained.

As the day was now getting on, 4.20 P.M., and Camasunary was to be the "hut" for the night, the easiest way down was taken. This, in the condition of the rocks, was considered to lie through Lota Corrie. Accordingly the ice-covered arête of the Castles was descended to the gap between the two peaks.

Then the steep gully leading to Harta Corrie was descended for some way. Short standing glissade here. Quitting the gully, just before it takes its great plunge down the lower precipices, a short rock wall led into Lota Corrie. Traversing round this till under the cliffs of Sgurr nah Uamha, an easy descent was made on the left side of the stream issuing from Lota Corrie into Harta Corrie, and Camasunary gained, after rather a weary tramp, at 8.15.     H. RAEBURN.

# MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

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ROCK CLIMBING IN NORTH WALES. By GEORGE and ASHLEY ABRAHAM. Keswick, 1906. 21s. net.

THE late Mr O. G. Jones had for some years been accumulating information on the rock-climbs of North Wales, with a view to writing a companion book to the one on the English Lake District, but, alas, his sad death occurred before it was carried out. As most of his climbs in North Wales were done in the company of Messrs Abraham, they have taken upon themselves the task of fulfilling the wish of their late friend, and they have worthily succeeded in carrying out this labour of love.

The book has been divided into two parts. Part I. deals with the Carnedd, Tryfaen, and the Glyders, and Part II. with Snowdon, the climbs south of the Llanberis Pass and Cader Idris, Mr George Abraham making himself responsible for the first and his brother for the second. The authors are indeed to be congratulated, both on the difficult climbs they have accomplished and on the delightful manner in which they have treated their subject. The many photographs which illustrate their narrative are perfect examples of the art, and lose little from the originals in the process adopted for their reproduction.

In the Introduction they weigh the rival merits of this and the Lake District, with the result that they say, "The two districts are very dissimilar, and appeal to one in different ways. We may safely say, however, that the Welsh climbs are longer, on the whole. Cumbrians could scarcely be expected to prefer Wales, and yet it would be incorrect to say that we do not. There is no Napes Needle in Wales, or anything like it that is known at present, nor is there a rival on similar lines to that glorious crag, Scawfell Pinnacle. On the other hand, one of the routes up Lliwedd's Eastern Buttress, and the Great Gully of Craig yr Ysfa, are undoubtedly finer climbs than any of those in Lakeland. Also, the wilder parts of the Welsh scenery strike us as being more impressive than those of the Lakes. The cwms of the Carnedd, the summits of Tryfaen and the Glyders, the horse-shoe of Snowdon, with the great crags of Lliwedd, are objects peculiar to Wales; as are the loneliness of Liza Valley, the coves of Pillar Fell, and the precipices of Scawfell to Lakeland."

We have much enjoyed reading the history of the various ascents described in the volumes. That of Twll Du, which opens the book, is particularly good, and it leads one on through the ninety-three courses described with ever-increasing interest to the end, and we heartily recommend the book to all climbers going to North Wales, as well as to every one likely to enjoy reading about some of the most difficult rock-climbs in the British Islands.



April 20, 1906.

LOCH TAY, FROM KENMORE.

*W. Inglis Clark.*

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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SEPTEMBER 1906.

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## MEMORIES OF THE KINGSHOUSE MEET, 1906.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

PERHAPS in no part of Bonnie Scotland is there greater wealth of sub-Alpine scenery than in Perthshire. The low hills, relics of a former higher level time, have long since ceased to take an active interest in disintegration, and in their garments of heather or forest have settled down to a placid old age, secure in the thought that neither lightning flash nor water spout, nor the riving frost of winter, are likely materially to alter their contour. Looked at from some higher ground, as the summit of Schiehallion or Lawers, we see them subject to the regular laws of mountain structure, and can trace their relation to the higher mountain ranges. Yet from below, in the valleys, they seem a very chaos of hills, now tossed here, now there, and in their very waywardness charming and delighting the eye of tourist or artist alike. The mountaineer claims all these as his own, for though they offer but few of the sterner aspects of the mountain, the cliff, the lonely corrie, or the narrow ridge, yet like the flying buttresses of some grand cathedral, they lead the eye and the longing to the summit level after all. Such thoughts as these often crowded on me when by a happy lot I spent a short holiday at Easter 1906 in Killiecrankie. In the previous summer, partly as a result of bad weather, partly as a matter of choice, I had avoided the higher peaks of the Alps, and courted a close acquaintance with the charming valleys running up from the plains of Italy to the ever-

lasting snow fields of Monte Rosa and its neighbours. A more enchanting holiday could not well be imagined, and here also the delight chiefly lay in the bewildering wealth of scenery lying in the sub-Alpine valleys. Our own Perthshire has something in common with these Southern valleys, and the absence of height in the mountain summits but little detracts from the impression imparted to the visitor.

I have not the space, far less the ability, to do justice to Perthshire, but it occurred to me that I might be permitted to tell of the vast enhancement of such a holiday when the motor car is present to annihilate distance, and to bring the peaks of the Blackmount literally to the doors of Killiecrankie. I trust to the loyalty of the S.M.C. not to calculate out with bare arithmetic the maximum and minimum speed during the journey, but rather to believe that in all things the Honorary Secretary upholds and obeys the demands of the law. All of us remember, if perchance with an envious sigh, how the summer burst on us in the beginning of April, and the sun, untempered by passing clouds, shone down day after day with fervid heat. It is true that the clear atmosphere by night offered no obstruction to radiation, and our earth generously gave off its heat to distant spheres, so that hard frost prevailed each morning, only to be swiftly removed by the recurring heat. How we wished that Old Time would set forward the hands of the clock a full week so as to bring the Easter Meet of the S.M.C. under the prevailing shelter of the anticyclone. But, as the days passed, a steadily increasing haze threatened to destroy the hopes of photographers, despite yellow screens and isochromatic plates, so dear to their hearts.

On Wednesday, 11th April, the weather still held good, and expectation ran high as my son and I loaded the 10 H.P. Humber with rucksacks, and rope, and ice axes, and hobnailers, and the various paraphernalia all can recall at will. Then there were figs and oranges, and peppermints and acid drops—for what expedition could be successful without these? And last, but not least, such a dressing in flannels, and Shetlands, and putties, and leather coats that not even the wildest blast should be able to

penetrate, the result being that no power on earth could have made me bend to lace my boots had that been necessary.

It was 4 A.M. on Thursday, and as we swiftly glided down the valley of the Garry, the moon, nearly full orbed, but yellow and smoky and depressed, blinked at us through the gaunt branches of the trees, or sparkled at us in the hurrying waters of the river down below. It was a tranquil night, and the hill forms and the level river-filled valley recalled powerfully an early morning ride down the valley of Aosta, the partial veil of night obliterating all details and leaving the forms of the hills alone to produce a romantic impression. In the keen frosty air our ears tingled, and we eagerly longed for the sun, still dallying over the North Sea. The streams of the Tummel and Garry, but recently united in their short-lived partnership, were merged in the mightier Tay, as turning west our car sped past Ballinluig and approached Aberfeldy. The dawn had come, but with it no sense of warmth, for the sun, feebly struggling through a ground fog, was powerless to send even a shadow athwart the road.

No one who has approached Kenmore from Aberfeldy at Easter can have failed to notice the superb views of Ben Lawers, now rising beyond some reach of the river, or vignetted by the beech or birch trees which border the road. But when Kenmore is reached, as on this glorious morning, the bosom of Loch Tay unrippled by a zephyr, and the snowy range reflected in intensified form in its mirror, it only needed the quaint fishing boat which lay in front to complete the resemblance to the Lake of Geneva or perchance that of Como. Stopping our course to dead slow, we took in the salient points of the picture, and then hurried on to meet the mountaineers at Inveroran. I must pass over the incidents of our journey, the new laid patches of metal, unsullied by the steam roller, calling forth carefully guarded language, or the execrable condition of the road from Luib to Crianlarich. These are but details, and much needed to curb the usually exuberant spirits of the motorist. At Luib an ominous swaying of the car pointed to a deflated tyre, but with our trusty Stepney

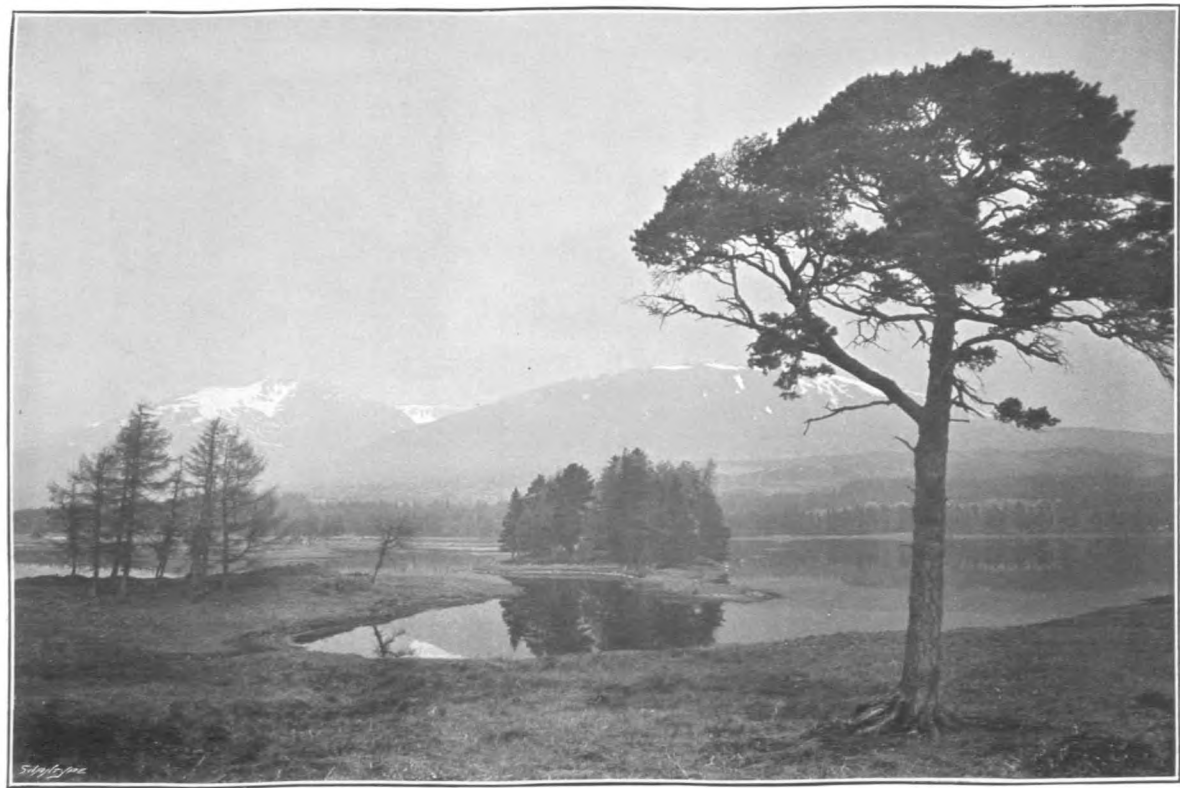


wheel, clamped on in neighbourly fashion to the rim, it was only a matter of five minutes ere we were again on the road. We were well to the front, and as we passed Tyndrum Hotel waved a greeting to Douglas and Rennie just starting on bicycles for Ballachulish.

The morning train laden with our friends had not reached Bridge of Orchy when after leisurely rounding the lovely shores of Loch Tulla we drove up to Inveroran. It was just eight o'clock, so that allowing for stops three and a half hours had sufficed for the journey. Ere long we descried Raeburn on his bicycle, the forerunner of those of the party who had arrived by train. Breakfast at Inveroran needs no commendation from me, the sharp-set appetites of the travellers being in any case the best of sauce. Parker from London was as usual in the best of spirits, and did yeoman service in obtaining extra supplies of scones. Douglas and Rennie appeared on the scene ere the party had scattered—Raeburn to join with Ling on an attack on the Buchaille Chasm; Parker, Ullén, and Campbell to try the steep buttress below the Clachlet; and the others to reach Kingshouse in the easiest way possible.

My son and I returned along Loch Tulla to photograph the exquisite scene. The surface of the loch was absolutely calm, and through the haze Stob Ghabhar or the mountains by Ben Dothaidh loomed ghostly and mysterious with their snowy crests. Our friends had all disappeared as we returned past Inveroran, and speedily motored to Baa Bridge. Here the car was left by the roadside, and a course made for the buttress coming down from the Clachlet to the Baa River. After so long a period of drought the bogs were practically dry, and good time was made to the ridge, where fine cornices overhung the great corrie. The distant views were hazy, and photography was entirely confined to snow effects.

On nearing the summit of our peak a distant "coo-ee" disclosed the whereabouts of Parker's party on the cliff below, but no scrutiny could detect the figures. The long line of cornices prevented any direct descent till the ridge crossing over to Meall Bhuiridh was reached, and here a splendid glissade of about 1,300 feet took us swiftly into



*April 12, 1906.*

LOCH TULLA.

*W. Inglis Clark.*

the corrie in time to see the others retreating from their buttress, and making their way by the steep snow slopes to the east of the peak. An easy walk of an hour led past a miniature Marjelen See, where huge masses of icy snow were either thrust under the surface of the water from the pressure behind, or floated like icebergs to and fro. The motor reached, it was an easy ascent to the Baa Pass, whence the view of numerous heather fires gave the impression of looking down on some great battle-field, the sound of artillery being alone wanting. Later that evening the scene was even more striking, and all who witnessed it will long remember the lurid crescents of flame reflected on the pillars of smoke rising to the sky.

Kingshouse Inn did its best for our party, consisting at its height of Campbell from Montrose, Goggs, Raeburn, the Macroberts, Thomson, Ullén, Goodeve, Mackenzie, Ling, and H. and C. W. Walker on their motor from Dundee. With so goodly a company no evening could drag heavily, and games of skill evinced the powers of the mountaineers. Raeburn introduced the peripatetic frogs, in which the laws of inertia and momentum were alternately invoked to direct the frogs in their course. The intrepid Goggs, with his usual staying power and go, came in an easy first, and was crowned with acclamation as the "Frog King," a title second to none. Subsequently Goodeve and C. W. Walker, like a couple of ancient gladiators, blindfolded and armed with deadly literary weapons, after asking the momentous question, "Brother, are you there?" endeavoured to annihilate each other, to the huge delight of the onlookers, who were perched on sofa or table or other vantage point. From Killiecrankie came the exciting game of Piladex, which made the hours pass almost as rapidly as we find them pass when negotiating some difficult rock pitch or endeavouring to escape from an ice-bound couloir. The merriment of the party perhaps reached its high-water mark when Parker and the writer endeavoured to secure for the Club-room a pair of china dogs which graced the mantelpiece. Although unable to secure these matchless treasures, it is satisfactory to know that replicas may perhaps be obtained in Glasgow.

Friday morning promised well, and Buchaille Etive attracted the whole party by different routes. As Parker describes elsewhere the attractive and difficult, though sometimes dangerous, climb accomplished by himself and the writer under the leadership of Raeburn, I pass on to the Saturday, when the motor did good service in conveying our party to Loch Etive head.

H. and C. W. Walker with my son and self nicely filled the motor, which was purposely not overloaded owing to the reputed bad state of the road. Our goal was Ben Starav, one of those inaccessible hills on Loch Etive shore, which occasionally attract our long-distance climbers from Inveroran. By road it was about twelve miles from Kingshouse, and as these intervening miles embraced views of every variety of scenery, the motor was an ideal mode of progression, save to the driver. We were credibly informed that this was the third motor to traverse the glen, but if our commendation has any influence it will not be the last one.

The weather was far from promising, and Buchaille only occasionally stood out clear from the scarf of clouds which streamed about its summit. Turning down Glen Etive we soon overtook our original member, Mr Mackenzie, *en route* for Dalness, thence to return to Glencoe by Buchaille Beag. As the road turned round the southern spur of the Buchaille Mhor ridge, the fine shapes of the hills evoked admiration, and a halt was called at Dalness to photograph Ben Starav, its snowy peak glittering in a distant gleam of sunshine. It was a farewell glimpse, for soon the storm clouds enveloped its summit and promised us a cool reception. As one approaches Loch Etive head, it is worth while to turn and look back, for the conical peaks about Buchaille Beag give quite an unusual interest to the landscape. About a mile from the sea we left the motor in a miniature quarry by the roadside, and taking to a cart track crossed the river to the east side, where a wooden bridge spans the narrow gorge. We had the greatest difficulty in passing this spot, for the Walkers, ardent fishermen, almost forgot Ben Starav in admiring the pools where sea trout might be got, or in discussing the other



*April 12, 1906.*

SUMMIT OF THE CLACHLET.

*W. Inglis Clark.*

amenities of this alluring river. The photographer also had here a rare prize, for Buchaille Beag and its neighbours are nicely framed in the gorge of the river, and form a picture more attractive than that of the open glen.

Meanwhile the weather steadily grew worse, and but for our hasty glances at the various ridges of the mountain as they loomed out momentarily from the mist, we would have been in absolute ignorance of our peak. One main arête came down from the clouds in our direction, its steep cliffs on the left and a narrow crest of snow above indicating a definite line of ascent. The wind increased in force, but sheltering behind a buttress we rapidly rose to 2,000 feet, whence a fine view was obtained to the waters of the loch far below, and across to the extraordinary slabby face of Ben Trilleachan just opposite. Streaming with water, these cliffs reminded one of the Coruisk slabs, and seemed to offer but few attractive routes for the climber. The ascent to the summit presented no difficulties, and the occasional glimpses right down to Bonawe, as some window in the clouds suddenly opened, repaid us manifold for any labour expended. On the top the wind was deflected by some lower ridge, but a dense mist enveloped us and prevented a view into the corrie. Keeping along the eastern ridge, we in vain sought a place to glissade down. No cornice intervened, but with hard snow above, an impenetrable mist below and a seemingly vertical wall descending from the ridge, no wonder that it was decided to send C. W. W. over on the rope to prospect.

The difficulties were more imaginary than real, and after about a hundred feet had been descended, the snow was found to be safe but in the most unsatisfactory condition for any form of glissade, being now hard, now soft, and never quite right. However, we managed to put in an aggregate of about 1,000 feet of glissades, by which time we more resembled snowballs than canny members of the S.M.C. A pleasant tramp to the loch side brought us to a pretty and clean cottage, where we were regaled on the best of oatcakes and milk. Our hostess, mother of ten, charmed us with her Highland intelligence and hospitality, and made the all too short time pass quickly in telling of

features of lonely life in the Highlands. While Harry Walker with his usual urbanity elicited information on a dozen points, the others had time to look round on the glittering cups hanging from the shelves, or to enjoy the cosiness of the ingle nook. The delightful picture of this Highland home and its charming mistress will long remain vivid in our memories. On crossing the little bridge we looked down to the deep pool near twenty feet below, and wondered at the recent flood which had poured in such force as to fill up the rocky gorge and even overflow the bridge. Evidence of the extraordinary spate was also forthcoming in the wreckage which hung on the highest boughs of some of the birch trees. We reached the motor in a biting blast of hail, and as, shivering, each one wrapped himself in his thick motor coat, we rejoiced in no longer facing the wind, but, speeding before it, in being able to allow the grand impressions of the day to sink into our memories.

Alas! the showers were gradually becoming more united, and when night had settled down the storm fiend shrieked around Kingshouse, and a south-westerly gale hurled itself against the windows. This continued all Sunday and prevented our proposed visit to the Meet at Ballachulish. On Monday morning a few bold spirits still hied them to the hills to be soaked externally in mountain dew. The motorists prepared for a wet journey, and about 10.30, amid the rattle of hail and rain, started for Killiecrankie. The road, rough at all times, was now a porridge of sand, stones, and water, but our motor was equal to the trial, and easily surmounting the Baa Pass took us safely home in four and a half hours. Accustomed as mountaineers are to defy the weather, it would still astonish them to know how many plies of garments are requisite to keep out such a rain when on motor tour. No less than five distinct garments were removed on our arrival, before the writer appeared in ordinary costume to enter the house.

Among the many mountains which can be climbed from Killiecrankie by the aid of a motor, Schiehallion stands out prominently. Ben Lawers or the Tarmachans are easily climbed from Killin. The peaks round Dalwhinnie are



*April 23, 1906.*

LOCH TUMMEL.

*W. Inglis Clark.*



within easy distance of the railway, but Schiehallion rises in isolated grandeur, and is hardly to be reached without a long tramp. In October, when on our Arrol Johnston car, my son and I made a trip to Glen Lyon and district to enjoy the glorious autumn tints. We toured north from Coshieville, and passing Whitebridge ran down to Tummel Bridge Inn through herds of sheep filling the road from hedge to hedge for fully a mile. It was a slow journey, but, though the driver could have no eyes save for the road, it enabled the passenger to take in the almost incredible beauty of this district in October. The heather, no longer in its purple, had added brown-red to its hues, and glowing in the slanting light harmonised with the withered bracken which here and there broke up the great moorlands. The birch trees glittered like a shower of golden rain, and the rowans, so familiar in the Highlands, with their blood-red leaves, stood out vividly against the sombre pine trees now almost blue-green by contrast.

It was a showery, snowy day, and as we rolled along by the tumultuous waters of the Tummel to Rannoch, a break in the clouds disclosed Schiehallion, covered with its first fresh garment of winter snow, dazzling the eye under the rays of the sun.

Again, in the beginning of April, a party of us had wandered up by the Falls of Bruar, where the combination of waterfall and rocky ravine recalls the best of sub-Alpine scenes. We had ascended to the point on the southern bank where a view could be obtained of the higher fall. Looking south, the splendid Scotch firs, now crowding on some shapely knoll, or again springing from a timely crack in the rocky walls, stood boldly against the sky. Far away a storm cloud was breaking on Schiehallion's rocky scarp. Piled high above and heaped one on another rolled mighty cumulus clouds, as if barred and deflected by the sudden cone which rises from the valley. The slanting track of the snowstorm formed a veil through which the peak itself could be seen basking snow white in a momentary ray. Our vision, perhaps more precious because short-lived, was rudely blotted out as we had to take refuge from one of those passing snowstorms so characteristic of last

April, but it strengthened the impression of October, and determined me to make nearer acquaintance with Schiehallion at an early date.

Perhaps among the dozen Scotch mountains which form the repertoire of every schoolboy, Schiehallion is sure to be one. Probably its reputation is chiefly dependent on the classical experiment which was performed on its regular slopes, when Maskelyne deduced the density of the earth from the attraction of a plummet to this mountain. Certain it is that no thrilling accounts of mountain adventure or of the feats of rock climbers on giddy crag or cliff, have brought it into notice. And yet no one who has gazed across the Moor of Rannoch, from the heights of Mamore or Nevis, to where its shapely cone looms in the distance, but, fascinated with its appearance, has longed to make its acquaintance. From Loch Rannoch, half way west from Kinloch Rannoch, it soars aloft like some volcanic peak in regular lines, dominating the gradually decreasing slopes to the east. If the photographer, bent on picture-making, can include some of the slender birches in the foreground, the result will combine the most charming characteristics of Scottish scenery, birches, and loch, with mountain form of simple but sublime proportions. The photograph facing this page by our worthy Editor, admirably suggests the scene.

Raeburn and C. W. Walker were invited to join in an expedition to Schiehallion, and as our home party was large, we commandeered the 6 H.P. de Dion of the latter to aid in transport. It was one of those peerless days in the beginning of April when, though the buds scarce showed the faintest sign of life, and the ground was frost-bound in the morning, the mid-day sun and a brilliant atmosphere gave such direct heat as to make mere existence a joy and a delight. The road, passing high above the river in the Pass of Killiecrankie, afforded glimpses through the trees which the leafy wealth of summer must deny the traveller. Crossing the Garry by the picturesque bridge, and ignoring the allurements of the Falls of Tummel, we toiled up the rough road to Bonskeid, from above which an exquisite view is obtained down the valley. At the Queen's View



*April 17, 1906.*

LOCH RANNOCH

*W. Douglas.*

Loch Tummel comes in full sight, the intervening stretches of the river pleasantly filling in the foreground. Leaving motor wraps behind, we ascended the slopes to the north whence the view is manifold enhanced. To the right, far beyond the level where lies Loch Rannoch, we could descry the Mamore peaks, clear cut and brilliant against the blue sky, while Schiehallion itself, its northern slopes heavy with snow, was mirrored in Loch Tummel. In the clear atmosphere it seemed but a stone's throw to our peak. What charming peeps through birch and pine as we reached Tummel Bridge, and turning sharply southwards breasted the steep hill to Whitebridge.

Unlike mountaineers, who are the very milk of human kindness, and noted for their tenderness to those unable to go equally fast, motorists are, I fear, very human. It was perhaps natural that C. W. W. in his smaller car, and carrying no less ponderous and important a personage than "yours truly," should have wished to demonstrate that neither gradients of one in six, nor surface suitable for a river bed, could prevent his little flier from reaching the hill top first. It was equally natural that as the hum of the engine degenerated to a thump, and finally to a gasp, that the driver should slip over the side, so that the lightened car might surmount the obstacle. It was even natural, though at great personal inconvenience, that the writer should offer to cast his coat on the roadside or even walk a few steps. These we could forgive, but I regret to relate that the 10 H.P. Humber, driven by C. I. C., which had been hiding its powers on the level, came up the slope with a rush, its mob of jeering occupants, headed by Raeburn, instead of descending to assist the faint and weary, using their comfortable position to scoff and laugh at our member from Dundee.

It is maintained that on rounding the corner, the occupants of the Humber saw the de Dion car standing on the hill, and a man apparently dead lying below it, a huge pair of boots being recognised as those of the Dundee member. They were relieved at last to see his snow-white anklets waving about, somewhat like a lamb's tail when its owner runs to its mother. It is further asserted that the

owner of the boots was caught in the act of sucking from the petrol pipe, and some one said he now knew why petrol is called motor spirit. These libels I cannot vouch for, as from my position in the car I could see nothing, but I know that C. W. W. seemed refreshed when he re-entered the car, and had now no difficulty in ascending the hill. It was therefore not long before we forgathered below Schiehallion. Taking the road from Whitebridge which descends to Rannoch, a few miles brought us to a point where we had the easiest and best way to the summit, and, leaving the motors by the roadside, we had a charming tramp over the heather to our hill. The bogs were dry, but where some deep pools remained swarms of frogs and their spawn kept up the interest. At intervals, a grouse, its red wattles shining like danger lamps amid the prevailing brown, or a hurrying hare, still white in its winter garb, raised the sporting interest in Walker, who, from habit, covered each as it appeared with his ice axe, and in thought at least had excellent sport. His soliloquy, "That's a deader," had the advantage that it couldn't be contradicted. The ascent to the ridge was for the most part over heather and debris, although Raeburn exploited a broad couloir for information as to the state of snow. All along the ridge the widening views called forth our admiration. The Lawers group shows especially to advantage, the Tarmachans and Ben More more to the right. But perhaps the finest mountain group was that of Lochaber and Mamore, which, heavily coated with snow, presented a serrated and diversified sky line. The fine rocky summit shows well as a foreground, throwing into atmospheric distance these Alps of Scotland.

While Raeburn, Walker, and my son exercised their ingenuity and their muscles in ascending a difficult rock chimney just below the summit, luncheon was spread on a rock island surrounded by beautiful snow. The conditions were perfect; absolute calm, a clear atmosphere, a glorious view, a jovial company, muscles but pleasantly tired, a satisfactory feast, a balmy temperature—what more can mortals wish for? And as, after a stay of an hour or more on the top, we wended our way either by glissade or

over the heather to the road below, our cup of satisfaction fairly flowed over. No weary tramp over the intervening fifteen miles of road, for in a trice the motors were ready, and with head lamps turned homewards, we speeded towards Killiecrankie, which was reached in time for dinner.

## A CLIMB ON THE COIRE ARDER CLIFFS.

BY F. S. GOGGS.

WERE it not that I consider that the honorary officials of the S.M.C. are already too many, I should certainly bring forward a motion at the Annual Meeting of the Club that the fresh post of "Honorary Guide" be established, and that Mr Raeburn should be elected thereto. His qualifications are numerous :—First and foremost he is a bachelor, and can therefore be at the beck and call of every member of the Club ; secondly, he never seems to mind what kind of a climber he has at the other end of the rope, his one object in life being apparently (to slightly alter Kingsley's words) "helping lame dogs up the cliffs" ; thirdly and lastly, his climbing skill—but to refer to this is a work of supererogation.

Being resident at Kingussie for part of June 1906, I summoned the Honorary Guide to my assistance, and we determined to make a further assault on Corrie Arder. I might remark in passing that Kingussie makes an excellent centre for bagging Munros, and for climbing, provided that the climber does not object to cycling or motoring to and from his work twenty to fifty miles.

Our plan was to cycle to Loch Laggan Hotel, spend the night there, make an early morning start, and catch the 5 P.M. train from Kingussie back to town. At seven o'clock in the evening of a day which lingers in my memory as the warmest and most tropical I ever experienced in Scotland—a day which brought back visions of Alpine beauty, for could we not see snow in abundance on Ben Alder and Mullach Coire an Iubhair—a day in which Raeburn and I had basked in the sunshine, lounging in *deshabille* on the grass terrace of the garden, lazily enjoying the grand panorama, stretching from Meall a Buchaille above Loch Morlich, along the Sgoran Dubh Ridge with its many corries, the rounded tops of the Gaick and Drumochter Hills to lone Ben Alder, thence across the uptowering mass of Mullach as aforesaid, still holding in a

strong embrace its wintry wealth, to Creag Peathraich and Carn Liath—in the comparative cool of the evening of this delightful day we started at a quiet pace. Everything that evening spoke of peace and rest, but after all—

“This is the scene of combat, not of rest.

Man’s joys are joys of conquest, not of peace.”—YOUNG.

Some three miles after leaving Newtonmore, Raeburn pointed out to me the two climbs on the face of Creag Dhubh mentioned in *S.M.C. Jour.*, Vol. VIII., p. 11. The road from Kingussie to Loch Laggan is very pretty, and the scenery extremely diversified, and we did our best to appreciate it, but it was the lambing season, and one’s mind had to be bent to the mundane problem of discovering what particular sheep was the mother of that lamb at present basking in the heat of the bare road a few yards from one’s front tyre. The lamb was certain to make for its mother, but as there were generally several mothers to choose from on either side of the road, we found it impossible to predict in which direction the lamb would go :

“And everywhere the wheel did turn,  
That lamb was sure to go.”

The warmth of the road invited the lambs to curl themselves upon it, and the only thing to do was to ride slowly. Laggan Bridge, close to which was the home of Mrs Grant, who wrote her “Letters from the Mountains” there at the end of the eighteenth century, was duly crossed, and having gained the watershed of Scotland, which at this point is almost level, we rode all too quickly through the charming defile of the Pattack stream, and suddenly Loch Laggan with its sandy beach, its grand woods, the picturesque peaks in the foreground, and the impressive outline of mountains in the background, burst on one’s delighted senses. A little before 9 P.M. we jumped off our machines at Loch Laggan Hotel, and gaily asked for rooms. We found we had reckoned without our host. There were no rooms to be had ; Mr Gladstone, the Home Secretary, and his party were occupying practically the whole place, and one small bedroom



containing a single bed, into which, we were assured, not more than one could squeeze, was the only accommodation that remained. The proprietor was invisible, and negotiations through a serving maid proved unavailing. If we went back on our road a mile and a half to the school-house, perhaps we could get a bed there, we were told, but we knew such a course of action would be fatal to an early start. Assuming we tossed up for the privilege of sleeping on the floor of the bedroom at the Hotel, could we get something to eat at 5 A.M., we ventured to inquire. "No," was the prompt reply—we should disturb the slumbers of the Liberal Government.

Finding once again that men were made for inns and not inns for men, we gave up the attempt and inquired about possible accommodation at Aberarder. We were told there was plenty of space there, but whether the shepherd would take us in was not known. After some liquid refreshment and the purchase of a loaf of bread to provide against contingencies, we mounted our machines and quickly covered the three and a quarter miles to Aberarder, arriving there a little before ten.

Raeburn went forward to try his hand at diplomacy, but his appearance was distinctly against him. He wore one of those soft slouch felt hats, which, in the popular mind, denotes an Italian brigand. I wished afterwards I had gone forward myself, as I happened to be wearing a most respectable cloth cap. Raeburn rapped, and a female, probably the shepherd's wife, just opened the door, but after one glance at Raeburn she never looked at him again, and the only reply vouchsafed in answer to his numerous tactful questions was "No." We remembered the Rev. A. E. Robertson's remark (*S.M.C. Jour.*, Vol. VII., p. 12), "In all my wanderings I have never been refused a night's shelter," and could only sorrowfully assume that we did not possess either his diplomacy, his persistency, or his clerical advantages—or was it that we lacked the Gaelic? At last Raeburn told her that we should put our machines in an outhouse (a cobbled hayshed), and leave them there till our return, to which she neither assented nor dissented. The final result of the parley was the loan of a box of

matches, though these were hardly necessary, as at this time of year in the north it never gets really dark, but inside the cobbled hayhouse they were of use. We inspected the outbuildings generally, and Raeburn with his keen ornithological instincts soon discovered the henhouse, but even he did not seem drawn to take up his night's lodging with the roosters, so we came back to our hayshed in which there was no hay. So far as we could tell in the gloom, the cobbled floor was clean and we decided to stop there for a few hours, and make an early morning start for Corrie Arder. I lay down on the cobbles, but Raeburn had the use of a piece of wire fencing which he had discovered in the course of our perambulations, and which he fondly tried to imagine was a wire mattress. In spite of his mattress I got more sleep than he did, but the small cobblestones did not assist the circulation, and finally, having kept perfectly still in a cramped position for half an hour—it might have been only five minutes but it seemed half an hour—being afraid to move for fear of disturbing Raeburn, who, I expect, was performing the same farce, I got up and recovered the normal use of arms and legs. We opened the rough doors of the shed, let in what light there was, and after having eaten a jam piece or two, set out at 2 A.M. for our objective. The moon was obscured by clouds but there was ample light to walk by, and a sheep track led us to the side of the burn, where we cached one of our knapsacks containing several spare articles between some stones, and covered it with driftwood and turf. About half a mile from Aberarder a good four-foot track leaves the burn and strikes north up the slopes of Carn Liath. It rises nearly 1,000 feet in the first mile, and then continues right on to the Lochan, high above the burn at first, nearly level.

This walk to the Lochan in the small hours of the morning was delightful. One felt that the world was asleep, and that one had nature to oneself. Some way below us was the unceasing roar of the burn; its tone subdued by distance, it seemed to symbolise nature's never-ceasing activities. The notes of various birds were heard the whole night through, and Raeburn showed me in the heather just beside our

path two nests of the titlark, both containing eggs. At 3.40 the sun rose, and shone full on the Posts of Corrie Arder. The Posts were white, and vigorously dancing cataracts could be seen emerging from their base. The Honorary Editor had been consulted as to the amount of snow we should be likely to find, and had given it as his opinion that we should not find much. As a matter of fact, the big gully between the Pinnacle and the Posts had over 1,200 feet of continuous hard snow in it, and we afterwards found on the tops several stretches of half-a-mile in length. I therefore roundly accused the Editor of being guilty of terminological inexactitude. We reached the Lochan about 4 A.M., and were struck with the black and white print the water gave us of the cliffs. We had left our camera at Kingussie, thinking we should have no time for photography. Had we brought it we should have been well rewarded. We selected a sunny spot at the foot of the Pinnacle, had a rest and food, and searched the rocks opposite us for feasible routes. The Posts or gullies were obviously only fit for clients of Neptune, so we turned our attention to the buttresses, and eventually decided to tackle the southernmost one. If the reader will refer to the drawing of "The Cliffs of Corrie Arder," facing page 141, *S.M.C. Jour.*, Vol. IV., he will notice that *b* marks the biggest gully on the cliff face: the buttress immediately to the left of *b* gully I propose to call the B buttress; the next buttress to the left (south), I shall call A buttress. To climb buttress A was the task we set ourselves.

At 5 A.M. we were afoot once more, stumping up the snow, which must have been of considerable depth. A direct ascent from the snow to our buttress looked impossible, so selecting a favourable point on buttress B we scrambled diagonally to the north a few yards, then traversed south and crossed the stream flowing from the Post dividing buttresses A and B just where it fell over straight to the snow below. We were now on the buttress we had selected from the breakfast place. The rough slope quickly increased in steepness, and we were soon on a very steep and much broken-up face composed of short ledges of mixed turf, rock, and heather. Some idea of the steepness

may be gathered from the fact that at one point Raeburn put his foot on my shoulder simply to prevent himself being pushed out, and although this was the only point at which my assistance was accepted, there were many nearly similar places. We kept gaining height by a series of short curves approximating to a straight line till, at length, we came to a full stop where a direct ascent was risky, not to say impossible. Raeburn spent some time in reconnoitring to the right, and reported a *mauvais pas* which, if accomplished, would bring us on to the buttress' indefinite arête. The *mauvais pas*, after being carefully looked at, did not endorse the saying that old friends are best, and Raeburn recommended a descent some twelve feet to a longer ledge than most there, which we reckoned would bring us round to easier ground on the left.

*Il faut reculer pour mieux sauter* is a tactical exercise which has frequently to be employed in climbing, but the direct ascent enjoys a unique prestige, and we objected to leave this first ascent to be straightened out by some second-hand expert. Raeburn stepped round me, therefore, and at length wormed his way diagonally up to the left: after a few more feet the A.P. face decreased in steepness, and curving back to the right, the arête of the buttress was struck at the foot of good rocks. The first part of the climb was successfully accomplished, and our fingers, grubby and black nailed with digging into turf and heather, gripped the pure rock with delight. For some fifty feet we clambered up the well-shattered ridge at an easy angle, then, finding that the direct route became steeper and the rock unshattered, we turned to the left out on to the face for some dozen feet or so, and up a steep and narrow chimney which we had seen from the breakfast place. There is also another chimney farther to the left, but the first served our purpose well enough. Our chimney is sensational—looking down between your legs you see the long snow tongue of the gully apparently vertically below you—but at the same time perfectly safe as you can wedge yourself in capitally. Our one complaint was that it was all too short (twenty feet say). We emerged on to a gently sloping grass shoulder and built a stone man,

then making a half-turn to the right (we could have gained the plateau by continuing straight on up a gentle ascent covered with snow), we strolled across some thirty yards of snow to a well-shattered mass of rock which can be scrambled up anywhere, and which lands one on the summit plateau of Creag Meggie. Here Raeburn propped up a stone obelisk some four feet in height to inform future generations of climbers that buttress A had been conquered. The length of the climb we reckon at 1,200 feet. The Lochan is 2,046 feet. The top of the Corrie Arder cliffs is 3,591 feet.

It was now barely 7.30 A.M., and Raeburn had never bagged the summit. He had therefore no excuse for not putting himself in a position to inscribe another name on his alpenstock, so we walked mostly across snow to the true summit cairn, about a mile from the Corrie Arder cliffs and 400 yards beyond the "huge cairn as big as a house," the work, it is said, of a mad farmer (*S.M.C. Jour.*, Vol. III., p. 236). Although it was only 8 A.M. and a fine day, the view was disappointing; the higher hills had caught what clouds there were, and only the nearer and lower hills were clear. Still, what view there was we enjoyed, and after half-an-hour's rest, we descended to the Window and found 500 or 600 feet of snow leading down to the Lochan. A few standing glissades seemed to quickly raise the level of the Lochan, and at the foot of the snow we stopped to admire the cliffs to the west, up which new climbs will doubtless be made.

The sun was by this time flooding the whole corrie with fierce light, and we, or at least I, now looked at the Lochan and cliffs with the added pleasure derived from knowledge. We could trace our climb quite easily from the bergschrund at the foot to the face chimney high up, and just beyond that the final bluff.

At eleven we were dabbling our feet in the burn in a somewhat somnolent condition, and it required little to make us believe that we were in Switzerland broiling in the valley after having conquered our peak. After an hour of laziness we put on the lighter boots we had now recovered from the uncached rucksack, and 300 yards brought us back to our

luxurious lodging-house. We called on our hostess to thank her for her hospitality, and to return the borrowed matches. Raeburn also bore in his hands as a thank-offering the loaf we had bought at Laggan Inn for a provision reserve, but we had not needed it, as the large supply of jam pieces we had brought from Kingussie was not yet altogether demolished: thus we repaid good for evil. Cycling proved to be a very pleasant change of motion, and we again enjoyed the charming scenery of the Kingussie and Loch Laggan road which we had traversed in the reverse direction only a little over twelve hours before—it seemed days. A sampling of the country's milk at Drumgask under the shadow of the big trees in front of the inn—futile attempts to sound the depths of lambs' infantile minds, are the only incidents which remain in my memory of our homeward journey to Kingussie, where we arrived at 3 P.M.

HOT NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE MOUNTAINS  
IN JUNE.

BY H. T. MUNRO.

*Bidein a' Choire Sheasgaich and Lurg Mhòr.*

By the kind invitation of Mr and Mrs Colin Phillip, who are spending the summer at Glen Brittle, I was enabled to pay a visit to that most inaccessible region the Southern Cuillins under exceptionally favourable conditions. To catch the mail for Skye it is necessary for me to go as far as Perth or Blair Athole overnight. Instead of so doing I left home on the morning of 4th June, and reached Strathcarron Station at 6 P.M. After a light meal I started out at seven for Lurg Mhòr and his neighbours. Lurg Mhòr, lying above the west end of Loch Monar, is undoubtedly somewhat un-get-at-able. From Strathcarron it can be approached either by a rough driving road to Loch Calavie, or more directly by a bridle path over the moor to the head of Loch an Laoigh. I chose the latter route. About a mile from the station the track branches, and the left branch should be followed. Having misunderstood the directions given me I took the right, which terminates at the little Loch nan Graobh, and had in consequence a rough walk across the moor till the correct path was again struck. This path rises to a height of some 1,500 feet, and then drops to about 800 feet at the loch. In the twilight the west face of Bidein a' Choire Sheasgaich looked craggy, and I accordingly bore away to the left for the north ridge. It afterwards appeared that this west face was anywhere easily climbable. The summit, which has no cairn, is according to the six-inch O.S. map 3,102 feet—the one-inch map only gives a 3,000 feet contour. It had taken four and a half hours to reach this, but the night was very hot, and at least an hour might have been saved. The big north-east corrie between this hill and Lurg Mhòr was still very full of snow. Between the two hills there is a considerable dip, but the ground is very easy. Lurg Mhòr (3,234 feet) has a large cairn. Beyond this the ridge

narrows, and is in places slabby with an abrupt drop to the north, and requires some dodging, but even at the darkest hour of the twenty-four there was no difficulty in finding an easy way. Meall Mòr rises to a pretty and very distinct little top with a small cairn (3,190 feet from the six-inch O.S.). In returning I kept over the southern shoulder of Bidein a' Choire Sheasgaich, but otherwise followed the same route, and reached the hotel at 6 A.M. in time for a good rest before the mail left for Skye.

It was after 9 P.M. before Glen Brittle Lodge was reached.

### *Sgurr Sguman and the Dubhs.*

Though I had written some days before, I was unable to secure John M'Kenzie, as he was permanently engaged to Mr A. E. Robertson, who was staying at Sligachan. Accordingly, on 6th June I started out alone and ascended Sgurr Sguman by his easy western shoulder. The day was again very fine and hot, and the views beautiful. An easy descent was made into Coir a' Ghrunnda and a line struck for Sgurr Dubh na Dabheinn on good snow patches below the cliffs of Sgurr Alasdair. Mr Phillip tells me that in company with Mrs Phillip and Dr Collie he had once descended these cliffs from Alasdair by a narrow but perfectly easy scree-filled chimney which they had accidentally struck. It is so hidden that it can neither be seen from above nor below unless one is close to the very base of the cliffs. John M'Kenzie told me that he knows this chimney, and that it is as easy as the Stone Shoot from Coire Labain. Many newly fallen stones on the snow induced me to avoid keeping too close to the cliffs, and consequently I entirely failed to see any sign of it.

By the time I reached Dubh na Dabheinn the mist had come down thick, and it was not easy to choose the best route. However, no difficulty was experienced in reaching Dubh Mhor. Hence I returned again over Dubh na Dabheinn, and down Coir a' Ghrunnda home. The descent of Dubh na Dabheinn is tedious and irksome, as it consists entirely of big blocks of very rough gabbro. The mist only extended to just below the loch.



*Sgurr Alasdair and Sgurr Tearlach.*

Next morning, 7th June, was again intensely hot, the air perfectly still, and all the tops clear. In company with the two Miss Protheros, nieces of Mr Phillip, I climbed Alasdair by the Stone Shoot. From Alasdair we went on to Tearlach. I suppose this mountain is almost always climbed by those who have either just come from Mhic Coinnich or crossed the Alasdair-Dubh gap, and by comparison it seems easy. I admit, though, that with two young ladies under my care I regretted that we had not brought the rope. They, however, climbed with ease and confidence, notwithstanding that Ben Vorlich was their only previous ascent of a 3,000-foot mountain. The height of Sgurr Alasdair has now been fixed trigonometrically at 3,309 feet. At the most I do not think that Tearlach can be 50 feet lower, and it may very possibly prove to be the second highest peak of the Cuillins. The day was absolutely perfect, and only the necessity of returning home for dinner induced us to leave the summit. On the Alasdair side of the Stone Shoot there was still a considerable depth of snow, on which we got several short standing glissades. About two-thirds of the way down is a spring of the coldest and most delicious water, which, however, *might* run dry late in the summer.

*Sgurr nan Eag and Garsbheinn.*

If possible 8th June was even hotter and more beautiful than the previous day. We had decided, however, to climb at night, and accordingly at 11 P.M. started for Coir a' Ghrunnda. Just as we left the Lodge the mist came down thick, and of course many were the lamentations that we had wasted so beautiful a day. Spite of the mist it was intensely hot. In June there is no night, and the way into Coir a' Ghrunnda is easy enough to find once you know that you must avoid the burn and bear well away to the left close to the cliffs of Sgurr Sguman. Still it is wonderful how time is lost in thick fog, especially fog at midnight, and already the evening twilight, which lingers through the night, was giving place to the dawn, when

some 300 or 400 feet below the loch (*i.e.* 1,800 feet above the sea) we rose above the mist, the full moon shone out, and the rocky cirque of summits appeared clearly silhouetted against a cloudless sky. A short halt for a light breakfast at the base of Sgurr nan Eag by a spring which rivalled that in the Alasdair Stone Shoot, and then we hurried on over unpleasant stony ground until the ridge was struck.

The view from here onwards was one we shall never forget. I have often, of course, had the experience of being in sunshine with the mist below, but except once—from the summit of Monte Rosa, in 1875—I have never before seen the effect so continuous and lasting; usually the sun dissipates the mists, or they rise and envelop the mountaintops. To-day we remained on the summits for several hours basking in the hot sun, revelling in the gorgeous views, and photographing, and during the whole time a white sea of cloud lay 1,000 to 1,500 feet below us, perfectly still, looking like a padding of cotton-wool, and appearing so solid as to give the impression that a stone, if rolled down on to it, would rest on the top and not penetrate it. We got also some beautiful and varied fog bow effects. Once a perfect bow appeared high *above* the sun, although there did not seem to be any vapour in the upper air. Now and then a tongue of mist would creep up until it filled the hollow in which lay Loch Coir a' Ghrunnda, which for a few moments it would obscure, and then again slowly recede to its original position a few hundred feet lower. Except this loch no water could be seen, all was covered and hidden by this white quilt of mist, but above it every mountain which it can ever be possible to see, stood out intensely clear and black and close-looking. The Long Island from Barra to Harris, Rum, Mull, and the mainland from Ben Nevis and the Glencoe hills to the Sutherlandshire mountains, Blathbheinn and Clach Glas looking like islands, and the whole range of the Cuillins from Sgurr nan Gilleann to Garsbheinn. By the way, I must entirely dissent from the statement in Mr Douglas's list of the Cuillins,\* that the main ridge ends in Sgurr Dubh Bheag,

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\* *Journal*, No. 22, Vol. IV., p. 212.

or indeed that either Dubh Bheag or Dubh Mhor are on the main ridge at all. They form a branch ridge just as much as do Sgurr a' Coir an Lochan or Druim nan Ramh, and the main ridge from Sgurr Tearlach passes through Sgurr Dubh na Dabheinn, Caisteal a Gharbh Choire, Sgurr nan Eag, and Sgurr a' Choire Bheag, and terminates in Garsbheinn. I had often been puzzled to reconcile Mr Douglas's dictum with the map, and these clear days on the spot have confirmed my view, with which Mr Alfred Harker in his list in No. 31 of the *Journal*, Vol. VI., p. 12, agrees.

From Eag our original idea had been to go to the Dubhs, but the young ladies seemed to fancy Garsbheinn, which fitted in well with my views as it enabled me to round off this end of the range. It was only the possible anxiety of our friends if we stayed away too long which finally compelled us to descend from the last-named summit, and about the time that they were breakfasting at Sligachan and Glen Brittle we plunged down into the mist which, opaque as it had seemed from above, proved to be very thin and dry when we got into it; but neither at Sligachan or Glen Brittle did they see the tops of the mountains or blue sky all that day. We reached home having been out just twelve hours—surely record time, but photography and the magnificent views, the delight of drinking in the pure crisp air, and basking in the sun on the ridges, possibly also *anni domini* on the side of the writer, must be held answerable, and by no means any want of energy on the part of the young ladies.

That afternoon I drove up to Sligachan intending to go on on Sunday evening to Portree, but the offer from Mr Robertson of John M'Kenzie's services on the Monday was too good to be refused, the only condition being that we should remain on the top of the third pinnacle until he had photographed us from the fourth.

Sunday was another lovely and very hot day.

#### *Pinnacles and Western Ridge of Sgurr nan Gilleann.*

When we started at 8.30 on Monday, 11th, the mist again lay low but thin, and by the time we reached the

base of the first pinnacle two hours later it had broken up and disappeared, but the rocks were already quite warm, showing that from here upward the sun had shone all the morning. The day was intensely hot, but the distance not as clear as on the previous days. The party consisted of A. E. Robertson, Mrs Urquhart, John M'Kenzie and his nephew Archie (who promises to be a good climber), and the writer. The rope was put on at the base of the third pinnacle. The pinnacles took four hours, but upwards of one hour of this was occupied with photography and luncheon; one and a half hours to the base of the first pinnacle and two hours thence to the summit should be sufficient in these splendid conditions. We descended by the western ridge, the rope being only required to cross the "policeman" and the few steps immediately above it.

After dinner I drove up to Portree, and next morning returned home.

I could not help contrasting this scorching week with my last icy experience of the Cuillins at the Easter Meet, 1905. It may be worth recording that John M'Kenzie tells me that in company with Mr Wickham King and another member he once climbed the gully leading up to the Bealach Coire na Banachdich, which, led by Raeburn, we had attempted at the above Meet.\* Had we known it had already been climbed we might possibly not have spent so much time over it. I do not, however, regret it, for it gave us a most interesting and enjoyable climb.

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\* See Raeburn's article, No. 50, Vol. IX, p. 67.

# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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## BEN WYVIS.

(DIVISION IV. GROUP XI.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 40' 45''$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 34' 35''$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 93; six-inch scale, Sheets 63, 64, Ross-shire. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

A dominant feature in the landscape north of the Beaully Firth, Ben Wyvis rises in the form of an elevated tableland 6 by 3 miles in extent, between the valley of the Black-water and Loch Glass.

The mean elevation of the undulating summit plateau is over 2,500 feet. The culminating points of this plateau, hardly to be called distinct tops, are as follows:—The summit or highest cairn—which has no name—3,429 feet above sea-level; An Cabar,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  mile to the south-south-west, 3,106 feet; An Socach,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to the east, 3,295 feet; Tom a' Choinnich (not named on one-inch map), 1 mile to north, 3,134 feet; and Feachdach, 3 miles to north-east, 3,018 feet. The mountain is entirely composed of the schists and gneisses of the "Moine Series."

Owing to the isolated position and superiority in height of the mountain to any of the neighbouring hills, the view from Wyvis is one of the finest to be obtained in Scotland.

From the ordinary points of view, Wyvis will appear to those who have not penetrated into the wild glens and savage corries that surround the headwaters of the Allt nan Caorach, as a featureless and uninteresting mountain mass. Of these eastern corries, Coire Mhòr and Coire na Feola on either side of the spur of An Socach are the finest; the crags of intensely folded and crumpled schist

which overhang the small lochan in the latter corrie, being particularly impressive.

Two high-level corries, with bold craggy faces, also give interest to the northern and eastern front of Feachdach.

The route ordinarily taken to the summit, from Achterneed Station, on the Dingwall and Skye Railway, is the least interesting and most fatiguing. For the first mile or two an indifferent peat road leads as far as the western branch of the headwaters of the Skiach River, after which an interminable series of peat bogs have to be crossed to the foot of the ridge between Meall na Speireig and An Cabar. This ridge surmounted, a gentle slope with good going, mostly over grass, leads to the summit cairn. The descent may be made by the steep grassy slope of Glas Leathad Mor to the Ullapool road and Garve Station.

Another and preferable route is from Garve (good hotel), along the Ullapool road for about four miles to the Allt a' Bhealaich, and thence by a rough track up the north side of that stream to the mouth of the deep hollow that separates An Cabar from Little Wyvis. From this point the stream can be followed to its head between An Cabar and An Socach, or the steep and stony face of the former hill climbed direct from the glen.

The most interesting approach to the mountain is, however, from the village of Evanton (inn, small but comfortable). Station—Novar, on the Highland Railway.

Five miles up the beautiful valley of the Glass—passing *en route* the wonderful river gorge of the Black Rock of Novar—the River Glass is crossed by the bridge at Eileanach, or, if the water is low, just above the falls, three-quarters of a mile lower down. From Eileanach a track leads over grassy slopes to the junction of the Allt Coire Measaich with the Allt nan Caorach. From the junction a good path follows the left bank of the latter stream for about two miles to the foot of a tributary burn coming in from the west. This stream can now be followed up into Coire na Feola on the left, or if the main stream be kept, a further walk of two miles over roughish peaty ground leads north-west to the foot of the crags which overhang the lonely waters of Loch Choire Mhoir. An easy climb out of Coire

Mhòr may be made up the most easterly branch of the burn, and the smooth grassy ridge—a delightful walk—followed to Feachdach, whence the descent is best made down the north-west slope to the head of Loch Glass.

L. W. H.

## BEINN DEARG (3,547 Feet).

### (DIVISION IV. GROUP XII.)

Lat. 57° 47'; W. Lon. 4° 56'. Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 92. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 24.

This is the highest mountain in Scotland north of the Garve and Ullapool road. It is a very wild and rugged hill, well worth the climber's attention, but it is in the deer forest of Braemore, so leave should be obtained.

1. Meall doire Faid, 2,390 feet (heap of the long wood), immediately above Braemore House.
2. Beinn Aonaclair, 2,915 feet ( ), divided by Feadan Mhucarnach, as the col at the head of the long glen of Mucarnach is called, from
3. Iorguill, 2,825 feet ( ), which is in its turn connected by
4. Diollaid a' Mhill Bhric (saddle of the speckled heap) to
5. Beinn Dearg, 3,547 feet (red mountain).

The big dome forming the top is a conspicuous feature from Strath Dirrie, and is flanked on the north by the precipices of Coire Mathair Lathail, and the east by the grand cliffs surrounding the savage Coire Granda, "ugly corrie." This is a splendid scene, and contains a beautiful tarn. On the north-east side of the corrie rises the finely ridged peak, Cona Mheall, about 3,150 feet.

The inn at Aultguish, on the Garve and Ullapool road, is the nearest point to the mountain, and is tolerable. It can also be reached by hiring from Garve or Ullapool, at both places there being comfortable hotels.

*Usual Route.*—Nos. 1, 2, and 3 are usually visited from Garve, Ullapool, or Aultguish.

Leave Garve and Ullapool road at a point about a

quarter of a mile from the Garve end of Loch Droma by a deer path, crossing the shoulder of the hill to Loch a' Gharbh Raoin, pass to west of the loch and ascend hill to north of it, Carn Loch nan Eilean, having small loch of that name to west. When at top a grand view is obtained of Coire Granda. Bear slightly west of north, descending a little and again climbing to level of the corrie, 1,800 feet—keep west shore of loch in corrie—here the cliffs of Beinn Dearg are very steep, and approach the loch at one place to within a few feet. When at head of loch make for col at head, about 2,600 feet, then turn sharply south and climb over rough ground to 5, the summit; leaving this make north-west to edge of cliffs over Coire Mathair Lathail and along 4, gradually descending to level of moor at head of Loch Broom, from which a deep descent leads to the level of the River Lael, and so to Garve-Ullapool road, at head of Loch Broom. Grand views of the Teallach, Fannich, Coigach and Assynt mountains are had *en route*, as well as the wild hills to the north—one in particular, Sgurr a' Bharra, in the Balnagowan Forest, showing a fine sharp peak.

*Climbs.*—None recorded.

The great cliffs in Coire Granda are very steep and cut into by deep gullies, and should afford fine rock climbing.

C. B. P.

## COIGACH GROUP.

### (DIVISION IV. GROUP XIII.)

Lat.  $58^{\circ} 2'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 8'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 101. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 24.

COIGACH GROUP—Cùl Mor, Cùl Beag, An Stàc, Ben More Coigach.—Includes the line of mountains that extends from Loch Veyatie in Assynt south-west to the northern shores of Outer Loch Broom. Composed almost entirely of red Torridon sandstone, they present the typical characteristics of that formation, rising steeply in mural escarpments towards the north and west, and falling gently with long dip-slopes to the east.



With the exception of Stack Polly, they afford no striking ridges or arêtes, but abound in steep cliffs seamed with deep rock gullies.

**CUL MOR** (*Coul More* = the great back), 2,786 feet.—This mountain, the most northerly of the group, rises steeply from the south shore of Loch Veyatie, a little to the west of the village of Elphin. It is conspicuous at a distance from the twin cones, each capped with white quartzite, that crown the summit. The west side of the mountain falls abruptly in a series of terraced cliffs into the wooded depths of Gleann na Laoigh (glen of the calf), a most beautiful but seldom visited mountain valley. Immediately below the highest peak, on the north side, lies Coire Dubh (the black corrie), encircled by fine mural precipices. On the north-west shoulder a deep gully, formed by a weathered-out dyke, runs up to the crest of the mountain, and near the point where it meets the ridge is a curious rock pinnacle known as Bòd a Mhiotailt, which from a distance bears a striking resemblance to a human figure.

*Centre*.—Alltnagealgach Inn, daily mail car from Lairg and Lochinver.

*Usual Route*.—By road to Knockan, 5½ miles, then turn west across the burn and up the eastern dip-slope to the top in three miles. [The best way from Lochinver is by the Fionn Loch path. Keep to the path until near Loch Veyatie, then ford the Uidh Fhearna (not deep save in very wet weather), and hold along the loch side until you come to where Loch a Mhiotailt joins Loch Veyatie. Just here will be found a spit of sand and rocks jutting out from both sides, and forming a kind of natural bridge. This can be easily crossed dry shod in fine weather, and by an easy ford when the lochs are high. The best way now lies up by the burn side to Loch na Claise, which lies just at the foot of Cul Mor.—A. E. R.]

*Climbs*.—None recorded.

**CUL BEAG** (*Coul Vick* = the little back), 2,523 feet.—Very similar in character to the last, but with only a single peak. Precipitous on the north and west, and with long dip-slope to east. The cliffs of Meall Dearg and Creag Dubh on the northern face, and those that rise above the



*June 11, 1906.*

STACK POLLY, FROM LOCH LURGAN.

*W. Inglis Clark.*

road at the head of Loch Lurgan are very steep, and are traversed by numerous gullies which would give good "chimney" work.

*Centres.*—Alltnagealgach or Ullapool, from which the top is equidistant about 12 miles.

*Usual Route.*—By road to Drumrunie (old) Lodge, and then north-west up the dip-slope.

AN STAC (more usually known as Stack Polly), 2,009 feet.—This curious little mountain, though barely reaching 2,000 feet in height, is remarkable for the extraordinary character of its summit ridge, which rises abruptly on all sides from steep talus slopes, and is broken into a succession of excessively sharp *aiguilles* or pinnacles of shattered sandstone. It has been graphically compared by Professor Heddle to "a porcupine in a state of extreme irascibility." The summit ridge may be easily attained on the north or south by the numerous scree gullies which lead up between the shattered pinnacle ridges. On the east and west the ridge terminates in very steep cliffs, that to the east being somewhat broken up by vegetable ledges. The western cliff has afforded a very difficult and sporting climb to a party consisting of C. W. Walker, Dr, Mrs, and Miss Inglis Clark, who ascended direct up the true terminal arête of the ridge, the line of ascent practically coinciding with the left-hand skyline in the photograph. The climb was of unusual difficulty from the very bottom, and consisted almost entirely of pure rock pitches and chimneys, quite unclimbable but for the rough surface of the rock. To traverse the summit ridge from end to end is an interesting and by no means easy bit of rock climbing, and from the spectacular photographic point of view is unique in the British Isles.

*Centres.*—Somewhat inaccessible. Ullapool is distant 13 miles. Achiltibuie, where there is a small inn, 9½ miles. Quarters may sometimes be got at the shepherd's or keeper's house at Inver Polly, 4 miles west.

*Usual Route.*—The road from Ullapool to Achiltibuie and Loch Inver passes the foot of the hill.

L. W. H.

## SUILVEN.

(DIVISION IV. GROUP XIV.)

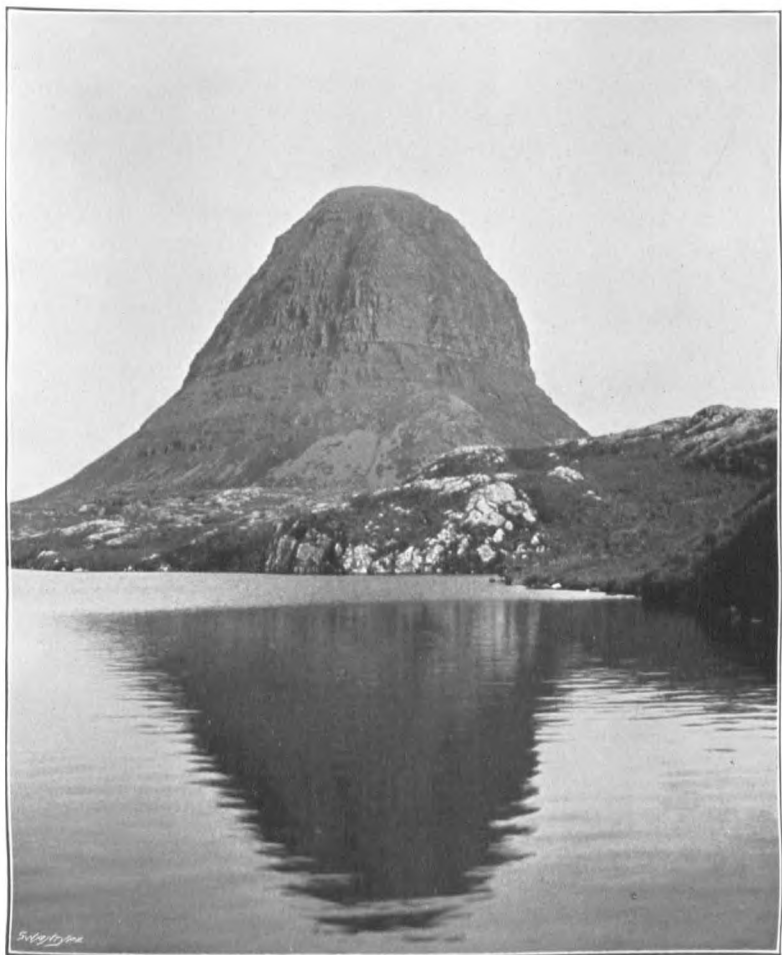
Lat.  $58^{\circ} 7'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 9'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 101. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 24.

