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## A SUMMER HOLIDAY IN SCOTLAND.

BY E. LÜSCHER.

WHEN I came over to England in the summer of 1920 I knew but little of British climbs, and I was very glad Prof. N. Collie told me of the Isle of Skye and the Black Cuillin. It was my plan to go far north and see a part of Scotland, so I took the quickest way by Inverness and Kyle of Lochalsh, and landed on a fine evening at Sligachan at the end of July.

It was not quite as I had imagined. I thought that the hills would be higher and nearer, the valleys cut deeper, and I found a wide, lonely island. But I felt the singular charm and I liked it at once. The fine evening was followed by a rainy day, and so it remained for the first ten days. Any serious climbing seemed to me impossible. I began with walking and scrambling up the easier ways. I remember a very stormy day on Sgurr nan Gillean, and difficulties in crossing the burns. I got accustomed to the wet moor and to the Gaelic names of the hills. When the weather turned better at last I had a little knowledge of the corries and of the main ridge, and was very anxious to tackle more difficult problems. The first fine day I went out for the Pinnacle Ridge on Sgurr nan Gillean, and traversed it coming down the western ridge over the Policeman. It was the first time I saw the whole ridge of the Black Cuillin, and I was

much impressed with the high Sgurr Alaisdair and its rocky neighbours. So I came home with the intention to stay a few days at Glen Brittle. I thought of crossing the main ridge south of Loch Coruisk without deciding exactly where, since the weather was again changeable. When I walked up the rough path of Glen Sligachan heavy clouds began to cover the sky rapidly. Loch Coruisk was dark, and the mist lay down in the valleys. I just reached a big stone at the shore of Loch Scavaig before rain was falling again. (Sligachan 9.50, Loch Scavaig 1.15 to 1.40.) I was now accustomed to it, and even liked it. I think clouds and mist belong to that country; they make the rocks blacker, the ridges steeper and higher, and give a feeling of extreme loneliness. I heard with pleasure the wind roaring among the rocks. There was a yacht on Loch Scavaig. People on it must have been surprised at my Swiss songs. I had lunch and made plans, and came to the conclusion that I would find, even in mist and rain, Garsven and Sgurr nan Eag, and perhaps a way down to Glen Brittle. So I followed the burn coming down from Coir a Chruidh. There is much "vegetable" on that slope, enough to get wet through on such a day. Sometimes a grassy ridge appeared to the left. I scrambled up to it from the back of the corrie, and soon gained the top of Garsven (3.30 to 3.40). The fine rain made the studying of the map most unpleasant, and since there was no view I followed the ridge to the north-west after a short rest. I passed another top (the name is not mentioned in the 1 inch map) still in dense mist. The wind was increasing, but turning to the north. The ridge became steeper and narrower without being difficult. I did not know exactly where I was, and so I was glad the mist lifted for a moment and I got a glimpse down the north side. I saw the small loch in An Garbh-Choire, and the map told me that the top of Sgurr nan Eag could not be far. So it was (4.35 P.M.). But I did not know my way down. We have in our language a proverb for such cases. "Sit down, eat, and think about it." I took the advice of the proverb, hoping the strong wind would

tear the clouds. After about a quarter of an hour's waiting I suddenly saw the sea, first like through a veil, then clearer and clearer. In a few minutes I had above me deep blue sky. The wind was driving the clouds out on the sea. Only round the highest tops they were still lingering. The sea itself was shadowed by a thick layer of clouds, and the sun was only piercing through here and there. On these places the water reflected the light, and brilliant patches were wandering with the clouds over the sea. Whenever I reached a top I looked for the sea, but I never saw it again to such a splendour. Maybe the long walk in the rain made it the more impressive. I was not in a hurry, and held my good seat beneath the top stone till 5.15 P.M. Then I packed up, scrambled down to Coir a Ghrunnda, walked over the *roches montonnées* to the right side, where it was easy to run down to the lower part of the corrie. From there I followed the foot of the hills at a very slow speed, sitting down here and there in the evening sunshine. In due time for dinner I turned up at Glen Brittle (7.30), and soon felt at home in Mrs Chisholm's "Post Office."

