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## THE CAIRNGORMS—AN APPRECIATION.

BY G. MURRAY LAWSON.

WHEN, in response to the urgent request of the Editor, I undertook the task of writing an article on the Cairngorms, I was under the impression that little concerning this district had appeared in the *Journal*. It was only when I had settled down to my task—a labour of love, be it admitted—that I discovered my error, and that far abler pens than mine had done honour to these noble hills. It is, therefore, with considerable diffidence that I submit a few of the experiences which I have had and the impressions which I have gathered during my visits to the Cairngorm district.

How well I recall my introduction to the Cairngorms! I and two friends, all of us clad in the scantiest of raiment—to wit football jerseys and shorts—sallied forth from Blair Atholl one sultry afternoon in August, each burdened with about thirty pounds' weight of provender, cooking utensils, &c. There was also a tent, which seemed to expand into the dimensions of a large marquee during the day, and at night to shrink to the narrowest limits, and to impress its inmates with its total inadequacy as a shelter for three human beings. After a sleepless night spent at the Falls of Tarff, we proceeded to Braemar for very necessary sartorial reasons. These matters being satisfactorily adjusted, we made a fresh start on the third day. Late in the afternoon, however, one of the party,

for some unaccountable reason, became weary of his burden, and absolutely refused to proceed any further that day. The result was that our camp was pitched in the neighbourhood of the Pools of Dee, where a somewhat chilly and uncomfortable night was spent. The following day, however, we were early afield, and tramped down to the Aulldruie Meadow in Rothiemurchus. Here we established what might be called a base camp about a mile above the meadow.

From our camp we made many excursions into the hills. We were all of us the veriest tyros. Our whole knowledge of the district was gleaned from a map apparently published for the use of cyclists, while not one of us had thought fit to bring a compass. In consequence, we often had considerable difficulty, both in finding our bearings on the hills, which during our visit were seldom free from mist, and also in leaving the forest when shortage of provisions rendered a call on the grocer at Aviemore desirable. Most beginners undergo some such experiences, but the lessons learned from these initial difficulties are never forgotten.

To enjoy the Cairngorms to the full one must live among them, study their moods, their moments of fierce storm and quiet rest, their sunshine and shadow. It is only then that their charm can be fully understood. If, however, one is willing to spend a few summer nights in the open, it is a comparatively simple matter to be thus enlightened. A moderately hardy constitution, a few days' provisions, and the Shelter Stone—little else is required. Most climbers who know the Cairngorms will cherish happy memories of many a comfortable night spent at the Shelter Stone. It is true that the couch it offers is somewhat hard, and that at times the draughts are somewhat persistent, but, after a day spent in the open, slumber, induced by fresh air and exercise, comes readily, and the sleeper awakens in the morning more refreshed than if the night had been spent in conventional surroundings. Then there is the scenery at one's doorstep, so to speak. One particular evening spent at the Shelter Stone will always remain vivid in my memory. The weather had not been

of the best, but towards dusk the mists lifted. Loch Avon, lying between the imprisoning hills, with its clear surface undisturbed by a ripple, rivalled even Loch Coruisk, and save for an occasional dark cloud scudding past high over the cliffs, the sky was clear. As daylight failed the top of Beinn Mheadoin caught the light of the rising moon, and the ever deepening shadows of the rocks loomed over the loch. The silence was only broken by the distant roar of the torrent.

Rothiemurchus Forest, lying between Aviemore and the Cairngorms, is one of the grandest forests in Scotland. Its height above sea level, the feeling of freedom and space which it inspires, and its rich colouring, all combine to render it peerless. Who is there from among its frequenters that has not at one time or another been conscious of its air of mystery and enchantment? The place teems with Highland legend and folklore, which prompt the imagination until one would almost believe the forest to be peopled with the spirits of the ancient clansmen. Looking to the hills from Rothiemurchus, the most striking feature in the landscape is the entrance to the Larig Ghru, which cuts, in a huge V-shaped gash, the otherwise rounded contours of the mountains. This natural gateway, at all times imposing, is ever at its best when the storm winds drive the swirling mists in wreaths around the crags, whose dark masses rise boldly on either side like two giant sentinels mounting guard over the pass. Under such circumstances it is well named "the forbidding pass." In the foreground stands the beautiful cone of Carn Elrick, a deer sanctuary of days gone by. Rising as it does practically from the midst of the forest, Carn Elrick is one of the finest view points in the neighbourhood, and all the wide expanse of Rothiemurchus and Glenmore lies just below—a wonderful panorama of forest and stream, moor and loch. The Larig track leads through heather and peat up the true right bank of the Allt-na-Larig Ghru, and as the woods are left behind, a splendid view of the entrance to the pass is revealed. About a couple of miles further on the path crosses the burn, and its condition, bad enough up to this point, now rapidly deteriorates. The pass is filled with

stones of all sizes, which have been hurled from the slopes above, completely burying the stream which flows for considerable distances under great boulders, to issue forth clear and cool, even during the hottest summer day. The summit of the pass is gained about the 2,750 contour, and here the scene of desolation and grandeur is at its maximum. There is no finer view of Cairn Toul than that obtained from this point, while the Pools of Dee, surrounded by a chaos of rocks, form a fitting foreground to the picture. Here the forces of Nature have been at work on a grand scale. As each year goes by, the landslips come thundering down from the heights above, adding their contribution to the medley of broken rock in the base of the pass.

From the Pools to the summit of Braeriach is but a climb of about 1,500 feet, and the going is not much rougher than that in the pass. The summit of Braeriach in fine summer weather is an ideal spot at which to laze away an hour or two, and to indulge in contemplations such as only the hills can inspire. Some climbers contend that the view from Braeriach is disappointing in comparison to that from the majority of hills in the Western Highlands, in that it fails to reveal the distant ranges and peaks. To a certain extent this must be admitted ; but, on the other hand, we have on Braeriach the grand scenery of the hill itself, namely, the Coire Brochain and the Garbhchoire. Who, on making the ascent for the first time, say, from Glen Eunach by the deerstalker's path, could fail to be impressed by this vast amphitheatre ? It is at such a moment as this, whilst contemplating in silence the mighty works of the Creator, that the troubles of a city life and world strife, always to be considered trivial matters on the hills, are temporarily banished.

To those who have climbed Braeriach under winter conditions is allotted the full reward. After the laborious ascent, the walk along the corniced cliffs over good, hard snow is a welcome relief. Stob Coire Lochan Uaine and Cairn Toul, rising but a few hundred feet above the plateau, are easily overcome, and, from accounts in a recent number of the *Journal*, the descent from the Cairn of the latter to Glen Dee may, under certain conditions, be



*August 1919*

THE POOLS OF DEE

*J. H. Buchanan*

made in thirteen minutes. A fitting finish to the day is the tramp down Glen Dee and round the shoulder of Carn a Mhaim to Lui Beg or Derry Lodge, where the wayfarer may always be certain of a hospitable reception.

Glen Derry almost rivals Rothiemurchus in beauty, but the rich growth of heather and blaeberry, so abundant in Rothiemurchus, is not so pronounced in Glen Derry, with the result that this glen lacks the warmth of colour, which is one of the outstanding features on the north-western side of the range. The approach to the hills from Inverey is an ever changing scene of fir forest, rushing torrent, and rugged hill, all most satisfying to the beholder but impossible to describe adequately. The culminating point is reached at the junction of Glen Derry with Glen Lui, where from a verdant meadow the hills, capped, maybe, with snow, rise steeply on all sides. On entering Glen Derry the way lies through a forest which possesses some fine specimens of the primeval fir. This forest—thanks to its remoteness and the resulting difficulty in transport—has so far been immune from the woodman's axe. Long may this continue! Further on, the path leaves the forest and, crossing the Derry Burn, leads along the hillside, while the burn winds through a broad meadow, a favourite grazing ground for the deer. Beyond the meadow, Cairn Gorm of Derry rises to a height of 3,788 feet, and still further up the glen, seemingly at the head of the pass, is the entrance to Coire Etchachan. Under the summit cliffs of Beinn Muich Dhui, at an altitude of 3,100 feet, lies Loch Etchachan. Its appearance on the finest summer day is wild and lonely. But how is one to describe the scene when the mists drive over its waters and the storm rushes shrieking across its troubled surface? These are never to be forgotten moments.

The distant view from the cairn of Beinn Muich Dhui, like that from Braeriach, is disappointing; but there is, again, the remarkable view of the neighbouring hills. From this point the hills bounding the western side of the Lurig Ghru and Glen Dee are seen to great advantage, and under snow conditions the Garbhchoire is magnificent. Although the summit of Beinn Muich Dhui is compara-

tively uninteresting in contour, as its name, "The hill of the Black Sow's Back," indicates, yet to one who wanders over the summit plateau there comes a feeling that he is really in an arctic clime. This is the home of the ptarmigan, snow bunting, and mountain hare. Comparatively large streams, buried in snow for the greater part of the year, flow across the plateau only a few hundred feet below the summit and, issuing from snow tunnels, plunge over the rocks at the head of Loch Avon. The walk along the plateau which leads to Cairngorm may prove delightful or not, according to the weather, but it is certainly always exhilarating. Indeed, what walk in Scotland at such an altitude could be otherwise? By a slight divergence from the direct route one can look down on Loch Avon which, seen from above, appears wild and desolate, while the crags rising from the Shelter Stone accentuate the grandeur of the scene. The scenery on the western side of the plateau is also very fine, and it is easy to wander over to the Lurcher's Crags and the rocks of Coire-an-t-Sneachda. In mist it is tricky work to steer a true course on this broad plateau, and strict attention requires to be paid to the compass if the intended line is to be kept. More than one party, to my knowledge, has, in making for Cairngorm from Beinn Muich Dhui, arrived on the shores of Loch Avon and incurred the penalty of an additional climb of about 1,500 feet.

The long descent from the summit of Cairngorm to Glenmore, though rather uninteresting from a mountaineering standpoint, is exceedingly comforting to one who has spent a long day on the hills. At the end of the day there is a peculiar satisfaction in the brisk walk through the fir forests, especially if the stars are twinkling overhead, and there is just a touch of frost in the air to make the blood tingle and walking a pleasure. It is then one feels the true enjoyment of the forest.

In bad weather the conditions on the Cairngorms may be very severe. During September of 1918 I visited this district in the company of a friend who wished to spend his short leave from France among the Cairngorms. We left Edinburgh by the night train and, after a sleepless

journey in a crowded carriage, started out from Aviemore at 4.30 A.M. The plan was to cross over from Glen Eunach to Inverey, taking in Braeriach, Monadh Mhor, and Beinn Bhrotain; but we had reckoned without the weather. Day was breaking as we entered the forest, and the morning mists enfolded the base of the hills. Carn Elrick stood out sharply defined, while beyond the shoulder of Braeriach, with its first covering of snow, a higher stratum of mist capped the summits of the greater hills. At the bothy in the Aultdrue Meadow a fire was lit, and after breakfast and a welcome cup of tea, we crossed over to Glen Eunach. Some trouble was experienced in negotiating the Allt-na-Beinne Mor, then in spate, and shortly afterwards the rain, which had never been far off since daybreak, came down in earnest. A halt was called at the second bothy, and as there was no prospect of eating in comfort at any other point on the journey, an early lunch was dispatched. The route followed was up the ridge to the east of Coire Dhonndail, from which a great view was obtained of the rocks of Sgoran Dhu. The upper parts of the ridges were enveloped in cloud, and gave one the impression that they might have continued for many thousands of feet beyond their point of contact with the mist. As the rain had now been transformed into sleet, rendered all the more unpleasant by a strong south-easterly gale, the idea of tackling Braeriach was abandoned, and a compass course was set for Monadh Mhor. The weather, however, became even worse and Monadh Mhor shared the fate of Braeriach. Our sole idea by now was to get into Glen Geusachan, and so escape the gale. The new snow, which lay to an average depth of about a foot on the higher ground, was anything but agreeable to walk through, as it served the purpose, amongst others, of concealing numerous rivulets, which were only discovered on personal contact. The glen, as we found it, simply exuded water. The Geusachan Burn, roaring down from its corrie in spate, was augmented by an infinite number of smaller streams and the walk down the glen appeared to consist of stepping out of one stream into another. By the time we had crossed the Dee the maximum state of discomfort



was attained. After halting at Lui Beg for tea, we arrived at Inverey about eight o'clock. Comparatively speaking, the day had been a failure, and we would have been the first to admit this while on the hills. But a dry change and a meal never fail to alter one's ideas of enjoyment, and our recollections of that day are now a happy memory. At such times it is hard to say where the pleasure lies, but pleasure there undoubtedly is.

This article is no tale of daring exploit on mountain crag, nor of strenuous days of peak bagging. It is merely a tribute to those grand hills which at all seasons of the year and in almost all weathers cannot fail to call forth admiration, and which, as time passes and one comes to know them, ever arouse feelings of veneration and friendship. Fortunate, indeed, is he who is able to claim such friends.

THE ROAD.

BY MISS C. G. M. ORR.

[These verses, which originally appeared in *Punch* for 3rd December 1919, are reprinted here by courteous permission of the proprietors of *Punch*.]

THERE are some that love the Border-land and some the  
Lothians wide,  
And some would boast the Neuk o' Fife and some the  
banks o' Clyde,  
And some are fain for Mull and Skye and all the Western  
Sea ;  
But the Road that runs by Atholl will be doing yet  
for me.

The Road it runs by Atholl and climbs the midmost  
brae  
Where Killiecrankie crowns the pass with golden woods  
and gay ;  
There straight and clean 'twas levelled where the Garry  
runs below  
By Wade's red-coated soldiery two hundred years ago.

The Road it strikes Dalwhinnie where the mountain tops  
are grey  
And the snow lies in the corries from October until May ;  
Then down from bleak Ben Alder by Loch Ericht's wind-  
swept shore  
It hastes by Dalnaspidal to the howes of Newtonmore.

The Road it runs through Badenoch, and still and on  
it rings  
With the riding of the clansmen and a hundred echoings ;  
Oh, some they rode for vengeance, and some for gear  
and gain,  
But some for Bonnie Charlie rode and came not home  
again.

The Road it runs by Alvie—you may linger if you list  
To gaze on Ben Muich-Dhuie and the Larig's cap of  
mist ;

There are pines in Rothiemurchus like a gipsy's dusky  
hair,

There are birch trees on Craigellachie like elfin silver-  
ware.

The Road it runs to Forres and it leaves the hills behind,  
For the roving winds from Morayshire have brought the  
sea to mind ;

But still it winds to northward in the twilight of the day,  
Where the stars shine down at evening on the bonny  
haughs o' Spey.

Oh, there's some that sing of Yarrow stream, Traquair  
and Manor-side,

And some would pick the Neuk o' Fife and some the  
banks o' Clyde ;

And some would choose the Pentlands, Cauldstaneslap  
to Woodhouselee,

But the Road that runs by Atholl will be doing yet  
for me.

Clachlet



Stob Coir an  
Albannaich



Stob Ghabhar



Glas Bheinn Mhor



*March 1910*

*J. R. Young*

SUMMIT OF BEN STARAV  
LOOKING EAST

## LOCH ETIVE SIDE.

BY G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

"This Land of Rainbows, spanning glens whose walls,  
Rock-built, arching with rainbow-coloured mists,  
Of far-stretched meres, whose salt flood never rests,  
Of tuneful caves and playful waterfalls,  
Of mountains varying momentarily their crests."

W. WORDSWORTH,

"Composed in the Glen of Loch Etive."

LOCH ETIVE has always had a great attraction for the writer, as it was on its shores that his first acquaintance with the charm of the Scottish hills was made. There is a subtle something about Loch Etive which is difficult to describe, which grips one, and year after year calls one back to renew a friendship at once alluring and fascinating.

Loch Etive stretches from the Falls of Lora at Connel Ferry for about 18 miles inland to Loch Etive Head, where the River Etive has deposited a very considerable delta, quite a mile in length, and which is very conspicuous to an observer on the hills round the head of the loch. From the pier at the head, Glen Etive runs north-east for about 6 miles, and then turns round the shoulder of Beinn Ceitlin for another 8 miles to Kingshouse, under the watchful eye of Stob Dearg of Buchaille Etive Mor.

The best place to make one's headquarters is undoubtedly Taynuilt, which is very easy of access from both Edinburgh and Glasgow. Taynuilt sits on a very good example of a raised beach, which is quite conspicuous on the road across from the village to the ferry to Bonawe quarries. The ferry runs immediately above a ridge on the bottom of the loch, which makes the water shallow here, and so causes considerable currents when the tide is strong. The River Awe, entering on the east side of this ridge, is one of Scotland's most famous salmon rivers, the record salmon caught therein being 55 lbs. (see hall of Loch Awe Hotel). The Awe flows through the Pass of

Brander, which occupies the site of a fault between the Cruachan granite and the volcanic plateau of Lorne. This fault is continued in Gleann Salach on the other side of Loch Etive.

Taynuilt is the ordinary tourist centre for Cruachan, the actual summit of which is not visible from the village, the summit seen being Stob Dearg (3,611 feet). To the writer's mind, Stob Dearg, seen from the north platform of Taynuilt station, with a mass of firs on either side of the foreground, is one of the most beautiful of Scottish peaks.

The Cruachan ridge is, outside Skye, the third best ridge in Scotland, only Aonach Eagach of Glencoe and the A'Chir ridge in Arran taking pride of place, by reason of the considerably more interesting climbing to be obtained thereon. The Cruachan ridge is only a scramble, although in winter time it can be a difficult proposition. In going along the ridge from east to west, it is well to remember, in mist, that when the summit (3,312 feet) is reached the route lies to the south-west, not straight on as it would appear. This saves an unlooked for descent into Glen Noe down Drochaid Ghlas.

Cruachan is quite an interesting hill to ascend from the north side, the route lying up the loch side to the mouth of Glen Noe and then up Glen Noe. Several points on the ridge may be aimed for, and, especially in winter time, some good snow gullies are to be found between Stob Dearg and Drochaid Ghlas. The Noe valley is very interesting as being an excellent example of a through valley. Quite a useful off-day can be put in by making the circuit of Cruachan, the distance being about 21 miles.

On the north side of Glen Noe is a long and tedious ridge leading up to Aonach Breac (2,395 feet). The writer and a friend from the Fell and Rock Club plugged up this long ridge from Inverliver on New Year's Day, 1920, and while the writer came across the col at the head of Glen Noe, his more energetic friend bagged Beinn a Chochuill. From this long ridge one gets a wonderful view of the north side of Cruachan, and on New Year's Day, which those who were at the Loch Awe Meet will never forget, the ridge was a wonderful sight, every gully showing

up beautifully in the bright sunshine, with a heavy coating of snow.

Looking north from Aonach Breac one gets a very fine view of Ben Starav in profile on one side of the loch, and the exceptionally steep face of Ben Trilleachan on the other.

Going north from Inverliver one passes up the loch side to the mouth of the River Kinglass, a considerable stream, which rises on the southern slopes of Stob Coire an Albannaich, and which is well known locally for its fishing. Ardmaddy, close beside the mouth, belongs to the Blackmount Forest, which is here bounded on the south by the Kinglass, and on the north marches with Glen Etive Forest.

The writer will never forget going up Loch Etive on New Year's Eve in a small motor boat from Inverliver, where the evening had been spent, to Ardmaddy, where, thanks to the excellent hospitality of Mr M'Innes, the keeper there, the night was passed. It was one of the events of a lifetime; the hills were covered with snow down to 600 feet, the moon nearly full, everything sparkling with frost, and clear, the water like glass. So smooth indeed was the loch that a considerable portion of it was frozen over the next morning. Truly such nights are worth a lifetime of days. The writer and friend had spent nine hours that day coming over from Druimnaohish at Loch Etive Head via the col between Ben Starav and Glas Bheinn Mhor, and down to Ardmaddy, 9 miles, with deep snow most of the way, the early morning object in view having been Loch Awe Hotel; but the heavy going quite negated any further progress, especially when combined with the kind invitations of Mrs Campbell of Inverliver and Miss M'Innes of Ardmaddy.

Going steadily north from Ardmaddy up the loch side we come to Inverghuisachan point, beside which there is the ruin of an old church. From here the Allt Ghuisachan runs due east, and then crosses another through valley to Coire Hallater. Glen Ghuisachan is a steep and narrow glen which rises quite rapidly to a perfectly flat little plateau previous to entering Coire Hallater with Beinn nan Aighean (3,141 feet) in view straight ahead all the time. Passing on up Coire Hallater, the floor of

which slopes very gradually upwards, and carries a lot of snow, we reach the col (2,519 feet), between Starav and Glas Bheinn Mhor Bealachan Lochain Ghaineamhaich. From this point, down the corrie of the same name, the descent is at first rapid and then more gradual until Coileitir is reached. On the left-hand side are the cliffs of Ben Starav, which, with Stob Coire Dheirg, should provide many good snow gullies. The writer and his friend spent four hours plugging up from Coileitir to this col, a distance of about two and a half miles, in deep snow, whilst Starav smoked vigorously the while. A small herd of deer kept a watchful eye on the two slow-moving mortals, and a slowly soaring eagle directed the expedition from on high as the col was being reached. This corrie is certainly a very fine one.

Having reached Coileitir, we are now at the foot of the north shoulder of Ben Starav, and join the loch side path which we had forsaken at Inverghuisachan point.

The writer owes Ben Starav a grudge, as he has made four attempts to bag him and only succeeded once. In summer time Starav is best ascended either from the loch side viâ the south-west shoulder which leads up from Rùadha Doire Larach, or else straight up the north-west corrie. The latter is steep and rough, but is short and to be recommended. In addition, one may ascend from Coileitir by the north ridge, and in winter time from Coire an Fhir Leith by one of the snow gullies on the east side of the ridge. Starav is a fine hill and well worth spending time on, although rather difficult of access. The major portion of Starav is in Glen Etive Forest, which is well known as the possessor of a traditional white hind which was supposed to bring death in its train. Scrope gives a yarn about some poachers who shot one of their own number whilst on the track of the white hind. Mr Ian Nelson, of Glen Etive, told the writer that some few years ago he shot a white stag, and that to-day there is a white hind in the forest. The strain of white, therefore, still crops up. We have now reached the head of the loch, and are presented with a magnificent view of Bidean nam Bian (3,766 feet), the highest mountain





*March 1910*

**BEN STARAV FROM GLEN ETIVE**

*J. R. Young*

in Argyllshire. Round the corner, out of sight, are the "Shepherds of Etive," two of the shapeliest hills imaginable. They are cut off from our present view by Ben Ceitlin, which is most unfortunate in being below the magic 3,000 feet, but which is, nevertheless, a magnificent hill. Passing on from Coileitir, we cross the Etive by an excellent bridge, and come upon the road down the glen. At Druimnahoish is the post office. The road passes on a mile or so down to the pier, where it ends, and a track goes down the side of the loch to Bonawe. From the pier the view is wonderful. Away down the loch, some 12 miles off, is the whole Cruachan ridge showing up against the sky, with Ben Cruachan and Stob Dearg standing out prominently. Up the glen, the two Buchiaialles, with a tiny cloud just forming on either lower flank above Dalness, are keeping a watchful eye on us.

Immediately in front of us is the solid massif of Starav with the north-west Coire straight ahead, whilst behind us Ben Trilleachan frowns down. To the writer, Ben Trilleachan is one of the most fascinating of hills, for although well below 3,000 feet, still there is a charm about it which is difficult to explain. The very steep eastern face must be one of the steepest in Scotland. For quite 1,500 feet the angle is considerably above that of the average Scottish hill, and one does not realise it until one sees it in profile. Mr MacDougall, who was keeper at Barrs but is now at Coileitir, once pursued a wounded stag across the face. He was hindered by a rifle, but I very much doubt if he would ever repeat the performance. There is a large horseshoe shaped area of bare water-worn granite, where a mythical horse is supposed to have stepped across from Starav and planted his foot. The writer tried these granite slabs one summer, but everything slopes the wrong way. To the north of this is an interesting gully which cleaves the face, and which the writer once unsuccessfully tackled solo, and was driven back by a large jammed block in the first pitch; the higher pitches look distinctly forbidding.

On 30th December 1919 the writer and his friend went up the north ridge of Trilleachan to the summit,

marked 2,506 feet; the southern top is the higher, 2,752 feet, and is about 1 mile from the north top. Our summit bore an incipient cornice on its eastern face, and the views of Loch Etive in the late afternoon were superb, with a rich golden sunset lighting everything up with a clear, cold light. The view of the loch was extraordinary, insomuch as there was absolutely no foreground! One saw snow at one's feet, and then Loch Etive, 2,500 feet below.

The play of colours—browns and greens—on the lower slopes which were free from snow, up Glen Etive, was truly wonderful. Beinn Sguliard away to the west looked cold and frosty in the fading light, and with not a breath of air and a truly uncanny stillness and quiet, one realised to the full the extraordinary fascination which it is possible for the hills to have in winter time.