1. Caisteal Liath, 2,399 feet = the gray castle; lies 5 miles south-east of Lochinver.
2. Meall Mheadhonach, 2,300 feet app. = the middle peak (pron. *Meal Vee-o-nach*); lies about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east of Caisteal Liath.
3. Meall Bheag, 2,000 feet app. = the little peak; lies about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east of Meall Mheadhonach.

Suilven, lying a few miles to the east of Lochinver in Western Sutherlandshire, is certainly the dominating feature in the landscape of that neighbourhood, and is probably one of the most remarkable mountains in Great Britain. Whether seen by the traveller for the first time from the sea off Lochinver, or from the watershed at the head of Strath Oyckell, the sight of this isolated and strangely shaped obelisk—"a monument of denudation"—springing up out of the plain, is most impressive and striking.

Although Suilven when seen from the east or west thus appears as a sharp cone, yet in reality it is a long narrow ridge of about one and a half miles in length, divided into three main peaks, so that when viewed from the north or south it presents the appearance of a triple-peaked ridge, the rounded cone of Caisteal Liath at the western extremity, the sharp peak of Meall Mheadhonach in the middle, and the much smaller peak of Meall Bheag with its sharp drop facing Meall Mheadhonach at the eastern end.

Suilven (a Norse-Gaelic hybrid = pillar fell) is easily reached from Lochinver by Glen Canisp or by Fionn Loch. A driving road runs to Glen Canisp Lodge, from whence, by taking the good shooting path which runs up the north side of the Amhainn na Clach Airidh to Suileag, a foot-bridge is reached. Crossing the river, a bee line across the moor takes one to the foot of the peak. The approach to Suilven by Fionn Loch is longer, but the route lies through some charming scenery, and can be confidently recom-



*June 1903.*

**SUILVEN—THE GRAY CASTLE.**

*A. E. Robertson.*

mended. Following the driving road from Lochinver to Inverkirkaig, take the shooting path up by the River Kirkaig past the falls to Fionn Loch, keep the path for about a mile or so farther on, and then a short and easy walk across the moor lands one at the base of the mountain.

The easy or tourist route to the top lies up one or other of the big gullies or stone shoots, which run up between Caisteal Liath and Meall Mheadhonach on the north or south side. The gully on the north side of the ridge is possibly a little easier than the one running up from the Fionn Loch side, but there is not much to choose between them. There is absolutely no difficulty about them, only steep, rough, toilsome walking. On reaching the col—the Bealach Mor—a short and easy ridge walk leads to the cairn of Caisteal Liath.

By far the best expedition is, of course, to traverse the mountain from west to east. This involves some pretty stiff climbing, and should only be attempted by a properly equipped climbing party. The ascent of the west face of the Caisteal Liath is the crux of this expedition, and the scaling of this great terraced bastion, some 800 feet high, is a most interesting and sensational experience. It was first ascended by Mr Charles Pilkington and Mr Horace Walker in May 1892, and afterwards by Professor Ramsay in August 1895—*vide S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IV., pp. 23 and 133. The route lies up a sort of shallow gully at the south-west angle of the Caisteal Liath. This gully soon merges into the face, and the climb is very steep and exposed. The holds in places are somewhat of the vegetable order, so that care and steadiness are absolutely essential. From the summit of Caisteal Liath the route lies down the ridge to the Bealach Mor previously referred to. From here an easy scramble leads to Meall Mheadhonach, and so on down to the bealach between Meall Mheadhonach and Meall Bheag. The ascent of Meall Bheag from the col involves some climbing. The way lies on the north side of the ridge, and there are a choice of routes leading up over a succession of steep terraces to the cairn of Meall Bheag. The climbing is now almost over save for a narrow gap, which has to be crossed a little way

down on the eastern end of the ridge. This climb can be done in the reverse direction from east to west, but as this means descending the Gray Castle instead of ascending it, it is better to take it from west to east.

A great deal remains to be done on Suilven, and there must be several fine climbs on it not yet touched. The mountain is wholly in the Glen Canisp deer forest. For further information *vide S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., p. 45, and Vol. IV., p. 23, two particularly charming articles by Mr Hinxman and Professor Ramsay.

A. E. R.

## BEN MORE ASSYNT.

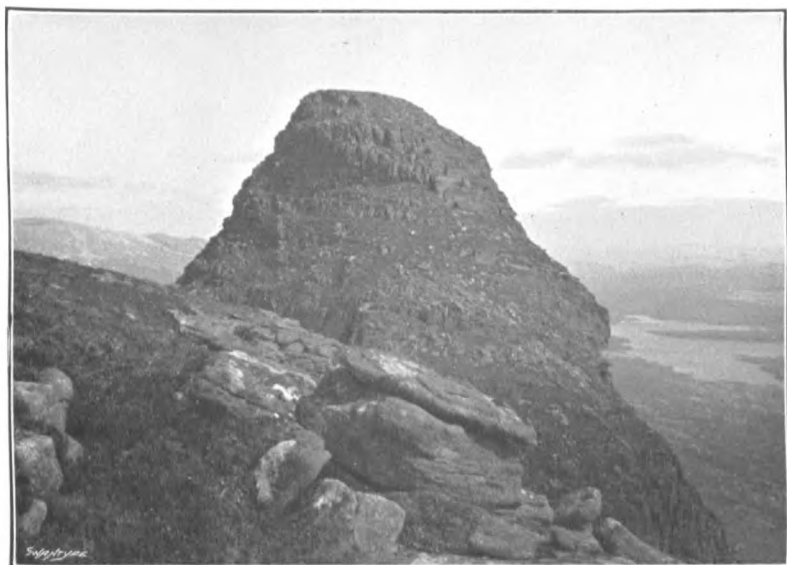
(DIVISION IV. GROUP XV.)

Lat.  $58^{\circ} 8'$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 52'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 101, 102, 107, and 108. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 24.

1. Ben More, 3,273 feet; 4 miles east by south of Inchnadamff, and 12 miles north-north-west of Oyckell Bridge Inn.
2. Coinnemheall (pron. *Connival*), 3,234 feet; scarcely a mile west of Ben More.
3. Carn nam Conbhairean, called "the South Top of Ben More" in Munro's Tables, 3,200 app., distant nearly  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

Ben More is probably entitled to the distinction of being the oldest mountain in the kingdom above 3,000 feet, for geologically it belongs to the oldest known rock system, viz., Lewisian gneiss, or "Old Boy," as it is irreverently termed. The extreme top is capped with Cambrian quartzite, which latter formation also appears on the western side of Connival.

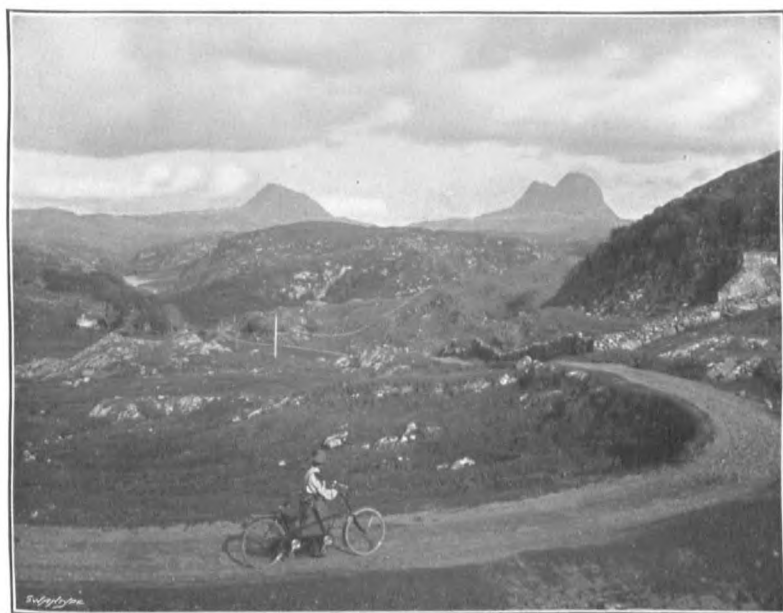
Ben More is the highest point of Sutherland, but it is rarely visited, owing to its distance from "anywhere," and also perhaps to its being in the heart of deer forests. The few visitors to break the stillness which ordinarily rests on this remote region, generally approach the mountain from Inchnadamff, at the head of Loch Assynt, and about 13 miles from Lochinver, by a fair road. From Inchnadamff the route to Ben More ascends Glen Dubh, whence



*June 1904.*

*A. E. Robertson.*

EAST PEAK OF SÜLVEN, FROM THE GRAY CASTLE.



*June 1903.*

*A. E. Robertson.*

SÜLVEN AND CANISP, FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



it goes up the steep west side of Connival, and over that summit and along the connecting ridge to the culminating top, involving a dip of 300 feet.

Ben More may also be reached from Strath Oykell by leaving the Highland Railway at Invershin and driving 14 miles to Oykell Bridge Inn, and about 10 miles farther to Ben More shooting lodge, which is situated 5 miles due south of Ben More, at the head of Loch Ailsh, a pretty sheet of water, half a mile square, with a wooded island. From Ben More Lodge the quickest way (two and a half hours' good going) is to follow the left bank of the River Oykell for fully 2 miles, then slant up the hillside to the right to a queer round tarn called Dubh Loch Beag, and thence mount the grass slopes of Carn nam Conbhairan. That top is joined to Ben More by a narrow rough ridge, with sides precipitous in several places, somewhat resembling Aonach Eagach of Glencoe.

On the south-west side the ridges of Ben More enclose a horse-shoe corrie in which lies a black tarn (Dubh Loch Mor), the source of the Oykell. Above this little loch the rocks rise steeply in places, and might give some scrambling, although they have not been explored with that object so far as is known.

Ben More commands a grand view of Suilven, Canisp, Cul Mor, and the other striking, or even grotesque, peaks of dark Torridon sandstone which skirt the Atlantic coast-line of Sutherland and Ross.

W. W. N.

## EXCURSIONS.

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

BLAVEN AND CLACH GLAS.—One July morning Mr H. I. Pinches and I drove from Broadford to Torrion on Loch Slapin, and in mist and heavy showers ascended Blaven, crossing the two tops. It was our intention to reach Sligachan *via* Clach Glas. In mist and rain, having no previous knowledge of the mountain, it was not an easy matter to find the ridge. Blaven has a big top, consisting of stone and grass, with steep slopes of rock on the west and gentler slopes with some gullies on the east. We followed the western line of cliffs, but could not find the ridge. In one or two places we descended some way in search of it. Then we passed a cairn, but it did not help us; till finally we emerged from the mist at the height of 1,200 feet on the Loch Slapin side of Blaven. This was rather serious, as it was now 4 P.M., and we had almost to begin our day again in order to reach Sligachan. It is to save others from a similar fate that we send this note. In order to reach the Clach Glas ridge from Blaven, it is necessary to follow the line of the western cliffs until the cairn, mentioned above, is reached. At this point it is necessary to go down what in the mist looks like an appalling precipice. In daylight it is seen that there is a very steep step, at the bottom of which the Clach Glas ridge begins. Lack of this knowledge cost us an additional three hours of hard work in an expedition that was already a long day.

We can strongly recommend this method of getting to Sligachan. It has great advantages and avoids the somewhat dreary drive from Portree.

EDRED M. CORNER.

COIRE GHREADAIDH AND SGURR NA BANACHDICH.—Whilst ascending this corrie with Mr H. I. Pinches (non-member) this July in thick mist and rain, we decided to take as a landmark a little loch marked on Bartholomew's map just above the 750 contour line. This loch would show us a burn which in its turn would lead us to An Diallyaid and the ridge to Sgurr na Banachdich. We ascended the corrie to a height of 1,100 feet without seeing the loch—a fact we attributed to

our limited horizon and depressed, sodden condition. At this point we were brought up by slabby rocks over which the burn rushed in four or five cascades—a magnificent sight but in the mist a deterrent to progress in that direction. Some broken rocks and traverses brought us to the An Diallaid ridge, and thence to the summit of Banachdich, where we spent a very chilly half-minute as the wind was a full gale and bitterly cold. We returned the same way as we had ascended, and the mist kindly clearing a little, enabled us to make sure that the little loch in Coire Ghreadaidh did not exist! It is well known that the maps of the Coolin ridges are often wrong. But it is of interest to find so gross a mistake at the height of 750 feet! This cartographical error made us miss our way, get into some nasty places with rotten rock, often slippery with the abundant moisture, and generally disconcerted us. To pass the time and enable the mist to lift, we built a cairn where we left the burn. It is to the south of the upper fork of the burn; its presence is merely of personal interest and has no indication for climbers. We apologise for building it, and hope that no one will be led astray. It will, however, serve as a useful guide to the rocks on An Diallaid. I find no indication of a lochan in Coire Ghreadaidh on the one or six inch O.S. maps.

EDRED M. CORNER.

ROCKS OF CORRIE SUGACH.—On the 1st June 1906, a party consisting of A. C. M'Laren, S. G. Shadbolt, and C. P. Shadbolt, climbed the gully marked J, P, in Vol. VII. of the *S.M.C. Journal*, p. 76.

This gully is easy to locate, being very deeply cut, and the only opening in the buttress which forms the true left side of Maclay's Gully.

It is a most interesting climb, and difficulties follow each other at short intervals the whole way up.

The first pitch is about eighty feet high and overhangs at the top, and is taken on the left side (looking up). The first thirty feet are fairly easy and lead into a shallow cave with a grass floor, above which the top of the pitch overhangs considerably. It was found possible, however, to thread the rope through a chockstone in the roof, which rendered it quite safe to traverse out above it, using the roof as support for the back as far as possible, and then climbing up through a small tunnel into the bed of the gully above. The next two pitches are quite short, and above these the gully narrows down to about two feet wide. The bed of the gully was followed until the party were about on a level with and behind the huge chockstone which forms such a conspicuous object about half way up the gully. A traverse was made on to this, and the left wall again attacked from it; the route followed sloped inwards up to a recess in the roof, where the second man joined the leader in order to anchor him during the traverse out. This is sensational but safe. The holds are good until the gully bed is again reached, where care must be taken during

the pull up with the arms which finishes the pitch. There is only one more pitch, which is about thirty feet high, and which is again taken by the left wall, looking up.

The following day the same party had an interesting climb on the buttress named TCB (*S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. VII., p. 76), keeping to the angle of the buttress all the way. They also traversed out to the foot of the arête from the bottom of Maclay's Gully, which makes a good short route to the arête if there is not time for the whole buttress climb.

These three climbs were all done under good summer conditions. The lowest pitch of the gully PF is unsafe without a rope from above.

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THE BRACK.—On 30th May the same party climbed the gully described in Vol. IX. of the *S.M.C. Journal*, p. 20, by Mr W. Inglis Clark. There is a good deal of grass in this gully which renders it rather bad on a wet day, but it is an interesting climb and in a most beautiful situation.

S. G. SHADBOLT.

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MULLACH COIRE AN IUBHAIR (3,443 feet).—This hill has received no notice in the Guide Book. It is nevertheless a prominent object from Speyside (Newtonmore to Aviemore), and its big eastern corrie shows much snow well into July. The only ascent recorded in the *Journal* is one by the ubiquitous Munro (Vol I., p. 321) from Dalwhinnie. June, this year, I cycled from Kingussie along the Loch Laggan road to within two miles of the hotel. Just beyond Inverpattack Lodge on the right, I crossed the River Pattack by a foot-bridge (about 520 feet), and, as it was early in the season, no objection was made to my cycling along the private road to Loch Pattack. The road was under repair, and was heavy and loose in many places. At about 6 miles from the turnpike and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  mile north of the north end of Loch Pattack, on the right of the road is a superior bothy (about 1,400 feet). Here I left my bicycle, and struck a narrow but good path, the south side of a burn (Allt a' Mheallain Odhair) which crosses the road 150 yards south of the bothy; after about half a mile the main stream goes south, and the path keeps on the north bank of a subsidiary burn (Allt Dubh), and, rising gradually, runs right across the mouth of the big eastern corrie of Mullach Coire an Iubhair.\* When you arrive at the col and see Loch Laggan beneath you, leave this path to continue its course to Lochan nan Earba, and take another path to the left, which slants right across the face of the corrie, landing you on the summit plateau between the horns of the corrie. Then 200 yards or so westwards you will find the well-made summit

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\* If you choose to leave the path when opposite the east ridge of Mullach (Sron Garbh), you can get a scramble over well broken-up rocks to the summit ridge.

cairn commanding an extensive view. Westwards again down over rough ground across the dip (about 2,600 feet at its lowest point), and a path running roughly north and south to the top of Creag Peathraich, a minor Munro (3,031), back to the last-mentioned path, follow it south, and in about a mile we are at the col (2,365) between Mullach and Beinn a' Chlachair (3,569). If you have time—I, unfortunately had not—you can strike to the right up the Chlachair ridge, steep and rough for the first few hundred feet, then a gradual and easy rise along a broad ridge to the summit. A little over one hour from the col to the summit will, I think, suffice. In descending from Chlachair it will probably be found quickest, or at any rate more comfortable, to retrace one's steps to the col, and follow the capital path leading high above Loch a Bhealaich Shleamhuinn down to Loch Pattack. Some two and a half miles from the col the track divides, a good one goes north and strikes the burn one mile west of the road. This I took as I had to get back to my bicycle; had it not been for that, I should have taken the right hand path, which apparently was not so distinct, and have gained the Benalder Lodge road by skirting the south end of Loch Pattack. From the bothy to Benalder Lodge (col 1,599) the road is rough; from the Lodge to Dalwhinnie Station it is very fair on the whole. The  $9\frac{1}{4}$  miles from the bothy to the station took me  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours, and then, with wind and road in my favour, the 15 miles to Kingussie were done in the hour. Left bothy 12.50; summit of Mullach 2.20; 27 mins. from Mullach to Peathraich; 21 mins. to Chlachair col; 1 hour 20 mins. col to bothy.

F. S. G.

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THE CAIRNGORMS IN JUNE.—Snow lay to an exceptional extent on the Cairngorms this past June, the level plateaus of Ben Muich Dhui and Braeriach being covered with hundreds of acres of snow, the higher lochs being still frozen over, and the whole of the Braeriach side of the Garbh Coire being draped in unbroken slopes of snow late into June.

10th.—Leaving the Aviemore Hotel in the evening at 11.35, I passed by Coylum Bridge and Glenmore Lodge, and reached the summit of Cairngorm about three o'clock, as the sun rose out of a low-lying band of clouds. It was a grand night, one of the special features of which was the long row of lights up and down the Moray Firth. Leaving again at 3.40, I descended by the usual route to Loch Avon, which lay absolutely still with magnificent reflections of cliff and snowfield. As the sun was still very low, I had, while close to the shore at the head of the loch, the very unusual experience of seeing my double shadow upon a steep bank at my side, one shadow immediately behind me cast by the sun, and another higher up the bank cast by the sun's reflection. The river was very full, and I had to continue far up till a satisfactory snow bridge was found, when nearly an hour's halt was made. A visit was next made to the Shelter

Stone, still half full of snow, and thence a long grind landed me on the summit of Ben Mheadoin by 7.50, unnecessarily long, as I had kept to the steep hill side, making straight for the top instead of, as better, making up directly to the ridge. Ben Mheadoin is crowned with a great mass of granite, some fifty feet high, rising abruptly out of the level summit, and exhibiting on the top two perfect samples of pot holes. The ridge was thereafter followed to the lower or western top, whence the view down to Loch Etchachan, still partially frozen over, and to an almost unbroken slope of snow stretching up to Ben Muich Dhui, was very grand. Descending to the loch a lengthy halt was made, and it was not till 9.40 that I again left and struck up the snows for Ben Muich Dhui. The first 300 feet rise steeply from the loch, but only here and there did a step require to be cut, and after that it was merely a trudge over soft snow under a broiling sun to the cairn by 10.40. A leisurely return was then made by the Larig Ghru and Coylum Bridge, only enlivened with a glissade down the March Burn.

13th.—It was a dull morning when I started with Mr B. R. G. Pemberton for a tramp which for its steadiness would have pleased the Hon. Librarian. Soon after passing the Glen Eunaich cross roads we struck through the forest to our right and made for the top of Cadha Mor, the north-east end of the Sgoran Dubh ridge, and thence followed the ridge to the top, whence during a minute's stop a fine eagle sailed out from the cliffs below us. Thence along over Sgor Ghaoith and round the head of Glen Eunaich, until, having crossed a large snowfield near the head of the Allt Linneach, we made our first rest of ten minutes. Leaving again at twelve, we skirted over the shoulder of the Angel's Peak and reached the summit of Cairn Toul, disturbing *en route* several pairs of snow buntings, by 12.45. The view was magnificent, and very clear with a blue haze in the far distance, and right in front the whole snowy Garbh Coire with the infant Dee seen but for a few yards as it issued from Braeriach's snows and dived down beneath a 1,000-feet snow slope. Leaving again at 12.50, with the prospect now of being back for tea, we returned over the Angel's Peak, halted for a mouthful of the Dee's cold water, and passed Braeriach's cairn at 2.25. Thence following the edge of Coire Bhrochain we descended to the col, and crossed over Sron na Leirg. To avoid the Larig Ghru and its toilsome path, we cut across to Glen Eunaich, reaching the bridge at 3.45. Another ten minutes' halt was allowed here, and then the short tramp to the hotel again by 5.15. The small quantity of snow in the Loch Eunaich region compared with the vast accumulations in the Garbh Coire and round Lochs Etchachan and Avon, emphasises again the effect of the sweep of the snow over the broad plateaus of Braeriach and Muich Dhui.

ARTHUR W. RUSSELL.

MEALL NA CUAICH.—The only ascents of this hill recorded in the *Journal* have been made from the Dalwhinnie side. A pleasant alternative route is to cycle up Glen Tromie (7 miles from Tromie Bridge) to a foot-bridge just beyond some cottages and Allt na Fearnna. One and a half hour's gentle ascent over heather takes one to the summit. One hour down will suffice. I can fully endorse Mr Munro's remarks in Vol. VI., pp. 130, 131, as to this hill being a capital view point.

Gael Charn (3,036)—MONADHLIATHS (*cf.* Mr Munro's note, Vol. VI., pp. 37, 38).—I took the direct road from Loch Laggan Inn *via* Glenshirra Lodge, and found it extremely pretty. You must push your bicycle up the first mile, as it is too steep and rough to ride. I crossed the Spey by a foot-bridge below the R.C. chapel at the foot of the north slope of the Black Craig, left my machine there, took the path up Glen Markie (east side of burn), left the path and crossed the burn about a mile and a half up, just above where a side burn joins the main burn, struck up the shoulder of Beinn na Sgeith (2,845), and seeing a cairn some half-mile to the south-west of the actual summit of this hill, I went up to it and found that the cairn was evidently meant to mark a view point. The three lochs, Crunachan, Laggan, and Earba, are well seen from this point, and the view is certainly a prettier one than from either Beinn na Sgeith or Gael Charn. To visit this cairn *en route* to Gael Charn hardly takes one out of their way. From Spey to summit of Gael Charn, 1 hour 35 mins.; down, 1 hour 5 mins. The road to Glen Markie from Laggan Bridge *via* Drumgask is recommended for cyclists in preference to the road on the north bank of the Spey. F. S. G.

LOCH AVON AND SHELTER STONE.—The following times from Aviemore may be of service :—

Cycle : Aviemore Station to Glenmore Lodge	- - -	$\frac{3}{4}$ hour.
Cycle : Glenmore Lodge to foot-bridge over Nethy south of		
Loch a Gharbchoire (small wooden hut here with fire-		
place)	- - - - -	$\frac{3}{4}$ "
Walk : Bridge over Nethy to Avonford by Learg an Laoigh	1 $\frac{3}{4}$	"
Avonford to Shelter Stone	- - - - -	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
Shelter Stone to summit of Beinn Mheadhoin	1 hr. 5 mins.	(easy going).
Avonford	- - - - -	$\frac{3}{4}$ hour.
Bridge over Nethy	- - - - -	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
Cycle to Aviemore	- - - - -	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

There is no doubt in my mind that the best view of Loch Avon is that obtained from its north-east end, and I quite endorse Mr Garden's recommendation of the Learg an Laoigh route (*S.M.C. Jour.*, Vol. VII., pp. 339-341). F. S. G.

TWO IN GLENCOE.—After weeks of eager expectation, we—G. H. H. Almond and P. R. Parkinson—found ourselves at Clachaig, which we reached on the afternoon of 2nd May. After a filling tea we made an abortive attempt to reach Ossian's Cave. On 3rd May we tackled Bidean, whose ridges were in excellent condition, and ended up the day by a long snow traverse at the head of Coire an Lochan to the Collie Pinnacle. On 4th May—still ever raining—we walked to Ballachulish, where the member left P. R. P. *hors de combat* for the day, and took in hand the Beinn a Bheithir range. On 5th May, after walking along the road for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles eastward, we struck up a face to the right of the gully leading to the unnamed 3,000 feet top,  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile east of Aonach Eagach. After trying to get up close to the gully, where the slopes were all the wrong way, we traversed to the right for 200 yards, and struck up a narrow gully that we had previously seen from the road. This led immediately into a second, and the two together gave us about 300 feet of interesting climbing. There was some difficulty in getting out of the second gully, for it was capped by an overhanging chockstone, but by dint of a long arm press-up balance we got out to the left. The remaining part of the climb was a fairly easy scramble for about 1,000 feet. For any party wishing to take in the whole of the Aonach Eagach range, from east to west, this route ought to afford an interesting start. On my Sassenach friend the ridge made a great impression. He had only heard of Scotch hills before.

6th May.—Still wet. However, we walked to Kingshouse, had tea, and set out at 2.30 for Buchaille Etive. Reaching the foot of the Crowberry ridge, the rain wreaked special vengeance. Reaching what we afterwards found to be the pedestal from which the Abraham "direct" ascent is made, we looked in vain for egress to the right. However, we discovered hobnailed scratches to our left, and our leader, P. R. P., was soon out of sight, his progress only made evident by the gradual withdrawal of rope. After a short interval of words, the rest of the party followed. Had we known at the time what we were attempting, we would certainly have made for the safer route to the right. We can both endorse what has more than once been stated in the *Journal*, that even under the best conditions the Abraham route is distinctly risky and should not be attempted. We took altogether 1 hour 50 minutes for the first 350 feet of the climb, and were quite glad when at 9 P.M. we reached Kingshouse and got into dry clothes.

On 7th May we took Collie's route to the top of Buchaille Etive. We struck up to the left of his gully, traversed to the right after about 500 feet, and got stuck working up the edge of a chimney, with an overhanging chockstone. After getting to the top, we were rewarded on our descent by 1,000 feet of snow which led us towards the sixth milestone from Clachaig, which we reached at about 8 P.M.

On 8th May we took a route we had previously marked out—a



ridge on Gairr Aonach, considerably to the left of those marked on the chart. It proved a somewhat uninteresting and easy scramble.

Rising at 5.30 on 9th May, we drove to Ballachulish Ferry, and reached Fort-William, by motor, at nine. We set out for Ben Nevis at ten, and reached the foot of the Tower Ridge by one. Ye gods and what a scene—two miles of solid buttresses each rising up for nearly 2,000 feet! At 1.30 we started our ascent. We took the east face of the Douglas Boulder with the traverse as described by Napier. The Sassenach was being impressed. This is Alpine! (Not bad for him.) At the foot of the Tower we traversed to the right. Our leader tried the cracked slab route, but found it impossible from ice, so that we had to pursue our way by the right traverse. We found the last 20 feet difficult from the hardness and steepness of the snow. Finishing our ascent at 6 P.M., we were not long in finding the Observatory in the mist. Just as we were beginning to descend from the western end of the top plateau, the mist suddenly cleared. Never shall we forget the view. Far away in the western sea we saw the purple Coolins with the distinct and characteristic outline which alone is theirs. To the south, to the west, and to the north, there lay in endless profusion hill after hill with valley and valley between, whilst below at our feet lay Loch Eil, a sheet of glass reflecting the golden glory of the western sun. We stood amazed and rapt with awe, stopping every few paces to gaze at what was before us. It was many minutes before we could finally tear ourselves away from that hillside, as the purple gradually deepened, and the water at our feet gradually lost its brilliant sheen. Had we never been “bled” before, we should both henceforth, from that moment, have joined the ranks of those to whom alone Nature has bequeathed the hidden glories of her hills. The memory will remain “a joy for ever”—a portion of earth’s wealth which is not to be bought with gold. And no more glorious ending could we have wished to have had to a week spent in devotion to Nature’s best gift to our island race.

GEORGE HELY-H. ALMOND.

THE “CHASM,” BUCHAILLE ETIVE MOR.—This is a great ravine, a steeper “Piersgill,” which cleaves the cliffs of the Etive face of the “Great Shepherd.” Of low angle below, its inclination gradually increases, and the pitches become higher and steeper, to the topmost huge vertical pitch of 200 feet with which it originates, rather more than two-thirds up the face from the Etive road.

The “Chasm” was named, and explored in 1898 as far as the “100-feet pitch” by a party led by Messrs Bell and Maclay (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. V., p. 131). On 15th June 1903 it was again visited by Dr and Mrs W. Inglis Clark and the writer. This party spent a half-day in climbing several pitches above the “100-feet” pitch, having descended into the “Chasm” above this pitch by the left wall, and in making a way

out of it, up a steep buttress on the right wall (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VII., p. 320). Like Piersgill, the "Chasm" is usually furnished with an over-abundant water supply. For ten days before the Easter Meet of 1906 Scotland had been rejoicing in a spell of drought and cloudless sun, and now was the time, aided by the probably large amount of snow, to test the possibility of a complete ascent of the "Chasm."

On Thursday, 12th April, at 12.45 P.M., Ling and I, who had started from Edinburgh the same morning at 4.30, left the inn at Kings-house.

Taking the short cut by the side of the Etive to Coupal Bridge, we reached the foot of the "Chasm" in forty-five minutes. The lowest part of this was now a uniform slope of hard snow. Descending on to the snow at the first rocky ridge on the left (north) bank we walked up it for some way. Then came some interesting scrambling. The first pitch was passed on the left wall. From the warmth of the day and sun the snowfields above were rapidly melting, and sending of their abundance enough water to make the cataract occupying the direct ascent of formidable volume and power; the waters had more-over melted out—a black chasm of unknown depth into which they plunged, leaving an impassable hiatus between the snow and the rock. On our right, however, the gap lessened to three or four feet, and the toughness of the snow tongue allowed of its edge being used to step delicately across to the somewhat minute toe-hold on the rock wall. It became easier above, and we then crossed the bed of the stream on fallen snow blocks to the right wall.

A most charming problem in traverses here presented itself; the rocks were smooth and water-worn, and a jutting corner, with non-existent holds, threatened to thrust the would-be climber to the bottom of the pitch below, where the cataract dashed itself into foam against a rock. No risks could here be run, so the leader removed his boots and, climbing the vertical wall for a few yards, found a capital hitch over which the rope could be run, and full security against any serious result obtained. With the adhesion got by stocking soles—by-the-way double stockings, for the same reason that they are *the* essentials for the walker and mountaineer, are no good in a case of this sort—the critical corner was safely passed, and a handhold found by which the climber could draw himself over the fall to a boulder in the bed above. The second man came on with a hand to pull him past the push-out, and we resumed our boots and our progress.

What we take for what remained of the 100-feet pitch was now encountered. It was really two pitches of 20 feet or so each. The bottom, 50 or 60 feet, filled up with snow. Both were passed on left wall. One was rather difficult, and we judged with a few feet less snow might have been pretty well impossible. We, however, had now passed the 100-feet pitch, and found ourselves on a great mass of snow filling up the bed of the chasm below the Tower on the "Four days' ridge," and covering all the pitches climbed by the Clarks and

the writer in 1903. This steeply inclined snowfield led past our "60-feet chimney," now almost buried, and slanted almost half-way up the great top pitch. The depth of snow here I calculate at little if anything less than 100 feet. Still high above us loomed the remaining 100 feet of the pitch, a black slimy slit of smooth rock, down which hissed and gurgled enough water, in gallons per minute, to furnish an ample supply to a fair-sized town. Even if we had thought of tackling this, which we did not, the walls were quite inaccessible, several yards of black vacancy, save for water-spray, separating them from the thin tongue of snow on which we stood.

A narrow crack on our left, could we gain it, seemed the only way of avoiding the necessity of a retreat. With some difficulty a lodgment was at last effected on this right wall, and after a scramble on rather loose rock the crack was reached. It was overhanging above, and too narrow to "chimney sweep," but the leader was able to jam in it and afford security to the second man, who then traversed out to the left round a projecting nose to a good ledge. Without again changing ends, a slanting overhung ledge was followed back to the line of the crack, and the gully above followed to a little col. We now found ourselves out of the chasm at the col separating the pinnacle of the buttress climbed in June 1903 from the rest of the mountain.

On the soft moss of this pinnacle we enjoyed a bask in the sun, and a period of well-earned repose. Then a scramble up broken rocks, a traverse of a steep snowfield, the final rocks of Buchaille, and at 5.45 P.M. we found ourselves on the summit of the mountain, 3,345 feet.

It was a lovely evening, warm and calm, so windless was it that a match burned unsheltered on the summit. Though clear at near hand, the countless moor fires all around, veiled the distant hills in a blue-grey haze of smoke, and the leagues long Moor of Rannoch with its myriad loch mirrors looked vaster than ever, its hill shores hid as if by many miles of distance.

At length, urged by thoughts of dinner, we rapidly descended by snowfields and screes to south of the "Chasm," and reached Kings-house about seven o'clock.

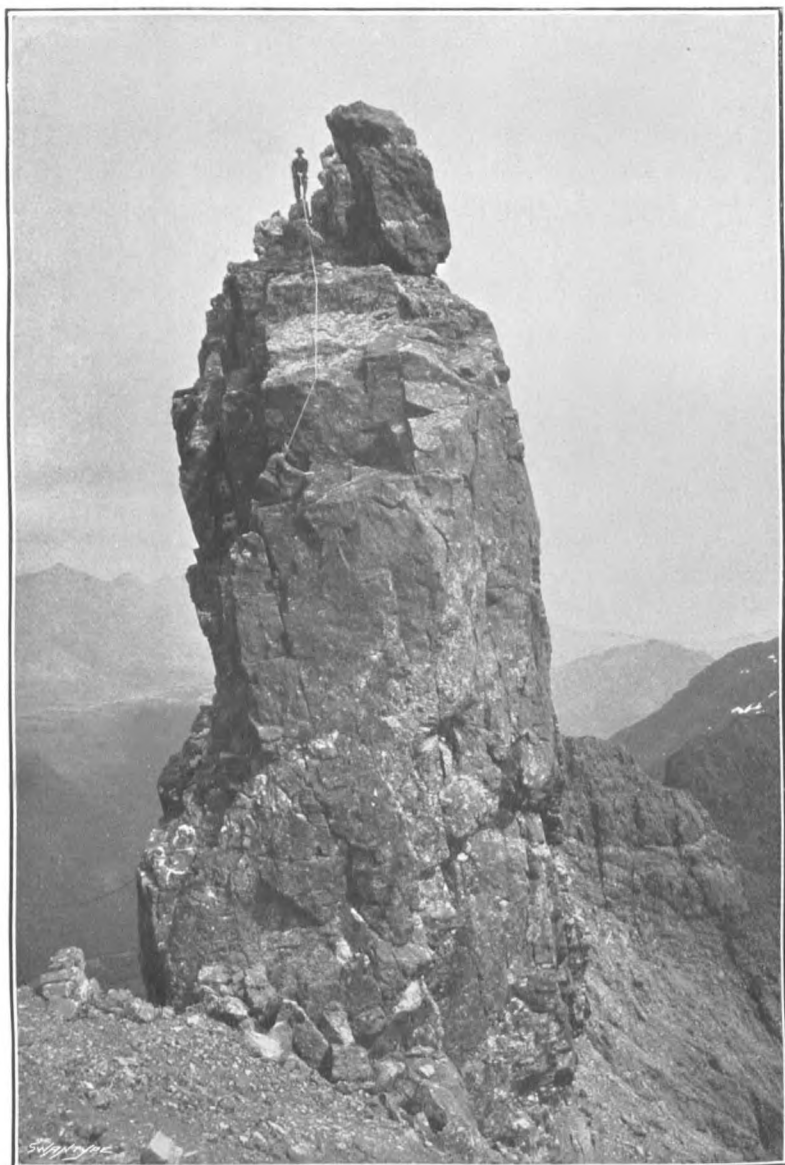
HAROLD RAE BURN.

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BEN MORE, ASSYNT.—On 25th July C. W. Walker with my son and self left Overscaig on Loch Shin to explore the very prominent rocky buttress of Coinnemheall which rises above Lochan Bealach a Mhadaidh. This buttress is directly north from the summit of the peak, and seems to be a part of the Beinn Fhuaran of the maps. Several hours were occupied in traversing the undulating moorland to the west of Loch Shin, the river being forded near Fionn Loch. The buttress, which looks imposing when approached, rises in two tiers of

cliffs, the lower one about a hundred feet high, being separated from the upper by rough screes. The upper is of much greater height, and runs round the summit in a convex crescentic form. At first sight these cliffs, particularly the upper ones, appear to afford ample scope for the climber, but we found them to be practically impossible, spending nearly six hours in endeavouring to find a route to the top. The rock is so-called "marble" and affords but slippery foothold, although it is generally possible to make good progress to a height of about sixty feet. A large rock slip has taken place recently, and the new fracture shows numerous red grainings. Eventually we ascended by an easy gully, and found the upper fifteen feet wall of rocks as much as we were able to accomplish. As the atmosphere was clear, magnificent views were obtained as far as the Teallach and Suilven and north to Ben Loyal and the Shetland Firth. The entire expedition occupied fifteen hours.

W. I. C.



June 1906.

A. E. Robertson.

THE "INACCESSIBLE."

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## A SCOTTISH ICE CLIMB.

BY HAROLD RAEURN.

PERHAPS a Scottish climber is in a better position than most others to realise the enormous difference there is in climbing steep and difficult rocks in bad and in good condition. In the Alps, if one is wise when "Wir haben schlechtes Wetter" or "Le temps fait mauvais," the climber keeps indoors, or, at most, takes a short walk or scramble in the vicinity of his hotel. In Scotland, however, we cannot afford to wait for good weather, which may possibly never come, at least within a reasonable period. We must just take the rough with the smooth, and take our buffeting and our pelting as if we enjoyed it, which, indeed, we do, at least in retrospect. It is a grand training, and teaches us how much bad weather can be endured with wonderfully little risk, *if properly clad and taking proper precautions against chill and frost-bite.*

To be caught in mist is also no novel or alarming experience to a Scottish climber. He almost comes to look upon mist as a normal condition of affairs, and takes his measures and his bearings accordingly.

There may be places and occasions, when the plating of ice and snow which forms so thickly on our crags in spring, may be a means of overcoming difficulties otherwise insurmountable. The present writer recollects a climb up the Coruisk face of M'Coinnich in April 1903 which was

probably a case in point. Possibly this is also the case with the climb described below.

Among the climbs prospected at the memorable summit meet on Nevis in "Coronation Week" of 1902 was that of the ascent of the "Comb," a steep ridge projecting into the lower or Coire na Ciste corrie of Nevis. The foot of this ridge overhangs, but means of access could apparently be obtained on the north side by climbing a gully on the left wall. This gully, however, proved very steep and slabby, and was not seriously attacked.

All S.M.C. members and their friends who took part in the Glencoe Meet of 1906, will remember the wonderful weather of early April, extending, alas, only into the first day of the meet. The Rev. A. E. Robertson, who had spent these days at Fort-William, reported the rocks of Ben Nevis in perfect condition. During the meet, and for a full fortnight thereafter, Atlantic cyclones raged, and when I came to Fort-William through rain and snow on 22nd April to keep a tryst with Robertson he reported the rocks heavily iced. Robertson, greatly to his and my regret, found that, owing to a slight indisposition, he would be unable to accompany me. I was saved the necessity of climbing the "Comb" *solus*, however, as he introduced me to a Genevese gentleman, a member of the Swiss Alpine Club, Monsieur Eberhard Phildius, who was staying in Fort-William, and who proved a pleasant companion and a keen and capable climber.

During the night the wet sou'-wester had given place to a strong cold wind from the north-east. Sweeping up the Allt a' Mhuillin, it carried with it flurries of snow. As our party passed below the great overhanging cliffs of the Carn Dearg Buttress, coat collars turned up, and hats well down on the back of the head, the snow, hitherto flying past in large soft flakes, turned hard and powdery in the grip of the increasing cold. [Many feet of snow lay in the deep chasm below the Tower Ridge, and sheets of snow-ice covered the *roches moutonnées* below the glacier-planed lip of the Lochan na Ciste. (Where a small streamlet trickles down these rocks we swung our ice-axes to cut ourselves steps and seats, and to hollow out a crystal

basin which the bubbling water quickly filled. It was a clearer interval, and we utilised it to scan our route ahead.

On our right, as we looked down, rose above us the jagged arête of the Tower Ridge, but how different from its summer aspect!

"And through the drifts the snowy clifts  
Did shed a dismal sheen."

Just like a great iceberg it was, or perhaps more like a mass of rough marble, all the dark rock hid by a plating of ribbed and embossed dull white snow-ice, with here and there streaks, ribs, and columns of pale green water-ice from a few inches to several feet in thickness.]

But the mists were again creeping slowly down from the heights, and presently everything was blotted from our ken but a few yards of the steepening slope of hard snow up which we were now making our way. We had, however, got our bearings for the foot of the "Comb."

My plan was to ascend the icy lower slopes of No. 2 North Tower Ridge gully till under the great overhanging beak of the Comb, traverse across a snow ledge below it to our right, and then cut up till we gained the foot of the slabby gully prospected in 1902. Then to cut up this, going out to our left to the arête whenever possible. As we ascended the steepening snowfield, here and there projected from the smooth slope large masses of half-buried fragments of cornice. Evidently fallen while the snow-slope was soft, these tenacious blocks had sunk in and stopped. They exhibited in a high degree all the qualities of Scottish *névé* in late spring. Struck by the pick of the ice-axe no result is produced; the pick merely sinks in and remains. If levering out is attempted, the ordinary Swiss amateur axe, which, by the way, is nearly useless for real hard ice work, stands a strong chance of being broken. The only way to make an impression on this toughest of snow is to cut a groove with the blade and then drive the piece out with the pick. There is one advantage about this toughness for the climber, that handholds and footholds once made can be relied upon. They are practically as good as if cut out of rock.



Soon leaving the gully we reached the rocks below the beak of the Comb, ice and snow covered as everywhere. The ledge noted was traversed, steps kicked and scraped, round to the right, then up a steep slope of soft snow, lying from one to two feet deep on hard icy stuff. The angle was pretty steep, and avalanching off highly probable, so it was necessary to dig down to and cut steps in the underlying hard snow. [Now we found ourselves looking up, so far as the mist and the descending cataracts of snow dust would permit, the steep gully which should give access to the ridge. Then began the real struggle. Keen frost reigned, and a biting wind moaned among the icy battlements impending over the great moat of the Corrie na Ciste. We two, stormers of one of the salient towers, felt the blast strike us now and again as it swept round the angle of the Comb.] [The worst was that the snow batteries were opened on us from both above and below. From above one could, to a certain extent, take cover beneath the shield of our cone-pointed, brim-turned-down felt hats, but occasionally the snow that fell mixed with the seldom ceasing stream that poured down the gully, was caught by the powerful ascending eddy and rushed up, thus taking us behind our defences. The pain of a stream of icy snow in the face is so great that work must stop, and the face covered till breath is regained. Fortunately those underhand tactics were never long continued, and the interrupted sapping and mining was soon renewed.]

[To speak of angles of ice or snow is always dangerous if these same angles have not been actually measured by clinometer, but two of the pitches we now encountered, if we make a distinction in what was practically one great pitch, were what is usually known as perpendicular, *i.e.*, probably  $70^{\circ}$  to  $75^{\circ}$ , with small portions approaching  $90^{\circ}$ .

It was of course only due to the peculiar tough quality of the snow-ice curtain hanging down these steeper portions that they were climbable at all. At angles such as these it is impossible to remain in toeholds in ice without holding on as well, and it is impossible to hoist the body up unless the handholds are cut so as to give a "pull in." These icy curtains allowed of this being done; frequently the pick

broke through to soft snow or black vacancy, backed with green bulbs of ice, and "pigeon-hole" holds resulted.

Ice work of this kind is, however, particularly cramping and exhausting, and progress was slow. To hang on with one hand, while that long two-handed weapon, the modern ice-axe, is wielded in the other, is calculated to produce severe cramps in course of time, and did so now. It is much harder work than the free open swing on the hard splintery ice slopes of the Alpine peaks.] [I suggest for climbs such as this our going back to the original Swiss icemen's tools, the iron-shod straight "baton," and the light tomahawk-like hatchet stuck in the belt when not in use. The second of these pitches almost "stumped" us, but yielded at the third attempt, and the reserves, in the person of Monsieur Phildius, were now brought up, and took their place in the van.

It was at this height evidently possible to traverse out to the left and thus reach the arête, but the sharp edge of this was so fringed and crowned with unstable-looking cornices of ice and snow that we judged it better to continue straight up.

Round the top of the gully—rather shallow scoop now—up which we were cutting, stretched the threatening line of the summit cornice. This did not look very high from farther down, but on approach was seen to rear its breaker-like crest, more than two-man height above the slope.

[Obviously our only chance here was to traverse out to our right where a rib of ice-covered rock ran up to meet the cornice, reducing it to half the height, and where it was only slightly overhanging. This way eventually "went," but the "Comb" was game to the last, and I must confess to a feeling of helplessness for a moment as I stood on my ice-axe, driven horizontally into the vertical snow wall, some hundreds of feet of little less than vertical ice-plastered rocks stretching away down into the depths of the mist beneath, while my fingers slid helplessly from the glassy surface of the cornice *névé*, in the vain endeavour to find or make a hold by which I might haul myself up. The problem was solved by a retreat, until Phildius was able to pass me up his axe. Then the ice-plating was quickly

shattered, and with fingers well crooked in the tough *névé*, a steady drag landed the body over the cornice lip, and Phildius soon followed.]

[Objections may be made to this climb that it is not the actual climb of the Comb. This is true, for we were never once on the exact arête. But what does this really matter? Phildius and I came out for a climb, and we got one, up one of the steepest cliffs on Nevis, in as icy condition as I have ever seen the old berg. We were both pleased and enjoyed it every bit, except perhaps when under the "hottest" fire of the rear batteries.]

I am tempted, if allowed by our patriotic Editor, with his rooted aversion to anything savouring of "foreign matter," to make a comparison between this climb and one in the Alps three months later. This was the ascent of the Zmutt arête of the Matterhorn, also in bad condition, in July, by Ling and myself. In everything but vertical height the Nevis climb was the more difficult and sporting, but there comparison fails, though the times show the Nevis climb must have been, height for height, the harder. On Nevis the party of two took  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hours to ascend about 450 feet, while on the Matterhorn the same number of climbers occupied 11 hours over 4,000 feet.

Next morning Robertson and I visited Carn Dearg. The weather was much better, and we had a pleasant promenade up the North Castle Gully. A few steps were occasionally kicked, but under the conditions the rope was not necessary, and was not used.

Rough, sticky, and hard snow rather spoiled such glissading as we got on our way down to the track above Lochan Meall an t'Suidhe.

Two P.M. saw us back at the Alexandra.

The illustration does not show the climb and was taken on a different occasion, when much less ice was on the rocks. It is, however, one of Mr Robertson's most successful efforts at depicting the Nevis cornices.



13th April 1904.

THE SUMMIT OF BEN NEVIS.

A. E. Robertson.

## GLEN BRITTLE IN JUNE.

BY H. MACROBERT.

IT was the wisest of mortals who declared that "many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it," and in the light of recent research it is within the range of conjecture that the writer had in mind the misty Isle of Skye. Be that as it may, the truth of the assertion was once more proved when J. C. Thomson suggested that we should again try our luck in Skye, and endeavour not only to climb there, but also to see what we were climbing. Two Edinburgh friends, F. Greig and C. Morris, both new to that district, having already resolved to spend a fortnight in the Coolins, all four of us arranged to stay with Ewen Campbell, the shepherd at Glen Brittle, and taste the delights of a glen of whose charms Alexander Nicolson has so eloquently written.

After careful investigation, a new route—that delight of climbers and of all who "yearn beyond the sky-line"—was discovered, which promised great store of new and wonderful views, especially of our beloved island. This route was by Oban, Ardnamurchan, Rum, Eigg, and Canna to Loch Bracadale, and turned out like many new things in this world to be very old indeed, in fact, as old as some of MacBrayne's steamers. The only difficulty was that of luggage, and it was finally decided that the ever-patient rucksack be called to our aid.

So it was that Friday the 15th June saw all four with rucksacks and ropes installed in the night train for Oban. For two weeks prior to that date the weather had been perfect, and our hopes for its continuance ran high. The dawn was breaking as we left Tyndrum Station, and the pale emerald sky showing behind the Glen Lyon hills gave promise of another fine day. We were greatly amused to observe at every station after Callander a posse of gamekeepers awaiting the early fishers, with whom our train seemed to be in special favour. Oban was eventually reached, and soon faded away in the distance, and as we slowly thumped our

way round Ardnamurchan with a blazing sun but tempering breeze, the sight was one for the gods. On one side were the brown and yellow hills with their frowning cliffs, on the other, the sparkling sea stretched to the outer isles lying like blue streaks on the horizon.

The bird life was particularly engrossing, and afforded constant enjoyment all day—gull and tern with easy sweep, shag and cormorant speeding past hurried and anxious, and innumerable guillemot, the white wings of the black variety twinkling into the distance like a heliograph in the sunlight.

After Canna, Skye bulked more and more largely in our minds, and soon its glorious headlands began to open out as we approached the intricacies of Loch Bracadale. Finally we were landed at Struan at 1.40 P.M., MacBrayne time, which future travellers might note is three hours slower than Greenwich time. We discussed our route over strong tea and thick oatcakes, and after a considerable amount of leisurely argument, we at length persuaded the landlady of the inn to drive us as far as Carlost, about nine miles on our way to Glen Brittle. The little four-wheeled dog-cart did not inspire us with confidence, and it proved to be a most exciting drive. As the unwilling steed was pushed down the numerous steep hills with ever-increasing momentum, the frail cart swung from side to side to such an alarming extent as to cause the tightly packed trio in the rear to hang on for dear life, and pray that the rusty old springs would hold. We left the conveyance where the road strikes over the hill into Glen Brittle, and shouldering our packs set off for the final stage.

The range of the Coolins looks extremely fine from this point of view, the pinnacles of Sgurr nan Gillea being shown to great advantage. The view gave rise to a discussion as to which was the finest mountain in Skye. The party ranged themselves into two camps, one urging the claims of Sgurr nan Gillea with its shapely peak and attendant ridges, whilst the other pointed to the rugged precipices of Sgurr Alasdair dropping down on either side to the finest corries in the Coolins. The point was raised again later, and after debate it was held ("Lord" Thomson dissenting)

that although Alasdair was the finer hill from the climber's point of view, it had to yield the palm in mountain architecture to the famous Sligachan peak.

It was still light when at 11.30 we reached the little cottage. The strangers were greatly delighted with its appearance, nestling in trees by a burnside, the hills rising immediately behind, with the murmur of the sea, and the sweet smell of hawthorn and gorse filling the air. They were soon introduced and welcomed with Highland hospitality.

On Sunday morning, as befitted the day, we rose late and breakfasted about ten, two of the party having had their morning tub in the sea while the others slept. I myself strongly deprecate early bathing, and when it came to a question of getting up I had always a strong supporter in my bed-fellow, who has a well-grounded objection to the theory of the matutinal bipped.

The programme for that day was *Mhic Coinnich* from the *Tearlach Col* by King's Chimney, and perhaps *Sgurr Dearg* afterwards. Morris, having a sore foot, stayed at home. It was very bright and sultry as we toiled up to *Coire Labain*, and notwithstanding a bathe in the lochan, we were all terribly hot and thirsty as we left the *Stone Shoot* and worked up the easy rocks on our left. A large patch of snow afforded us some relief. Having carefully kicked off a block as large as a football, I slowly clambered up amid derisive cheers with the dripping mass under one arm. On the col, however, we stopped for lunch, and then was illustrated the economic theory of place value. Suitably propped up in the hot sun, above our drinking cup, the snow soon supplied us with enough water, if not to slake our thirst, sufficient at least to act as a dilutant.

The position of leader having fallen to Greig, we set off directly up from the col, although Thomson reported a likely looking chimney a little down on the *Coruisk* side, which, however, did not tally with our somewhat vague ideas of King's. We soon gained a broad platform about 40 feet up, which led round to our left out of sight. On our right, broken rocks led up to a very smooth, steep, and shallow chimney, which appeared to overhang at the top.

As the appearance of this route was far from inviting, we started up diagonally to the left, and after some difficulty, gained another small platform. From here, however, no further progress could be made, as the whole face above us was S.B.—what a Yankee at Sligachan described as “simply bulging!” We retreated, and turned our attention once more to the steep chimney. Examined through the glasses, there appeared to be a small ledge leading out from under the overhang at the top, so we resolved to try it. About two-thirds of the way up, in a small recess, there are two jammed blocks slightly loose. Uncomfortably stowed here, the second man had, as he put it, “a crowded hour of glorious life,” whilst Greig cautiously hand-traversed up and out to a roomy platform to the right and above the chimney. The plight of the baggage animal, coming up last without one rest, was a sorry one. His packs prevented him from jamming himself, and even the recess afforded no safe resting-place, being too small to admit the rucksack. Dripping with perspiration, the three of us made our way to the summit, and giving up all thought of Sgurr Dearg, spent a happy hour dozing peacefully in the cool breeze which had sprung up. We came to the conclusion that our route was after all King’s Chimney, although Greig, seeing no nail marks, led up under the impression that it was a new climb. Descending by the Dearg Col, the sun was setting as we reached the sea for our bathe

On our return to the cottage, we were agreeably surprised to find that the Rev. A. E. Robertson had walked over from Sligachan to join us. Notwithstanding our straitened accommodation, a small and uncomfortable-looking sofa was unanimously placed at his disposal, and coiled up on this, to our astonishment, he was soon fast asleep. To ensure some measure of ventilation, the “front door” and the door of our room were left open, and this, although necessary, had its disadvantages, for our peaceful morning slumbers were disturbed by the entrance of two sociable sheep-dogs. Undismayed by the coldness of their reception, our visitors, blissfully ignorant of English swear-words, were rapidly becoming obnoxious, when wild shouts



of *Ichy va* and *Bidein druim nan ramh* from the sofa sent them helter-skelter up the hill side!

It was the dawn of another perfect day, and after great preparation, the whole expedition of five was on the move for Coire Ghrunnda. Crossing the moor, Morris encountered a large adder. The only noteworthy feature of the incident was that the pretty reptile was allowed to depart in peace, contrary, I am credibly informed, to the time-honoured practice of the S.M.C. All were looking forward to the wonderful view of the entrance to Coire Ghrunnda, and, when it was reached, expectations were more than realised. Those to whom the view was new were more than impressed by the scene of weird desolation—a desolation from which not even the magnificent “alone I did it” attitudes of the old hands could detract.

The rocky floor and sides of the valley are worn smooth by glacial action so well preserved that any one desiring to ascend the 1,000 feet to the coire itself must keep well up on the sides, or force a way up where the burns have cut into the great rock-falls. We kept high to the left, the easiest route, and, after crossing a perfect maze of great gabbro boulders pitched in wildest confusion, gained the coire. After the inevitable bathe and lunch, Mr Robertson and Morris proceeded slowly up to the col south of the gap; the others, skirting the lochan, made for Sgurr Dubh na Dabheinn. While Greig and Thomson made a hasty rush up Sgurr Dubh Mhor, the writer had ample time to contemplate the unsurpassed view of the South Coolins which this peak affords. Photographers may be interested to learn that with an ordinary 5-inch lens, a quarter-plate will take in all the peaks from Sgumain to Bandachdich.

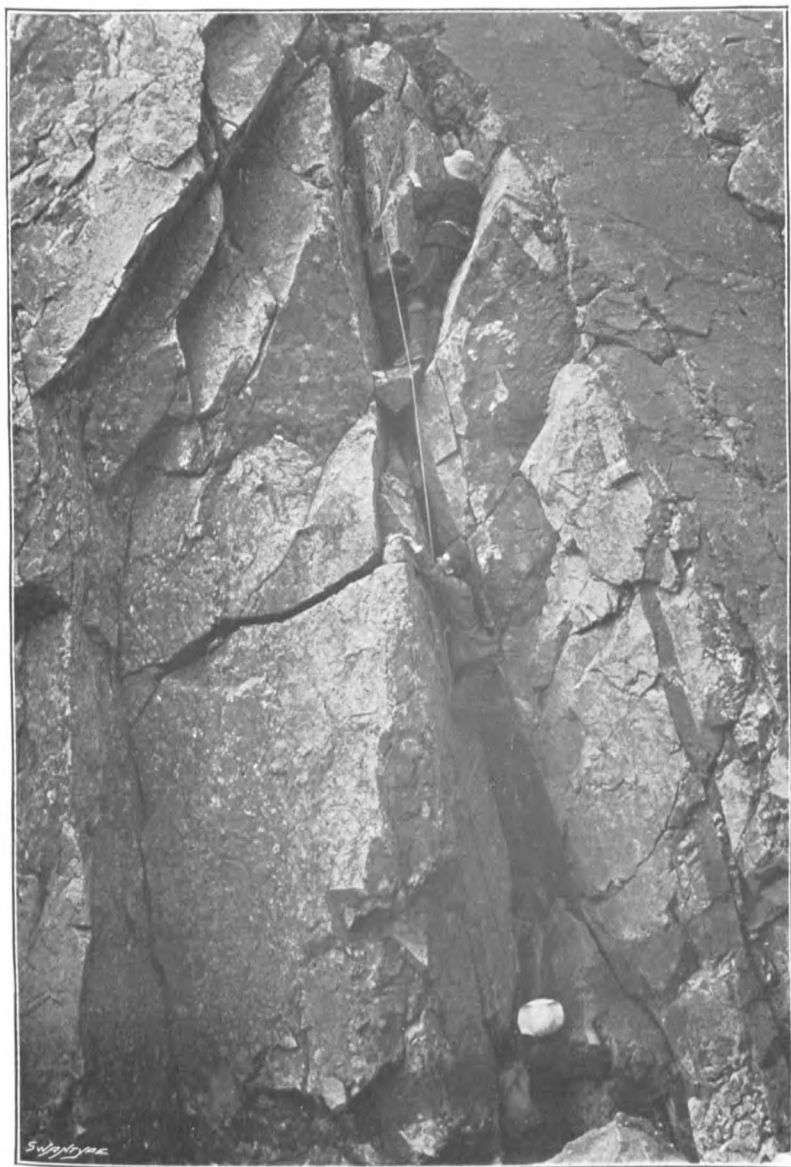
Having photoed the ascent to the gap, the whole party moved on to negotiate this step. The two photographers remained on the Dubh side in order to get pictures of the ascent of the long side. These were successfully taken with the aid of a wide-angle lens. Under the perfect conditions no difficulty was found in the climb, the hitch for the short side working all right, and soon the whole party were on the Tearlach slopes. Greig and Morris

pushed on to bag Sgurr Alasdair, while the others admired their energy from the roof-like ridge of Tearlach. The descent was made by the Mhic Coinnich-Tearlach Col, and after our usual bathe, we were soon doing full justice to the ample repast awaiting us in our cheery little room.

We had always meant to have a day off, to recover from the effects of our long and circuitous journey to Skye, but Tuesday saw us once more on the move up the sweet-scented moor, and finally on to the slopes of Sgurr Dearg. Here a beautiful lizard was captured basking in the sun, and after the phenomenon of the breaking tail had been demonstrated, our insect expert proceeded to expatiate on the intricacies of the Emperor Moth Cocoon, and the various methods of locomotion in use among different types of caterpillar. Progress upwards was slow, even for such a laggard party, and any information as to abstruse natural phenomena was deemed sufficient excuse for a rest and listened to with rapt attention. When we at last came under the magnificent pinnacle it was long past noon. Photography was evidently the main pursuit of the party, and the anxious look on the face of the expert betokened a growing uneasiness as to the weather. Thick banks of mist were rolling over Alasdair and Tearlach, and ever and again a thin wisp would flutter round our peak, chilling us to the bone, dressed as we were in the lightest of summer garments. While all around us was growing dark and gloomy, we could still see far out to the east the stately mass of Blaven glittering in the sun.

Greig and I attacked the short side. Our attitudes, more amusing than elegant, were not appreciated by the eager photographer, and as the leader gaily ambled over the upper slabs wagging his rope-tail, the joyous shouts of the youthful spirits scarce served to cover up the torrent of Gaelic invective which bubbled from under the focussing cloth! As there are no crossing stations on this line, the long side was descended as quickly as possible to make way for the rest of the party, who were making the return journey. The pinnacle was thus traversed both ways, and photos taken of both sides.

Scarcely was the last man off the steep side, when the



*June 1906.*

*A. F. Robertson.*

THE ALASDAIR-DUBH GAP.

mists swirled up around us and heavy rain descended. Congratulating ourselves on having secured the photos and climb in comfort, we slowly made our way down to the welcome shelter at Glen Brittle.

Wednesday broke wet and stormy—a real Skye day. As the official photographer was returning that day to Sligachan, we got up and had breakfast at the usual luxurious hour. Thereafter having sent the traveller on his way, we unblushingly returned to bed. The rain continued throughout the day, and by evening the burns were all roaring down in spate. The Banachdich Waterfall was a magnificent spectacle, far surpassing any we had seen in Scotland, while dimly through the mist two fine falls could be seen pouring over the cliffs directly into the sea.

On Thursday, the weather having cleared, Thomson and I set out for Sligachan *via* the Bealach a Mhaim, somewhat heavy heartedly it must be said, as we felt that the net was closing on us again. Glad of any excuse for a rest, we spent quite a time watching through the glasses a number of golden plover, which followed us on either side for almost two miles from the summit down towards the hotel. We arrived there for that most acceptable meal, afternoon tea. John Mackenzie, as brisk as ever, we found in the sorry occupation of thinning parsley.