The next morning the usual grey mist covered the whole range. Nothing more was visible than the lower slopes. I mistook the Window Tower for the Inaccessible Pinnacle, and climbed it, looking in vain for a top. Very angry, I went down, fetched my bag, reached the ridge of Sgurr Dearg again, and found at last my aim. I did not like the wet state of the short western side of the Pinnacle, but managed it, and sent down my rope for two young men who came per chance to the foot of the Pinnacle at the same time. We came safely down the eastern ridge in spite of a strong, cold wind. In the evening the weather cleared up so I was able to study the precipice of Sron na Ciche and the beginning of the Cioch Gully which I intended to climb. The following day the weather favoured my plans. The sun was shining when I walked up Coir Lagan, making for the Cioch Gully. There were many new traces of falling stones in the latter. I had very seldom seen that among the Cuillin, and quickened

my pace. So after a short time I sat on the Cioch. (Glen Brittle, 10.30 ; Cioch, 12.40 to 1.)

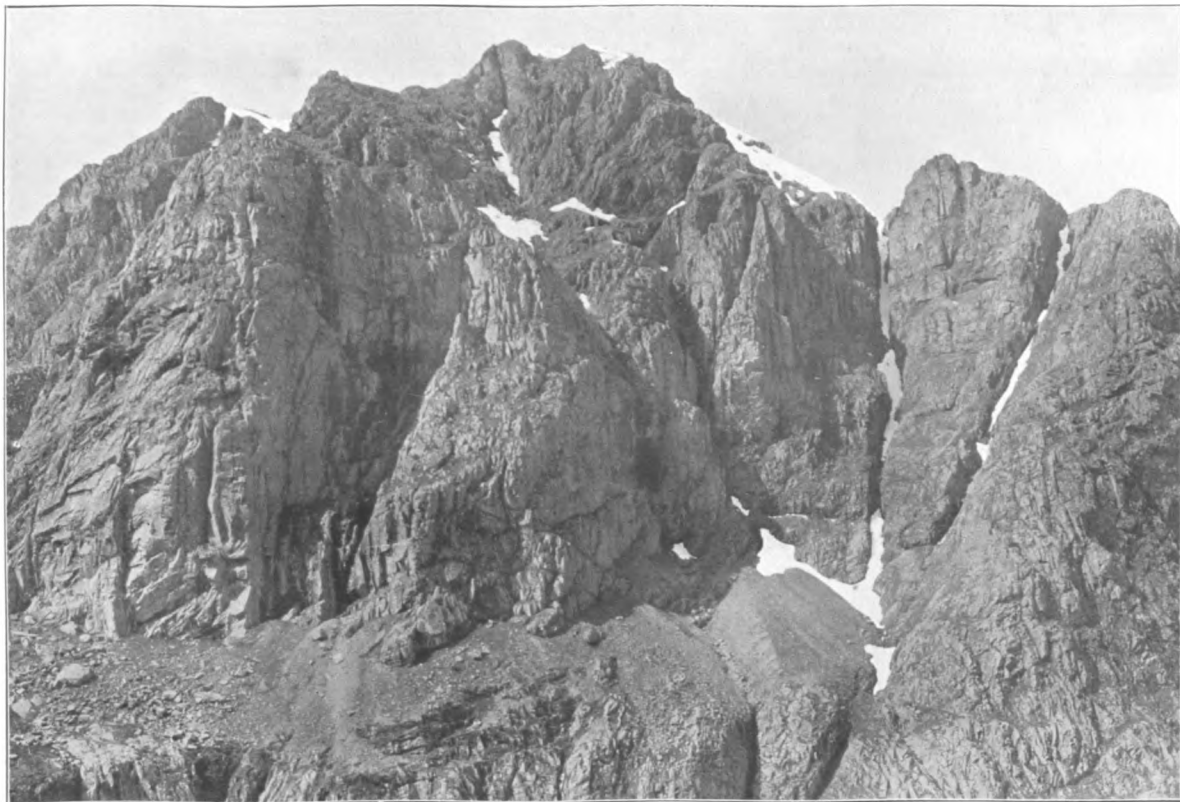
I think that point one of the finest in Skye. I especially liked the feeling of height above Corrie Lagan and its blue lochs, and the view over Glen Brittle and the wide moor to the sea. The few houses of Glen Brittle and one single path are the only signs of human beings. In our country one never is so isolated from the rest of the world except above the snow line, and even then not during the summer holiday. On the other hand, the Cioch is relatively low down, so that the hills all around seem to be very steep and high. I followed with my eyes the fine skyline from Sgurr Alaisdair to the Inaccessible Pinnacle, and soon made up my mind to go all along as far as time would allow me. So I gained the ridge of Sgurr Sgumain by the eastern gully, walked up that top (1.50), climbed Sgurr Alaisdair and lunched on its top (2.15 to 3). Then I came quickly to the foot of the steep side of Sgurr Tearlach. A short but nice climb brought me up (3.10). The following part of the ridge to the gap between Sgurr Tearlach and Sgurr Mhic Choinnich affords only an easy scramble. Sgurr Mhic Choinnich itself has to be taken more seriously. I gained from the gap a ledge leading to the left round the corner, and then climbed straight up to the top over a steep and sensational bit of rock (3.50 to 4). I had only a short rest. An Stac looks from there like a formidable steep pinnacle, and I did not know where I had to go. But the best thing is to try. It turned out quite easy. I began on the left side, followed then the ridge itself, and traversed finally on to the right side. When I saw there would not be any more difficulties, I sat down in the sunshine and saw with satisfaction the long way already done. Then I reached the foot of the Inaccessible Pinnacle in a few minutes (4.30), took off my boots, and thought of having a smoke on its top. The dry warm rocks made the eastern ridge easy. When I came to the upper end of the south crack the upper part did not seem to me either dangerous or difficult. I felt the strength of doing something more