From Ben Trilleachan down the loch side to Bonawe there is really little of interest, except the wonderful changing views of the Cruachan ridge, Beinn nan Aighean and Ben Starav on the left hand, and Beinn Sguliard away to the right. Sguliard is best climbed from Glen Ure. The writer, one very hot and oppressive day, plugged wearily across from Loch Etive Head, past Airidh an Lochan to the summit, which has a huge cairn, and then down to Dall. From the summit down to Dall is wearisome in the extreme, waist-deep old heather and huge boulders. Leaving Dall, one passes a small schoolhouse, which usually has three pupils and one mistress, who stays with her pupils, who come either from Dall or Cadderlie, and go daily up the loch side to school.

From Cadderlie past Craig the track winds about among open birch wood on the loch side to Bonawe quarries, where one can take the ferry back to Taynuilt.

We have now traversed the most interesting portion of the loch, and it only remains to say a few words about the loch itself. It is a typical Scottish sea loch, the saltness of the water varying a good deal with the state of the several rivers which flow into it, the Etive, Kinglass, and Awe. In winter time, when the loch is considerably fresher than in the summer, it freezes quite easily, and Mr Mackay, the

mail carrier from Taynuilt, has occasionally to put in at Barrs and carry the mails up the loch side to the pier, the upper reaches of the loch being too heavily iced to allow a boat to get up at all. The head of the loch is also a great storm centre in rough weather, the drift from the loch being carried up the glen as far as Glen Etive House, the windows of which are coated with salt after a heavy storm.

Eagles have for years been known to nest in the neighbourhood of the loch.

For some years now a pair have nested on Beinn Duirinnis, and some years ago there was an eyrie on the cliff of Trilleachan, south of the face. In addition, at the head of the loch and up the glen several eyries exist on the neighbouring hills. There is a considerable number of large foxes at the head of the loch, which do not do any good.

Mr Mackay's motor boat goes up the loch during the winter, except on very stormy days, on Tuesdays and Fridays, leaving Taynuilt pier at 10 A.M., and returning from the head of the loch about 1 P.M. In summer the trips are more frequent. He calls at Glen Noe, Inverliver, and Ardmaddy on the east side, and at Craig, Cadderlie, Dall, and Barrs on the west side (Barrs is at present empty), but he is always willing to put climbers ashore where they wish, *i.e.*, at the foot of Starav or Trilleachan.

The tracks on the two sides of the loch are very similar, as far as quality, or the lack of it, goes. If anything, the Ben Trilleachan side is the easier, but is much wetter in its first three miles. There is only one stream of any size to cross, and this is crossed by quite a useful bridge, which is decaying in parts. The Ben Starav side has three streams to cross, one of them the Kinglass, a good sized river; but there is an excellent foot bridge near Ardmaddy, which is well clear of any spates. The bridges on the Liver and Noe are both good, solid bridges. The ferry across the Awe is right at the mouth, and the boat lies on the Cruachan side of the river, so has to be shouted for from the other side when required.

The tracks on either side of the loch are not at all

suitable for cycles: they could only be ridden for a very short distance.

“ Down the pass of Glen-Etive the tempest is borne,  
And the hill-side is swinging, and roars with a sound  
In the heart of the forest embosomed profound,  
Till all in a moment the tumult is o'er,  
And the mountain of thunder is still as the shore  
When the sea is at ebb ; not a leaf nor a breath  
To disturb the wild solitude, steadfast as death.”

Professor WILSON,

“Address to a wild deer in the Forest of Dalness, Argyllshire.”

## FROTH AND FANCY.

BY G. SANG.

"I swear by my sword and Ben Cruachan."

IT may be presumed that something akin to worship of the mountains obtained in the early days of the Scottish Clans. Why otherwise would we find the chieftains swearing by the Peaks of Cruachan, or taking their most sacred oaths with solemn faces and arms outstretched towards the hills? Then, even as now, the puny mortal, labouring on his way amongst the tangled woods that fringe Loch Awe, must have felt his countenance compelled heavenward to gaze with feelings not unmingled with dread upon the everlasting hills which are so full of change and yet change not; the homes of storm and calm; the birth-places of the waters; the pillows of the clouds; the nurseries of the winds; and possibly, in the early days, also the dread haunt of the wolf and bear.

To see Cruachan Peak break through the mist, while the beholder, held spellbound, rocks on the waters of Ardmucknish Bay, cannot fail to stir the heart more deeply than words can express. To be the fortunate beholder of that wonderful picture of—

The soft vignette of cotton white  
Revealing circlet of blue light,  
And in its midst, majestic, lone,  
The hoary-headed mountain cone  
Suspended 'twixt the earth and sky  
In heaven aspiring majesty,  
With glad amaze enthalls the sight.

It seems almost sacrilege to register the vow of pilgrimage. And yet surely it may be admitted that the toilsome overcoming of the first 2,000 feet from the Bridge of Awe goes some way towards the penance of the pilgrim. In the sweat of his brow he shall earn his bread, and even in the winter time it is written that he shall not come nigh unto the summit without labour. And what a recompense is

his! If the air be but clear, the reward to the eye is worth ten times the energy spent on the steep ascent. From under foot the shining snowy ridge sweeps up, like some great wave, to where on the peak it seems to curve over northwards in a cornice of foam, all frozen, so still, so virgin white and trackless, that awesome feelings grip the heart of the lonely pilgrim, and he realises, almost as he might amid the great Alps, how small and puny a thing is man in the presence of these portents of the elemental.

In the days long before railways—before even General Wade and his army and the advent of the roads—did the raw hide shoe of the clansman ever break through the icy crust of thy summit winter mantle, O Cruachan? Were there those who, even in winter, risked the slipping of the smooth shod foot for reasons of worship, inquisitiveness, or retreat? What tales you could tell were we but skilled to know them in the telling! The lurking place of the scout and the fugitive one can imagine as not being ill to seek in your fastnesses, whence the Pass of Brander, or the route by the Acurraich Braes from Inveraray, or the tracks of Glen Strae lie under observation of the anxious eye.

Have these men of old known also, as we of to-day know, the awful terror of the storm that sweeps the long ridge? A torment unspeakable, that may neither be faced nor endured in cowering patience. A fierceness that drives all life before it, chilling to the marrow, blinding to the eyes, forbidding even breath to the storm-torn mortal daring to profane the mountain revels of the Wind Gods.

“Stay! Pilgrim, turn! Thy penance is in vain.  
No man may hope the riven peak to gain  
Whereon the Storm Omnipotent doth reign.  
See how the Awe in gale-torn wavelets roars,  
Her waters wind-hurled back against the shores.  
And where Meall Cuanail steep to Brander falls,  
Shadowed by frowning Creag an Aonaidh walls,  
The Imp of Danger to the pilgrim calls.”

Even as a mere study of contrasts there are few mountains that can excel Ben Cruachan and its attendant satellites. The silvan beauties of its Loch Awe slopes.

with their music of rushing waters, and the vistas of moist moors and distant peaks, and beneath, the hoary old castle mouldering on its isle. The rough deserted pathlessness of Glen Strae, with its illusive track and toilsome undulations. The charms of the Horse Shoe, where the scurrying fleetness of the mountain hare and the crafty slinking of the preying fox proclaim the rarity of human interference. The sodden repulsiveness of Glen Noe, with its sight from Corrie Lochain of the frowning bastion of Drochaid Ghlas. The charming neighbourhood of Taynuilt village, with its woods and waters ; and lastly, the imposing grandeur of the Pass of Brander. All these, linked together with the creature comforts of an excellent hotel and the best of good company at a New Year Meet of our Club, dispel any doubts one's mind may have harboured on the suitability of a panegyric most feelingly voiced by an honoured former editor of the *Journal*.

#### DOWN FROM THE RIDGE.

In snow-clad splendour shine the Argyll hills,  
As from Kilninver burns the last of day.  
A frozen silence holds the restless rills,  
And homeward quickly must we wend our way.

See how Ben Lui, blushing like a bride,  
Catches the glory of a setting sun.  
There in a cold, green sky the moon doth ride,  
And pale stars glimmer one by one.

See how the sinuous waters of Loch Awe  
Throw back the flame-shot lustre of the West.  
A fiery beacon, such as clansmen saw  
As signal of a fighting chief's behest.

And dark and awful Brander glooms below,  
Seeming to hint at unplumbed depths of tide.  
In sombre contrast to the shining snow  
Still holding daylight on the mountain side.

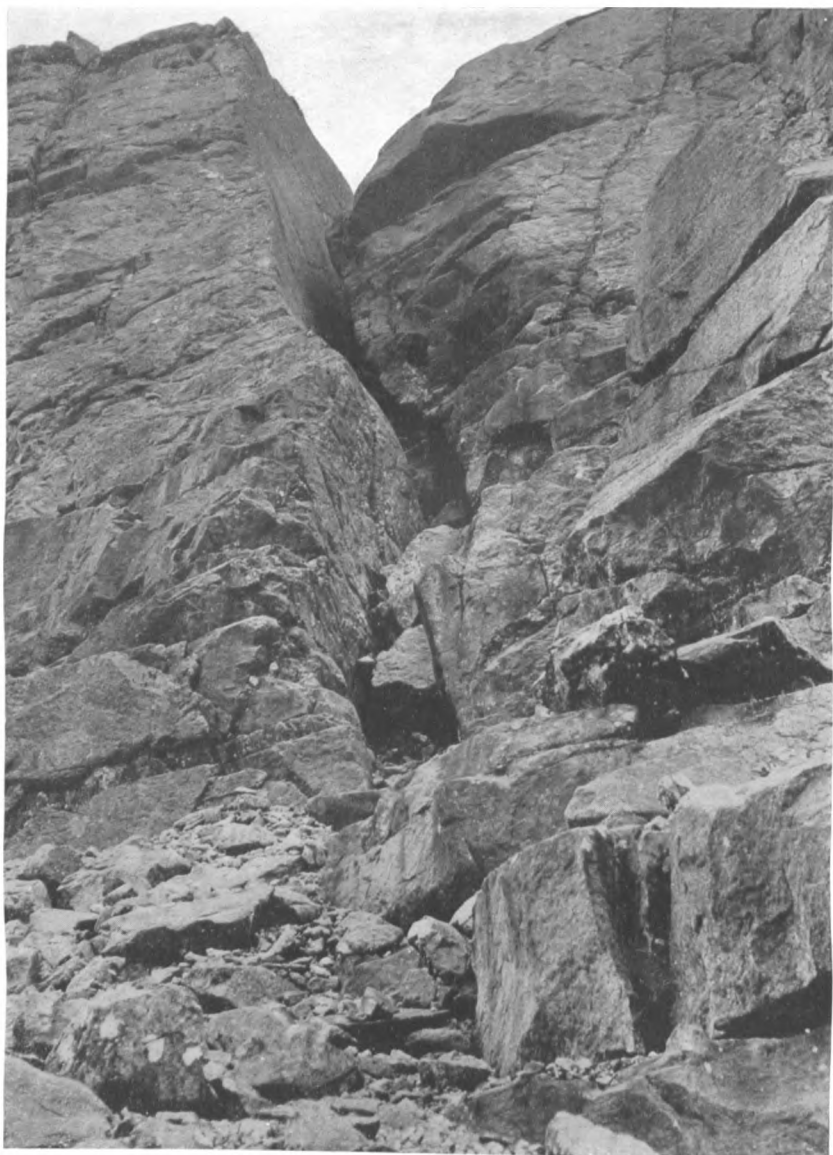


Hoar Drochaid Ghlas uprears a cliff of ice  
 Of spiney crystals and of spears and shields,  
 Wondrous in coating of the fog's device  
 Of mimic armour from war's bygone fields.

Ben Cruachan itself is draped in haze  
 Of spindrift particles of frozen snow,  
 And with averted face man strives to gaze  
 Upon the downward track his feet would go.

See now Beinn Chaluim takes the final light,  
 With his deep corrie folded in his breast ;  
 Enwrapped in shadow midst the world of white,  
 Sinks for another evening to his rest.

Oh, hills, whose voices midst my daily task  
 Find the responses of a lover's heart,  
 Grant me assurance of the boon I ask—  
 To-night is not for ever that we part.



*G. Barlow*

THE CHASM—SGURR NAN EAG

## THE CHASM OF SGURR NAN EAG.

BY G. BARLOW AND E. W. STEEPLE.

NEAR the southern end of the ridge of Sgurr nan Eag a steep cliff frowns over the head of Garbh Choire, composed of clean-cut and massive gabbro. Not far from the bealach which connects this corrie with Coire nan Laogh, the cliff is split from base to summit by a wide curving gully of attractive appearance, which faces north, and is well seen from the neighbourhood of the Dubhs. It terminates on the main ridge at a solid arch of rock, from which an extraordinarily impressive downward view is obtained of its upper portion. Doubtless, many who have passed it on their way to Gars-bheinn have been interested in this tremendous gash in the mountain side. In fact, it was referred to by Mr Rennie in some notes to the *Journal* as long ago as 1896, but it does not appear to have been seriously considered from a climbing point of view.

We first inspected it some seven or eight years ago, when a cursory examination from below revealed the existence of several large pitches, but lack of time prevented a closer investigation. The opportunity came at Easter 1915, when it was visited on a day of bright sunshine punctuated by heavy scuds of hail and snow. We reached it by way of the Sgumain Stone Shoot and Bealach a' Garbh Choire, and were greatly charmed by the wintry aspect of Coir' a' Ghrunnda. The frozen condition of the lochan invited speculation as to its appearance in the glacial age; but our discussion was rudely interrupted by a particularly fierce little snow-storm, and without much reluctance we hurried away on the more urgent business of exploration.

On arriving at the Bealach a' Garbh Choire we traversed southward at the same level, across steep snow slopes, which in places were composed of coarse granular snow resembling hailstones. The gully, when reached,

was also found to contain a vast quantity of snow which completely masked the pitches we had previously seen. Hail fell at intervals, and the wind, driving down the gully, filled the air with powdery snow, which prevented a full appreciation of the beauty of the ice drapery upon its walls. We advanced with some caution, as we knew not to what abysmal depths we might be precipitated if the covering of one of the pitches gave way. It was a very delightful climb, however, and the only jarring note was struck quite at the top, when the leader, emerging from a sort of icy grotto by means of a skylight, brushed away a charming festoon of icicles which the second man was preparing to photograph. The abrupt exit from the depths of the gully on to the crest of the ridge was rather dramatic, and enhanced our appreciation of the magnificent view of snowy peaks, glistening in the sunlight, which burst upon our gaze.

We were so pleased with this expedition that we decided to take the first opportunity of trying the gully under summer conditions. We did not visit Skye again, however, for more than four years; but in August 1919, accompanied by A. H. Doughty, we made a second assault. Owing to a heavy mist the rocks were rather wet, but as the formation of the cleft does not admit of much water draining into it from above, the climbing conditions should never be seriously affected by bad weather. The gully contains four pitches, all of a complex character. The first of these is formed by two large overhanging blocks, and in each case some difficulty was experienced in effecting a lodgment in the gutter on the left. From the top, a short scree led to the second and most difficult pitch. A preliminary scramble over a mass of rock, with a hollow beneath it on the right, brought us to the threshold of a large cave, roofed in by an assemblage of huge boulders. The cave possesses a through route which, however, is not easy to reach except by means of a human ladder. The outside gutter—again on the left—was therefore utilised, but was found so difficult to enter, without considerable assistance from below, that the third man preferred to

come up through the skylight with the aid of a stirrup-rope.\*

We now ascended the scree bed of the gully for 20 feet, passing under a wedged block, shaped like an inverted candle extinguisher, which was duly cairned. The third pitch is formed by a vertical wall of rock about 50 feet in height. In the right corner is a deeply cut trap chimney, blocked up at the top. We climbed a narrower chimney on the left, from which an upward movement towards the centre led to a little cave, above which were sundry boulders which presented no difficulty.

A little beyond this pitch we passed beneath an imposing tier of huge blocks, wedged at various heights between the smooth walls of the gully. We had the sensation of wandering in the dim recesses of a rock crevasse; and the curving walls ahead, completely obscuring its upper part, gave a suggestion of mystery, and made the possibility of escape seem remote. Fifty feet of scree, however, led to what was evidently the final pitch. This was again of a complex character, composed of a chaos of boulders filling the back of the gully. Various complicated movements, ending with a splendid side pull on the arms, led us to another cave—the icy grotto of our former visit. From this cave there are at least four exits, all of which are in Coire nan Laogh, as the archway overhead may be regarded as forming part of the main ridge of the Cuillin.

It may be thought that a gully of so modest a height (300 feet) is scarcely worth the long trudge from Glen Brittle. A visit to it on any moderately fine day will quickly dispel this idea. Its architecture is of a most imposing character, and the astounding upward curve of its great left wall is perhaps unique in the Cuillin. The quality of the rock is unexceptionable, and the gully is so deeply cut that we have always called it "The Chasm."

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\* In an ascent made a few weeks later, Mr Henry Alexander climbed this pitch by the through route, with the aid of a threaded rope and a shoulder, having also climbed through a hole behind the initial obstacle. There was ice in the gully on this occasion, and it is probable that under such conditions this route would be preferable to the smooth and holdless gutter.

Moreover, the walk thereto from Glen Brittle takes one through some of the finest scenery in the district. It may be approached either by Coir' a' Ghrunnda or Coire Lagan. The latter route is the more direct, if time is a consideration. The Sgumain Stone Shoot is easy of ascent, and from its head the Bealach a' Garbh Choire can be reached in half an hour; unless, indeed, the explorer is detained by an examination of the grotesque blocks of peridotite in Coir' a' Ghrunnda, or is unable to resist the attraction of a swim in the lochan. The great boulders in Garbh Choire are almost equally interesting, and form an easy promenade of twenty minutes to the foot of the Chasm. The return to Glen Brittle may be varied by traversing the long ridge of Sgurr nan Eag; or, if time allows, a scramble down the glaciated slabs of Coire nan Laogh, followed by the walk over the wild moorland of Lòn Bàn, will often reward the climber with one of the finest views of Sgurr Alasdair. It should be noted, however, that visitors are requested to avoid Coire nan Laogh and the lower part of Coir' a' Ghrunnda during the stalking season.

### In Memoriam.

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#### CHARLES PILKINGTON.

By the death of Mr Charles Pilkington, on the 23rd December 1918, the Club lost one of its most distinguished members. At the formation of the Club in 1889, Mr Pilkington, in common with many of the best known Alpine climbers of that day, showed his sympathy with the movement by joining and becoming one of the original members; and he was present at the first annual meeting, and at the dinner following it, when he responded to the toast of "The Alpine Club." He attended one or two other annual meetings, but he was not, I believe, ever present at an official meet in the mountains.

Upon Mr Pilkington's career as an Alpine climber, this is not the place to dwell at any length. From boyhood he was a lover of all outdoor sports and games, and in 1869, while still in his teens, he made an ascent of the Pillar Rock, which was considered to be quite a feat in those days. In the next few years he made many visits to the Alps, where his strength and skill soon brought him to the front, and in 1878 he began a series of guideless expeditions with his younger brother, Mr Lawrence Pilkington, who is also an original member of the Club, and with either Mr F. Gardiner or Mr E. Hulton as third man. Other climbers had made isolated guideless climbs, but I think it may fairly be said that they were the first climbing party who deliberately planned a guideless tour amongst the great peaks of the Alps, and carried their plan to a successful conclusion. Many of their climbs are described in the *Alpine Journal*, and perhaps the most famous is the ascent of the Meije, an account of which was read to the Alpine Club in December 1879, and appears in Vol. IX. of their *Journal*.

But it is with Mr Pilkington's climbs in Skye and the Highlands that this *Journal* is most concerned.

His first visit to Skye was made in 1880, when the two

brothers, who had come to the Hebrides for fishing, being attracted by the name on the maps, "Inaccessible Pinnacle," visited Skye, and showed the futility of such names by making the ascent of the Pinnacle. They went up and down by the eastern ridge. In the next ten years they made many visits to Skye, and Mr Charles Pilkington published his map of the Cuillin, which for many years was the only map of the range with any pretence to accuracy.

During one or other of those visits he made many first ascents, including the Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr nan Gilleann, Sgurr Mhic Choinnich, Sgurr Tearlach, Bidean Druim nan Ramh, and Clach Glas. He also made another ascent of the Inaccessible Pinnacle, accompanied by Mrs Pilkington, who was the first lady to reach the top. His last visit to the island for climbing was made in 1889 with a large party, whose doings are recounted by the late Mr Clinton Dent in an amusing paper in the *Alpine Journal*. On the mainland, Mr Pilkington, with Mr Horace Walker, made the first ascent of the Grey Castle of Suilven, and climbed many other hills, but these expeditions were made mostly in summer in districts where he was staying for shooting or fishing.

The above is a bare record of climbing on routes which have now become familiar to many and are not considered very difficult, and it is only by thinking of the dates that one can realise what Mr Pilkington did for Scottish mountaineering. All these climbs were made before the Scottish Mountaineering Club was formed, and when there were no maps, or journals, or guide-books to indicate the routes, and the name of Mr Charles Pilkington may fitly be bracketed with the honoured names of Sheriff Alexander Nicholson and Professor Knight. These three were the true pioneers of rock climbing in the Cuillin, and it is pleasant to know that the three names will for ever be associated with the hills they loved so well. Sgurr Alasdair, Sgurr Tearlach and Knight's Peak are worthy monuments of even the greatest of mountaineers.

I cannot conclude this notice without a more general reference to Mr Pilkington, although he was not personally known to very many of the present members of the Scottish



Mountaineering Club. He was a man of great business capacity, and had taken a leading part in many matters affecting capital and labour, in addition to the management of his own large business; while to those who had the privilege of knowing him in his home, or of travelling with him, either in the Alps or in the British Isles, he has left the memory of one of the kindest and most valued friends that they have ever had.

G. A. SOLLV.

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REV. GEORGE REITH, D.D.

DR REITH, who died last December, joined the Club in 1895. Born in 1842, he was thus fifty-three years of age when he became a member. He was one of those men who joined the Club comparatively late in life; and while he possessed an unbounded love for the mountains, was unable, from natural lack of physical power, to negotiate a difficult climb or indulge in those gymnastic exploits the almost necessary attributes of the modern mountaineer. Exercise, however, and simple hill walking he dearly loved and frequently took; and nothing—during a long and lingering illness, that finally caused his death—gave him greater pleasure than to recall the hill rambles of his early days.

Unable, mostly for professional reasons, to be a frequenter of the Club's public functions, he was probably but little known to the great majority of the members, and more particularly to those of the younger generation. Such lack of being personally known far from implies that no interest can be taken, no good effected by the practically unknown member. Eminent distinction in life, whatever be the sphere in which it exists, and although it be unconnected directly with conspicuous mountaineering propensities, can still prove fruitful in furthering the aims and objects of the Club. In Dr Reith, an ex-Moderator of the United Free Church of Scotland, the Club had one of the most distinguished ministers of his time. The good such men are capable of doing in lauding the merits of such a wholesome sport as mountaineering, especially among young men, is incalculable. It was such an

influence that Dr Reith exercised and sought to disseminate; and in so doing he may be said to have accomplished as much in that special way, in furtherance of the interests of the Club, as the practical example of the modern mountaineer.

Men of the type of Dr Reith form some of the most charming and stimulating companions one could have on an expedition; and those who in earlier days accompanied him, when out for a day on the hills, speak of the rich store of knowledge he possessed, and the attractive way he had of imparting it. At seventy-seven years of age, had his life been spared, we could hardly have expected to have seen much of Dr Reith in the future; but his loss, all the same, creates a regrettable gap in our membership, and one less in the roll of our distinguished comrades.

A. ERNEST MAYLARD.

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### HERMANN WOOLLEY.

ANOTHER well-known name in the climbing world will appear no more in our list of members. Woolley died in February 1920. He joined our Club in 1906, and attended one or two Meets and Annual Dinners. In particular he was present at the coming of age Dinner in Glasgow in 1909, and replied to the toast of "The Alpine Club." He was President of the Alpine Club from 1908-11. We were proud to number him as one of our members, and took it as a high compliment that he applied for membership in the ordinary way. In his youth he was a first rate athlete. He had climbed in most parts of the world, and knew intimately the various climbing districts in Great Britain and Ireland. He had attained the allotted span, but his upright and clear-cut figure suited better a well-preserved man of sixty. Of his personal and mental qualities we must leave his own friends to speak in the pages of the *Alpine Journal*. We would only say that what struck those who had merely a nodding acquaintance with him was his modesty and approachableness, or to put these qualities in one word—his sympathy.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

### THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

THE meeting was held in St Enoch's Station Hotel, Glasgow, on Friday, 5th December. The President, Dr Inglis Clark, took the chair. The Minutes of the last meeting having been read by the Hon. Secretary and approved by the meeting, the Chairman called upon the Hon. Treasurer to make a statement on the present financial position of the Club.

THE HON. TREASURER, after shortly specifying the annual income and expenditure, informed the meeting that a balance of £90 would be left to meet the cost of production of the *Journal* which, on a moderate estimate, would be £100. A certain amount of additional income might be looked for from the Librarian's sales of back numbers of the *Journal*, and also from entry money which he had not included in his estimate of income for the coming year. There were still £2. 16s. of subscriptions outstanding which were considered good. Mr NAISMITH and some other members spoke on the redemption period of the South Australian Stock, which was standing considerably below par, and was to be redeemed as regards £350, 1916-35, and as regards £150, 1917-36. The balance in favour of the Club on the ordinary revenue account was stated to be £136. 3s. 11d., and on the Commutation Fund, £306. 6s.