As neither Thomson nor I had been on the Bhasteir, we decided to neglect Sgurr nan Gillean and spend Friday, our last day, on that weird-looking rock. Leaving about 9.30, we leisurely wended our way up to Fionne Coire, and after lunch reached the Tooth. Having lost the usual time over photography, we decided to attack Naismith's route on the south face. This we found most interesting, but after the description we had heard of it, were rather surprised at the scantiness of the holds on the first steep pitch. The final pull up is very weary work with a rucksack and camera on board. Having traversed the Bhasteir we made our way into the coire, and passing under the pinnacles crossed the moor to Sligachan, which we reached about five o'clock. Mr Robertson was not of the party, he having previously arranged to cross over to Glen Brittle with Mrs Robertson to explore further Coire Ghrunnda.

That evening Thomson and I left on the mail gig for Portree, and next day went south. Greig and Morris, who were staying another week, did no more climbing, with the exception of the pinnacles and west ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean. Coming down the third pinnacle, it would appear that Morris indulged in a hand traverse from the east wall into the head of the scree gully. They devoted themselves to fishing, and, thanks to the kindness of the shooting tenant and the copious rainfall, they were enabled to do this with considerable success, rarely coming back with less than five pounds of fish.

## AN EXPERIENCE ON THE HILLS OF EY.

BY EDRED M. CORNER.

THIS communication is sent to the *Journal* because the writer had a peculiar experience whilst on the very ordinary round-topped hills of the Forest of Ey. Further, the result of his adventure was that such a day's work was done on the hills as to be possibly worthy of note. The mountains between Glen Shee and Braemar, although a large number exceed 3,000 feet, are of very tame character, and for years have received no mention in the *Journal* except in Mr H. T. Munro's communication on page 116 of Vol. V.,\* and a section by him in the growing S.M.C. Guide-book. Though these are not hills which offer rock-climbing in any sense, yet they are hills which offer a splendid high-level walk, ever varied in view and interest, a breezy bracing climax and close to a holiday.

After spending a long and rather weary day in a mail cart, which took five hours to get from Blairgowrie to the Spittal, I left the hotel next morning at 7 A.M. The day was dark and lowering, the clouds being about 1,500 feet high; that is to say, only 300 or 400 feet above the Spittal. The wind was cool, strong and gusty, driving banks of dense black cloud up from the south-west. During breakfast a torrential downfall of rain had lasted a quarter of an hour. As it was nearly my last chance of a day on the hills, I decided to set the weather at nought and go forth. The day was very young, 7 A.M., and I hoped, against a steadily falling barometer, that the weather would improve. Outside the hotel everything was wet and fresh as it only can be in the early morning. Crossing the bridge over the river, I passed through a gate close by the church, and followed the track round the foot of Ben Gulabin, beneath a rocky headland which forms so prominent an object in the view from the hotel. Passing a ruined house, the track took me through some trees to the side of the river. It was here that the particular experience began. The day

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\* "A Summer Night on the Glen Shee Hills."

was cold rather than cool, so that I was intensely surprised to see a flash of lightning. The thunder came crashing, with another torrential shower. I was wet through before 8 A.M. This thunderstorm lasted about three quarters of an hour, after which it brightened a little. The path took me to the Allt Ghlinn Ghailneiche, and over a bridge to its west bank. The rain had stopped, except for showers of a few minutes' duration to prevent me drying. I followed up the glen until opposite a burn which descended from Carn Geoidh, when I took to the western hillside, and in a few minutes was within the zone of the mist. Passing at least two sets of rocks I arrived at the broad easy ridge of Creag Bhreac, and in due course struck a wire fence which goes more or less north and south over the backbone of Glas Tulachan. Now the wind was from behind, and assisted me, no longer dashing the rain into my face. The fence, acting as a guide, was a great comfort, as it allowed me to go on without constantly consulting map and compass. It was a long and weary trudge of over a mile of slowly rising ridge to the top of Glas Tulachan, the monotony of which was occasionally relieved by glimpses down into its north-east corries. There are two such corries, which, by the fitful glimpses I obtained, might give some sport in winter, but certainly none in summer. Glas Tulachan is 3,445 feet high, and though I have read that it possesses a huge cairn, I only found a small one. In fact, considering that it is the highest hill between Glas Maol, east of the Cairnwell Pass, and Ben a Ghlo by Blair-Atholl, it was a very small cairn. After passing this I followed the fence for a little distance, and then left it, striking west into Glen Mhor, following the burn which runs north-west from Glas Tulachan. The whole glen seemed a mass of water. Runnels which in the usual course of events could be stepped over easily, and would often be dry, were full and swollen to the size of a decent burn. Frequently they were too wide to jump, and had to be waded. But the additional wet received in this way scarcely made itself felt. Having joined the main burn, Allt a Gleann Mhor, I seized on the interval between two showers to take an early lunch. It was a hurried meal

on account of the quick succession of the showers. All the time I had been in the mist no thunder was heard. From my luncheon place the col between Carn an Righ and Mam nan Carn was quickly gained. The ascent of Carn an Righ is about 700 to 800 feet from here. It is very easy; grassy at first, becoming stonier as one ascends. The upper part of the hill is made of quartz, hence its fine symmetrical conical shape. The mist was re-entered just above the col. The wind was much stronger and higher on Carn an Righ than on Glas Tulachan. There are two very respectable quartz cairns on the summit of this little visited hill, 3,377 feet high, but as the wind made it bitterly cold I did not tarry, starting for the saddle again. The height of this col is about 2,600 feet. It presents no noteworthy features. The ridge of Mam nan Carn rises steeply at first, easing off after about 300 feet, and becoming broad, grassy, and stony in places. About 150 yards south-west of the point marked 3,217 feet, the six-inch Ordnance Survey map gives a point 3,224 feet high. Munro says there is a small cairn on this hill; in the mist I never saw it. Having passed the summit I steered north-east, and came to the col between Mam nan Carn and Ben Uarn Mor. This is a delightful grassy place with springy turf. The height is about 2,800 feet. A rise of 500 or 600 feet over an easy ground brought me to the large white quartz cairn of Ben Uarn Mor. As I was there ten days after the summer excursion of the Cairngorm Club, I was impressed with the absence of all litter; a fact which shed credit on the members present. By the side of the big cairn I noticed a second and small one, which Mr A. C. Waters told me afterwards was used as the altar upon which the mystic rites of initiation to that Club had been performed. The weather was distinctly drier than it had been, and I had a great discussion with myself as to whether the tops of that out-of-the-way hill Carn Bhac should be visited or not. All was in favour of Carn Bhac when suddenly it began to rain heavily. This decided me, and taking compass bearings, I rapidly descended to the Allt Ben Uarn. When I was at the fringe of the mist, the first occasion for some time, I noticed the thunder rolling about the hills. The



claps at this level were shorter and more frequent than those heard in the morning whilst at a lower level. In a short time I reached the col between Mam nan Carn and Ben Uarn Beg. Its height is about 2,800 feet. An ascent of about 250 feet placed one on the summit of Ben Uarn Beg. It had never ceased to rain since leaving Ben Uarn Mor. The height of Ben Uarn Beg is 3,011 feet, and it has a small cairn on the summit. From this top a bumpy ridge with two tops, 2,845 and 2,742 feet high respectively, leads in a circuitous manner towards An Socach. Instead of attempting the very difficult task of finding my way along this in the mist, I preferred to descend in an east-north-east direction into the corrie between Ben Uarn Beg and An Socach. A steeper pull of some 800 feet landed me on the top of An Socach, 3,059 feet. No cairn was to be seen. I had scarcely left the mist since leaving Ben Uarn Mor, and it had been raining practically continuously all the time. But now it rained and blew still harder. There was no shelter, and I had to crouch on occasions with my back to the wind behind wholly inefficient stones. It was noticed also that the frequency of electrical discharges from the rocks was much increased. They were very pretty, being chiefly glow discharges which lit up the scene, but were unaccompanied by thunder. When thunder did come it was not the booming sound to which one is accustomed at low levels, but merely a loud and vicious rattle, just like a stonefall on a rocky mountain, such as one hears in Skye or on Ben Nevis.

The surroundings were eerie and unpleasant, such as are apt to get on the nerves of a wet and lonely climber who had been in the mist for some hours. Still I had the summit of An Socach to visit (Socach Mor). It was close and also the last item in the work of a good day. Having been travelling by compass for hours, consulting it every few minutes, I was pretty much at home with the directions and started off for Socach Mor in heavy rain. The ridge between these two tops is nearly level, declining and rising less than 200 feet in a mile. Hurrying along I came at last to the big cairn on Socach Mor, 3,073 feet. It is a stony top, and the electrical glow discharges were very

frequent in consequence. The thunder was rattling three or four times a minute, a vicious wind howled through the cairn battering all unsheltered parts with hail. It was a most uninviting state of affairs such as did not tempt me to linger. Having thus completed my day's work, I consulted my compass to return. But what a surprise! I had been travelling on a ridge running east-north-east with a howling gale behind me coming roughly from the south-south-west. Yet the compass persisted in showing that the north was in the wind's eye. On arriving on the summit I had sat down in the lee of the cairn and should have been facing north! Had the wind changed, or what had happened? It was bitterly cold and the electrical discharges pretty but very unpleasant, so that, having no inclination to pause and consider, I naturally assumed that the compass knew better, and set off in a direction which appeared to be east-south-east or thereabouts. After descending a few hundred feet I came across water which was running in a south-easterly direction according to the compass, so I followed it, and eventually emerged from the mist and rain close to the main burn of the glen. But I had never been in this glen before. I had meant to be in Glen Baddoch, but this certainly was not Glen Baddoch. The hills were different. It seemed narrower. By-and-by I espied a clump of trees and a house. These were certainly not in Glen Baddoch. Where was I? The compass should help. So it was consulted, and, to my disgust, showed that I was in a glen which ran north-east, not south-east, and certainly was not Glen Baddoch. The map proved it to be Glen Ey and the house to be Alltanodhar Shieling with the clump of trees around it. Shortly, my position was this. It was six o'clock and I had been travelling with few halts and little food for many hours. I was many miles from the Spittal, with one or two water-sheds in between. Lastly, I was about fourteen or fifteen miles from Braemar, the nearest house of public entertainment. I chose the latter alternative because it was the easiest, there being a road and a track which was mostly downhill. So, having finished my stores of provisions in the lee of the empty shieling, I began

the long tramp down Glen Ey. The clump of trees round the house is very thick, making it dark beneath them. The track down the glen was in great part under water, even when it was not diving through the burns. It may be a beautiful glen, but I don't know, as my thoughts were occupied with the problem as to how I, practically a ten-year-old member of the S.M.C., had come down in the wrong glen. A boyish trick, forsooth, and humiliating in spite of our Librarian's confessions of his lonely wanderings at the head of Glen Lyon. It was then that the truth dawned on me. The electrical disturbances, whose increase and incessance I had noticed on the Socachs, had turned my compass. It could not have been a magnetic rock, because when I reached running water the compass was as biassed as it had been on the top of Socach Mor. My compass must have been turned, demagnetised, or otherwise affected on the Socach ridge and was deviated for about two hours. This was a curious experience to have on the rounded easy hills of this district. Near the bottom of Glen Ey the keeper met me, I have no doubt on the scent of a trespasser on the last day of July. But his heart was softened when I gave him my news, relating the misfortunes which led to my being in Glen Ey. His news was depressing also—two more miles of glen and five of road to Braemar! Braemar was reached about 8.30 P.M., but I was still in trouble. I was wringing wet and had no other clothes. This might be considered bad, but worse was to follow. There is one fairy wand in particular which opens the hearts of hotel managers at fashionable places. I lacked that persuader, having left almost all my money at the Spittal. Fortunately, Mr Macdonald of the Fife Arms was the reverse of what might have been expected, for he accepted the word of a wet, dirty, and, I have no doubt, disreputable-looking wanderer. Certainly, Braemar was one of the last places I should have expected to see that night. But I had had an excellent day on the hills, plenty of new experiences, and a kind, genial host and entertainment at my journey's end. Further than this, I met an old friend, and in his company tested the deep truth of the last sentence of Munro's article which I have already

referred to. After his day in the Glenshee hills, he dwelt feelingly on postprandial ease and cigars. There is no doubt that there should be no niggardly finish to a good day.

There was a peculiarity about the thunder which I had not noticed before that day. In the valleys below the mist it possessed all the rolling, booming character with which we are so familiar. In the mist I heard very little of it. This is not surprising, for very few who spend days on mountains can have failed to see a thunderstorm below them and have heard no thunder. But when I was on the tops and still in the clouds, the thunder was again apparent and had changed its character from a long, booming roll to a sharp, short, vicious rattle. This rattle did not seem to accompany the glow discharges, which were more frequent on the sharper and rockier summits, but only the more definite sparkings.

The next day I had to return to the Spittal, and, having found Mr A. C. Waters, S.M.C., at Braemar, we decided to have a gentle day together. As is well known, near Braemar is the Cairnwell Pass, 2,200 feet high, and traversed by a driving road. That was obviously the key to our "gentle day," as the road led to the Spittal of Glen Shee. We hired a machine and drove nearly to the top of the pass, from which we ascended a three-thousand footer in half-an-hour without having to hurry! I know of no gentler beginning to a day in Scotland. The name of our hill is Carn Aosda, 3,003 feet high. It is a quartz hill with two cairns. After duly halting, we descended, and, leaving the Cairnwell on the left, passed over Carn nan Sac (3,000 feet) to Carn Geoidh (3,194 feet). It was astonishing how the ground had sucked up the previous day's rain, showing how badly the moisture was needed. Carn Geoidh has two cairns, one being on the south side and not on the summit. A further walk took us to the summit of Carn Bhinnein (3,006 feet), which is, as Munro says, the most shapely top in the district. It is true that it is not separated from Carn Geoidh by dip or distance as are Carn Aosda or the Cairnwell, but in individuality it ranks above them all. It is a rocky knob at the point of intersection of some

grassy ridges which enclose grassy corries. The actual summit is composed of quartz, and, contrary to the statement of the Guide Book, has a cairn, and a very respectable cairn too. Here we parted, Waters returning northward to Braemar, I southward to Spittal. Twice on the homeward journey I went to sleep, and twice was awakened by a sharp shower. Such was the last day of a holiday which, no matter how carefully the plans had been made for it, had not followed the course which had been prepared. This has a great and happy result, one can build fresh schemes for the future, and have the additional pleasure of traversing ground which has become familiar from former experiences. It is a very great pleasure to visit neighbourhoods which have been explored before, provided that some time has been allowed to elapse, unless there are special attractions as in Skye. I had not visited this part of the country since 1898. My second visit has made me feel that eight years shall not elapse before I see it again. It is a matter of joy that I have still at least two hills which I wish to climb in this neighbourhood.

The two consecutive days which I had there were a great contrast to each other; one full of storm and mist, the other sunny, particularly on the north side of the range.

## QUINAG AND STACK POLLY.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

THE County of Sutherland is a land of contrast, whether one compares the bleak bareness of the interior with the almost extravagant adornment of the west coast, or the undulating moorlands with the startling monumental peaks that group themselves in the neighbourhood of Inchnadamph. The late Professor Heddle in a charming article on the Geognosy of Sutherland speaks of the district in no measured terms, and says : "There is no county in Britain . . . in which there is *a priori* to be expected so great an amount of diversified scenery." "Whatever extent of such expectations may have been indulged in, the reality will here be found to exceed it." No lover of nature, I believe, has visited this romantic district but brings back the same tale. The artist, the climber, the geologist join in its praise, and there is now the prospect that the S.M.C., a family of the lovers of nature, will taste its joys at the coming Easter Meet. Nor are its mountains, aged though they be, *blas  es* with generations of climbers. In their unrivalled variety of form they still offer problems to be solved which will remain to test the powers of the flower of our manhood. Suilven, with its Grey Castle and long line of precipice, stands where it did when Professor Ramsay wrote of it in justifiable terms as the "Perfect Matterhorn." Quinag, as we shall see, though partly explored, is still flaunting its banner in steep *ar  te* or in rocky gully ; and the great cliffs of Ben More of Coigach have yet to yield their secrets to the foot of man.

It is, then, a land for the young and eager and active, for its distances are great and its peaks isolated. But it no less invites the thoughtful and experienced. Its rocks are unlike other rocks, and its great cliffs repel the unwary and are difficult to conquer. Sutherland captured my young imagination in 1872, when, as a pedestrian, I carried the memory of Quinag with me, never to be extinguished. To revisit these scenes presented difficulties which the advent of the motor car materially solved, and in June and

July 1906, the long planned tour was accomplished, first with my wife and daughter, and subsequently with my son alone.

Our 10-H.P. Humber car was a sort of travelling hotel and photographic studio, and was well stored with bodily sustenance, so that, as a rule, no visions of the passing lunch or dinner hour prevented us from enjoying to the full the glorious scenery of Inverness-shire and Ross-shire through which we passed *en route* for Inchnadamph. At length Loch Duich lay before us, and, in its still waters, the Sisters of Kintail displayed the vista of receding peaks, which has captivated many an artist.

Between us and the northern shore of Loch Carron two ferries had to be negotiated, but, as the charges for these were six shillings and ten shillings respectively, we presumed that proper arrangements would exist for our safe passage. It was about 3.30 P.M. when we reached Dornie pier, and, by the aid of the horn, invoked the ferryman from the other side. During the necessary delay an inspection of the pier was not reassuring. Sloping steeply into the fast-ebbing tide, it was covered with seaweed, which refused a footing even to mountaineers. How then would pneumatic tyres fare? The pier was also narrow and left little opportunity for getting at right angles to the boat. Even the ferryman refused to take the risk until the rising tide made conditions more practicable.

Meanwhile we visited the ruined castle of Donan, approachable at low tide over stepping-stones. Basking in the setting sun, we looked over to Skye or up Loch Duich, a clear sky now fortunately succeeding the earlier rain. But the ferry still loomed before us, and to while away the time and cover my anxiety, I changed my plates in a changing bag, to the mystification and astonishment of the village crowd, which included well-nigh every inhabitant.

At last the critical moment arrived, and, guided by the shouted advices of well-nigh two score natives, I had to drive on to, and poise on, a couple of planks unsecured and oscillating to and fro. I am informed that twenty-three men held the car by wheel and footboard, mudguard and nameplate, and as eleven thought I should drive forward at

the same moment that twelve endeavoured to pull me back, it is little wonder that the car on one occasion was only prevented from capsizing by being pushed bodily sideways back on to the planks. I had removed my heavy clothes preparatory to a possible swim for life, and poised high above the bulwarks, thought only of such things as the S.M.C. and the minute book. But my retirement was not to be then, and thanks to a calm night and a slackened tide, we reached the opposite shore as darkness descended, and sought the hospitable shelter of Airdferry Hotel to sleep in peace. Our host was the ferryman, an expert in transshipping motors, but he had been absent all day, and hence the old saying, "In the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom," might better be replaced by the more modern one, "Too many cooks spoil the broth."

The sun was shining brightly in the early morning, but ere we left for Strome Ferry, a westerly gale drove heavy torrents of rain in our faces. The steep ascent over the ridge to Strome Ferry was well-nigh impossible owing to the condition of the road, but once at the top, the magnificent view over the forests of Duncraig and away to Loch Carron, hemmed in by lofty mountains, was most superb. Passing clouds and constant light and shade combined to enchant the eye. The crossing of Strome Ferry proved easier than that of Dornie, for the bonnet of the motor was run into the bottom of the boat. Notwithstanding, seventeen men assisted in the operation under the courteous leadership of the ferryman, who prefaced each effort by the words, "Now, shentlemen, another heave."

I must pass over our journey to the happy hunting-ground of Sutherland. We visited the Applecross and Torridon mountains, rejoiced amid the islands of Loch Maree, explored the snowy recesses of the Teallachs, descended into the depths of Corrie Lizzie, and found ourselves at Ullapool and Loch Broom, whence shortly we reached Loch Lurgain, beyond which Stack Polly towered up in the ruddy rays of a setting sun. This peak had already been marked off for exploration, but our immediate goal was Inchnadamph.

Our appetite had been excited by tales of the ridges



and precipices of Cul Beag and Cul Mòr, but though the road passes near them, we only got fragmentary glimpses. Quite otherwise was it at Knockan or Elphin, villages situated near the south-east end of Loch Veyatie, where Suilven rose with terrifying aspect to the north-west.

Inchnadamph has many attractions apart from its fishing lochs and streams ; it is fortunate in its hospitable master and mistress, and climbers who come at the right time, April till July, will have only one opinion of their treatment. Even in June the inn is apt to be crowded, and we were relegated to the roomy dependence, a former manse now let to the hotel. The enterprise of the proprietor has led him to invest in a motor car, the charge for which is no more than for a two-horse conveyance. This inn is the best situated one in the district for climbers.

Close behind, and within walking distance rise the twin summits of Coinnemheall and Ben More of Assynt, from which the eye ranges over moorland to Loch Shin, and still farther to Ben Klibrick in the east. The western outlook embraces the fantastic peaks from the Teallach in the south-west to Foinaven in the north. So far Ben More has not yielded any recognised climbs. Coinnemheall, however, with its northern buttress (in some maps called Fhuaran), possesses a range of quartzite cliffs, which hem in an eastern corrie, rounding the Fhuaran buttress with impossible precipices, and finally stretching northwards, still facing the east. None of these cliffs have been explored, if we except part of the rounded buttress of Fhuaran. This, in company with C. W. Walker and my son, was made the goal of a fifteen hours' expedition from Overscaig, and proved the most humiliating of mountain attempts. The party was defeated time after time both on the lower range of cliffs and on the summit. The angle is not very acute, but the character of the rock makes climbing peculiarly tantalising. Many promising routes are there to tempt the climber, but in all of these a point is soon reached when the difficulties are so great as to forbid further progress.

Glas Bheinn, Canisp, and the southern peak of Quinag, Spidean Coinnich, probably complete the list of higher hills easily reached from the inn without the aid of a convey-

ance. By the use of a trap or bicycle, Quinag, Suilven, and Cul Mòr are practicable, while the hotel motor makes it possible to include Cul Beag, Stack Polly, and even Ben More of Coigach.

Our first excursion was to the north-east buttress of Quinag, which is a very prominent object from the ferry of Kylesku. Motoring to the summit of the pass between Loch Assynt and Kylesku, we obtained a clear view of the eastern face of the mountain. The southern peak, Spidean Coinnich (2,508 feet), has a fine appearance from Inchnadamph, whence it is seen rising above Loch Assynt, the ruins of Ardvreck Castle in the foreground. From the pass, this is seen to be separated from the main peak by a wide corrie, in which is the Lochan Bealach a Chornain, the bealach itself giving access to the western face. Leading directly to the summit of Spidean from the corrie is a fine rocky ridge, which looks as if it would give good sport. Quinag itself is in the form of a horse-shoe, enclosing a deep sunk corrie looking to the north. The respective arms are named Sail Ghorm (2,551 feet) on the west, and Sail Gharbh on the east. The actual summit, Quinag (2,653 feet), is at the southern corner of the eastern ridge where it joins the Chornain Corrie. Apart from the Spidean ridge, the Chornain Corrie is dominated by grass, scree, or heather slopes, which rise steeply to the summit level. The eastern face of Sail Gharbh is very steep, but consists on the whole of scree slopes, broken, however, by a fairly continuous rocky wall, which is most easily avoided at the corner leading into the corrie.

Those making for the north-east buttress should leave the road a little after its highest point, and passing two little lochans, keep almost horizontally over to the foot of the ridge. In this way, practically no descent is necessary, and it is then easy to skirt along, gradually rising, until the corner is turned and the steep precipices rise directly above. The northern end of Sail Gharbh presents a very remarkable appearance from Kylesku. Descending from the summit is a huge bastion with absolutely vertical face, its rounded contours making it resemble some great outwork of a fortress. At first sight, this might be pronounced im-

possible, and it may be so, but these sandstone precipices are very deceptive, and often yield to a persistent attack.

To the right (west), and separated by a gully, is a great buttress, broad at the base and narrowing to the top, where it approaches the summit. This will probably afford a splendid climb, judging from our experiences on the left hand (eastern) buttress, but is rather inaccessible. The latter, which was climbed by our party, is separated from the central rampart by a ravine or gully which, higher up, branches, holding a narrow ridge in the fork. As we scrambled round the eastern corner over steep grass or heather, we could see the deer scampering along the hill-side, or standing erect and watchful on the sky-line regarding the intruder. Just below the rocks we rested on a green ledge, where the pressed-down ferns and violets told of recent occupation by the deer. The outlook to the north was inspiring. Far below, Kylesku ferry, with its islands and rapid tide, lay at the branching of Lochs Glendhu and Coulmore, the road to Scourie zig-zagging over the undulating country away to the north-west. A romantic waterfall, visible even at this distance, gave vent to the superfluous waters of Lochan Leathaid Bhuan, the roar of the cataract rising and falling with the changes of the wind. Eddrachillis Bay, with its countless islands and sea lochs, was on our left, and beyond these nearer objects the eye roamed over Ben Stack, Ben Arkle, and distant Foinaven, and then farther afield to where in the dim distance, the coast-line leading to Cape Wrath might be descried. It was a wilderness of rolling hilltops, illuminated and brightened up by the countless lochs which even in the gloomy conditions sparkled upon every hand.

A dense cloud was rolling up from the Atlantic, and ere long the curtain was drawn over all, till only the great black bastion at our side remained of the magic scene. We therefore turned to our buttress, which, looked at from below, seemed absolutely impossible. The rocks, of a type quite new to me, rose at a terrifying angle, and higher up seemed to present hopeless pitches on a scale fitted only for a giant's reach. But the obstacles in a climb can generally be surmounted, if we meet them singly.

This was no exception. It is true that we held a little round the corner, and in this way avoided the worst part, but our climb was steep, safe, and sensational, and such as would rejoice any climber's heart. Steep vertical pitches with square-cut ledges, so steep on the average that, to those behind, the leader is recognised as a pair of boot heels, while looking down, only the caps of those following are visible. The rock was delightfully rough without being sharp, and offered slight protuberances giving the best of hand and foot hold. The chief drawback was the nearly general absence of hitches, which, however, did not prevent our party from gradually conquering the several hundred feet of cliff, and reaching the easier slope above. Finding our climbing apparently over, we descended to the gully and attacked the narrow Fork Ridge, already mentioned as lying between the two buttresses. The climb on to the ridge at the bottom is very steep, but is soon passed, and interest centres on the final pinnacle or overhanging tooth which blocks the route to the summit. Escape can be made to the gully, but, although it was now raining heavily and the clouds surrounded us, the ladies were placed in secure positions in caves to the left; and with the rope thus well hitched, the leader, after preliminary attempts, scaled the obstruction on the very fine mural precipice at the corner, and was soon followed by the others, to find that the climbing was over, and the sooner we got home the better. A slight rise took us on to the long level ridge leading south to the main peak. This ridge, which was all that we could see, is unique in its character. About fifty feet wide and practically flat and horizontal for half a mile or more, it descends on either hand very steeply. This roadway is paved with flat stones two to three feet square, reminding one of the heights and hollows of a tessellated pavement, the foundation of which had yielded through the stress of traffic or sheer old age.

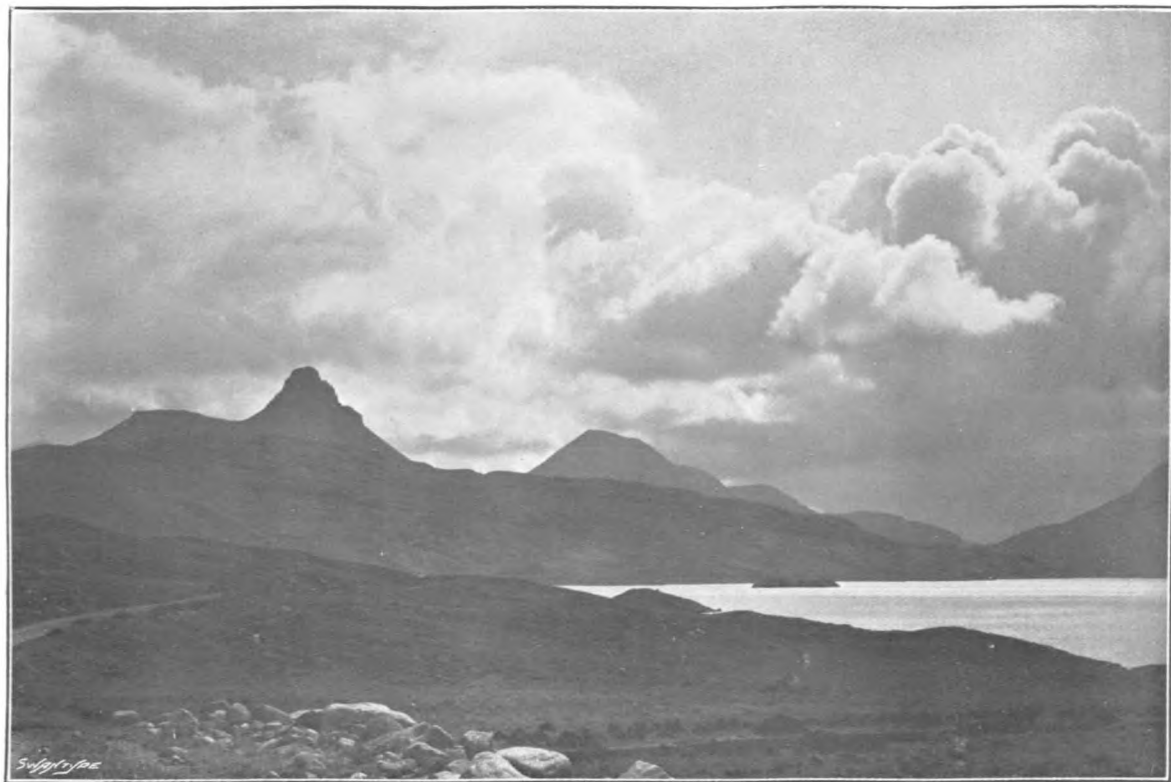
We had done well to study the easiest line of descent during the sunshine of the morning, so that, at first over soft moss, and later over scree slopes, we descended straight from the cairn on the main peak, and emerging from the

clouds, made for the lochans which lay between us and the motor. Removing the tarpaulin which held miniature lochans in every fold, we were soon facing the wind and retracing our steps to Inchnadamph.

Our next destination was Stack Polly, our road lying pleasantly by the shores of Loch Assynt. Nearing the lower end of the loch, the southern peak of Quinag—Coinneach—is passed, and the grand western wall is finely seen rising over little bays and intervening trees. Climbers will do well to study this long escarpment, both binocularly and practically. Quite a number of deep cleft gullies intersect the precipices, some of which have been climbed by Dr Collie, who reports them as affording good sport. It is a pleasant run from Loch Assynt to the village of Lochinver. The road, now by the riverside, or separated from it by heather and birch-clad mounds, is always interesting, and the fresh smell of the sea may be detected some distance before it is reached.

We were fortunate in surprising a group of deer which were resting on rocks amid-stream on the River Inver. There were three stags, their antlers covered with moss, and along with them about half a dozen does. We stopped to photograph the pretty picture, but the does, alarmed, made for the opposite bank. Not so the stags, who in the presence of their lady friends, affected absolute indifference to the intruders. Reassured, the does plashed back through the water to the islets, till further photographic operations again frightened them away. The stags now rose, and with the most consummate show of bravery slowly commenced to move away, every now and then turning to make sure that no real danger threatened. In this way they walked up stream, the satellite does re-joining them, although their timid gestures showed that nothing but the undaunted mien of their lords would have held the band together.

The weather was superb at Lochinver, and although the day was almost at its longest, the traditional midges and clegs could hardly be called a nuisance. The charm of Lochinver lies first in its proximity to the striking mountains, Quinag and Suilven, but from a pictorial point of



*July 1906.*

LOCH LURGAIN AND STACK POLLY.

*W. Inglis Clark.*

view still more to the miniature ranges which run down to the sea, cutting up the coast-line into innumerable bays, and diversifying even a short walk by a perfect kaleidoscope of beauty. Each little bay has its sandy beach, while farther out the smooth worn rocks dip steeply into the clear water, and the islets almost block the distant peeps of Lewis.

From a cycling or motoring point of view, the road from Lochinver to Loch Lurgain is the reverse of ideal. Rising steeply from the sea-level to a height varying from 200 to 300 feet, you have often but a score of yards ere with similar precipitancy you hasten back to the sandy shore below. But these count for nothing, as now turning inland through lovely natural birch, or again through heather moor or by lonely loch side, one constantly returns to the sea coast, where the narrow road, with its hair-pin corners, is led round giddy cliffs, and demands the most careful attention. In the morning a "westerly haar" shrouded the islands, but lay lightly along the lower ranges, and promised to lift from the higher peaks. It was the exact counterpart of an "easterly haar," and led one to hope for a gradual thinning of the veil, the complete casting of it off, and finally a blue sky and hot sun along with the brilliance and light so characteristic of these conditions. We had surmounted successfully the various ranges between Lochinver and Inverpolly, and had already topped our last rise ere running down to Loch Lurgain.

It was 9.45 A.M., and C. W. Walker had trysted to motor from Dundee to Achiltibuie, and thereafter to meet us on the shore below Stack Polly at 10 A.M. The road was rough, but our tryst must be kept, and we felt impatient as we saw in front, blocking the narrow carriageway, a dog-cart with ghillie and fishermen. We made up and there was our Dundee member with fishing paraphernalia, admitting that as he doubted if we would keep our engagement, he had come prepared to spend the day in the "gentle sport" in the event of our non-appearance. Now all dubiety was gone, and leaving his rod and landing-net to his friends, he was soon seated on the step of our car *en route* for Stack Polly. We selected a spot just below

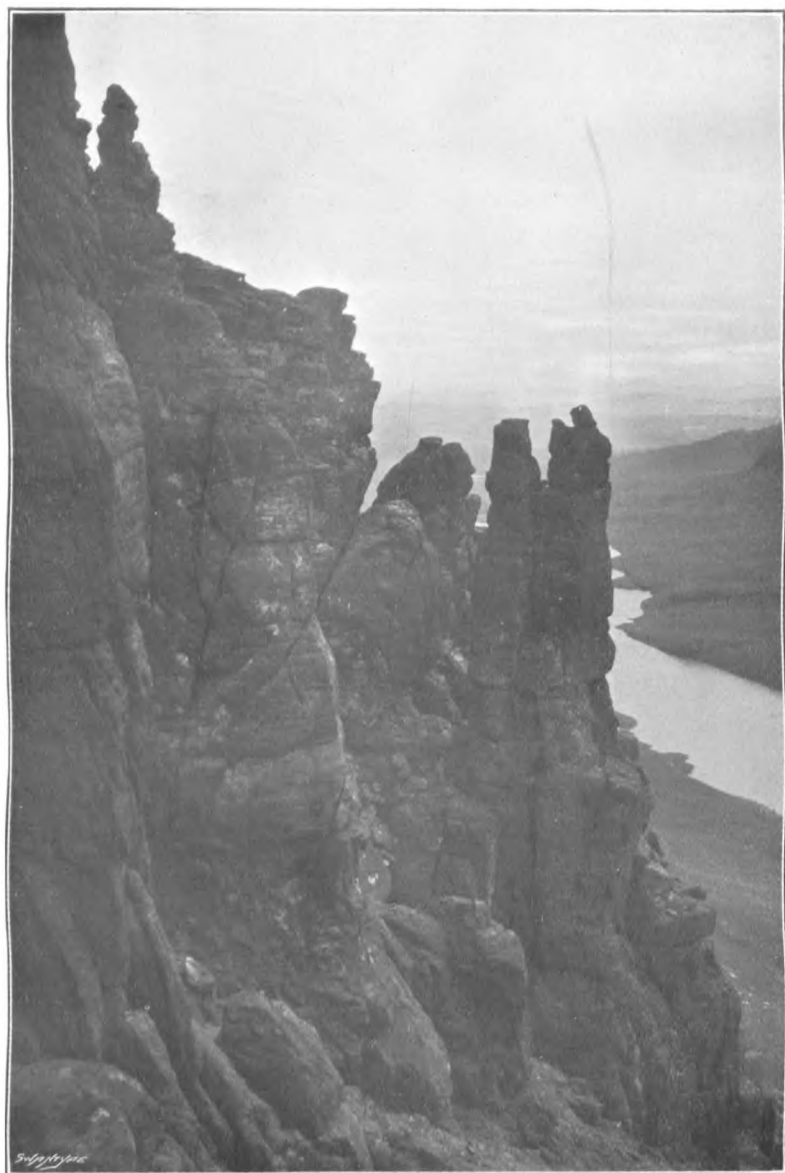
the peak, and at 10.5 A.M. dismounted to make a change into mountaineering boots.

Stack Polly, the An Stac of the one-inch Ordnance map, is a striking peak and one which is not easily forgotten. Rising steeply from the shores of Loch Lurgain it thrusts itself before the traveller by the dolomitic shapes of the pinnacles on the main ridge. Professor Heddle in the article already referred to speaks of this ridge as being like "a porcupine in a state of extreme irascibility." (See also *S.M.C.J.*, Sept. 1906, p. 137.)

Stack Polly is a bizarre mountain, and far removed, for instance, from the Cairngorms, dignified and grand as they are, with outlying buttresses and corries sheltering in their flanks. No mighty river rises from its rain-trenched slopes, and, damnable fact, it can claim no place in the peerage of the Munros. It only claims a meagre altitude of 2,009 feet, and each succeeding year, if we may trust our own experience, threatens to reduce its height by inches or feet.

The photograph in the last issue of the *Journal* shows its appearance from the roadside. In this the upper parts are no doubt foreshortened, but enough remains to give a good idea of the rocky crest. The lower slopes rise without a break to the foot of the rocks, and, as the sun had now justified the promise of the morning, and poured down its rays from a clear sky, the toilsome ascent to the rocks much resembled many a Swiss experience, the jagged peaks above strengthening the impression. The ridge of Stack Polly is about half a mile long, and runs nearly east and west, with a slight deviation to north-west. At the eastern end it rises very steeply, the rocks being somewhat cliffy with numerous vegetable ledges of an unpromising nature. The western end is the higher, and rises abruptly at a very high angle in a rocky face which is practically free from vegetation. Between these two, the rocky ridge is broken by rotten gullies, so that while it is perfectly easy to traverse the ridge from north to south, it is not quite so easy to pass from east to west if the true crest be kept. The intervening rock towers into fantastic pinnacles, and tempts the climber to seek the pathway of least resistance. Some of the transverse ridges seem impossible of access, and we passed these,





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*W. Inglis Clark*

PINNACLES OF STACK POLLY.

being more attracted to the great western cliff. A wide gully of easy access cuts off the rocky portion abruptly, and the cliff immediately to the left rises so vertically as to be quite hopeless. Immediately beyond, and just about the left sky-line in the photograph, the face is broken up by numerous chimneys and ledges which tempted us to make our attack at this point. We were in light marching costume, and, save for some precious apples, a pair of rubber shoes, and the inevitable camera, had few incumbrances.

Appearances are often deceitful, and the beginning of the climb, which at the first glance seemed to offer superabundant holds, proved sufficiently difficult to all the party. We had ample rope, 140 feet in all, and Walker, being chosen leader, was backed up by the writer, the ladies coming last. We were soon impressed by the splendid character of the climb, which was practically free from grass, and, I may also add, from small stones or earth. It was essentially a rock climb, the great slabs of rough sandstone, set almost vertically, affording excellent friction grips, but refusing hitches when they would be most desirable. A few hitches were indeed met with, but balanced so warily that a touch with the finger set them rocking. In particular, a square-cut slab, about 4 feet by 2 feet 6 inches set on end, seemed an obvious and splendid hitch, more especially as a traverse without it into a corner was not particularly easy. It, however, rocked sidewise, so that all use of it was restricted to the one stable position we could depend on.

About half-way up matters became so formidable that both rucksacks were left behind, and C. W. W. exchanged his nailed boots for my rubbers (old friends in Dolomite work). Our way seemed restricted to an upward course, and this became intensified where a slight crack or chimney was the only means of progression to higher regions. A little ledge for the left foot would give support if it could be reached, and higher up a good sharp handhold would solve the problem, but the position was a difficult one, and needed consideration. At length the leader made the attempt, and standing on my shoulder, after a few

minutes of strenuous effort, struggled up the slab and got a breathing place just below the final difficulty. It was no easy matter to dispose of two ladies, two rucksacks, and the writer on the meagre ledges of the face, and the presence of a two-foot cubical block poised on the only standing space, made it difficult and even dangerous for the leader to handle the rope at all while the writer joined him above the pitch. I don't know how much physical suasion was applied to my rope, but I know that it took a few minutes after the supreme effort was made before I had breath enough to discuss the further difficulty which alone lay between us and victory. The rough character of the rock aids one materially in such a place, and the perch above, sufficient for one, is even sufficient for two when unencumbered with rucksacks. The slightly overhanging bulge above proved less trying than we feared, and by the aid of *vis a tergo*, in the shape of the writer's head applied in the proper way, I soon had the satisfaction of finding myself alone on the flat perch, with the knowledge that the leader was enjoying a well-earned cigarette on the top. It was a lengthy business bringing up the ladies and the rucksacks. The latter made no effort to climb the pitch, but the ladies as usual allowed no ledge or nook or cranny to pass unheeded, and as far as possible legitimately finished the climb.

When the last of the party reached the final stance, a touch of the foot sent over the huge block which had for so long menaced our safety. As we watched it bound down the precipice, clearing a hundred feet at a leap, we felt that future climbing parties would be the safer for our sweeping operations.

The summit was an ideal spot for afternoon lunch. Luxuriant beds of crowberry afforded couches equal to the softest down. All the way up our thoughts had dwelt on the joys of an apple on the summit. The heat was intense, the rocks warm, wind absent, the exertion great; was it not natural that we should rejoice in the knowledge that our lunch, confided to Walker's care before starting, included apples? All will sympathise with our secret happiness. But it had a rude awakening. Before com-

mencing the rock climb, lunch had been served, each detachment (*Dundee v. Edinburgh*) taking from his own store. We noticed the ample, even lavish, supplies of fruit consumed by our friend, and secretly remembered, "You can't have your cake, and eat it." On the summit, however, the hour of reckoning came, and when a demand was made for the restitution of the five talents confided to his care, it was proved down to the hilt that the unfaithful leader could not return ours with usury, but had only one small apple hidden away in a napkin in his rucksack. I make no commentary.

As the single apple took but a short time to demolish, more time was available to survey the wonderful prospect before us. As a rule, readers are not grateful to those who tell of the floating clouds, the dream-like islands in the distance, and the hundreds of mountain tops visible from some unknown view point. It is therefore only because I wish my fellow-members to make an effort to visit Stack Polly for themselves, that I venture to give some slight idea of the scene that met our eyes.

Standing, as it does, quite isolated, it rises 2,000 feet abruptly from almost the sea-level. Its two sides, north and south, are equally steep, and terminate in the rock ridge already referred to. The actual summit, covered with wild fruit, is only a few feet wide. There is therefore nothing to detract from the sense of isolation, and one looks down as from some lofty tower on as wonderful a scene as can be met with in Great Britain.

My pen is powerless to give adequate expression to our feelings as we looked around, but I can at least refer to the salient characteristics of the scenery. Immediately below, to the south, lie Lochs Lurgain and Baddagyle, the crescent shape of the former being pleasantly sprinkled with islands. Opposite, and rising with equal abruptness, are the peaks of the Ben More of Coigach group, the riven summit of Sgor Deas tempting the climber to investigate its gully. Beyond, and topping these peaks, the glorious Teallachs pierce the sky, while out to sea a hundred mysteries are faintly discerned through the haze. Turning to the north and west, Loch Skinaskink, an inland loch,

first attracts attention, its contorted shore line and numerous bays being fabled to sum up to 500 miles of fishing ground. Between it and the sea rise the miniature ranges which stretch up to Lochinver, giving wondrous effects of light and shade, to which the numerous lochans add intensity. The fretted coast-line of Enard and Kirkaig and Inver, fringed by the islands of Polly, Fraochlin, and Soyea among others, lies like a lace embroidery on the sea, which from this height always presents a placid appearance.

Beyond Loch Skinaskink rises the extraordinary Suilven, its Grey Castle walled round by vertical cliffs, and beyond it the long line of Quinag precipices so alluring to climbers. Canisp peeps in between Suilven and Cul Mòr, and Cul Beag fills in the foreground to the south-east. The abruptness of these northern peaks is startling, but the impression is not one of bleakness or monstrosity. The setting is so delicate in form and rich in colouring that not even the tourist-ridden Rigi can display a more attractive or varied prospect. Then again, the pinnacled crest of the mountain is in itself wonderful. Here a slender spire soars into heaven, and in the strongest contrast the eye passes on to some inland loch, or to the distant sea where the fisherman's brown sail proclaims the toiler of the deep. The pinnacles and blocks seem poised in the most insecure position, and look as if a mere touch would send them hurtling into the valley below.

After we had built a cairn at the top of our climb we approached the top of the great cliff a little to the south-east. A huge column of rock here stands isolated from the summit mass by a cleft some 2 feet wide. It must have measured at least 15 feet high by perhaps 6 feet by 2 feet, and no doubt as to its stability occurred to us. I was photographing near the edge when Walker, his rope held by my wife, put his foot across, and barely rested on the column preparatory to crossing. At that instant, a weird sound issued from the base of the rock, which had doubtless changed its point of support, and we hastily moved to a safer position in case of developments. The sound somewhat resembled a very deep-toned drum, the pitch of

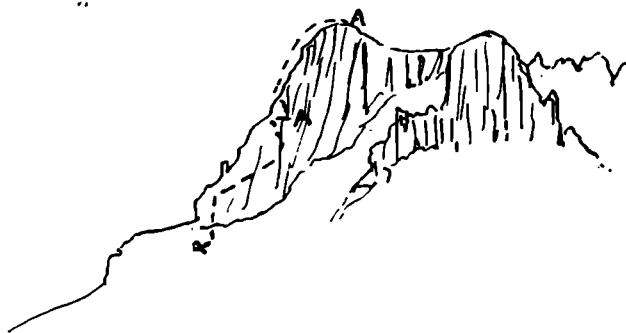
the note being about the lowest audible to the human ear.

It was a delightful change from the wild surroundings of the mountain to retrace our steps to the motor, the resources of which, in a few minutes, furnished an excellent tea-table by the side of a rustling brook. Alas, our mountaineering experiences were over for the time being, for Walker had to return to Achiltibuie, while our road lay to Ullapool, and thence by Garve to Beauly.

A month later, however, in company with my son I returned to complete the exploration of Stack Polly. In particular the eastern peak which had been passed over on the former occasion must be attempted, and the long array of pinnacles on the ridge sampled. It was evening and threatening rain when we stopped below our peak, and on the shore of Loch Lurgain. But we were provided with a gipsy tent weighing six pounds complete, and sleeping bags, so the car was turned on to the only firm-looking piece of turf we had seen, and we proceeded to erect our tent among the brackens near by. Before this was accomplished, the car showed signs of sinking, and we found it impossible to regain the road. It took an hour and a half, and the aid of a shepherd boy, before, by means of foot-boards and a jack, we could coax the car back on to the road, and place it in safety. The brackens by this time were wet, and our tent erection, owing to inexperience, was slow; but when darkness closed in all was snug, and in the solitude of Bracken Camp we discussed our plans for the morrow. This proved to be stormy, and as we lay in our sleeping bags we looked across to the drifting clouds rolling over Ben More of Coigach, while Stack Polly was invisible above in the mists.

Next morning, in order to secure an early start, I surreptitiously put on the alarm, so that my unsuspecting son, cook of the party, had breakfast ready by 5.30 A.M., and we were well up to our peak when the sun was rising behind Cul Mòr and Cul Beag, and in all the panoply of colour shone through the broken-up clouds which o'erspread the sky. The eastern peak is very forbidding, rising in huge, slightly overhanging slabs, with impracticable chim-

neys facing Loch Lurgain. Above these a number of grassy ledges lead up to a top rampart of cliffs, which seem equally hopeless; at least we found it impossible to find a footing on the face, and gradually edged round to the eastern gable where access to the ridge is easy. The traverse of the ridge took us about five hours; these were occupied partly in photography, but for the greater part in climbing pinnacles and cross ridges, which for the whole distance formed enchanting foregrounds for the distant views o'er loch and sea. Lest any may think that I overestimate the splendour of this mountain district, I recommend them to read the late Professor Heddle's brilliant article, to which I have already referred, and which was kindly lent me by our Editor. He says: "The ridge of



The dotted line A A A represents Dr Collie's Climb.

Stack Polly connects, if it can be called connecting, two terminal massive bastions, square as if rule and angle had been laid to them, and cleft as clean downwards as if the axe of Omnipotence had dealt the blow. The bastions stand as inaccessible to climber as they seem regardless of winter blast and rending ice. The bolts of heaven alone could affect them."

We have seen that the western buttress has yielded a route to the climber, but the eastern still challenges the daring to test their skill. Professor Collie, who knows the mountain well, has kindly given me some notes regarding a route on the western buttress by which he forced a way to the top, and the accompanying sketch will enable suc-

ceeding climbers to understand the position of his climb. This commences on the south side some distance to the right of our start, and does not appear to touch our route at any point.

It may be asked what remains to be climbed. Are the pinnacles and ridges worth climbing, with safe rock, and not liable to crumble beneath the first man who climbs them? I think the climber will find ample scope for an enjoyable day, and the ridges, save where obviously rotten, give good rough rock, the angle of which will usually suffice to keep off mere ridge walkers. The situations are sensational, even incredible, and the whole presents an attraction unique in Great Britain. The western buttress or peak is of sterner stuff, and though I circled the giant cliffs with the object of finding further routes of ascent, I confess the impression left was that the secret is well guarded, and will only be given up to the strenuous ultramontist of the future. From Inchnadamph Stack Polly is inaccessible save by motor, but I think that two hours going by Elphin and Drumrunie would place a party at the foot within three-quarters of an hour of the ridge. If any are enterprising enough to go, and given good weather, their experiences will far exceed their expectations.



## THE KNEES OF THE GODS.

THIS story was told to me by a friend whom I shall call Smith, a man of limited imagination and unswerving veracity. He prefaced his narrative by declaring that never in his life had he dreamed before or at any rate remembered the details in the morning, and that in any other case and to any other man he would have been ashamed to repeat the nonsense. From which I argued that my friend had been more than a little scared.

It seemed that Smith had gone to Chamonix in the end of May for a rest. He had had no thought of climbing, for at that season it is only by the merest chance that serious ascents are possible. As it fell out, however, the chance was given him. A fortnight of uninterrupted sunshine stripped the snow from the Aiguilles, and Smith, forgetful of the work he was writing on "The Metaphysics of the Impossible," was tempted and fell. He began with the Charmoz; he then did the Blaitière by the northern ridge; and, fired now with intolerable pride, attempted and achieved the Grèpon. It was on the night following this last ascent that he dreamed the dream I am about to relate. As I have said, his pride had become overweening, and he had gone to bed with his head full of presumptuous plans. He would do the Dent de Requin; then he might have a try at the Aiguille de la Republique; after that, perhaps, at the virgin Capuchin. He would return to England with a record of achievements, done out of due season, which would make his mountaineering friends blaspheme.

The slumbers of a climber are usually dreamless. No sooner has tattered cheek been laid to cool pillow than there comes that hammering of the infamous boots on the door which announces three o'clock and time to get up. But on this night Smith had scarcely closed his eyes when he began to dream.

He found himself, he said, in what seemed to be the smoking-room of an hotel. It was winter time, for a large fire was burning on the hearth, and on closer inspection he noticed that the fuel was peat. Clearly this was not

Switzerland. And then something about the room struck him as familiar. He went to the window, drew up the blind a little and looked out. Snow lay deep on the ground, and a moon in a patch of open sky showed a line of jagged white hills. The sight brought him at once to his bearings. The ancient barn-like shape had been changed. The well-worn sofa had gone ; gone, too, the moth-eaten deer's horn above the fireplace, the rickety writing-tables, the few well-thumbed books. There were some good Della Robbia imitations on the mantelpiece. A Chippendale bureau stood in a corner, and some pretty Turcoman rugs lay on the floor. The place was furnished like a sitting-room at the Ritz, but it was none the less the smoking-room of the Sligachan Inn.

While Smith sat on a spindle-legged chair, wondering what had become of his pipe, and wondering still more how on earth he had got there, a party of men entered, dressed as if for some climbing expedition. It seemed an odd thing to be starting at dead of night in mid-winter for the Coolins, but somehow when he looked at the climbers he did not think their conduct ridiculous. They were all long men and incredibly lean, and about their movement was a nervous strength which Smith remembered to have noticed in one or two great guides of his acquaintance. With them came a man whom he thought he recognised. He rubbed his eyes and stared at him, and then a nod from the other convinced him. It was his friend Brown, a Chancery barrister, longer and thinner than he remembered him, but undoubtedly Brown.

The party talked for a few minutes and drank minute tumblers of milk. Then they departed, leaving Brown behind them. Smith had by this time found his pipe, and walked to the fireplace to get a light.

"My dear good fellow," said Brown, "for Heaven's sake throw away that poison!" and he looked darkly at the pipe.

Now Brown had been accustomed to smoke cigars of a peculiar rankness, and Smith was therefore surprised at his tone.

"What do you mean?" he asked. "You know you smoke like a chimney yourself."

"I!" cried Brown in horror, "I never touched the stuff in my life. No one does nowadays, except a few obese Germans."

Smith would have liked to contradict him, but he had so many questions to ask that he forbore.

"Where are those fellows going?" he said. "They must be maniacs to set out at this time of night. I suppose they are walking to Glenbrittle or Camasunary?"

Brown stared. "My dear man, they are not trippers. They are going to do the traverse of the Coolins—Sgurr-nan Gilleán to Garsbheinn. They will breakfast at Glenbrittle about nine o'clock."

"Now, look here, Brown," said Smith, "what is the good of talking rot to me? That traverse has never been done in the longest summer's day, and in a winter night it is unthinkable——"

He stopped, for it seemed to him that everything about his present position was unthinkable. How had he come there, what had happened to the Sligachan Inn, what above all things had happened to Brown, who used to be a tubby little man tired out by a day's grouse shooting? Had he, Smith, gone to sleep like Rip Van Winkle and awakened in a new century? The odd thing was that he felt no alarm, only an insatiable curiosity. He wanted to cross-examine Brown, but he did not know how to begin, for his ignorance would seem to the other to call for an explanation he was unable to give.

"You have been away from mountaineering for some years," said Brown politely. "I don't wonder that it all seems odd to you."

"I wish you'd explain things a bit," said Smith. "What do people do nowadays? As you say, I have been out of the world for some time. About Chamonix, for instance?"

"Ah, there you touch upon a sore subject. There has been a great row, but happily it is now settled. There are railways, of course, up Mont Blanc and the Verte and the Grandes Jorasses, but these we did not mind. But last year they proposed to put electric lifts on the Aiguilles, and then we had to draw the line. There are five ex-presidents of the Alpine Club in the Cabinet, including the Foreign Secre-

tary, so we brought pressure to bear on France, and after a little fuss she climbed down. There is not much good climbing left at Chamonix, but the Aiguilles still make a pleasant day."

"How do you mean?" said Smith. "A pleasant *day!*"

"Oh, yes. One of the most popular scrambles in Europe is to start from the Montanvert and run over the Charmoz, Grèpon, Blaitière, Plan, and Midi. The best time is nine and a half hours."

"That," said Smith excitedly, "is an infernal lie."

Brown coloured. "I beg your pardon," he said stiffly. "Do you doubt my word?"

Smith saw that he had made a mistake. "Forgive me, old man, but it seems so strange to me. I am sorry for being rude, but I feel exactly like some kind of Rip Van Winkle awakening to a more strenuous world. What about Zermatt?"

"Alas," said Brown, restored to good temper, "that is a sad tale. No mountaineer goes there now except for exercise. The Dent Blanche still offers interesting snow work for beginners. But the other peaks are festooned with railways, and the Matterhorn, as you have probably heard, is covered in."

"Covered in," said Smith in amazement. "What are you saying?"

"Oh, you go to the Schwarzsee or the Zmutt, and you find a door where you take a ticket—10 francs it costs. Then you are conducted by housemaids up carpeted stairs heated by electricity. At every third landing or so there is a restaurant where you can lunch, and there are balconies for the view. In the end you come to a little glass cupola, and you raise a skylight and climb out on the top. Or if you like you can do the whole thing in a lift. The summit is a sort of German beer-garden."

"Then where do people climb nowadays — serious climbers, I mean?" asked Smith with a doleful sinking of heart.

"Mainly in the Himalaya and the Karakoram. Everest and the other great peaks are a little hackneyed, but there are still a good many summits unclimbed. There are one

or two places also in the Kuen-lun and the Bolivian Andes where I am told you have a chance of first ascents. Ruwenzori, too, has a good reputation because of the difficulty of equatorial snow."

"And what about Scotland?" said Smith, looking sadly around the room, filled for him with so many memories of wearied and contented evenings.

"Scotland is still fairly good, given the right kind of weather, but the Coolins are almost the only hills which are worth doing. You see all the other places like Coire Mhic Fhearchair and Ben Nevis and the Sutherland hills are a little too much scrambled about on. But some of us combined and had the Coolins made a climbing reserve, and we don't allow fancy railways on the peaks. Of course they are useless in summer, only fit for tourists and artists and people out of training. But given a really good snow-storm or a pitch-dark night, and you may get some very fair scrambling. I had quite a hard time last Christmas Eve in a blizzard doing the traverse of the range. We nearly got hung up at the Alasdair-Dubh Gap. The best thing here, I think, is the Waterpipe Gully, when there is a real torrent coming down it, provided you keep to the gully all the time, and don't go out on the face. You're half drowned before you finish, but it's excellent fun."

Smith, having no comment to make adequate to his surprise, disregarded Brown's disapproval and lit his pipe.

"Have some Talisker," he said hospitably to his companion.

"Good Lord!" said Brown in consternation. "What are you saying? The thing's forbidden as a beverage, and there's a tremendous penalty on its sale. Unless you're ill, and have a doctor's certificate, you can't get it. . . . You were asking about Ben Nevis. The last time I was there was when my battalion of the Scottish Mountain Rifles went into camp on the top in December. We had some good practice with ice-axes among the gullies."

"What in the name of wonder are the Scottish Mountain Rifles?" asked Smith, and then he repented of his question, fearing that Brown might think him a maniac and tell him no more. But Brown seemed to have a love for

explaining what to him must have been the obvious, and continued without a sign of surprise.

"In old days they were called the Scottish Horse. But when motors displaced horses in war it was thought best to utilise the advantage Scotland offered, and turn them into a mountain corps. About the same time the deer-forests were made national manœuvre grounds, so they had every chance in training. They are a very fit lot of men, and all of them can climb rocks with heavy baggage, and handle an ice-axe. The officers are *ex-officio* members of the Alpine Club. I should like to have shown you the way the sergeants took their men up the Ben Nevis buttresses."

A question had long been hovering on Smith's lips. "But what started all this colossal revolution?" he asked.

Brown stared. "This is schoolboy history with a vengeance. Every one knows that it began years ago when the Labour Party first came into power, and introduced *geist* into our national life. The first Haldane Ministry nationalised the great landed estates, introduced conscription, made the phonetic spelling of Gaelic names compulsory, and united the Empire. After that, of course, it was a short step to physical training and the reform of diet and the reconstruction of the individual life. Now, thank Heaven, we are on the road to national health—some way off it yet, but still on the road."

"What the devil do you mean by *geist*?" asked Smith testily, darkly suspicious of something which stood between him and his Talisker.

"Reason," said Brown, "reason—science—intelligence—all the things that used to be at a discount in politics, and are now the only things that matter. We have got rid of feudalism and clericalism and prejudice on the one hand, and doctrinairiedom on the other."

"And has all the world got *geist* like you?"

Brown laughed. "Oh no! We have it in the Empire—at least the rudiments of it. The other peoples, except Japan, refused it, and have suffered accordingly. To-day we divide the world between us. Japan has China and the American continent. Europe is a collection of small republics under our suzerainty, all except France, which we

have neutralised, and keep as an independent centre of art and culture."

"Give me some dates," said Smith plaintively; "my memory is so bad nowadays."

"You seem to have become very stupid, old man," said Brown. "It's all due to that infamous tobacco of yours. I oughtn't to have to instruct you in these rudiments. The beginning was in 1911, the date of the first Haldane Ministry. In 1915 we fought the Triple Alliance. In 1916 Japan conquered and annexed the United States, and in 1920 there was the famous Conference of Ecclefechan between the Mikado and our Emperor. In 1921 the last Liberal died, and was preserved in the British Museum. In 1923"—

But at this moment Smith unfortunately chose to knock the ashes out of his pipe. As a Gladstonian of the old school, Brown's last remark had annoyed him greatly, and he was about to declare that the new régime, for all its mountaineering pride, was one from which beer and skittles, not to mention tobacco and Talisker, were deplorably absent. But the sound of his pipe-bowl, hammered against the mantelpiece, seemed to echo and reverberate with uncanny persistence. . . .

And then he suddenly awoke to the fact that he was not in the Sligachan smoking-room, but in his bedroom at Chamonix, and that the boots was beating at his door, and striving in broken English to tell him that it was two o'clock in the morning.

Smith got up in a daze and struggled into his clothes. As a sign of his preoccupation he told me that he was half-way to the Blaitière chalet before it occurred to him to notice the state of the weather.

## S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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### QUINAG (THE WATER STOUP?).

(DIVISION IV. GROUP XVI.)

Lat.  $58^{\circ} 13'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 2' 50''$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 107; six-inch scale, Sutherland, Sheets 59 and 60. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 26. Geological Survey Map, Sheet 107.

This fine mountain, one of the most striking of the isolated masses of Torridon Sandstone that rise along the western seaboard of Sutherland and North Ross-shire, lies between Loch Assynt and the salt-water Loch Cairn Bhan, and is conveniently situated in the angle between the roads which lead from Inchnadamph westward to Lochinver and northward to Kylesku.

From the southern peak, Spidean Coinich (2,508 feet), which overlooks the waters of Loch Assynt, the principal axis of the mountain runs for some distance due north, and then dividing, throws out two spurs which enclose the flat-bottomed sandy corrie of the Bàthaich Cuinneige (the byre of Quinag). The western of these spurs, looking towards Ardvar, is Sail Ghorm (the blue or green heel), 2,551 feet; that to the east Sail Gharbh (the rough heel), 2,414 feet. The highest point of the mountain (2,653 feet) is found on the eastern ridge about half a mile south-south-west from the top of Sail Gharbh. The extremities of both the northern spurs rise boldly and abruptly from the rolling floor of gneiss below, Sail Gharbh in particular presenting a magnificent face of precipitous sandstone, rifted by deep and almost vertical gullies, and broken into rounded tower-like buttresses. These are well seen from the Kylesku road. The west side of the main ridge also forms a long line of



terraced crags, broken at intervals by gullies, up which access can be more or less easily had to the summit ridge.

Quinag is chiefly composed of purplish-red Torridon Sandstone, which rests upon an uneven floor of Lewisian gneiss, the latter rising to a height of nearly 2,000 feet on the north face of Sail Ghorm; while quartzite of Cambrian age caps the highest point of the eastern ridge, covers the top of Spidean Coinich, and extends down its eastern slopes to the Skiag Burn.

The easiest ascent of the mountain is made from Inchnadamph. (Good hotel; mail cars from Lairg and Loch-inver). *Route*.—Three miles along the road to Kylesku; thence west one and a half miles up the slope of Spidean Coinich, and thence along the ridge for one and a half miles to Sail Gharbh or two miles to Sail Ghorm.

The western face can best be approached by the path through Glen Leirg to Ardvar, which leaves the Unapool road near Achumore.

The precipices and gullies of Sail Gharbh lie about one mile west from the bridge over the Unapool Burn on the road to Kylesku, which is two and a half miles distant to the north. (Inn good, but small.)

*Climbs*.—Two gullies on the south-western face of the mountain near Sail Ghorm have been climbed by Dr Collie. There are no climbs of particular interest on the Sail Ghorm buttress itself, but the face and gullies of Sail Gharbh should afford some interesting ascents.

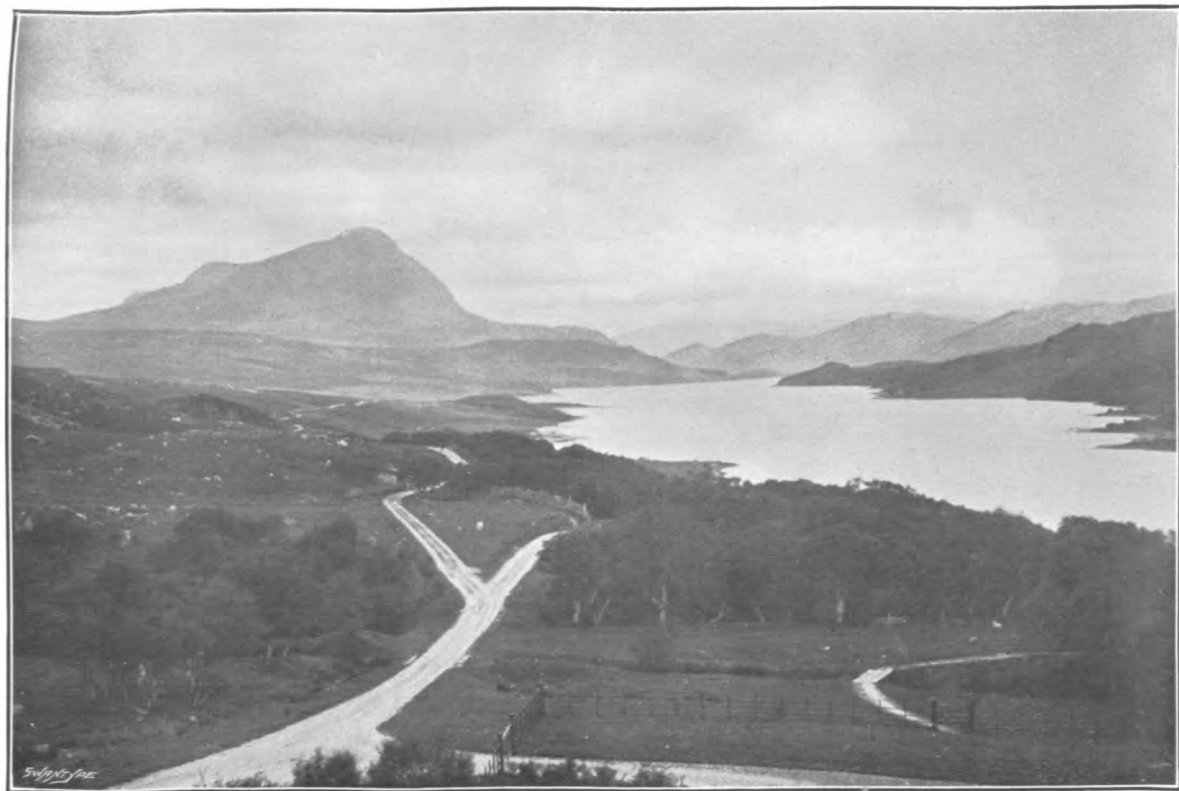
L. W. H.

## BEN HOPE (3,040 feet).

### (DIVISION IV. GROUP XVII.)

Lat. 58° 25'; W. Lon. 4° 37'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 114. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 26.

This mountain is the most northerly summit over 3,000 feet in the British Isles. It is an imposing dome-shaped mass, situated at the south end of Loch Hope in the north of Sutherlandshire, which being only 12 feet above the sea-



*June 1903.*

**BEN HOPE AND LOCH HOPE.**

*A. E. Robertson.*

level, gives full effect to its height. The west and north-west faces are very steep, rising in two terraces, the lower about 1,000 feet and finely wooded, the upper of about 2,000 feet, and cut into numerous rocky buttresses. The eastern slopes are more gradual, and are hollowed out into corries, containing rather large tarns.

Ben Hope is remotely placed as regards inns, both Tongue and Durness being a long distance from the top. A road runs along its western base, passing the keeper's house at Cashil Dhu, where it is sometimes possible to get accommodation for the night. This place can be reached from either Durness or Tongue by road, being twenty-five miles from the former and twenty-three from the latter, including the ferry. It is fourteen miles from Tongue to the summit, by a road passing Kinloch Lodge, and up the eastern slopes. Tongue and Durness are in communication by mail car with Lairg station, on the Highland Railway.

*Usual Route.*—From Cashil Dhu.

There is a choice of routes. The easier crosses the ferry of the river of Strath More opposite the house, and proceeds by road up Strath More for three miles to where the Allt na Cailliche descends from Ben Hope in a series of fine waterfalls. Climbing the north side of the stream till the top of the falls is reached, then following stream for half a mile, and taking to the western slopes, a ridge is struck, which after a long gentle ascent lands the climber on the summit.

*Another Route.*—Cross ferry as above, and traverse moor till a path to Hope Lodge is struck. Follow this for a short distance till the small burn flowing from Dubh-loch na Beinne (a small loch on the first shelf of the mountain) is reached; then ascend north side of stream to the top of the first terrace; pass the loch to the south, and make for the end of the north-western ridge, climb steeply to ridge, which follow to top. Before arriving at the summit the rocks form the deep corrie on the north-east, and the cliffs of the north-western slope make an acute angle. It is steep here. If there is soft snow the climber may be forced to descend into the corrie and reach the summit by the ridge on the south side, which runs due east from top.

Ben Hope commands grand views, the sea with the Orkneys, the flats of Caithness, and the fine mountains of Sutherland, being the principal points of interest.

*Climbs.*—None recorded. The grand western and north-western faces should afford fine scrambles.

C. B. P.

## FOINNE BHEINN, ARCUIL, AND BEN HEE.

(DIVISION IV. GROUP XVIII.)

Lat.  $58^{\circ} 25'$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 53'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 113, 114, 107, and 108. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 26.

Foinne Bheinn (pron. *Foinaven*)=the white ben. A name applied to the whole range, embracing the three following peaks :—

1. Ceann Garbh, 2,952 feet=the rough head. Lies 4 miles east of Rhiconich Inn.
2. Ceann Mor, 2,980 feet=the big head. Lies 1 mile south of Ceann Garbh.
3. Creag Dionard (pron. *Creag Jee-o-nard*), 2,654 feet. Lies 3 miles south-east of Ceann Mor.

Arcuil, 2,580 feet. Lies 5 miles south-east of Rhiconich Inn.

Meall a' Chuirn (Meall Horn), 2,548 feet. Lies 3 miles east of Arcuil.

Sabhal Mor (pron. *Saval Mor*), 2,288 feet=the big barn. Lies 1 mile south-east of Meall Horn.

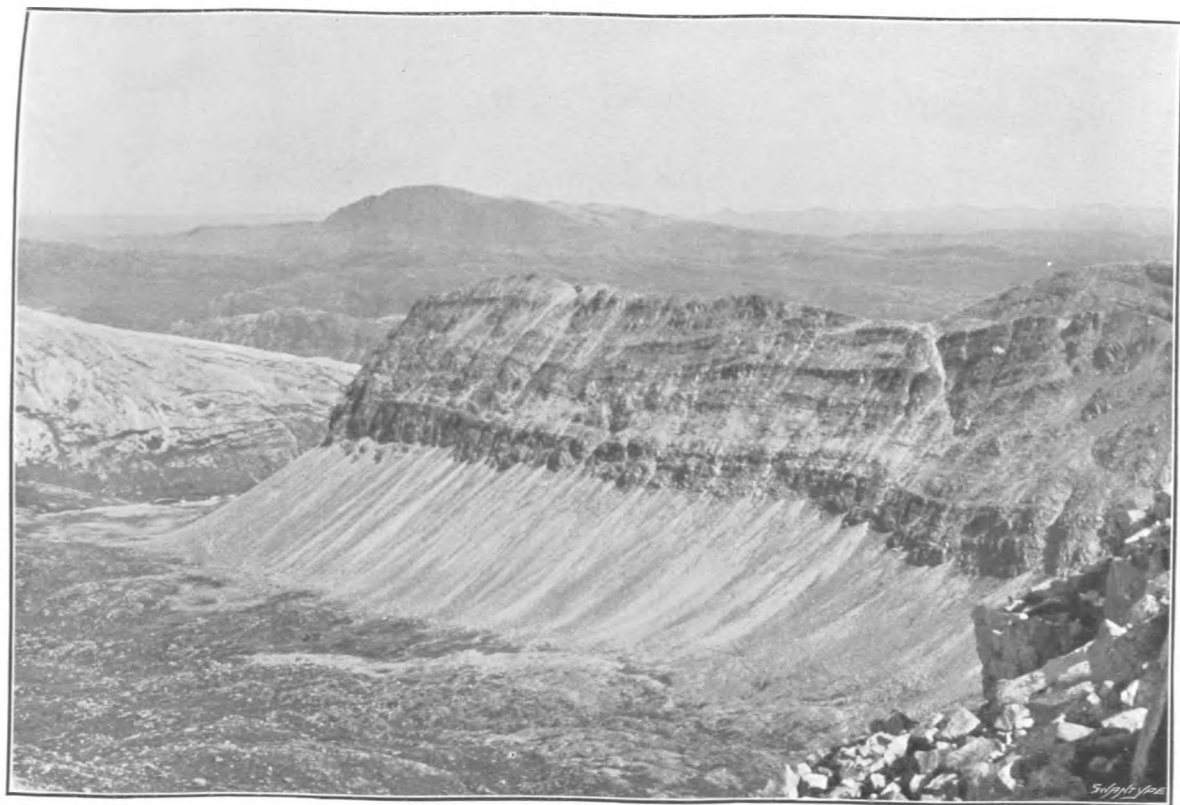
Sabhal Beag, 2,393 feet=the little barn. Lies  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile south-east of Sabhal Mor.

Meallan Liath, 2,625 feet=the grey heap. Lies 2 miles north-east of Loch More.

Carn Dearg, 2,613 feet=the red cairn. Lies 1 mile east of Meallan Liath.

Ben Hee, 2,864 feet. Lies 3 miles north-east of Loch Merkland.

The above-mentioned peaks are situated in that wild and remote corner of North-West Sutherlandshire, known as the Reay Forest. They are best reached from Rhiconich Inn, which, although small, is most comfortable. The more southerly peaks of this forest, as Meallan Liath and Ben Hee, may also be got at from Altnaharra or Lairg. There is a daily motor service from Lairg to Laxford Bridge, and any one availing himself of this can get off at some con-



*June 1903.*

CREAG DIONARD (FOINNE BHEINN).

*A. E. Robertson.*

venient point at Loch Merkland or Loch More, from which a start can be made for these hills.

The north-west end of the range—the Foinne Bheinn peaks—are composed of white Cambrian quartzite, giving them a glittering white appearance, from which they get their name. Foinne Bheinn falls away in easy scree slopes to the west and south, but on the north it throws out three very remarkable spurs, which descend in precipitous escarpments into the head of Strath Dionard. The rock here, however, is splintery and brittle, thus making it most unsafe, if not impossible, for serious climbing. It may be that some parts of the buttresses overlooking Strath Dionard are built up of rock of greater stability, but so far as the writer has examined them, this is not so, and the climber has to turn his back reluctantly on these imposing-looking cliffs.

Arcuil is also a quartzite mountain with all its attendant disadvantages from a climbing and even a hill-walking point of view. It may be somewhat profanely likened to a vast shale heap, and the individual who essays to scale "the ghastly cheek of Arkle," will have an experience in rough walking he will not easily forget.

Farther south, when one comes to the peaks of Mcall Horn, Carn Dearg, and Ben Hee, these mountains, being composed mainly of the schistose rocks of the Central Highlands, are all now more or less rounded in form, and easy of ascent. There is a forest road running through the Bealach nam Meirland, which leaves the main road at the north end of Loch Merkland. This road will afford easy access to Ben Hee or the Carn Dearg peaks. There are also numerous shooting paths, which in the non-shooting season may doubtless be utilised to facilitate progress to and from the hills.

The whole country hereabout is under deer.

A. E. R.

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## BEN LAOGHAL.

(DIVISION IV. GROUP XIX.)

Lat.  $58^{\circ} 25'$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 26'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 114 and 108. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 26.

1. An Caisteal (the castle), 2,504 feet; 5 miles south by west of Tongue.
2. Sgòr a' Chonais-aite, 2,320 feet;  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of No. 1.
3. Top, 2,465 feet; \*  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south of No. 1.
4. Carn an Tionail;  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south of No. 3.
5. Sgòr a' Chleirich; a shoulder  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north-west of No. 3.

The isolated position and striking appearance of Ben Laoghal (Ben Loyal) gives it an importance out of all proportion to its comparatively low elevation. It towers high over everything to the north and east, while to the west its nearest rival, Ben Hope, is six miles distant, and Cleith Bric, to the south, twice as far. The extremely graceful outline of its four granite peaks, with the rounded cone of its northern extension, Sgòr a' Chonais-aite, rising from the flat moorland of Northern Sutherlandshire, gives it, especially as seen from the north or north-west, a character all its own. Its eastern flanks are washed by Loch Laoghal and crossed by the main road from Lairg to Tongue; a chain of smaller lochs stretch round its southern and western sides, while to the north some three miles of low undulating moorland lead to the Kyle of Tongue.

Tongue itself, with a comfortable inn, is only five miles distant, and the ascent is easily made from here. A good road leads in two miles due south to the large farm of Ribigill, whence a track continues in something more than a mile to a shepherd's cottage. From here An Caisteal, the highest point, is easily reached by either of the two gullies which run almost direct to the summit. No climbs are recorded, but plenty may undoubtedly be found on the great granite buttresses of the north-west face or on the line of eastern cliffs which descend direct from the summit.

H. T. M.

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\* Dr Heddle's measurement.

## BEINN CLEITH BRIC.

## (DIVISION IV. GROUP XX.)

Lat.  $58^{\circ} 14'$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 24'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 108. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 26.

1. Meall nan Eoin, 3,154 feet (round hill of the birds);  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-south-east of Altnaharra.
2. Càrn an Eild,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-west of No. 1.
3. Cnoc Sgeireach, 1,780 feet;  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles west-south-west of No. 2, above the Crask Inn.
4. Top, 2,367 feet; 2 miles north-east of No. 1.

Beinn Cleith Bric (Ben Clibrig or Klibreck) is a long hog-backed mountain extending from south-west to north-east in a fairly regular crescent, from the centre or highest point of which a shoulder extends south-east, so that the mountain forms a huge E, in the recesses of which lie two large corries facing south-east, and draining into Loch Coir' an Fhearna. This loch, with its upper extension, Loch a' Bhealach, encloses the whole southern side of the mountain, while Loch Naver bounds it on the north. At the head of Loch Naver is Altnaharra Inn, an excellent inn much frequented by anglers. It is  $20\frac{3}{4}$  miles from Lairg Hotel, or nearly 23 from Lairg Station, and is about 300 feet above the sea. Except the Crask (see below), Altnaharra is the nearest hotel to the mountain, and the ascent is easily made from it in a little over two hours. Between the inn or Loch Naver and the base of the mountain there are about 2 miles (three-quarter hour's walk) of boggy moor. The ascent is perfectly easy, mainly over grass and heather, the summit, Meall nan Eoin (3,154 feet), being in sight almost the whole way.

Another equally simple route is to ascend from the Crask Inn at Drochaid a' Chraisg, 13 miles from Lairg Hotel, 15 from the station, and 750 feet above the sea. The watershed, a mile farther, is 850 feet. (Remark the moraine heaps between here and Altnaharra.) The inn at the Crask is very small and unpretentious but clean. The ascent lies over Cnoc Sgeireach (1,780 feet), the western



spur of Càrn an Eild, which is itself the southern arm of the mountain, and presents no difficulty whatever.

Beinn Cleith Bric is very isolated, far over-topping in altitude anything to the north or east of it. It is composed of Schistose rock, but as before stated, is very grassy. It is entirely in forest.

*Climbs.*—None recorded.

H. T. M.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

### GENERAL MEETING.

THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the North British Station Hotel, Edinburgh, on the evening of Friday, 7th December 1906, with the President, Mr John Rennie, in the chair.

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

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr Napier, submitted his statement for the past year, showing a balance in favour of the Club of £208. 6s. The Income of the Club had been £128. 14s. 1d., and the Expenditure £122. 7s. 4d. (of which £48. 8s. 5d. went to the *Journal*; £17. 19s. 2d. to the Club Room; £30. 10s. to Additions to Library, Lantern Slide Collection, and Furnishings; £11. 15s. 11d. to the Club Reception; the balance, £13. 13s. 10d., being for sundry expenses). Besides the above account, the Treasurer submitted that of the Commutation Fund, showing that forty-one Members were now on the roll, and that there was a balance of £229. 2s. 5d. at its credit. The Funds of the Club thus being at 31st October 1906, £437. 8s. 5d.—of which £360 is invested in 4 per cent. South Australian Government Stock. The accounts were approved.

The Hon. Secretary, Dr Inglis Clark, reported that seven new Members had been elected to the Club, viz.: John Barrie, J. W. Buchan, Chas. Inglis Clark, Col. Farquhar, F. Greig, J. S. Greig, and H. Woolley, and that the membership of the Club was now 168. At the beginning of the year the membership of the Club had been 162, of whom one Member had retired through default.

The Hon. Librarian, Mr Goggs, reported on the Club-room, and mentioned that the number of volumes in the Library had risen from 600 to 660.

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

MR WALTER NELSON was elected Hon. Treasurer in

room of Mr R. Graham Napier, who did not offer himself for re-election.

Messrs F. C. SQUANCE and G. T. GLOVER were elected Members of Committee in room of Messrs H. Walker and H. Raeburn, who retired by rotation.

It was decided to hold the New Year Meet at CORRIE, and the Easter one at ARROCH and INCHNADAMPH.

Mr Garden proposed, "That a Catalogue of the books in the Club Library, also a catalogue of the slides in the Club collection be printed, and copies presented to each Member." After some discussion, it was decided to remit the question to the Club-room Committee with powers to make the Library Catalogue at an expense of not more than £10, and to do nothing with regard to the Slide Catalogue at present.

The President moved, and Mr H. T. Munro seconded, "That the present Rules of the Club be rescinded, and that the proposed new Rules take their place." In speaking to his motion the President said :—

"I should like to express our indebtedness to the Rules of the Alpine Club, which have been of much service to us in framing ours. The Committee have twice sat in judgment on these new Rules, and every point has been carefully weighed and fully discussed. I think you will find, if you compare these new Rules with the old, that the spirit of the old has been retained almost untouched. The chief differences are :—

"1. That the Committee have been deprived of their power to alter the Rules, and this has been given to the General Meeting.

"2. That no motion can be heard at a General Meeting without previous notice, which was not so in the old Rules.

"3. A provision for dissolution has been included, which I sincerely hope will never be acted on, but it is right we should have such a provision."

After some discussion, and various minor points of principle being put to the vote, the President's motion was unanimously carried.

The Rules, after the verbal alterations suggested at

the Meeting have been considered by the Committee, now stand as follows :—

## RULES OF THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.

### CONSTITUTION OF THE CLUB.

1. The Club shall be called the "SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB."

2. The object of the Club shall be :—To serve as a bond of union amongst lovers of mountain climbing ; to encourage mountaineering in Scotland, in winter as well as in summer ; to collect information regarding routes, distances, means of access, time occupied in ascents, character of rocks, extent of snow, &c., and in general to promote the interests of mountaineering in Scotland.

3. The Club shall consist of Ordinary Members elected as provided in Rules 39, 40, and 41, and Honorary Members elected as provided in Rule 34.

### PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS.

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

5. Save as hereinafter provided, all Members shall be entitled to attend the General Meetings and Dinners of the Club, to use the Club-room and Library at such times and under such conditions as may be prescribed, and to receive the Club publications.

6. Honorary Members shall be exempt from payment of any Entrance Fee or Subscription.

7. Every Ordinary Member shall, on election, pay an Entrance Fee of one guinea, and, until his Entrance Fee is paid, no Member shall be entitled to any of the privileges of the Club.

8. Every Ordinary Member shall pay an Annual Subscription of fifteen shillings, or he may commute his Annual Subscription on joining the Club by a single payment of eleven guineas in addition to his Entrance Fee. Original Members may commute their Annual Subscription by a single payment of five guineas ; Members of ten years' standing by a single payment of seven guineas ; Members of five years' standing by a single payment of nine guineas.

9. The Annual Subscription shall be due and payable on election ; and on every succeeding 1st of January, save only that no Member elected in November or December shall be required to pay any further subscription for the ensuing year. The Honorary Treasurer shall send intimation to each Member when his Annual Subscription becomes due.

10. Every Member shall be held liable for his subscription for the current year, unless his resignation in writing reaches the Honorary Secretary before 1st February.

11. Every Member whose subscription is more than three months in arrear, and who has not intimated to the Honorary Secretary his intention of resigning, shall have his name posted in the Club-room, and in the event of the arrears not being paid before the 31st October, shall cease to be a Member of the Club.

12. The election of any Member shall be null and void if he shall not have paid his Entrance Fee and First Annual Subscription within three months from the date of his election.

#### GENERAL MEETINGS.

13. The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held alternately in Edinburgh and Glasgow during the first fortnight of December of each year, preferably on the first Friday of that month.

14. The Committee shall have power to call Special General Meetings at such times as they shall see fit.

15. A Special General Meeting shall be called by the Honorary Secretary, on receiving a requisition to that effect signed by any ten Members of the Club, and specifying the object for which the Meeting is to be called. This Meeting shall take place within six weeks of the receipt by the Honorary Secretary of such requisition.

16. At least three weeks before the Annual General Meeting, and at least ten days before any Special General Meeting, the Honorary Secretary shall post to every Member of the Club a notice of the time and place of such Meeting, and of the business to be transacted. No business, other than routine business, shall be taken at any Meeting without such notice.

17. A General Meeting shall have power, by a majority consisting of not less than two-thirds of those present at the time of voting (with a minimum of twenty recorded votes), to alter or add to the existing Rules of the Club.

18. The Chair, whether at a General Meeting, or at a Meeting of Committee, shall be taken by the President of the Club, or, in his absence, by one of the Vice-Presidents. In the absence of the President and Vice-Presidents, the Meeting shall elect a Chairman from the Members present.

19. The Chairman, whether at a General Meeting or at a Meeting of the Committee, shall, in the case of an equality of votes, have a second or casting vote.

20. A General Meeting shall have power, by a majority of not less than two-thirds of those present, to expel from the Club any Member for any cause which the Meeting shall deem sufficient. The proposal to expel a Member shall be made only upon a motion submitted to the Meeting by the Committee, or in pursuance of a requisition made to the Honorary Secretary, and signed by not less than twenty members of the Club. Any Member so expelled shall forfeit all right to the use of, or claim upon the property of, the Club, but shall have his subscription for the current year returned to him.

In the case of Members whose subscriptions have been commuted, no repayment shall be made.

21. A Special General Meeting shall have power, by a majority of five-sixths of votes recorded, with a minimum of recorded votes of not less than two-thirds of all the Ordinary Members on the roll of the Club at the time of the vote, to dissolve the Club. The proposal to dissolve shall be made only upon a motion submitted to the Meeting by the Committee, or in pursuance of a requisition made to the Honorary Secretary, and signed by not less than twenty Ordinary Members of the Club, or by two-thirds of the existing Ordinary Members of the Club, whichever of these numbers be the less. The voting shall be open, and Members not present shall be entitled to vote by letter. Should the Club be dissolved, a liquidator shall be appointed to realise the effects of the Club ; and after all debts, claims, obligations, and expenses have been paid and met, the surplus, if any, shall be divided equally among the Ordinary Members on the roll of the Club at the time of the vote, whether they have commuted their Annual Subscription by a single payment or not ; and should there be a deficit, it shall be borne by them in equal proportions.

#### AUDIT.

22. The Committee shall, at their Annual Meeting in October of each year, appoint two Members of the Club as Auditors to audit the Club accounts for the current year. Such accounts shall, when duly audited, be presented by the Treasurer to the Annual General Meeting of the Club, a copy thereof having been duly forwarded to every Member of the Club, with the notice convening the Meeting.

#### MANAGEMENT OF THE CLUB.

23. The Office-Bearers of the Club shall be a President, two Vice-Presidents, an Honorary Secretary, an Honorary Librarian, an Honorary Treasurer, and an Honorary Editor.

24. The Management of the Club shall be vested in a Committee, consisting of the Office-Bearers and eight Ordinary Members, appointed in the manner hereinafter provided. Four shall form a quorum.

25. Two or more Members of the Club shall be appointed, as hereinafter provided, to hold for behoof of the Club any of the surplus funds which the Committee may decide to invest. These Members shall be called the Trustees of the Club Funds, and they shall not be liable for any loss sustained in connection with any investment authorised by the Committee.

26. The Office-Bearers, Members of Committee, and Trustees of the Club Funds, shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting in December, to hold office for one year from the day following the Annual General Meeting. They shall be eligible for re-election, pro-

vided always that the President and Vice-Presidents shall not hold their respective offices for more than three consecutive years, and that the two senior Members of Committee in order of election shall retire each year, and shall not be eligible for the same office till after the expiration of one year.

27. If, for the purpose of the preceding Rule, it shall be necessary to choose for retirement between two or more Members of Committee, of equal seniority, the Committee shall make the selection by the drawing of lots.

28. It shall be the duty of the Committee at the Annual General Meeting in December to propose candidates for the posts of President, Vice-Presidents, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Librarian, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Editor, Members of Committee, and Trustees of the Club Funds. Notice of the names of candidates so proposed shall be posted to each Member of the Club at least three weeks before the date of the Meeting.

29. It shall be competent for any two Members of the Club to propose a candidate for any of the posts mentioned in the preceding Rule by giving notice in writing to the Honorary Secretary at least a fortnight before the date of the Meeting, accompanied by the consent in writing of the Member so proposed. Notice of the names of all candidates so proposed, and of their proposers, shall be posted to each Member of the Club at least seven days before the Meeting.

30. If, at the Annual General Meeting it appears that the number of candidates duly proposed as Office-Bearers and Members of Committee, or as Trustees of the Club Funds, does not exceed the number of respective vacancies, then the Chairman of the Meeting shall declare the candidates elected. If the number of candidates for any post exceed the number of vacancies, the Club shall forthwith proceed to an election by ballot.

31. In the case of a casual vacancy occurring in the office of President, the senior Vice-President shall fill the office until the day following the next Annual General Meeting.

#### POWERS OF COMMITTEE.

32. The Committee shall have power to fill up any casual vacancy, except that of President, in the list of Office-Bearers, Members of Committee, or Trustees of the Club Funds, such appointments to last until the day following the next Annual General Meeting. The Committee shall also have power to make temporary appointments in cases of illness or absence.

33. The Committee shall have power from time to time to make such regulations, not being inconsistent with these Rules, as they may deem to be for the well-being of the Club.

34. The Committee shall have power to elect an Honorary President, and suitable persons to be Honorary Members, and these are not to exceed ten in number.

35. The Committee shall have power to make such regulations as they may think fit for the management of the Club-room and of the Club Library and Slides.

36. The Committee shall have power to appoint Sub-Committees, and may include therein Members not on the Committee.

37. The Committee shall have power to alter the Dates and Places of Meets arranged at the Annual General Meeting should it be found necessary to do so.

38. The Committee shall have power to vote Sums of Money to cover the annual expense of the Club-room and Journal, to purchase Books, Maps, or Slides, and to meet other incidental expenses connected with the management of the Club.

#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS.

39. Every candidate for election as an Ordinary Member of the Club shall be proposed by a Member, and seconded by another Member, both having personal knowledge of him, and shall supply, for the information of the Committee, on a special form to be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, a list of his Scottish and other ascents, stating the month and the year in which each ascent was made, or a statement of his contributions to Science, Art, or Literature in connection with Scottish Mountains. Such a list must be signed by the candidate, and by the two Members acting as proposer and seconder. Members of the Alpine Club shall be eligible for election without supplying such a list.\*

40. If, in the opinion of the Committee, the qualifications be deemed sufficient, the name, designation, and address of the candidate, along with the names of his proposer and seconder, shall be sent by post to each Member of the Club at least one week before the closing of the ballot.

41. Every candidate whose qualifications have been approved by the Committee, shall be balloted for by the Ordinary Members of the Club, either, as the Committee may decide, at a General Meeting of the Club, or by post on a voting paper sent by the Honorary Secretary to each Member for that purpose at least one week before the closing of the ballot. Not less than eight votes must be recorded for the election of any candidate, and one adverse vote in eight shall reject for one year.

#### DINNERS OF THE CLUB.

42. The Members of the Club shall, save in exceptional circumstances, of which the Committee shall be the judges, dine together

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\* To ensure the candidate's application being considered at the Annual Meeting of the Committee on the fourth Friday of October, applications must reach the Honorary Secretary not later than 20th October.



alternately in Edinburgh and Glasgow, in the month of December in each year, preferably on the day of the Annual General Meeting.

43. The Committee are empowered to entertain three guests at the Annual Dinner in the name of the Club.

44. Any Member shall be at liberty to introduce guests at his own expense, subject always to such regulations as may from time to time be made by the Committee, and confirmed by a General Meeting of the Club.

#### CLUB MEETS.

45. Meets of the Club shall be held at New Year and Easter, or at such other times as may be arranged, at some Scottish centre or centres, and the places shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting in December. The Honorary Secretary shall send notice of the time and place to every Member of the Club at least ten days before such meeting.

#### 'EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL DINNER.

At the close of the General Meeting the Annual Dinner was held in the same hotel, with the President, Mr John Rennie, in the chair. The Members present were sixty-three, and the guests twenty-six. Among the latter were to be seen Mr Slingsby, President of the Climbers' Club; Rev. Mr Calvert, President of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club; Mr Haskett-Smith, of the Alpine Club; Mr Shepherd, President of the Dundee Ramblers; and Mr Geo. T. Ewen, of the Rucksac Club.

The toasts proposed at this dinner were—

The King - - - - John Rennie.

Imperial Forces - - - John Rennie.

*Reply*—Lieut.-Colonel Farquhar.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club - John Rennie.

The Alpine Club - - - W. C. Smith.

*Reply*—W. P. Haskett-Smith.

Kindred Societies - - - W. Inglis Clark.

*Reply*—W. C. Slingsby.

The Guests - - - W. N. Ling.

*Reply*—Lord Salvesen.

## RECEPTION.

Previous to the Meeting the Club held a reception in the Royal Arch Hall, 75 Queen Street, which was attended by a large number of ladies and gentlemen. Mr W. C. Smith, K.C., gave an interesting demonstration of the Club collection of slides, and Mr Harold Raeburn exhibited slides illustrating the travels of Members in the Canadian Rockies, Norway, and the Alps.

## CLUB-ROOM AND LIBRARY.

THE list of additions to the Library this time is not a long one. It includes, however, two books on the Himalayas—one by Major-General Macintyre, published in 1889, dealing chiefly with “wanderings and wild sport,” and the other, “Western Tibet,” by Mr C. A. Sherring, published last year. The latter book contains a chapter by one of our members, Dr Longstaff, describing an attempt to climb Gurla Mandhata (25,850 feet), probably the highest mountain situated wholly in Tibet. At 23,000 feet the party started a snow avalanche, which, after a fall of 1,000 feet, most fortunately stopped; then followed one night on rocks, a second in a snow hole, and then—but I leave Members to read the account for themselves. Apart altogether from its climbing interest, the book is a very interesting and informing one, and is remarkable for the number of its photographic reproductions—175. Mr David Hepburn has given the Club a very interesting set of views taken in the Faröe Isles by himself.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Western Tibet. Charles A. Sherring. With a chapter by T. G. Longstaff, M.B., describing an attempt to climb Gurla Mandhata. 1906	T. G. Longstaff.
Duncan's Itinerary of Scotland. 1823 - -	Geo. Duncan.
Appendice complémentaire et rectificatif de la carte d'Etat-Major des Bassins de l'Ubaye et du Haut-Verdon. M. F. Arnaud. 1904 -	French Alpine Club.
Hawthorne (Julian). Saxon Studies, including “Mountaineering in Miniature.” London, 1876 - - - - -	Adam Smail.
Arnold (Thomas, D.D.) Travelling Journals (Switzerland, Italy, &c.) London, 1852 -	”
Macintyre (Major-General Donald). Hindu-Koh: Wanderings and Wild Sport On and Beyond the Himalayas. Edinburgh, 1889.	”
The Highlands of Scotland in 1750 (from a Manuscript in the British Museum). Edinburgh, 1898 - - - - -	Purchased.
Chambers's Journal, 1st June 1906 (containing, <i>inter alia</i> , “Alpine Mountaineering in Scotland.” By the Rev. A. E. Robertson, B.D.) -	”

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Blackwood's Magazine, June 1906 (containing, <i>inter alia</i> , "In the Heart of the Coolins") -	Purchased.
The Geographical Journal, May 1906 (containing, <i>inter alia</i> , "The Glacial Aspect of Ben Nevis." Victor H. Gatty) - - - -	The Royal Geographical Society.
A Wintry Ascent in Skye. Ashley P. Abraham (newspaper cutting, <i>Manchester Guardian</i> , 8th May 1906) - - - -	Purchased.
<i>Engraving</i> —A Comparative View of the Heights of the Principal Mountains of Scotland. Edinburgh, 1831 - - - -	"
Summer Rambles. Thomas M'Kie (1856-1875). 1906 - - - -	"
Sweden. A Short Handbook on Sweden's History, Sport, Scenery, &c. - - - -	Svenska Turist- föreningen.
Album containing 48 Views taken in the Faröe Isles - - - -	David Hepburn.
The Science of the Weather, &c. By several Authors. Glasgow, 1867 - - - -	David Sime.
Reminiscences of Dollar, Tillicoultry, &c. Wm. Gibson. Edinburgh, 1883 - - - -	"
The Mean Atmospheric Pressure and Tempera- ture of the British Islands. Dr Buchan ( <i>ex Journal of the Scottish Meteorological Society</i> , 3rd Series, Nos. 13 and 14, 1897) - - -	"
Twenty-two Local Scottish Guide Books - -	"

## EXCURSIONS.

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

### S.M.C. ABROAD IN 1906.

Mr DOUGLAS was out in the Alps during July with an English friend and two guides. They went from Turin to Crissolo, and spent two nights at the Grand Lake di Viso hut. The weather was so bad while there that they hardly got out of doors, and had eventually to give up the Viso. They then went into Dauphiné *via* the Col del Colour del Porco and Abries. They ascended the Pelvoux and the Pic Sans Nom. They also slept out at the *gîte* on the left bank of the Glacier du Sélé for the traverse of the Ailefroide. The weather again turned bad, and they had to force, in dense fog and snow, a passage of the Col du Sélé to La Bérarde. They then ascended Les Ecrins by the Col des Ecrins from La Bérarde, and traversed the Meije from the Promontoire hut to La Grave. The last week or so of July was spent at Chamonix, but again the weather was shocking, and nothing was done.

Mr S. A. GILLON was at Öie, Söndmøre, Norway, at the beginning of August during rather unsettled weather. After escorting two ladies up Slogen, and walking to the summit of Jakta (5,090 feet), with Urke, the shoemaker at Öie, he ascended (1), with Lars Haugen, both Kviteggen and Hornindalsrokken in eleven hours from Öie; (2) Geithorn, from Urkedal, with Olav Klok, who is a good cragsman, and a son of the late Jon Klok, the first to climb Slogen; and (3) Smörskredstind from the col between Slogen and that mountain. There is still plenty pioneering and good climbing to be done round about Hjørundsfjord, and Öie has one of the best hotels in Norway.

Messrs F. S. GOGGS and C. W. NETTLETON were in the Pennines together during part of July and August, and made the most of the good weather.

Starting from Zinal they crossed the Col de l'Allée and Col de Couronne to Haudères, and then up to Arolla, a good fifteen hours' training walk! From Arolla, on successive days, they did the Petite Dent de Veisivi (traversed), Aig. de la Za (traversed), and the Dents des Bouquetins (central peak). Then, after an off-day on the Dent de

Satarma, they traversed in quick succession the Aig. Rouges, the Dent Perroc, and Pointe des Genevois (descending from the latter by a new and not to be recommended route), the Pigne d'Arolla (by the north face), and Mont Blanc de Seilon, the last two peaks being traversed in a day. Leaving Arolla for the Valpelline, they had the pleasure of meeting Mr Howard Priestman's party on the Col de Collon, and later of joining them as the first guests at the new inn at Prarayé, which was opened on the day of their arrival, although not quite finished. From Prarayé an attempt was made on the Dent d'Herens, but had to be abandoned owing to a snowstorm, accompanied by lightning, which caught them at a height of over 11,000 feet. Mr Goggs then had to turn towards home. Ascending to the Col de Collon he met Mr Unna, who had come up from Arolla by previous arrangement, and together they traversed l'Evêque, afterwards descending the Otemma Glacier to Chanrion, thence down the Val de Bagnes to Martigny, and so home. From Prarayé Mr Nettleton crossed the Cols de Val Cournera and de Dza to Breuil, thence traversing the Matterhorn to Zermatt. Here the weather was far from good, and beyond ascending the Dom in a snowstorm, and the Unter Gabelhorn with Mr Erik Ullén, by a new route up the E.N.E. arête, he did nothing else in nine days.

Mrs Nettleton, as usual, joined in many of the ascents, her best days being the Pigne d'Arolla by the face, afterwards traversing Mont Blanc de Seilon (a long day), and later the traverse of the Matterhorn.

Messrs T. E. GOODEVE and H. WALKER spent a most delightful holiday in the Chamonix district, with Montanvert as headquarters. Despite broken and threatening weather, a fair number of ascents were made.

Starting with the Aig. des Pits. Charmoz and Aig. de l'M., the Aig. Verte by the Moine arête was then tackled. Favoured by a glorious moon this otherwise long expedition was successfully accomplished in good time. Goodeve then did the Dent du Requin, Walker having an off-day. The following day they proceeded to the Refugio Turino on the Col du Géant, and the next morning descended to Courmayeur, taking the Dent du Géant *en route*.

The good things of Courmayeur caused the loss of a day, but the active member of the party was appeased by the pleasure of meeting Mr M'Intyre, who, after a successful season elsewhere, was on his way to traverse Mont Blanc.

Threatening weather made it doubtful whether the traverse of "The Monarch" *via* the Dôme du Gouter route would be feasible, but it was resolved to go up to the hut on the Aiguilles Grises on the chance of the weather holding for another day. This happily proved to be the case, for although several storms threatened from Italy, the Aiguille Noire de Pétécet seemed to act as a lightning conductor, and warded them off; the only part of the scheme which had to be abandoned was the descent *via* the Midi Cabane, the ordinary route

to the Grands Mulets being substituted with its complement, the temper-trying walk across to the Montanvert.

The weather now broke badly, and after an unsuccessful attempt to get the Grépon, Goodeve had to return to England.

Two inches of snow at Montanvert meant three days' inactivity, and consequently Walker crossed over to Lognan, and thence to Champex *via* Col de Chardonnet, Fenêtre de Saleinaz, Col d'Orny, and Col de la Breyaz, returning next day to the new hut on the Col de Orny *via* the Vallée d'Arpette, Col du Chamois, and Pte. d'Orny. The following day the Fenêtre de Saleinaz was recrossed, and the Aiguille d'Argentièr traversed to Lognan, and thence back to Montanvert. An off-day, and then the Grépon to finish, completed a most enjoyable holiday.

The new railway from Chamonix to Montanvert is making rapid progress, and is expected to be opened for tourist traffic early in 1908, when future generations will know no more the joys of the historic mule path.

Messrs W. N. LING and H. RAEBURN had a completely successful season in the Swiss Alps. With three climbing weeks (the last three of July) at their disposal, they visited three centres—the Val Ferret, Oberland, and Zermatt, the second of these in company with Mr Eric Greenwood. Naturally, with so much travelling, few peaks were climbed, but all climbed were, with one exception, also traversed, by routes, in directions, or by combinations of routes, never before followed, so far as known, by any parties of amateur climbers. In the Val Ferret, thanks to information freely placed at their disposal by Monsieur M. Kurz, through Monsieur E. Phildius, they were able to make the first ascent of a hitherto unclimbed Aiguille of the Rouges de Dolent. This they propose to call "La Mouche," 11,750 feet. The last 350 feet is steep and difficult; boots removed on ascent, and a rope ring left on descent at one place. From the Saleinaz hut, grandly situated, L. and R. walked up the Saleinaz glacier, climbed to the ridge between the Aig. de la Neuvaz and the south peak of the Argentièr, first ascent from this side, several hours' step-cutting in ice above the bergschrund, traversed the ridge, rock towers and ice, and the south peak of the Aiguille d'Argentièr, first traverse, over the central to the west peak, down ordinary route to Chardonnet glacier, through Col Chardonnet, and down Saleinaz glacier to Cabane.

Next day, sixteen and a half hours of travel from that hut by foot, diligence, rail, diligence, and horseback, placed them at the Hotel Jungfrau, on Eggishorn, where Mr Greenwood awaited them.

The following afternoon the party moved to the Concordia, and next morning passing over the Grünhornlücke and across the Fiescher-firn, stopped at the small new hut at foot of the Finsteraarhorn. A way on to the great south-east ridge was prospected and discovered the same day.

After a very bad night—a party of fifteen Swiss and guides having

arrived in the evening, and accommodation adequate for six or eight—G., L., and R. left at 3 A.M., climbed to the south-eastern ridge, followed it to top of Finsteraarhorn (14,026 feet), down north-western ridge to Hugsattel, and Agassizjoch, down rocks of Agassizhorn, ice of great couloir—lot of step-cutting in ice—to Finsteraar glacier, through Finsteraarjoch, and straight down through the seracs above the Ober Eismeer, across rocks on right bank, and down Ober Eismeer to the Schwarzegg hut. Grindelwald was gained next morning, and the following day, in bad weather, L. and R. made the round by train—Zweilütschinen, Lauterbrunnen, Kleine Scheideck, and Grindelwald. Again up to Schwarzegg. From there the three traversed the Schreckhorn, ascending by north-western and descending by south-western ridge, first traverse in this way, and first *descent* of south-west ridge. Lovely day, and tea made on summit, 13,386 feet. They now took rail and steamer to Meiringen, and from there, in pouring rain and a closed cab, made the passage of the Grimsel Col, snow still lying in deep drifts on road, then down the Rhone Valley to Brig, Greenwood dropping off to join his baggage at Fiesch, sixteen hours' driving.

L. and R. now moved up to Zermatt, where they found the wall lined with unemployed guides, all climbing stopped for about a week from bad weather. Here was the only place where they were able to greet a fellow-member of the S.M.C., Mr M'Intyre, climbing from here with a friend. Mr Munro should have met them at the Monte Rosa, but only a letter awaited them, telling that duty called him far south in a Pyrenean direction. To let the new snow settle, Saturday, 28th July, was devoted to a traverse of the Riffelhorn by the Matterhorn couloir. The electric railway was utilised for the first part of the ascent, but the train was given a start and a beating on the descent. Then two porters were engaged, and, on Monday, loaded with sleeping bags, provisions, and wood, they went up to a *gîte* below the Zmutt arête.

The porters dismissed, a lovely evening was spent, partly in cooking, mostly in admiring the magnificently impressive scenery from the stone-swept western face of the Matterhorn round by the couloir and Tête du Lion, and the Dent d'Hérens, to where the sun set behind a crimson cloud above the ridge of the Dent Blanche. Next day the Matterhorn was climbed by the Zmutt arête, and descended to the Italian hut, first traverse in this way without guides, and first British guideless ascent of the Zmutt arête.

The ridge was in very bad condition, plastered with ice and snow, and almost every yard had to be won by the ice-axe. Starting at 4 A.M., the top was not gained till 3 P.M.

On the descent, fine Brocken spectres were seen, and the climbers treated to a considerable display of electric energy on the part of the rocks and ice-axes, a somewhat severe thunderstorm coming on with snow. After a good night in the hut—fortunately no one there—L. and R. descended to Col du Lion, and down to moraine above Breuil,



thence the Furggjoch was climbed, and after a farewell to the Italian peaks, descent was made to the Schwarzee, and Zermatt reached one hour from there. The party then left for the Lake of Geneva, where one day was spent cooling (?) off, and so home.

Messrs W. A. MOUNSEY and EDWARD BACKHOUSE had a most successful three weeks amongst the Dolomites last September, the weather, from the climber's point of view, being almost perfect. Starting in the Gröden Valley and gradually working over to Cortina, they had a series of successful expeditions with guides. The *Fermeda Spitze* was the first ascent, and then, going over to the *Vajolet Hütte*, they traversed the *Rosengarten Spitze* and the *Winklerthurm* (the chimney up the latter they cannot pretend to have "climbed"). From the *Sella Haus* the *Grohmann Spitze* was taken, and then the *Fünffingerspitze* by the *Schmidt Kamin*. This proved far the finest and most exciting climb of the whole tour; never for a single step did it lack interest. A stiff gully on the *Sella Thurm* was done (supposed to be new). *Marmolata* was then traversed, and on the road to Cortina an excellent climb was had on the *Cinque Torri*, the two central peaks being traversed in the unorthodox way of a fixed rope between the two spanning the chasm.

Other climbs at Cortina were the face of the *Punta di Fiammes*, the traverse of *Cristallo*, *Col Rosa* face, and the *Becco di Mezzodi*, which, unfortunately, owing to a morning of rain, had to take the place of the *Croda da Lago*. On four of these climbs Mrs Mounsey formed one of the party.

Mr M'INTYRE, with a Scots friend, ascended the *Moostock* after three unsuccessful attempts from *Göschenen*. From here they crossed the *Winterlucke* and returned by way of the *Alpligenlucke* to the hotel. They crossed to the *Furka* by the *Alpligenlucke*, and from there ascended the *Galenstock* under the care of a guide. From *Münster* they climbed without guides the *Loffelhorn* and the *Blindenhorn*, and on their way to *Brig*, the *Eggishorn*.

In the Zermatt district, with two guides, they traversed the *Riffelhorn*, traversed the *Unter-Gabelhorn*, ascended the *Zinal Rothhorn*, crossed the *Furggjoch* to *Breuil*, and from there traversed the *Matterhorn* to Zermatt. His friend here had unfortunately to leave for home, and Mr M'Intyre, with the two guides, from the *Staffel Alp Hotel* ascended the *Dent Blanche*, and descended by *Col Bertol* to *Arolla*; from *Arolla* he crossed the *Col de Collon* to *Aosta*, and from *Courmayeur* ascended by the *Dome* route to the summit of *Mont Blanc*, descending to *Chamonix*.

The weather was somewhat broken while at *Göschenen Alp*, but otherwise it was fairly good. They experienced a severe thunderstorm on the *Matterhorn* when descending, about 1,000 feet or so from the top.

Mr MAYLARD spent some time at *Fionnay* in the *Val de Bagnes*,

and in company with a friend, Principal Reichel, of the University College of North Wales, climbed Mont Fort, Grand Tavé, Ruinette, and Tournalon Blanc.

Messrs NELSON and GROVE, with two friends, spent the latter half of August at Saas-Fee, and enjoyed much better weather than Mr Maclay's party in July. After visiting the Upper Fee glacier by way of the Langefluh, they had a nice scramble to the summit of the Mittaghorn by its north-west arête. They ascended the Ulrichshorn and Nadelhorn, also the Weissmies (which they took direct from Saas-Fee by the Zwischbergen Pass), and thereafter crossed to St Nicolas by the Windjoch and Ried Glacier. A few days were spent at Zermatt, from which village, Grove, accompanied by J. Barrie, climbed the Matterhorn.

Mr SOLLY, accompanied at first by Messrs MACLAY and GILBERT THOMSON, and later by Mr J. A. PARKER and some friends other than S.M.C. members, spent a month at Saas-Fee and Bel Alp, beginning with the middle of July. The excellent weather of the first few days had to be spent on training walks and short expeditions, the chief being the Mittaghorn-Egginer ridge. The weather then broke badly, and the Weissmies was traversed in mist and wind, but with the famous glissade, and a glorious view over Italy on emerging from the mist, as redeeming features. A couple of nights at the Mischabel Hut resulted only in the ascent of the Ulrichshorn, and in viewing a grand thunderstorm—by some of the party more closely than they enjoyed. At this stage Maclay left, and Parker joined the party, and in the determination to climb something, a second ascent of the Mittaghorn—this time by the Ritz Glacier—was made under unpleasant weather conditions. Thomson (and the bad weather) left immediately after.

The next climb was the Alphubel, which was climbed by the Fee Glacier, Mischabeljoch, and the north arête, the ascent of the ice slopes below the Joch taking fully three hours. The party, in descending, at first tried to reach the Alphubeljoch, but getting very quickly on to ice slopes, of which they had already had enough, came back and went down the ordinary route to the Fee Glacier. The expedition took eighteen hours. Another climb was on the ridge from the Portje towards the Portjengrat. This is described in the "Climbers' Guide" as an interesting scramble, but the lower part of the ridge is impossible. Before it was realised that the guide-book was wrong, too much time had been lost and the peak was given up.

The party then moved to Bel Alp, Parker going by way of the Monte Moro Pass, Macugnaga, and the Simplon Tunnel. The climbs from Bel Alp included the traverse of the Fusshorn, the Kleine Nesthorn, and the traverse of the Hohstock arête.

All the climbs were guideless, though the tracks of previous parties were of some service in the mist on the Weissmies.

Mr UNNA had a successful three weeks' holiday in the Arolla

district, and the following is a list of his expeditions:—Ruinette *via* Cols du Mont Rouge and Seilon, Aiguille de la Za by west face, Petite Dent de Veisevi, Dent Blanche, traverse of the Evêque, Mont Collon (twice), first the usual traverse by the south-east and west faces, and then by the north-north-east ridge and south-east face.

Mr WORSDELL, in company with H. S. Mundahl of Newcastle, spent about ten days in the Dolomites, and made the following guideless ascents:—Fermeda Thurm, in Gröden Thal; Croda da Lago from the Refugio Barbaria hut; Kleine Zinne, by traverse and Zigmond Chimney; and Fünffingerspitze, by Daumenscharte route, but for this they had a guide.

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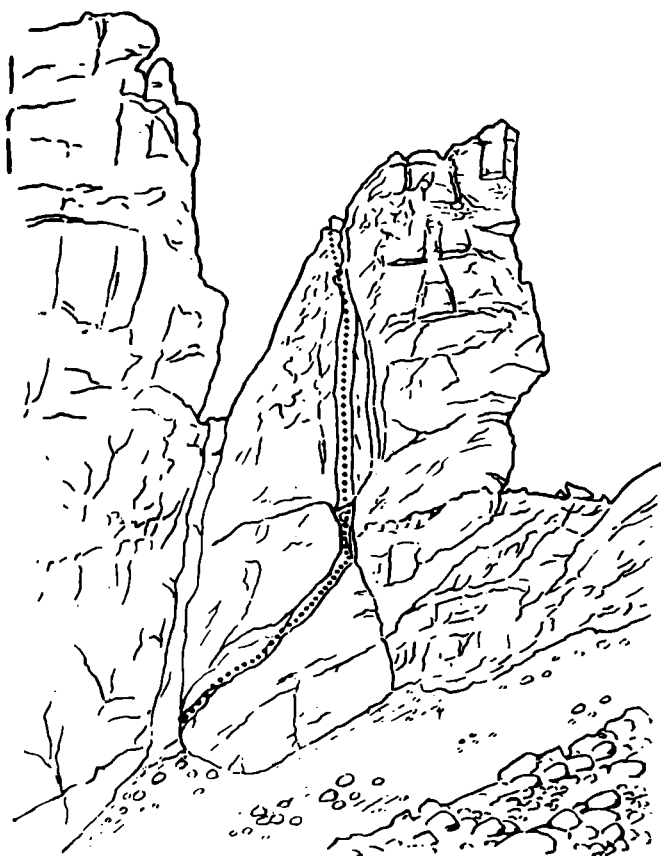
BUCHAILLE ETIVE.—On the 13th April, Dr Inglis Clark, Raeburn, and myself, made an ascent of the north buttress by a route which kept close to the Crowberry Ridge Gully, and which is new in its upper portion. The ordinary route to the Crowberry Ridge was followed to the foot of the lower rocks of that ridge, at which point we turned sharp to the right and dropped on to the snow of the Crowberry Gully. We crossed this, holding slightly upwards, and shortly reached a point where we could leave the snow and climb on to the rocks of the north buttress. These were quite easy owing to the excellent nature of the holds, and we had a pleasant scramble up the edge of the well-defined ridge which runs parallel to the big gully, and is separated from the north buttress by a shallow rock gully. This ridge is an ideal place from which to photograph parties climbing on the Crowberry Ridge, but we were unable to do this on account of a thick mist in which we found ourselves enveloped. We experienced no difficulty in following the crest of our ridge except at one place where we turned a seemingly impossible pitch by keeping to the left, and shortly reached the broad band of snow which crosses the face of the buttress. Our route so far having apparently coincided with that of Mr Burns' party at Easter 1905.

From this point we made a traverse to the left by a steep and narrow slope of hard snow which took us into the Crowberry Ridge Gully, just above the big pitch at the junction of the Crowberry Main Gully with the Crowberry Tower Chimney. We ascended the gully for a few steps cut in hard ice, crossed it, and climbed the face of rock between the gully and the chimney, starting at a conspicuous crack. The rocks proved to be extremely rotten, and were also very steep. From the top of the crack we held to the left and soon emerged at the beginning of the little saddle which runs out to the Crowberry Tower. The climb had taken three hours from the foot of the Crowberry Ridge, but of this a considerable part was taken up waiting for the mist to clear in hope of being able to get a photograph.

J. A. PARKER.

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**BHASTIER TOOTH, SKYE.**—On 27th July 1906, a party consisting of O. P. Shadbolt, A. C. M'Laren, and myself made an ascent on the northern face of the Tooth by the deep chimney to the right (looking up) of the Bhastier Nick Gully. The route followed made a very interesting climb, and is shown on the accompanying diagram. The start was made from the foot of the Nick Gully up some sloping ledges, until the foot of the chimney was reached. The first pitch of



this is a small cave which proved to be rather difficult, and was eventually climbed by starting inside the cave facing outwards and swinging round, when a good handhold was found upon the roof chockstone on the true right. The bed of the chimney was reached about eight feet farther up, and this was followed right to the back. The next pitch is forty feet high, and gave good back and knee work all the way up. We were now in semi-darkness under the roof, which

stretched out in front for many yards, but it was observed that this roof was hollow, and the leader climbed up through the first opening and along a narrow tunnel leading outwards. This tunnel was blocked in front about twenty feet from the start, but doubled back again into the heart of the rock. We followed this and soon saw a narrow opening close above our heads, through which the smallest member of the party was just able to squeeze. Two and a half hours later the remainder of the party emerged into the sunlight through a tunnel dug especially for their benefit. The top of this climb is exactly opposite the top of the Naismith crack, by which route we descended.

L. G. SHADBOLT.

### SIGNALLING.

I HAVE looked through our Journals to find if there is any mention made of the Alpine Club code of Distress Signals. I cannot find any. Although I hope it will never be needed, still I think our Members should have it brought under their notice.

“ . . . Thou art no' thy lane  
In proving foresight may be vain,  
The best laid schemes o' mice and men  
Gang aft a-gley.”—BURNS.

I annex it hereto as printed in the Badminton Library's volume on Mountaineering, edited by C. T. Dent, pages 125, 126.

J. RENNIE.

### ALPINE DISTRESS SIGNAL.

This signal is to be used only in cases of emergency when it is desired to summon help. The responsibility rests on the party or individual making the signal.

The signal consists of a series of short signs at regular intervals of time continued during one minute at the rate of *six* signs per minute, and repeated in alternate minutes.

To make the signal, therefore: Make the short sign six times at intervals of *ten* seconds. Then pause for one minute. Then repeat the short signs as before. Then pause again for one minute, and so on, for so long as may be considered necessary.

In order to make the signal as efficiently as possible the following points should be borne in mind:—

I. Endeavour to attract attention, as by making a fire (the smoke of a fire by day is likely to be seen), hoisting a flag, or any such device.

In many cases the best chance of attracting attention will be by sound.

If in a hut, any special means provided, such as rockets or magnesium wire, can be used.

II. The short sign can be made in any way. For instance, *visual* signs can be made by the single wave to and fro of a flag or extemporised flag (the larger the better) ; a flash of sunlight from a mirror or reflecting surface ; obscuring the light of a fire or of a lantern at regular intervals : *audible* signs by a single shout, or blast of horn or whistle, &c. The time occupied in making any one short sign should not exceed two seconds. *The intermittency of the signs at regular intervals constitutes the essential feature of the signal.*

III. Consider carefully the best position to select, and avoid changing it when chosen.

Consider the background. Endeavour to obtain as much contrast as possible between the signal used and the background.

Consider the direction of the place from which help is most likely to be obtained, and stand facing in that direction.

In making the signal by lantern light, fix the lantern in the proper position and obscure the light, *exposing the light* at regular intervals. *Do not move the lantern when once properly directed.*

In making the signal by mirror keep the flash carefully directed at the object, using "sights" if possible, and causing the shadow of the tip of the hind-sight to fall on the tip of the fore-sight. Obscure the flash at regular intervals, but do not move the mirror except to follow the sun. If the sun is behind you, use two mirrors, throwing the flash from the first upon the second, and so on to the object.

In making the signal by sounds consider the direction of the wind. Endeavour to obtain a background reflecting the sound.

IV. The answer to the signal is made by similar short signs at regular intervals of time, at the rate of *three* per minute.

To make the answer, therefore : Make the short sign three times at intervals of *twenty* seconds. Then pause for one minute. Then repeat the short sign three times at intervals of twenty seconds. Then pause for one minute, and so on.

## Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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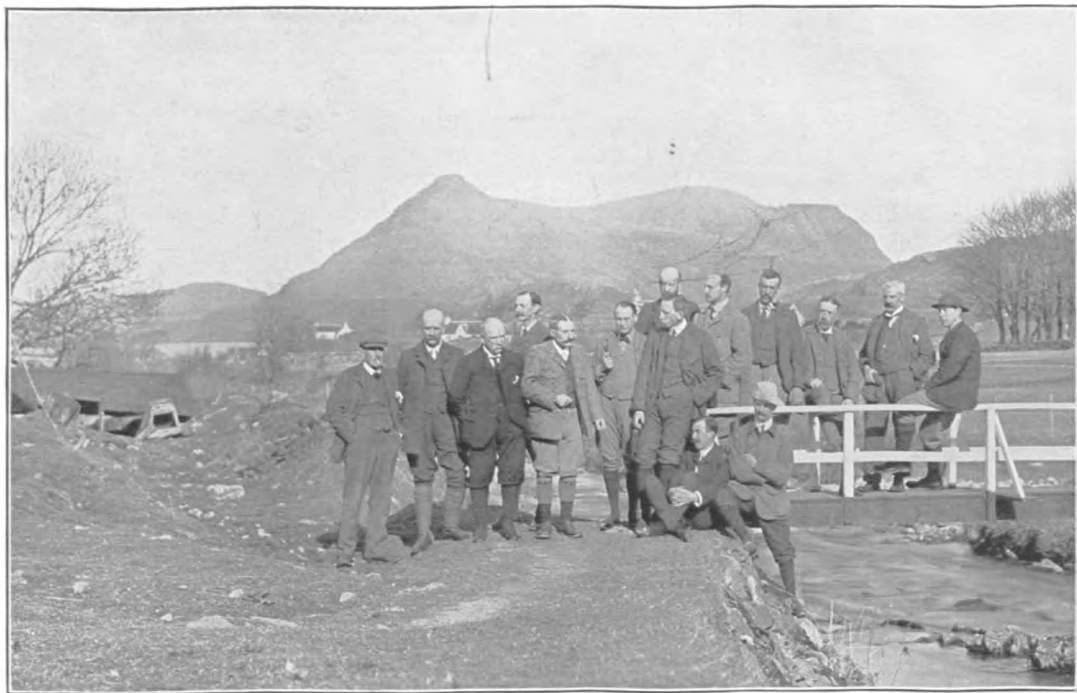
WILLIAM GARDEN.	A. E. MAYLARD.
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The Hon. Editor.

The Hon. Librarian (*Convener*).



INCHNADAMPH, EASTER 1907.

*W. Inglis Clark.*



# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## A TALE OF A TWO DAYS' TRAMP.

BY F. S. GOGGS.

RAP! rap! "Half-past six!" "Thank you."

Half-an-hour later E. B. Robertson and myself were sitting down to breakfast in the dining-room of that comfortable little inn at the Bridge of Lochay, Killin. On the centre of our table was a small vase filled with the delicate and graceful snowdrop. Outside was heard the cheerful twittering of the birds, the never-ceasing murmur of the stream, the intermittent sighing of the wind in the hedges and tree-tops, as yet quite bare, but thickening for the coming spring. Through the open window was wafted to us the indefinable fragrance and freshness of the countryside. A little new snow was to be seen on the ridge to the south, and ever and anon the mist came creeping down its slopes, only, however, to disappear. The weather outlook was uncertain, but Robertson and I were quite content to take the atmospheric conditions as we found them. After cutting some substantial jam pieces, we bade adieu to our landlady with the expression of a pious hope that we should see her again in some thirty-six hours, and 8 A.M., on an early day in March 1907, found us crossing the Lochay Bridge and proceeding eastwards along the high road above Loch Tay. That road has received the impress of many an S.M.C. hobnailer in the past, and will doubtless receive many another in the future. Every now and then

we caught a glimpse of the waters of the loch looking sullen and dark. The gentle wind earlier had died completely away, and not a ripple was to be seen on the loch's surface. In fact, so motionless was the surface, and so impossible was it to say definitely where the hillside left off and its shadow in the still water commenced, that my companion took the reflection of the cloudy sky in the water to be the loch itself, and so thought that the loch was a long way beneath us, and that the hills on the south were twice their actual height. I suppose that we have all at one time or another had the same deception played upon us, and have found the same difficulty in turning the false impression out of our minds once it has taken root there. The four miles to Edramucky passed pleasantly enough, first through wood, then through pasture; here a dip to cross a burn hurrying to the loch, now a rise from which the open moor to the north could be seen stretching away in its freedom; here a comfortable farmhouse with blue smoke circling upwards in the motionless air from the low chimney, there a thatched cottage, simple and primitive, to our modern eyes even squalid and mean: yet from these unpromising exteriors have come a fine race of men who have made Scotland and Scotsmen known and respected the world over. Will the more comfortable homes of the present day produce as stalwart and strong-minded men,—I wonder?