The income was stated at	-	-	£151	6	10
The expenditure was stated at	-	-	£160	9	7
Cost of <i>Journal</i>	-	-	£108	10	9
Club-Room expenses	-	-	21	14	7
Printing, postages, &c.	-	-	29	16	3
Books and maps	-	-	0	8	0
			£160	9	7

The total funds at the Club's credit amounted to £542.

Mr GALL INGLIS spoke on the rise in the cost of publishing the *Journal* which the Club would have to face, and, after some discussion, which the President pointed out would come up for further notice under the *Journal* report, the Hon. Treasurer's report was accepted, and he was cordially thanked for his work on the Club's behalf.

The HON. SECRETARY read a report on the present membership of the Club. In the beginning of the year the membership stood at 182 (which included the two honorary members). Since then the Club had lost, through death on active service, Major T. E. Goodeve; through death, Mr Lamond Howie, Dr George Kemp Edwards, and two original members, Sir Hugh T. Munro and Mr Charles Pilkington; four members had resigned, Captain Donald Cameron Swan, Mr J. G. Hay Halkett, Prof. J. S. Phillimore, and Mr H. Irving Pinches; and Mr Morris W. Travers had ceased to be a member by default. This reduced the membership to 172. By a ballot in April, three new members had been added, Mr Alan Greaves, Dr J. R. P. Sclater, and Mr George M. Wood; and, by a ballot in November, seven new members, Dr Elwell, Captain Bartrum, Messrs William Barclay, T. J. Crombie, G. W. T. H. Fleming, J. S. M. Jack, and Marshall J. Robb had been enrolled, bringing the membership again up to the figure of 182. The Secretary laid stress on the necessity of securing recruits for the Club among the younger body of climbers, and urged the members present to do what was possible in that direction. He asked for the ruling of the meeting on the point of giving an old member, who had resigned, the benefit of his previous years of membership on commutation on rejoining; and also on the question of relaxing the standard of qualifications to candidates wounded on active service. These two points caused much discussion, and threatened to absorb an undue share of the limited time at the disposal of the meeting. The first point was eventually remitted to the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer to report to the Committee, and the second point was left to the discretion of the Committee when such candidates should submit their qualifications, with a bias in favour of relaxation.

The HON. SECRETARY next read the Hon. Editor's report on the *Journal*, stating that owing to the cost of production the Club must either reduce the issue of the *Journal* to once a year, or reduce the number of pages in each number. Considerable discussion followed on the report. Mr GALL INGLIS pointed out that the Club must bear in mind that the cost of the *Journal* was likely to be two and a half to three times what it was before the war, and several suggestions were made with a view to reducing the burden of cost to the Club. It was finally agreed that advertisements should be sought for again, and that something be done to push the sale of the *Journal* among non-members interested in mountaineering, the means to this end being left to the discretion of the Hon. Editor. The members present expressed themselves as anxious that the *Journal* should be produced in two numbers annually, and that, as far as possible, it should be maintained at its present standard of length and excellence.

Mr GREEN, the Hon. Librarian, read his report on the Library, and commented on its condition, stating that, with the exception of the usual journal and magazine publications, and the presentation of a few volumes, no new books had been added to the library. A new book-case was urgently required, and he proposed devoting funds secured from the sale of back numbers of the *Journal* to that purpose.

Mr MURRAY LAWSON reported on the photographic Slides, and mentioned that several additions had been made through presentation. The Lamond Howie collection was meantime being kept separate from the general collection, and the late Mr Howie's lecture on "The Scottish Alps" had been placed in a lecturer's slide box, ready to be issued to members wishing it, together with copies of the relative MSS., of which Mr Parker had made and presented duplicates to the Club. Mr Lawson mentioned the necessity for obtaining fresh accommodation for the slides, and the meeting agreed to his purchasing a new cabinet. He was warmly thanked for his work on behalf of the Club, and Mr Parker was thanked for his trouble in making the copies referred to.

Mr YOUNG reported on the "Guide Book," the editorship of which he was willing to assume in the meantime, with a view to pushing forward the completion of the outstanding articles.

Mr HARRY MACROBERT, seconded by Mr CUMMING, moved that Rule 8 be amended to read :—

"8. Every Ordinary Member shall pay an annual subscription of twenty-one shillings, or he may commute his annual subscription on joining the Club by a single payment of sixteen guineas in addition to his entrance fee. Members may commute their annual subscription by a single payment at the rates shown in the accompanying table :—

" Original Members and			
Members of 30 years' standing, for a single payment of			
		£	s   d
"	25	"	5   5   0
"	20	"	7   7   0
"	15	"	9   9   0
"	10	"	11   11   0
"	5	"	14   3   6"

Mr MacRobert explained the reasons necessitating the proposed augmentation of the fund. The motion was agreed to without division, and Mr Cumming was thanked for his work in connection with the matter.

The PRESIDENT then asked the meeting to agree to the following changes of Office-Bearers and Committee Members, and the reappointment of those still continuing in office. His remarks met with the hearty approval of the meeting :—

*President* (in room of Dr Inglis Clark)—Mr W. N. Ling.

*Vice-Presidents* (in room of Mr Ling and Mr Garden)—Messrs C. W. Walker and J. A. Parker.

*Members of Committee* (in room of Messrs C. W. Walker, Backhouse, Maylard, Donald, John Grove, and Dr Levack)—Messrs H. Alexander, G. E. Howard, J. H. Buchanan, Hugh Jas. Craig, G. Murray Lawson, and P. J. H. Unna.

The meeting agreed to hold the Easter 1920 Meet at Fort William. Mr BELL proposed and Mr LING seconded a suggestion that the Spean Bridge Hotel be included for the accommodation of parties wishing to approach the hills from the Spean Valley. This was agreed to, and the Secretary was instructed to make the necessary arrange-

ments. The meeting decided to hold the New Year Meet at Loch Awe.

The HON. SECRETARY read, for the approval and acceptance of the meeting, the formal minute of sympathy to Mrs T. E. Goodeve. This was accepted, all members standing.

The HON. SECRETARY next read the report of the War Memorial Committee, which stated that a sketch for a bronze tablet had been passed by the Committee, and approved by Mr Colin B. Phillip. He now proposed having it prepared and cast as soon as some further slight alterations had been made and approved of. The meeting expressed its approval of what had been done, and instructed the Secretary to see the matter put through in due course.

The HON. SECRETARY made a statement as to the proposed Congress of Monaco, and read a letter of invitation from the Baron Gabet and some further communications with Mr Henry Montagnier, one of the Secretaries. Members who expected to be in Monaco about the time of the Congress (20th April to 10th May) were requested to communicate with the Hon. Secretary nearer the time, when he hoped to be in a position to give them fuller information. (*Note: This Congress will be held on 1st May 1920, and members are requested to arrange for accommodation at Hotel Bushby, Rue Cotta, Nice.*)

This concluded the business of the meeting, and the members thereafter adjourned to dinner.

The Annual Dinner was held in Messrs Ferguson & Forrester's Rooms, Buchanan Street, Glasgow. There was a large attendance, the members present numbering fifty-eight and the guests twenty-four.

The loyal toasts, "The King" and "The Imperial Forces," were proposed by the PRESIDENT.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH.

For the sixth time in succession I have had the honour of proposing the toast of the evening, "The Scottish Mountaineering Club." It is customary for the President, in proposing this toast, to set forth the objects of the Club, and to discuss how far these objects have been attained. Before I refer to these

objects, however, I feel that, while our spirits rise in buoyancy as we foregather under at least the semblance of peace, we must not forget that, since we last dined together, some who used to meet with us have passed to the other side—Edwards, Goodeve, Howie, Munro, and Pilkington.

Edwards will be remembered as an eager, earnest, and active climber, whose reverent spirit influenced his every action; he died in far away lands, a martyr to duty. Goodeve, whose merry laughter and genial smile might have earned for him the sobriquet, "Perpetual Sunshine," was one of our boldest spirits, and those of us who can recall perilous moments in his company on the Pinnacle Ridge of Blaven, the face of Clach Glas, the cliffs of Stac Polly, and the ice-bound crags of Ben Nevis know that, with his passing has gone one of our bravest and best. Howie, the Club's photographer, was my sponsor when I entered the Club in 1895. In addition to a genial nature and a never failing fund of anecdote, he possessed the true artistic eye. He apprehended the mountains in their loveliest aspects, and ever presented in the *Journal* photographs of greater and greater merit, so stimulating the rest of us to increased efforts. Munro, one of the giants of the Club, was accustomed to move in exalted circles, yet seemed more at home on the mountain side or at a simple Club Meet. I venture to say that the welfare of the Scottish Mountaineering Club was one of the most outstanding interests of his life. He was essentially a lover of the mountains, though he never professed to be a daring cragsman. His hospitality knew no bounds, and on two occasions he entertained the members of the Club at Lindertis, while at our last dinner he informed me that he hoped, ere long, to have us back again at his charming Highland home. Pilkington belonged to that band of mountaineers which ushered in the golden age of climbing in Scotland, and his explorations of the Skye mountains will keep his memory before us. One associates his name with an exalted conception of mountaineering. All these have "gone West."

We who have lingered on mountain shoulder or summit and seen the sun sink in the broad Atlantic or behind the serrated outlines of the Western Isles, have often felt enraptured as a mass of cumulus clouds, lit up by the setting rays, has formed a stately pageant before our eyes. It seems to me that in the North the sunset conveys the true conception of "going West." Thus, from the summit of Ben Nevis we can see the sun dip below the peaks of Skye, and for a time the glory darkens; but, ere we can say that night has come, the colours brighten and a new day has commenced. This is, I think, the true "going West," after but a short eclipse, to emerge in brighter light; so may it be with our princely brothers.

We have with us to-night a goodly number of guests, and I assume that their presence indicates an interest in the great



sport or craft of mountaineering. I remember a distinguished guest at one of our dinners, who said in his speech that he had come to see what manner of men these climbers were, and that, so far as he could make out, their chief characteristic was that they had a good conceit of themselves. I am not concerned to-night to gainsay this remark, but I am certain that no class of men is bound so closely together by community of interest and ties of mutual admiration. At past dinners I have touched upon a number of points connected with mountaineering, and discussed its influence upon the body, the character, and the intellect. Last year I spoke of the philosophy of the mountains. To-night I would like to speak of the Magna Charta of the Club as embodied in the Rules. The gist of the whole matter is that the Club exists for the encouragement of mountaineering in Scotland. A laudable object indeed. And how does the Club carry out this great trust? In the first place, it does not profess to be purely Scottish, and, this being the case, it draws its members from across the border as well as from "Bonnie Scotland." To-night we have with us representatives of the Rucksack Club and the Fell and Rock Club, and these gentlemen could tell us that, year by year, more and more English climbers flock to our Bens. The Club does not—nay, cannot—object to this, but it hopes and believes that these climbers will, ere long, enrol under the banner of the Scottish Mountaineering Club and attend the Club Meets. I consider that the Meets and attendance thereat form the paramount influence which holds the Club together. At these Meets "cliquism" is clearly absent. The President and Officials will be found distributed among the different climbing parties, and beginners are soon initiated into the rules—the only safe rules of the sport. From the beginning the Club has endeavoured to respect the sporting rights of the proprietors, and in consequence it has received every encouragement, from the King downwards. The Club, moreover, rejoices to hear of the doings of the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club.

It may be that, among our guests, there are some who wonder what possible attraction can draw us to the hills; what it is that makes men disregard the force of gravity, the terrifying blizzard, and the quagmire bog, and strive towards the mountain summit; why it is that the fascination does not stop with youth, but still draws the middle-aged and the old, notwithstanding their physical disabilities. Clearly, the magnetism of the mountains is a power of no ordinary character. It seems to me that this magnetism is an adaptable and protean force. In youth, the mere love of exercise, of adventure, of mystery, of danger, of companionship will tempt a young man to seek the unknown difficulties of mountaineering. Mountaineering in this phase offers opportunities for gymnastic exercise, and, in excitement, rivals any other venturesome sport. But were this all it would

soon lose its attractive power, and be regarded only as an exercise for the young. Yet, when one looks around this gathering and counts the many bald heads, or when one glances at the list of our members and appraises their social and intellectual standing, it is evident that deep and persistent forces continue to draw to the mountains the best in the land, at an age when mere danger or gymnastics have no attraction. The true mountaineer is the lover of the mountains, and the most permanent phase of mountaineering is the one which makes "a day on the hills" a joy to look forward to, a period of present rapture, and a memory of a sacred nature.

Were I to act as a missionary in spreading the mountaineering spirit, I could adopt no more convincing method than to put before the layman the marvellous delights which become the possession of every mature climber. There, in the keen morning air, rises the chosen mountain, with rounded top or craggy face, a proud elevation offering an infinity of problems ere its summit is reached. A scarf of subtle clouds floats about, and a succession of pictures is presented, in which now an unnoticed ridge, now a snow filled gully, or again the distant summit, is the leading feature. The band of climbers issues from the door—botanists, geologists, naturalists, meteorologists, artists, scientists, and, last but not least, photographers. Can all these types find something to interest them? The track leads them across the peaty moor, where the water glows like turquoise in its setting. The pingiculas and potentilla make up with fern, heather, and saxifrage a garden below their feet. The turbulent burn has to be crossed, and the mysterious geological workings of the past, laid bare by the ever chiselling water, are revealed, and dykes of infinite age form the bed of the stream. The photographer calls a halt; and blessings descend upon his head, for has he not afforded an opportunity for a well deserved rest. There are some who have endeavoured to maintain that the "ca' canny" methods of modern life have really arisen from mountaineering, and that the two maxims, *chi va piano va sano* and *festina lente* are really an encouragement to "ca' canny." Be this as it may, the climber reserves his strength, not to fritter it away by indecent haste, but for the more intense struggle nearer the summit. When the rocks are reached, or the steeply rising couloir leads the eye to a higher ridge, or the snowy slope bids the donning of the rope, the mind is occupied with the work of the moment, troubles of business or life are brushed aside, and in the cool air the brain becomes alert. But even under these acuter conditions the eye perceives the mossy bouquets or alpine phlox which fill the tiny basins in the rocks, and notices the encrustations of ice, growing like flowers on every blade of vegetation, and investing even the sullen rocks with lacery far beyond imagination. The problems of regelation of snow and condensation of water are forced upon one, and when St Elmo's fire flashes from every rock,

one's introduction to electric phenomena becomes intense and insistent. Higher still the horizon widens, and the configuration of land, moulded and shaped by ice and water, stretches like a chart before us. Far away the rocky islet bears the brunt of Atlantic waves, and distant planes of atmosphere give due proportions to the receding ridges. Wherever the eye turns the reverent soul admits that all is good, and the poet maintains that in the mountains there is no sin. These are but some of the delights that draw us to the mountains.

But enough of the magnetism of the mountains! It only remains for me to ask—does Scotland possess such mountains? Can it be that at our doors we can enjoy such feasts of Nature? Yes! a thousand times yes! From the far Pentland Firth to the Cheviots, from the distant Hebrides, still basking in the sunshine, to the eastern lowlands already gone to rest, our wonderful land presents a succession of mountains varied as the climate, and altering from hour to hour under the ever changing conditions. In presenting the Exhibition of Scottish Scenery this afternoon, I was influenced by the desire to show that our playground and interests are of no cramped and limited nature, but are of infinite beauty, infinite variety, and enthralling interest. If I have failed to present the subject in a sufficiently attractive garb, go to the hills, novices and experts alike, and with new eyes and even more receptive minds appraise for yourselves the value of the Scottish mountains and their great exponent, "The Scottish Mountaineering Club." To me the Club is the genius of the mountains, and every vision of the hills only makes me bless the more the day when first I was enrolled in its membership.

The toast of "Kindred Societies" was proposed by Mr FRASER CAMPBELL, and was replied to by Mr PHILIP S. MINOR, President of the Rucksack Club.

A very enjoyable evening was concluded by the drinking of the retiring President's health with musical honours.

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During the course of the evening a set of seven volumes (Nos. I. to VII.) of the Club *Journal* was put up for auction. Great interest was taken in the event, and the bidding was keen. The volumes were sold separately, Volume I. going at £11. 10s., and the other volumes bringing varying prices. The total sum realised was £27. 15s.

## DINNER IN LONDON.

THE Second Annual Dinner of the London members of the Club was held at Pagani's restaurant on Saturday, the 31st January 1920, and the same programme, which proved such a pleasant one in 1919, was again carried through.

The Alpine Club were good enough, once more, to allow the use of their rooms, and Professor Collie (President of the Alpine Club), who was unable to be present at the Dinner, greeted our members on their arrival at Savile Row. Those present also felt particularly indebted to our own President, Mr Ling, who came specially from Carlisle.

The following is a list of those present:—

*Members.*

W. N. Ling (*Chairman*).

Dr E. A. Baker.	G. E. Howard.
Capt. G. L. Bartrum.	Sir Alex. B. W. Kennedy.
R. W. Brant.	Professor Ker.
R. A. Brown.	Thos. Meares.
R. Corry.	C. W. Nettleton.
F. S. Goggs.	Dr Claude Wilson.
G. F. G. Grant.	

And five guests.

## NEW YEAR MEET AT LOCH AWE—1919-20.

PRESENT.—*Members*.—W. N. Ling (President), G. Sang, Dr Inglis Clark, Euan Robertson, H. MacRobert, D. H. Menzies, R. Jeffrey, J. H. Buchanan, E. P. Buchanan, J. Gall Inglis, W. Nelson, J. Rennie, Arnold Brown, G. Murray Lawson, G. B. Green, W. Galbraith, J. H. Bell, R. Burn, J. Grove, Allan Arthur, G. Ednie, J. R. Young, G. W. T. H. Fleming, J. S. M. Jack, T. R. Marshall, R. C. Paterson, J. Craig, and D. A. Clapperton. *Guests*.—Stuart Brown, D. Adamson, — Hutchison, J. A. Garrick, and C. N. Marshall.

The New Year Meet of 1919-20 will long be recalled as one of the happiest and most successful gatherings of the Club. Verily, the clerk of the weather was in his most genial mood, and the thanks of the members who were present are due to him for the excellence of his meteorological arrangements. In retrospect the Meet will not be remembered as one of strenuous effort, of early starts and late returns, but rather as one which has left with us vivid and lasting mental pictures of Scottish winter scenery at its best.

The Loch Awe district was seen in all the fulness of its winter beauty.

The hills were thickly mantled in snow, and the weather was almost consistently clear and frosty, just the weather which the climber, as he anticipates a coming Meet, so often dreams of, and, alas—at New Year time at any rate—so seldom experiences. The delicacy and beauty of the colour effects, the contrasts of light and shade, the tones of the sky, were all wonderful, and more than wonderful. The moors were a glory of brown and orange, merging into hues of mauve and violet. The sweeping shoulders of the mountains were bright in the winter sunlight, casting shadows of mysterious blue across the curving corries. The warm tinted branches of the birches and the rich green foliage of the firs stood out in striking contrast to the snowy heights beyond. The waters of the loch, often calm in the still, keen air, mirrored the beauties of the wooded shores, and reflected in form and colour the encircling hills. At sunset the snows of Ben Lui and Ben a Clee and many a neighbouring mountain were tinted pink in the radiance of the afterglow, which yielded, as night fell, to the cool brilliance of the moonlight.

On New Year's Day the views from the ridges and summits were obscured at times by the dry, powdery snow, which was whirling and eddying in a strong wind, while on the Saturday afternoon for a space the wind blew high, and mist shrouded the higher tops; but otherwise the weather conditions on the summits were as perfect as they were down below. During the earlier days of the Meet the going, especially on the ridges, was arduous,

owing to soft snow. The conditions, however, rapidly improved, and towards the end of the week the underfoot conditions were excellent.

Green and Galbraith arrived on the evening of Monday (the 29th), and made the ascent of Ben Lui the following day (the 30th). The evening brought a substantial addition to the party in the persons of the President, Sang, Bell, Ednie, Young, Lawson, and Burn.

On the morrow (the 31st), Ling and Sang set out for Cruachan, and were subsequently overtaken by Young and Ednie. After lunch, Young left the party, and Ednie went on with Sang and Ling to the top of Cruachan, returning viâ Drochaid Ghlas and the "Vourie track." Bell and Galbraith climbed Ben Eunaich by the east corrie, returning by the Ben a Chochuill col. Lawson and Burn were also on Ben Eunaich, and did some prospecting in one of the gullies. The arrivals in the evening were Clark, MacRobert, Arthur, Menzies, Jeffrey, the two Buchanans, Inglis, Euan Robertson, Nelson and his guest Adamson, Paterson, Marshall and his brother, Grove, and Jack.

New Year's Day dawned clear and crisp, and eight o'clock breakfast was the rule. After breakfast the sun shone out brightly, and every one was soon on the move. Ling, Sang, MacRobert, and Jack motored to Bridge of Awe, and from there climbed the "Taynuilt peak" and traversed Cruachan, finishing up with Ben Vourie. Clark, Arthur, and Menzies traversed the "Horseshoe," commencing with Sron an Isean, and bagging Ben Vourie on the return journey. Jeffrey, Lawson, and the Buchanans followed in their (distinctly useful) tracks, but returned direct to the old railway from the col below Ben Vourie. The two Marshalls, Grove, and Paterson, and also Nelson and Adamson, completed the "Horseshoe" in the opposite direction. Galbraith, Burn, and Ednie climbed Cruachan direct. Inglis and Robertson scaled Ben Vourie, as also did Bell; while Young, accompanied by his trusty camera, was also on the same hill. Green, who was unfortunately suffering from boot trouble, had an off day. In the course of the afternoon Fleming and his friend Garrick, a member of the Fell and Rock Club, and also Arnold Brown and

his brother turned up. The two former had done Ben Trilleachan on the 30th. On the 31st they had set out with Starav as their objective, and though they had been able to reach the col between Starav and Ghlas Bheinn Mhor, the very heavy going in the soft snow had made progress so slow that they had not had time to reach their top, and they spent the night at Ardmaddy. On New Year's Day they tramped down Loch Etive side, and taking the ridge on the north side of Glen Noe, came over Aonach Breac and Ben a Chochuill to Loch Awe, their time being nine and a half hours.

In the evening contentment reigned. Faces which had looked pale and, perhaps, tired the previous night were ruddy and glowing, and it was indeed a happy, hungry band which sat down to do justice—ample justice—to the good fare which Mr Currie had provided for dinner.

On Friday morning (the 2nd) the departures began, the first (unwilling) deserters being Clark, Sang, and Fleming. The new arrivals were Rennie, Clapperton, Craig, and Hutchison. Jeffrey, Arthur, H. Buchanan, Lawson, and Garrick traversed Ben Vourie, Cruachan, and the Taynuilt peak, and after an extra special tea at Taynuilt, returned by the evening train. Ling, MacRobert, the Browns, and Jack climbed Ben Lui, returning over Ben a Clee, the hotel motor doing useful work in the initial and final stages of their journey. Galbraith, Nelson, Adamson, Grove, Burn, and Ednie visited Ben a Chochuill. Menzies and E. Buchanan, and also the Marshalls, Paterson, Craig, and Hutchison, walked up Glen Strae. Green, Bell, and Robertson took the train to Taynuilt, and walked back, while Rennie and Clapperton also had a low level tramp. Inglis, before returning south in the evening, went with Young to Dalmally by train, and walked to Cladich and thence back to the hotel.

On Saturday (the 3rd), Galbraith, Green, MacRobert, and Robertson left in the morning for their "ain" firesides. Paterson, Craig, the Marshalls, and Hutchison motored to Taynuilt, and tackled the Taynuilt peak of Cruachan, Bell accompanying them part of the way. Ling, the

two Browns, and Jack were on Ben a Chochuill, while, with the exception of Rennie and Clapperton, who walked round to the Cruachan corrie and returned over the slopes of Vourie, and Young, of whom more anon, all the other members of the party gravitated to Ben Eunaich. Here Arthur, Menzies, and Jeffrey put in a gully climb, which gave them good sport, especially at the top where the angle was steep. Lawson, Burn, and Garrick ascended an adjoining gully, while Nelson, Adamson, and Ednie made the ascent by the usual shoulder, meeting E. Buchanan near the top. Young spent an enjoyable day down below, *inter alia* searching for some sturdy shepherd with whom he could share the comforting contents of his flask. The shepherd was soon found, and, after carefully satisfying himself that the liquid contained in the flask had nothing in common with "that stuff that's causin' a' the deaths in America," enjoyed his dram to the full. The evening saw Nelson, Adamson, Craig, Jack, and Ednie homeward bound. After dinner the billiard room was the scene of an exciting and keenly contested "fives" tournament, the outstanding features of which were, firstly, a perfect catch at cover point by Arnold Brown, and secondly, the wonderful pirouettes executed by Grove after he had put in a hard drive to the cushion.

Sunday (the 4th) was, perhaps, the loveliest day of the Meet. The sun shone almost uninterruptedly, and it was the day of days for colour effects. Bell, Ling, and Young did the "Horseshoe" tops, returning over Vourie. Jeffrey, Arthur, and Menzies, fired by their conquests of the previous day, set out to explore the Black Shoot. They found it impossible, however, to gain access to it, owing to the heavy icing of the lower pitches. They accordingly tackled a gully near by, which subsequently transpired to be the White Shoot (climbed 28th March 1891, see Vol. I., p. 238). They surmounted the two initial pitches—the first a chockstone and the second an ice pitch. The conditions above, however, were so treacherous that they eventually beat a retreat, after spending two hours in the gully. They reached the top of Eunaich about 4 P.M., where they enjoyed the full beauties of the sunset, and



then continued to the Chochuill col. Arthur went on to Ben a Chochuill, while Jeffrey and Menzies returned direct from the col. The two Marshalls, Paterson, and Hutchison climbed Ben a Chochuill. Arnold Brown, his brother, Lawson, Burn, and Garrick made up a party for Beinn Mhic Mhonaidh, and reported enthusiastically of its qualities, both as a climb and as a fine view point. The Buchanans tramped round to the Dalmally side of the loch, Rennie and Clapperton visited Kilchurn Castle, while Grove walked up the old railway track.

Monday morning saw the last of every one but Clapperton and Lawson, who, after climbing Chochuill, came south by the evening train.

Our hearty thanks are due to Mr Currie and the members of his staff for their ready and thoughtful attention during the course of the Meet.

E. P. B.

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

### ADDITIONS TO LIBRARY.

A Short Tour in Sutherlandshire. By C. St John. *Presented by*  
George Sang.

Book of Views of Australian Mountain Scenery. *Presented by* Walter  
A. Smith.

The Club thanks the donors.

Alpines and Bog Plants. By Reginald Farrer. Purchased.

### PERIODICALS RECEIVED.

The Alpine Club Journal. June 1919.

The Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club for 1916, 1917-18,  
1918.

The Cairngorm Club Journal. 1919. Nos. 52-54.

The French Alpine Club Journal. 1919. 12 parts.

The Italian Alpine Club Journal (Rivista Mensile). 1919. 12 parts.

L'Echo des Alpes. 1919. 12 parts.

Spanish Alpine Club Journal. 1919.

The Canadian Alpine Club Journal. 1919.

Sangaku (Japanese Alpine Club Journal). 1919.

Appalachia. 1919.

Bulletin Pyrenéen. 1919.

Maryama. 1919.

### ADDITIONS TO THE SLIDE COLLECTION.

During the last year the Club's Alpine Collection has been augmented by a gift from George Sang of thirty-nine slides, all relating to Swiss mountains.

Six new slides, made from negatives of photographs taken by Mr Barclay and kindly lent for this purpose, have been added to the Home Collection.

The Club thanks these gentlemen.



1915

MAJOR ALEXANDER WHITE · 5<sup>TH</sup> R SCOTS  
LIEUT COL HARRY WALKER · CM · 4<sup>TH</sup> B WATCH  
CAPT CHAS A AIR · 4<sup>TH</sup> BLACK WATCH

1916

MAJOR RONALD MACDONALD · CAM · HRS  
MAJOR W<sup>M</sup> · G · MACALISTER · 5<sup>TH</sup> SCO RIFLES  
2<sup>ND</sup> LT J · R · RANALD · BECKETT · 17<sup>TH</sup> FFI  
CAPT W<sup>M</sup> · R · B · MCJANNET · SEA · HIGHS  
CAPT THOS · H · B · RORIE · 4<sup>TH</sup> B WATCH

1917

CAPT ALLAN · G · MARSHALL · 17<sup>TH</sup> FFI

1918

CAPT CHAS · INGLIS · CLARK · R · A · S · C  
CAPT GEORGE · H · HALMOND · R · A · M · C  
LIEUT CHARLES · DEARDS · R · F · C

1919

MAJOR T · E · GOODEVE · R · E

IN MEMORIAM

## WAR MEMORIAL TABLET.

MEMBERS will recollect that at the Annual General Meeting, held in Edinburgh in December 1918, it was agreed that the Club erect in the Library of the Club-Room a Memorial Tablet, bearing the names of those fellow-members who had made the supreme sacrifice in our country's struggle for freedom.

At that time it was generally felt that this, at least, should be done to honour the names of those men and give them a special significance in the annals of the Club. At the same time it was understood that the erection of such a Memorial was not necessarily the beginning and end of the Club's expression of honour and regret, but more an earnest of its appreciation to be carried out as soon as might be on the conclusion of hostilities between the combatants, the question of any further Memorial to our dead comrades to remain over for consideration at a later date.

Even this Tablet did not prove to be a simple matter. The Special Committee appointed by the meeting and the Club Committee itself found much cause for earnest consideration and patient deliberation on the choice of design and manner of execution.

All felt that first and foremost the result must be worthy of the men to be commemorated, and worthy of the Club, and to this end it was agreed that the choice of Memorial be not approached in any parsimonious spirit. Several designs were first obtained for a brass plaque, but on consideration it was felt that these were too ecclesiastical and out of keeping with the surroundings. Some more artistic design was indicated, and Mr Colin B. Phillip, Mr James Paterson, R.S.A., and latterly Mr Alexander Paterson, F.R.I.B.A., Glasgow, were consulted, with the result that the matter was put into the capable hands of Mr Henshaw, of Edinburgh, who produced a design which, after some slight alteration and adjustment, was accepted by the Committee and approved

by the gentlemen already mentioned who, as it were, formed our mentors in the delicate questions of artistic taste: to them our very best thanks are due for their patient guidance and friendly interest in the scheme, and for their valuable suggestions and sound advice.

The Tablet, which is of bronze, is now cast, and will very shortly be erected in the Club-Room in a prominent position: the accompanying illustration shows it as finally approved. It is confidently hoped that the choice and decision of the Committee will meet with the hearty approval of the members, and, as the cost is to be defrayed by a levy, as agreed at the 1918 meeting, that there will be a ready response to the call for subscriptions.

The levy works out at the rate of 10s. per head per member, and to simplify the task of collection a slip is enclosed with this issue of the *Journal*, to which members will please give their early attention.

## SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB'S GUIDE BOOK TO THE MOUNTAINS OF SCOTLAND.

AS with so much else the events of the recent years have played sad havoc with the progress of this scheme of the Club. But now that we are shaking off the foul miasmas of war, it is surely the moment for the Editor to hail the members to the hills that they may bring the work to a successful issue.

Let us dedicate the book to our fallen members.

Ere 1914, much work had been done and well done. The greatest credit is the due of those—not by any means the youngest among us—who set hand to task and carried through their part thus early. Others, again, have been hard at work of recent months. But much still remains to be done. A neglected breach has to be filled, and it now behoves those who can, to give the most loyal support to the future sub-editor of Division III., by acquiring information and preparing articles ahead of his appointment. It is a far cry to the lands of Knoydart and Glen Shiel, and the forests of Glen Affric and Strath Conon. Let those who may go, have pen and camera with them and mind alert, and let those who have been, render their account.

What would have cost us, when the idea was first mooted, some £300, will now cost £1,000, or perhaps £1,200. Finance has thus become the paramount factor. The Committee would have liked to publish the "Guide" complete and as a whole. It has been decided that this cannot be done under present conditions. It will therefore be published section by section. As the Ben Nevis number of the Club's *Journal* has long been out of print, and to meet the needs of the large majority of our younger members at the forthcoming Meet at Fort William, the first section to be published will be Section E., of Volume I., that for Ben Nevis, which the Editor hopes to have ready about Easter. It will be generously illustrated with the Club's most beautiful photographs of both winter and

summer scenes. It behoves each member to obtain a copy, and to make it as widely known as possible among his friends of the Mountains. Who would not be possessed of the beautiful pictures of Clark, Howie, or Robertson? From the measure of support accorded this first number, the Committee will gauge their ability to illustrate succeeding numbers on as generous a scale, for it is chiefly in the illustrations that the cost lies.

It is hoped that the first section will follow Section E. at a short interval. It will contain the general articles on the geology, meteorology, and the plant and animal life of the Scottish mountains as well as on the craft of the mountaineer and his gear withal. That for the Islands, too, has long been complete, and only requires to be brought up to date by noting the more recent climbs.

The Divisions, with their geographical limits, together with the names of those members who have most kindly agreed to act as sub-editors, are given in the table below. These gentlemen, however, must receive generous support from their fellow-members, if the work is to be made worthy of the Club. Articles on isolated and remote mountain groups are especially required. Members can render real service by writing the sub-editors to ascertain where their information is meagre, and thereafter endeavouring to arrange their excursions to cover those parts. As examples of the type of article considered most suitable, favourable attention has already been called in the *Journal* to those of Mr Duncan on the Eastern Cairngorms (Vol. VIII., pp. 49-72), and of Mr Garden on the Central Cairngorms (Vol. VII., pp. 323-362). Failing the ability to provide an article, notes will be appreciated. Matters of antiquarian and historical interest should not be overlooked, and mention of old drove roads, bridle paths, &c., should be included. Good photographs, especially if possessing pictorial merit, are required. These reproduce best when silver prints with a highly polished surface are supplied.

All articles, notes, and photographs, and all communications of local interest, should be sent to the sub-editor of the Division concerned. Only on matters of general

policy (and meantime of Division III.) should communications be addressed to the General Editor, J. R. Young.

*Division I.*—North of the Forth and Clyde, west and south of the line of the Highland Railway from Perth to Dalwhinnie, thence west by Tulloch to Fort William.

*Sub-Editor* — Harry MacRobert, Lynton, Kilmacolm, Renfrewshire.

*Division II.*—East of Caledonian Canal, north of a line drawn from Fort William by Tulloch to Dalwhinnie, and east of the line of the Highland Railway, thence to Perth.

*Sub-Editor*—George Duncan, 15 Golden Square, Aberdeen.

*Division III.*—West of the Caledonian Canal, and south of the Dingwall and Kyle of Lochalsh Railway line.

*Sub-Editor*—

*Division IV.*—North of the Dingwall and Kyle of Lochalsh Railway line.

*Sub-Editor*—W. N. Ling, Ashgate, Wetheral, near Carlisle.

*Division V.*—South of the Forth and Clyde.

*Sub-Editor*—J. J. Waugh, 4 Wemyss Place, Edinburgh.

*Division VI.*—Islands.

*Sub-Editor* — W. W. Naismith, 57 Hamilton Drive, Glasgow, W.



# 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.*

DURING the latter half of July 1919 the following climbs, believed to be new, were done by J. B. Meldrum and the writer :—

## 1. WESTERN BUTTRESS OF BEN EIGHE (COIRE MHC FHEARCHAIR FACE).

A start is made near the extreme right of the buttress (looking up), not far from the gully on that side. The first pitch consists of an open scoop, followed by an overhang on the right, and is very difficult, owing to the rounded character of the red sandstone. It finishes on a good grass terrace. For the second pitch the rocks are tackled to the right of a slight crack or corner, and, some distance up, it is necessary to make a delicate traverse to the left on sloping holds. A long stride across the corner leads to an easier finishing slab, from which one lands on another grass terrace. Moving somewhat to the right, one is now confronted by the third pitch, the crux of the climb. Climbing upwards and to the right, a small, sloping moss ledge or stance is attained. Then it is necessary to climb the steep slab above, working slightly to the left, and this section is undoubtedly severe, the holds being extremely poor and rounded. Rubbers were worn by the leader throughout the climb, and for this pitch and the one below, they, or stocking feet, are probably essential.

A fourth and much easier pitch lands one on a broad, sloping terrace, marking the top of the sandstone and the commencement of the quartzite.

The route now lies up a square cut wide opening in the centre of the face above, bearing somewhat to the left at the top. A short distance of scrambling then leads to the foot of the final tower. This would probably succumb to a frontal attack. We found the weak defences on the right, reaching the foot of a chimney by easy rocks on the western arête of the tower, followed by a traverse to the left. The chimney is only of moderate difficulty, but pleasant, and leads to a ledge at the foot of a short crack in the nose of the buttress. The crack is easy, and marks the finish of the climb. The rock scenery throughout is magnificent.

## 2. SKYE--S. FACE OF SGURR ALASDAIR, FROM COIRE A' GHRUNNDHA.

The course lies to the right of the face, which is well shown by a photo in No. 66 of the *Journal*.

An extremely steep initial section (wet at the time) is avoided by climbing the first, short, easy pitch of the gully slanting up to the Tearlach-Dubh Gap. Thence a very difficult traverse and ascent is made towards the left, to a point where the face slopes at a more favourable angle, and is more broken. This pitch necessitates a run out of nearly 70 feet, and stocking feet, or other "fancy" footgear, will be found desirable. The open face is now climbed for some 250 to 300 feet. Holds are plentiful, but care is necessary, owing to loose rock. One emerges near the head of the Great Stone Shoot.

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Second ascents were made of the following climbs, which were described in No. 87 of the *Journal*. Our impressions may be of interest.

#### 1. MALLORY'S ROUTE, SRON-NA-CICHE.

Rubbers were found grateful and comforting on the very difficult slabs above the impressive first pitch. Soon after quitting the gully by the crack, further progress along the original route seemed uninviting, owing to slimy, steep rocks. An alternative was sought on the left wall of the crack, commencing about 35 feet above the Central Gully. An ascent of this wall for about 40 feet conducted one to a slabby ledge, with a good belay round a perched block on the left. From here a move was made to the right, then up a groove, and, in due course, following the line of least resistance throughout, without meeting anything unduly difficult, we attained the luncheon corner of the first ascent. For the finish, above the cairn, we selected the wide gully on the left. We cannot recommend it.

The climb proper was very enjoyable, especially at the conclusion of each difficulty. It is probably the finest buttress climb in Skye. On this climb we were accompanied by Mr G. A. Solly.

#### 2. CRACK OF DOOM.

This was, without doubt, the most difficult climb we did during the holiday, the sort of climb one vows never to revisit, except in nightmares.

We started from near the foot of the Cioch Gully, attaining the Terrace level with the Cioch by way of a couple of chimneys, which appear, from some points of view, to constitute a downward prolongation of the Crack itself. One of these chimneys was ascended by a delicate slab on its left wall. Immediately above the Terrace a lengthy water-worn groove was climbed instead of an easier route on the right. The second man was left at the point just above this, where the Crack bears to the right and steepens, whilst the leader did the severe portion in one run out.

After leaving the chockstone no real rest could be had, for the stance above was disappointing, and the moral strain of the situation unique. Facing towards the left, it was found necessary to wedge for a foot or two before the left foot could reach the first of the small

holds on the left wall. Then a hurried pull up on the small holds above, a frantic grip of a wobbly damp chockstone at the top, a loving embrace of a real, hefty chockstone on the left, and the deed was done, much to the leader's relief.

GEORGE S. BOWER.

#### THE LADIES' SCOTTISH CLIMBING CLUB.

The year of the Armistice has seen the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club gradually resuming its former activities, and it is a matter for congratulation that, despite the difficult years it has passed through, it has held together marvellously, and can even record an increase in membership. Not only is the acquisition of new members necessary for the well-being of the Club, but renewed enthusiasm on the part of the old members is equally essential. The members who have been away on war service in foreign countries have returned with their love of the Scottish mountains intensified: those who carried on at home, under less romantic conditions, feel the call of the hills and glens more strongly than ever.

In April 1919 the Easter Meet of the Club was held at Blair Atholl, and some good expeditions were made, including the ascents of Beinn-a-Chait, Beinn-a-Ghlo, Carn-a-Chlamain, and Ben Dearg. The New Year Meet (1920) took place at Leadhills, from where interesting excursions were made over the Lowther Hills, and through the famous Enterkin and Mennock Passes.

#### THE SCOTTISH CASSITERIDES.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

*The following article, which appeared in the "Times Educational Supplement" for 4th March 1920, is reprinted here, with the kind permission of the Supplement's Editor.*

OWING to discoveries which I am able to record to-day, the controversy as to the location of the Cassiterides is likely once again to engage the active attention of classical scholars and antiquaries. There exist in the Hebrides considerable and widespread deposits of surface tin, while there are also traces of silver, lead, and copper. It is well known that iron, too, is to be found on several islands. During the war the new iron mine on the island of Raasay, near Skye, was successfully worked, and the industry is now a well-established one.

Contemporary opinion regarding the mysterious tin islands of the ancients is somewhat divided and somewhat confusing, the scholars of a past generation, who made valiant attempts to settle the problem once and for all, having failed to arrive at an agreement as to what value should be attached to the apparently conflicting statements

made by various classical writers. Certain antiquaries, like the late Professor Haverfield (*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries*, New Series, Vol. XVIII., 1900, p. 119), refer with scepticism to "the famous and fabulous Cassiterides." Others still cling to the belief that they must be located off the north-west coast of Spain, although the islands favoured have failed to yield traces of tin. Not a few prefer to maintain an open mind on the question.

It cannot but be admitted that M. Reinach (*L'Anthr.*, III., 1892, pp. 275 *et seq.*) struck at the heart of the problem when he asked, "In what Western European islands is tin found?" Perceiving that Strabo had located the tin islands to the north of Corunna, he concluded that the British Isles constituted "the archipelago of the Cassiterides." In doing so, however, he failed to give due consideration to Strabo's further statement that Crassus, who succeeded in reaching the tin islands, announced that the distance to them was greater than that from the Continent to Britain. Crassus, it may be noted, found that the tin ore lay on the surface of these islands, as it does in the Hebrides.

The difficulty raised by the reference regarding the distance of the tin islands from the Continent has been met by those who believe the Scilly Islands were the Cassiterides by assuming that "tin pebbles" were washed down from those hills which, as has been found, contain veins of the rare metal, and could be picked up on the island beaches in ancient times. Some antiquaries, taking into consideration the probability that the tin deposits on the Scilly Islands were not overlooked by the early "metal searchers," have inclined to include them with the Cornish peninsula in the region "vaguely referred to as the Cassiterides." The plausible theory of Mr Cecil Torr will be recalled in this connection (*The Academy*, XLVIII., October 26, 1895, pp. 342-3). "In the Phœnician language," he wrote, "the word for 'island' is the same as in the Hebrew." This word "is used repeatedly in the Bible for places beyond the sea, as well as islands." He believed the Greeks misunderstood Phœnician references to a distant tin-bearing region, and supposed that "islands" were referred to.

The evidence now afforded by the Hebridean discoveries seems to confirm Reinach's considered opinion that "Cassiterides" means "the remotest isles" (*insula extimæ*). It also throws into relief the fourth-century rendering by Rufus Festus Avienus of the lost work of Himilco, the Carthaginian explorer who visited Britain and Ireland about 500 B.C. This ancient navigator referred to the tin islands as the "Æstrymnides that raise their heads, lie scattered, and are rich in tin and lead." The natives crossed the stormy, whale-haunted ocean in their light but sea-worthy skin-covered boats—the Pictish "skiffs."

Elton, in his "Origins of English History," found it necessary, in dealing with the Cassiterides problem, to refer to Rufus Festus Avienus as "a foolish writer" (p. 20), to throw doubt on Strabo's

knowledge (p. 18), and to regard Timaeus, the contemporary of Pytheas, as an unreliable writer (p. 39, N 1). Touching on the Mictis-Ictis-Vectis aspect of the problem, Elton wrote, "Pliny (IV., 16) places Vectis between England (? Britain) and Ireland; and Timaeus, probably misunderstanding Pytheas, has transferred Ictis to the site of Thule." Timaeus, as Elton notes (p. 35), had, on the authority of Pytheas, referred to "an island called Mictis, lying 'inwards' at a distance of six days' sail from Britain, where the tin is found, to which island the natives make voyages in their canoes of wickerwork covered with hides." As is now generally accepted, "inwards" in the passage quoted signifies "northward." The theory that Thanet was Mictis cannot be maintained. Pliny distinguished between Mictis and Vectis. It should be noted that there is no indication as to from what port in Britain the six days' voyage was made.

Rufus Festus Avienus is more definite regarding the location of the tin islands than any other ancient writer. He tells us in his "Ora Maritima" that Himilco found them to be situated "two days' voyage from the Sacred Isle (Ireland)," which is "rich in green grass" and "thickly peopled by the Hierni." Near the tin islands "lies the broad isle of the Albiones." Here we seem to have the Hebrides without a doubt. The name Albion was originally applied to England and Scotland. By the time of Pliny, who died in 79 A.D., Latin writers had, however, ceased to use "Albion," and knew England as "Britain." Festus Avienus refers to "the hardy folk of Britain." His "isle of the Albiones" may therefore be Scotland, which was known to the Irish Gaels as "Alba."

The "Mictis" of Pytheas may have been Tiree, Iona, or Lewis. Tiree was known formerly as "Tirieth" and "Terra Hith"—that is, "the land of Ith." Some would connect "Ith" with "Ethiopian" or with "Ithaca." In Irish mythology "Ith" figures as an ancestor of the Milesians, who invaded Ireland from Spain, making a sea voyage by night in the approved Phœnician fashion. There are several "Ith" place-names in Ireland. It is apparently a pre-Celtic tribal name, and may refer to the ancient searchers for metals, who came to our islands in Phœnician ships. Tin and copper have been found on Tiree, and there is tin on Iona and in Lewis. Iona was anciently called in Gaelic "Innis Druidhean" ("the island of the Druids"). It has the tin place-name, "Loch Staoineag," from "staoin," the Gaelic for tin. Other "staoin" place-names are found in Islay, Jura, Ross-shire, &c.

It will be recalled that the Phœnicians carried tin from the Cassiterides direct to the Spanish port of Corbilo. They kept secret the sources of their metal-bearing areas.

That a non-Celtic people had a remote connection with the Hebrides is suggested not only by the "foreign faces" found among the natives of certain islands, but by the folk-lore evidence. As in Ancient Egypt, the Hebridean devil (Set) is a "black pig," the non-

Celtic pork taboo still survives, ceremonial mouse-feasts were anciently held as in Troad, and the story of Osiris survives in the folk tales. It looks, too, as if the ancient searchers for metals erected the great stone circles in Lewis and Orkney. Tin is found near Callernish circle in Lewis, while deposits of silver-lead, copper, and zinc have been located in the Orkneys. Indeed, the Scottish stone circles, as a whole, are closely connected either with metal-yielding areas or with rivers in which rather good pearls are still found.

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#### SCHICHALLION, &c.

COLONEL JAMES A. GREEN, M.C., of East Lassintullich Lodge, Kinloch Rannoch, writes that any member of the S.M.C. climbing or wandering in the district will invariably find quarters and plain material comforts at the address given, for a night or so.

We tender the Colonel the Club's hearty thanks for his kind offer of hospitality, and trust that some members will be able to avail themselves of the invitation.

## Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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*March 1910*

THE BUCHAILLES OF ETIVE

*Jas. R. Young*



# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## CLIMBING IN DALNESS AND MAMLORN.\*

BY JOSEPH GIBSON STOTT.

“Far lone amang the Hielan’ hills,  
Midst Nature’s wildest grandeur,  
Thro’ snowy dens and icy glens  
Wi’ weary steps I wander.”

IMAGINE the darkness of night falling on a lonely Highland glen: the mountains, white with snow, towering high overhead till lost in the rolling mist; the swollen river sweeping along its wide, stony channel. Not a house in sight, not a sound of man or beast, not the twinkle of a star to illumine the dark breast of the night; everything cold and solitary, cheerless and uninviting; a fine wetting mist and drizzling rain distilling over all Nature. Such was Glenorchy as we invaded it one night early in May (1884)—a month that will be remembered as visiting our mountains with one of the fiercest snowstorms of the year. All the way up the line we saw how winter had renewed his grip: Ben Ledi was white three-quarters of the way down; Ben Lawers and Ben More wore their hoods and cloaks of ermine; Stobinian boasted a snow cornice that was plainly visible without the aid of the field-glass. We saw that hard work was in store for us,

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\* This article was written over thirty years ago and formed one of a series: the spelling of place-names is here and there unusual, but we print the article as written.—EDITOR.

but we were not going back on that account ; and at Tyndrum we shouldered our knapsacks, and in the fast deepening gloom of night footed it up to Inveroran.

Few tourists in Scotland but are acquainted with Loch Tulla: the blue sheet of water, the reedy shore, the girdle of dark pinewood, the huge surrounding mountains, Ben Doe and Ben Doran, Ben a Challader, Ben Chaistel, and others, the cosy hotel nestling 'mid the wood on the one side, the gables of the shooting lodge peeping out on the other. And a comfortable inn is it withal, and mine host besides renting some of the best water in the Orchy for his guests, can give them plenty of information both about fishing and climbing, cheer them of an evening with the strains of his splendid violin, and wake the wild echoes with the soul-stirring music of his pipes. *Slainte !* to thee, mine host of Inveroran, *Slainte mhór !* long life and bumper houses !

The morning following our arrival witnessed a bold adventure. The pilot was there :—

“Fleet foot on the corrie,  
Sage counsel in cumber.”