Up the Lochan na Lairige road, cutting off one or two zigzags, we rose steadily and quickly, every now and then getting a glimpse of our snowy objective to the north. Where ridge ended and mist began was not easy to determine, but to the west the Tarmachans showed up in snowy majesty, and to the south and south-west an ever-widening view of mountain, moor, and loch spread itself out to our charmed senses. About two miles from Edramucky an old peat track strikes away north, so the map told us, and we kept a sharp lookout for it, as many of the tracks in this district are so overgrown as to be practically non-existent. However, in this instance the path proved to be easily recognisable, and although at places the sunk track had collected snowdrifts, we were led quickly and pleasantly to the peat mosses in Coire Odhar under Meall Corranaich.

Selecting what looked to be a nick in the ridge, up to which an unbroken ladder of snow led, steps were quickly kicked to where snow and sky met. The atmosphere was heavy and oppressive, we felt an entire lack of energy and life, and Robertson and I had no need to echo Hamlet's wish, "O that this too too solid flesh would melt!" Once we gain the ridge, thought I, relief will come in the shape of a cool breeze. The ridge was gained—not a breath of air at over 3,000 feet: on an unprotected ridge we were as quiet as though we had been on the strand of Loch Tay itself. Five minutes to the north we came to a heap of stones which I expected to mark the summit, but looking ahead I saw another cairn which looked slightly higher. I groaned inwardly—still another ten minutes. In under a minute we were there. I had the same experience several times that day, and at last I banished all thoughts of distance from my fevered brain, and made no estimates till I had reached my goal. Never prophesy till you know is as safe a rule in mountaineering as in other departments of life, perhaps safer. There was a thick pall of mist over the main mass of Ben Lawers, but our top and ridge were quite clear, so one's lack of ability to judge distance was not due to mist. Let the Club scientists explain the reason for these optical illusions, with which all climbers are familiar.

After breaking our fast (we had taken three and a quarter hours to this point), we made for peak No. 2, Beinn Ghlas, which ever and again forced its head through the mist. There was plenty of snow, but also plenty of rock, so no glissades were possible. A hare in his winter clothing watched us from the steep slope on the other side of the col, and recognising that we were lovers of Nature, and that our weapons would not carry far, he waited till we came close to him before racing up the hillside. Three-quarters of an hour sufficed to top Beinn Ghlas, whose height is not officially charted. My aneroid made it 3,680 feet, but the more you learn about law, the less confidence you have in winning any specific case, and in the same way the more you learn about aneroids, the less con-

fidence you have in any particular result, and as I had not a battery of other scientific instruments with me, the result is given with all diffidence. Looking down (N.W.) when beyond the summit we noticed a good shooting track leading up Coire Liath in long zigzags to the col, whence it runs south along the flank of Beinn Ghlas, looking as if it had been drawn with a ruler. The summit of our ambition, and the tenth highest peak in Scotland, Ben Lawers, was attained at 1.7 P.M. (43 minutes from Beinn Ghlas). Oh, this pedantic accuracy! I hear the exasperated reader exclaim. Why does not the man say one o'clock, and three-quarters of an hour? Because every self-respecting mountaineer carries a pocket book, in which, oftentimes with benumbed fingers and under circumstances of considerable difficulty, he strives to record his doings faithfully; and is it right that this scientific accuracy should be wasted on the desert air by dealing in round figures and periods? No, not for a moment can the idea be entertained. An orange, jam pieces, and toffee were offered at the frost-feathered, fog-enveloped shrine of the peak, and for the first time that day we felt the need of woollen gloves. Steering north we soon caught sight of frozen Lochan a' Chait, 1,250 feet below, and had a clear view of the rest of the range; in fact, the weather from now on steadily improved, and a little later we had a strong sun. We were rather alarmed to see how many ups and downs we had to do before the long low ridge of Meall Gruaidh should be conquered; the ascents and descents seemed endless, but time saw us through, summit by summit.

Up and down the rough hummock of Creag an Fhithich was rather hard on our boots, but in another forty-three minutes from Ben Lawers we were summoning An Stuc to surrender. Having once got us in his grip he seemed loath to let us go. North and north-east his sides looked steep and rocky, but a clear snow slope on the north seemed to promise well, and Robertson commenced kicking steps down it, face in, on approved Badminton lines. After some 200 feet of a steep descent Robertson became pessimistic, and we finally imitated Napoleon's famous forty thousand men by going up again. This little excursion consumed forty minutes, and it was now my turn to take up the rôle of leader. We

tried more to the east and slightly south, and taking the descent in two sections, the latter of which we were able to glissade, a quarter of an hour saw us at the col. We looked back at An Stuc, a true mountain peak clad in sun-lit robes of black and white, and remembered with sorrow that he was not a Munro.

The only peak on the whole range requiring an ice axe is the only peak that is not considered worthy of a place in the immortal list. I trust that in any revision An Stuc's claims will receive favourable consideration. From Meall Garbh we had a fine view of Ben Lawers, which towered above the lochan, a grand white mass, its summit lost in misty vastness. To the north-east was the long white ridge of our final top, Meall Gruaidh, and on the north the rounded contours of the Carn Mairg range, with the long black line of Schiehallion beyond. A gentle descent, and a longer and still more gentle ascent, and we sat on the top of our sixth summit, with that comfortable feeling one experiences when a mapped out programme has been successfully carried through. The day's work is quite a normal one for the Club's stalwarts, about 6,500 feet, but looking back in the evening light to Meall Corranaich we appeared to have come over so many hills and to have covered so much ground that we felt rather proud of our performance. Far below were the pier and houses of Fearnan, on the shores of the loch, backed by the well-wooded slopes of Drummond Hill—so peaceful, so still.

We left the quiet top with all its impressions of serenity, peace, and reposefulness, with its absence of rush and hurry, its aloofness from all human passions, frailties, and weaknesses, from sordid aims and carking care, with regret. How true is that German sentence, "*Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruhe*" (literally: over all peaks is rest). I firmly believe that it is this feeling of infinite rest experienced on the summits of the hills which so attracts and fascinates us, which so draws out and feeds the best that is in us. Looking westwards as we descended we noticed a rosy hue on one or two of the lower hillocks, and gradually this rosy tint over-spread the south-west end of the loch and the adjacent

hillsides. Neither Robertson nor I had seen the alpenglüh in Scotland on such a scale before; the whole end of the loch seemed bathed in a delicate pink. The colouring attained its meridian, then slowly died away, and when we reached the road the evening shadows were fast creeping on. We found that we had the comfortable little Tigh-na-loan Inn to ourselves, and the evening passed quickly and pleasantly. A cloudless sky at 10 P.M., with the bright stars shining on the still waters of the loch lapping the strand a few yards from us, promised a fine day for the morrow. We were not disappointed. A keen frost, wisps of mist on the hillside reflected on the loch's surface, and "mountains gemmed with morning dew" greeted us when we pulled up our blinds early next morning.

At 8.15 A.M. we were once more on the tramp. Crossing the Lyon at the Fortingal Bridge we soon came to the charming defile of that river. The road runs at some height above the stream, which is confined to a rocky gorge, and the wooded hillsides slope down steeply. From one point in the road we had a most charming vista through bare birches of a half-mile stretch of the alternating smooth black and foam-white river. Glen Lyon seemed to attract the ground mists to itself, but the sun was now struggling hard to pierce and dissipate them.

Enjoying to the full the glories of an early spring morning, and keeping time as it were to the music of the rushing torrent below us, we walked briskly along to Blackcroft, just beyond which the glen, taking a sharp bend, appears to end in steep wooded slopes.

Whilst looking at our map to make sure that we were leaving the road at the right point, we happened to glance upward, and saw a squirrel at the far end of a bough munching a nut and carefully observing us. We admired him, but what he thought of us I cannot say. Passing under him, we struck up the hillside to the north-west by a path through the wood, crossed a high deer fence about 150 yards from the road, and emerging on the open hillside left the path. Zigzagging up the steep slopes of Beinn Dearg, taking or avoiding numerous rocky escarp-

ments as the humour seized us, we found warm work, as the sun was now shining brightly, though the whole of Glen Lyon beneath us was a mass of rolling mist.

Snow was reached at about 1,750 feet. Rabbits seemed numerous, and we often saw half-a-dozen scuttling away from us at the same moment. The higher tops were still covered in mist, but our course was easy to find up a monotonous easy slope of heather, grass, and snow, and on the summit ridge scree.

Our first Munro for the day, Creag Mhor, was occupied at eleven, and from it we saw the snowy slopes of Carn Maig to the north, but the summit was in dense mist.

The fight between the sun and the mist seemed likely to end in the defeat of the sun.

On looking back from our next col, we saw that the summit of Creag Mhor was a level ridge for some quarter of a mile, and we were doubtful whether the east end where we had been was as high as the west end. As we were interested parties we decided in our own favour, and proceeding up the slope of Carn Maig, we were soon in that cold mist and thick snow which the patriotic climbing Scot is so accustomed to. Mid-day found us at the cairn on the highest point of the range, but the conditions were only of interest to the scientist desirous of prosecuting inquiries as to the amount of moisture present in the atmosphere, so we hurried along what seemed a long stone-strewn hog back for half-an-hour, and presumably bagged all the tops and peaks recorded by Munro; the ascents and descents are very slight.

From what we assumed to be Meall Garbh we struck south-west, and in about 100 feet we were out of the mist. Loch Rannoch stretched out on the north, and to the south-west we saw our last peak for the day, Carn Gorm, or rather we saw his lower slopes—his head was swathed in cloud. From the Lawers range the previous day he had stood up a white cone—with an individuality altogether awaiting in the other summits of the range.

From the col 400 feet below Meall Garbh you go south-west up and over a 3,000 ft. ridge (An Sgor), down again 450 feet, and then comes a steep snow plug of 600

feet to the top of Carn Gorm (3,370 feet). If the mist is low the best plan would be to follow the wire fence from the col below Meall Garbh, notwithstanding its turns which are many and erratic, till the summit ridge of Carn Gorm is reached, when the cairn will be found a few yards to the left (south). We had a short rest after our somewhat exhausting turn at snow-kicking, but thinking that a more luxurious lodging could be obtained at a lower elevation with the added advantage of a view, we left at 2.15 and were pleased to find ourselves out of the mist in a few yards.

The south side of the peak had little snow, and we trotted quickly down the grass slopes of the western curve of a big corrie. Far below us was "deep and dark Glen Lyon." The river flowed between fertile strips, which were in turn hemmed in by steep slopes, looking precipitous in the misty atmosphere, and the huge carries right opposite to us running up into the fastnesses of Ben Lawers till lost in gloom, seemed from our lofty viewpoint standing up on end. The Free Church and the bridge over the Lyon just to the south were caught sight of as we got lower down, and, making a bee-line for the kirk, we reached the main road at three. Innerwick with its memories of Fraser Campbell's damp bed and the slimness of Stott (*Climbers' Club Journal*, vol. vi., p. 170), whom Robertson saw in his New Zealand home only last year, was passed in due course, and we stood on the Bridge of Balgie at 4 P.M., wishing in vain for afternoon tea. The river is very pretty just here, and we would fain have stayed a little to enjoy the charming peeps of crag and wood, pool and torrent, moor and mountain which, to the eye that can see, are presented here in rich profusion, but we had still some way to go, so on we went up the Lochan na Lairige road.

At the point where the Allt Breisleich comes into the main burn, and where can be seen the forlorn remains of an old clachan, now embosomed in green grass, which sheep love to pasture on, and which tells its own tale of ground cleared and cultivated long ago, at this point Robertson and I came to a full stop. I offered him a choice of routes—



on the one hand a good driving road to Killin, an ascertained mileage, dinner at a known hour, a mechanical and easy route, and no chance of being benighted; on the other, the Lairg Breisleich, which, I stated, to the best of my belief, had been in use as an easy route between Glen Lochay and Glen Lyon many generations ago; I reported that no trace of tracks, old or new, was shown on the maps, and that the height of the col was lower than that on the road (in this I was inaccurate, it is slightly higher, by say 50 feet). I mentioned the interesting fact, that although this route was shorter than the road as the crow flies, we were not crows, and that unless we made quick time, after having already done more than a trade unionist's eight hours' day, we ran a good chance of sleeping out or of barking our shins. I might have known that Robertson's keen sporting instincts would decide the question at once, and that the charming possibilities I pointed out would only act as incentives to the trackless route.

Having been weak enough to give Robertson the choice, I still more weakly followed him up the very narrow glen down which the Allt Breisleich comes. Sheep tracks helped us at first, but whenever we were forced off them by snow banks we found the going in either the snow or heather very trying. Where the burn emerged on the open moor remains of another clachan in the usual green clearing were found, and then commenced a flounder which seemed interminable, over peat moss and hags, snow and heather, beautiful stretches of black mud which sometimes bore you, sometimes did not, generally the latter, odd pools and bits of burns which seemed to have no beginning and no ending. You could never take three good strides on a flat surface, and I felt I could sympathise with what I understand are the feelings of a poor motor in a crowded street constantly being stopped and restarted. I thought of the high road we had left, and the mechanical four miles an hour we should without conscious effort be now making along it, but Robertson, who has youth on his side (you should always take an older man than yourself on excursions such as these), was romping along like a roebuck.

Even he, however, did not refuse my suggestion to stop and replenish the bunkers. Luckily I had followed my invariable practice of bringing twenty-five per cent. more food than one is at all likely to eat, so in spite of the heavy demands that had already been made on the commissariat department some crumbs were still left, and these we ate with relish, while we looked at the quickly darkening west and wondered if the final ridge running down from the Tarmachans could be rounded before the last glimmering of light went out. The chances looked against us, but refreshed by Mackie's best sultana cake Robertson bounded along and I after him as fast as I could without coming to grief entirely, and just as we commenced to think that we should have to blunder down into Glen Lochay in the darkness as best we could, we came across an old peat track on the left (east) side of the burn\* which saved the situation. We were on a good path now, and going downhill, and although we had some difficulty in keeping the track in the dark, we reached the Lochay road just to the east of Duncroisk at 6.55, and the Bridge of Lochay Inn three-quarters of an hour later. The night was black, and we both felt that the existence of a track just where it was imperatively wanted was a bit of good fortune which we did not deserve. However, Robertson had taken his sporting chance and won.

\* On the west side of the burn there is a rough track which keeps some distance from it till the 1,250 contour is reached, when, after coming nearer to the main burn, it strikes away north and follows up the Allt nah Iolaire to about the 1,750 contour.

## THE GLEN CRERAN HILLS.

BY ARTHUR W. RUSSELL.

AN invitation to spend the week end of March 17th at Airds, in Appin, sent me at once to the *Journal* for information about the grand group of hills at the head of Glen Creran ; but, lo ! the *Journal* breathed never a word about them except twice. The first time in Volume I., where Mr Colin Philip narrates his adventures on the eastern face of Sgor na h-Ulaidh, the highest of the group ; and again in Volume VI., where this same Sgor is given as Group No. 23 in the Guide Book, but on referring to No. 23 it is found that another group has taken its place, and no further mention is made of Sgor na h-Ulaidh or of the Glen Creran Hills. This group of hills, therefore, now acquired the added interest of the unknown, for interest they had had to me ever since 1894, when, with A. R. Wilson, I first learned the beauties of Glen Creran and its mountains on a glorious afternoon in April, towards the end of a memorable tramp—our first initiation into the glories of spring among our Scottish mountains.

We had left Edinburgh one drenching morning with the early train for Crieff, and thence had tramped up Loch Earn to Ardvorlich, ascended Ben Vorlich and Stuc a Chroin, and crossed that abominable Meall nan Uamh to Kingshouse. Ascending Balquhidder the following morning, we crossed Stobinian and Ben More—what a rush we had down that steep northern face—and on to Tyndrum. Next day was again perfect, and we ascended Ben Lui by his north-west corrie, crossed Beinn a Chleibh—what memories still linger of our first glissades—and descended to Dalmally. The charms of Cruachan followed next day, from an ascent by the Horseshoe, traverse of the ridge, and descent to Taynuilt. Thence came the beauties of Loch Etive in the morning light, Glen Salach, with a battle in full swing among some woodcock, the descent to Creagan Inn at the narrows of Loch Creran by mid-day, the tramp

up Glen Creran to Salachail, and across the pass to Ballachulish village, and thence to Clachaig, where Bidean with his snowy corrie for the first time burst upon our sight in all his crimson glories of an April sunset.

Glen Creran had ever since remained a glen apart, so luxuriant and varied did it seem after these mountain tramps, from the rich woodlands of Barcaldine up through the beauties of Fasnacloich and its loch to the bare grandeur of the upper glen. But now the glen bore a very different aspect, for a westerly gale was blowing strong, and ever and anon blotted out sky, hill, and loch in one dense mass of mist and snow and rain.

A quiet warm evening had given place during the night to a north-west gale and snow, and the morning of the 17th March 1907 broke with the hills fresh coated down to 1,000 feet. ..We (the writer and a non-member, R. M. Reid) left Druimneil, near the old house of Airds, at 8.50, and drove up the glen to Salachail, about 9 miles from Creagan and 15 from Appin, arriving there at 10.40. Here the driving road comes to an end, our path of 1894 branching off to the left to Ballachulish and another path following the glen as far as a small cottage some  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles farther on. Our object was to ascend Sgor na h-Ulaidh, which lies near the head of the glen, about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-east by east of Salachail, and to return over Beinn Fhionnlaidh, whose great mass forms the southern boundary of the glen, from below Salachail eastwards, but we had reckoned without the storm of the previous night and the wintry conditions now prevailing.

Soon after passing the above cottage a burn descends on the left from the col betwixt Meall an Aodainn (2,225 feet) and Sgor na h-Ulaidh, and appears to be the best line of ascent to the latter's northern face. We elected to make the direct ascent of Corr na Beinne (about 2,900 feet), the western point of the Sgor na h-Ulaidh ridge, which faces Salachail. The ascent, though fairly steep at places and broken up with rock, does not offer any real climb. From this top a more or less gradual ascent of about a quarter of a mile leads to the fairly narrow summit of the Sgor (3,258 feet). Fortunately we were going east, for that fierce west wind

still raged behind and covered us with snow and drift. Half-way along the ridge a fence, struggling with difficulty to keep an upright attitude through many an icy gale, appeared from out the mist up the steep northern face, held along the ridge and disappeared again down the eastern face. The northern face of the summit seemed precipitous, with some good gullies and considerable corning. It was now 2.20, and, with the prospect of a 14 mile drive before us ere dark, all idea of crossing Beinn Fhionnlaidh had to be abandoned, and our main thought was to find the simplest and quickest way down. Retracing our steps towards Corr na Beinne, an easy snow slope, unfortunately too easy at times even for glissading, led down to the col betwixt and Beinn Fhionnlaidh. At length a sheltered spot was found for lunch, and for a time the mists thinned off a little, and we were able to make out the easy ridge running south-east from the Sgor to Meall a Bhuidh, and then straight before us the grand northern face of Beinn Fhionnlaidh (3,139 feet) rising abruptly for about 2,000 feet. There appeared to be little of an actual wall of rock, unless farther down towards Glen Creran, where a big glacier-rounded buttress rose steep from the stream, and with the opposing shoulder of Corr na Beinne formed a narrow pass exceedingly grand as seen under its present wintry garb. The northern buttress of Beinn Fhionnlaidh rises very abruptly from the col betwixt and the Sgor, and should give a good climb under winter conditions. By 4.55 we were back again at Salachail, and twenty-five minutes later at the farm of Ellerich, lying opposite Glen Ure, which separates Beinn Fhionnlaidh from Beinn Sgulaird. The latter is at once the lowest (3,058 feet) and the least interesting of the three main Glen Creran hills—least interesting from a climbing point of view, for it seemed but a large mass without any attraction of cliff or ridge, and as a view point must be inferior to either of the other hills.

Soon we were off again for a bitter one and a half hour's drive down the glen, in the face of the fiercest blasts of hail and wind and rain we had ever been out in, but all things good or bad come to an end, and by eight o'clock we were

rejoicing once more over a blazing fire and listening to the storm still raging from the hills of Morven.

Education, from a mountaineering point of view at least, seemed very backward in that glen judging from the look of wonderment and interest—or was it horror, being the Sabbath day?—with which the few inhabitants we met gazed upon axe and rope, but this it may be hoped will be remedied ere long, for the district seems worthy of greater attention than it has so far received from the members of the Club.

## ANEROID BAROMETERS.

BY J. GALL INGLIS.

EVERY one who carries an aneroid must have noticed how rarely the barometer reading at the top of a mountain corresponds with the Ordnance Survey figures, the discrepancy being frequently 150 feet or more. The whole of this discrepancy, however, may be due not to a faulty instrument, but simply to the temperature conditions under which the reading is taken. Cold air is heavier than warm air, with the result that in summer more than 1,000 feet of air must be traversed vertically to produce the same alteration on the height of the barometer that 1,000 feet does in winter.

Aneroids are graduated in accordance with a table calculated by the late Sir George Airy, which shows the height corresponding to any reading of the barometer in inches, assuming sea-level to be 31 inches, and the mean temperature of the intervening air 50° Fahr. This latter figure represents the average temperature throughout the year, but the heights given in the table are too high in frosty weather and too low in very warm weather by 30 feet per 1,000 feet of rise, or even more.

The temperature error, however, which is common to both mercurial and aneroid barometers, may be eliminated as follows, according to Airy's table:—

“ Add together the temperatures at the upper and lower station. If this sum, in degrees of Fahrenheit, is greater than 100°, *increase* the height by  $\frac{1}{1000}$  part for every degree of the excess above 100° F.; if the sum is less than 100°, *diminish* the height by  $\frac{1}{1000}$  part for every degree of the defect from 100°.”

For ordinary mountaineering this rule is useless, as simultaneous readings at the foot and at the summit are of course out of the question, but, fortunately, there are means available for obtaining a fairly reliable approximation to

them. The Ben Nevis Observatory records show that the difference in temperature between the top of a hill and sea-level is nearly constant, except under abnormal conditions, and that on the average the temperature of the air decreases by about  $1^{\circ}$  F. for each 275 feet of rise, or  $3.6^{\circ}$  F. per 1,000 feet. The amount varies slightly according to the season of the year, but the mean variation from the average does not exceed  $2^{\circ}$  F. on either side, or  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

	Mean Difference about	=	Rise per 1° Fall of Temp.	=	Fall in Temp. per 1,000 ft. Rise.
March to May - -	$18^{\circ}$ F.		244 feet		$4.1^{\circ}$
June to October - -	$16^{\circ}$		275 "		$3.6^{\circ}$
November to February	$14^{\circ}$		313 "		$3.1^{\circ}$

Knowing, then, that on the top of a mountain, say 3,000 feet high, the temperature will be about  $3.6^{\circ} \times 3 = 10.8^{\circ}$  lower than at sea-level; to correct for temperature in accordance with Airy's rule, it is only necessary to double the temperature at the time of observation, add  $10.8^{\circ}$ , and then subtract from  $100^{\circ}$ , which will give approximately the number of feet to add or deduct per 1,000 feet of rise. Similarly for other heights as in the following table, which gives the winter and spring figures also for the sake of comparison. As the large March-June difference, however, is believed to be due to the cooling effect of the unmelted snow-fields, the spring figures should probably be only utilised for the highest mountains, on which the snow lies long, and in considerable quantity.

Rise in Feet.	Fall in Temperature.		
	November-February.	March-May.	June-October.
250	$3\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ F.	$1^{\circ}$ F.	$1^{\circ}$ F.
500	$1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$2^{\circ}$	$1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$
1,000	$3^{\circ}$	$4^{\circ}$	$3^{\circ}$
1,500	$4\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$6\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$5\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$
2,000	$6\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$8\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$7\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$
2,500	$7\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$10\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$9^{\circ}$
3,000	$9\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$12\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$10\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$
3,500	$11^{\circ}$	$14\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$12\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$
4,000	$12\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$16\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$	$14\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$
4,407	$14^{\circ}$	$18^{\circ}$	$16^{\circ}$



It is evident from the above table that the higher the altitude of the "lower station" can be arranged for, the less is the error due to temperature.

The following table, calculated on this basis for a mountain 3,000 feet high, and taking the round number of 10° as the difference in temperature, will give a good idea of the influence of temperature on the readings at different seasons of the year. It will be noticed that in ordinary frosty weather the temperature error for 3,000 feet is about 100 feet, so that in winter climbers nearing the top must expect to have another 100 feet more to climb than the aneroid indicates.

Shade Temperature (Fahr.)  
at Time of Observation.

70°	Add to aneroid reading	50 ft.	per 1,000 ft. of rise	= 150 ft.
60°	"	"	30 "	" = 90 "
50°	"	"	10 "	" = 30 "
45°	Correct.			
40°	Deduct from aneroid reading	10 ft.	per 1,000 ft. of rise	= 30 ft.
35°	"	"	20 "	" = 60 "
30°	"	"	30 "	" = 90 "
25°	"	"	40 "	" = 120 "
20°	"	"	50 "	" = 150 "

Another source of considerable error is present in those convenient aneroids which have the scale of feet movable with respect to the "inches" scale. Unfortunately, convenience is obtained at the price of accuracy. The movable scale is graduated in accordance with Airy's table, and when set with "0" at 31 inches will be found to read as follows with respect to the "inches" scale:—

Sea-level corresponds to 31.000 ins.—Fall for 1,000 ft. of rise= —					
1,000 feet	"	29.883 "	"	"	" = 1.117 in.
2,000 "	"	28.807 "	"	"	" = 1.076 "
3,000 "	"	27.769 "	"	"	" = 1.038 "
4,000 "	"	26.769 "	"	"	" = 1.000 "
5,000 "	"	25.804 "	"	"	" = 0.965 "

Readings of 31 inches at sea-level, however, are almost unknown, the average reading being usually reckoned as 29.92 inches. Hence the zero of the shifting scale has to be moved round to 29.92 on the average, or more than an inch, when setting for sea-level, while with a very low barometer

it might even be to 29.0. Let us see the result, using the figures in the above table for convenience :—

	Sea-level at 31 ins.	Sea-level at 29.883 ins.	Sea-level at 28.807 ins.
At sea-level - - - -	31.000 ins.	29.883 ins.	28.807 ins.
At 3,000 feet the barometer would stand at - - -	27.769 "	26.769 "	25.804 "
Fall for 3,000 feet -	3.231 ins.	3.114 ins.	3.003 ins.

Now as 3,000 feet on the shifting scale is graduated to the equivalent of a fall of 3.231 inches, it is evident that, when the barometer stands below 31 inches, the aneroid must register less than 3,000 feet if the zero of the scale is set accordingly at starting. With the average sea-level reading the aneroid will only register 2,883 feet at 3,000 feet (*i.e.*, 117 feet too low,  $\frac{1}{10}$  of an inch corresponding to about 100 feet), while with a reading of 28.807 at starting it will only register 2,772 feet.

But this is not all. If the dial of an aneroid is examined, it will be noticed that, as a rule, the arc representing 1 inch of mercury gradually decreases in length as the barometer falls, to suit the exigencies of the mechanism. Thus, in addition to the above-mentioned error, there is superadded a second one, due to the large divisions of the scale being shifted round to where there should be shorter divisions.

From the above considerations it will be seen that, where reliable observations of altitudes are desired, the zero from which the barometer is graduated must not be moved. Also, account must be taken of the temperature conditions. It is a curious fact, however, that the "shifting scale" error compensates the temperature correction fairly well in frosty weather.

In addition to these errors which can be eliminated, there is also another error which cannot be provided against with certainty, being caused by a mechanical defect inherent in the aneroid principle. Every one who has read his aneroid on reaching the top, and then read it again after a few minutes, even, must have remarked that the second reading always gives a height greater than the first. This discrepancy is due to the fact that, as Whympers' observations have proved, aneroid barometers when moved

from one level to another always take some time before they adjust themselves permanently to the altered conditions. A special form of aneroid barometer by Watkins, which is "turned on" every time a reading is taken, claims to have practically obviated this inaccuracy; it is, however, rather bulky for ordinary mountaineering purposes, being about 3 inches in diameter and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick, though quite light for its size.

This aneroidal error, as it may be termed, is rather important, and very complex, but I may deal with it more fully in another paper in a later number of the *Journal*.

## ON ROUTE FINDING IN MIST.

BY W. DOUGLAS.

ONE often hears tales of people being enveloped in mist while among the mountains, and of their being afraid to move until it clears away ; also of shepherds and others, well acquainted with their surroundings, going hopelessly astray when suddenly caught in fog. Why is this ? The answer is simple—Because they have never taught themselves to walk by compass.

The mere possession of a compass will not help one much without the knowledge of how to use it, combined, of course, with his knowing the point of the compass in which his direction lies ; this he may get from a map, if he knows where he is, and has the power to read the map aright.

When one sees a gathering storm likely to develop into thick mist, he should at once take a compass bearing of the direction in which his route lies, be it to a hill-top, pass, or inn. If this is got, it simplifies matters greatly, for no consultation of map nor allowance for compass variation is necessary. When once one is in the mist, if the ground is not covered with snow, there will generally be some objects, such as projecting or peculiarly shaped or coloured stones, tufts of grass or heather, visible, according to the density of the mist, within either a radius of a few yards, or of a much greater distance. Lay your course by compass, and try to pick up three objects in line in the direction you want to go. Before you pass the first, pick up another still farther ahead. This is soon done unconsciously, and thus a fairly straight course can be steered with only a glance at the compass every five to fifteen minutes or so.

If the ground be under snow, it increases the difficulties of the situation, for often it is absolutely impossible to distinguish anything ahead. When the mist in the air and the snow on the ground blend in colour, as they often do, then the bewilderment is excessive, and it is often even

impossible to see whether the ground ahead is rising or falling, so that one gets many surprises as his foot reaches the ground too soon or too late. Generally, one can tell when he comes to the edge of a precipice, for the different colour of the void space is quite perceptible, and if one is constantly on the *qui vive* there is little danger of his walking over it. When these conditions prevail it is best to rope up, and then the man in the rear becomes the steersman, for the track ahead of him to the man in front gives a fairly good idea of the straightness of the course taken.

When one has had no previous acquaintance with the country that he intends to cross, or with the mountain he wishes to climb, and since his arrival at his base everything has been shrouded in mist so that no clear view of the route has been had, then the art of steering by compass and map can be practised in its entirety.

First, one must know how much to allow for the variation of the compass, which, for our Scottish hills, may be roughly averaged at  $18^{\circ}$  W. of N. It is well to put a little mark on the compass card at this point (just a shade N. of N.N.W.), and when the needle points to this mark, then the card and map are in agreement; if, however, the compass card revolves along with the needle, as many cards do, you will not be able to take advantage of this plan. Next look over the map for distinctive landmarks, such as streams, junction of streams, cols, tops, bridges, and such like things; roughly estimate the time one should take between each, and look out for them when they are due. Tick each off as they appear, and in this way you know exactly where you are and never lose touch of the route. Without taking infinite care, one is certain to go wrong. If all our members were to tell of their experiences in mist, I think few could boast of not being wandered occasionally.

I remember a most laughable incident occurring at our last Ballachulish Meet. A party of half-a-dozen of us, including the President and other old members, of which I was one, attempted to make the round of Beinn a' Bheithir in thick mist. Well, we reached the east top successfully, and also had no difficulty in finding the top of the highest

peak. From here we had to round a deep corrie to reach the next top to the east of us. Away we went gaily down the ridge and duly turned at the correct spot, and after going steady for some time, found ourselves at a cairn. It had been snowing all the time and no tracks were visible, but our President was uneasy, and insisted that we were back again at the peak we had left more than an hour before. We scouted the idea, but he soon convinced us that he was right by unearthing the lunch papers we had buried before leaving the top. Moral:—In mist, with a large party, always see that one man is appointed to keep the course, and make him responsible. We did this now, and had not the slightest difficulty in getting to the west top (Sgorr Bhan), and so back to Ballachulish.

Mr Goggs has given us an explanation of his mysterious night's wandering about the head of Glen Lyon (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VIII., p. 241), and Mr Corner also has attempted to explain how he found himself at Braemar instead of Glen Shee (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IX., p. 167).

I have often steered a good course in mist, but I well remember the first which gave me the necessary confidence. Many years ago, when at Aviemore, a friend and I started for Ben Macdhui, a mountain then new to both of us. The mist was thick all day, and down almost to Rothiemurchus Forest. We found the group of cairns on the top without much difficulty, and got home again without once missing the slight landmarks we had marked down on the map. We were some eight hours in the mist on that occasion.

Another memorable bit of compass work was done in the company of Mr Naismith. We left Rosthwaite, ascended Grain Gill, found the central gully on Great End, climbed it, crossed Scafell Pike, picked up Mickledore, climbed the north climb and Pillar and Scafell, descended Deep Gill to Wastdalehead in dense mist the whole day, without either of us having been on these hills before.

Since then I have often steered a good course, and I have often been "wandered" off into some side valley. When this occurred, I have had only myself to blame, for it has been always due to carelessness in reading the map or compass; and that carelessness is often excusable to

oneself, for when blizzards are blowing, rain descending, and fingers wet and cold, one is very apt to scamp these operations and trust to the uncertain shifts of the wind for a guide. When once one has lost touch of his landmarks, it is very difficult to pick them up again, and one has then to walk boldly in the faith of the compass, with an uncomfortable feeling all the time that something is wrong somewhere.

The chief point to remember is, to keep in touch with all the outstanding landmarks *en route*, and that is only done by frequently consulting the map, the watch, and the compass. The aneroid is a useful adjunct, but is not absolutely necessary. Tick the points off as they are passed. I remember, in Arran, telling two unbelieving friends of mine, after we had been groping our way in dense mist for a couple of hours, that we were not far off a well with a cairn of stones. When we reached this a few minutes later, they had unbounded confidence in their guide. Don't trust too much to the wind as a guide, for it is apt to change, and don't walk too long without checking the direction with the compass, and timing the distances between points by the watch, and you will not go far wrong.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THIRTY-EIGHTH MEET OF THE CLUB—NEW YEAR 1907.

CORRIE, ARRAN.

MEMBERS present—President J. Rennie, J. W. Burns, C. I. Clark, W. Douglas, F. S. Goggs, T. E. Goodeve, W. N. Ling, W. G. Macalister, J. H. A. M'Intyre, H. Macrobert, W. A. Morrison, W. W. Naismith, W. Nelson, H. Raeburn, E. B. Robertson, J. C. Thomson, P. J. H. Unna, R. E. Workman.

Guests—G. Ednie, Stewart Jack, and Mr Young.

The early boat which left Ardrossan on Friday, 28th December 1906, conveyed three mountaineering passengers—Goodeve, M'Intyre, and Ednie—in the teeth of a strong north-west wind and a rather upsetting sea without mishap, to Brodick. The views then obtained of the granite peaks of Arran in their mantle of snow were exceptionally grand. Goodeve, who wished to exercise his limbs after a long train journey, and to obtain some knowledge of the geography of the island, walked over Goatfell, North Goatfell, and Cioch na h-Oighe, and descended into Glen Sannox on his way to Corrie Hotel. He arrived at Corrie in time for dinner.

The next morning, Goodeve, M'Intyre, and Ednie, who were still the only visitors, breakfasted at 6.30 A.M. and started at 7.30 A.M. for Cir Mhor, by way of Glen Sannox. They reached Coire na h-Uaimh about 10.15 A.M., started the climb at 10.45 A.M., with good weather prospects, under the able leadership of Goodeve, and arrived at the summit about four o'clock during a heavy snowstorm. After a short rest a descent was made direct to the Saddle and thence down Glen Sannox; the hotel was reached at 7.15 P.M. The climb, which was entirely new to all three, was pronounced by the experts of the Club to be the Pinnacle route to the summit with some variations. Goggs, Ling, E. B. Robertson, and Unna, who had arrived at Brodick by the forenoon boat, climbed Beinn a' Chliabhain, traversed



A'Chir ridge, descended into Coire na h-Uaimh, and down Glen Sannox, on their way to the hotel, which they reached about eight o'clock.

The following day C. I. Clark, Goodeve, Macalister, Unna, Workman, and Young, climbed Caisteal Abhail and descended into Coire na h-Uaimh; Macrobert took J. C. Thomson over Cioch na h-Oighe and North Goatfell; the caves in the vicinity of the hotel were explored by Burns, Goggs, Morrison, and E. B. Robertson; and Ling, Raeburn, and Rennie ascended Glen Sannox to the rise of the Saddle, where Raeburn, due to a false step in the long heather and deep soft snow, struck his knee against a boulder which, unfortunately, bruised it so severely that he had to forego climbing during the Meet.

On Monday, Goggs, Ling, Rennie, E. B. Robertson, Unna, Workman, and Young ascended by Suidhe Fhearghas to the Witch's Step. Here the party divided; Rennie, Workman, and Young returned by North Glen Sannox, the other four proceeded over Caisteal Abhail and came back by Coire na h-Uaimh and Glen Sannox. C. I. Clark, Macalister, Macrobert, J. C. Thomson, and Stewart Jack climbed to the col of Coire na h-Uaimh, and then ascended A'Chir, descended into Fionn Choire, and returned by the Saddle and Glen Sannox. M'Intyre and Ednie, who accompanied this party to the col, could not proceed beyond Caisteal Abhail owing to the fierceness of the blizzard; during their return to the col they were blown, unknown to themselves, on to the north-west ridge and hence descended by mistake into Glen Iorsa in the direction of Loch na Davie. Burns and Morrison contented themselves by ascending Suidhe Fhearghas. Naismith and Nelson, two youthful members of the Club with a smattering of the geography of the Island, who had arrived by steamer at Brodick about 4.30 P.M., lost their way among the bogs and snow-wreaths, and finally stumbled over the top of Goatfell and down the White-water Burn to the hotel, too late for dinner.

On Tuesday, 1st January 1907, two parties—Goggs, Ling, E. B. Robertson, Unna Workman, and Young—and Burns and Macalister—ascended Goatfell; the first

party returned to the hotel by Cioch na h-Oighe and Glen Sannox; while the second party contented itself with Glen Sannox. M'Intyre, Macrobert, Naismith, Nelson, Ednie, and Stewart Jack ascended Suidhe Fhearghas and along the ridge to the Witch's Step; Macrobert now took charge of Ednie and Stewart Jack, lowering them very slowly by stages to the col, Naismith safeguarding the other two. Macrobert and Stewart Jack descended the north gully from the col, and returned over Suidhe Fhearghas for afternoon tea; the other four traversed Caisteal Abhail and returned by Coire na h-Uaimh and Glen Sannox.

On Wednesday, 2nd January, Ednie and Stewart Jack walked up Goatfell, found rather severe weather at the top, and got down shortly before 1 P.M. The others by that time had taken their departure for home.

The snowstorm that occurred during the week in which the Meet opened was one of exceptional severity; so deep were some of the drifts on the driving roads of the island that cutting had to be resorted to before the mail-gigs could proceed on their respective journeys from and to Brodick. On the hills all parties experienced heavy snowstorms daily, and all reported that the snow was too deep and too soft to afford good climbing. Even a sitting glissade could not be indulged in.

J. H. A. M'I.

### THIRTY-NINTH MEET OF THE CLUB—EASTER 1907.

#### INCHNADAMPH, SUTHERLAND.

NOT for twelve years has an Easter Meet of the Club been favoured with such ideal weather as that which attended the Meet at Inchnadamph this year. Glorious sunshine and blue skies prevailed throughout the gathering. For similar weather conditions at Easter, the memories of Clubmen had to go back to the halcyon days at Inveroran in 1894, and the first Fort-William Meet in 1895. And yet there was a difference, for, unlike the experience of

those early Meets, the hills this year were almost entirely devoid of snow. The weather, indeed, was almost summer-like, though the freshness and buoyancy of the spring air were better for climbing than summer. The lack of snow and ice was to some a source of regret, for there was no opportunity for the exercise of snowcraft, and ice-axes on the hills were useless impedimenta. But for this there was ample compensation to the rock-climber in the warm, dry state of the rocks, which made rock-climbing a pleasure, and enabled many climbs of a high standard of difficulty to be successfully accomplished.

Inchnadamph is a most interesting centre. It lies in the heart of a very impressive country, fascinating alike to the mountaineer and to the geologist. Of its angling attractions it is not for me to speak. The moors around exhibit the rolling sea of ancient gneiss—"the fundamental gneiss"—barren and desolate, studded with lochs and tarns, out of which spring abruptly those "vast outlying fragments of the red sandstone" which, in the long course of denudation, "have been left standing up as isolated hills," and which Geikie describes as unique in Britain. Certainly the writer has seen no mountain in Scotland to rival the steep and shapely cone of Suilven, as seen from the moors to the east, whence its resemblance to the Matterhorn, to which Professor Ramsay likened it, is in reality very striking. And the climber who is not a geologist cannot but be impressed by the obvious evidences of the sea having once covered these strange peaks, because high up on the mountain sides and on the summits he comes across the rounded pebbles of the seashore embedded in the hard sandstone rocks. Finally, there is a touch of romance in the district, for here it was that the gallant but ill-fated Montrose fell into the hands of MacLeod of Assynt, and in MacLeod's Castle of Ardvreck, the ruins of which stand on a picturesque little promontory on the shores of Loch Assynt, the hero was confined after his capture.

The Meet was attended by eighteen men in all—Lieut.-Colonel Farquhar, Messrs D. S. Campbell, W. Inglis Clark, W. Douglas, S. A. Gillon, T. E. Goodeve, A. Harker,

W. L. Howie, W. N. Ling, A. M. Mackay, D. MacKenzie, H. T. Munro, H. Raeburn, E. B. Robertson, G. A. Solly, Harry Walker, and H. C. Boyd (members), and Mr Collins (non-member). The earliest arrivals were Munro and Robertson, who arrived on Wednesday, 27th March. The bulk of the members turned up on Thursday—most by motor, several by bicycle—and some late arrivals on Friday and Saturday completed the party.

*Thursday, 28th March.*—Munro and Robertson had a short day, starting at noon, and climbed Coinnemheall, Ben More Assynt, and Carn nan Conbhairean.

*Friday, 29th March.*—Two parties were formed for Suilven. One, consisting of Gillon, Mackay, and Robertson, struck straight across the moors and over the shoulder of Canisp, to the western buttress of the mountain, and ascended the Grey Castle by the gully followed by Professor Ramsay in 1895. The other, consisting of Ling, Raeburn, and Boyd, drove down Loch Assynt as far as Little Assynt, whence by a good deer path and a walk over the moor they reached the same point from which the first party commenced their climb. Skirting the base of the precipices till the southern face was reached, Raeburn and Ling took to the rocks about fifty yards west of the first big gully on that face, and traversing to the left they crossed the route of the first party, finishing the climb shortly after them. Thereafter the combined parties met at the summit, and traversed the entire ridge from west to east. Gillon returned home over the top of Canisp, and the others across the moor.

The precipitous rocky face of Sail Garbh on Quinag attracted a good deal of attention. The principal feature of this face is a massive and rather grim-looking buttress facing north-east, which from its shape was called the Barrel Buttress. A steep, snow-filled gully immediately to the right of this buttress was climbed by Clark, Douglas, and Walker. Solly and Collins ascended the eastern buttress, to the left of the Barrel Buttress. Both parties completed the day by traversing the tops of Quinag and Spidean.

Colonel Farquhar, MacKenzie, and Campbell spent the

day on Ben More, visiting the various tops, and Harker geologised.

*Saturday, 30th March.*—Colonel Farquhar, MacKenzie, Munro, Harker, and Boyd had a quiet but enjoyable day on Quinag, which was coated with a fresh fall of snow. The precipitous western face of the same mountain was visited by Clark, Goodeve, Raeburn, and Walker, who ascended a fine gully between magnificent vertical walls on this face.

The superb sandstone rocks forming the jagged crest of Stack Polly afforded some of the finest climbing of the Meet. A party of six motored to the foot. Campbell, Douglas, and Mackay traversed the splintered ridge from end to end, and Ling, Solly, and Collins climbed a very fine arête at the north-west corner of the mountain.

Gillon "bagged" the whole of the peaks forming the range of Ben More.

*Easter Sunday* was spent by most of the men quietly. Some cycled, some went to church. One party was on Canisp, another on Ben More, and Raeburn visited Cul More.

*Monday, 1st April.*—Suilven was climbed by two parties—Clark, Douglas, and Walker, and Solly, Munro, and Collins. The route taken in both cases was by Professor Ramsay's Gully on the Grey Castle, this route being apparently the only well-defined one of these crags.

A motor party of six went to Stack Polly. Three of them—Goodeve, Robertson, and Boyd—had a capital climb on a sporting arête on the south face, immediately above the big stone shoot conspicuously shown in the photograph facing page 136 of the current volume. The return home was made by a delightful run of thirty miles round by Loch-inver. Two adders were captured and destroyed on the lower slopes of Stack Polly during this excursion.

The great climb of the Meet—the ascent of the Barrel Buttress of Sail Garbh on Quinag—was this day successfully accomplished by Raeburn, Ling, and Mackay. The climb will probably be fully described elsewhere, and here it will suffice to say that, after an unsuccessful attempt, the party descended and reached the top by a side route. Then,

descending once more, they rejoined the first line of ascent, and re-ascending they completed the climb by the original direct route. The whole climb took between five and six hours.

So ended this memorable and highly successful Meet. Most of the party scattered on Tuesday, leaving a few stragglers who were tempted to prolong their stay by the continued spell of beautiful weather.

H. C. B.

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#### THE ARROCHAR MEET.

THE Arrochar Meet, though small from the numerical point of view, will live in the memories of those who attended it as one of the most enjoyable in their experience. The weather was superb, and no unduly energetic member made the rest groan at the prospect of a 6 A.M. breakfast. Quarters in both hotels were most comfortable, and the evening chat round the fire after the day's toils not the least pleasant part of the proceedings.

Naismith, Squance, and Inglis arrived at Ross's Hotel on Friday night, and were joined at breakfast-time next morning by Moore. As three-fourths of the Meet had been more or less in the doctor's hands, an "easy day" was carried unanimously, and the party set out for Narnain *via* Crois. There must surely be something magnetic about the Corrie Sugach Cliffs, however, for they had not been long in sight before the *soi-disant* "invalid" party was heading straight for them. After exploring the large boulders at the foot, to the great detriment of hands and clothes, it was resolved to investigate the central portion of the ridge along the line PF in the photograph at page 76 of the *Journal*, Vol. VII. There was an easy scramble up steep grass to what was probably the platform, three-quarters of an inch below F. Then the gully to the west, which was filled with very soft snow, was crossed, and Naismith led up a fairly steep pitch of rock and grass for twenty feet to a chimney with a succession of short but not very steep pitches, emerging at last on the platform just to the left of F, which looks right into the great gully

A. Here what was christened the "Invalids' Climb" proper ended, but some more interesting scrambling was secured before reaching the top of the ridge.

Next morning—the finest day of the Meet—Naismith and Moore, along with Hillhouse and MacHarg—who had arrived the previous evening at Arrochar Hotel—started off to visit the Cobbler family. After spending some hours in "bouldering," Naismith and MacHarg investigated some sensational ridges on the Glencroe side of "Jean," which would not "go"; thence to the top by what was possibly a small variation, in which there was a short steep pitch where they had to help one another. Hillhouse and Moore climbed the Central peak, and then the North peak *via* the Right-angled Gully. Squance also climbed the North peak by a steep snow slope near the Narnain col, finding it over 50° at the top, while Inglis went on to Ben Ime, and was rewarded by a magnificent view.

Though Sunday was fine, little was done, it being taken for the most part as a day off. On Monday Macmillan arrived by the early train. The day broke cold and raw, with mist low on the hills; however it was resolved to explore the "Mystery of Crois," and fortunately the mist lifted as the morning wore on. An interesting little climb was first done along the lowest of three parallel terraces just below the final rocks, and then the central gully—in which there was a "bergschrund"—was ascended to the top of Crois. Afterwards the Pinnacle was visited, and the outdoor proceedings of the Meet closed with a 700 feet glissade, and an exploration of the Sugach caves by candle-light on the way back.

J. G. I.

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AN UNAUTHORISED MEET AT FORT WILLIAM—  
EASTER 1907.

THE General Meeting of the Club, with maternal solicitude for the aged and infirm members, had in its omniscience decreed that, failing your being able to start from your hut at 3 A.M. to endure half a day's jogging in Highland Railway carriages, followed by two score miles of pneumoniocal

motor car, you were to report yourself to Jean and join in the classic pursuits of a Glasgow holiday throng.

Ominous mutterings broke forth from an original member—

“By the Nine Gods he swore  
That the great town of Glasgow  
Should suffer wrong no more.  
By the Nine Gods he swore it,  
And named a trysting day,  
And bade his messengers ride forth,  
East and west and south and north,  
To summon his array.”

Two officials of the Club were captured, and it was forthwith decided to hold *the* Club meet at Duncansburgh under the shadow of Cow Hill. Here the clans assembled. The Macroberts, the Macalisters, the Macintyres were joined by representatives from many a noble family, distant England even contributing her quota.

Fortune favours the brave. The weather during the Meet was all that could be desired. Wettermantels and other patent rainproof coverings were exposed for sale at a heavy discount, but found no buyers.

At the Alexandra we missed the familiar face of Mrs Doig, who has now retired. Between her and the Club existed a mutual regard and esteem, but her successor, Miss Robertson, was willingly initiated into Club ways, and requests for breakfast at 5.30 A.M. were received as though that hour were the ordinary one.

On Friday evening, about nine, an Edinburgh contingent, composed of Russell and Goggs, and Ingram and Smith (non-members), marched in, having made a high level route from Corrour, including Binnein Beag. The ravenous Russell and Goggs took Binnein Mòr in addition. Ednie (non-member) was found extended under the verandah, and reported that although he had not been able to find the path, he had inspected the summit of Ben Nevis. At 9.20 Macintyre and his axe, J. C. Thomson, Macrobert, and Brown (non-member) arrived by train.

Early Saturday morning it rained hard, and at 6 A.M. the outlook was bad : at seven hope rose, and at eight a fine day was certain. Macrobert led a party composed of Brown,



Deards (non-members), Goggs, and J. C. Thomson along the Spean Bridge road for some miles, then up the interminable slopes of Aonach Mòr to Aonach Beag. The view from the summit is reported to have been very extensive—Arran to the Cairngorms, Skye, Ross, &c. &c., half of Scotland in fact. Carn Mòr Dearg was next tackled, and the arête leading to the ridge found to be in a truly Alpine condition. Half an hour before the summit was reached, Macintyre and Ednie, who had walked up the North Castle Gully over Ben Nevis round by the Carn Mòr Dearg arête, were seen on the sky-line, and, as the odds were five to two, they beat a hasty retreat by the old Banavie pony track, and fear lending them wings they were not caught till dinner-time. Workman and Macalister, who had come by the early morning train, finding too much snow and ice on the Castle for their liking, came down and followed Macintyre's tracks up the North Castle Gully, and then home.

Nelson, Grove, and Gilbert Thomson arrived at 9.15 P.M. by train from Spean Bridge, having left the morning train at Corrour, and having bagged the south peak of Stob Choire an Easain Mhor *en route*.

Sunday was another glorious day. Macrobert, Brown, Ednie, J. C. Thomson, and Deards made one party, and Workman, Macalister, and Young another. The former reached the Observatory by No. 3 Gully, and the latter by the Castle Ridge. Joining forces, a rather rapid glissade into Coire Leas gave two of the party a slight attack of spotted fever, and the late start (ten or after) necessitated a lantern return down the glen.

Some influential members represented the Club at church, and in the afternoon Goggs, Grove, Macintyre, Nelson, and Gilbert Thomson made an ascent of a hill which it is believed is quite unknown to even well-educated members of the Club. The view from the summit, it must be admitted, is not quite so extensive as that from Ben Nevis, but it has compensating advantages. Its name is redolent of poetry and romance, rustic simplicity, and quiet reflection—Cow Hill. The name arises from the fact that the hill is or was the common grazing ground of

the town. At afternoon tea a legal luminary hailing from the Metropolis of the West gave some instructive information on swearing and dog licenses. It seems that to call a man a thief is actionable, but if a bricklayer's or other adjective is inserted before the word thief, no damage can result ; the remark is then only scurrilous abuse and not actionable. If the language of the Club deteriorate in the future the blame must be laid at the doors of the legal gentleman who thus thoughtlessly admitted laymen into the secrets of the profession. We now know that free use of language by the "Black One's own" is based on sound legal principles. Another curious point which came out was the comparative value of different classes of men. What ought we to take as our unit of value? The unit selected by this legal light was the dog tax, 7s. 6d. per dog. Under this system a Glasgow lawyer is found to be worth eighteen dogs (a Glasgow lawyer's tax is £6 per annum, and the 7s. 6d. dog tax may be reduced to 6s. 8d. when taking a quantity); an Edinburgh lawyer twenty-seven dogs, as the latter's tax is £9 per annum. Every S.M.C. man is thus worth two dogs, and if he be an A.C. man in addition, he will be worth some eight dogs. This may be shortly described as "The Dog Theory of the Universe," and may be recommended as a considerably better method of valuation than many of those in greater vogue.

An impromptu telegram to Inchnadamph, reading as follows, cost the party some hours of anxious thought :—

*"Proprietor, Hotel,  
Inchnadamph.*

"If any S.M.C. members at Inchnadamph, please inform them that Meet in Alexandra and dependances send good wishes. Poor Arrochar. Cobbler seen his last. Only drawback here mountains overcrowded."

Monday saw the old men of the party, Goggs, Nelson, and Gilbert Thomson, setting an example to the younger generation by appearing for breakfast at the hour they had ordered it, viz., 5.30 A.M. At 6.10 they were trudging away to the Lochan, bound with the wisdom of the ancients for the steps of Macrobert's party up Gully No. 3. On their return at 2 P.M. from the mist-enveloped summit of the

Ben, they had the ingratitude to complain that the steps were too large. The same day the Castle Ridge was again trodden under foot by Ednie, Grove, and Macintyre, whilst J. C. Thomson and Workman extended their travels to Binneins Mòr and Beag, 11 $\frac{1}{4}$  hours out and home. Macrobert and Brown traversed Stob Ban and Mullach nan Coirean. Macalister and Young took what is fast becoming the fashionable highroad between Fort-William and Corrour, and joined the party of the ancients, plus Deards, in a first-class compartment which had been with difficulty saved by ice-axes from the attacks of a Glasgow holiday crowd.

At Arrochar the remains of the Cobbler Meet, in the person of the Vice-President, W. W. Naismith, were reverentially pulled into the carriage through the window. On Tuesday the last that was left of them, Macintyre and Ednie, annexed Sgor a' Mhaim. The "Cave" meet was a brilliant success. Caveat Committee!

# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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## THE SOUTHERN UPLANDS.

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### THE GALLOWAY HILLS.

(DIVISION V. GROUP I.)

Lat.  $54^{\circ} 56'$  to  $55^{\circ} 20'$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 5'$  to  $4^{\circ} 40'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 4, 8, 9, 14, and 15. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Maps, Nos. 1 and 4.

Though these hills are neither so high nor so grand as the finest parts of the Highlands, they amply repay the time spent in visiting their recesses. Few parts of Scotland indeed surpass the district in variety—wild and lonely in one place, in another almost vying with the richest scenes in England. The hills differ in most respects from the other parts of the southern uplands, the display of rock being the principal difference, due to the fact that granite plays a large part in their geological composition—indeed, it is in this granite district the mountaineer will find most to attract him. A large number of lovely tarns and lakes fill the hollows of the hills and add greatly to their beauty. There are not many lakes in Britain to surpass Lochs Trool, Neldricken, Valley, and Dec. The lack of accommodation near the hills is the principal drawback, but where there are inns they are always comfortable, and sometimes the farmers will put up a belated traveller.

The most interesting groups are :—

1. Cairnsmore of Fleet, 2,331 feet.
2. Lamachan, 2,349 feet.

3. Merrick, 2,764 feet.
4. Kells, 2,668 feet.
5. Cairnsmore of Carsphairn, 2,612 feet.

#### 1. CAIRNSMORE OF FLEET.

This hill is a large granite mass, standing east of the valley of the Cree at Newton Stewart, and is the farthest south of the higher Galloway hills. It is very rough and stony, and has some cliffs on its eastern slopes. It commands fine views and affords a capital walk. The range has several rounded summits.

- (1) Craignelder, 1,971 feet.
- (2) Craigronald, 1,929 feet.
- (3) Meikle Mulltaggart = the big priest's hill, 2,000 feet (contour).
- (4) The High Top, 2,331 feet.
- (5) Knee of Cairnsmore = knee of the great cairn, 2,152 feet.

Newton Stewart forms the best centre—there are several comfortable hotels of the family and commercial type.

*Usual Route.*—Take an early train to Palnure Station and follow the road up the Palnure Glen for two and a quarter miles to Bargaly Farm, turn east behind the farmhouse and cross a small burn, then walk over rough moor and hill ground to top (4), about two and a half miles from Bargaly Farm. An interesting return can be made by descending north-east to the nick of the Saddle and crossing (3), (2), and (1) in order. This last is a very rugged hill, with wild cliffs over the head of the Palnure Glen, called the Big and Wee Gairy. One part of the face is called the Flesh Market, owing to the number of sheep that fall over and are killed. From (1) the road from Newton Stewart to New Galloway can be reached at Talnotry, and the return made by it.

*Another Route.*—From Palnure Station follow Creetown road for half a mile, then branch up country road past Muirhead to the farm of Cuil, and cross the moors behind to the source of the Graddock Burn and so to the top. It is about five miles to the top from Palnure. It is, however,

more interesting to make for the pass at the south end of the hill called the Door of Cairnsmore. There are rocky cliffs here. A way can be found through them to the top of (5) and so to (4).

*Climbs.*—None recorded. There are cliffs both at the Door of Cairnsmore and on the east slope, called the Clints of the Spout. The rock is granite and slabby.

## 2. LAMACHAN GROUP.

This is a group of Silurian hills, filling up the space between Glen Trool and the Dee valley to the north and the road from Newton Stewart to New Galloway on the south. Taking everything into consideration, they are, perhaps, the most picturesque of the Galloway Hills.

(1) Curleywee, 2,212 feet. A rough hill, something like Arthur's Seat in outline. It has fine scars on several sides.

(2) Bennanbrack = brindled or spotted hill, 2,245 feet. Merely the north end of

(3) Lamachan, 2,349 feet, which is divided from

(4) Larg Hill, 2,216 feet, by the nick of the Brishie.

*Centre.*—Newton Stewart.

*Usual Route.*—Cross the bridge to the Kirkcudbrightshire side of the Cree, and pass through the village of Minnigaff. Follow the road up the Penkill valley to the farm of Auchenleek, four miles from Newton Stewart.

Here the driving road ends. Thence take the path to Loch Dee, up the Pulnee Glen to the pass (1,300 feet), Loup of Laggan, and ascend slopes to the west to the south base of No. 1, then steeply to top. A roughish descent leads to nick of the Curleywee, cross a lower hump on the ridge (Milldown, 1,950 feet) to the nick of the Corners Gale, beyond which rises No. 2. From this point strike south-west over No. 3 to No. 4, *via* nick of the Brishie. A long easy descent leads into the Penkill Glen, two miles above Auchenleek.

The whole walk gives a fine insight into the wild and picturesque scenery of the neighbourhood, and is highly recommended.

*Climbs.*—None recorded. The rocks are Silurian and rather rotten-looking.

## 3. MERRICK.

This is the loftiest hill in the South of Scotland. It is the highest summit of a long range of hills running roughly north and south parallel with the Kells Range, which rises on the east side of what is called in Sir A. Geikie's "Scenery of Scotland" the "Galloway Ice Cauldron." Glen Trool bounds the range on the south, the valley of Minnoch on the west, and it dies out on the north into the moors at the head of the Girvan Water. The chain is mainly composed of Silurian, but granite rises high on the shoulder of Merrick on its east side.

(1) Benyellary = eagle's mountain, 2,360 feet, the south off-shoot of

(2) Merrick, 2,764 feet. There are two deep corries on the north-east and north-west sides, divided by a rather narrow ridge called the Spear (2,550 feet). The westerly is called the Fang or Fank of the Merrick, and the easterly the How of the Cauldron.

(3) Kirrierecoch, 2,562 feet.

(4) Tarfessock, 2,282 feet.

(5) Shalloch on Minnoch, 2,520 feet.

These hills all rise more or less steeply from the "Ice Cauldron" on the east, and send out long spurs to the west.

*Centres.*—Newton Stewart is the nearest town, and it is thirteen miles from Loch Trool Lodge at the south base of the hills. There are comfortable hotels there. There is also a small inn, House of the Hill, about nine miles on the road from Newton Stewart to Loch Trool. Accommodation can sometimes be got by the courtesy of the farmers in the neighbourhood.

*Usual Route.*—From Newton Stewart drive or walk to Buchan Farm, near the head of Loch Trool and fourteen miles from Newton Stewart. Close to the farm the Buchan Burn comes down from Merrick. There are some fine falls called the Buchan Linns. Follow a path on the west side of the burn to Carlsharg, a shepherd's house, at base of No. 1. Strike up slopes of No. 1 direct to top—a dip divides this from No. 2, which is reached by easy green slopes. At

top of ridge a fine view down cliffs into the Fang of the Merrick on the north side. From the cairn a route may be struck over the Spear with a heavy dip to No. 3, and so to No. 4 and No. 5. From No. 5 turn due west along the ridge, gradually descending till the Minnoch Water is reached, and the road to Newton Stewart.

*Another Route.*—From top of No. 2 descend south-east to the shore of Loch Enoch (1,650 feet). The scenery here is very wild—granite rocks and stones in all directions. By keeping along the south shore of the loch the route from the nick of the Dungeon to Loch Trool can be struck about half a mile south-east from Loch Enoch. There is a wonderful view here looking south-west over Loch Trool and the Lamachan to the low ground of Wigtownshire. Descend to shore (east) of Loch Neldricken, and crossing the burn that connects it with Loch Valley, follow its western bank and down the deep glen of the Gairland Lane to the head of Loch Trool. The whole of the scenery *en route* is exceedingly wild and picturesque.

*Climbs.*—On Merrick Range the rocks are rather rotten-looking and the cliffs don't suggest climbs. The rugged hills of the Ice Cauldron, however—Mullwharchar (2,270 feet), Dungeon Hill (2,000 feet), and Craignaw (2,115 feet)—have granite cliffs on their eastern slopes.

#### 4. KELLS RANGE.

This is a long range of Silurian hills running north and south, commencing in the north half-way down the east side of Loch Doon, and terminated in the south by the valley of the Dee. It is bounded on the west by the moorland glen which traverses the county from the head of Loch Doon to Loch Dee, and which bounds the Galloway Ice Cauldron on the east. On the east the range sends out low chains of hills, divided by glens, to the Glenkens.