The pilot who never missed an expedition that promised danger and difficulty. And big, strong M'Toddy was there ; and so was S—, and so was our Schichallion recruit ; whose power of wind and limb had caught the train for us at Aberfeldy. Our attack was to be directed on Buchaille Etive, the shepherd—as his name implies—of all the mountains that cluster round Glencoe and Glen Etive, and the forests of Blackmount and Dalness. Some of us had surveyed him in former years, but never climbed him ; indeed, the foresters assured us that very few people ever cared to go to *his* summit, and that at this time of year and in this weather it was rather a rash enterprise. All the more honour then in climbing him, was our answer, and in light marching order we took the road to Kings-house. It is useless here to describe the lonely solitudes of Blackmount that are crossed by the road. At this time they were doubly lonely and solitary ; the peaks buried deep in new fallen snow ; the pastures in the corries

hidden from sight for the same reason ; the snow and ice lying along the roadside long before we attained the summit of the pass—some 1,450 feet. Deer were numerous—driven to the low ground through stress of weather ; wild ducks flew up from every moorland tarn ; a pair of ravens from the rocks of Corrie Ba circled high over our heads. At the summit we opened out the drear expanse of the Moor of Rannoch, Schichallion keeping watch and ward over it with snow-clad cone ; and as we wheeled down the hill towards the west, we looked through the entrances of gloomy Glencoe and Glen Etive, and marked our mountain towering over them. Viewed from the east, it appears a sharp pointed pyramid of rock, black and rugged and inaccessible. Its proportions are magnificent ; 3,345 feet its spire soars into the sky, dominating nearly all the mountains round about. On the east it plunges sheer in crag and precipice, defying the snow to find secure resting place ; westward it dips sharply for a few hundred feet, to rise steeply in a second peak to an almost similar elevation. The pass between the two is a stiff pull, and the descent on the Glencoe side is almost harder than the other. The natives of Blackmount claim that Leith Pier and the top of Buchaille Etive are the first places to catch the rays of the rising sun in Scotland. On the face of it this is improbable, but it is a fancy wherewith to console yourself when you are going to climb him.

At Kingshouse we were told that the new Etive route is the most popular in the West Highlands. People embark at the foot of Loch Etive, steam up to its head, ascend the glen by coach to Kingshouse, and still by coach go down Glencoe to Ballachulish, whence the steamer takes them to Oban or Fort William. Nearly two thousand five hundred persons travelled this way in the season of 1883.

Half a mile beyond Kingshouse Inn the Etive road leaves Glencoe, and closely circling the base of the black crags of the Buchaille, follows the wild river down the glen. The view of the mountains from this point is superb. High, high above you climb the precipices of the Herdsman, seamed with deep rifts and ravines where the snow harbours long, and vies in whiteness with the torrents.

About a third of the way to the top is an eagle's eyrie, but for two or three years past the birds have not bred there. Just across the glen rises another mountain giant. His sides rush aloft—smooth in their steepness—and at no great elevation the snow commences to mantle them and increases in depth till the upper regions are wrapped in a mantle of whiteness whose thickness is to be measured by feet. We are now in the forest of Dalness—once one of the royal hunting grounds of Scotland. It is utterly bare of wood, but in bygone years oaks and magnificent pines flourished in its glens and on its mountains, as the trunks and branches buried in the peat can testify.

For nearly 3 miles we went down Glen Etive, searching every foot of the side of the Buchaille through our binoculars; but he was still so rocky and barren, so fenced by crag and cliff and ravine, that in the present state of matters an ascent could only have been attended with great danger and probable defeat. M'Toddy was loud in his demands for an attack by way of a profound gully full of snow and boulders and foaming water; but our leader would not try it till he had searched it from top to bottom with the glass; and when we were directly opposite it and this became possible, we saw the wisdom of such a course. We might have been able to work our way high on to the mountain through its recesses, but our progress would in the end have been stopped by a wall of rock many feet high that could hardly be turned or surmounted. So we kept the road for about 3 miles from its junction with Glencoe, and then being about a quarter of a mile from the line of the pass between the Buchaille and its neighbour, we turned to the right and began to rise. The hill was still very steep and rocky, but the way to the summit appeared to be free from the greater difficulties of the eastern slopes.

The turf was soft and wet to a degree—at every step we went up to the ankle; but, considering the amount of snow melting in the upper regions, this was not to be wondered at. Soon, however, we got clear of the marshy ground and went to work on a huge steep that soared

high overhead into the snowline. As we rose slowly the glass enabled us to distinguish several herds of deer on the mountain behind us. So steep and narrow was the glen, that even from our considerable elevation we failed to enlarge the view to any great degree; and although the river was now some hundred feet beneath, it seemed as though a stone could easily be pitched into it.

Steadily we worked our way upwards. Long furrows of soft green moss marked the course of unseen waters; trains of loose-lying shingle slipped away from under us, and made our progress slow and arduous; the fresh fallen snow was soft and slippery. Presently we got among the big boulders and the ledges of rock, and here the snow lay in plots a foot or two deep. The slope was much steeper, too—plunging right away to the river—and where seen in profile on both sides of us the angle appeared enormous. High above the point where we first struck the snow, in a hollow among boulders surrounded by a bank of drift about 3 feet deep, we found a large primrose plant in full leaf and blossom. We took it as a good omen.

As far as our progress could be gauged by the side of the mountain opposite, we must now be about 2,000 feet above the sea, with 1,300 feet still to climb before we could top our ben. Hitherto the weather had been all that could be wished, but now there was a blackness gathering over Rannoch, and presently the hailstones began to plump down on us thick and fast, driving us to some rocks for shelter. It cleared as soon as it had come, and blue sky again looked down on us; but over in the east, above Rannoch, the darkness of the snowstorm still lingered, and heavy mists were rolling around some of the peaks lower down Glen Etive. The wind, too, was shifty—puffs struck us from all sides—and some one ventured the prophecy that we should have a bad time of it yet. All the more reason, then, for making our hay while the sun shone; but progress was now very difficult. We were in a stormy sea of drifted snow, from which huge blocks rose high overhead. Every step we took let us into it up to the knee—sometimes, indeed, to the waist. The pilot,

with his usual eye for rock climbing, scrambled among the boulders; but as the snow between them was deeper than elsewhere, he fared perhaps worse than any of us. There was a feature in the snow that we had read of as presented in the Alps, but we had never heard of it in Scotland. When we had got up nearly to 3,000 feet, it assumed a lovely blue tint whenever it was turned over. This was particularly apparent in the deep holes made by our footsteps—a blue shaded downwards to deep indigo, not unlike the hue of glacier ice. In some huge snowballs we made for rolling down the steep the blue tint was also visible. We were inclined to account for it by the crystalline character of the snow at this elevation. The soft snow of low levels has no translucent qualities, but up here it was rather morsels of ice that fell, and in the mass these possessed the prismatic qualities of the consolidated *névé* of the glacier.

As we approached the top of the ridge the reason for the name of our hill became plain. The rocks were a kind of syenite or porphyry, and were pink in colour, thus justifying the name of Stob Dearg—the Red Peak—applied in distinction to Stob Dhu, the summit just across the pass. Buchaille Etive—the Herdsmen of Etive—applies to both hills, or the united mass of the mountain.

The storm that had long been threatening at last burst upon us. The mist that had so obstinately hung over Rannoch Moor came pouring in dense volumes into Glen Etive, hiding first the river, and then not only the mountains across it, but also Bidean nam Bian close beside us. Then it rushed over the rocks above and below us, and down swished the frozen snow and the hail, fairly darkening the atmosphere. No use going ahead now, so we established ourselves under the lee of some rocks, curled ourselves up, and made the most of our lunch. The outlook was not cheerful. We were just under the crest of the ridge, and above our heads a perfect tempest was raging, sending the thick snowdrift streaming far out over the glen. Comparatively sheltered though we were, it fell upon us thick and fast, and we were soon almost covered in; but if we had a snow blanket it was not a

very warm one. M'Toddy was the first to tire of the state of affairs and, promising to take good care of himself, he climbed on to the crest to reconnoitre.

In five minutes he came back, half-frozen, with the news that the line of the ridge was fairly level, that the snow was knee-deep and soft, the cold and wind and drifting terrible, and that from the nature of the hill he was sure the cairn on the top could not be more than a couple of hundred yards away. "If you stay here you may have to wait till you're frozen," he told us; "come on and make a dash at it; the chances are we'll be back again in a few minutes." The advice seemed good, so we got on our feet, shook the snow off, drew collars higher and ear-flaps lower, and mounted to the ridge. Whew! what a staggerer greeted us as we topped it—a blinding blast of snow and hail and drift; a perfect *tourmente* lashed upon us by a wind nearly strong enough to blow us down again. Lucky the ground was level. We could never have spent the time necessary to gain the cairn had it not been so. Bending low, we rushed on with a cheer—burly M'Toddy foremost, D—— next, then the pilot, S——, in the rear. We were on a narrow rounded ridge of snow, with an unknown deep on either side, and a whirling mist of snow all around us that the eye could not penetrate for 20 feet in any direction. The deep trench ploughed by the leader was almost filled up before the man behind him got into it, though not six paces separated the files. "Hooroo, boys! forrard! Steady here! take care of that edge"—such were the ejaculations as we plunged forward, and within five minutes came the "Hip! hip! hip! hurrah!" as we sunk down in a small basin in the snow, where the cairn, all covered with ice, rose about 4 feet above the level.

By Jove! no looking about us to-day. Hastily the thick woollen gloves were torn off and the cards produced; hastily they were crammed into a bottle and buried in the snow at the foot of the cairn; and then hastily we plunged through the snow and the storm, back along the ridge to the neighbourhood of the spot where we had lain before our rush. Arrived in shelter, we had time to look at ourselves. We were thickly covered with snow,

from head to foot ; it filled our ears, our hair, our pockets ; it had penetrated everywhere ; our eyebrows and moustaches were icicles ; we were veritable snow-men, or living statues of winter. "Couldn't have stood that for long ; toughest bit that we've ever done ; well, boys, that rush was a thing to be proud of"—these were the consolations we administered to each other as we paused before commencing the descent. This at first was no easy matter. Lower down on the ridge we again became exposed to the full force of the storm. It was hard to say how deep the snow was. For the most part we were into it up to the hip, kicking and stumbling along ; but the drift and the falling snow flew in such dense and blinding volumes that we were almost as much cumbered round the arms and heads as about the feet. The soft snow enabled us to go down very steep slopes, tumbling and sliding anyway, and presently we left the worst of the storm above and behind us, and raced along the steep course of a torrent whose waters were all but hidden by the snowdrift cumbering its bed. Soon we heard the unseen Etive thundering below us, and the wild corrie we were in opened out, and through the steep rocky sides and beyond the maze of falling flakes we saw the dark flank of the opposite mountain. We were by no means at the bottom yet, though. The boulders cumbering the stream that drained the corrie were so covered with snow that the water was hardly visible, and it was far down its course before it became possible to have the drink that the weather had denied us on the peak. At length though we reached the brink of a boiling linn, out came the big Club flask, and it was "Slainte Buchaille Etive ; slainte Inveroran ; slainte all round !"

Wilder surroundings it would be difficult to imagine. Standing by the edge of the stream, you looked upwards into a huge amphitheatre and saw the twin peaks—Stob Dearg on the right, Stob Dhu on the left—soaring high above it, the sharp summit of the latter showing an overhanging comb of snow that must have been 20 feet in height. The sides of the hollow were whitest snow, with here and there a jagged black rock uprearing through



it ; and adown the steep pitched floor, leaping and raving through the black boulders and the snow wreaths, came the fierce mountain torrent, hurling on its way to the Etive. As we turned to resume the descent, a sudden exclamation brought us to a halt. There, just across the water, not a score of yards from us, was a red deer hind, standing in the attitude you so commonly see them, turned from us ready for flight, looking back over her shoulder. A moment she looked, wondering what brought man to her mountains in such weather ; then with a speed and ease that astonished us, she cantered up the rough slope, took one last glance, and disappeared over the rise.

Over snow and rock, moss and shingle and water, we scrambled down to the Etive, almost jumping into a big white hare on the way ; and just as we reached the river the snow stopped falling, the sun struck through the clouds, and the mountains one and all came forth radiant and rejoicing. Oh, you ill-mannered old churl of a Buchaille, thus to treat the few visitors who come near you ; fairly you smiled on us till we were well within your grip, and then you did your best to wrap us in storm and hurl us over your crags ; and when we had vanquished you in spite of all your endeavours, and left our cards in a soda-water bottle upon your highest pinnacle, you came out of the dumps and laughed at us as we marched homewards.

As we left Kingshouse, there was not a cloud in the blue ; the mountains were white marble, and all over the drear expanse of Glencoe were the floods of golden light that heralded the sunset. The snow lay thick on the road as we retraversed it, and wild Corrie Ba was plunged in shadow. The keen mountain breeze played around us, and the last gleam of sunset faded on the white summit of Ben a Challader as we strode into the woods around Loch Tulla. High up in the deepening blue the silver sickle of the moon hangs above the hills ; the placid lake spreads like glass and mirrors the dark green woods, the blue smoke-wreaths hanging over the house and the lodge, the lonely mountains, and the cold sky. But down there, beyond the bridge, there is a cheerful object—the light streaming from the windows of Inveroran. Our toil is

done. There stands the landlord himself to welcome us ; he has been a trifle anxious during the snowstorm ; slippers and socks are at the fire, and through the house there is an odour of mutton and coffee. After the pleasures of the mountain come the pleasures of the table ; after the pleasures of the table, the pleasures of the pipe, the toddy tumbler, and the general retrospect. The big sofa is hauled round to face the fire, the blaze is stirred up, the chairs and footstools are arranged more conveniently, and then—oh, the recollection of it ; who is there in the world with whom we would change places ?

Eight hours of sound sleep thoroughly refreshed us and took away the stiffness, and the promise of a more favourable day put us in the best of spirits. After breakfast, S—— borrowed the landlord's pipes, and strutted up and down before the house in full blast and great jubilation. The keeper brought round his magnificent kennel of deer hounds for our inspection, and the time flew fast till the word was given to prepare for departure. Sad word, under many circumstances—very much so here. The knapsacks are packed and sent on by conveyance to Tyndrum, adieux are said, and in light marching order we take the road we traversed a couple of nights ago. We cannot yet see Ben Doran—our objective to-day—but high into the air, beyond the loch, heaves the broad white back of his neighbour, Ben Doe. Two miles we sweep round the bend of the water, and then, over the tree tops, we see the massive shoulder of this hill sinking down in a curve round the head of a magnificent corrie, to swell again on its further side into the ridgy breast of Ben Doran. That's our way. Straight up into the recesses of the corrie, round the upper side of that black rampart of crags, forward for a weary 2 miles along the wastes of snow to the summit. If not a long day's work, 'twill at any rate be a hard one, considering the present condition of the hills.

Here we are at Orchy Bridge, and here, threading its winding course down the long hill, is the stream that rises in our corrie. Good-bye the road ; the broad gulch is our way now. The slope is easy, but the ground is very soft and rotten. Grouse spring out of the heather at every

turn—sometimes a snipe, sometimes a wild duck; and when—at the end of half an hour of steady work—we throw ourselves down for a rest, road and river are far down below us, and we are high up on the side of Ben Doran. Look at that surly old Buchaille and his compeers. While we are toasting in sunshine, there they are smothered in mists and clouds, fighting it out with the elements. It is snowing hard over there; we can only hope that as they are 20 miles away and the wind is pretty steady, none of the storm will visit us.

Come along again. Ha! here is the first snow to-day—soft and slushy it is too. We're up among the Alpine leaves now, and amongst the rocks above us there should be ptarmigan. Soon we are clear of the trench of the stream and getting into the corrie. The hills are on both sides of us as well as ahead—steep, rocky slopes, the snow deepening the further we go. Listen! that's the raven's croak for certain—to be sure! look at them! There they are, a pair of black specks circling in the sky far above us. Keep an eye on the cliffs for an eyrie; but though we do so, we can't find it. This is bad going now, huge boulders lying in deep, soft snow. You have to be very careful, not having a notion where your foot may go to. There they are! a pair of them—ptarmigan. Ha! another brace, still in the full splendour of their white winter plumage.

Every man for himself now. D—— is far over on the left, following one of the forks of the stream up to the very head of the corrie; M'Toddy is up to his waist in a snow slope on the right face; the pilot, with an eye to rock climbing, is heading for what looks to S—— like the side of a cathedral, as with dubious steps he follows him.

Here we are, united at last, above the brow of the corrie. We must be 2,500 feet up now at least, and the prospect has enlarged immensely. Smooth Loch Tulla, though 2 or 3 miles away, appears to be at our feet. For 10 long miles the eye follows the course of the tumultuous Orchy. The mountain giants of Blackmount and Dalness are still grappling with the storm clouds, and over in the south-west there is a bevy of white summits, chief amongst which soar the lordly peaks of Cruachan.

The ravens are still wheeling overhead, and with the glass we see an old hare or two pottering about on the slopes down below us.

Hullo! what's that? From some place over on the craggy side of Ben Doe there comes a rumble and a rattle; in a moment more we see the fragments of the huge icicles tumbling down the cliff, a spout of snow follows, and a few blocks of stone hurtle and crash from ledge to ledge, and finally trace long grooves on the smooth slope beneath. "A young avalanche, by Jove! We must look out for that sort of thing. That's not far from where you came up, D——; lucky you're out of it now."

The worst is past, as regards the toil of ascending. We have still a considerable mount, but we have nearly 2 miles to do it in—more's the pity. Thinking to find the crest of the ridge swept tolerably clear, we mount to it. There is a keen wind blowing, and we have to get our gloves on; but we enjoy a fine view down on the left—deep Glen Lyon with its loch, and all the snowclad mountains of what used to be the Mamlorn forest.

We mount steadily but easily. Sometimes we clamber over great ledges and tables of rock, the long, grey icicles hanging from every projection on their leeward sides, and the drifted snow, fine and dry as dust, filling up every cranny and crevice; but more usually we plod in single file through deep snowdrifts, where every step sinks us up to the knee. At intervals the ridge draws upwards into rocky hummocks, and sometimes over them—oftener round them, we toil on—each one surmounted only disclosing another a few hundred yards ahead.

It is a long, hard grind. The footprints shine blue as on yesterday; but the glare of the endless tracts of snow, lit up from time to time by the sun, is insufferably trying. We wish we had brought blue spectacles, but it is no use repining.

Snow, snow, nothing but white, weary wastes of snow, broken here and there by a smooth grey boulder of mica slate, on which we are glad to sit down and rest.

Plod, plod, plod, taking it in turns to break the way. How you wish you were a mountain hare, able to skip

along the surface ; but as it is, you feel much more like an elephant.

Hurrah ! One of M'Toddy's long-drawn shouts. There we are at last. A quarter of a mile ahead, a white mound with a cairn on it. Each leg immediately grows a quarter of a ton lighter. We press on enraptured.

"Hip! hip! hip! ho ro!" Here we are; and we quarry a hole in the ice and the stones to hold the record.

It is a fine view, but not one to send you into raptures. Chief among the mountains the eye welcomes—five-and-twenty miles away in the north-east—Scotland's chief, Ben Nevis himself, square and massive, shrouded in snow every yard that we see of him. Next come the group captained by the Buchaille: Ben Starav and Ben Cruachan; Ben More in Mull; the Paps of Jura, gleaming blue across the sea; glorious Ben Lui, sharp edged as ever; the white cones of Ben More and Stobinian; Ben Lomond, and most of the Perthshire hills—more or less white, every one of them, some showing not a trace of any other colour. Oh, the mighty power of winter!

Well did old Duncan Ban, the bard of Glenorchy, eulogise Ben Doran, applying to it the highest praise and the sweetest epithets his mellifluous language afforded. It is indeed a beautiful mountain, both in its own proportions and in the panorama it commands.

Parts of two of our finest lakes—Loch Awe and Loch Lomond—are in sight; Loch Tulla and Loch Lyon, and many a lonely tarn, both moorland and mountain. We feel that we are fully recompensed for the labour of the climb, and the loss of a view in our ascent of yesterday. From an elevation of 3,523 feet, we look far and wide over the West of Scotland, nearly 200 feet higher than old Buchaille, whose peak we stood on twenty-four hours ago.

It is cold, if it is enjoyable, so we soon descend. The hill plunges more than 3,000 feet in one huge slope the whole way down to the junction of the glens at Auchinnis Challain. The first score of these we slide on our backs on a steep snowdrift, but then caution becomes necessary. Steady, now steady, this is an ugly bit—a wall of very rough rock, from whose foot the slope plunges

dizzily. Round this rampart we have to go, clinging to the rocks with the hand, half sitting, half standing in the snow, kicking out secure footsteps, hanging on with tooth and nail.

It's past, and through knee-deep drift we soon drop down a few hundred feet. Were the snow frozen, the difficulty would be very great. A single slip might send you headlong to Glen Lyon. Being soft, there is little fear of falling, and we plunge through it till the big boulders begin to crop up and make progress more difficult, and caution necessary.

Then the snow thins away, and shingle and moss appear; then the snow gives out altogether, and down a watercourse of fire-escape steepness we make our way to the bottom of the glen. 3,000 feet of a descent such as that is, if anything, more trying to the thigh and knee-joint than a climb to a similar height.

Right at the foot of the ben, commanding it from top to bottom, is a shepherd's house—a cosy, comfortable little place, the abode of a buxom maiden who administered consolation to us in the shape of oat-cake and milk. These consummated, we strolled down the glen to Tyn-drum, casting many an amorous glance over our shoulders at the majestic contours of the mountain.

Tyndrum visitors' book contains the record of more than one of our expeditions. We were now able to add another, as well as to signalise our appreciation of the viands set before us.

We had fondly hoped to end this excursion without one of our almost inevitable rushes for the train; it was not to be. Ere we had finished dinner the handmaiden electrified us with the intelligence that the train was at the station. Luckily the bill was paid; down went fork and napkin, caught up in haste were hats and sticks and other trappings, and off we flew like the wind in the corries of Ben Doran. We did it, but at such a cost that an appeal to the flasks became imperatively necessary, and in brimming cups we drank "Slainte to the Buchaille; slainte to Ben Doran; slainte to ourselves; slainte to absent friends," and hopes for many another expedition as pleasant and successful as this one had been.

## THE EXPLORATION OF THE HISTORIC CAVE AT FASTCASTLE.

BY W. DOUGLAS.

FASTCASTLE in its time has played many parts, but its origin is shrouded in the dim and misty regions of unrecorded history, and all we know of the builder is gathered from the illuminating remark of James VI. that "the man who built it must have been a knave at heart." \*

It first appears in history during the early part of the fourteenth century, when it figures as one of the important strongholds on the Scottish Borders, sometimes in the hands of the Scots and sometimes in those of the English.

Its first private owner was Sir Patrick Home, who was designated as of Fastcastle in 1488. He was succeeded by his son Cuthbert, a man who met his death at Flodden, and whose two daughters became co-heiresses of the castle. One of these married Sir Robert Logan of Restalrig, the grandfather of the wily Logan who conspired with the Gowries in 1600 for the capture of the King, James VI., and for the housing of him in Fastcastle. It is not, however, my purpose to deal here with the stirring events that happened in this little stronghold, but it is of interest to note that it was sometimes used as a prison, sometimes as a house for the entertainment of royalty, sometimes for the safe keeping of rebels against the King and his Council, and sometimes as a place where robbers on the King's highway found a convenient refuge for themselves and their booty.

Not much of the walls of the rebuilt castle of 1521 are left standing now, but sufficient is there to give a vivid idea of the part it played in the history of bygone days. The crumbling stones of this little ruin stand on a rocky peninsula which is now joined to the mainland by a narrow pathway, but which, when the castle was a power in the

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\* Hume-Brown's "Surveys of Scottish History," p. 186.

land, was connected by a drawbridge. No access to the castle from the land could be obtained other than by the drawbridge, for the precipitous cliffs of the peninsula, where not absolutely unclimbable, were fenced with walls at all the vulnerable points.

A tradition still survives that there was a means of entering the castle from the sea, and that there was a staircase cut out of the rock which led through the roof of a sea-cave into the castle above. The following extracts show what was said about it:—(1) "There was a communication between the castle and a large cavern at its base, by means of a stair constructed through its heart."\* (2) "A cavern penetrates the rock beneath the keep, and it is supposed that there existed a staircase which communicated between the castle and the cave. Had the Gowrie conspiracy prospered, this would probably have been the passage by which the King, James VI., would have passed to his prison in Logan's castle above."† (3) "From the sea, it was completely inaccessible, unless to those who knew the secret of its steps cut in the rock, and could unlock the iron bolts and doors which defended them."‡

The cave is there, and singularly enough, a depression in the ground above, as well as a mysterious hole under the rock wall of the castle, lent a hope that there might be some foundation for the story.

The difficulty of getting into this cave from the land is great, and it is only when the wind is off-shore that it can be approached from the sea. Boats on this coast are not easily hired. St Abb's, which is the nearest place where they are to be had, lies some four miles away, and they are seldom available at a moment's notice. Harold Raeburn has explored the cliffs below the castle, and has tried to reach the cave from the plateau, but without success.

A careful examination of the entrance to the cave was made from the plateau, as well as one could from a hundred

\* Carr's "Coldingham" (1836), p. 95.

† M'Gibbon and Ross's "Castles" (1889), vol. iii., p. 224.

‡ Fraser-Tytler's "History of Scotland" (1864), vol. iv., p. 286.





*June 1908*

**FASTCASTLE FROM THE SOUTH**

*W. Douglas*

feet above it, and it appeared from there that the entrance, if not the cave itself, might be gained at dead low water by a circuitous route. This route ran round the top of Hawk's heugh and down a steep slope to the shore, and from thence along the foreshore between the cliffs and the sea. I tried this circuitous route on the 22nd of last May. The steep slope was very rough and loose; had I known at the time that in the next gully there was a zigzag path, it would have made my descent to the shore somewhat easier. The beach is an exceedingly rough one, and is covered in places with immense blocks of rock which have fallen from the cliffs, and these are intersected with high and narrow ribs of rock which run from the foot of the cliffs towards the sea. These have to be climbed with care. A weird and wild place it is. Two eider ducks fluttered from their nests as I passed, in one of which were four and in the other three eggs. The herring gull's nests were also within easy reach, and a pair of peregrine falcons mingled their noisy screaming with "the yammer and the youlls" of the gulls. The last rib of rock being crossed, the entrance to the cave was gained. Here disappointment met me, for I was still cut off from the cave by some four or five yards of deep water. The near wall plunged into the sea with a side so smooth and overhanging that no way could be made along its face. It was most tantalising. But help was to come, for next day Sang and Raeburn joined me, and they enthusiastically volunteered to swim the gap. We had a perfect day for this expedition. The tide was out, the wind was west, and the sun was shining. When the cave was reached, and the swim made, their clothes were sent across on a rope, and they disappeared into the dark recesses of the cavern.

They were away for what seemed to me a very long time, and they explored it thoroughly with the aid of a candle, right to its furthest extremity. They estimated that it ran back about eighty yards, and terminated in a little tunnel with slimy bits of broken wreckage. There was every indication that the waves at high tide lashed right in to its very end. They found the walls of the

cave were solid sheets of rock which gradually converged as they advanced. The floor was of slippery rock, covered near the entrance with a beautiful sea-lichen resembling a pink coral in colour, which changed, as they advanced, into an unspeakably slimy mud well-nigh impossible to walk on. There was not the slightest appearance of an aperture in its roof, nor was there any trace of cut steps on its walls. So that alluring tradition is now smashed, and the idea that there ever was a passage from the cave to the castle must be abandoned.

There can be no doubt that in olden times some sort of communication existed between the castle and the sea. Old references to this make it quite certain that this was so, and the following three examples are sufficient to prove it:—

The first is of date 1549. At that time the castle was in the hands of the English, who were then considering the advisability of destroying it. The Governor of it pleaded that it was "a meet place for the storage of victuals to be conveyed from thence by sea to Dunglas."\*

The second is of date 1598. When the papist outlaw, George Ker, a man concerned in the affairs of "the Spanish blanks," was returning secretly to Scotland, he arranged at Calais with a skipper to land him at either "Haymouthe or Falscastell" (Eyemouth or Fastcastle).†

The third is of date 1600. When Robert Logan was arranging with Gowrie to bring King Jamie as captive in one of "the great fishing boats" to his house of Fastcastle, he wrote that he would have "all materials in readiness for their safe receiving a land," and if, when they were half a mile from the shore, they "gar set forth ane vaf," he promises they shall land as safely as on Leith shore.‡

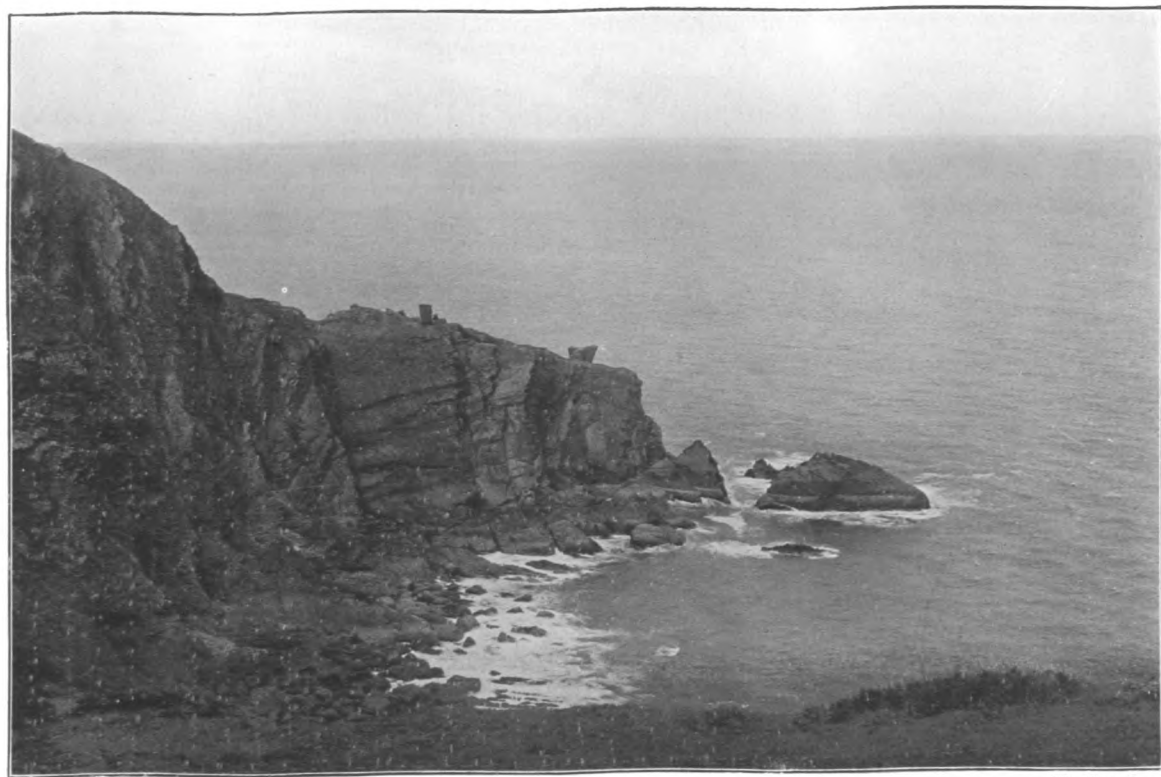
The most likely explanation is, that the boat or boats would be brought into the natural harbour at the entrance of the cave, which on the 6-inch O.S. Map is called the Castle Hole, and which in off-shore winds forms a snug

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\* "Historical MSS. Commission," Rutland, 4, p. 192.

† "Historical MSS. Commission," Hatfield, 8, p. 39.

‡ Lang's "James VI. and the Gowrie Mystery," pp. 261-63.



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FASTCASTLE FROM THE EAST

*W. Douglas*

enough harbour. From the plateau above a rope ladder could be lowered by which to scale the cliff, or a windlass and crane could be used to hoist or lower people and goods up and down. This seems quite practicable, and Logan's remark of having all materials in readiness seems to point to something of the kind being used. The rest of the coast for a mile or two on each side of the castle is quite unapproachable by boats except on the calmest of days.

It is not pleasant to break a tradition, especially such a delightful one as this, but as Fastcastle is so rich in historical associations it can surely afford to drop one without detracting in any way from its interest.

## BEN NEVIS: OBSERVATORY RIDGE.

BY F. S. GOGGS.

WHETHER Ben Nevis or the Cuillin should be considered the Mecca of the Scottish mountaineer, would be a good subject for discussion at the Club's Annual Meeting, if ever it befell that there was nothing of debatable interest to set before the members there assembled. Whatever the true answer to the conundrum may be, I was delighted to receive one day, in the English Mecca of London, a printed note to the effect that the Committee recommended that the Easter 1920 Meet should be held at Fort William. Easter 1914 was the last occasion on which I had seen THE Ben, and that year seems some quarter of a century ago and to belong to a different order of things. How well I recollect the opening day, Thursday—a party of five of us arrived at Fort William by the morning train, and after calling at the Alexandra, we strolled up the track; then leaving our three companions at the half-way hut, Harry Walker and I trudged up the snow slopes to the summit of the Ben: the snow on the summit plateau was so deep that no cairn was visible, and as there was a slight mist, we found we had overshot the summit only by commencing to go down hill. The mist cleared away as we slowly retraced our steps to Achintee: the wondrous beauty of the view over Loch Eil, and away to the west and north-west, seen in the evening light, gave us both much pleasure. Being alone, our conversation was more intimate and personal than usual, and under such conditions you get to know men in a way that you rarely if ever do among bricks and mortar. Little did either of us think that this was the last occasion we should ever meet in this world, but even had either of us possessed the gift of second sight, I am certain that neither, if the parting had to be, would have wished for any different setting to the last scene.

In the war years which followed how often has the Ben

OBSERVATORY RIDGE



BEN NEVIS, CLIFFS FROM N.E. BUTTRESS TO TOWER RIDGE

*Gilbert Thomson*

been to all of us the subject of a mind picture, symbolising beauty and peace, and now, after six years' absence, comes the opportunity to revisit the corries and ridges of that grand northern face, sanctified by the memory of many who can no longer accompany us in the flesh.

The long journey from the South was over, well-kent faces were seen again, some good climbs had been done, and now the end of the Meet was approaching. Raeburn suggested on the Monday evening that Mounsey and I should do something with him on the Tuesday on the face of the Ben. We gladly accepted, and at 8.30 on Tuesday morning, Mounsey and I left the Alexandra on foot, joining Raeburn, who was on his motor cycle, at Achintee. The day was fair, but nothing much was to be seen above 2,500 feet. The tramp up the track is considered monotonous by some, but I must admit that I always find it interesting, or to use a Baedeker term which is perhaps anathema to the patriotic blue guide, "repaying." What finer head to a glen can you want than Stob Ban, Sgor a Mhaim and the Mullach? What better grading can you ask for? You ascend rapidly with little effort; you are given time to digest your breakfast and to get your mechanism running sweetly—to the young who have a camel's interior there is no advantage in the fact mentioned, to the ageing it is a substantial factor in the day's enjoyment; the zigzags, moreover, give you a constant change of view, now up the Glen, now down. Birds are always present, giving a note of grace in motion, and if you are lucky a buzzard or even an eagle will reward your quest. At the last zigzag we leave the half-way hut on our right, and the lochan, ever varying in hue with the day, on our left. The familiar deer fence is once again surmounted or penetrated as the fancy of the climber or the state of the wire dictates, then follows the rapid drop of 300 feet to the Luncheon Stone. If you can keep close to Raeburn as he skims along and down the slope, now on turf, now on scree, and now on boulders, with the perfect balance of the born hill man, you are in good training. Arrived at the Stone we had our first survey of the cliffs: a certain amount of new snow had fallen in the night, but not enough to cause us any anxiety,



the mists were still clinging to the last 1,000 feet and there was little wind. There is always something new to see on the cliffs of the Ben, a pinnacle you have not previously noticed, a gully which suggests the possibility of a new route, a ridge the size of which has never struck you before, new combinations of snow and rock, new light or shadow on walls or cliffs every wrinkle of which you thought you knew. Nature has ten thousand robes and we never see the same one twice.

Douglas' boulder loomed grandly ahead in the mist, but we gradually overhauled him, and at length turned his flank. Near the site of MacRobert's camp, at the edge of continuous snow, we sat down by the burn side for a meal. The time had come to decide on our future course of action. The mist was somewhat higher, the new snow on the upper cliffs looked light, and Raeburn's opinion was that most routes would go. Should we try the North-East?—all of us had done that before—the Tower Ridge? Raeburn and I had done the upper part only the previous day—the Observatory Ridge?—new to Mounsey and myself, and Raeburn had only done it under summer conditions. We looked at it once again, the first half, black rock, well sprinkled with snow, looked steep, very steep, but the rocks seemed fairly well broken up, and the second half appeared to be largely snow at a much less steep angle. The first winter ascent of the Observatory Ridge—it sounded tempting and we voted for it unanimously. A five minutes' trudge across the snow took us to the foot of the Ridge (about 3,000 feet). Here we roped, Raeburn leading, the writer second, and Mounsey, the heaviest of the party, third. We were careful to give our leader a generous share of the 100-foot rope, and at 12.30 we started. The first 200 feet were what they should be on a model climb: a sufficient number of sound hitches, good standing room, the rocks reasonably broken up, and the demand on the muscles not excessive. A kind of preliminary canter to put the heart, lungs, and muscles in good working order. The route bent a little towards the left at first, then to the right: some 200 feet up, we arrived at a big slabby face, which at first glance one dismissed. A peep round the

corner to the right, however, was still more satisfying in the sense that no route lay up or across the precipice there revealed. Raeburn examined the slabs more carefully and suddenly exclaimed, "I have it." It was ten years or more since he had visited the spot under summer conditions, and to solve the problem so quickly was good evidence as to the reliability of his memory. You clamber up a slight recess on the right, then when you can get no farther and feel uncomfortable, you see a narrow ledge on your left, but out of your reach; however, with the aid of a niche for the toe of your boot, and not much more than a balancing hand on the smooth rock face above, you manage to get your knees on the ledge. Here I seemed most delicately poised, and felt that I might come off my perch if Raeburn merely shook the rope. The problem was to get my feet where my knees were, but there was absolutely no hold above. The effect of considering the problem only resulted in my fingers becoming colder: with the consciousness that if the worst came to the worst I should but dangle on the rope, I managed to exchange knees for feet. How I did it I frankly cannot say, and it really does not matter two straws; it was probably a very delicate balance problem, but, as I told Raeburn, too fine a one for my scales: slightly to the right up a gully, under a chock stone, and a stance was reached. Mounsey, who followed, had watched my performance and had taken note how not to do it, and as a result came up in fine style. I had my revenge later. On and up we went, always anticipating the slope would ease off and that we should come to the more level stretch we thought we noticed when down below. Looking down one never saw more than two slippery ledges at a time, and then—the Glen, looking up, steep frowning rocks were succeeded by steep snow slopes which lost themselves in cloudland.

Recognising that we were in for a long climb, we suggested to Raeburn that a little refreshment would do his team no harm. He quite agreed, and pointing to a wide snow gully on our right, suggested the base of a wall of rock as a suitable spot for a meal. We left the actual ridge and traversed a few feet to the spot selected. As

often happens, a look at close quarters failed to reproduce the alluring aspect seen from a short distance away ; if we sat down it was on a steep slope of hard snow in which the ice-axe made little impression. We all agreed to look for a more comfortable luncheon place, and Raeburn clambered up a short steep gully to the ridge again. The gully was only some 15 or 18 feet high, but getting into it was not easy, your right foothold was good, but the left consisted of a smooth rock surface leading outwards instead of inwards. After one attempt which failed I accepted an offer of a shoulder from Mounsey, and from one or two grunts I gathered he thought I was rather rough, or that my boots were rather hard : however I soon reached Raeburn, and found the ridge here a narrow arête. Mounsey had no shoulder to take off from, and as time threatened to be an important factor in our climb, he accepted a direct pull, but as I could only use one arm for that purpose, and Mounsey is a heavy weight, there was rather a struggling and a kicking before the third man's head appeared on the ridge. A few yards on and another problem presented itself for solution. It had been snowing on and off for some little time and conditions were becoming steadily worse. Rocks therefore which Raeburn said were easy in summer now proved the reverse. The direct route over steep glazed rocks was obviously impossible, so a foot or two's descent was made to the left, and a route sought which would circumvent the difficulty and land us on the ridge higher up. A curious spike of rock 15 inches long supplied a natural hitch, and our leader's rope was promptly drawn round it. Raeburn disappeared round the corner, but soon reappeared to seek another route ; on our right, smooth rocky faces went directly down to an open snow gully, which seemed to run upwards to the summit plateau ; it looked, however, very hard and icy in places, and very steep. Away to the left of the gully were masses of rock, including one large tower. I did not know whether our route was over the rocks or up the snow. At the top of the snow slope one could dimly see an edge of something—was it a cornice which would forbid all access to the level plateau to which

we were bound? Raeburn seemed, however, quite happy as to the cornice risk, and turned his attention to the problem immediately requiring a solution: there was a band of snow traversing the smooth rock from the ridge to the snow gully: if it were a ledge the route would go. Raeburn scratched its surface with the blade of his axe—no ledge, merely a depression which held snow. It looked as if we might be defeated. I do not think any of us would have relished a descent; the absence of stances and hitches would have made it even slower than the ascent. Once again Raeburn went to the left, saying, "It's got to go." I stood at the rock spike with Mounsey a yard or two away, Raeburn disappeared round the corner, and for the next quarter of an hour we saw nothing of him, but heard and saw hard snow and ice hurtling down. The rope went out very slowly, but it went, and that was the chief thing. Finally it went out much more quickly, and a halloo from our leader announced his conquest of the difficulty. When my turn came to follow, I found the route, a clamber over somewhat rounded and holdless rocks, comparatively easy for the second man, with the snow and ice knocked away, and secured by the rope in the event of a slip, but a very unpleasant place for a leader. We now took to the aforementioned broad, open, snow gully. The snow was of a *névé* consistency, hard, and not enough of it: in many stretches you could only get your ice axe in about 6 inches: at two small ice-falls steps had to be cut in bare ice, but generally speaking footholds were scraped and kicked. The angle of the slope was steep, on the average  $45^{\circ}$ , with an occasional increase to  $60^{\circ}$ . Raeburn ran out length after length of rope, only one man moved at a time, and rarely was our leader able to say he had his ice-axe well in. Our conversation seemed to consist in the following repetition:—Goggs to Raeburn, "Last six feet." Raeburn to Goggs, "You must come: I have no hitch." Every now and then a *tourmente* would sweep round us, and our steps would be filled in, but on the whole the weather improved as we mounted and the clouds rose.

The North-East Buttress at first towered above us on our left, and served as a test of height gained by our

slow and at times imperceptible ascent. At length the cairn and ridge of Carn Mor Dearg seemed to be getting lower, and the Aonachs could be clearly seen beyond. Looking through one's legs the green Allt a Mhuilinn lay stretched out like a carpet, and the higher we mounted the less desirable the descent of our route seemed. On our right we saw a wilderness of rock and snow, with here and there some good ice scenery. There was a strange, almost weird absence of life: we never disturbed a ptarmigan or a hare; no bird flew over us to see how we were progressing—not even the hum of an insect was heard—solitude reigned here supreme.

We inhabited

"The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls  
Have pinnaced in clouds their snowy scalps,  
And throned Eternity in icy halls  
Of cold sublimity." . . .

Fortunately for us there was a pleasing absence of wind, and the temperature was not low. I cannot say with truth that we basked in the sunshine, but I do not think that any of the party was ever really chilled. The only thing I feared was cramp: the steps were perforce small, the angle steep, the ice axe could rarely be depended on to give a satisfying sense of security, the leader had to take his time, and occasionally we had to wait, not at the most convenient stances, but just where we happened to be at the moment: the strain on our leg muscles (after five war years) was therefore considerable. As under the conditions described, physical failure on the part of any of us would have been distinctly unpleasant, I eased my position as much as possible, but from start to finish, the climb was remarkable for its lack of comfortable stopping places. No bowling greens or tennis courts appeared, and the angle of steepness never seemed to ease off. However, we were really getting on, and at last Raeburn was able to assure us that the cornice would give no trouble, and that victory was at hand. The slope steepened, and a short ice-fall between rocks looked as if it were the only difficulty intervening between us and our goal.

Notwithstanding a final attempt by a *tourmente* to stop us, steps were cut aslant the ice, and another 20 feet of *névé* landed Raeburn on snow-covered flat rocks.

I brought Mounsey up the steep staircase to where I stood; he put the shaft of his axe in the hole which Raeburn's and mine had successively occupied, and then I started to join Raeburn. At the ice fall a few rocks jutted out on the right, and I remember the feeling of security and satisfaction there was in gripping a rough rock surface: it was literally the first rock which could be described as in any way useful we had seen for some hours. I felt inclined to linger lovingly by it, but this the rope spacing did not allow, and I had to go a few feet higher. Mounsey now came up to the rock, and then I joined Raeburn: in a few minutes we were all three on what seemed to us, after the everlasting slopes, a flat table; we were looking with great interest on a snow bay set at a low angle and fringed with a cornice of a moderate size, vulnerable at several points. We steered for one where was a kind of double lip, and half a dozen steps up the cornice landed us on the actual summit plateau. The sun, which had been threatening to break through the scurrying clouds, bathed us in light just as we finished the climb. We congratulated Raeburn heartily on his success; he had led throughout and had done all the work. We looked at our watches and found it was 6.15—5 $\frac{3}{4}$  hours from the foot of the ridge; we had come without haste but without rest. The rope was taken off and rolled up once more in the orthodox way. Raeburn rewarded his party with the acidulated drops reserved for victors, and if I remember rightly, there was a brandy ball too: a jam piece and chocolate followed. Then once more we took the downward track. The sun conquered the clouds as we had conquered the Ridge: the sky was a curious mass of colour—green, blue, and grey, with a unique, at all events to us, black feather bit of vapour over Ardgour, and low down, almost touching earth, two small, white, fleecy clouds, made radiant as silver by the declining sun, formed an extraordinary contrast. Wyvis was clear to the north and many of the Ross-shire peaks.

As we had been so long without sun or in actual mist the tints we now saw were all the more vivid to our colour-starved eyes. It was a fine ending to a grand climb. 8.30, just twelve hours after setting out, saw us once more at the Alexandra, announcing to MacRobert that his Guide Book to Ben Nevis required amendment.

## MOFFAT IN THE 'SEVENTIES.

BY SCOTT MONCRIEFF PENNEY.

HAPPY are those who in childhood and youth have not been dragged year after year to a different watering-place or country side for literally a "change," but have been allowed by frequent visits to make at least one part of their native land their own—every hill and glen, and even milestone, familiar and remembered for life—and the stage on which in old age they can still see, with mingled emotions of joy, thankfulness, and sadness, the guardians, friends, and companions of their youth passing and repassing as if it were yesterday, although half a century may have elapsed since they first knew these never-to-be-forgotten playgrounds, long it may be unvisited.

In the far-off days, before the Highlands, with their more striking scenery, their higher mountains, and their more bracing air, became so accessible and so frequented, Moffat was one of those places where families, widely separated throughout the winter, regathered summer after summer. I still regard the railway to it so long talked of, now so long there, as practically non-existent, and the omnibuses on the road to Beattock, sometimes stopping half way "by request" to allow of greetings being exchanged with Lochhouse Tower by the well-known echo, are more real to me than the trains. Motors and bicycles were unknown in those days, but people had their feet and used them more. Ponies could be got. I have seen a cavalcade of well-nigh a dozen, collected from the different hiring establishments, and I fancy I am the only one who has ridden, with ladies too, to the top of Loch Fell (2,256 feet). I well remember the opening of the recreation grounds (in 1870) for bowling and croquet. Lawn tennis came later. Coaches, useful for lifts, ran regularly three days a week to St Mary's Loch, and Moffat was, and must ever be, while the hills and the glens remain, an ideal centre for "rounds," whether by motor, by cycle, or on foot.



The Cornal Tower burn, hidden away by thick woods from the vulgar gaze, was a unique glen for an excellent hour's scramble. The game was to keep the bed of the stream if the water was low, and if not, as near to it as possible. There was an interesting pitch at a waterfall half-way up, an awkward jump to a face of rock, against which a lady once broke a rib, and a rock face at the head near the final waterfall where, if, as generally was the case, ladies were of the party, a man had to climb to a ledge and let down a foot as a half-way step. It was rare for every one to escape at least a mild ducking somewhere in the glen, and on one occasion I fell in over the head into a deep narrow pool across which I was guiding (?) ladies. After an interval of thirty years I took my Sapper son, not born at the date of my previous visits, all the way from Argyllshire to do the scramble for the last time. He was pleased to admit that I had not exaggerated its attractiveness, but alas! what a change on the scene. The woods are away. The glen lies bare and exposed to common view, and the final climb is no longer possible, as the growth that made it so is entirely swept away from the rock face. Still, other attractions remain.

What more enjoyable scramble and ridge walk is there in the Lowland Uplands than up the side of the Grey Mare's Tail burn to Loch Skene, and back by the tops of White Coomb (2,695 feet, the highest hill in Dumfriesshire) and Hartfell (2,651 feet)? What pleasanter wide views than from the top of Loch Fell, returning by the interesting Craigmichan Scaurs, or from the isolated Queensberry (2,285 feet)? As illustrations, too, of how even the ordinary bicycle has made the hills more accessible, I may state that I have climbed Broadlaw (2,754 feet) by cycling to Hearthstane at the mouth of the burn of that name, and one day after lunch I climbed Ettrick Pen (2,269 feet), which, in boyhood, I had always regarded as remote and inaccessible, and was back in four hours for tea. My bicycle took me to Capplegill ( $5\frac{3}{4}$  miles) in thirty-four minutes. In another hour I had crossed Bodesbeck and the Ettrick. The climb took half an hour. Ten minutes were devoted

to the view, and I returned to Capplegill in seventy minutes.