The summits are smoother and less individual than the Lamachan and Merrick hills, but have some rugged crags and deep corries, notably that of Loch Dungeon on the east side at the south end of the range.



*Centres.*—Dalry and New Galloway in Glenkens—have both very good hotels, and there is a nice little house at Carsphairn.

(1) Black Craig, 1,730 feet.

(2) Coran of Portmark, 2,042 feet.

(3) The Bow, 2,000 feet (contour).

(4) Meaul, 2,280 feet, with an eastern buttress.

(5) Cairnsgarroch, 2,156 feet.

(6) Carlin's Cairn, 2,650 feet, with a large cairn on the tip—hence the name.

(7) Corserine, 2,668 feet, the highest point, with buttresses—west, Meikle Craigtarson, 2,000 feet, and east, North Gairy Top, 2,210 feet, and Craignine, 2,300 feet. Turning north from this last—

(8) Millfire and "Cold Hill," 2,350 feet.

(9) Milldown = Brown Hill, have fine cliffs over Loch Dungeon on their eastern slopes, 2,400 feet.

(10) Meikle Millyca = big grey hill, 2,449 feet.

(11) Little Millyea = little grey hill, 1,900 feet.

*Usual Route.*—From Dalry cross the bridge over the Ken, three-quarters of a mile north of the village, and turn due south for a long mile on the road to New Galloway. Here a road up the Coom Burn must be followed for about three and a half miles to a house, Largmore. Follow the burn for another mile or so, and then turn up slope to a point marked 1,434 on the Ordnance Survey map. From this point No. 10 is in front about one and a half miles off by the ridge round the head of the Minnigall Burn. From No. 10 a straight course is made over No. 9 and No. 8, passing the fine crags over Loch Dungeon on the east. Beyond No. 8 the lowest point of the ridge (2,050 feet), then an easy pull leads to No. 7, a dip to 2,300 feet and then the top of No. 6 is reached. There is a deep corrie on the east side, with cliffy sides—head of the Pulmaddy Burn. Beyond this the route traverses No. 4 and No. 3 to the path which leads from Lochhead of Doon to Carsphairn. This is followed past the Woodhead mines and Garryhorn to Carsphairn, crossing the Deugh by a foot-bridge about half a mile due east of Garryhorn.

*Another Route.*—From Dalry follow the Carsphairn

road on the west side of the valley two and a half miles, and turn up the Pulharrow Glen to a house, Burnhead. Follow stream to Loch Dungeon and climb among the rocks to top of Milldown on the north side of two deep gullies called the Garinner Stand.

*Another Route.*—From Carsphairn cross the Deugh to the farm of Carnavel and cross the moors to the Halfmark Burn. Follow this, passing the gorge of the Illwraith, traverse the col in front to the Pulmaddy Burn and follow its course to the foot of the crags of the Craignelder Gairy, ascend on the east side of these to top of Craigrine, as the eastern buttress of Corserine is called, and so to the top.

*Climbs.*—There are rough cliffs round Loch Dungeon and the head of the Pulmaddy Burn which might possibly yield climbs.

#### 5. CAIRNSMORE OF CARSPHAIRN OR DEUGH.

This group is situated at the head of the valley of Glenkens in Galloway, and is of a distinctly more pastoral character than the Merrick or Kells. The rock of the central mass is granite.

- (1) Willieanna, 1,400 feet.
- (2) Dunool, 1,758 feet.
- (3) Cairnsmore, 2,612 feet. There are some crags on the east side.
- (4) Beninner, 2,328 feet. A rather fine hill, with a steep craggy face to the east.

*Centres.*—Carsphairn is the best centre. There is a comfortable little hotel. The hills can be reached also from Dalry and Dalmellington.

*Usual Route.*—From Carsphairn follow the Dalmellington road to the bridge over the Deugh. Keep up the east bank of the river, through a picturesque hollow called Midge Ha', to the junction of the Deugh and the Benloch Burn. Beyond this burn ascend slopes of No. 1 in a north-easterly direction, crossing it to No. 2. Bending slightly more east, in about a mile a point marked '2,257 on the Ordnance Survey map is reached and the direction changed

to north, the cairn being reached in half a mile. Turning direct south for a short distance along the top of the eastern crags, Gairy of Cairnsmore, an open col, is traversed almost due east to No. 4. By keeping south from the top a path from the head of the Ken valley to Carsphairn is struck, and so home. But it is more interesting to strike due north from top of No. 4 and turn the steep eastern face, Beninner Gairy, and follow the glen of the Poldores Burn to the path mentioned above.

*Climbs.*—These hills are not of climbing importance.

C. B. P.

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## THE MOFFAT, LOWTHER, AND TWEEDSMUIR HILLS.

(DIVISION V. GROUP II.)

### THE MOFFAT HILLS.

Lat.  $55^{\circ} 25'$ ; W. Lon.  $3^{\circ} 20'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 16. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 5.

#### PRINCIPAL SUMMITS :—

White Coomb, 2,695 feet.

Hart Fell, 2,651 feet.

Swatte Fell, 2,388 feet.

Saddle Yoke, 2,412 feet.

Bodesbeck Law, 2,173 feet.

This group is in the basin of the Annan, Dumfriesshire, and occupies the angle between Moffat Water and the upper Annan. The area which it covers is not large, but in view of the height of the hills, their accessibility, and the interest of the scenery, there is no group of more importance in the southern uplands. With its hydro., hotels, and *pensions*, Moffat contains ample choice of travellers' quarters, and the hills are generally visited from there.

The following walk will give an adequate impression of them. Go from Moffat up Moffat Water by public coach or otherwise, and on reaching the Tail Burn (ten miles), take path on the right looking up the burn. There is a

view from it of the Grey Mare's Tail fall, the finest in the South of Scotland after the Falls of Clyde. A mile above the fall, Loch Skeen (three-quarters of a mile long by a quarter broad) is reached. Notice the ancient moraines that have formed the loch by damming back the stream. The crags around the loch are high, and the whole scene impressive from its wildness and desolation. From the loch go up the White Coomb to the south. This is the highest summit of the group and has a fine corrie, a rare feature in the southern hills, on its eastern side. From the top of White Coomb hold west, then south to obtain a view down Carrifran and Blackshope glens, both very fine, then west again to the top of Hart Fell. From there go south-westwards down a long grassy ridge to the point where the Auchencat Burn passes under the road, and thence three miles down the Annan to Moffat. Allow four or five hours from road to road.

As an alternative to descending to the Annan valley, one may turn south-east instead of south-west from the summit cairn on Hart Fell. This course leads to the top of Swatte Fell, from which a ridge, rather steep and rough at its lower end, goes down on the west side of Birnock Water to Moffat Mineral Well, fully a mile from the town. If Loch Skeen and surrounding hills are approached from St Mary's Loch, the road may be left where a burn crosses it near the watershed and about midway between Kerrcleuch and Birkhill. The loch is about two miles across the moor, but as the way is wet and uninteresting the approach by the Tail Burn before mentioned is recommended to those to whom an extra walk of a mile or two is not a serious matter.

It is inadvisable without a compass and map and the knowledge of how to use them, to attempt the part of the above route leading along the hill tops if there is mist or a probability of it, as the ridges are confusing and one can readily land in a tributary valley of the Tweed remote from everywhere instead of at Moffat. As an alternative, return from Loch Skeen to the road, descend Moffatdale about three miles and go up the Saddle Yoke on the right. The climb is interesting, the point a fine one, and the view

of the Blackshope and Carrifran glens on either side rewarding.

Mention should be made of Bodesbeck Law, opposite the Saddle Yoke, and the other hills on the east side of Moffat Water. They are best approached by crossing the Moffat Water at Capplegill, about six miles up the Moffatdale road. From the path from here between Moffatdale and Ettrickdale the way is plain, either to Bodesbeck Law on the north or Capel Fell on the south, with its neighbours Wind Fell and Ettrick Pen. Andrewhinney (2,220 feet) lies to the north of Bodesbeck Law, about which a charming paper was written by Prof. Veitch (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 41).

Queensberry Hill and Lochcraig Head adjoin the Moffat Hills, but belong more properly to the last and second last sections respectively, and are dealt with in these.

*Climbs.*—The crags above Loch Skeen, those in the corrie east of White Coomb, and in the Carrifran and Blackshope glens offer rock climbing, but their capacities in this way so far as the writer knows await investigation.

#### THE LOWTHER HILLS.

Lat.  $55^{\circ} 24'$ ; W. Lon.  $3^{\circ} 44'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 15. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 4.

##### PRINCIPAL SUMMITS:—

Green Lowther, 2,403 feet.

Five Cairns, 2,377 feet.

Dun Law, 2,216 feet.

This group occupies an area in the counties of Lanark and Dumfries, roughly quadrangular in shape, the south-western boundary being the valley of the Nith, the north-eastern the valley of the Clyde, while the north-western boundary is formed by the valleys of Crawick Water and Duneaton Water, and the south-eastern by the valleys of Carron Water and Potrail Water. The villages of Leadhills and Wanlockhead, interesting for their long-established industry in lead mining, lie high up near the centre of the group, and can be reached by branch railway from

Elvanfoot Station. The average height of the villages is about 1,400 feet, and there is a good hotel at Leadhills.

The highest summit of the group, the Green Lowther, is visible from Leadhills Station and within an hour's walk of it. The way lies through the lead workings on the hillside above the station and past the reservoir near the head of the Shortcleuch Water. The second summit of the group, known as the Five Cairns, or simply as the Lowther Hill, is about a mile south-west from the Green Lowther. It may be reached from Leadhills direct by following the track to Enterkinhead. This track will be found by proceeding up the highroad or railway from Leadhills about half a mile and turning to the left up the hillside. From Enterkinhead it is an easy ten minutes' walk to the Five Cairns (now reduced to one), and the view in clear weather is exceptionally good, extending to the Pentlands, Arran, and the Cumberland Hills. Enterkin Pass is impressive, and may be followed about two and a half miles down till some sheepfolds are reached. Here a track can be seen on the hillside which leads in a quarter of an hour to Dalveen, at the lower end of the pass of that name. Dalveen Pass, with its steep, smooth, and lofty green hills, broken here and there by rocky glens and cliffs, is one of the most attractive bits of hill scenery in the southern uplands. The road up it leads to Elvanfoot, and a round from Leadhills by the Five Cairns, Enterkin, Dalveen, and Elvanfoot, may be made on foot in about seven hours. An interesting short cut from Enterkin to Dalveen Pass may be made by turning to the left at the foot of Kelts Linn, fully a mile from Enterkinhead, and crossing to Upper Dalveen. The Stey Gail (steep gable), on the right hand as one crosses from pass to pass, is most fitly named, from the remarkable length, steepness, and regularity of its grass slopes.

Dalveen Pass may also be approached from Leadhills by the road running southwards down the Menock Pass. The scenery of the Menock Pass is pleasing, and the road is kept for about five miles. Here, where the valley turns westward, a path on the hillside across the stream will be found. It goes to Glenim in about one and a half miles,

and from Glenim across the Enterkin valley to Nether Dalveen it is about three miles.

There is a direct route about six miles in length from the top of the Green Lowther to Elvanfoot, along the Dun Law and other heights. It is high, but has no features of special interest.

Unless on the heather-clad ground in the shooting season, objection is seldom made to exploring the hills in this district as one chooses; the walking is rarely rough, though sometimes steep on the Dumfriesshire side. Some interesting impressions of the neighbourhood and its hill scenery may be obtained from bicycle or motor; there are fair cycling roads between Elvanfoot and Dalveen, between Abington and Menock, and between Abington and Sanquhar. There is only a rough footpath down Enterkin. The group offers no rock climbs worthy of attention.

#### THE TWEEDSMUIR HILLS.

Lat.  $55^{\circ} 31'$ ; W. Lon.  $3^{\circ} 21'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, Sheets 16 and 24. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 5.

##### PRINCIPAL SUMMITS:—

Broad Law, 2,754 feet.

Dollar Law, 2,680 feet.

Lochcraig Head, 2,625 feet.

The above name is here applied to the hills between the headwaters of the Tweed and Yarrow, in the counties of Peebles and Selkirk. They contain pleasing scenery, and have interesting associations with Border literature, particularly where they descend to the Yarrow and St Mary's Loch, rich in memories of Scott, Hogg, and Wordsworth. With the exception of Merrick, in Galloway, which overtops it by a few feet, Broadlaw, the highest of the group (2,754 feet), is higher than any Scottish hill south of the Forth and Clyde. It and the other principal heights of the group are most easily approached from the upper Tweed valley, to which Broughton is the nearest station. From Broughton there is a good road to the head of the Talla

reservoir (about eleven miles), passing Crook Inn at seven miles, and the Beild Inn and Tweedsmuir a mile farther on. From the end of the reservoir the track up Talla Linn should be followed as far as the wooden footbridge near the watershed, and about three-quarters of a mile from Talla. Here an easy ascent to the left leads to the summit ridge of the group, which when reached is smooth and level enough to suit a nursemaid with a perambulator. Cairn Law, Broad Law, Dun Law, and Dollar Law are reached in order, and there is a fence along the ridge which is useful in mist. From Dollar Law, where three fences meet, a return may be made by the Long Grain Knowe and Drummelzier Burn to Broughton, or one may descend in the opposite direction to the Manor valley and Peebles. From the head of Talla Linn over the hills to Broughton is about fifteen miles, and to Peebles two or three miles farther. A track leads from near Manorhead, at the base of Dollar Law, to the Meggat road and thence to St Mary's Loch. This track, some four miles in length, is sometimes taken by cyclists; they may not have to carry their machines while on it, but their machines will not carry them. The direct road from Talla to St Mary's Loch is mostly rideable, and has even been done by motor, but the motorist who is merciful to his car goes some other way.

Another part of this group is reached by following the Talla to its source. Here we have Moll's Cleuch Dod (2,571 feet) on the west, and Lochcraig Head (2,625 feet) on the east. The latter overhangs Loch Skeen, and is oftenest visited along with the Moffat Hills, of which to a small extent it forms part, though most of its area is in the basin of the Tweed. If the hills are approached from the Talla valley the return journey may be made by Gameshope valley, which is much more picturesque than the upper Talla.

Crook Hotel, before mentioned, and Rodono Hotel on St Mary's Loch are the quarters where visitors to the Tweedsmuir Hills usually put up, and can be recommended. Tweedsmuir telegraph office is near the former, and Coppercleuch telegraph office near the latter.

The district offers no attractions to the rock-climber.



Though they cannot be included among the Tweedsmuir Hills the hills between Tweed and Yarrow continue to near the confluence of the rivers, and offer an interesting route between Innerleithen and Selkirk. The road leading at right angles from the railway station at Innerleithen to the Tweed is followed for about a mile across the river and up the Quair, giving a glimpse of the antique house of Traquair on the right. At a point nearly opposite to the bridge over the Quair the road to the left is taken, leading up the hill past the post office and smithy. It conducts to the hill tops, nearly disappearing for a time, and latterly leads down to the Yarrow valley. It is generally preferable to quit the track and keep along the ridge to the head of Long Philip Burn, and follow that burn past the reservoirs to Selkirk. This walk is described with high literary grace by Dr John Brown in the paper entitled "Minchmoor," in "*Hortæ Subsecivæ*." The total distance is fully twelve miles.

#### HILLS NEAR THE FOREGOING GROUPS.

Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheets 4 and 5.

Tinto, 2,335 feet.

Queensberry, 2,285 feet.

Eildons, 1,200 to 1,400 feet.

Outlying hills are often better known and better worth ascending for views than members of larger masses. Tinto Hill (2,335 feet), in Upper Clydesdale, is a case in point. It may be conveniently climbed from the moor alongside the Stirling and Carlisle road near Thankerton station, or from a point on that road fully a mile west and south from Symington station. This point is opposite a water-tank and quarry on the hillside. A footpath goes from the quarry to the top.

Queensberry (2,285 feet) might have been mentioned among the Moffat hills already referred to, but as it is geographically distinct from them it falls more properly into the present category. It is rarely climbed except from Moffat, from which it is fully eight miles distant. To reach it take the high road to Beattock Bridge, then the side road

over river and railway westward up the hill to Carshaig and Kinnelhead. Thence a south-westerly course through the moor will bring one to the final rise. The view from the top, particularly the view to the south, repays the rather commonplace walk through the moor.

The Eildon Hills also deserve mention from the fine country seen from them, and the interesting neighbourhood at their base. They are usually climbed from Melrose. Taking the road which passes below the railway close to Melrose station and following it as far as the golf course, turn across the course and one will reach the base of the highest and most interesting hill of the group.

J. J. WAUGH.

## THE CHEVIOT.

(DIVISION V. GROUP III.)

Lat.  $55^{\circ} 30'$ ; W. Lon.  $2^{\circ} 10'$ . One-inch Ordnance Survey—England and Wales, Sheet No. 5. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 5.

The Cheviot (2,676 feet), the highest of the long grassy Border hills of that name, has a flat-topped summit of considerable area; over a space of about one mile by three-quarter mile, the variation in height is only about 130 feet, and is therefore uninteresting as well as very boggy, except after a dry spell, the tableland being intersected by peat bogs of the typical heather moorland type. The hill sides are rough grass and heather.

The Cheviot can be reached either from Yetholm on the Scottish or Wooler on the English side.

From Yetholm, about twelve miles, the College Burn is the best route, either branching off at Southernknowe and up the Bazzle, or continuing straight up the burn and through Henhole.

From Wooler, about eight and a half miles, proceed south on the road as far as Middleton Hall; then turn sharply to the right, pass a small fir plantation—from here a fine view of Cheviot may be obtained—thence straight up

the valley to Langleeford Farm, and to the summit up a long shoulder, or turning off at a glen about three-quarters of a mile before Langleeford, over the moors to Goldcleugh and up the Bazzle.

The view from the south-east edge of the summit plateau is very fine, stretching all along the Northumberland seaboard, and as far as the Durham heights of Low Fell, Consett, and Cross Fell. Owing to the Cheviot being so near the sea, mist is very frequent, and a compass for use on the long flat top is often required.

*Climbs.*—On the whole the Cheviot and surrounding hills are suitable for long walks, &c., and do not lend themselves either to rock or snow work—the latter always being too soft to require an ice-axe.

The nearest approach to rock-climbing is found in the two great gorges, Henhole and Bazzle.

Henhole faces west and the College Burn runs up the centre; on the (true) right there is about 150 feet of crag in the centre of which is a curious small cave, which can be entered without much difficulty by traversing out along a broad “rake,” the last two steps of which are on the face of the crag, but there is good hand and foot hold at these points. On the opposite side of the gorge the crags are more broken up and grassy, and can be ascended at two places and traversed by a ledge across the middle.

The Bazzle faces north and contains the only well-defined climb on the range. It is situated on the (true) left side of the glen, and consists of an 80-foot chimney facing north-eastwards. Apparently the first ascent was made on 5th March 1899 by Messrs G. H. Tarver and G. T. Glover, who proposed calling it North-Eastern Chimney. It consists of a small cave at the foot and three pitches; it is steep, but gives good opportunities for back and knee work.

G. T. G.

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## THE LAMMERMUIRS.

(DIVISION V. GROUP IV.)

Lat.  $55^{\circ} 50'$ ; W. Lon.  $2^{\circ} 40'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 33. Bartholomew's Reduced Survey Map, No. 9.

These hills form a large tract of elevated country, bare sweeping moorlands, of slow, smooth outline, separating the fertile lowlands of Haddingtonshire on the north from the rich vale of Tweeddale on the south.

Orographically, they form a continuation eastwards of the Moorfoots, but the line of separation is taken as the valley of the Gala, and the railway between Edinburgh and Galashiels. Their length from west to east, measured from the summit of the pass at Tynehead to Fast Castle on the coast, is about 30 miles, while their breadth varies from 5 or 6 to about 15 miles. The highest summits lie at the west end of the range. They are—

Meikle Says Law	-	-	-	-	1,749 feet.
Lammerlaw	-	-	-	-	1,733 "
Seenes Law	-	-	-	-	1,686 "
Lowran's Law	-	-	-	-	1,681 "
Crib Law	-	-	-	-	1,670 "
Willie's Law	-	-	-	-	1,626 "
Hunt Law	-	-	-	-	1,625 "

These are all situated round the sources of the Hopes Water, and from 4 to 6 miles south of the village of Gifford in Haddingtonshire, to which a line of light railway has recently been opened.

Lammerlaw is perhaps the most conspicuous and most frequently visited summit, and is the name peak of the range; but the survey has given 16 feet more to Meikle Says Law, about 4 miles to the east. It will be seen that the highest hill is considerably below the culminating summits of the Moorfoots (Blackhope Scar, 2,138 feet) and Pentlands (Scald Law, 1,898 feet).

Passing eastwards from the Hopes Hills, the heights gradually diminish, till the range drops steeply into the sea at the cliffs about Fast Castle and the outlying island-like

peninsula of St Abb's Head. Close to the shore-line the heights run up to over 500 feet in some places. The only pass through the range which is under the 500-foot line is that through which the railway between Edinburgh and Berwick runs. The route lies up the picturesque defile of the Pease Dean, with its fine oak woods, to the summit at Grantshouse, and into the basin of the Eye Water on the south.

There are a number of old drove roads across the hills at various places. These are mostly to be found running along the tops of the hills. There is a road, of old an important thoroughfare, now much dilapidated and overgrown in its upper part, which makes nearly a bee-line across the tops of the hills between Longformacus and Gifford.

A walk over the west part can be most conveniently done by making either Gifford or Oxtou, the latter a station on the Lauder Light Railway, the starting point. The distance is under 10 miles as the crow flies, but if a visit is paid to both Lammerlaw and Meikle Says Law, six or seven hours is not too much to allow. There is no climbing on the range; they are merely breezy uplands of grass or heather. On the coast round from west of Fast Castle to St Abb's Head and Coldingham Shore, where the North Sea beats upon the rock, and has washed away the softer strata, the cliff scenery is in places very fine. Numerous caves and coves indent the shore-line, and steep headlands thrust themselves out seaward where harder strata exist. Beyond the shore-line numerous rocks, stacks, and skerries lie off the land, frequented by sea-fowl in summer.

A charming walk at any season, and one instructive in a geological sense, can be obtained by following the coast-line from the village of St Abb's (station, Reston Junction) to Pease Bridge and Cockburnspath, or striking from Fast Castle south-west across the moors to Grantshouse. Though the distance is not great on the map, it will be found that a whole day is necessary for the walk, as the shore cannot be followed, and the ups and downs over the various "heughs" and coves will give a very considerable amount of climbing.

An account of this walk will be found under the title of "A Bit of the Berwickshire Coast and its Birds," by W. Douglas, in the *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VIII., p. 313.

H. R.

## MOORFOOTS.

(DIVISION V. GROUP V.)

Lat.  $55^{\circ} 35'$  to  $55^{\circ} 50'$ ; W. Lon.  $2^{\circ} 51'$  to  $3^{\circ} 12'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 24. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 9.

This extensive range of undulating grassy hills—of which Blackhope Scar (2,136 feet) is the highest—lies between Edinburgh and Peebles, and affords many delightful walks for Saturday afternoons. They can be approached easily from the railway stations of Leadburn, Auchindinny, Eddleston, Peebles, Innerleithen, Fountainhall, and Heriot, and from any of these points it only takes a few minutes before the grassy braes of these grand broad-backed hills are under foot.

The following five routes, which cover the best part of them, can be easily made out with the aid of No. 9 of Bartholomew's maps.

1. *From Leadburn*—Leave the road at Craighburn; strike S.E. over moor, cross three roads, climb Jeffries Corse (2,004 feet). From there make for Dundreich (2,040 feet), above the Portmore estate, then to Hogs Knowe, from where a fine view of the head waters of the Leithen is obtained. Cardon Law is the next point, and if time permits the Makeness Kipps (1,839 feet) should not be omitted before going down the valley of Soonhope to Peebles. Distance, 12 miles; time, 4 to 5 hours.

2. *From Peebles*—Over the Dunsclair Heights (1,975 feet) to the junction of the Leithen and Woolandslee Waters, cross both, climb Whitehope Law (2,038 feet) and return *via* the Leithen Water and Innerleithen to Peebles. Distance, 18 to 20 miles; time, 6 to 7 hours.

3. *From Peebles*—Cross to the Leithen valley between Black Law and Black Knowe by the Horsburgh valley;

climb Totto (1,970 feet), continue north along the high ground to Blackhope Scar (2,136 feet)—the highest hill in Midlothian—and round by Dundreich to Eddleston, and back to Peebles by road. Distance, 18 to 20 miles; time, 6 to 7 hours.

4. *From Auchindinny*—Follow the old Peebles road by Howgate, and take the first road to the left after crossing the railway. Pass below Gladhouse and cross moor; climb hills at lowest point, descend Blackhope Burn, and then down Heriot Water to Heriot Station. Time 6 to 7 hours. Or, from Blackhope Burn walk in by road to Edinburgh, across Middleton Moor to Gorebridge. A good day's work.

5. *From Fountainhall*—Walk past Pirntaiton and Howliston to Overshiels, cross Ludgate Water and keep a S.W. direction till the top of Windlestraw Law (2,161 feet) is reached, then continue on by the Leithen Water to Innerleithen. Distance, 14 miles; time, 4 to 5 hours.

W. D.

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## THE PENTLAND HILLS.

### (DIVISION V. GROUP VI.)

Lat.  $55^{\circ} 50'$ ; W. Lon.  $3^{\circ} 18'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 32 and 24. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 9.

According to Sir Archibald Geikie, the Pentland Hills—which are such a familiar and pleasing object to the citizens of Edinburgh—are the most important interruption to the continuity of the carboniferous plain of the great midland valley of Scotland, are composed of conglomerates, sandstones, and volcanic rocks of the "Lower Old Red Stone," and were buried at one time under carboniferous deposits to a depth of over 5,000 feet! While the more active members of the S.M.C. resident in Edinburgh may, thinking on this, perhaps regret the inevitable effect of the great forces of denudation in thus crumbling away over 3,000 feet of good climbing material at their very doors, let us all be thankful that for us at any rate, and it is to be hoped for many future generations of members, so charm-

ing and interesting a range of hills remains to walk over and explore.

As above indicated, the height of these hills barely attains to 2,000 feet. The following, going from east to west, are the points above 1,750 feet :—

Carnethy, 1,890 feet.

Scald Law, 1,898 feet.

South Black Hill, *c.* 1,800 feet (really the southern shoulder of Scald Law).

West Kip, 1,806 feet.

The Mount, 1,763 feet (south-west of North Esk Reservoir).

Mount Maw, 1,753 feet (between Carlops and the Lyne Valley).

East Cairn Hill, 1,839 feet.

West Cairn Hill, 1,844 feet.

And there are several other lower, but not less interesting tops. But by their heights ye shall *not* judge them! Just eighty years ago Sir Walter Scott wrote in his "Journal" that he "never saw anything more beautiful than the ridge of Carnethy against a clear frosty sky. . . . The hills glowed like purple amethysts. . . . I never saw a finer screen than Pentland, considering that it is neither rocky nor highly elevated." The most eastern of the range, and therefore nearest to Edinburgh (in fact, within an hour's walk of the Braid Hill car terminus), is Caerketton Hill, with its bold rocky front and scree, across which the summer sunsets always throw a sharp and interesting shadow, overlooking the farm and pretty hamlet of Swanston, so familiar to the readers of Robert Louis Stevenson. Then next, to the west, in the northern range (for there are *two* main eastern ranges, separated by Glencorse), comes the graceful long back and rounded top of Allermuir, sloping gently up from the woods of Bonaly and Dreghorn at Colinton.

Away some four miles to the south-west of these tops, across the quite "highland-looking" valley of Glencorse, with its picturesque lochs (*i.e.*, reservoirs!), stand out the higher heights of Carnethy and Scald Law, mentioned above, flanked to the east by the steep, green ridge of Turnhouse Hill, at the far lower brae of which was fought that fight of Rullion Green, so fatal to the Covenanters, in 1666. From the rough big cairn on Scald Law the eye is



led on by beautiful lines of grassy slope and heathery ridge until it rests on the sharp peaks of the East and West Kips in the west. It is a most delightful "high-level" route of some four miles or so from the fine top of the West Kip along all these heights to the south of Glencorse, to Turnhouse on the east. Or if from the top of the Kip you would prefer the mild excitement of an easy little rock scramble down a waterfall, you may find it in the picturesque ravine down which the Logan Burn tumbles into the head of Glencorse.

The Cairn Hills, these two bold, bleak, stony buttresses forming practically the western terminus of the higher hills, are distinctly the roughest of the whole group. They are some six miles or so west of the Kips, and are conveniently reached by the "Cauld Stane Slap," the old drove road from Mid-Calder to West Linton. Or, of course, the eastern one may be easily ascended from the "Bore Stane" pass above Carlops.

The "Pentlands," as a whole, occupy more than seventy square miles of Scotland, mostly in Mid-Lothian, but partly in Peebles and Lanarkshires; and although they afford no sensational "climbs" on precipice or pinnacle, yet up and across and round about them a most varied and delightful series of rambles is to be found. The views both far and near are lovely and extensive. You can see from Ben More to Broad Law, and from Ben Lomond to the Bass Rock. And on the braes and in the glens the heather blooms, the curlew cries, the grouse crows, the sheep bleat, the wind blows, and the rain falls—but the sun shines, and the heart rejoices!

The following notes as to the best routes across the hills may be of use:—

1. Colinton (*Caledonian Railway from Edinburgh*) to Glencorse and ROSLIN (nine miles) *via* Bonaly, Glencorse, Flotterstone Bridge, and Fisher's Tryst. (*N. B. Railway, Roslin to Edinburgh.*)

2. Currie (*Caledonian Railway from Edinburgh*) to GLENCORSE, &c. (four miles to the Reservoir) *via* the Moor Shooting Range. This is the shortest way to Carnethy.

3. Balerno (*Caledonian Railway from Edinburgh*)—

(a) To PENICUIK by the "Kirk Road" (nine miles) *via* Bavelaw, Logan Burn Waterfall at head of Glencorse, saddle

between Scald Law and Carnethy, and Coates Farm,  
(*N. B. Railway, Penicuik to Edinburgh.*)

- (b) To Penicuik *or* Carlops *via* Bavelaw and saddle west of Kip  
(saddle five miles from Balerno).

From saddle about five miles to PENICUIK, by East Side  
and Saltersyke ; *or* about four miles to CARLOPS, by West  
Side and Nine-mile-burn. West Linton (*Broomlee Station,*  
*N. B. Railway*) is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-west of Carlops.

4. Balerno to Carlops *via* Haughhead, Listonshiels, Bore Stane,  
and North Esk Reservoir (ten miles).

5. Mid-Calder (*Caledonian Railway from Edinburgh*) to West  
Linton *via* Belstane, Harper Rig Farm, and the "CAULD STANE  
SLAP" (thirteen miles).

6. Harburn (*Caledonian Railway from Edinburgh*) to Dolphinton  
(near West Linton and Dunsyre) *via* Crosswood Farm and Garval  
Syke and the Covenanter's Grave (twelve miles).

7. West Linton to Dunsyre *via* Medwin House, North Slipperfield,  
the Rumbling Well, the "Garrel," and Ferryhaugh (seven miles).

There are INNS at Roslin, Penicuik, Nine-mile-burn, Carlops, and  
West Linton ; and at Balerno and Currie.

Sunday morning and Sunday evening trains (*N. B. Railway*) to and  
from Ratho and to and from Pomathorn (near Penicuik) will be found  
useful.

W. A. S.

*Note.*—For detailed information regarding these and other walks  
over the Pentlands, see "The Pentland Hills: Their Paths and Passes,"  
published by Macniven & Wallace, Edinburgh. Price 1s.

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## ARTHUR'S SEAT AND THE SALISBURY CRAGS.

THIS splendid little mountain range forms the chief land-  
mark of the Scottish Capital. It dominates the city on the  
east, and from its summit, or from the summit of its spur,  
the Salisbury Crags, one looks, as it were, down the chimneys  
of "Auld Reekie."

The outward views from the Lion's Head are, if the  
conditions are favourable, very extensive. Especially is  
this so on a clear morning in winter or spring, when the  
distant Highland hills or Southern Uplands are coated with  
snow. The fertile shores of the Firth of Forth, the shining  
plain of sea, with the rocky islets off North Berwick, and  
the Isle of May, lie to the east. Southward, rise the long

slopes of the Southern Uplands, and west and north-west, the crowded mass of the Highland Bens.

Owing to the large amount of rock (basalt) exposed, Arthur's Seat offers some real though small problems in climbing, while the steep grass slopes, when burnt by a summer sun, present serious and alarming difficulties to the city-bred tourist, in nailless boots, who happens to stray from the easiest path of ascent.

There is a mention of Arthur's Seat as a climbing ground in the book on "Mountaineering" in the All England Series, by Dr Claude Wilson, and it was ascended by one of the best and most famous of Alpine guides, Emile Rey of Courmayeur, when on a visit to Scotland with Mr C. D. Cunningham in 1886, when the party also climbed Ben Nevis by the path in three hours thirty-five minutes.\*

As a striking instance of the difficulty of judging distances under unfamiliar conditions, the story is told of how Rey, looking up at the hill from Holyrood Palace, was asked, "How long did he reckon it would take to gain the top?" He replied, "Two and a half to three hours," whereas the party reached the top in twenty-five minutes.

The minute exploration of the climbing capabilities of Arthur's Seat and the Salisbury Crag only began, however, a few years ago, but since then has been pretty fully completed. Originally only one route, the "Cat Nick," up the Salisbury Crag, there are now over forty separate and distinct climbs, some of them involving climbing of a decidedly high standard. Every prominent rock on the main hill has also been ascended and descended by one or more routes. The climbing is of a nature, except on the quarried portion of the Crag, to teach caution, as the basalt rock is often loose or treacherous, and the climber's motto, as, indeed, everywhere, ought to be "Never trust one hold."

Notes and articles on "Arthur's Seat and the Climbs" will be found in the *S.M.C.J.* as below:—

Vol. IV., pp. 65, 133, 302, 333; Vol. VI., p. 71; Vol. VII., p. 241. H. R.

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\* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xii., p. 502.

## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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*The Editor will be glad to receive brief notices of any noteworthy expeditions.*

*These are not meant to supersede longer articles, but many members who may not care to undertake the one will have no difficulty in imparting information in the other form.*

SGURR-NAN-GILLEAN: DIRECT ASCENT OF THE GULLY BETWEEN THE THIRD AND FOURTH PINNACLES.—In June 1905 a party of four, Messrs Bowron, Tattersall, Heap, and Lamb, were staying at Sligachan Inn, Skye. On the 15th of that month Heap and Lamb climbed the "Water Pipe" direct. On the 16th the whole party left the inn to try their fortunes on the gully which divides the third and fourth pinnacles of Sgurr-nan-Gillean. After skirting the base of the third pinnacle the party found the entrance to the gully blocked by a huge snowdrift up which steps had to be kicked to reach the first pitch. A wall of rock about twelve feet high, not very difficult to negotiate, confronted the climbers, followed by several short slimy pitches or chimneys, which can be avoided by keeping to the slabs on the right. This course so far makes a very pleasant climb, then the difficult pitch is reached. Here the party gathered together and made a careful inspection. At the foot is a narrow ledge with an upright slab. Three of the party climbed on to the ledge and the fourth got into a cave close below and safely belayed. The leader now proceeded to make stepping accommodation of his two colleagues, first on to the back of one, then on to the shoulders, head, and finally on to the outstretched hands of the other. Still he was almost three feet short of any safe hold. After spending over an hour in vain efforts to overcome the difficulties that side of the gully had to be relinquished. One of the party (Mr Tattersall) then noticed another possible route at the extreme end of the ledge. This was a rotten-looking dyke, and after a short rest the leader (Mr Lamb) tried again. After displacing a great quantity of loose stones and *débris* he struggled over the main difficulty, which is very stiff for about fifteen feet, was able to find a good anchorage, and the rest of the party followed. This fifteen feet requires great care, because if the leader came off it would be very awkward. There is nothing but a bad drop below. For the difficult pitch Mr Lamb used Scarpetti borrowed from a friend at the inn. The gully above the severe pitch is nothing more than a pleasant scramble.

ROBERTSON LAMB.

AN TEALLACH.—A recent visit (on 5th April 1907) to this group suggests the following observations. The height of Glas Mheall Liath (No. 3 in the Sketch Map of the range, *Journal*, Vol. IX., p. 92), as given in the Guide Book article and taken from the Tables in Vol. I., No. 6, is 3,080 feet approximately. This was from a measurement by Dr Heddle. My aneroid made it about 50 feet higher—namely, 3,130 feet. Sgùrr Creag an Eich, No. 4 in Sketch Map, is 3,350 feet according to Dr Heddle—*vide* Tables and Guide Book. I made it 30 feet higher—3,380. Dr Heddle's measurements are usually so extremely accurate that I shall be curious to hear what the new Ordnance Survey or the aneroids of other members have to say on the subject.

Lord Berkeley's Seat, No. 6 on Sketch Map, is slightly higher than Sgùrr Creag an Eich. The approximate height, given in the Tables as 3,300 feet, is from an estimate by Mr Colin Phillip. The Guide Book height, 3,325 feet, is from aneroid measurements taken by a party of S.M.C. members, of whom the writer formed one, on 1st April 1893. I believe this to be too low, and if my measurement of Sgùrr Creag an Eich is correct, Lord Berkeley's Seat must be at least 3,380 feet.

Corrag Buidhe, according to Dr Heddle (see Tables), is 3,360 feet. The height given in the Guide Book, 3,425 feet, is probably about correct, and was taken on 1st April 1893. The top above Cadha Gobhlach, according to Dr Heddle, is 3,040. The above party made it 3,100 feet—*vide* Guide Book. Sail Liath, the rounded southern end of the range, is not given in the Tables. Its height is about 3,100 feet—*vide* Guide Book.

The whole portion of the range from Sgùrr Fiona southwards, and indeed the whole district as far as Ben Lair and Slioch, appear to have been very imperfectly surveyed. South of Sgùrr Fiona no heights whatever are given on the old Ordnance Survey maps.

The ridge from Glas Mheall Liath to Bidean a' Ghlas Thuill, the highest peak of the range, which looks so formidable from the north-east, is a fraud; on its southern side it is an easy slope right down to the loch, and every one of its teeth, as they appear from the north-east, could be ascended with one's hands in one's pockets. The magnificent views, however, into Toll an Lochain—the feature of the range—induce me to recommend the ascent to the main peak over Glas Mheall Liath in preference to any other. Corrag Buidhe, of which Lord Berkeley's Seat to the north is really a part, as seen from below, form probably the finest group of pinnacles outside the Cuillins; to the west, however, they have an easy slope, and any slight difficulty in keeping to the absolute crest of the ridge can be easily dodged. The magnificent precipices to the east—see illustration facing page 92, Vol. IX.—when seen from the ridge between Glas Mheall Liath and Bidean a' Ghlas Thuill, do not appear as steep as from elsewhere—from base to summit not more than 45° to 50°. The pitches at the bottom appear

to be worst ; above these the climbing would undoubtedly be unpleasant, for the only apparent holds consist of grass, of which there is a good deal lying at a high angle. There are, however, some well defined ridges, some indication of which can be seen in the illustration facing page 94, Vol. IX.

H. T. MUNRO.

BEN MORE ASSYNT.—In the list of mountains comprising the Ben More Assynt group given by Mr Naismith in the “Guide Book” article (*Journal*, Vol. IX., p. 140) is the following :—“3. Carn nan Conbhairean, called ‘the South top of Ben More’ in Munro’s Tables, 3,200 app. . . .”

The name Carn nan Conbhairean, both on the one-inch and six-inch Ordnance Survey Maps, is given to a point about a mile south of this 3,200 top, and probably 500 or 600 feet lower. The ridge here rises to a very distinct top about equidistant between the Dubh Loch Mor, the Dúbh Loch Beag, and Loch Carn nan Conbhairean. The (old) six-inch map gives no heights at all to this ridge, and the one-inch map only contours. I have not been on this summit, but it is probably between 2,500 and 2,700 feet.

As the name Carn nan Conbhairean appears clearly to apply to this lower summit I preferred, and still prefer, to call the higher summit “the South top of Ben More Assynt.” It is right above—*i.e.*, east of—the Dubh Loch Mor. The approximate height given in the Tables as 3,200 feet was from an estimate—not a measurement—by Dr Heddle. My aneroid, on 28th March last, made it 3,175 feet.

H. T. MUNRO.

ELECTRICAL DISTURBANCE ON BEINN A GHLO.—On Monday, 8th April, an ascent of Beinn a Ghlo was made by the writer, accompanied by Messrs Donald and Air, of the Dundee Ramblers’ Club. Driving to Forest Lodge, in Glen Tilt, and crossing the river by the Dail-an-eas Bridge, the south bank of the river was followed to the junction of the Allt Fheannach. Following the latter stream for about three-quarters of a mile, we turned east and climbed the northern ridge of Carn nan Gabhar, with the intention of walking along the ridge to the summit. The weather was clear and cold, with a slight north-east breeze carrying high white clouds, which every now and then allowed the sun to break through. Above an elevation of 2,300 feet the ground was covered with newly-fallen snow, and this increased considerably in depth as we reached higher ground. Shortly after 2.30 P.M. we gained the ridge, and were surprised to find all our view

to the north and east blocked by a dense hazy cloud—blue-black when viewed towards the east, and a dull copper colour overhead. This cloud or haze increased in thickness until Loch Loch and the opposite sides of the valley were completely hidden from view. At 3 P.M., when about half-a-mile north of the cairn, a sharp storm of hail began, and simultaneously we noticed our ice-axes and rucksack buckles began to hiss. The noise was loud, clear, and high pitched, reminding one somewhat of the hum of a mosquito greatly magnified in intensity and loudness. As we proceeded slowly through the deep soft snow towards the cairn the hail stopped, the hissing gradually grew fainter and fainter, and finally ceased. Altogether the phenomenon lasted about half-an-hour, and almost coincided with the duration of the hailstorm. The temperature was several degrees below freezing-point, and an examination of the barometer at the cairn showed a rise of 0.2 inch since 11.30 A.M. Experimenting with an ice-axe, the hissing was found to be loudest when the points were turned towards the zenith, gradually decreasing in intensity as the points were revolved towards the horizontal, below which, as might be expected, the noise ceased. Covering the upturned point with the hand, or placing the palm of the hand a few inches above the point, was sufficient to stop the noise. When the disturbance was passing away and the potential weakening, the point of the axe could be turned upwards without any sound of a discharge, but by briskly rubbing the shaft with the gloved hand the hissing would almost immediately begin again. All afternoon the dark cloud hung round Carn nan Gabhar, making no sign of moving on the light breeze to the south or west, while the peak to the south-west, marked 3,505 feet on the Ordnance map, and the top of Carn Liath were during the whole time bathed in brilliant sunshine. After five o'clock the cloud thinned, and by half-past five had cleared away. The recent very strange experience on the hills of Ey being fresh in our minds, we examined our compasses, only to find them entirely unaffected.

JAMES S. GREIG.

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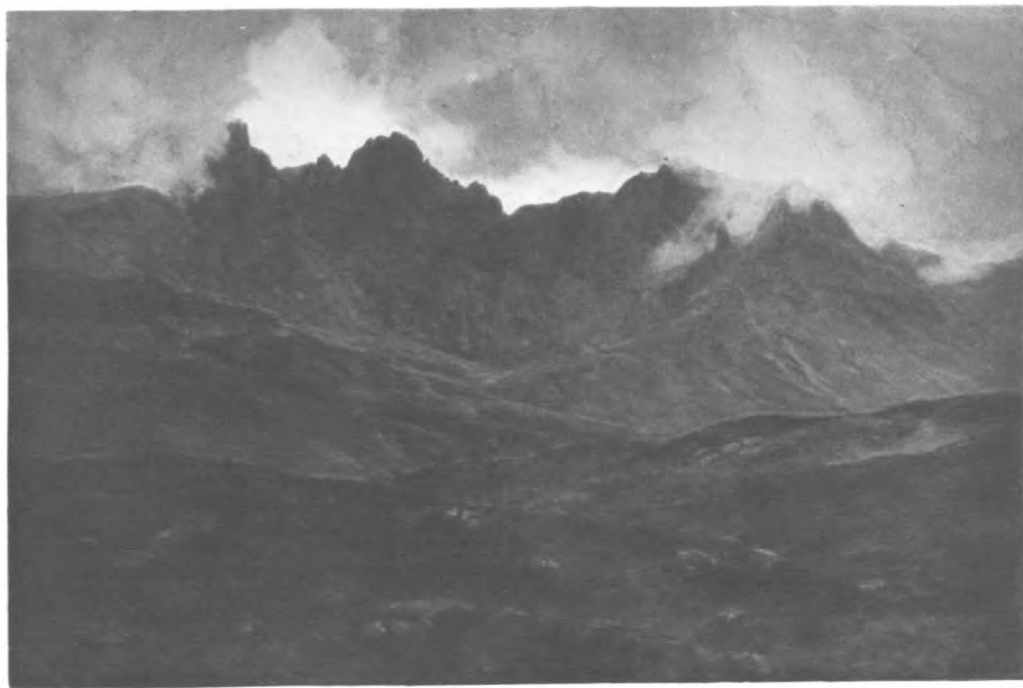
DAVID HEPBURN.—The Club has suffered a severe loss by the death in December last of Mr David Hepburn. Although not an original member of our Club (he joined in 1896), he was one of the pioneers of climbing in Scotland, especially in the Coolins of Skye, where he was the companion of Sheriff Nicolson in some of his explorations of the Skye ridges. A graphic sketch of the difficulty on the third pinnacle of Sgurr-nan-Gilleann, drawn by him, appears in the early part of the Sligachan Climbing Book, now in the possession of the Club.

Mr Hepburn was an enthusiastic lover of the hills, of the sea, and of nature, and spent many of his holidays in Scotland, Iceland, or the Faroe Islands, whence he brought back numerous sketches and photo-

graphs. Living in London, and a busy professional man, he was not an attendant at Club meets, but followed all its doings with great interest, and was a diligent student of the *Journal*.

Of Mr Hepburn's place and gifts as apart from the Club we need say little here. His loss to the Scottish world of London will be severely felt. A Director of the Highland Society of London, of the Royal Caledonian Asylum, of the Royal Scottish Corporation, the Royal Scottish Hospital, the Scottish Clans Association, of the Caledonian Society of London, of which he was three times president, he was naturally one of the most prominent Scotsmen in the Metropolis, and his sudden removal in the prime of his life leaves a gap not readily to be filled.





*The Cuillin.*

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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### THE ISLAND OF SKYE.

(DIVISION VI. GROUP I.)

*Foreword.*—The writer of the following paper on the Island of Skye has received so much help, and from so many friends, that he finds it impossible to make adequate acknowledgment except in this general way. Not only has he made free use of every article on Skye that has appeared in the *Journal*, and they have not been few, but he has received considerable help from Prof. Norman Collie, W. W. Naismith, and Alfred Harker, whose extensive knowledge of the range of the Cuillin Hills is unsurpassed. These gentlemen he specially wishes to thank for their kindness in reading the proof sheets. He has also to record his indebtedness to Mr Harker for marking the red lines of "easy routes" on the map which accompanies this paper. This map is reproduced in a reduced form from the six-inch scale of the Ordnance Survey, with no additional names except those of the passes at the south end of the range, and Sgurr Thormaid, which names have been created since our map of 1898 appeared. He

also desires to record his indebtedness and to express his thanks to Eric Greenwood for so kindly drawing many of the outline diagrams, to the Rev. A. E. Robertson for the use of his most beautiful photographs—perhaps the most successful ever taken in Skye—which he has allowed to be reproduced here, and to J. A. Parker for his kindly help in connection with the Blaven group.

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## THE ISLAND OF SKYE.

*Gaelic.*—Eilean Sgiathanach = the winged island.

*Norse.*—Ealand Skianach = the cloudy island.

The group of the Cuillin Hills lies in Lat.  $57^{\circ} 10'$  to  $57^{\circ} 15'$ ; W. Lon.  $6^{\circ} 4'$  to  $6^{\circ} 17'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, six-inch scale, "Island of Skye, Inverness-shire," Sheets 38, 39, 44, and 45 (of which a reduction accompanies this paper); one-inch scale, Sheets 70 and 71. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Nos. 14 and 19. The two latter, however, are not of much use to the climber except as route maps.

### INTRODUCTORY.

The Cuillin Hills have always exercised a magnetic attraction, not only upon the compass needle, but upon all climbers who have ever come under their spell. Often has the strength of this drawn them year after year to their summits.

"Oh, Blaven ! rocky Blaven ! how I long to be with thee again,  
To see lashed gulf and gully smoke white in the windy rain,"

is the cry of one who has come under its influence. Yes, "windy rain," that is most characteristic of Skye, and there is, as a rule, plenty of it; but there is sunshine as well, for I have seen it, and have basked in its warmth many and many a time. Let him who is despondent from many days of mist, gloom, and flood comfort himself with the reflection that everything comes to him who waits—if he waits long enough, and fine weather in Skye is worth waiting for. But is not the weather of Skye—be it good, bad, or indifferent—that which gives glory to its hills? and with Nicolson I can only exclaim—

"If you are a delicate man,  
And of wetting your skin are shy,  
I'd have you know, before you go,  
You had better not think of Skye."



Should the climber, however, have some knowledge of the piscatorial art, and has had the foresight to strap up a trout rod with his sticks and umbrellas, the sight of the Sligachan Burn, filling the arches of the bridge and racing, brown and flaked with white, on its way to the sea, may be some compensation, but a day occasionally spent on the hills in "windy rain" has a peculiar charm which many of us have found over and over again.

My dear lamented friend, William Brown, the companion of many a climb on the Cuillins, wrote a charming introduction to a paper on climbing there in 1896, which says exactly what I want to say. I quote it here, not only for the information it contains, but as a tribute to the memory of one who loved these hills so well.

"The Cuillins are the most popular hills in Britain, and they are popular because they yield the finest climbing, contain the finest rocks, the shapeliest peaks, and the wildest corries. The ideal of the sport is to be found amongst them in perfection—the combination of all the essentials on which a keen sportsman could insist. It is a place where the tyro and the expert find themselves equally at home, for the climbing is of every variety. Most of the climbs look more difficult than they are, which is an agreeable deception. The climbing, too, is mostly safe, because the rocks are nearly everywhere sound. The views are superb, both near and distant. A constant feast of colour and of striking scenes is before the climber's eyes. He goes out in the morning, and the mountain tops, just piercing the mist, are red with the rising sun. At mid-day, when the morning vapours have floated up the dark mountain sides, the black jagged peaks stand out still and clear against the blue sky, and the corries, bathed in shadow, lie black at their bases, adding height and grandeur to their appearance. As the afternoon fades away, the sun sinks behind some distant isle, the shining plain of the sea is spread out beneath, and Rum, Mull, Canna, and Eigg sleep peacefully on its surface, drawing graceful curves across the evening sky. There is no sight like this in all Scotland, and Nicolson is probably right in saying that there is nothing finer in the 'Isles of Greece.'

“The Cuillins lie at the southern extremity of the island, and consist of two groups, the Red and the Black Cuillins, divided from each other by Glen Sligachan. The Reds are round and uninteresting in shape, and are formed of granite. The Blacks, on the other hand, are of wonderfully bold outline, and are made of gabbro. They form a crescent or horseshoe of irregular outline, divided into two unequal portions by a low-lying ridge, on one side of which is Loch Coruisk, and on the other Harta and Lota Corries. Sgurr Alasdair and Sgurr Dearg are the giants which dominate the large or western section, and Sgurr nan Gilleann towers over the other. Blaven lies detached from its Black brothers at the south end of the Reds, with which, however, it has no connection other than a geographical one. Bidein Druim nan Ramh, though the lowest of all the peaks, is, from its position at the junction of the ridges, the keystone to the whole fabric, and is the most central and easily identified in the whole range.

“From Sgurr na h-Uamha in the north to Gars-bheinn in the south, the Cuillins form a continuous chain, the highest summits being linked together by high ridges, which, though broken into many beallachs, rarely fall much below 3,000 feet. On each side of the main chain there are short lateral ridges, between which lie the corries, nine in number, including the huge hollow of Coruisk. Neither in the corries nor on the tops is there much trace of vegetation; the summits are of bare and naked rock, blue-black in colour, while the corries contain the *dèbris* torn off from the peaks above, and tossed into a state of chaos which is quite inconceivable, and can only be measured by its deadly effect upon shoe leather. On account of their chain-like formation, the Cuillins have always lent themselves to the form of climbing known as ‘ridge wandering.’ It is said that the whole ridge has been traversed from end to end in one day; but ordinary climbers will agree that this is a feat for the gods, who can step from mountain top to mountain top. Three long summer days would ordinarily be required to complete the circuit.

“The development of rock-climbing in Skye has followed

for the most part the line of the ridges. These are so full of material, so bristling with obstacles of every kind, that hitherto climbers have been content to travel along the obvious routes. Of course, when Nicolson made his first ascents of Sgurr Alasdair and Sgurr Dubh, the latter was reported 'inaccessible,' a halo of awe and reverence protected the hill from casual visitors, and the ordinary ascents were mentioned in very respectful tones. As for the 'Inaccessible Pinnacle,' the brothers Pilkington had not yet ascended its eastern edge, and Nicolson hazarded the reluctant opinion that 'with rope and irons it *might* be possible to get to the top,' but, he added, it 'would be a useless achievement.' The present-day climber who runs over the 'Pinnacle Route' smiles at those sentiments, and goes off to scale some 'inaccessible' face; but it would be easy to show that Nicolson's climbs were relatively as difficult as, say, Alasdair from Coire Labain, when the moral effect exercised by unexplored and traditionally dangerous peaks is taken into account.

"There comes a time, however, even at the richest centres, when the search for new climbs has to be conducted through a microscope. The Alps have reached that stage long ago, but the best instance in point are the mountains round Wastdale. At Christmas and Easter men assemble there in scores, and not the most lurking crack nor the most faintly marked wrinkle on the mountain face can for long escape their vigilance. This minute form of the sport has not hitherto been necessary in Scotland, where north-east corries and unclimbed faces exist in all the Highland counties; but the historian of the future will no doubt record the fact that it began in Skye in the summer of 1896."

Since 1896 many of the faces and gullies have been climbed, but still "the ridge" is the feature, and always will be the feature, of the Cuillin Hills.

Before reaching the dry facts of figures and the unhappy points of the compass, I feel that any paper for the Club Guide on Skye would be incomplete did it not include that delightful and poetic appreciation of the Cuillins by Norman Collie, and therefore with his permission it is printed here.

Once upon a time, as the story-books say, Dr Samuel Johnson was bold enough to forsake his beloved Fleet Street, and, at the age of sixty-four, journey northwards in company with Boswell to the Hebrides, the Ultima Thule of those days. He finally arrived in the Island of Skye, "without any memorable accident," about the beginning of September 1773, where he experienced all the severities of ordinary Skye weather—much rain and many gales—and this state of things continuing throughout the month, the Doctor found some difficulty in getting back again to the mainland. He writes, "Having been detained by storms many days in Skie, we left, as we thought, with a fair wind ; but a violent gust which Bos had a great mind to call a tempest, forced us into Col, an obscure island."

The wild and beautiful scenery of the Island of Skye does not seem to have made any impression on Johnson, and he leaves with no regret, merely admitting that he has "many pictures in his mind which he could not have had without his journey," and that these pictures "will serve later for pleasing topics of conversation." What these pictures were he does not say, but they probably had little to do with what we now call the beauties of the Highlands, for he mentions that he found little entertainment in the wildernesses of the Hebrides, the universal barrenness oppressed him, and he points out that "in those countries you are not to suppose that you shall find villages or enclosures. The traveller wanders through a naked desert, gratified sometimes but rarely with sight of cows, and now and then finds heaps of loose stones and turf in a cavity between the rocks, where a being, born with all those powers which education expands, and all those sensations which culture refines, is condemned to shelter itself from the wind and the rain." Also, that "a walk upon ploughed fields in England is a dance upon carpets compared to the toilsome drudgery of wandering in Skie." But it is not surprising that Johnson at the age of sixty-four looked upon hilly country with aversion—the mountains interfered with his convenience. He only mentions the hills in Skye once. "Here are mountains that I should once have climbed," he writes to his friend Mrs Thale ; "but to climb steepes is now very laborious, and to descend them dangerous." No doubt at the Doctor's age he was right ; still we feel somewhat disappointed that during his stay at Talisker he was apparently unconscious of the Cuillin, and we receive but small consolation from his elegant epistolary communications, when they tell us instead that he was gratified sometimes but rarely with sight of cows, and that Mr Boswell was affected almost to tears by the illustrious ruins at Iona.

All this shows us how the attitude of people towards the wilds of the Highlands has become completely changed in one century, for Johnson was not in any way peculiar in his ideas. Look where we will in the literature of that time, we find the same sentiments. Pennant, who visited Skye the year before Dr Johnson, describes the Cuillin as "a savage series of rude mountains," whilst Blaven "affects

him with astonishment." Thirty years later the only natural objects in the island that interested Forsyth, at least so far as one can judge from what he writes in "The Beauties of Scotland," were "an obelisk of uncommon magnitude" in the parish of Snizort (probably the Storr Rock), and a waterfall and sea cave near Portree.

But a new school was growing up, and Sir Walter Scott was one of the first to insist that a visit to the Highlands would reveal objects more interesting than cows, waterfalls, and sea caves. People were beginning to find in the torrents, mountains, lochs, and pine woods beauties they had not seen before. No longer were the hills chaotic masses of rock, ready at any moment to fall and overwhelm the valleys, nor were the moors and glens expanses of uniform barrenness or gloomy mountain fastnesses. Robson, at the beginning of last century (1815), writing of one of the most remote and wild regions of the Highlands, namely, the head of Glen Tilt, says: "Of all the romantic scenes which are presented to those who explore the recesses of the Grampians, none will be found to possess a more picturesque combination of wild and characteristic beauty than this"; and in the preface to his accurate and delightful volume on the scenery of the Grampian Mountains, he writes: "With the man of taste few districts in this kingdom have equal claim to admiration."

Robson was not a Scotchman, but a London artist; yet one has only to look at his sketches and read the letterpress of his book to see how well he appreciated mountain form, and how he understood, in no uncertain manner, that which now delights us nearly a century later in the Highlands. His water-colour picture of Loch Coruisk\* is an honest attempt to accurately reproduce the wonderful colour and savage beauty of the grandest of all Scotch lochs, and one is only sorry that he has introduced into the foreground a fully dressed Highlander—a legacy, no doubt, of that old feeling that made Dr Johnson crave for cows, and that even now survives at the present time in the pretty sketches of Scotch hills, where the foreground is animated by Highland cattle.

Since Robson's time many people have been to the Highlands and to Skye and the Cuillin. Turner visited them, and the impression produced may be seen from his drawing of "Loch Coriskin." This drawing is described by Ruskin in "Modern Painters" as "a perfect expression of the Inferior Mountains," yet any one who had really seen the Cuillin would hardly be justified in asserting that Turner's drawing (Fig. 69, vol. iv., "Modern Painters") was the perfect expression of the hills round Sgurr Dubh, even though it may be the perfect expression of an inferior mountain.

Fortunately the Cuillin are never inferior mountains, unless we measure them by the number of feet they rise above the sea. "Comparative bulk and height," says the late Sheriff Nicolson, "are of course important elements in mountain grandeur, but outline and

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\* It used to be in the Loan Collection at the South Kensington Museum.

features are, as with human beings, even more important." Clachlet at Easter, covered with snow and seen across the Moor of Rannoch at a distance of a few miles, towers up into the heavens just as grandly as a peak five times its altitude does in the Himalaya when that peak is seen from a point thirty miles away.

It is the atmosphere that adds both dignity and charm to these Scotch hills, making them appear far bigger than they would in the clearer air of the larger mountain ranges, and giving them all the softened colour and perspective so necessary to emphasise the real beauty of true mountains. Their form also helps them in no small degree. The long-flowing lines of the lower slopes gradually rising from the moorland below, and the beautifully carved corries that nestle into their sides, all tend to strengthen and serve as a fit sub-structure for their more wild and broken summits.

At their feet lie no valleys with dirty-white glacier streams tearing down between mud banks, and never a proper pool in them; their sides are not disfigured with monotonous pine forests of a uniform light green colour, but the heather and the grey rocks, lichen-covered, mingle together on their slopes, lighting up with every flash of sunshine, or deepening into every shade of brown and purple gloom as the storm clouds sweep over their summits; whilst, below, brown trout streams wander between wild birches and Scotch firs, staying here in some dark pool hidden away under the rocks covered with ferns and heather, flashing out again there into the sunshine over the pebbles and across the low-lying moor.

Those who have seen the Cuillin from the moors above Talisker in the twilight, or who have watched them on a summer's evening from Kyle Akin, apparently clothed in deep purple velvet brodered with gold, and rising out of the "wandering fields of barren foam," whilst

"The charmed sunset linger'd low adown  
In the red west";

or lazily spent a whole day on the sand beaches of Arisaig Point, gazing towards Rum and Skye lying light blue on the horizon, and across a sea brilliant in colour as the Mediterranean amongst the Ionian Islands; or lingered at the head of Loch Coruisk till the last pale light has faded out of the heavens behind Sgurr Alasdair, and only the murmur of the streams breaks the stillness of the night air—those who have thus seen the Cuillin will know that they are beautiful. But the fascination that these mountains exercise over those that know them well is manifold; there are more pleasures that the Cuillin can offer than those of being merely very beautiful. For the mountaineer who wanders in the heart of this marvellous mountain land there are rock climbs without end. He can spend hour after hour exploring the corries or threading the intricacies of the narrow rock edges that form so large a part of the sky-line. From the summits he can watch the mists sweeping up from below and hurrying over the bealachs in tumbled masses of vapour, or he can dreamily follow the white sails

of the boats, far out to sea, as they slowly make for the outer islands ; then clambering down the precipitous faces he can repose in some sheltered nook and listen to the sound of a burn, perhaps a thousand feet below, echoed across from the sheer walls of rock on the other side of the corrie. There is always something new to interest him—it may be a gully that requires the utmost of his skill as a mountaineer, or it may be a view of hill, moor, and loch backed by the Atlantic and the far-off isles of the western sea. Nowhere in the British Islands are there any rock climbs to be compared with those in Skye, measure them by what standard you will—length, variety, or difficulty. Should any one doubt this, let him some fine morning walk up from the head of Coruisk to the rocky slabs at the foot of Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh. There he will see the bare grey rocks rising out from the heather not 500 feet above the level of the loch, and there walls, ridges, and towers of weather-worn gabbro stretch with hardly a break to the summit of the mountain, 2,800 feet above him. Measured on the map it is but half a mile, but that half-mile will tax his muscles. He must climb up gullies that the mountain torrents have worn out of the precipices, and over slabs of rock sloping down into space at an angle that makes handhold necessary as well as foothold ; he must creep out round edges on to the faces of perpendicular cliffs, only to find that after all the perpendicular cliff itself must be scaled before he can win back again to the ridge that is to lead him to the topmost peak. There are many such climbs in the Cuillin. The pinnacles of Sgurr nan Gilleann, the four tops of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh, and the ridge from Sgurr Dearg to Sgurr Dubh are well known, but the face climbs have been neglected. The face of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh from Tairneilear, the face of Sgurr Alasdair from Coire Labain, are both excellent examples of what these mountains can offer to any one who wants a first-rate scramble on perfect rock. Sgurr a' Coir' an Lochain on the northern face gives a climb as good as one could anywhere wish to get, yet it is only a preliminary one to those on the giants Sgurr Alasdair and Sgurr Dearg that lie behind.