The autumn of 1876 I shall never forget—so many friends met almost daily, so many picnics were carried out, so many keen games of tennis were contested on a green that would now be regarded as hardly large enough for Badminton. One Monday morning a friend and I thought we would penetrate into the wilds of Eskdalemuir hitherto unknown to us. So up the Cornal burn cart road we went, crossed the Wamphray Water at 8.30, kept the track over the shoulder of Loch Fell, followed the Garwald Water till it joined the White Esk, bathed in the pool below the bridge over the Black Esk, just above the meeting of the Esks, and somewhat tired and footsore after a tramp of something like 24 miles, reached the farm of Carlesgill, 4 miles above Langholm, where my friend had cousins with whom we hoped to spend the night, before six o'clock. Alas! no one was at home. We asked for tea and were well served, though we afterwards learned that the servants were much relieved when "the tramps" departed, as they did at eight o'clock, with the intention of reaching Langholm for the night. Fortunately, after walking a mile we met the good folk returning home, were taken back, were hospitably entertained, and next day were driven to Langholm, and from there we walked to Lockerbie. For the most of the week my feet troubled me, but, being otherwise fit and my friend offering me a pair of easy boots, on the Friday night we conceived the idea of walking to St Mary's Loch by way of the Devil's Beef Tub, Tweedsmuir, the Talla (there was no reservoir there in those days), and the Megget, returning of course by coach.

We made a good start at 6.20, did the first 4 miles up the Edinburgh road in an hour, then the 10 miles past the Tub and down the Tweed in two hours and ten minutes. A short halt was called in the Talla Valley, and the track through it had to be traversed at a slower rate, but we reached Tibbie Shiels at one o'clock. We calculated that we had done 27 miles. This was confirmed by the Contour Book when it appeared, and thirty-nine years later by checking the distance with a cyclometer on a bicycle ridden

alongside the Talla Reservoir by a route practically the same, and certainly no longer. We reached St Mary's Loch before the coaches, and as neither of us had ever walked 30 miles we resolved to keep on the other 4 miles to Birkhill and there to wait for the coach. The weather, which had hitherto been fine though dull, broke down as we walked by the Loch of the Lowes and became so bad as we breasted the slope up the watershed between the Yarrow and the Moffat Water that we arrived at Birkhill thoroughly soaked. I can still see in my mind's eye the pools of water that gathered round our chairs as we sat in the kitchen of the primitive little inn eating our lunch. It would have been folly to sit on in our wet clothes, so after twenty minutes' rest we walked on, the weather improved, and we reached Moffat before the coaches, having completed our 42 miles in eleven hours and eleven minutes. I was quite fresh—we were out again in the evening—and I realised the advantage of sometimes stepping into another man's shoes.

A fortnight later we had a very wet day followed by a dry one. I thought the Grey Mare's Tail would be in exceptionally fine condition, so, my friends having now all left, I started off alone and did the 10 miles in two hours, returning in two and a half. I was rewarded by a good view of the Fall, though it was scarcely so grand as I had expected.

These are the recollections of many years ago. They may confirm my younger friends in the S.M.C. in what they must have often thought, namely, that the expeditions they undertake are not only pleasant at the time but will be a joy to look back upon when "their eyes are dim and their natural force abated."

## HOW TO STOP A FALL ON HARD SNOW OR ICE.

BY W. W. NAISMITH.

BOOKS and articles on mountaineering rarely give much advice on this subject,\* and perhaps a few words may not come amiss from an old climber, who in his day has made many experiments on snow, and who will gladly welcome suggestions from younger men.

The authors who deal with the practice of climbing in snow naturally devote themselves chiefly to showing the best ways of *avoiding* slips and falls; but, in spite of all the care climbers may use, mistakes will sometimes happen. It is most important therefore to know exactly what to do if a fall should unfortunately occur; and to practise the thing quietly beforehand, so that it may be remembered in an emergency.

Suppose, then, that an unroped climber, when mounting a slope of hard snow, somehow or other falls out of his steps and finds himself sliding downwards involuntarily on his side, what is he to do?

*Two things*, in the writer's opinion. *First*, let him instantly turn his face inwards to the slope, and dig his toes into the snow. *Second*, holding the stock of his axe in either hand, let him grasp the axe-head by the blade with his other hand; and then, bringing it low down to the level of his breast-bone, press the pick into the snow—at first gradually, but ultimately with the weight of his body behind it.

The climber will then be practically supported on a tripod, consisting of his axe-head and the toes of his boots, which will plough parallel furrows down the slope,

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\* Mr George D. Abraham, in "The Complete Mountaineer" (1907), gives on p. 87 a good paragraph about stopping a slip on icy snow; and Mr Gilbert Thomson, in *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. X., pp. 23, 24, makes some valuable suggestions for braking in sitting glissades.

deep or shallow, according to the condition of the surface. As a result, tremendous resistance will be developed, and the slide ought soon to come to a standstill. The ice-axe held in the way described will quickly bring the climber "right end up," even if he should have slued round and be sliding down sideways.

In the event of a roped party being upset, and getting adrift on ice or snow, owing to the fall of one of their number, each man must separately do his utmost to stop his own way, and to retard the motion of the others; and the method above described appears to be the best available for all.

Even without an axe, by turning face inwards one has the best chance of arresting a slide downhill on a moderate snow slope. On one occasion the writer remembers proving that on hard-frozen snow set at  $32^{\circ}$  (measured) it was just possible to stop with the toes alone; but when the angle rose to  $35^{\circ}$ , the help of the axe was needed.

## ALPINE CONGRESS AT MONACO.

THE Club was represented at the Congress, held at Monaco from 1st to 10th May this year, by the President, W. N. Ling, and Vice-President C. W. Walker.

Forty-four clubs and societies of the allied and neutral nations took part in the Congress, which was held under the auspices of the Club Alpin Français, with H.S.H. the Prince Albert I. of Monaco as patron, and M. le Baron F. Gabet, president of the Club Alpin Français, as president, with twenty-five presidents d'honneur, amongst whom the president of the S.M.C. had the honour to be included.

Before the official opening of the Congress, on 1st May, the Section Alpes Maritimes of the C.A.F., under their genial president, M. le Chevalier Victor de Cessole, hon. member A.C., had arranged excursions from Nice, and a banquet.

Messrs Ling and Walker arrived at Nice on 20th April, and early on the 22nd went up to St Martin Vesubie, a village charmingly situated in the Maritime Alps. From there they climbed the Cime de Belletz and the Mont Pelago, which were still deep in snow. Then they went up to the mountain inn at La Madone de Fenestre, which had just been opened two days before for the season. The following day they were joined by the party, which had been arranged to climb the Cime de Gelas, 10,200 feet, and a pleasant evening was spent.

At 3.50 next morning the caravan started—two guides and thirteen amateurs, including three members of the Swiss Ladies' Alpine Club. The snow was in good condition, and the ascent was made without any special incident. The view was very fine, including Corsica, the Ecrins, M. Viso, M. Rosa, and M. Blanc. The weather was perfect. The descent was made to St Martin, and next morning the party returned to Nice, where a banquet was held in the evening—at which the president of the S.M.C. was a guest of honour—followed by a dance.

On 30th April the party proceeded to Monaco for the opening of the Congress on 1st May. This was performed by H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco, accompanied by his granddaughter and her husband, the Duke and Duchess of Valentinois, in the fine lecture hall attached to the splendid Museum of Oceanography, where are stored the trophies gathered by the Prince in his deep sea researches and explorations in Spitzbergen and elsewhere. He graciously welcomed the delegates in French and English. In the evening the delegates were entertained at a performance of the Russian Ballet.

The following day an expedition was planned to the Mont Baudon, 4,095 feet, a fine view-point behind Mentone. Leaving Monaco at 7.30 in the morning, the party had a fine walk, with beautiful scenery and pleasant companionship, returning in the evening.

Papers were read in the mornings and afternoons; the afternoon sitting generally concluding with a show of slides. On Monday the Prince hospitably entertained the presidents d'honneur to luncheon at the Palace, and in the afternoon gave a garden party to all the delegates and their friends in his beautiful grounds overlooking the blue waters of the Mediterranean.

Interesting papers were read on various subjects connected with mountaineering, such as topography and map-making, the movement of glaciers, the conservation of woods and forests, the utilisation and management of the streams, flora and fauna, national parks, exploration, historical reviews of the various clubs, huts and refuges, attempts on K.2 and Kangchenjunga, and the possibility of the ascent of Mount Everest.

Expeditions were arranged every day to some of the beauty spots of the neighbourhood, and the delegates came away with most pleasant recollections of new friendships made, of most gracious hospitality and camaraderie, and of a beautiful country seen under most favourable conditions.

The weather was perfect, and the gathering was in every way a complete success. All the arrangements were most admirably carried out.

W. N. L.



*18th September 1919*

SGOR A' MHAIM FROM SUMMIT OF BEN NEVIS

*W. Fraser*



## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

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### EASTER MEET AT FORT WILLIAM AND SPEAN BRIDGE, 1920.

PRESENT AT FORT WILLIAM.—*Members*: W. N. Ling (President), E. Backhouse, J. H. Bell, A. M. Buchanan, J. H. Buchanan, G. Ednie, W. Galbraith, F. S. Goggs, G. B. Green, A. Harrison, J. G. Inglis, R. Jeffrey, G. M. Lawson, H. MacRobert, A. E. Maylard, T. Meares, W. A. Mounsey, J. A. Parker, H. Raeburn, J. Rennie, M. J. Robb, A. D. Smith, G. A. Solly, J. C. Thomson, J. R. Young. *Guests*: Dr T. R. Burnett, J. B. Meldrum, R. C. Napier, J. L. Wingate.

SPEAN BRIDGE.—A. R. Anderson, J. H. Bell, Dr Burnett (guest), G. B. Green, J. Grove, J. G. Inglis, W. N. Ling, H. MacRobert.

Total (excluding duplicates), 31.

Owing to its possessing THE BEN, Fort William may be looked upon as the natural headquarters of the S.M.C., and as the Meet at Easter 1920 was the first held there since the termination of the war, a large muster was anticipated.

Owing, however, to recent marriages, new houses or the lack thereof, family claims, fear of Fort William weather, &c., the muster, as regards numbers, was by no means a record. It is, of course, natural that the decreasing locks and increasing girth of members should make it more and more difficult for them to summon up the necessary energy to put in an appearance at Meets, but when their decision is trembling in the balance, it is hoped that one or more of the following considerations will tip the beam in the right direction:—

- (1) Your presence will give pleasure to other members, many of whom have the opportunity of meeting you only once a year.

- (2) Your presence encourages the younger members, and tends to the promotion of the aims and objects of the Club.
- (3) The exercise obtained at the Meets is an infallible cure for rheumatism, gout, tic-doloureux, sciatica, lumbago, liver and kidney troubles, insomnia, worry, &c. (for full list consult any doctor in the Club, or read any patent medicine advertisement in any daily paper).
- (4) Did you ever hear of a man who did not enjoy a Meet or was sorry he had come?

We particularly missed the presence of Naismith, Gilbert Thomson, Douglas, C. W. Walker, and last but not least, Dr W. Inglis Clark, all of whom in one way or another have been so closely associated with THE BEN in past years. Dr Clark was not well, and was thus deprived of the chance of hearing the encomiums passed on the new edition of the Ben Nevis section of the "Guide-Book" which, by the Herculean efforts of MacRobert and Young, was duly on sale at Fort William as promised—in fact, unless rumour be a lying jade, a queue was daily seen outside the principal bookseller's and stationer's window in the main street waiting its turn to inspect a highly artistic poster anent the "New Guide-Book to Ben Nevis." To save members of the Club swelling the size of the queue a copy was exhibited in the hotel smoking-room.

In any account of any Meet the weather always comes in for a considerable amount of attention—not to say criticism. Mr and Mrs Bell, however, went to Spean Bridge a week before the Meet, and in the absence of the Hon. Secretary, who was last reported as pursuing a vendetta in Corsica, were successful in making the necessary local arrangements. The oldest inhabitant reported that the district had had the rainiest winter within his recollection: as a result, the snow had been well washed away, and on the open hill-side little was met with under 3,000 feet.

On the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday before the Meet cold weather set in with much new snow, and by Sunday afternoon you had a 6-inch covering of snow down to about the 1,500-foot contour.

On the Monday Mr and Mrs Bell went up Aonach Mor by the north-west shoulder of Aonach an Nid, and down by the west shoulder of Sgor a Pheanais, the going being heavy, but Tuesday and Wednesday saw the snow go very rapidly, and on Thursday the hills were once more decked in their green costumes. During the Meet the wind—what there was of it—was generally from the east; clouds were low, about 2,750; but no rain, beyond a few gentle snow showers and a little fresh snow at nights. There was an entire lack of sunshine, and no good views were obtained, a few glimpses only from time to time. At not many Meets has there been less photography; in fact, the writer did not see a plate or film exposed. However, no one got a wet jacket, so we must consider ourselves fortunate, more especially as this is the third consecutive fine weather Meet we have had.

Greetings were exchanged with the Cairngorm Club, who were holding their Easter Meet at Crianlarich. The Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club were at Tyndrum. Several representatives of the Fell and Rock Climbers' Club were with us at Fort William, and a climbing camping party were at Achintee. Their four tents of different patterns, colour, and size, formed a topic for conversation as we went up and came down the path. Mr Herbert Carr, of the Rucksac Club, Mr Stobart, and Mr Odell (A.C.) formed the party. We used their tracks on occasion, and doubtless they, too, found ours useful.

Talking of other Clubs reminds me that at the present time three of our members are Presidents of Climbing Clubs. Dr Collie, of the A.C. (he was a member of the S.M.C. two years before he joined the A.C.); Dr Levack, of the Cairngorm Club; G. A. Solly, of the Fell and Rock.

Before giving the usual details as to the Meet's doings, I might refer to one general matter which forced itself upon my notice, and that is the extraordinary punctuality of all members at breakfast and—I might truthfully add—

dinner. As one member put it, if you were only five minutes late you were quite a long way down the table. 7.45 was the breakfast hour. Mr Wenzel rang the gong vigorously to the minute ; at 7.47 porridge was disappearing, and at 7.50 a few—but very few—late birds put in a blushing appearance.

Half a dozen men were at the Station and the Imperial Hotels, and I received good reports as to how they were looked after. With regard to the Alexandra, we found Mr Wenzel—as always—a capable, pleasant, and business-like hotel proprietor, taking a personal interest in all his guests. His staff followed the example set them—one and all gave us ungrudging service, for which we tender them our hearty thanks.

*Thursday, April.*—Solly and Maylard arrived by the morning train, and reported that the President, with Green and Burnett, had got down at Corrour. The President and his party eventually reached Spean Bridge, having traversed Stob Coire an Easain Mohr.

A little after six, Goggs and Young, with Napier and Wingate, arrived, having had a very enjoyable motor drive from Glasgow via Loch Lomond, Glencoe, and Ballachulish Ferry. As the motor ferry-boat was being repaired, a somewhat sporting crossing of the ferry was made on a barge kind of boat. Having regard to the price of motors nowadays, such a crossing shows an undue trust in Providence, but the driver was young and had been in the Air Force ; in any case his faith was justified. By the evening train came Backhouse, A. M. Buchanan, Ednie, Harrison, Lawson, Meldrum, Mounsey, Watson.

Friday morning presented a grey and cloudy appearance to those who looked out of their bedroom window to gauge what Fortune had in store for them as regards weather. The optimist thought the skies would hold up, the pessimist thought it would rain. However, optimist and pessimist alike, after a good breakfast, set out for the Ben Nevis track. Maylard and Solly contented themselves with the Half-way Hut and the Luncheon Stone respectively. Watson and Ednie followed the path to the summit. A. M. Buchanan, Harrison, and Lawson attained the

summit of the Ben by the Castle Gully. Goggs, Napier, Wingate, and Young, followed by Mounsey, Backhouse, and Meldrum, ascended No. 2 Gully, the last two mentioned returning home via Carn Mòr Dearg.

No. 2 Gully was found to be in excellent condition: for a good part of the way up, steps could be kicked; for the last few hundred feet they required to be scraped; the cornice was small and easily surmounted. The rock walls, festooned with icy mantles, were much admired.

Comparisons are odious, but in the writer's opinion, Gully No. 2 is much to be preferred to No. 3. No. 3 is so broad that the route is almost a highway, and does not seem to introduce you to the heart of things in the way that No. 2 does. It must be remembered, however, that if the summit ridge cornices are heavy, Gully No. 2 is more likely to prove untractable than No. 3.

The summit plateau was covered with mist, but not of the heavy variety. A few sitting glissades were obtained by the Red Burn, but they were so poor that some members refused to damp their breeches in trying them.

The Spean Bridge contingent—Bell, Burnett, Green, Ling, MacRobert—traversed the Easain Ridge from Stob Coire nan Ceann to Sgor a Choinnich Beag, Ling and Green omitting the last two peaks. They came down through the gorge to the head of the Ben Nevis road, where a trap picked them up, bringing them into Fort William about 7.30. Galbraith, Rennie, and Smith arrived by the evening train, having traversed Stob Coire an Easain Mohr *en route*.

Parker and Robb also came by the same train, having sampled first the Cairngorm Club Meet at Crianlarich, where they put Cruach Ardran to their credit. Jeffrey and J. H. Buchanan came through by motor cycle.

*Saturday*.—The only arrival to-day was Raeburn, from Tyndrum, where he had spent a day at the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club Meet. Parker and Robb traversed the Aonachs from north to south, returning by Glen Nevis. Jeffrey and Buchanan motor-cycled via Invergarry and Tomdown, and leaving their steed on the road under

Creag a' Mhaim, did that peak and the next two or three on the ridge forming the south wall of Glen Shiel in dense mist. Ling, MacRobert, Napier, and Wingate tackled the Tower Ridge. It was found in worse condition than had been anticipated, and as at 4 P.M. the party had only reached the foot of the false Tower, a retreat was ordered, and Fort William was not reached till 10.30 P.M.—a fourteen-hours day. All the others spent the day on the Mamore Forest Hills. Every Munro from An Garbhanach and Stob Coire a Chairn to Mullach nan Coirean was crowned. Some men saw nothing but mist of varying density all day long; others had a few glimpses of Loch Leven and the sea, but there was no rain, and the comparatively small amount of snow on the summit ridges was a subject of remark. From Spean Bridge, Anderson, Grove, and Inglis ascended that grand peak, Stob Coire Claurigh, but they had no better luck as regards views than the rest of us.

*Sunday.*—Morning church, a walk to Banavie in the afternoon, and a stroll on the moors to the east of the town in the evening, formed a delightful foil to the more strenuous days before and after. Those who could not rest from their labours did the Castle Ridge (two parties), No. 2 Gully, and Raeburn's Easy Route from Coire na Ciste to the plateau, between the Tower Ridge and No. 2 Gully.

The Stob Ban, An Garbhanach round was also traversed by a party of two.

Several members reported having seen a one-legged man with two arm-crutches on the summit. It is pleasant to think that those of our countrymen who have lost a limb for their country's cause are not necessarily debarred from the enjoyment of the hills.

*Monday.*—Another cloudy, dull day. Backhouse, Meldrum, Mounsey, and Solly reached the summit via No. 3 Gully; Ednie and Galbraith via Carn Mòr Dearg. MacRobert made the direct path ascent, and caught the afternoon train home.

Maylard and Green, in order to provide the night out sensation, without which a Fort William Meet would not

be complete, did not return from Loch Ailort till Tuesday morning, having missed their train, or rather, according to their account, their train missed them, as it started two minutes before its time. They complained of a sleepless night and the lack of night garments, but their fate might have been worse.

A. M. Buchanan, Harrison, and Lawson did the Aonach Carn Mòr Dearg round.

Burnett, Napier, and Wingate, with the aid of a motor, repeated Jeffrey and Buchanan's Saturday's trip to the ridge south of Glen Shiel. Burnett secured four peaks, Napier and Wingate six. All three came down into Glen Shiel and were picked up by the car.

Raeburn, Ling, and Goggs went to the foot of the Observatory Gully, then traversed across the steep snow slope to the base of the Tower, traversing it from west to east, then up to the cairn by the Recess route, and on to the summit of the Ben. Meares turned up from London by the evening train.

*Tuesday.*—The Castle Ridge succumbed again to a party of five, consisting of Solly, Ednie, Harrison, Napier, Wingate. Raeburn, Mounsey, and Goggs made the only new ascent of the Meet, viz., the first winter ascent of the Observatory Ridge. The actual climb took five and three-quarter hours, and the whole expedition from and to Fort William twelve hours. For particulars, see separate article.

Inglis arrived from Spean Bridge.

*Wednesday.*—Ednie, with two members of the Cairngorm Club, did the Ben Nevis, Carn Mòr Dearg round.

*Thursday.*—Meares walked up the Ben by the Path.

*Friday.*—Maylard, Meares, and Solly—the last of the barons—departed.

F. S. G.

#### ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS.

The following new members were duly elected on the 21st May 1920:—Herbert Porritt Cain, John Harrison, jun., John Easson M'Intyre, John Bernard Meldrum, Thomas Clement Ormiston-Chant, Theodore Howard Somervell.

## GIFT OF ILLUSTRATION BLOCKS.

It is with pleasure that the Editor offers the thanks of the Club to two members—Mr Wm. Fraser and Mr Douglas—for defraying the cost of blocks for two illustrations appearing in this Number. A similar gift will be welcomed from any member. Our *Journal* has always been noted for the excellence of its illustrations, but the greatly increased cost of its production makes the Editor hesitate about including many plates. The difficulty will be met if members follow the good example set them by the above-mentioned gentlemen.

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

As usual, during the summer months, the Club-Room has been less frequented. The monthly evening meetings have been dropped, as members naturally prefer the open air at this time of year. A new bookcase has been bought, in which the Continental climbing journals have been placed. The Librarian had hoped to find room for all periodicals in it, but they are far too numerous. No new books have been bought, chiefly because there are none to buy. The following periodicals have been received :—

Alpine Club Journal. March 1920.  
 Rucksack Club Journal. 1920.  
 La Montagne. January, February, March-May 1920.  
 Club Alpino Italiano, Rivista Mensile. January, February, March 1920.  
 L'Echo des Alpes. January, February, March, April, May, June 1920.  
 Bulletin Pyrénéen. January, February, March 1920.  
 Sierra Club Bulletin. 1920.  
 Sangaku (Japanese Alpine Club Journal). 1920.  
 Svenska Turist-Föreningens Arsskrift. 1920.

## SLIDE COLLECTION.

The Club is indebted to Mrs Hugh S. Ingram who has very kindly presented to the collection, a number of her late husband's slides. They are as follows, viz. :—

Scenery of Norwegian Mountains, Fjords, &c.	-	-	22
Italian and Swiss Alps	-	-	7
Scottish Hill Scenery -	-	-	44



## In Memoriam.

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### JAMES REID YOUNG.

THE news of Jim Young's sudden death in May will be a source of extreme regret to every member of the Club, for to all, his photographic genius, which has so enriched the pages of our *Journal*, has been a joy and inspiration, and to those who knew him his loss adds another to that band of "comrades staunch" and well tried, whose early deaths we mourn and whose spirits will ever accompany us in our wanderings in the old familiar haunts.

While still in the army the call of the hills took him south to Montanvert during his leave in August of last year. He made one or two expeditions, but these were spoiled by sudden attacks of giddiness and sickness, and his plans had to be abandoned. To the great distress of his friends, the doctor's report on his return was not favourable, so that, although he was with us at the New Year (1920) Meet, he was able for nothing more than low-level walks. At the Easter Meet, however, he seemed much better.

Born in Glasgow, Young was educated at a private school in Harrogate and then at Rugby, and received his engineering training in Glasgow and Pittsburg. An engineering friend writes :—

"He was for some years engaged as director in a private company, which he formed, in the development and manufacture of oil engines of a type which has only reached complete success in the last five years. After some years of strenuous work to make a market for these engines before they had been proved to have very valuable uses, this pioneer enterprise was abandoned. The engine, on which he worked, now generally known as the Semi-Diesel Engine, has since proved of great value, and is largely used."

Into his climbing career he brought the same thorough-

ness and enthusiasm, which he displayed in everything he took up. He began climbing in 1900, and became a member of the Club in 1908. Before that he had already paid a visit to the Canadian Rockies, and soon he steadily extended his experiences, until they embraced most of the many and varied districts of Scotland and also many of the better known European massifs.

He was also an enthusiastic member of the Scottish Ski Club, and between his mountaineering and ski-ing expeditions was fast acquiring a knowledge of his own land such as few have, and his camera has provided a host of witnesses to his ceaseless activities from Sutherland to Galloway and from Deeside to the "Rough Bounds" and Skye.

His tours abroad included seasons in the Alps, at Chamonix, Courmayeur, and Arolla, with ski-ing visits to Norway, Bohemia (the Reisingebirge and the Bohmerwald), and Chamonix; but his most interesting experiences were with the Raeburn-Ling Expedition to the Caucasus in 1913, and a return visit to the Rockies and Selkirk Mountains in 1914.

Both of the latter were highly successful.

In the Caucasus the party left the railway at Vladikavkaz, and in the Tsaya Valley climbed two new peaks; crossing the Mamison Pass to the Asiatic side of the Central Range, they took two peaks *en route*, one being new. Proceeding through Suanetia, the three unclimbed peaks of Nuamquam were traversed.

The season in Canada in 1914 was exceptionally fine, and between the 2nd and 27th of August, Young made the following ascents:—In the Rocky Mountains from Lake Louise Chalet and from Desolation Valley, The Mitre, Mount Victoria, the main and north peaks, Mount Deltaform, and Mount Hungabee; in the Selkirk Mountains from Glacier House, Hermit Hut and Van Horne Creek, Uto Peak, the traverse of Mount Sir Donald, Mount Tupper, the traverses of Rogers, Fleming, and Grant Peaks, Swiss Peak, and the traverses of Tomatin and Findhorn Peaks (first ascents).

The expedition was broken off by belated news of the

outbreak of the war, and he returned early in September to Scotland, getting a passage with difficulty.

He immediately offered himself for enlistment, but was rejected, to his intense disgust, owing to a slight defect in his hearing. For the next few months he spent his time travelling backwards and forwards from London, besieging every War Office Department he could think of, but to no purpose. However, determined to get overseas, he, a keen motorist, presented a car to the Belgian Medical Authorities, on condition that he was allowed to drive it. He then spent a year on the Flanders front, becoming Secretary and later Commandant to the British Field Hospital attached to the Belgian Army. He was now able to persuade the War Office that he was a fit person to be enlisted and sent overseas, and was attached to the Tank Corps, from there being sent to the 36th Divisional S.C. and finally to the 36th Divisional M.T. Company, with which he remained till the Motor Transport Units were broken up more than a year after Armistice Day.

On his return to civilian life, though unable to climb seriously, he threw himself with energy into the work of the Club.

Acting as Editor for the new "Guide-Book," he overhauled the proofs of the Ben Nevis Section, and had gone over, before his death, those of the General Section including the revised "Munro" Tables, with an almost "pagan thoroughness," which was most characteristic.

For these weeks of incessant labour we owe him much, but we owe him more for his prodigal output of photographs, maintaining at the same time, as he always did, the extremely high standard of mountain photography which has ever been the Club's pride.

A man of powerful build, of great simplicity of character, single-minded, very reserved and quiet, but with an unexpectedly hearty laugh—never more hearty, as his intimate friends can testify, than when some happy thrust "got home" against himself—it is hard to think he is gone.

But it rejoices those that knew him that in his interpre-

tations of his well-loved mountains in their infinite settings  
and ever-changing moods,

“Black with December's snows unshed and  
Pearled with August haze,  
The clanging arch of steel-grey March and  
June's long-lighted days”—

he, by his enthusiasm, his meticulous care and his rare  
artistic taste, has left an inspiration to others and a worthy  
memorial to himself.

J. C. T.

## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.



*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.*

### NOTES ON MUNRO'S TABLES.

HAVING climbed a number of out-of-the-way hills in Ross and Inverness, &c., and made systematic use of an aneroid, I enclose a few notes, which I trust, Mr Editor, you will think of sufficient interest to publish.

FANNICHS.—The 2,750 contour between A' Chailleach and Sgurr Breac (3,286 by my aneroid) has long been more than suspected of possessing standard height. Its name is Tom Chòinnich (round hill of the moss), and height, 3,131. Beinn Liath Mhór Fainich I made 3,137.

BEINN DEARG.—Ceann Garbh of Meall nan Ceapraichean is the lowest of three summits, though its height alone seems to have been ascertained. South top is highest (3,192), and there is 80 feet dip to mid top (3,177). So that Ceann Garbh (3,063) is actually the lowest top. But the mid top seems the least important.

Visiting Munro, two or three months before his death, I went right through his own copy of the Tables; and one remark, pencilled against hill 116, struck me. It was that Douglas had discovered a peak on Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair, but no height was given. The name of the peak I have found to be Tom Chòinnich, and height 3,229. This peak shows best from Sgurr Bàn, and it lies east by south of the Mullach. It should certainly be included. A' Mhaighdean I make 3,140.

Talking about Munro's own copy, I might here insert that he had been told that Foinaven (Eriboll district) was over 3,000 feet. I have been lucky enough to secure Heddle's Geological Map of Sutherland (1881), and there, sure enough, the hill is marked 3,013, the top lying east by north of 2,980 Δ of the new 1-inch O.S. and named Ganu Mór on both maps. Presumably this is an aneroid height, though not so marked.

Càrn Gorm Loch of Stravaich was also pencil noted as over 3,000—I make it 3,010. Its south-west neighbour Faochag (misnamed Am Fraochagach in Tables, following O.S.) has a south top 3,010, perhaps worth inclusion. I suspect that Meall Gorm near by to south-east is also of standard height, but lacked time to investigate.

BEINN EIGHE.—Spidean Coire nan Clach, the finest peak on the ridge and the hinge on which all the rest turn, is certainly a separate mountain. It is the second highest of the range (3,275) and I suggest that Ruadh Stac Mór (and possibly Sàil Mór) be reckoned as the Munros of this range. The next 3,000 top to Spidean is Mullach a' Chòinnich Mhóir (top of the big moss, 3,030 in Tables), and its west summit is perhaps 3,185.

LIATHGHAICH.—Most easterly peak is called Stuc a' Choire Dhuibh, without the addition of Bhig. It is 3,001. Next is Bidein Toll a' Bheathaich (peak of the hole of the [herd or flock] beast), not a' Mhuic (3,136). If Creag Dhubh a' Choire Lèith must be included, it is 3,191. *Perhaps* Spideanan nam Fasairinen (3,060) should be a separate hill, as the ridge to Mullach na (not *an*) Rathain is long and contains a shoulder of some small importance—Còinneach an Tuill Bhàin (moss of the white hollow, 3,200).

The top between Beinn Fhionnlaidh and Càrn Éite (not Eige—see Watson's "Place-Names of Ross"), at the head of Glen Cannich, called in Tables Coire Lochain Top, is named Friamhnach (the rooty hill?), but it does not deserve to be in the Tables at all.

AFFRIC.—The small top between Sgurr na Lapaich of Glen Affric and Màin Sabhal (not Sodhail) is called Mullach Cadha Rainich. The ridge running parallel from Ciste Dubh (nearly) contains an equally dubious mid top (nameless), 3,482. It ends in a 3,500 contour, requiring insertion, whose name is Sùgh Doire Mór, not An Tudair, arising from An t-sùgh doire misheard. I make the height 3,497 or even less, and this after doubly-checked reading. Coire Coulavie (*i.e.*, cùil na fiadh=deer's food) top should be deleted. New map quite rightly gives no name to the 3,462 top, as the name Creag a' Chaorruinn applies to its south-east heel.

Only one peak of the Taigh Mór massif needs inclusion—the 3,285 one + the 3,045 top named Tom a' Chòinnich and Sàil Chaorruinn (3,040).

Aonach Mheadhoin of Sgurr a' Bhealaich Dheirg should be omitted. It is almost invisible.

Name Ceum na h-Aon Choise does not belong to any top, nor is it anywhere near even a 2,000 contour. The place is a low gully of Coire Garbh at about 1,000 contour west of Sgurr a' Choire Ghairbh. If it is to have a name, it can only be Plaide Mhór top (3,140). But more prominent than this round end of the beautiful grass blanket that stretches west from the summit of Beinn Fhada, is the top above Bealach an t-Sealgaire and to east of it (3,020). It is worth inclusion; and so, too, is the top south by east of the 3,383 summit (nameless, and not easy to find a name—? west top of Sùgh Doire).

No amount of trying to "cook" my aneroid results would allow more than 2,973 to Faochag=the whelk (not Fraochag) of Sgurr na Sgìne (Glen Sheil), despite map's 3,000 contour. But I fear the contour will secure this peak's place in the Tables.

Gurr Thionail of Sgurr a' Mhóraire (not Mhaoraiche), Glen Quoich, 3,065 by aneroid (2,750 contour), is offered as a prospective candidate. It looks higher than Am Bàthaiche (3,045) both from that peak and from the main hill. Query :—may not Sgurr a' Chlaidheimh be over 3,000 feet?

On the other hand, Meall an Teanga of Loch Lochy should be deleted : I make it 2,991.

LOCH LAGGAN.—Beinn a' Chlachair has an important north-east top which ought to be included (3,138).

Between Creag Mhóir and the head of Coir' Arder are some bumps divided between 1 and 6 inch maps. None need inclusion. Uinneag Coire a' Chaorruinn (3,180) should go, and perhaps *Meall* a' Ghoire (peak 345).

Geal Chàrn Mór (255) is true name of the south-west outlier of the Monadhliaths

CAIRNGORMS.—The Loch (not Lochan) nan Cnapan top of Tables is named Cnapan Alasdair Mhóir—Ian Alasdair Mór having been the grandfather of Finlay Macintosh, who has just removed to Loch Ericht, after spending twenty years in Glen Feshie.

On Sgarsaich Mhór (not An Sgarsoch), famed for its still visible market-stance, are two tops to east and south. The east one is in Tables, the south is 3,178. Either both should be deleted or both shoulders retained.

Càrn Bhac of Fealar should be Càrn a' Bhàthaiche (byre-like stony hill).

Meall Gorm of Glas Maol is not worth its place in the Tables, and still less is Druim Mor, a mere fence turn on a uniformly rising ridge. Not so Creag Leachdach of Fafernne (3,150).

Sròn a' Chadha No (3,338) of Cairngorm is no top, for the col is very small.

LOCHNAGAR.—Perhaps the south-west top of Creag a' Ghlais Uillt (3,476) is worth insertion and Stùc Eòin (3,571).

Beinn a' Chaorruinn Bheag (Glen Derry) seems, perhaps, a dubious top, and Bynac Beag to north-west of Caplaich is, though a poor thing, a genuine top—not so the 3,400 point, north by east. Bynac Beag is 3,194.

RONALD BURN.

## SKYE.

TRAVERSE OF MAIN CUILLIN RIDGE IN ONE DAY.—Whilst the S.M.C. never lay any special stress on times, and are not profoundly interested in the number of minutes taken to run up and down Ben Nevis or any other Scottish mountain, yet times have their proper place in mountaineering records, and we are sure our members will be interested in having before them the following note of an excursion made in June last by a newly-elected member of the Club—

T. Howard Somervell. It will be remembered that Messrs M'Laren and Shadbolt made practically the same traverse in June 1911 (see Vol. XI., p. 329), and a comparison of the respective times is interesting.

Mr Somervell remarks that "another time, with a water bottle and a pound of raisins, I think I could knock another hour off the time—but the chief disability was thirst and unappetising bannock!"

Those of us who know best the amount of water to be found on the Cuillin ridges, and the strain put on the salivary glands to masticate bannocks some days old, will best appreciate Mr Somervell's comment. As far as Banachdich, Mr Somervell had a companion.

Left Glen Brittle	-	-	-	7.11 A.M.
Top of Garsbheinn	-	-	-	9.16 "
Sgurr nan Eag	-	-	-	9.58 "
Sgurr Dubh na Dabheinn	-	-	-	10.41 "
Thearlaich-Dubh Gap	-	-	-	...
Sgurr Alasdair	-	-	-	11.43 "
Sgurr Thearlaich	-	-	-	11.50 "
Sgurr Mhic Choinnich	-	-	-	12.18 P.M.
Inaccessible Pinnacle	-	-	-	1.17 "
Sgurr Dearg Cairn	-	-	1.25 to	2.11 " (Rest).
Sgurr na Banachdich	-	-	-	2.40 "
Sgurr a Ghreadaidh	-	-	-	3.32 "
Sgurr a Mhadaidh	-	-	-	3.50 "
Bidein druim nan Ramh	-	-	4.42 to	5.0 " (Rest).
Bruach na Frithe	-	-	-	...
Sgurr a Fionn Choire	-	-	-	6.13 "
Bealach nan Lice	-	-	6.20 to	6.50 " (Rest).
Am Bhasteir (via Tooth—Naismith's route)	-	-	-	7.21 "
Sgurr nan Gillean	-	-	-	7.45 "
Sgurr na h' Uamha	-	-	-	8.5 "
Sligachan	-	-	-	9.29 "

Total, 14 hours 18 minutes ; total rest, 1 hour 34 minutes ; total on ridge, 9.16 to 8.5 = 10 hours 49 minutes.

#### S.M.C. ABROAD IN 1920.

MR D. A. CLAPPERTON sends the following interesting account of his trip :—

After a seven years' interval my wife and I decided to go to Grindelwald. We chose the Ostend-Luxemburg route to Basel to



avoid the Paris rush, and on the whole it was a success, but the rate of travelling is still slow, and passports and luggage are dealt with both on entering and leaving each frontier. Grindelwald, however, repaid all the trouble of reaching it. We arrived there on Sunday, 1st August, and had a fortnight of excellent weather. After making the usual path excursions to the Faulhorn, Bäregg Hut, and the two Scheideggs, we fixed up a climb—the Strahlegghorn. The guide, Hans Gertsch, and ourselves made an early start on Monday, 9th August, for the Strahlegghut. On arrival there, we found that forty would be using it overnight, all Swiss except ourselves. As sleep was practically impossible, my wife could not face the climb, but the guide and I made it out between 4.30 and 9 A.M. without any trouble, and we were rewarded by a gorgeous view from the summit.

The next excursion—a big one for me, viz., the Wetterhorn—I did on the 12th and 13th August with Hans Gertsch and Christian Almer. A start was made from the Gleckstein Hut at 2.30 A.M., and the summit was reached at 7. The rocks are free from snow this season, but the couloir is as famous for falling stones as ever. Unfortunately, the weather did not favour us on the summit, cold wind and fog being prevalent.

We left for Mürren the next day—Saturday, 14th. The weather broke badly that week-end, and on Monday and Tuesday we did the Schiltalp, the Oberberg, and Sefinentahl. On the 18th, with the guide Karl Feuz, we set off for Büttlassen at 4 A.M. and reached the Sefinenfurka at 9, and were on the summit by noon, 10,500 feet. The day was perfect, and the view extended all over the famous Oberland peaks, and as far as the mountains at Zermatt. This really proved to be our last peak, owing to another breakdown in the weather.

The conditions in Switzerland were entirely pleasant. One missed, however, the usual number of English visitors, who were extremely scarce. Personally, I did not meet any Englishmen out with a guide. There were Dutch, American, and Swiss employing them. Indeed, my Mürren guide had forgotten his English through six years' disuse.

Climbing is scarcely an amusement nowadays for the "new poor." The guides' fees are all 30 per cent. up, and I found 70 frs. in my bill for food for the Wetterhorn excursion. The guide and porter mean 80 and 60 frs., and hut and other expenses at 20 frs. mean a minimum outlay of 230 frs., nearly £11 for that one excursion. The hotels and pensions run to 17 frs. at the "Adler," at Grindelwald, and 14 frs. at the "Regina," in Mürren. Living, therefore, cannot be considered extravagant, but one is faced with the additional railway fares, which seem to have risen in a proportion roughly corresponding to that in our country.

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Mr G. SHADBOLT sends the following record :—The party during the whole trip was R. Bicknell, H. E. Porter, and myself, without guides.

- July* 5.—La Grave to Chalet de l'Alpe du Villard d'Arene.  
 „ 6.—Pic de Neige du Cordier. Col Emile Pic to Ernest Caron Hut.  
 „ 7.—Les Ecrins. Col des Ecrins to La Berarde.  
 „ 8.—La Berarde.  
 „ 9.—Promontoire Hut.  
 „ 10.—Breche de la Meije to La Grave.  
 „ 12.—Breche de la Meije to Promontoire Hut.  
 „ 13.—Traversed La Meije to La Grave.  
 „ 14 and 15.—La Grave to Argentiere.  
 „ 16.—To Jardin d'Argentiere Hut.  
 „ 17.—Traversed Mont Dolent via Breche de l'Amone and down to Col Feret and La Vachey.  
 „ 19.—Grandes Jorasses Hut.  
 „ 20.—Grandes Jorasses and back to Hut.  
 „ 21.—Col des Grandes Jorasses to Argentiere.

During the remaining days of the holiday the weather was for the most part bad, and we did nothing of importance.

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Mr W. N. LING spent three weeks in the Alps in August with H. C. Bowen, A.C. Going out to La Grave at the end of July, they crossed the Col Emile Pic to the Ernest Caron Hut with the intention of doing the Ecrins, but a severe storm, with heavy wind and new snow, drove them down the Glacier Blanc to the hamlet of Ailefroide. From there they crossed the Col du Sélé in indifferent weather to La Berarde.

Here they spent a day or two to allow the Meije, their next objective, to get into condition, and after an inspection from the Tête de la Maye, they went up to the Promontoire Hut, and the following day crossed the mountain, which was in excellent condition. An axe was, unfortunately, lost on the descent into the Breche Zsigmondy, and the remainder of the climb was done with one axe only, which necessitated great care in the descent of the final slope. From La Grave they journeyed to Chamonix and up to Montanvert. After a minor expedition to the Glacier de Taléfre, the party, to which was now added A. E. Russell, A.C., went up to the Pavillon Trélatête, and after a day's imprisonment, owing to bad weather, they ascended the Dome de Miage and the Aiguille Béranger. Ling then had to return home, leaving the others to do the Aig du Plan.

Mr ROBERT CORRY sends the following notes :—

With guides Emil and Alex Graven—

*July 12.*—Wellenkuppe and Obergabelhorn, descending to Arben Glacier.

*July 21.*—Matterhorn, by Zmut Arête. The first ascent this season was made the day before. There was a good deal of ice on the Tiefenmatten face, and some difficult passages were encountered.

Left Schönbühl Hut, 1.0 A.M. Italian summit, 12.28 P.M.

*July 24.*—Zinal Rothhorn.

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Mr and Mrs H. MACROBERT were at Arolla and Zermatt for three weeks. No serious climbing was attempted, but full advantage was taken of the splendid weather by a series of excursions on the lower slopes, including the Bertol Pass, Theodule Pass, and the Riffelhorn. The travelling throughout was most comfortable, and no difficulties or annoyances were encountered in regard to passports or customs.

I met Professor W. P. Ker at Zermatt, and Tyndale arrived at Arolla as I left.

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Mr GODFREY A. SOLLY was at the Montanvert Hotel for about three weeks in July and August, but did not do much climbing. In the second week he was joined by a very strong party of Fell and Rock Club Cragmen, which included our members, Mr MELDRUM and Dr SOMERVEIL, but the weather broke just at that time. The party had a long climb on the Aiguille de Chardonnet, but owing to the rocks being plastered with ice and snow, they decided not to proceed and, turning aside, reached the Col Adams Reilly. Mr Solly also had a climb on the Aiguille Pierre Joseph, and with Mrs Solly ascended the Petit Charmoz and the Aiguille de l'M.

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Mr W. A. MOUNSEY was at Val d'Isère with his son, aged fifteen, during the month of August, and ascended many of the easy peaks in the Western Graians. Some of the more interesting expeditions were the Tsanteleina, Pointe de Galise, Pointe de la Traversière, and the Aiguille Grande Sassièr.

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HIMALAYAS.—Mr Harold Raeburn sailed for India early in June, and the Editor has received from him a postcard, dated "Darjeeling, 21st July 1920. Propose to start to-morrow on a reconnaissance to the North. Height here is 6,500 feet, and it is not very hot, but weather is rather like Skye at its worst. Had some glorious views of the great snow peaks." Needless to say, we wish him success and good fortune.

## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

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"MOUNTAINEERING ART." By Harold Raeburn. London: Fisher Unwin. 16s. net.

WE feel sure that all S.M.C. members will be delighted to see Mr Raeburn immortalised in a "book" on his favourite pastime. We all knew already how well he could climb, but now we are glad to be told by himself how it is done.

"Mountaineering Art," coming from a man who has traversed the Meije *alone*, will rank high among climbing literature.

In this book Mr Raeburn is downright and natural, and while we read it we can almost hear him speaking to us in his own quietly emphatic tones.

He is absolutely fearless in challenging erroneous notions, even although they are supported by authority and tradition. With the hearty goodwill of an iconoclast, he upsets many idols of popular climbing belief. Take the following instances:—

Lighter boots should be worn, and so save the needless lifting from the ground of many tons in a long climb.

In chimneys, keep as far out as possible.

Rock-climbing, even when the angle approaches the vertical, is done mainly with the feet, not the hands.

When it is necessary to hoist the body by the arms, save them by choosing holds low down on which the palms of the hands can press with a straight arm, rather than higher holds involving a tiring haul-up.

Apart from climbing difficulties, it is easier to find the way on Alpine peaks than on British hills.

The ice-axe, if the shaft is properly ovalled, should be held loosely when cutting steps, rather than be gripped firmly.

Leather laces are not so good as woven ones.

Braces give more freedom of movement than a belt.

Drink as much cold water as you like when climbing.

The rule anent guideless climbing laid down by an old writer that "No beginner should start climbing with the idea that he may one day dispense with the assistance of guides," ought, Mr Raeburn thinks, to remain, with the simple change of the word "No" to "Every."

Our readers will likely agree with most of these views, but there may be less unanimity on one or two other matters, *e.g.* :—

Projecting welts on climbing boots should be abolished.

That opinion is perhaps justified as far as steep rock climbing is concerned, but the trouble is that after all the hobnailer is a compromise, and must serve the wearer's convenience on scree slopes, boggy moorland, and perhaps miles of hard road, as well as on a rock face.

It is not very difficult, and the steeper the slope is—up to 60° at any rate—the easier it is to stop a man who slips from ice-steps below one.

What is meant here is no doubt that when the slope is steeper than half a right angle, the pull of the rope will be more downward than outward, but we hesitate to accept the statement as it stands, that it is easier to stop a slip on a 60° slope than on one of 40°.

Beginners will find in this book all sorts of useful hints and many out-of-the-way items of information about the pursuit of mountaineering. Full instructions are given

about exploration, sure-footedness and balance, equipment, knots, step-cutting, measured angles of snow and ice, glissading, sunburn, and provender. The words "hitch" and "belay" are distinguished from one another: also a "chockstone" from a "jammed stone," which have been hitherto used loosely as referring to the same things.

Mr Raeburn takes his young readers for personally-conducted tours among the mountains—two at home and one in the Alps. These chapters will be read with interest and profit, and one only wishes that the volume were of lighter weight, so that it could be carried to the hillside and studied on the spot.

Ladies will find two chapters written for themselves.

Like all the authorities on the art of climbing, our author emphasises the recognised rule that on steep ground the climber must stand up straight, but he will probably admit that there is always a more or less unconscious bias inwards. A man on a snow slope resembles in this respect a boy walking along the parapet of a bridge, who of course stands upright, or he would leave the parapet, but who also knows quite well on which side he is going to alight if he tumbles off.

With the view that no other sport is so likely to keep us out of the hands of the physician, there will be cordial agreement. Indeed, the experience of the Club's "Commutation Fund" proves what terribly long-lived persons our original members are.

The interesting and thoughtful section on "Mountain Lassitude" (which term Mr Raeburn gives good reasons for preferring to "mountain sickness"), and his hopeful remarks on the prospects of the great Himalayan summits being reached some day, will be read with sympathy by his old comrades, who wish him much success in his present Indian enterprise. But a new edition of "Mountaineering Art" will then be needed!

W. W. NAISMITH.

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The following notes have been sent the Editor by Mr Gilbert Thomson, and as they are of general interest, they are included as a supplement to Mr Naismith's review:—

Two parts of Mr Raeburn's interesting and instructive work bring mountaineering art into touch with science.

The first refers to the weight of boots. The principle that boots should be as light as possible is unquestionably sound, although opinions may differ as to what is possible consistent with efficiency. The illustrative calculations, given in terms of tons lifted from the ground, are obscure, and the method of calculation is not explained. The measure of work should be "foot-tons" (or any similar pair of units), and it is easy to calculate that the work done by a twelve-stone man in ascending Ben Nevis is in round numbers 330 foot-tons, plus anything to be allowed for ups and downs of the body as a whole or any part of it. To take two pounds through the same height would mean 4 foot-tons, with a similar addition. It is comparatively simple to estimate the rise and fall of the body in walking on a level (one-twentieth of the distance is a well-known estimate); it is much more complicated when the ground is sloping or rough; and it is impossible to give any reliable calculation of the work done in lifting the feet. Every mountaineer knows how this is increased by the substitution of heather for grass, or the failure of the surface of deep snow. Mr Raeburn's arithmetical illustration is not nearly so convincing as his general argument. Weight on the feet is in the most objectionable place—compare a 20-lb. rucksack with a 10-lb. weight on each foot.

The excellent advice as to drinking water, and the well-deserved ridicule of the alleged danger of drinking water from the glacier surface, is followed by the more doubtful advice that snow may be used instead of water. To replace the water given off by the body implies the absorption of a considerable amount, and if the body is to supply the heat necessary to produce this amount from snow, it is a serious demand. No doubt part of the heat is removed with advantage, just as by the radiator of a motor or the condenser of a steam engine; but this cannot be a large proportion of the total required. For instance, to produce a gallon of water from snow would require about 500 foot-tons of energy (a gallon weighs 10 lbs.,

each lb. requires 143 heat units to melt it, and each heat unit is equivalent to 778 foot-pounds), which would take a good many pairs of heavy boots to the top of Ben Nevis. A minor point is, that while snow or ice relieves thirst for the moment, it may put the salivary glands out of action, and cause subsequently most intense thirst. The snow should be melted otherwise than by the body heat.



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