But splendid though the climbing on the Cuillin may be, it is only one of the attractions, possibly a minor attraction, to these hills, and there are many other mountain ranges where rock climbing can be found. It is the individuality of the Cuillin that makes the lover of the hills come back again and again to Skye, and this is true also of other mountain districts on the mainland of Scotland. To those who can appreciate the beauty of true hill form, the ever-changing colour and wonderful power and character of the sea-girt islands of the west, the lonely grandeur of Rannoch Moor, the spacious wooded valley of the Spey at Aviemore, backed by the Cairngorm Mountains, wild Glen Affric prodigal of gnarled pines abounding in strange curves of strength, or the savage gloom of Glencoe—all those scenes tell the same tale, and proclaim in no doubtful manner that the Scotch mountain land in its own way is able to offer some of the most beautiful scenery in the world.

The Highlands of Scotland contain mountain form of the very finest and most subtle kind—form not so much architectural, of which Ruskin writes, "These great cathedrals of the earth, with their gates of rock, pavements of clouds, choirs of streams and stone, altars of snow, and vaults of purple traversed by the continual stars," but form where the savage grandeur, the strength, and the vastness of the mountains is subordinate to simpler, yet in a way more complicated, structures. Scotch mountains have something finer to give than architectural form. In their modelling may be seen the same beauties that in perfection exist in Greek statuary. The curving lines of the human figure are more subtle than those of any cathedral ever built. The Aiguilles round Mont Blanc are architectural in the highest degree, but the mighty summit rising up far above them into the blue sky, draped in wonderful and sweeping lines of snow and ice, marvellously strong, yet full of moderation, is far more mysterious, far more beautiful, than all the serrated ridges and peaks that cluster round its base.

It is in the gentleness of ascent in many of the Highland hills, in the restraint and repose of the slopes "full of slumber," that we can trace all the finer and more delicate human lines; and it is due to the strength of these lines that the bigger mountains seem to rise without an effort from the moors and smaller hills that surround them. To many people the Cairngorm range is composed of shapeless, flat-topped mountains devoid almost of any character. They do not rise like the Matterhorn in savage grandeur, yet the sculptured sides of Braeriach, seen from Sgoran Dubh Mhor, are in reality far more full of rich and intricate mountain sculpture than the whole face of the Matterhorn as seen from the Riffel Alp.

The individuality of the Cuillin is not seen in their summits, which are often almost ugly, but in the colour of the rocks, the atmospheric effects, the relative largeness and harmony of the details compared with the actual size of the mountains, and most of all in the mountain mystery that wraps them round: not the mystery of clearness such as is seen in the Alps and Himalaya, where range after range recedes into the infinite distance, till the white snow peaks cannot be distinguished from the clouds, but in the secret beauty born of the mists, the rain, and the sunshine, in a quiet and untroubled land, no longer vexed by the more rude and violent manifestations of the active powers of Nature. Once there was a time when these peaks were the centre of a great cataclysm; they are the shattered remains of a vast volcano that ages since poured its lavas in mighty flood far and wide over the land; since then the glaciers in prehistoric times have polished and worn down the corries and the valley floors, leaving scars and wounds everywhere as a testimony of this power; but the fire age and the ice age are past; now the still, clear waters of Coruisk ripple in the breeze, by the loch-side lie the fallen masses of the hills, and the shattered *débris* left by the glaciers of bygone days; these harbour the dwarf



hazel, the purple heather, and the wildflowers, whilst corrie, glen, and mountain-side bask in the summer sunlight.

But when the wild Atlantic storms sweep across the mountains ; when the streams gather in volume, and the bare rock faces are streaked with the foam of a thousand waterfalls ; when the wind shrieks amongst the rock pinnacles, and sky, loch, and hillside all are one dull grey, the Cuillin can be savage and dreary indeed. Perhaps, though, the clouds towards evening may break ; then the torn masses of vapour tearing in mad hunt along the ridges will be lit up by the rays of the sun slowly descending into the western sea, "robing the gloom with a vesture of divers colours, of which the threads are purple and scarlet, and the embroideries flame" ; and as the light flashes from the black rocks, and the shadows deepen in the corries, the superb beauty, the melancholy, the mystery of these mountains of the Isle of Mist will be revealed. But the golden glory of the sunset will melt from off the mountains, the light that silvered the great slabs will slowly fail ; from out the corries darkness heralding the black night will creep with stealthy tread, hiding all in gloom ; then, last of all, beyond the darkly luminous, jagged, and fantastic outline of the Cuillin, the glittering stars will flash from the clear sky, no wind will stir the great quiet, and only the far-off sound, born of the rhythmic murmur of the sea-waves beating on the rock-bound shore of lonely Scaavaig, remains as a memory of the storm.

#### NOMENCLATURE.

The spelling of the word Cuillins has exercised the ingenuity of many generations. In 1549 it appears as Cuilluelum (Donald Munro), in 1560-1630 as Culluelun or Gulluin Hills (Pont), in 1703 as Quillin (Martin), in 1800 as Cullin (Robt. Jameson). Sir Walter Scott has it in 1814 as Quillen, and J. D. Forbes in 1836 gives it as Cuchullin Hills. The Ordnance Survey maps of the present day adopt Cuillin Hills. The late Sheriff Alexander Nicolson, to whom Skye owes so much, desired us in the second volume of our *Journal*, p. 99, to call these hills "The Coolin," and as I know of no higher authority, I should much like to give effect to his wishes. He says they "are known to the natives of Skye, and always have been, as the Coolin (*Gaelic*—A Chuillionn), like as the Caucasus and the Himalaya are called without the addition of the word mountains." However, as we have taken the spelling of the Ordnance Survey map as our standard, I have no alternative but to call the group the Cuillin Hills.

I am sorry to see that even this standard is becoming unreliable, for in the revised map several names are changed, thus—Bealach a Leitir has become Bealach nan Lice, and Coire Labain now appears as Coire Lagan, for what reason I am totally unaware.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Much has been written on Skye, and an exhaustive list of books and magazine articles would fill too much space to allow of its being given here. I would refer those interested in this subject to the article, "Early Descriptions of Skye," which appeared in the fifth volume of the *S.M.C. Journal*, p. 205. However, I would like to name here the following books, for although they do not say very much about climbing in the Cuillin Hills, they will be interesting to those who want to know something about the island and its people:—

- "A Summer in Skye," by Alex. Smith, 1865.
- "The Hebrid Isles," by R. W. Buchanan, new edition, 1883.
- "Rambles in Skye," by Malcolm Ferguson, 1883.
- "History and Traditions of the Isle of Skye," by Alex. Cameron, 1871.
- "The Misty Isle of Skye," by J. A. MacCulloch, 1905.
- "The Tertiary Igneous Rocks of Skye," by Alfred Harker, with Notes by C. T. Clough, 1904.

The following list of magazine articles will help climbers to find what has already been written on climbing in the Cuillin Hills:—

## *Alpine Journal*—

- Vol. XIII. The Black Coolins, by C. Pilkington.
- „ XV. The Rocky Mountains of Skye, by Clinton Dent.

## *Cairngorm Club Journal*—

- Vol. I. Sgurr nan Gilleann, by W. Tough.
- „ Hill Climbing in Skye, by Prof. Adamson.
- „ Three Days in Skye, by David Crombie.
- „ Sgurr Dearg and the Inaccessible Peak, by W. Tough.

*Cairngorm Club Journal (continued)—*

- Vol. V. Skye with Cycle and Camera, by Alex. Simpson.
- „ On the Ridges of the Coolins, by Wm. Barclay.

*Climbers' Club Journal—*

- Vol. II. A Fortnight in Skye, by R. E. T.
- Vol. IX. Camping in Skye, by A. and M. Gimson.

*Rucksack Club, Third Annual Report—*

- A New Climb in Skye, by W. Heap.

*Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal—*

- Vol. I. Three Days among the Cuchullins, by W. W. Naismith.
- „ Sgurr Alaisdair, by C. Pilkington.
- Vol. II. A Day in the Cuillins, by A. E. Maylard.
- „ Skye and Sgurr nan Gillea in 1865, by Alex. Nicolson.
- „ On the Height of Some of the Black Cuillins, by J. N. Collie.
- „ Easter in the Cuillins, by J. H. Gibson.
- „ The Pinnacle Route, by W. W. Naismith.
- „ Sgurr Dearg Pinnacle, by W. Brunskill.
- „ The Coolins, by W. W. Naismith.
- Vol. III. Bidein Druim nan Ramh, by W. Tough.
- „ Accident in the Coolins.
- „ Bhasteir and Bhasteir Tooth, by F. W. Jackson.
- Vol. IV. Clach Glas, Skye, by F. W. Jackson.
- „ Sgurr Dubh, Skye, by W. Douglas.
- „ The Coolins in 1896, by W. Brown.
- „ A Chuilionn, by Norman Collie.
- „ Garsbheinn, by J. Rennie.
- Vol. V. The Climbers' Camp at Coruisk, by W. Douglas.
- „ August at Sligachan, by G. B. Gibbs.
- „ Early Descriptions of Skye, compiled by the Editor.
- „ The Coolins, by W. Inglis Clark.
- „ The Storr Rock, by H. Raeburn.
- Vol. VI. Notes, Geological and Topographical, on the Cuillin Hills, Skye, by Alfred Harker.
- „ Maccoitar's Cave, Skye, by Scott Moncrieff Penney.
- „ Cloudless March Days in Skye, by Scott Moncrieff Penney.
- „ Stormy June Days in Skye, &c., by W. Inglis Clark.
- „ Blaven, by Sydney Williams.
- Vol. VII. Song: Och! The Coolin!
- „ Sligachan to Glenbrittle by the Dubh Ridges, by W. N. Ling.
- „ Beallach Coire Labain, by J. A. Parker.
- „ A Spring Day on Blaven, by C. Walker.
- „ Sligachan Meet, Easter 1903.

*Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal (continued)—*

- Vol. VII. Skye : August, by W. W. King.
- „ Mr Whincup's Accident.
- Vol. VIII. Only a Beautiful Day on the Hills, or Doing the  
Dubhs, by A. E. Maylard.
- „ Mr Allen's Accident.
- „ Sligachan Meet, Easter 1905.
- Vol. IX. Ridge-walking on the Coolins at Easter 1905, by  
H. Raeburn.
- „ The Castles from Harta Corrie, by H. Raeburn.
- „ Blaven and Clach Glas, by E. M. Corner.
- „ Coire Ghreadaidh and Sgurr na Banachdich, by E.  
M. Corner.
- „ Glen Brittle in June, by H. MacRobert.
- „ Bhasteir Tooth, by L. S. Shadbolt.

GEOLOGY.

Mr Harker wrote a most valuable article for us on this subject, and it appeared in our *Journal* for 1900 (Vol. VI., p. 1). He tells us that the Cuillins consist largely of gabbro and basalt, with the general dip towards the centre of the gabbro area. This means that the outer slopes of the group, though usually more precipitous, afford the best climbs. The holds of course on that side "slope in," while they are "out" on the inside faces. Thus the "dip" is to the south on Sgurr nan Gilleann, east on Sgurr Dearg, north on Sgurr na Stri, and west on Clach Glas. The surface of the gabbro is rough to the touch, with sharp, weathered-out crystals which cling kindly to the hobnailers and render it almost necessary to wear gloves until the tips of one's fingers become hardened. Those who want to study the ancient glacier movement in Skye are referred to Mr Harker's paper in the Royal Society of Edinburgh's *Transactions*, Vol. XL., and for a full account of the geology of Skye, to "The Tertiary and Igneous Rocks of Skye," by Alfred Harker, with notes by C. T. Clough, 1904.

CENTRES.

The most convenient inn within reach of the hills is the one at Sligachan, and, although admirably situated for some of the climbs at the north end of the range, it

would be a great boon to climbers were a hut erected either in Coire Lagan or Coruisk, or at both places, for the hills at the southern extremity of the group are too far off to be included in a moderate day's work from Sligachan. It is possible, however, sometimes to obtain accommodation at Glen Brittle, and I am told that the little inn at Carbost is another possible centre and more convenient for all the western peaks. Also, that it is useful to remember that Elgol is within reach of Coruisk, and that Blaven can be easily approached from Broadford by driving to Loch Slapin. Perhaps a more workable site for a camp than the one situated at the head of Loch Coruisk would be one suggested by Mr Harker. He says: "I would suggest as an ideal site for camping, the coast of Loch Scavaig immediately south of the 'Mad Burn' (Allt a' Chaoich). It has complete shelter from the winds and every convenience of situation. The Soay boatmen will receive and transport heavy baggage sent by steamer."

#### HINTS TO THOSE WHO VISIT SKYE FOR THE FIRST TIME.

Go and see Loch Coruisk. From Sligachan Hotel cross the bridge and follow the rough path up the east side of Glen Sligachan for four miles, then leave the pathway (which continues on to Camasunary) just beyond the Dubh lochs, and breast the shoulder of the Druim Hain ridge. A rough pathway is visible most of the way to the top of the ridge, beyond that there is no pathway. It takes some three hours' steady walking to reach the loch.

Should it be desired to extend the expedition this can be done in either of the following three ways:—

1. A circle of Loch Coruisk may be made.
2. The shores of Loch Scavaig may be followed round to Camasunary and back by Glen Sligachan to Sligachan Hotel. This includes the passage of the much-dreaded "bad step," on which there is not the slightest difficulty if crossed at the right place. Most parties who get into trouble here attempt to cross too high up, for its height



*June 1906.*

LOCH CORUIK.

*A. F. Robertson.*

is only 15 feet above high-water level. The correct way is more easily found in going to Camasunary from Loch Coruisk than in the reverse direction.

3. Should the tourist be more ambitious he may, from the head of Loch Coruisk, continue on and cross the Bealach na Glaic Moire (2,510 feet) (see p. 316).

Short cuts may be made from Glen Sligachan to the head of Loch Coruisk *via* the Bloody Stone in Harta Corrie by crossing the Drum nan Ramh ridge at its lowest point, but a stranger is apt to lose time among the huge ice-worn boiler-plate slabs on the Coruisk side of this unless he hits off the right place.

The most repaying view-point within reach of Sligachan is Bruach na Frithe (p. 339). No climbing is necessary to reach the top. The ascent could be made by the north-west ridge from Bealach a' Mhaim in one hour, returning by the east ridge and Basteir, or, as an alternative, returning over Sgurr a' Bhasteir. I also mention here that interesting excursions and ascents, including the finest view-points in the district, can be made by pedestrians who do not care to undertake difficult ascents, and a few of these which occur to me are as follows :—

*Sgurr na Banachdich*, from Sligachan, by Coire na Creiche and Coire a' Ghreadaidh and up Coir' an Eich, an easy walk of four hours up and about three or three and a quarter back.

*Walk along Druim nan Ramh*.—To reach this, follow the track up Harta Coire until it begins to turn northward, and then make for a green slanting ledge which leads up to the ridge. Return either across upper part of Coire Riabhach to Harta Coire, or across lower part to Druim Hain and Glen Sligachan.

*Glamaig*.—Ascent from Sligachan about one hour twenty minutes, and descent forty minutes. Or make the circuit of Glamaig, Beinn Dearg Mhor, Beinn Dearg Mheadhonach, and Druim na Ruaige.

*Marsco*.—Follow a route rising gradually along the northern face on to the ridge on the west side of Coire nan Laogh. Descend by the corrie.

Also, they might drive to Glen Brittle and walk up the west ridge of Sgurr Dearg and down by the screes to Coire Lagan.

Three of the best excursions in the island for experienced climbers new to Skye, and with headquarters at Sligachan Hotel, are :—

1. *Sgurr nan Gilleann* by the pinnacles (p. 330), and returning by the western ridge (p. 331). The route to the base of the first pinnacle is *viâ* the keeper's cottage (Cuillin Lodge), cross the Red Burn by stepping stones there, cross the moor, follow up the right bank or north-west side of the burn that comes out of the Bhasteir ravine, cross the stream below the ravine, and keep it on the right till the cliffs are struck.

2. *The Round of Coire Lagan*.—Drive to Glen Brittle. Ascend Sgurr Sgumain by one of the rakes from Loch Lagan (see G to H and G to I on Fig. 13), continue along the ridge to Sgurr Alasdair, taking the *mauvais pas* on the way, or turning it on the Ghrunnda side, then Sgurr Thearlaich, and Sgurr Mhic Coinnich follows with its long narrow ridge of shattered basalt. Next comes the pinnacle of Sgurr Dearg ("inaccessible" no longer!), and the descent to Glen Brittle along the shoulder terminating in Sron Dearg (2,012 feet). The round should take about ten hours and the drive about three hours each way. Glen Brittle can be reached from Sligachan as quickly on foot by the Bealach a Mhaim, for the driving road goes round by Drynoch (Mr Harker's time for the walk over Bealach a Mhaim is two and a half hours or two if pressed); but to do this as well as the round of Coire Lagan is indeed a big day. It is also useful to know that from the Mhic Coinnich-Dearg col (now called Bealach Coire Lagan), Sligachan Hotel can be reached *viâ* Coruisk, Drum nan Ramh ridge, Bloody Stone, and Glen Sligachan in four and a half hours. On these ridges, and indeed on most of the Skye ridges, there is in fine weather but little water to be found, so it is well to be provided with water of some kind if a long day is contemplated.





COIRE LAGAN.

*W. Norrie.*

3. *Blaven and Clach Glas* (pp. 355-362).—Take the Camasunary track as far as Loch an Athain, and then turn to the left and make for the col between Garbh-bheinn and Clach Glas; cross Clach Glas to Blaven and descend to Coire Dubh by the scree shoot that commences near the north top of Blaven.

When these three excursions have been made the climber will be in a position to plan further expeditions for himself.

Mr Harker has given me the following most useful table of times, which will be invaluable to the climber for letting him know how much time to allow, especially in getting home, from a given point:—

To Sligachan

	hr.	m.
from Bealach a Mhaim - - -	1	0
„ head of Coire na Creiche - - -	1	30
„ Coire a' Ghreadaidh - - -	2	30
„ Bealach Glaic Moire - - -	2	45
„ Glen Brittle House (over Bealach a' Mhaim) - - -	2	30
(can be done in 2 hrs. if pressed)		
„ the march-fence in Glen Sligachan - - -	0	35
„ Loch an Athain - - -	1	45
„ Druim Hain (by west side of valley) - - -	2	0
„ Loch a' Bhasteir - - -	1	15
„ Loch Scavaig (over Druim Hain) - - -	2	45
„ head of Loch Coruisk do. - - -	3	10
„ Camasunary Ford (by west side Loch na Creitheach), easy going - - -	2	30

To Glen Brittle House

from Bealach Coire na Banachdich - - -	1	10
„ Bealach Coire Lagan - - -	1	0
„ top of Sgurr Dearg - - -	1	0
„ tarn of Coire Lagan - - -	0	45
„ top of Alasdair Stone Shoot - - -	1	20
„ top of Sgurr na Banachdich (by Coir' an Eich) - - -	1	20

## PASSES ACROSS THE MAIN RIDGE.

There are several routes across the main ridge, but the three following will be found to be the most useful :—

1. *Bealach nan Lice* (2,940 feet).—From three-quarters of a mile on the Sligachan side of the summit of the Bealach a Mhaim turn up Fionn Choire, cross the pass just under the Tooth of Bhasteir (this point can also be easily reached by the Bhasteir Corrie, but the “going” there, though perhaps more interesting, is somewhat rougher), then descend the steep screes to Lota Corrie, and by keeping the left bank of the stream which falls into Harta Corrie, Harta Corrie can be easily reached.

2. *Bealach na Glais Mhoire* (2,510 feet).—Cross the Bealach a Mhaim and pass through Coire na Creiche to Coir' a' Mhadaidh, ascend the shoulder of Sgurr an Fheadain on its north-east side, close under the nearest peak of Bidein, as shown in Fig. 10, A to B. Then cross the shoulder of Sgurr an Fheadain to the pass which is west and south of all the Bidein peaks. A long scree slope descends to Coruisk. It has two branches near the top. It does not matter which one is taken, but the one to the north is easiest to descend and the one to the south is the best to ascend by. The above route by Coir' a' Mhadaidh I have recommended in preference to that by Tairneilear, for I have heard of more than one person getting into difficulties on the latter route. However, in coming from Coruisk, the Tairneilear route is no doubt the natural way, and no difficulty should be found if the top of the screes of Fheadain are kept and the line followed as shown on the map. Coming up from Coire na Creiche the Mhadaidh route is somewhat easier.

3. *Bealach Coire na Banachdich* (2,815 feet).—This is the easiest route from Glen Brittle to Coruisk. The chief point to be remembered after getting to the first steep ascent in Coire na Banachdich is to keep to the right, up a gully leading to the cliffs of Sgurr Dearg till a traverse can be made to the col. The descent on the Coruisk side is over screes, then keep to the right or south until some smooth rocks at about 1,800 feet are passed.

# THE PEAKS OF THE CUILLIN HILLS.

*An Asterisk after a Number indicates an Ordnance Survey Height.*

(*Gaelic.*—A Chuilionn = the hills of the holly trees.)

**Sgurr nan Gilleán**, 3,167\* = the peak of the young men, lies 3 m. S.S.W. of Sligachan Hotel.

(a.) From the summit a branch ridge runs to the N.N.E. dividing Coire a' Bhasteir on the W. from Glen Sligachan on the E. This is the Pinnacle ridge. The fourth pinnacle lying next to Sgurr nan Gilleán is 3,000 ap. The third is 2,900 ap.; the second, 2,700 ap.; and the first, 2,500 ap.

(b.) From the summit a branch ridge runs to the S.E. dividing Lota Corrie in the W. from Coire nan Allt Geala in the E. It ends in Sgurr na h-Uamha, 2,400 ap., pron. *Sgurr na Hoo-a* = the peak of the cave, which lies 1 m. S. by E. from Sgurr nan Gilleán. The lowest point on this ridge is 2,050 ap. A small peak lies between this and Sgurr nan Gilleán,  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. S.E. by S. from the latter, and is called on the new 6-inch map Sgurr Beag, 2,475 ap. This is the ridge by which the tourist makes the ascent. He joins it between the summit and Sgurr Beag at a height of 2,360 ap.

(c.) From the summit the main ridge continues westward to the Tooth of Sgurr nan Gilleán and

Coire a' Bhasteir (executioner's corrie).	} Bealach a' Bhasteir (an easy pass).	} Lota Corrie (loft corrie).
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**Am Basteir**, 3,050 ap., pron. *Basteir* = the executioner,  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. W. of Sgurr nan Gilleán. Bhasteir Tooth, 3,000 ap., lies immediately under Am Basteir to the W.

(a.) From 50 yards W. of the tooth a branch ridge runs N. for  $\frac{1}{4}$  m., and ends in Sgurr a' Bhasteir, 2,950 ap. It separates Fionn Choire from Coire a' Bhasteir.

Fionn Choire (fair corrie).	{ Bealach a' Leitir = pass of the declivity, 2,940 ap. (an easy pass), (in new 6-inch map, Bealach nan Lice). (See p. 316.) }	Lota Corrie.
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**Sgurr a' Fionn Choire**, 3,050 ap., a small peak between Am Basteir and Bruach na Frithe.

Fionn Choire.

Dip, 2,970.

Lota Corrie.

**Bruach na Frithe**, 3,143,\* pron. *Bruach na Free* = the brae of the forest,  $\frac{3}{4}$  m. W. of Sgurr nan Gilleann.

- (a.) From Bruach na Frithe a ridge runs N.W. to Meall a' Tobar nan Uaislean, 1,682,\* and Bealach a' Mhaim, 1,132.\*

Coir' a' Mhadaidh } Dip, 2,520 ap. Lota Corrie.  
(foxes' corrie).

**An Caisteal**, 2,740 ap. = the castle, lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. S. of Bruach na Frithe. An Caisteal is the southern of two peaks which are divided by a deep cleft. The northern peak of sharper form is part of the Bruach na Frithe ridge and deserves a proper name.

Coir' a' Mhadaidh. Dip, 2,740.\* Harta Corrie.

**North Top, Bidein Druim nan Ramh**, 2,870\* ap., pron. *Bidein Dru-eem na Raav* = the hill of the ridge of oars, lies 1 m. S.S.W. of Bruach na Frithe.

Coir' a' Mhadaidh. Dip, 2,730 ap. Lota Corrie.

**South-east Top, Bidein Druim nan Ramh**, 2,810 ap.

Coir' a' Mhadaidh. Dip, 2,750 ap. Coruisk (water cauldron).

**South-west Top, Bidein Druim nan Ramh**, 2,900.\*

- (a.) From south-east top a branch ridge runs S.E., called Druim nan Ramh, and divides Coruisk from Harta Corrie.

- (b.) From south-west top a branch ridge runs for  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. N.W. towards Coire na Creiche (the corrie of the spoil), so called from a battle having been fought there in 1601 between the Macdonalds and Macleods, and ends with Sgurr na Fheadain, 2,215 ap. = peak of the water-pipe. This ridge divides Coir' a' Mhadaidh in the N.E. from Tairneilear in the S.W.

- (c.) From the south-west top the main ridge runs W. to

Tairneilear { Bealach na Glaic Moire, 2,510 ap. = pass of the big } Coruisk.  
(thunderer). { hollow (see p. 316).

**North-east Top of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh**, 2,970,\* pron. *Sgurr a Vadee* = the foxes' peak, 1 m. S.W. from Bruach na Frithe.

Tairneilear. Dip. { Coire an Uaigneis (retiring corrie), and Coruisk.

**Second Peak of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh**, 2,880 ap.

Tairneilear. Dip, 2,820 ap. Coire an Uaigneis.

**Third Peak of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh**, 2,910 ap.

Tairneilear. Dip. Coire an Uaigneis.

**South-west Peak of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh** has two tops ; the one to the N. is 3,014,\* and the S. top is about the same height.

- (a.) From the summit of the 3,014 top a shattered ridge runs W. to Sgurr Thuilm, 2,885,\* pron. *Hulim*=peak of Tulm, with a bealach from Tairneilear to Coire a' Ghreadaidh.

Coire a' Ghreadaidh.	{	Eag Dubh=black notch, 2,760 ap. This on the map is called An Dorus. The pass is fairly easy on the Coire a' Ghreadaidh side but troublesome on the other, owing to slippery slabs. In Coire an Uaigneis take left side of the burn. It is proposed to call the N.E. branch of Coire a' Ghreadaidh, Coire na Dorus.	Coire an Uaigneis.
Coire a' Ghreadaidh.	{	An Dorus=the door, or Macleod's Gap, 2,890. (N.B.—A pass said to be used by the Macleods.) There is an easy descent into Coire a' Ghreadaidh by a scree gully.	Coire an Uaigneis.

**North Top, Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh**, 3,197,\* pron. *Sgurr Grecta*, i.e., Grecta's Peak, lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. S. of S. top of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh.

- (a.) Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh has not a round top, but a narrow crest-line with two summits besides a wart-like prominence N. of the chief summit. From this prominence a spur runs off to the right (N.W.) with successive points at about 2,870 and 2,770. It is proposed to call these Sgurr Eadar da Choire.

Coire a' Ghreadaidh.

Dip, 3,100 ap.

Coireachan Ruadha.

**South Top, Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh**, 3,180 ap.

- (a.) From summit of S. top a short branch ridge runs E.S.E., dividing Coire an Uaigneis from Coireachan Ruadha.

Coire a' Ghreadaidh.	{	Dip, 2,810.	Coireachan Ruadha and Coruisk.
		Small prominence.	
		Dip, 2,930.	

**North Top, Sgurr na Banachdich**, 3,007,\* pronounced as it is spelt= the smallpox peak. The new name for this is Sgurr Thormaid= "Norman's peak," in honour of Professor Collie, lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. S.W. of Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh.

- (a.) From here a short spur runs into Coire a' Ghreadaidh.

Coire a' Ghreadaidh.	{	Dip, 2,920. Descent into Coire a' Ghreadaidh—	Coireachan Ruadha.
		first a short rough scramble, then easy, turning to right round "short spur." Descent into Coireachan Ruadha not difficult.	

**Second Top, Sgurr na Banachdich**, 3,167.\*

- (a.) The branch ridge of Sgurr nan Gobhar runs off to right (W.), terminating at cairn (2,047, O.S.). From this ridge,

at about 2,700, the shorter spur of An Diallaid runs off to N.W. ; saddle, 2,365 ; summit, 2,375. (Easy descent from Sgurr na Banachdich by Coir' an Eich. Note that the "pock-marked" rock occurs in Coire na Banachdich, the mountain being, of course, named after the corrie.)

Coire na Banachdich.

Dip, 3,020.

Coireachan Ruadha.

**Third Top, Sgurr na Banachdich, 3,104.\***

Coire na Banachdich.

Dip.

Coireachan Ruadha.

**Fourth Top, Sgurr na Banachdich, 2,937.\***Coire na  
Banachdich. }

Dip, 2,865 (alternative pass).

{ Coireachan Ruadha  
and Coruisk.

**South Termination of Banachdich Part of Range, 2,900.** From here a spur, about 2,650, runs off to E.N.E., dividing Coireachan Ruadha into two smaller corries. (This spur is conspicuous as seen from the E., owing to a broad horizontal band of orange-yellow, with darker rock above and below. It might be named Sron Bhuidhé.)

Bealach Coire na Banachdich, 2,815. (See p. 316.)

Gap just before precipice of Dearg, 2,940. (The map is faulty about here, the high part of the Dearg ridge being carried too far northward, and the westward sweep to the gap and pass not indicated.)

**Sgurr Dearg, 3,234,\* and the Inaccessible Pinnacle, 3,254,\*** pron. *Sgurr Jerrack* = the red peak (named "Inaccessible Peak," 3,212, on the Admiralty Chart), lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. S. of Sgurr na Banachdich.

(a.) From this a ridge runs W., dividing Coire na Banachdich from Coire Lagan.

Sgurr Dearg ridge runs S. from summit cairn (3,234\*) to a point, 3,165 ; then after a dip, 3,135, runs W. from a point, 3,160, to a marked summit (3,042\*), continues to a point, 2,535, from which a short spur runs off to N.W., and terminates at the cairn of Sron Dearg (2,012\*).

The O.S. map immediately E. of the Sgurr Dearg ridge is very difficult to understand. The Inaccessible Pinnacle, which is only about 100 feet distant from the summit cairn, is not marked, and the strongly accentuated point on the old S.M.C. map, to which has been attached the name, has apparently no existence on the ground, though there is a small pinnacle at or about the site. The other point on the map, farther east, corresponds pretty nearly with the position of the nameless peak,\* 3,155, below and S.E. of

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\* This peak is marked An Stac in the new edition of the O.S. 6-inch.

the Inaccessible. (Easy descent from Sgurr Dearg to Coire Labain (or Coire Lagan as it is called on the new 6-inch map) over screes, skirting W. base of Inaccessible and peak just mentioned, and bearing to left until near the pass. Avoid the scree leading more directly down towards the corrie over a precipice.)

Coire Lagan (corrie of the hollow).	{	Bealach Coire Lagan, 2,680. (Descent into Coire Lagan easy. Descent into Coireachan Ruadha troublesome for the first 300 or 400 feet, until joining the Coire na Banachdich Pass, having rotten rock at top and smooth slabs at bottom ; the latter may be avoided by keeping away to left.)	}	Coireachan Ruadha and Coruisk.
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**Sgurr Mhic Coinnich**, 3,107\* = Mackenzie's peak, after John Mackenzie (the guide), lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. S.E. of Sgurr Dearg.

Coire Lagan.	{	Dip, about 2,935, not checked. (Possible pass. Descent into Coire Lagan—first a short rock-climb, then a scree gully joining the Alasdair Stone Shoot at about 2,500. Descent on other side on to col of Sgurr Coire an Lochain presents no difficulty.)	}	Coir' an Lochain and Coruisk.
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**Sgurr Thearlaich**, 3,230 ap. = peak of Charles (after C. Pilkington, P.A.C., an early pioneer in Skye). This used to be called the N.E. peak of Alasdair.

Coire Lagan.	{	Dip, 3,150. (N.B.—Head of "Great Stone Shoot," from Coire Lagan. Impossible on Ghrunnda side.)	}	Coir' a' Ghrunnda.
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**Sgurr Alasdair**, 3,309\* = peak of Alexander (after the late Sheriff Alexander Nicolson, who made the first ascent), lies close to and W. of Sgurr Thearlaich.

(a.) From summit a ridge runs S.W. and ends in Sgurr Sgumain, 3,104,\* dividing Coire Lagan from Coir' a' Ghrunnda. The continuation of this ridge broadens out into a sloping stony plateau, cut off from Sgurr Sgumain by a slight dip, perhaps 80 or 100 feet, which gap it is proposed to call Bealach Coir' a' Ghrunnda, as it makes a very easy cut into the Coire from Brittle. The projection itself is Sron na Ciche, from the remarkable pinnacle Cioch a' Sgumain on its Coire Lagan face.

(b.) From Sgurr Thearlaich and Sgurr Mhic Coinnich a buttress runs N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  m., and ends in Sgurr Coire an Lochain, 2,450 ap., which lies exactly 1 m. due W. of the upper end of Loch Coruisk.



(c.) From Sgurr Thearlaich the main ridge runs S.E. to the

Coir' a' Ghrunnda.

Alasdair-Dubh Gap.

Coir' an Lochain.

Coir' a' Ghrunnda.	{	Bealach Coir' an Lochain, 2,830 (2,810, Collie). Descent into Coir' a' Ghrunnda easy. Going down from Coir' a' Ghrunnda, leave the burn where it turns to left after first steep descent, and, passing just below a rough bit of scree, keep up on right side of corrie, thus avoiding all slippery slabs. Descent into Coir' an Lochain rough. There is an easy way to Coruisk from Coir' an Lochain. At the mouth of the corrie, on the right, a cairn marks the top of this way. One may walk straight down a ledge which runs eastwards to Coir' a' Chaoruinn, emerging into this through a small natural arch at about 1,200 feet altitude.	}	Coir' an Lochain.
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**Sgurr Dubh'na Da Bheinn**, 3,069,\* pron. *Sgurr Doo ni Da Ven*=the black peak of the two hills, lies  $\frac{1}{4}$  m. E.S.E. of Sgurr Alasdair.

Coir' an Lochain }  
and Coruisk. }

Dip, 2,900 ap.

{ An Garbh-  
choire.

From here a long ridge runs E. to

**Sgurr Dubh Mor**, 3,089,\* pron. *Sgurr Doo Mor*=the big black peak, lies  $\frac{1}{4}$  m. W. of Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn.

Coir' a' Chaoruinn.

Dip.

An Garbh-choire.

**Sgurr Dubh Beag**, 2,430 ap., pron. *Sgurr Doo Beg*=the little black peak, lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. W. of Sgurr Dubh Mor. From Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn the main ridge continues to

**Caisteal a Gharbh-Choire**, 2,740 ap.=the castle of the rough corrie, which lies at the head of An Garbh-choire.

Coir' a' Ghrunnda.	{	Bealach a' Gharbh-choire, 2,620 ap. (an easy pass). The direct way down the bottom of An Garbh-choire is made almost im- passable by scattered blocks of rock, but one can make an easy route by crossing over under the "Castle" on to the flank of Sgurr Dubh. The name of the pass is incorrectly placed on the map. It lies to the north of the place marked.	}	An Garbh- choire.
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**Sgurr nan Eag**, 3,037,\* lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. S. of Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn.

It has a nearly level summit ridge running S.E. for 300 or 400 yards; to give it two tops is rather a needless refinement.

Dip 2,555 (2,550, Collie). Descent into An Garbh-choire, bearing to the left for the first 100 feet. To reach Coire nan Laogh easily, either ascend to the shoulder of Sgurr nan Eag or keep up on the slope of Sgurr a' Choire Bhig at first.

**Sgurr a' Choire Bhig**, 2,870 ap., pron. *Sgurr a Choire Vick*, with branch ridge running off to the N.E., dividing Garbh-choire from Coire Beag.

Coire nan Laogh.	{	Dip, 2,760 (a possible pass). Descent into Coire nan Laogh; at first keep well up on slopes of <i>Gars-bheinn</i> . Descent into Coire Beag difficult at first, keeping close under Sgurr a' Coire Bhig; then bear well to right to avoid slippery slabs.	}	Coire Beag (small corrie).
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**Gars-bheinn**, 2,934,\* pron. *Garsven*=the echoing mountain (named "Gairs-bheinn, 2,902," on the Admiralty Chart), lies 1 m. S.E. of Sgurr nan Eag.

The 6-inch O.S. map seems to be fairly accurate here, except that the summit of Gars-bheinn is not sufficiently isolated, nor the S.E. precipitous termination of Sgurr nan Eag indicated, while the burns in Coire nan Laogh are unrecognisable. The 1-inch reduction has been made with gross carelessness, Gars-bheinn being placed 200 yards too far to the S.E.

Gars-bheinn ridge, running S.E. from the summit :—

From a point a little S. of summit a branch ridge runs off to left, N.E., dividing Coire Beag from Coir' a' Chruidh, and terminating in a prominent crag, about 2,125.

Prominent point on ridge, about 2,665. A little beyond this another branch ridge runs off to left into Coir' a' Chruidh, terminating in a knoll at about 1,850.

Ridge continues E.S.E., with a prominent point at 2,485, and another (termination) at 2,275.

#### THE RED HILLS.

**Glamaig**, 2,537,\* lies 2 m. E. of Sligachan.

The highest top is named *Sgurr Mhairi*, from Mary who was killed while looking for a lost cow. The E. summit is called An Coileach.

Bealach na Sgairde, 1,419.

**Beinn Dearg Mhor**, 2,389\* = the big red hill, lies 1 m. S. of Glamaig.

Bealach Mosgaraidh, 1,663.

**Beinn Dearg Mheadhonach**, 2,094\* = the middle red hill, lies 2 m. S. of Glamaig.

**Ciche na Beinne Deirge**, 1,661,\* = the pap of the red hill, lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. S. of Beinn Dearg Mheadhonach.

Coire Dubh }  
Measarroch. }

Mam a' Phobuill, 952.

{ Coire nan  
Bruadaran.

**Marsco**, 2,414,\* lies 3 m. S. of Glamaig.

Am Fraoch- }  
choire. }

Bealach, 1,079.

{ Coire nan  
Bruadaran.

#### THE BLAVEN GROUP.

**Garbh-bheinn**, 2,640,\* pron. *Garven* = the rough mountain, lies 1 m. N. of Blaven.

From here a branch ridge runs N.E. to

Bealach na Beiste.

**Belig**, 2,250 ap., 2 m. N.E. of Blaven.

Bealach.

Glas-bheinn Mhor (a Red hill).

Main ridge from Garbh-bheinn continues S. to

Bealach, 2,086,\*

**Sgurr nan Each**, W. Top, 2,360\* = peak of the horses, lies 1 m. N.E. of Blaven, and E. Top, 2,400,\*  $1\frac{1}{4}$  m. N.E. of Blaven.

Dip.

**Clach Glas**, 2,590 = the grey stone, lies  $\frac{1}{4}$  m. N. of Blaven.

The O.S. map names this Glac Glas, evidently a misprint.

Bealach, 2,310.

**Blaven**, N. Top., 3,042\* = the hill of bloom, lies 2 m. N. of Camasunary, and S. Top, 3,031.\*

#### BROADFORD GROUP OF RED HILLS.

**Beinn na Caillich**, 2,403,\* lies  $2\frac{1}{2}$  m. W. of Broadford.

**Beinn Dearg Mhor**, 2,323,\* lies 1 m. W.S.W. of Beinn na Caillich.

**Beinn Dearg Bheag**, 1,750 cont., lies 1 m. S.W. of Beinn na Caillich.

PEAKS ARRANGED IN ORDER OF ALTITUDE.

- 3,309. Sgurr Alasdair.  
 3,254. Inaccessible Pinnacle and Sgurr Dearg, 3,234.  
 3,230 ap. Sgurr Thearlaich.  
 3,197. Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh, N. top.  
 3,167. Sgurr na Banachdich.  
 3,167. Sgurr nan Gillean.  
 3,143. Bruach na Frithe.  
 3,107. Sgurr Mhic Coinnich.  
 3,089. Sgurr Dubh Mor.  
 3,069. Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn.  
 3,050 ap. Am Basteir.  
 3,050 ap. Sgurr a' Fionn Choire.  
 3,042. Blaven.  
 3,037. Sgurr nan Eag.  
 3,014. Sgurr a' Mhadaidh.  
 3,007. Sgurr Thormaid or North Top of Sgurr na Banachdich.  
 2,934. Gars-bheinn.  
 2,900. Bidein Druim nan Ramh, S.E. top.  
 2,740. An Caisteal.  
 2,590. Clach Glas.  
 2,537. Glamaig.  
 2,450 ap. Sgurr Dubh Beag.  
 2,414. Marsco.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE CUILLIN CLIMBS.

- |              |                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Easy.     | 3. Difficult.               |
| 2. Moderate. | 4. Exceptionally difficult. |

Sgurr nan Gillean—

Tourist route	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pinnacle route	-	-	-	-	-	2
Ridge to Bruach na Frithe	-	-	-	-	-	2
Approach to First Pinnacle by E. screes or Bhasteir face	-	-	-	-	-	1
Approach to First Pinnacle by N.W. ridge	-	-	-	-	-	2
Gully between 1 and 2 Pinnacle	-	-	-	-	-	1
" " 2 and 3 "	-	-	-	-	-	2
" " 3 and 4 "	-	-	-	-	-	4
" " 4 and 5 "	-	-	-	-	-	1
W. face of Fourth Pinnacle	-	-	-	-	-	2
N.W. face of Sgurr nan Gillean by Forked Chimney	3					
" " " by Jammed-block Chimney	2					

**Bhasteir and Bhasteir Tooth—**

Bhasteir from Bealach a Bhasteir	-	-	1
Bhasteir Tooth from Bhasteir	-	-	2
"    "    Lota Corrie	-	-	2
"    "    by Naismith's Climb, S.W. face	-	-	3
"    "    by King's Cave route, N. face	-	-	3
"    "    by Shadbolt's Chimney, N. face	-	-	3

**Sgurr na h-Uamha—**

From Sgurr nan Gillean	-	-	1 or 2?
From Harta Corrie	-	-	2

**Sgurr a Fionn Choire—**

From Fionn Corrie	-	-	1
From Lota Corrie by S. face	-	-	2

Bruach na Frithe, by any route	-	-	1
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**Ridge from Bruach na Frithe to Mhadaidh over the**

Castles, Bidein Druim nan Ramh	-	-	2
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The Castles from Lota Corrie	-	-	3
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**Bidein Druim nan Ramh—**

From Coire na Creiche	-	-	2
From the Druim nan Ramh ridge	-	-	2

The Water-pipe Gully on Sgurr na Fheadain	-	-	3
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(and if all the pitches are taken direct, 4)

**Sgurr a' Mhadaidh—**

By the Thuilm ridge or rake at head of the			
Tairneilear	-	-	1 or 2?
N.W. face of N. peak	-	-	3
S.E. face of S. peak	-	-	2

Sgurr Thuilm	-	-	1
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**Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh—**

From Coire a' Ghreadaidh to col and ridge			1
By ridge in Coire a' Ghreadaidh	-	-	2
Upper N. branch of Coire a' Ghreadaidh, by chimney			2
Upper S. branch of	"	"	2
Coruisk face	-	-	2

Sgurr na Banachdich	-	-	1
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Sgurr Dearg Pinnacle	-	-	3
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**Sgurr Mhic Coinnich—**

Easiest way by Lagan and N. ridge	-	-	2
King's Chimney or S. face	-	-	3
Traverse on Lagan face from Tearlach col	-	-	2

Ridge from Mhadaidh to Dearg	-	-		1
Ridge from Dearg to Thearlaich	-	-	-	2
Sgurr Alasdair—				
By Corrie Lagan and Great Stone Shoot	-			1
By ridge from Sgumain	-	-	-	2
By N. face from Corrie Lagan (Collie's climb)	-			3
Sgurr Thearlaich, from col of Great Stone Shoot	1	or	2?	
Ridge from Thearlaich to Dubh, Thearlaich-Dubh Gap				3
Ridge of Sgurr Dubh	-	-	-	2
Sgurr Coire an Lochain—				
By W. ridge	-	-	-	1
By N. face	-	-	-	3
Sgurr Sgumain—				
By W. ridge	-	-	-	1
From loch in Corrie Lagan by big gully	-			2
Ridge of Gars-bheinn and Sgurr nan Eag	-	-		1
Glamaig	-			
Beinn Dearg	-			
Marsco	-			
Belig	-			
Garbh-bheinn	-			
Beinn na Caillich Group	-			
Sgurr nan Each	-			
Clach Glas ridge	-	-	-	2
"    "    W. face	-	-	-	2
Blaven by big gully	-	-	-	2
"    by S. ridge	-	-	-	1
"    from Clach Glas	-	-	-	2

•

*Ropes.*—For all climbs in class No. 3 an 80-foot rope should be used for a party of three, and a spare 60 will often be useful as well. For class No. 2 a 60-foot rope will, as a rule, be found quite sufficient for a party of three.

## THE CUILLIN HILLS.

SGURR NAN GILLEAN was for many years considered the highest point of the Cuillin, but some of the peaks near the centre of the range rise to a greater altitude, and it now ranks, with Sgurr na Banachdich, as the fifth highest in the island.

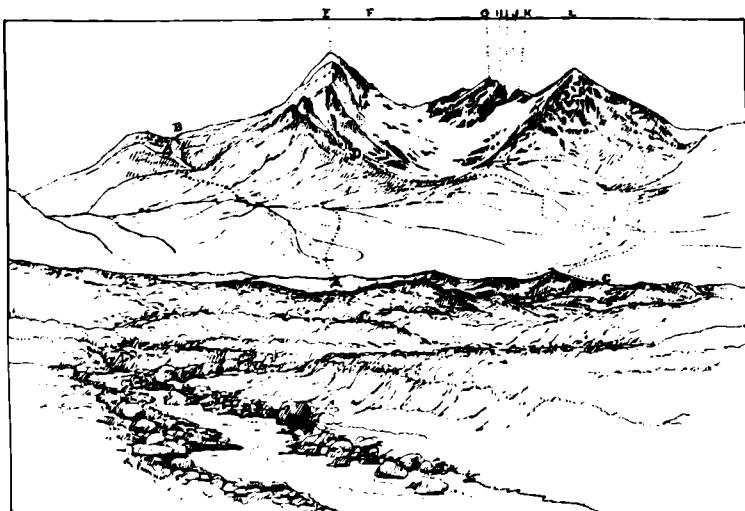
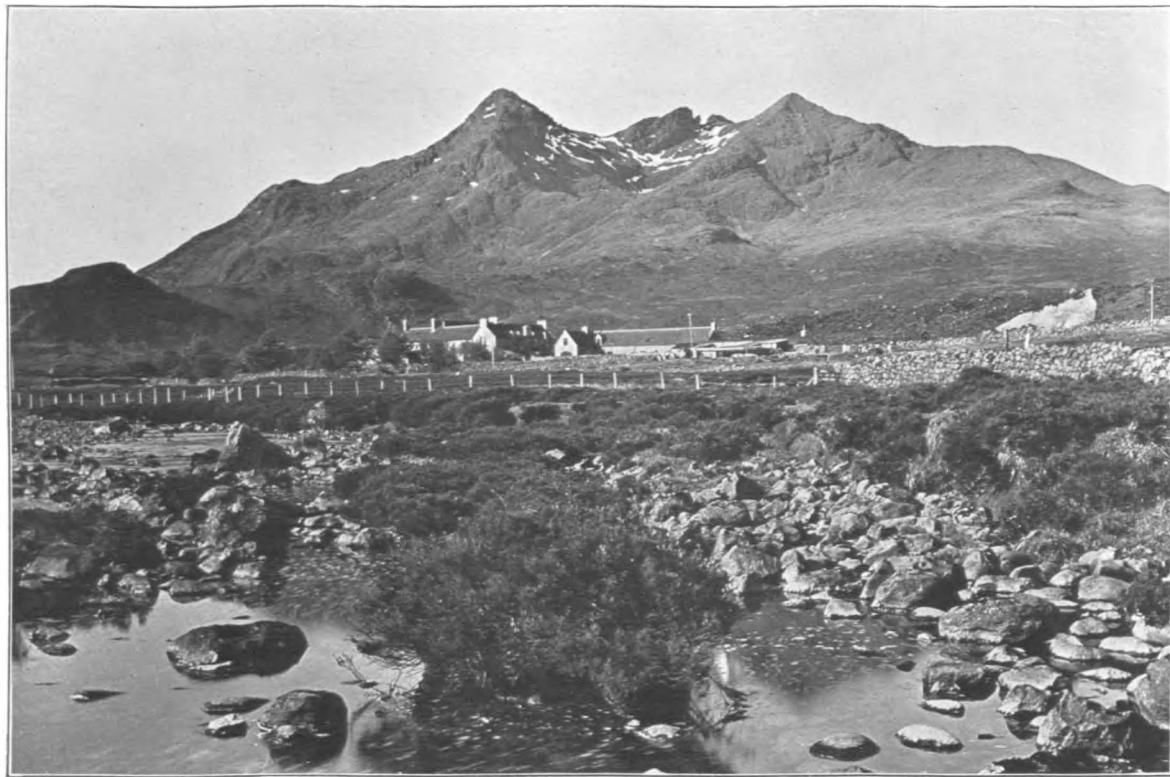


FIG. I.—SGURR NAN GILLEAN FROM SLIGACHAN.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>A to B. Commencement of Tourist Route to Summit.<br/> C to D. Best route to foot of Pinnacles.<br/> E. Summit of Sgurr nan Gillean.<br/> F. Tooth of Sgurr nan Gillean.<br/> G. Am Basteir.</p> | <p>H. Nick Gap.<br/> I. Bhasteir Tooth.<br/> J. Bealach na Lice.<br/> K. Sgurr a Fionn Choire.<br/> L. Sgurr a Bhasteir.</p> |
|--|--|

It was first climbed in 1836 by Professor J. D. Forbes, and his description of the ascent is as follows :—

“The ascent of Sgurr-na-Gillean was deemed impossible at the time of my first visit in 1836. Talking of it with an active forester in the service of Lord Macdonald, named Duncan Macintyre, whom I engaged to guide me to Coruisk from Sligachan, he told me that he had attempted it repeatedly without success, both by himself and also with



*June 1906.*

SLIGACHAN AND SGURR NAN GILLEAN.

*A. E. Robertson.*



different strangers, who had engaged him for the purpose ; but he indicated a way different from those which he had already tried, which he thought might be more successful. I engaged him to accompany me ; the next day (7th July) we succeeded in gaining the top, the extreme roughness of the rocks rendering the ascent safe, when, with any other formation, it might have been considerably perilous. Indeed I have never seen a rock so adapted for clambering."

Sgurr nan Gillean has three well-defined ridges, running respectively south-east, north, and west.

*The Tourist route* joins the south-east ridge from the

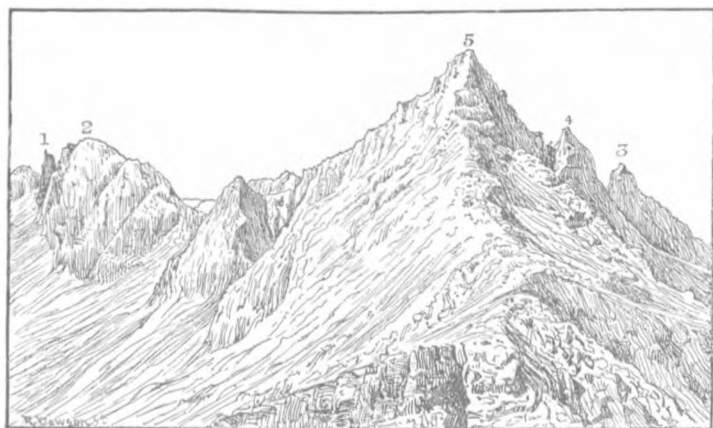


FIG. 2.—SGURR NAN GILLEAN FROM SOUTH-EAST RIDGE.

1. Bhasteir Tooth.

2. Am Basteir.

3 and 4. Third and Fourth Pinnacles.

5. Sgurr nan Gillean.

east near the col between Sgurr Beag and the summit. The route is quite easy to find. It first bears south over the moor after crossing the Red Burn at the keeper's cottage. The loch of Coire Riabhaich is passed on the left. Coire nan Allt Geala is entered by an easy stone shoot and the south-east ridge gained by a scree slope. The only place where one need touch the rocks with hands is on the final part of the ridge, but it is not at all difficult. This ridge is not in sight from Sligachan, but the other two are in view from windows of the hotel smoking-room, and are respectively called the Pinnacle and Western Ridges.

*The Pinnacle Route.*—To ascend by the “Pinnacles” and descend by the Western Ridge, or *vice versa*, gives a characteristic example of the rock-climbing to be had in Skye. Of all the Cuillin expeditions it is the nearest to Sligachan Hotel, and it can be easily accomplished by good climbers within five or six hours. From Sligachan the Pinnacle Ridge is seen end on, and its peaks cannot be distinguished from one another except when a background of mist forms behind them. There are numerous ways of reaching the top of the First Pinnacle. The easiest way of doing this is to keep the ordinary Sgurr nan Gilleann route as far as the first rise beyond Loch a’ Choire Riabhach, where by turning sharply to the right an easy ascent over scree and rock ledges can be made to the top of the First Pinnacle.

Climbers, however, usually prefer to ascend the First Pinnacle from Bhasteir side by the rounded ridge which runs north-east towards the Bhasteir Burn.

Two other routes to the top of the First Pinnacle—both giving good rock-climbs—start from Loch a’ Choire Riabhach and mount the north-east face of the First Pinnacle. The first of these, climbed in September 1896 by Mr Naismith and others, kept to the left of a gully visible from Sligachan as a vertical cut, and, after crossing some scree, ascended a 40-foot chimney and a nearly vertical wall above it, on the top of which a cairn was left. In August 1898 Messrs Baker, Maclay, and Solly climbed the gully above mentioned, and scaled the upper cliffs by a chimney somewhat to the right of that followed by the others.

If the first described route to the top of the First Pinnacle is selected, the real climb only begins at the foot of the Third, from where to the top of Sgurr nan Gilleann, involving altogether about 600 feet of ascent and 180 feet of descent, the climber’s hands are constantly employed. It is hardly necessary here to give a minute description of the route, for the hobnails of the many previous climbers have left a well-defined trail which is easy to trace. The only awkward bit to pass will be found a few feet beyond the top of the Third Pinnacle, though some people think that the descent of the Fourth demands more

nerve and skill than the "drop" on the Third. The descent from the top of the Third Pinnacle is on the Bhasteir side, and the drop of about ten feet into a shallow gully or ledge is a little trying to the inexperienced. There are three ways of getting into this gully, and none of them are quite simple, for the holds are somewhat awkwardly placed. When once one is into the gully the west wall of the Third Pinnacle is traversed to the col. The Fourth Pinnacle is

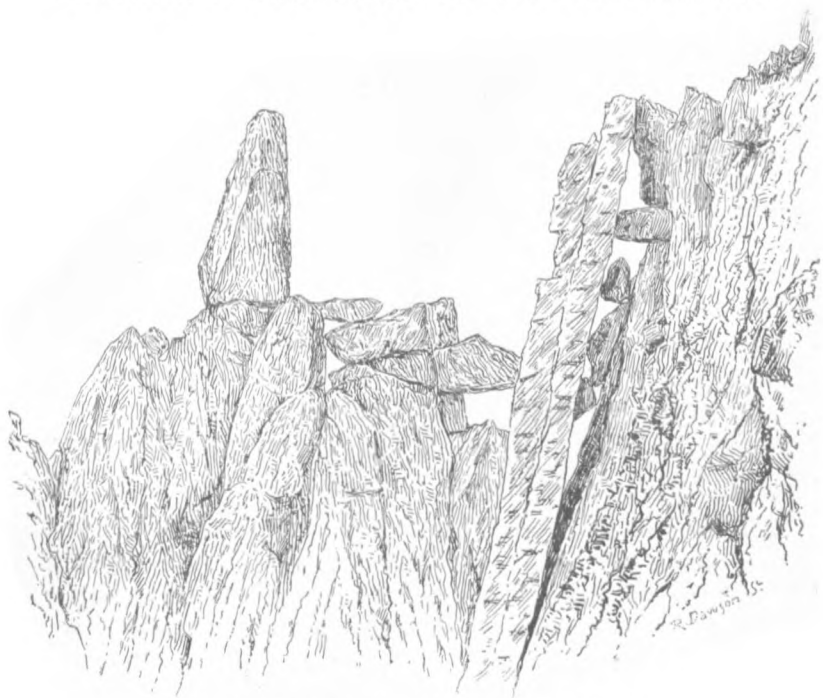


FIG. 3.—THE TOOTH OF SGURR NAN GILEAN.

taken straight up, and the descent is again on the Bhasteir side. The summit ridge is usually joined a few yards west of the top. The rock is so good here that there are few places on these pinnacles that cannot be climbed, and many variations have been made from the recognised route. (See "Pinnacle Route and Western Ridge," *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 285, for a fuller account.)

*The Western Ridge.*—From the summit of Sgurr nan

Gillean, the Western Ridge extends to Bhasteir, and the only bit of it at all sensational to pass is the gap and tooth of Sgurr nan Gillean. This is a most fiercesome-looking place, narrow and shattered, with a big boulder planted on the ridge, which, bulging out on both sides, apparently blocks the way. Such is the grim aspect of the place that one is not surprised to learn that the climbers who first described this bit of the ridge "smoked a pipe over it" before venturing to make the passage. When the pipe was finished they crossed it without difficulty in a couple of minutes! A few feet beyond the tooth, or policeman or gendarme as it is variously called, there is a perpendicular drop of some 25 feet, which is usually turned by a 40-foot chimney on the north side, but there is a slightly more difficult route on the south side, close to the perpendicular drop, which has also been done. (*N.B.*—A 15-foot detached obelisk projects from the screes beside the 25-foot drop on the Lota Corrie side which gives a stiff little climb.)

Between Sgurr nan Gillean and the Tooth, and not far from the latter, there is a long straight chimney leading into Coire Bhasteir, called "Nicolson's Chimney" (see C to E, Fig. 4), which is often used by those who do not care to risk the passage of the Tooth.

According to Dr Collie (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 172) all the gullies leading from Coire Bhasteir to the cols between the five pinnacles had been climbed before 1890, with the exception of one between the Third and Fourth which has since been done. He also stated that the faces of the pinnacles themselves afford excellent rock climbing. However, in the absence of more definite information, we must credit those who first record their ascent as being the first to make it.

*The gully between First and Second* is quite easy, and is sometimes used as a route to the top of the First Pinnacle, but the buttress to the left of the gully is still easier.

*The gully between the Second and Third* was climbed in September 1896 by a party led by Dr Collier. The only difficulty is to get past a large cave. This was managed by "back-and-knee" work on to some jammed stones near

the roof of the cave. Standing on these the leader succeeded in reaching the top of the pitch and the rest was easy.

*The gully between the Third and Fourth* has been attempted several times, but there is a pitch near the top which is both difficult and dangerous. This was, however, climbed in June 1905 by a party led by Mr Lamb. He records that "the climbing is practically confined to one

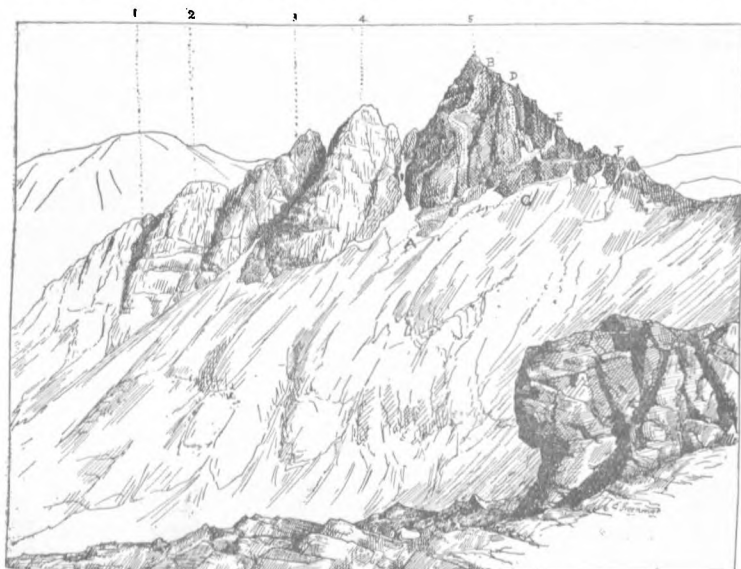


FIG. 4.—SGURR NAN GILLEAN FROM SGURR A' BHASTEIR.

1. First Pinnacle.
2. Second Pinnacle.
3. Third Pinnacle.
4. Fourth Pinnacle.
5. Summit.

- A to B. Forked Chimney.  
 C to D. Jammed-block Chimney.  
 C to E. The Doctor's Chimney.  
 F. Tooth of Sgurr nan Gillean.

Nicolson's Chimney finishes on the ridge half way between E and F.

big pitch of perhaps 100 feet. The first 70 feet consists of two slimy chimneys inclining to the right and slightly overhanging. The upper of these leads to three small chockstones, from which an easy scramble leads to a cave in which very safe anchorage may be found while the leader attempts the last part. The leader climbed the pitch without assistance by traversing to the right about 8 feet and climbing the rotten dyke beyond the edge of

the slab. This dyke gives 12 feet of difficult and dangerous climbing—difficult because of the scarcity of holds, dangerous because of the insecure rock. An easy traverse along the side of the slab brings the climber to safe anchorage above a small chockstone. A short chimney finishes the climb."

*The gully between the Fourth and Fifth* is quite easy, and if any one wanted to make a record ascent from Sligachan this route might prove the quickest way to the top of Sgurr nan Gillean.

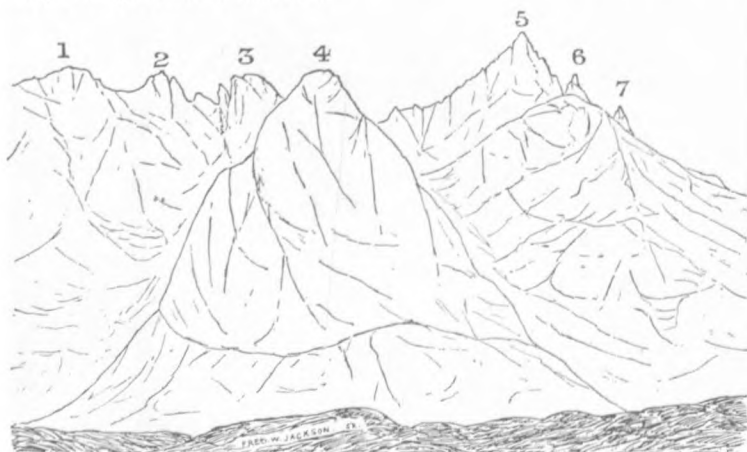


FIG. 5.—SGURR NAN GILLEAN FROM THE DRUIM HAIN RIDGE.

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Bruach na Frithe.     | 4. Sgurr na h-Uamha.                                      |
| 2. Sgurr a Fionn Choire. | 5. Sgurr nan Gillean.                                     |
| 3. Bhasteir.             | 6 and 7. Fourth and Third Pinnacles of Sgurr nan Gillean. |

*West Face of Fourth Pinnacle.*—This was first climbed in August 1886 by two brothers Stocker, or Stocker and A. G. Parker, and has been climbed many times since then.

*North-west Face of Sgurr nan Gillean.*—Two chimneys on this face were climbed in August 1898, viz.—

(1.) *The Forked Chimney*, climbed 15th August 1898.—This chimney, which is very steep, divides into two, about 100 feet above the screes. At the fork the first climbers kept the left (north) branch. An overhanging pitch of 30 feet was climbed with back and knee, past the outside of the obstacle. The ascent was continued partly by the face and partly by an easy ridge (see A to B, Fig. 4). The

chimney has since been climbed to the top, and is interesting throughout.

(2.) *The Jammed-block Chimney*, climbed 18th August 1898.—A feature of this chimney is a large jammed block near the top. At that place the first party thought they had got into a *cul-de-sac*, but after climbing out upon the jammed block they found a simple way of turning the difficulty by scaling the face (see C to D, Fig. 4). It has since been climbed to the top.

SGURR NA II-UAMHA can be ascended without much difficulty from the south-east ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean. It has also been climbed from Harta Corrie more than once. The rocks are good, and the climbing interesting without being difficult.

AM BASTEIR AND BHASTEIR TOOTH.—In crossing these two from Sgurr nan Gillean to Bruach na Frithe, the part from Bealach a' Bhasteir to the top of Am Basteir is a rough walk along a very narrow ridge. From the top of Bhasteir there is a short overhung drop to the roof of the Tooth (there are two routes at this point to the rake below, one at the extreme end of the ridge, and one a little farther down on the Lota Corrie side) and a few minutes' scramble over the roof of the Tooth places one on the top. From the top of the Tooth the usual way to reach the Bealach a' Leitir (now Bealach nan Lice) is to retrace one's steps to the rake and then descend by it, under the precipice of Bhasteir, till it is possible to join the screes below. The rake is fairly steep, and affords in itself a pretty bit of climbing in short chimneys and over slabs for about 400 feet. By this route it is not until the screes below are joined that it is practicable to reach the Bealach nan Lice about 330 feet above (see B to C to C, Fig. 6). This climb was first done by N. Collie in the late '80's, and it is considered the first ascent of the Tooth.

*Naismith's Climb* on the south-west face.—The ascent of Bhasteir Tooth from the west had long been deemed impossible without the descent of the 300 feet of the Lota Corrie screes. In August 1898 it was climbed without this

descent by a party led by Mr Naismith. His route, as shown by the diagram (Fig. 7), goes up easy rocks to a horizontal ledge with a large stone lying on it, from the end of which ledge a short chimney with indifferent holds (but the leader can get the help of a shoulder here) leads to an anchorage 20 feet up. Above that point a crack with good hand-holes is followed obliquely to the right, and finally a pull up of 6 feet lands the climber on a platform, when all difficulty is over. This is an extremely



FIG. 6.—BHASTEIR TOOTH.

A to B. Naismith's Climb.

C to C to B. The Ordinary Route.

interesting little climb, and avoids the tedious descent by the Lota Corrie screes.

*King's Cave Route.*—This climb is to be found in the cave that runs up towards the col between Am Basteir and the Bhasteir Tooth on the Bhasteir Corrie side. Mr King led a party up this in August 1898. The climb is almost subterranean in character, and forms an interesting variety in the Cuillin climbs. It can be done in the wildest of weather. The route is somewhat difficult to find, and the following hints may be useful :—The climb starts by



mounting a large block at the back of the cave and climbing by back and foot work into the first floor. From here a small aperture will be found at the back of the cave



FIG. 7.—BHASTEIR TOOTH—SOUTH FACE.

A to B. Naismith's Climb.

which leads into a vertical funnel 40 feet high. The passage of this is done in almost total darkness, and the exit, which lands one on the col, is almost as small as the entrance (see A to B, Fig. 8).

*North Chimney Climb.*—In July 1906 Messrs Shadbolt

and M'Laren made the ascent, as shown on the accompanying diagram (see A to C, Fig. 8). The start was made from the foot of the King's Cave route up some sloping ledges until the foot of the chimney was reached. The first pitch of this is a small cave which proved to be rather

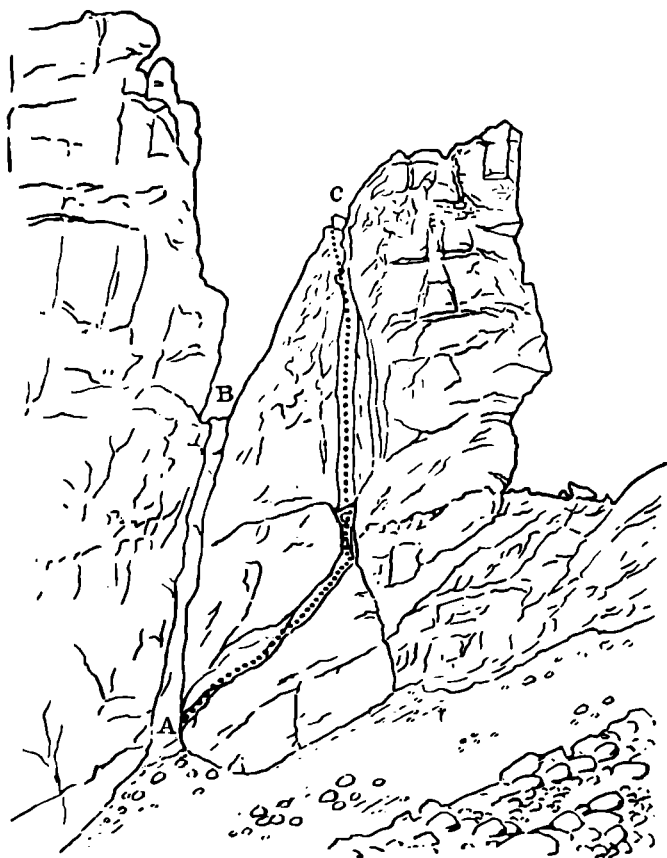


FIG. 8.—BHASTEIR TOOTH—NORTH FACE.

A to B. King's Cave Route.

A to C. Shadbolt's Chimney.

difficult, and was eventually climbed by starting inside the cave facing outwards, and swinging round when a good handhold was found upon the roof chockstone on the true right. The bed of the chimney was reached about 8 feet farther up, and this was followed right to



*June 1906.*

LOOKING SOUTH FROM BRUACH NA FRITHE.

*A. E. Robertson.*

the back. The next pitch is 40 feet high, and gave good back and knee work all the way up. They were now in semi-darkness under the roof, which stretched out in front for many yards, but it was observed that this roof was hollow, and the leader climbed up through the first opening and along a narrow tunnel leading outwards. This tunnel was blocked in front about 20 feet from the start, but doubled back again into the heart of the rock. They followed this and soon saw a narrow opening close above their heads, through which the smallest member of the party was just able to squeeze. Two and a half hours later the remainder of the party emerged into the sunlight through a tunnel dug especially for their benefit. The top of this climb is exactly opposite the top of the Naismith crack.

SGURR A FIONN CHOIRE is a prominent boss of rock between Bhasteir Tooth and Bruach na Frithe cleft in two by a gash at the summit. This gash continues in the form of a chimney some distance down the Lota Corrie face. There is no climbing to be done on its northern slopes, but a short climb was done on its southern face in September 1896 by Messrs Naismith and J. A. Parker. They reported that the salient feature of the south face is a prominent nose. This nose they ascended for a short distance on its east side; they turned it by a ledge immediately below the overhanging part, and finally scaled it from its precipitous west side.

BRUACH NA FRITHE is one of the best view points on the range, and is the hill most easily ascended by tourists. The ascent usually commences at the highest point in the pathway (Bealach a Mhaim) to Corrie na Creiche, and continues up a long steep grassy slope for eight or nine hundred feet. The remainder is over gravel passing at the top into scree and rock, where the ridge for one or two hundred feet is for tourists fairly steep and narrow. Probably the best way to make the ascent would be by one of the rakes that run to the ridge at the head of Fionn a' Choire. They are quite simple, and it is quite possible to trot down from the summit of Bruach na Frithe to Sligachan Hotel in an hour and a half. This route by Fionn a' Choire is often used by

climbers who wish to leave the main ridge even from as far south as Bidein or Mhadaidh. From Mhadaidh a party took three hours to Sligachan in September 1896 by Fionn Choire.

THE CASTLES is the portion of the ridge that continues south from Bruach na Frithe to Bidein Druim nan Ramh. It is fairly sharp and broken in two or three places with a

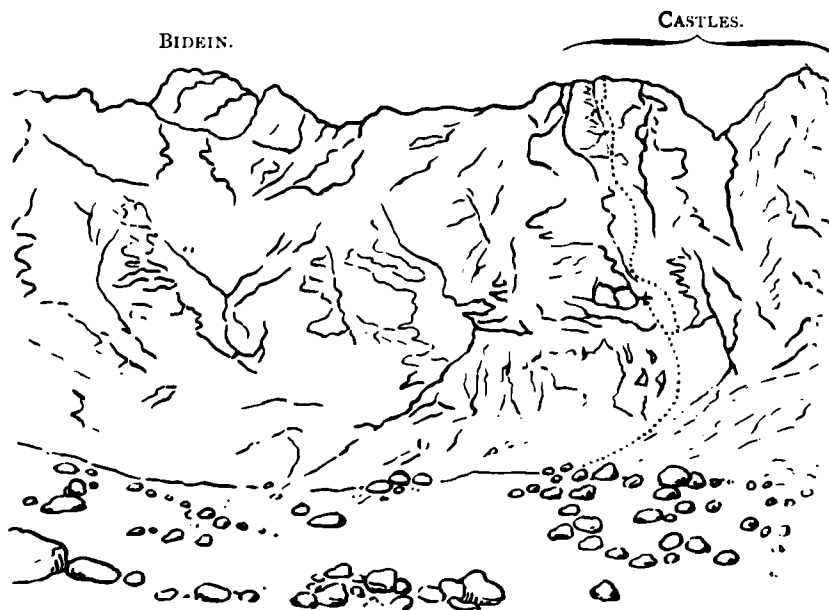


FIG. 9.—LOOKING ACROSS HARTA CORRIE FROM SOUTH RIDGE OF SGURR NAN GILLEAN.

deep gash in it. But it is one of the easiest portions of the Cuillin ridge.

*The Castles from Harta Corrie.*—At the Easter Meet of 1905, a party of four, led by Mr Raeburn, ascended the southmost Castle, direct from Harta Corrie (see dotted line on Fig. 9).

From Sligachan *via* Harta Corrie they reached the foot of the Castles at 10.45. This south Castle is split into three buttresses by two large gullies. The climb was commenced

by way of the south gully, but after about half-an-hour's climb up several minor pitches, a huge overhanging pitch was met with, which appeared impossible, and a retreat had to be made to the foot of the rocks again. The climb was restarted up the central buttress. This buttress, at first of low angle, rapidly steepened, and here was composed of enormous ice-smoothed slabs of gabbro. The rocks were at this level free from ice, clean and dry, and the leader removed his boots and put on Kletterschue. A traverse had soon to be made to the left, across and up some steeply inclined slabs. Passing under the overhanging slabs, barring the direct route, the climbers found themselves above the great pitch in the gully on their left, which had stopped their first attack, and in a position from which access to this gully could be obtained. It was, however, resolved to continue on the buttress, and a neat little chimney parallel with the gully was found, which led above the overhanging slabs to easier ground, where snow was lying. This easier portion continues to the foot of the final wall of cliffs, about two-thirds up the face. These final cliffs are pierced by several narrow gullies or chimneys. Selecting the cleft nearest in line to the summit, this was climbed to near the top of the peak. Then, as the gully died out on the face, a traverse to right was made on to a narrow, well-broken-up rib. The chimney was steep and held a good deal of ice, snow, and water. A few minutes up the ridge led to the summit, whence a wonderful and enchanting view of the snow and ice plastered ridges and pinnacles of the Cuillins was obtained.

BIDEIN DRUIM NAN RAMH.—Owing to its position this mountain, although one of the lowest, may be termed the Hub of the Cuillins. Its three tops form a striking object standing boldly out at the head of Coire na Creiche, and from Coruisk they also present a most impressive appearance. In all probability they can be climbed from any of the four corries at their base—Tairneilear, Mhadaidh, Lota, and Coruisk. But the only climb on the Coire na Creiche side that has been recorded is one by the gully running from Coir' a' Mhadaidh between the north and central peaks.

The ascent of the peaks of Bidein is usually made in passing between the tops of Mhadaidh and Bruach na Frithe. The peaks are somewhat hard to scale if taken along their true sky-line, but the faces are so well broken up that their ascent offers scope for most interesting climbing of all degrees of difficulty. Another route to the top of Bidein is that by which the south-east peak is joined from the Druim nan Ramh ridge. The first part of this ridge is broad and grassy, and those who do not care to follow it throughout can, from the end of the level ground

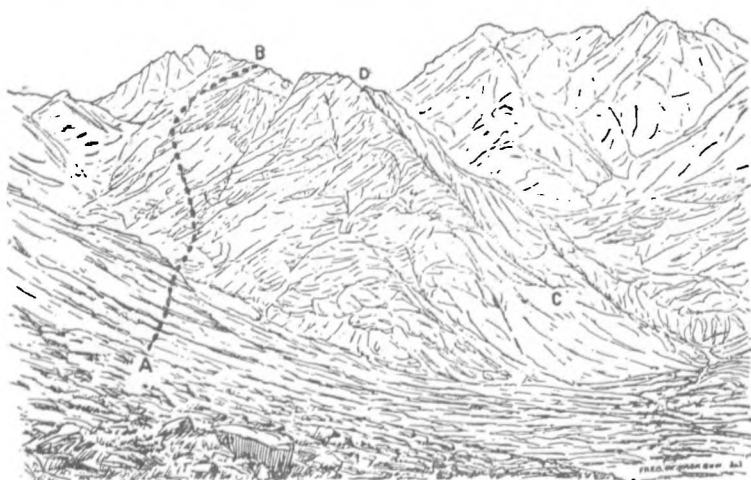


FIG. 10.—COIRE NA CREICHE.

A to B. Route to Bealach na Glaic Moire.

C to D. The Water-pipe on Sgurr na Fheadain.

in Harta Corrie, easily join it anywhere below the point where it begins to assume the general character of a Cuillin ridge. Starting the climb from this point a cleft has to be crossed before the south-east peak can be touched (the south-west peak is not on this ridge). The passage of this cleft, like most of the "bad steps" in Skye, is not so difficult as it looks. It will, however, always require to be done carefully. The south-east peak can be crossed, but the descent into the gap between it and the north peak is difficult, and is usually turned by a traverse on the west

face. The descent on the north side of the north peak is also difficult if the true sky-line is kept.

SGURR NA FHEADAIN.—This lies at the end of a long shoulder projecting from Bidein Druim nan Ramh into Coire na Creiche, and dividing Coir' a' Mhadaidh from Tairneilear. The west face is cleft by a great gully, which, known as the "Water-pipe," gives the name to this summit (see C to D on Fig. 10).

This gully was first ascended in 1895 by Messrs Kelsall and Hallitt, who wrote in the "Climbers' Book" at Sligachan a full account of their climb.

Mr Bell with a party repeated the climb in 1896, and records in the *Journal* that the gully gives "interesting climbing almost throughout." He says there are four specially good places:—

"(1.) Near the foot there is a very steep pitch about 60 feet high. To climb straight up the bed of the gully here would certainly be very difficult, probably impossible. The pitch can be passed by following a sloping grassy ledge on the right (south) wall. (2.) About 300 feet up there is a vertical pitch with a small waterfall. Possibly, if regardless of a ducking, this pitch might be climbed direct, otherwise the right wall must be taken to and climbed almost to the top before a traverse can be made back into the bed of the gully. (3.) About 850 feet up, a 'stack of rock' divides the gully into two branches. This was passed by both parties by climbing up to a small grassy ridge by a shallow gully in the stack itself, and from there traversing into the right-hand branch. (4.) Near the top, at a place where the gully is narrow and both walls quite unclimbable, there is another steep pitch about 60 feet high. The way here lies up the water-course, and if the weather is bad the ascent of this pitch will be found very wet work." Since then all the pitches have been climbed more than once. (See *Climbers' Club Journal*, vol. ii., p. 25.)

SGURR A' MHADAIDH.—A grand hill, though its crest is not so sharply defined as some of the others. Its sides fall with great steepness into Tairneilear and the other



corries at its base. The crossing of its four peaks makes a most interesting climb, and one that is easier to follow in going from south-west to north-east than in the opposite direction. There are four tops to Mhadaidh, and the south-westmost is divided into two peaks, of which the southern is the highest.

The ascent is usually made to the Thuilm ridge at its lowest point between Thuilm and Mhadaidh to the highest top of the latter. The ridge in its upper part is narrow and much shattered, but is quite easy to follow.

There is another easy way to Mhadaidh from the head of Tairneilear. A stony rake runs up to the gap between the third and fourth peaks of Mhadaidh, and with the exception of a short chimney at the col the ascent involves hardly any climbing. This perhaps is the quickest way to reach Mhadaidh.

In crossing the peaks of Mhadaidh the most interesting places will be found on the south-east sides of the third and second tops (reckoning the highest as the fourth). On the third a shallow gully has to be climbed, and on the second there is a pillar of gabbro leaning against the cliff face that has to be scaled. The compass here, as in many other places in the Cuillins, reads incorrectly.

*North-west Face.*—A climb was made in 1896 on the Tairneilear face of the most northerly of the Mhadaidh peaks, which gave 1,200 feet of rock climbing. Mr Naismith, who described the ascent, says: "The buttress is in three sections of nearly equal height, the upper being the easiest and the middle section the stiffest. A perpendicular pitch in this latter had to be turned by traversing to the right into a shallow gully, which was followed for a rope's length or so. A traverse back to the middle line of the buttress was accomplished by Dr Collie, who wormed himself along a very narrow and sensational groove, 60 feet long, across the face of an A.P. cliff."

*South-east Face.*—An excellent little climb was done in July 1897 on the east face of the south-west or highest peak of Mhadaidh, by a party led by Mr Brown. It was not a long climb—about 800 feet in all—but what there was of it was very steep. Any one looking at the hill from

Coruisk will see a V-shaped buttress of rock running into the scree slope above Coire an Uaigneis, with a gully cutting it into two. It was on the left hand (or south side) of this gully that the ascent was made, and the party got a capital climb up continuously steep rocks without having to pass any exceedingly difficult pitches (see C to D, Fig. 11).

SGURR THUILM.—This lies at the end of a long

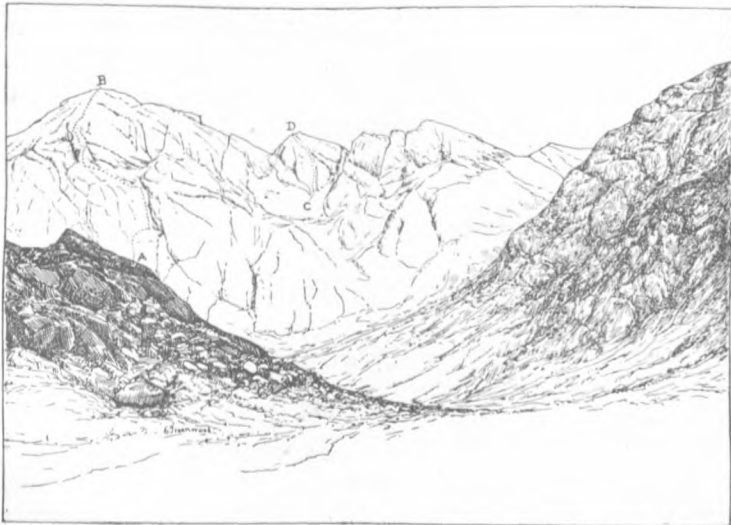


FIG. 11.—SGURR A' GHREADAIDH AND SGURR A' MHADAIDH FROM LOCH CORUISK.

A to B, Collie's Climb on East Face of Ghreadaidh.  
C to D, Brown's Climb on East Face of Mhadaidh.

shoulder running westwards from the fourth peak of Mhadaidh, and can be ascended without climbing almost anywhere. The ascent from Coire na Creiche is easy, but very tedious. The ridge leading from it to Mhadaidh is very shattered, but is easy to climb.

SGURR A' GHREADAIDH rises boldly at the head of Coruisk and forms the great central dome in the Cuillin range as seen from the tourist view point at the foot of

that loch. The summit ridge is narrow, but although from below An Dorus appears to cut deeply into it, in reality it only runs up to a col, and nowhere in the ridge are there any great clefts. It is, however, well broken up so as to form several minor tops.

*The usual route* to the top is from the Ghreadaidh-Mhadaidh col.

*The pinnacled ridge from Ghreadaidh dividing Coire a' Ghreadaidh into two* was ascended in August 1898 by Messrs King, Gibbs, and Dobson. They found it not difficult, but it afforded plenty of scrambling. It is in places a knife edge of rock.

*Upper North Branch of Coire a' Ghreadaidh.*—The chimney at the junction of the ridges, facing Thuilm, was descended by the same party. It offers no difficulty to rock-climbers.

*Upper South Branch of Coire a' Ghreadaidh.*—Messrs Collie and King in August 1887 descended from Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh into the south-west portion of Coire a' Ghreadaidh.

*The East or Coruisk Face.*—A splendid climb can be got on the south-east face of this mountain, which affords over 2,000 feet of almost continuous bare rock. It was first done by Dr Collie and Mr Howell in September 1896. The route lies on the south side of a small stream that comes out of Coire an Uaigneis, and then eventually leads out on to the precipitous face over Coireachan Ruadha. This is traversed diagonally upwards for a short distance, then doubling back again the south-east ridge is reached and followed to the top (see A to B, Fig. 11).

SGURR NA BANACHDICH.—This part of the ridge is well broken up, but the gaps are easily passed.

The usual way to make the ascent is from Coire na Banachdich to the Bealach Coire na Banachdich.

No climbs have been recorded on any of the faces. The east face of the highest peak would give a fair climb.

*Coire na Banachdich.*—On the south-west side of the coire is a pinnacle with a window in it that gives good climbing. An excellent rock route can then be followed



*June 1905.*

**CORUIK AND SCAVAIG FROM SGURR A'MHADAIDH.**

*A. E. Robertson.*

from this pinnacle straight up the rocks on to the summit ridge of Sgurr Dearg.

**SGURR DEARG PINNACLE.**—This is a weathered-out wall of trap-rock (topping by some 20 feet the highest point of Sgurr Dearg) on the south-west side of the summit. The foot of this pinnacle is easily reached either by a stone



FIG. 12.—THE PINNACLE OF SGURR DEARG.

Dotted line shows usual route of ascent on the short side. It has also been climbed by the crack continuing on, from the lower part of the climb, to the left.

shoot at the head of Coire Lagan or by the long western shoulder of Sgurr Dearg.

The pinnacle was first climbed in 1880 by the brothers Pilkington, who made the ascent by its "long" or eastern side, and in 1886 Messrs Stocker and Parker made the ascent by the west or "short" side.

*The west climb* is quite a short one (some 40 feet), and

the chief difficulty consists in getting from a narrow sloping ledge, running across its north face, to the crest of the ridge at its north-east corner. There is an admirable hitch here which can be used in the descent (see dotted line on Fig. 12).

*The east climb* is much longer (being 125 feet from the foot to the top), and is a more sensational one, but it is not so steep and there are plenty of hand-holds.

The story of these early ascents is told by Mr Charles Pilkington as follows :—

"The pinnacle had attracted much attention in the district, and had often been attacked by local climbers ; but it deserved its name of Inaccessible till 1880, when my brother and I climbed it by its east edge. The following year a shepherd got up, after having taken off his shoes. It was then unclimbed until Walker, Hulton, and my brother made the third ascent in 1883, since which date it has been ascended several times. In 1886 Mr A. H. Stocker and Mr A. G. Parker climbed it by the western end. Desirous of following their example, and having reached this end of the rock, we asked Mackenzie, who had come with us to carry the camera, if he would like to go with us. He had done it from the other side before. 'Oh, yes,' was his ready reply. Off went his boots, and we tied him on to the rope. I believe his great anxiety for some time had been that we might send him round with the luggage to the other side and not give him a chance of the climb. The first few steps were easy. We then traversed a little ledge, about 6 inches wide, to our left, leading on to the north face for about 20 feet. As we stood in turn upon the highest part of this ledge (it descended a little beyond), a smooth, slanting rock came down, its edge ending about half-way up our chests. The next step or wriggle was the difficulty. It would have been fairly easy had the standing place been firm and good, but it was a narrow piece of hard, slippery trap, and shook slightly when tried with a stock. We slowly and steadily drew ourselves up till we landed flat on the steep, smooth incline above. Very steep and smooth it was, and care was required as we wormed ourselves up for about 10 feet, till we found on the left a good crack large enough for our fingers. The difficulties were over when that was accomplished, for a few changes of hand along this ledge slid us under a rough, upright rock, a swarm up which landed us on good holding ground on the west end of the pinnacle, and about 40 feet from its base, whence two minutes' pleasant scramble took us past the extraordinary bolster stone on the highest point beyond.

"We descended by the east edge, which we found easier than we expected. No doubt it is easier now ; for on the first ascent very great care and labour were required to pull out stones, loose but still



*June 1900.*

LOOKING NORTH FROM SGURR THEARLAICH.

*A. E. Robertson.*

forming part of the natural rock, and often the whole edge, which, by the way, is only six inches to a foot wide in many places. Of the two routes the west is the shortest and most difficult, the east is the longest, the finest, and most sensational; both require care, and a slip from the east edge would be fatal."—*Alpine Journal*, xiii., p. 442.

Between the pinnacle and the Bealach Coire Lagan is a long and difficult buttress, which was descended by Mr J. H. Gibson's party in 1892 (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 218), but the easiest way to reach the bealach is to keep this buttress on the left and descend by a stone shoot.

SGURR MHIC COINNICH.—The long back of this mountain is extremely narrow, and is perhaps one of the sharpest in Skye. Probably this peak of Bidein Druim nan Ramh is the most difficult of access by "the easiest way" of any in the Cuillins. The easiest way is from Coire Lagan to the col between it and Dearg, and then along the narrow ridge to the summit.

Directly beyond the summit on the south side there is a precipitous drop in the ridge. This is usually turned on the Corrie Lagan side (see A to B, Fig. 13).

The Mhic Coinnich-Thearlaich col can be easily reached from below either on the Coruisk or Lagan sides. On the face opposite Thearlaich there are three chimneys. This face was climbed in 1898, directly from the col, by a party led by Mr King, and the chief difficulty consisted in a traverse out of the chimney to avoid the overhanging part at the top.

Another route appears to have been done in 1892, but from the description it is difficult to follow. It says, "From the col, a broad ledge must be followed for 15 or 20 yards until the foot of a sheer wall some 12 feet high is reached" (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 220).

All Mr Pilkington has to say of the first recorded ascent is, "We climbed the nameless peak at the head of Corrie Labain in the afternoon from the pass between it and Sgurr Dearg, and built a cairn on its summit—a fine easy climb with precipitous rocks on either side of the ridge" (*Alpine Journal*, vol. xiii., p. 443).



**SGURR SGUMAIN.**—On the north-west side of the lower peak of Sgurr Sgumain is the finest wall of rock in the Cuillin Hills, at least half a mile long, and in most places 1,000 feet high. Owing to the magnificent nature of the rock, the numerous climbs are second to none in the Cuillin Hills. Two large gullies, the eastern and western, run to the sky-line, a third only runs a little over half-way up the precipice and lies between the other two. Between the eastern and middle gully is a large pinnacle of rock

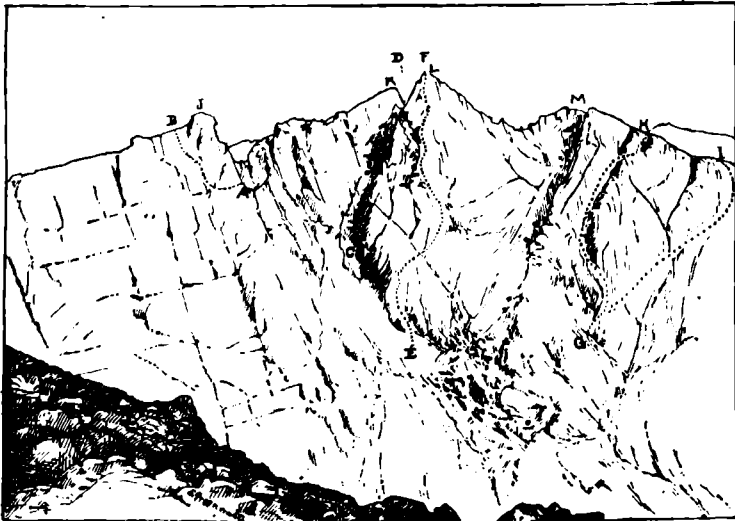


FIG. 13.—SGURR ALASDAIR FROM SGURR DEARG.

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| A to B. Easy route from col to Sgurr Mhic Coinnich.  | J. Sgurr Mhic Coinnich. |
| C to D. Great Stone Shoot.                           | K. Sgurr Thearlaich.    |
| E to F. Collié's north-west climb on Sgurr Alasdair. | L. Sgurr Alasdair.      |
| G to H. } Easy routes to Sgurr Sgumain.              | M. Sgurr Sgumain.       |
| G to I. }  |                         |

(Cioch a Sgumain). The traverse of this Cioch from the eastern gully to the small central gully affords an exceedingly interesting climb, and was made first during July 1906.

**SGURR ALASDAIR** is one of the most graceful as well as the highest in the range. The late Sheriff Alexander Nicolson made the first ascent (some time before 1875). He approached it from Banachdich, crossed over Sgurr



*June 1906.*

LOOKING NORTH FROM SCURR DUBH NA DA BHEINN.

*A. E. Robertson.*

Dearg (omitting the pinnacle), descended into Coire Lagan, and climbed to the top of Alasdair, probably by the Great Stone Shoot.

The story of this ascent, as related by Nicolson, is told as follows :—

“I had been told at Glen Breatal that another peak, a very beautiful one, which forms a prominent object from the house there, had never been ascended, and had foiled the Ordnance men. This naturally stirred my desire to attempt it, which I did, accompanied by a shepherd, A. Macrae, well acquainted with all the hills and passes, and a first-rate climber. He had a peculiar style of walk, a sort of amble, and seemed to glide up the hillside like a cloud. He, too, had never been up, and had never heard of anybody having done it. We first went up Scur na Banachdich, a charming climb, and then I discovered the meaning of that singular name, the Smallpox Peak, which I never could understand. The surface of the rocks is marked by little red spots, caused by oxidation, whence no doubt the name. As showing how formidable in appearance these heights are, Professor Forbes says of this peak that ‘it may perhaps be accessible’ on the Breatal side. We found no difficulty in any part of the ascent.

“From this peak we went on, down and up Scur Dearg, and made the acquaintance of that formidable horn above mentioned. It stands out a little from the main ridge, and is the termination of a precipice of some 1,200 feet that goes right down into the basin above Coiruisg. At this point our progress along the ridge was barred, and to get at the desired peak farther on we had to descend a chasm into a deep stony corrie, with a small dark loch at its lower end, from which on the previous day I had obtained out of the midst of driving mist a single glimpse of this same peak, one of the wildest objects I ever saw. This corrie is called Coire Laghain, and the tarn Loch-a-Laghain; and the peak, for which my companion knew no name, I propose to call Scur-a-Laghain. I should have been inclined to think that the very appropriate name of Scur-a-Sgumain (Stack Peak) belonged to it, but he assured me that the neighbouring but lower peak to the west was Scur-a-Sgumain. I confess I doubt this, inasmuch that I renounce the honour of bestowing a name on this lovely peak. The climb up on the other side of the corrie was stiff and warm, and some judgment was required to find a way, and still more when it came to circumventing the peak. We did it, however, without much difficulty: one or two places were somewhat trying, requiring good grip of hands and feet, but on the whole I have seen worse places. Whether this peak was really ascended for the first time that day, I cannot say, but it seemed very like it. There was, at any rate, no sign on the top of any one having ever been on it before, and of course we thought it our duty to make up for that by erecting a cairn and

adding a few feet to the height of the peak."—*Good Words*, 1875, p. 458.

Since then it has been climbed in many ways.

*The easiest way* is from the head of Coire Lagan by the "Great Stone Shoot."

*One of the most popular* is by the face of Sgumain by one of its rakes, from the loch in Coire Lagan, and then along the ridge to Alasdair. The ridge makes a delightful climb with at least one place on the sky-line that is difficult, but this is often avoided by a traverse on the Coir' a' Ghrunnda face.

*North-west face of Alasdair* gives a magnificent rock-climb of about 1,000 feet. It is extremely steep, but the holds are splendid. It was done in September 1896 by Messrs Collie, Howell, and Naismith. They crossed a short easy slope to the foot of the steep rib of smooth rock which leads directly to the summit. Sticking to this rib they emerged on the top within a few feet of the cairn (Fig. 13, E to F).

SGURR THEARLAICH.—The col between Alasdair and this is easily reached by the Great Stone Shoot from Coire Lagan, and from there there is a short rock-climb to get on to the top.

THEARLAICH-DUBH GAP (this used to be called the Alasdair-Dubh Gap).—In following the ridge from Sgurr Thearlaich to Sgurr Dubh a somewhat difficult piece of climbing will be encountered at the Thearlaich-Dubh gap. The gap consists of a V-shaped depression with steep rocky walls on both sides. The height of the wall on the Thearlaich side is about 80 feet and about 30 on the other. The passage of this gap is not at all easy, and unless the party are sure of their powers to climb the opposite wall, it is well they should not all descend into the gap at one time. On the long side a useful hitch may be had for the bottom pitch by throwing a rope round a projection of rock about 15 feet above.

Beyond the gap on the Dubh side there is the descent of "The Pinnacle," and, as it is covered with loose stones, great care has to be taken here.



*June 1906.*

GARS-BHEINN FROM SGURR SGUMAIN.

*A. E. Robertson.*

The gap was first climbed in 1891 by Dr Collie and Mr King. They reached it from below on the Ghrunnda side. Collie climbed up on to the Dubh ridge out of the gap, and King followed. They then descended into the gap again. Throwing a rope over the hitch, King scrambled up and Collie followed.

SGURR DUBH is a long ridge with three well-defined summits. It was first climbed by Sheriff Nicolson, and in *Good Words* for 1875 he gives a graphic account of his adventures. No obstruction will be found in wandering from one end of the long ridge to the other, with the exception of a short steep pitch on the west face of the east or lower peak, where there is a little climb of 10 or 15 feet. This, however, can be turned on its south side. From Scavaig Sgurr Dubh shows its three peaks to full advantage. The Bealach a' Garbh-choire (2,620 feet), from which the ascent is usually made, is about two miles from Loch Scavaig, and the way is very, very rough. It can also be reached from Glen Brittle by crossing the shoulder of Sgurr Sgumain by the Bealach Coir Ghrunnda into Coir a' Ghrunnda, or Coir a' Ghrunnda can also be reached from its foot. In this case, and especially in descending, keep close under the cliffs of Sgumain, for the burn, if followed, leads over smooth boiler-plate slabs lying at a high angle. The upper portions of this corrie, with its little loch, are among the wildest and grandest scenery in the Cuillins. The following is the experience of Messrs Maylard and Solly on "the Dubhs," as chronicled by the Club's poetaster:—

"Said Maylard to Solly one day in Glen Brittle,  
'All serious climbing, I vote, is a bore ;  
Just for once, I Dubh Bheag you'll agree to do little,  
And, as less we can't do, let's go straight to Dubh Mhor.'

"So now when they seek but a day's relaxation,  
With no thought in the world but of viewing the views,  
And regarding the mountains in mute adoration,  
They call it not 'climbing,' but 'doing the Dubhs.'"

SGURR COIRE AN LOCHAIN.—On the 12th of September 1896, Messrs Collie, Howell, Naismith, and John

Mackenzie crossed this peak from north to south. The ascent gave over 1,000 feet of rock climbing, most of it across steeply inclined slabs of wet and rather slippery rock—not of the ordinary coarse-grained gabbro.

GARSBHEINN is the most southerly of the Cuillin group, and extends with Sgurr nan Eag about two miles in a narrow rough ridge, but there is no difficulty in traversing it from Scavaig over SGURR NAN EAG to the Bealach a' Garbh-choire. From the bealach to Scavaig is a terribly rough walk, and though the distance is short it will take more than an hour and a half.

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## THE RED HILLS AND BLAVEN.

The Eastern Cuillins, with the exception of the Blaven Group, are conical or rounded in shape, their sides consisting largely of granite screes, and offer little, if any, scope for rock climbing. The Blaven Group, however, is of a similar geological formation to the Western Cuillins.

### RED HILLS.

GLAMAIG is the most northern, and appears from Sligachan to be a rounded cone, though it is really elongated out three-quarters of a mile to the north-east to An Coileach. It has been ascended from Sligachan Hotel in thirty-seven minutes, and descended in eighteen minutes, but this feat is not likely to be repeated.

BEINN DEARG runs south from Glamaig for about two and a half miles, and has three tops, the round of which and Glamaig forms a pleasant high-level walk, and affords good views. It can be done from either end, but it is probably



*June 1906.*

LOCH COIR' A' GHRUNDA.

*A. E. Robertson.*



best to ascend Glamaig first, the bulk of whose screes can be avoided by keeping well to the north-west face.

MARSCO possesses little interest, though possibly rock climbing of some difficulty might be found on its precipitous west face. There is no record of any climbing having been done there.

#### THE BLAVEN GROUP.

The hills forming the Blaven Group are far away from Sligachan, and when a day is devoted to them it is usually spent in crossing Clach Glas and Blaven. The group can be reached in several ways.

(1.) The easiest is to follow the Glen Sligachan path to Loch an Athain, and strike up Coire Dubh to the north end of the Clach Glas ridge.

(2.) Another is to follow the Glen Sligachan path only as far as the wire fence, turn to the left and follow the burn round the back of Marsco, and go over the top of (or across the south-west slope of) Garbh-bheinn to the north end of the Clach Glas ridge.

(3.) A third way is to go past the loch and climb Blaven first.

BELIG, the most northern, is very much out of the way for any one staying at Sligachan, and will probably not afford much climbing.

GARBH-BHEINN has one steep face to the north-east on which some good rock-climbing might be found. The south-west face is steep and rocky, and its traverse on a contour is said to afford some hours' delightful scrambling. The ridge can be crossed from north-west to south-east without any difficulty.

SGURR NAN EACH is a rocky ridge, half a mile long, running eastwards from the col between the Garbh-bheinn and Clach Glas. This ridge is much broken, and gives easy, but interesting, climbing. The north face is precipitous, but can be easily climbed anywhere. The south face is not so interesting, being broken by screes.

CLACH GLAS is the great rock tower on the ridge connecting Garbh-bheinn with Blaven. The ridge itself is well broken up, and gives one to three hours of delightful climbing. The first ascent was made in 1888, and Mr Pilkington, who describes the ascent (marked C to D on Fig. 16), says:—

“Seen from Glen Sligachan, a dark cleft runs up the centre of the mountain for some distance ; climbing up this, and gaining the upper part of the ridge to the right or south side of the actual summit, we found a knife edge of tremendous steepness coming down towards us. We put on the rope and nerved ourselves for the attack ; we just had a look round the edge first, and seeing a piece of slanting rock, we crossed it, and, pulling ourselves out of the neck of a little gully, walked up the impostor in a few minutes.”—*Alpine Journal*, vol. xiii., p. 445.

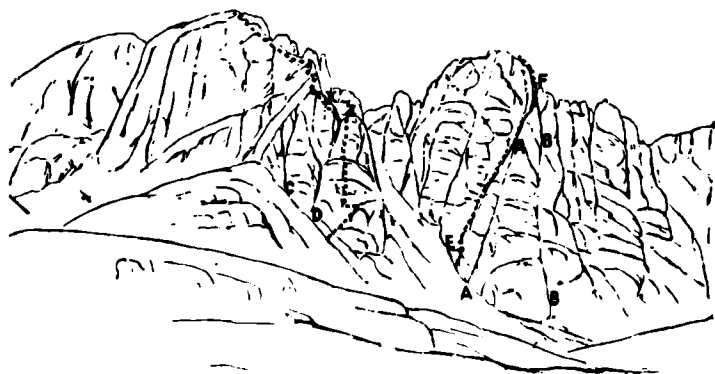


FIG. 14.—EAST FACE OF BLAVEN AND CLACH GLAS, FROM A SKETCH BY ALFRED WILLIAMS.

The *west face* of Clach Glas, overlooking the Coire Dubh and Loch an Athain, consists of slabs set at a high angle, intersected vertically by gullies. This face was climbed by Messrs Naismith and J. A. Parker in 1896, and their route is shown on Fig. 16, A to B. They found slabs (boiler plates) to start with. Above that there was a steepish corner pitch which might have been avoided by going farther to the right. Above that was mixed scree and easy rocks.

The *east face* is rocky, with grass ledges, and may be traversed almost anywhere. Dr Clark describes an exciting time he had in making the ascent of this face, partially in

and partially on the rib above the south wall of gully B of Mr Williams' diagram in June 1901 *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VI., p. 218, but the most descriptive account comes from Mr Sydney Williams. He says :—

“There is a carriage road from Broadford (9 miles) to the foot of the mountain ; then right before you are four or five of the very finest gullies, and there is here a rare opportunity for the chimney lovers. The most striking are the two long ones on Clach Glas (A and B) which I did not attempt, but looked into two or three on the lower rocks of Blaven (C and D), and found that they were of much too high a class for our powers. We found, however, that there was a way across the face of Clach Glas (E F), something like Jack's Rake on Pavey Ark, which hits the ridge just at the place where the ordinary route to the top turns out on to the west face. The knowledge of this rake may be useful to those trying serious climbing on this side of Clach Glas, and it gives a short route to the top from the east.

“We spent three days in examining the spur which runs east from the top of Blaven, and succeeded in making the ridge good. The only difficulties are in the ascent of the lowest pinnacle (Z) and in the passage from it to the second. We found a fault about 2 feet wide which ran straight to the top of Z, and it afforded holds which were scarcer on the glacier-ground rocks on each side of it. Looking from Z towards X, there is a mossy ledge about 9 inches wide, which is doubtless the correct way, but which we did not take, preferring the rotten stuff a little to the right.”

*Clach Glas* is usually climbed by following the ridge from end to end.

In going from north to south the first part presents no great difficulties, and these, such as they are, can be easily turned on the west side. On reaching the foot of the great tower a conspicuous slanting gully will be seen starting a little west of the col, and by this gully the steep roof of the tower is gained. Nail marks abound and indicate the way.

From the summit the ridge runs southwards towards Blaven, and the drops on the ridge are usually taken on

the east side. Mr Jackson describes the route from the top of Clach Glas to the Clach Glas-Blaven col thus:—

“Leaving the summit, the way for six to eight yards is along a good crack in a sloping slab, followed by a steep and rather rotten and narrow arête of some 60 feet in height, requiring caution. This is Mr Pilkington’s ‘impostor.’ Looking back it will be seen that the way down has been only a few inches from the edge of a perpendicular face of rock, at least 100 feet high. No wonder it impressed the first climbers as looking far worse than it turned out to

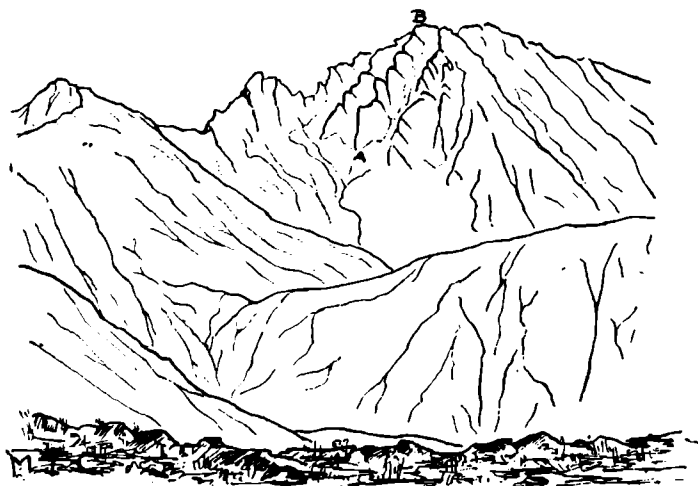


FIG. 15.—WEST FACE OF BLAVEN AND CLACH GLAS.

A to B. Pinnacle ridge of Blaven.

be. The rest of the way to the last bealach simply requires careful scrambling” (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IV., p. 21).

From the Clach Glas-Blaven col one can easily reach Coire Dubh by a scree slope that runs down to it, but those descending by this should assure themselves that they have reached the lowest point of the col before beginning to descend. In mist some gullies to the north of it tempt the unwary and lead them into trouble.

In mist it is one of the most difficult excursions to combine Clach Glas with Blaven. On the Western Cuillins

the ridge can usually be followed, no matter how dense the mist, by merely sticking to its crest, but from the Clach Glas-Blaven col to the top of Blaven things are very different, and few parties, without previous knowledge of the place, who tackle the two peaks in thick mist manage to carry out their programme. Mr Jackson, who wrote a very full description of Clach Glas (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IV., p. 16), says of this part of the climb:—

“From the col there is first a steep 15-foot wall. The

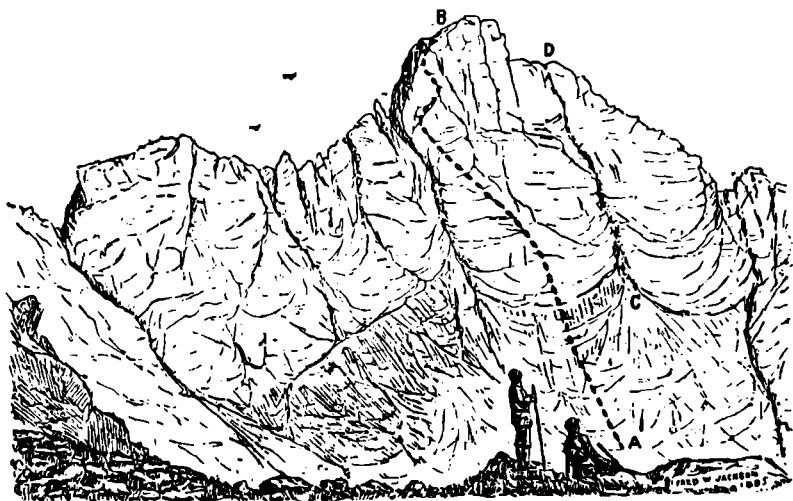


FIG. 16.—CLACH GLAS.

A to B, Naismith and Parker's route.  
C to D, Pilkington's route.

hold is ample, but the landing on the grass above will have to be effected by sprawling over the edge. Should one be descending instead of ascending this place, the last step will very likely be a combined tumble and jump, if the experience of three at least of our party of 1893 is any criterion. The rock is so steep as almost to compel one to fall off. The north end of Blaven is a perfect maze of shattered pinnacles. It appears to be generally want of time that prevents scrambling amongst them, and the guides leave them severely alone. We therefore proceed

over open, grassy ground to where two stone shoots are distinctly seen a little way ahead. The second of these is the better and shorter one to take; both lead into the enclosed place, Naismith's half-crown pinnacle forming the eastern side. Facing south we next climb a pretty 60-feet chimney leading to the final walk to the top of Blaven."

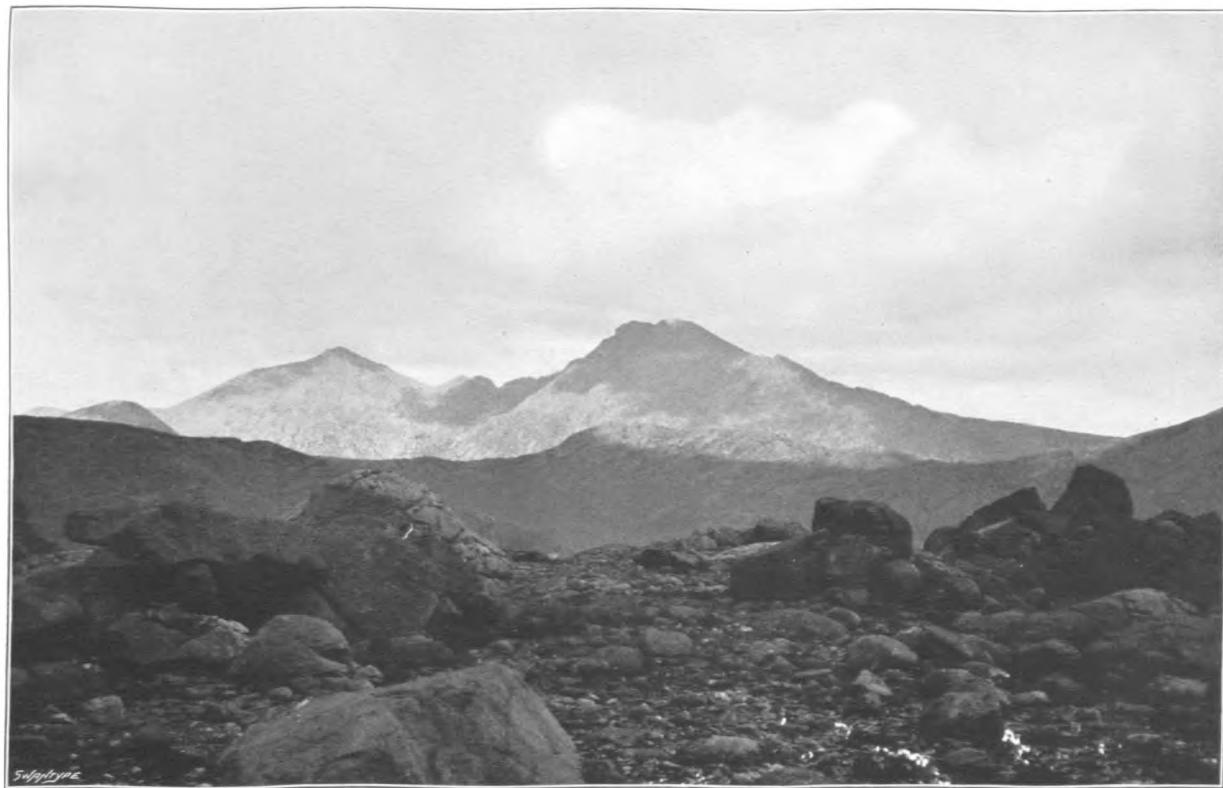
Mr Parker, another expert on the Blaven ridge, writes me an additional description of the same place, which I reprint *verbatim*:—

"To climb Blaven from Clach Glas-Blaven col, climb out slightly to the left, then to the right, and up a 15 feet wall with poor holds at the top; then to right across screes past one chimney and up the second (a stone shoot) which will lead you into an enclosed place; turn to the left, and up the adjoining gully, one with smooth sides and jammed stones. At its head cross the large stones and down into the large stone shoot, climbing up which to the left will place you on the sky-line above the steep north face of Blaven, at a height of about 2,600 feet. The walk from here to the north summit is simple."

Mr Corner also writes of this part of Blaven taken in the reverse direction. He says: "In order to reach the Clach Glas ridge from Blaven it is necessary to follow the line of the western cliff until a cairn is reached. At this point it is necessary to go down what in the mist looks like an appalling precipice. In daylight it is seen that there is a very steep step, at the bottom of which Clach Glas ridge begins" (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IX., p. 142).

BLAVEN is one of the most picturesquely shaped hills in Scotland, and its cleft and magnificent head, terminating the long southern ridge and supported on the north by the fantastic rocks of Clach Glas, often forms a subject for the artist's brush as well as the poet's pen. Its praises have been sung by Alexander Smith and Sheriff Nicolson over and over again.

Nicolson considers Blaven the finest hill in Skye and a remarkable example of the value of form in the production



*August 1902.*

BLAVEN FROM THE GARBH-CHOIRE.

*W. Douglas.*

of mountain grandeur, and in this I agree with him ; and Alexander Smith's

" At a clear open turn in the roadway  
My passion went up with a cry,  
For the wonderful mountain of Blaaven  
Was heaving his huge bulk on high,"

tells how the sight of this mountain stirred him to the very heart.

We have seen above how Mr Williams made the ascent from the east by the east ridge, so I need not refer to it again. Its summit can also be reached from the north and west by the scree shoot from Coire Dubh or from Strath na Creitheach by the steep slope to the south of the great gully ending between its two highest peaks. Nicolson also recommends a south-east route from Kirkibost, through a long glen up a steepish ridge, on the other side of which is a beautiful tarn sleeping quietly under the brow of the mountain. The ascent from this to the top, he says, is rough and rocky, but free from danger.

The usual route from Broadford side is, of course, up the easy scree of Coire Uaigneich to the north peak.

The ascent from Camasunary along its south ridge is delightfully easy, in fact it is little more than a pleasant walk, to be repaid on gaining the summit, if the day be clear, by one of the finest views obtainable in Skye. About this, perhaps, opinions differ, and I am doubtful if the one from Sgurr na Stri between Camasunary and Coruisk does not offer a grander prospect. It is nearer the Western Cullins, has a complete view of Loch Coruisk and of Blaven as well.

The gully between the north and south tops of Blaven can be descended, but the going is unpleasant, and there is a pitch about half-way down which usually necessitates a traverse out to the south side. If one wishes easy "going," it will probably be better to avoid the big gully, and descend the south ridge for about half a mile, where the west face can be descended easily. Or if one is fond of big-scrree slopes, the shoot referred to above that runs from a little east of the north summit of Blaven to Coire Dubh



will probably prove to be the quickest way down in the direction of Sligachan.

*The Pinnacle Ridge of Blaven.*—This ridge forms a prominent feature of the northern face of Blaven, as seen from Loch an Athain or Coire Dubh, more especially when clouds, filling the col between Blaven and Clach Glas, form a background. It was first ascended by W. Inglis Clark, T. E. Goodeve, and Harry Walker on 22nd April 1905; the conditions were very wintry, the rocks being comparatively free from snow, but thickly encrusted with fog crystals. After the first steep 300 feet the climb is a little indefinite, consisting of a series of platforms on which the screes from above have accumulated at a dangerous angle; thereafter the ridge narrows and affords excellent sport. After traversing several pinnacles the nature of the rock changes, and an exceedingly steep gabbro tower of fully 200 feet gives access to the final ridge which runs out just at the cairn (Fig. 15, A to B).

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### BROADFORD HILLS.

BEINN NA CAILLICH GROUP.—This can be ascended easily from Broadford. The character of the slopes is the same as that of Glamaig, and probably no climbing will be found on these hills, though the comprehensive views from some of them are indeed fine, especially so from Beinn Dearg Mhor.

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## PORTREE HILLS.

THE STORR ROCK (2,360 feet), and THE OLD MAN OF STORR.—The only notes of these we have are from the pen of Mr Raeburn. He says: "These rocks are well worth notice, not perhaps so much in a climbing sense—though in that respect they would certainly repay investigation—as for the extraordinary rock scenery they present. Admirers of the bizarre and eccentric in rock form would find here a multitude of the most strange-looking rock pinnacles in Scotland, standing up from a green slope below a fine striking wall of almost vertical rock, seamed with great chimneys of most formidable aspect. On 1st September 1898, A. W. Russell and H. Raeburn visited the Storr and the Old Man from Sligachan. Riding our cycles as far as Portree, we thence walked by the direct track by Lochs Fada and Leathan, reaching the Old Man in about two hours and a quarter. We will not venture to assert the Old Man will never be ascended, but we were quite content to look at him without making an attempt. The Old Man is a wonderful obelisk of trap rock, 160 feet high and about 40 feet in diameter. It actually overhangs its base almost the whole way round, so that it has the appearance of dangerous instability at close quarters. The Old Man is only one, though the largest, of a number of other rock pinnacles. One, which we called the Old Woman, looks possible of ascent; another presents the appearance of a ruined castle; and another, farther to the south, has a summit which shows the outline of a begging dog. We made the ascent of a small pinnacle near the Old Man, but the wind was blowing half a gale from the south-west, and it was no easy matter to hold on. Time did not permit of a close examination of the great chimneys of the Storr, but probably some of these might 'go' if properly investigated."

PORTREE TO STAFFIN—*High-Level Route*.—Mr Penney describes an excursion which he made by this route in March 1901, as follows:—

"On Wednesday we set off from Portree, and three hours took us to the top of the Storr (2,360 feet). The atmosphere, especially to the west, was phenomenally clear, and such a day does not occur often, or Skye would be overrun with Cockneys. Every eminence in the Long Island from Barra Head to the Butt of Lewis stood out in sharp outline against the sky. One rehearsed the names of the Cuillins, and identified the heights from Beinn na Caillich above Broadford to Sgurr na Banachdich. Eigg, Rum, and Canna showed up to the south; Ben Alligin, Leagach, and An Teallach were seen to the east and north-east; Scour Ouran and its Six Sisters were plainly visible; but farther to the south-east was not so clear.

"Sheriff Nicolson, our late Vice-President, a leading authority on all things connected with Skye, is alleged to have said that 'to ascend the Storr and follow the mountain ridge the whole way till you come to the highroad near the Quiraing is no doubt one of the grandest promenades in Skye, commanding wide views in all directions.' I had determined to follow his advice, although I have as little doubt he never did the tramp himself as I have that Scott 'never went by light of moon to see what could be seen at noon'! It is a fine ridge walk, and the view of the basaltic terraces and cliffs on the east side of the range is unrivalled. I would fain have had another hour in which to catch the steamer at Staffin, but, by making twenty-five minutes cover all rests, I reached the boat slip in four and a half hours after leaving the Storr. The true nature of the range is seen from the sea. It is a succession of tops with numerous although not heavy dips between. From the Storr the ridge appears to be pretty well continuous, or I might not have attempted it with the time at my disposal. There are in all seven different dips before Beinn Edra (2,003 feet), a sharp imposing top at the north end of the ridge, is reached, and the climbing, including the ascent of the Storr, amounts in all to more than 4,250 feet. With the exception of two easy bealachs, down which a horse might be taken, there did not appear to me to be any places where a descent towards the east could be comfortably made. There is, however, a well-recognised but steep

passage down from the head of Glen Hinnisdal, which runs up from beyond Kingsburgh on the west, to Loch Cuithir (pronounced *Queer*) and Lealt on the east.

“Uig Bay and its long pier were well seen to the left before I reached Bealach Uig, by which I went down into the boggy glen leading to Staffin. In front of me the Needle Rock of the Quiraing was most distinct, and by a somewhat early start from Portree the Quiraing itself might be added to the day's work.”

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### QUIRAING.

The drive from Portree to Uig is a pleasant one. From there it is about an hour and a half's walk on the main road towards Staffin to where the footpath strikes northwards (a little beyond the highest part of the road), leading in half an hour to the wonderful collection of rocks and rock pinnacles. Not much has appeared in the *Journal* about them, and the Editor suggests that they would be a good subject for a paper. Mr Penney tells me that the best way to reach its inner recesses is to follow a zigzag path to the Needle Rock and then to climb the gully in which the Needle Rock is situated. The gully is steep but not difficult.

Sheriff Nicolson wrote of the Quiraing in 1872, and thus he describes it :—

“Quiraing is a hollow with a raised oblong, grassy platform in its centre, almost quite encircled by tall rocks, at an elevation of about 1,000 feet from the sea, and within two miles from the shore. You enter by a steep, half-grassy, half-gravelly ascent, through a cleft between the rocks, the entrance of which is well marked by a pyramidal rock known as the ‘Needle,’ about 100 feet high, a very wonderful object, which gives you the impression as you gaze back on it that it is moving up towards the sky. After you reach the top of

this steep ascent you see before you an amphitheatre of rocks surrounding the foresaid platform, which is about 40 feet high, 100 yards long and 60 broad, and is most luxuriously carpeted with fine mossy grass. Behind it to the left is a lofty uniform wall of black trap rock, forming the northern face of the mountain that slopes away westwards towards the moors above Uig. To the right, and all round, except on the north, is a circle of rocky pillars and spires of varied and fantastic form, through the clefts between which you get glimpses of the sea and the steep intervening slopes of land. You descend into the hollow, and after a short scramble you get to the foot of the raised platform, up to which there is an easy path, and on the summit of which you are in the best position for surveying and enjoying the extraordinary scene around you. After you have sufficiently rested and contemplated here, you will descend and take peeps through the clefts below, and admire the curious structure of the rocks, the grotesque resemblances they suggest to human faces and forms of men and beasts, and the rich growth of green and yellow plants and flowers that adorns their perpendicular sides with their numberless shelves and crevices. Above all, if the sun shines, you will delight to look down on the far-gleaming sea—stretching away in front to the faint distant outline of Lewis, and eastwards to the more distant but bolder outline of the Sutherland mountains—Benmore, Suilven, and Quinaig. If the sun does not shine, and if, on the contrary, you have moaning winds and wreathing mists eddying round those strange pinnacles and eerie chasms, you will have seen the Cuiraing in its most solemn and memorable aspect.”—*Scotsman*, June 1872.

I began this paper with a word as to the weather of Skye, and so, too, do I end it. One may get good weather at any time of the year, but the general consensus of opinion pronounces that from mid-May to mid-July is the time *par excellence* to visit Skye. Then you have the longest days, the clearest atmosphere, with the best chance of dry weather. But go to the Cuillins whenever you may, climb wisely and always within your powers. At Easter time you are likely to find many of the peaks inaccessible except by the lines of least resistance, and even these may tax the powers of a “strong party” to the utmost. When the rocks are free from snow then the Cuillin Hills are at their best. Go, therefore, and enjoy to the full those splendid rocks with their glorious holds and friction grips of excessive tenacity; revel in the angle that counts as nothing, and you will find those hills as fresh to-day as in the days of the pioneer. What matter though they have

all been done before, the "wild joy of gripping grey-brown ledges" can still be yours, and that, after all, is one of the great charms of the Cuillins. But when you have left Skye, remember that other rocks are not so kind, and that they are not to be treated with that reckless confidence begotten of familiarity with the all-too-good gabbro of the Cuillin Hills ; also, one must not be so carried away in his joy of overcoming so many seemingly impossible places as to slander those grand old hills by speaking of the "ridiculously easy climbs" that are to be found among them.

W. D.

*[Owing to the size of the foregoing paper on Skye all other Articles and Notes have been held over for the January number.—ED.]*

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