than usual, and the pipe remained in the pocket. Coming down again the easy way I had a look at the lower part of that crack, and began to try it. There is one sensational bit in it, but one can do the whole climb safely owing to small but firm handholds. For the second time I reached the eastern ridge, and followed it to the top. Now I had my smoke and a lazy rest, while the shadows were slowly becoming longer. I did not see much of the view. After such a working day one has had too many impressions, and the mind is hardly capable of taking up new ones. One is satisfied and feels agreeably tired, and thinks with pleasure of dinner and a good bed. I climbed down very carefully to my boots and my bag, and was quite glad climbing was over for that day (5.30). On the way home to Glen Brittle (7.10), I felt that I would never forget the round of Coire Lagan.

The next day I walked home to Sligachan over Sgurr na Banachdich and Sgurr a' Greadaidh, and enjoyed the warm sun and the view thoroughly.

The fine weather was settled, and after another dry day I thought of trying the Waterpipe Gully. The path up Bealach a' Mhaim and along the slopes of Bruach na Frithe down to Coir na Creiche allows fast walking (Sligachan, 9.25; beginning of the Waterpipe Gully, 11). Against my expectation, a small burn was flowing through the deep, dark chasm. Even on the first level part I had to jump from one stone to the other. I could manage the first pitch without getting drowned, but my wet skin and my common sense advised me to leave the darkness and to avoid the "80-footer." So I climbed the steep right wall of the gully, and was glad to be in the sun again. There are no difficulties in following the gully on the right side. I looked down here and there, and found above the high pitch a place where I was able to reach again the ground of the cleft. The water lessened with increasing height, but still made the work much harder. Just above the branching of the gully the pitch was very wet and slimy. I therefore went up the left branch till I could traverse over slippery slabs above the

pitch to the right. I can't remember any more obstacles till a high wall across the gully. It was green with moss. I could safely climb up the left corner to a certain point, but then a traverse has to be made over a slimy, wet slab to the right. I did not like it at all. Several big stones bar the gully higher up, but they are much easier to overcome than it seems. The serious part of the work was done, and an easy scramble led me up to the top of Sgurr na Fheadain (12.30). After lunch I gazed with half-shut eyes, half sleeping, over hills and moor. The three peaks of Bidein Druim na Ramh look very attractive from that point. I knew them from a previous traverse. Especially I remembered the soft moss on the Central Top, where I had not been able to rest owing to a hail-storm. So I thought of recovering the loss. I left my top at 1.30, and followed the ridge to Bidein Druim, reaching the main ridge at the foot of the south-west peak. I had the intention to take the usual way over Druim na Ramh down to Harta Corrie. In fact, the ridge of Druim na Ramh ends just on the Central Top, but a big drop in it can't be climbed directly. This is avoided by following a ledge on the Coruisk side from the gap between the Central Top and the South-West Top to the lower part of Druim na Ramh. But I liked the outline of the upper part, and hoped to find a good climb there. So I had again unknown ground before me. That shortened my rest on the soft moss of the Central Top (2.30). The ridge did not disappoint me. Though not difficult, it is narrow in some places, and gives good hand and foot work. The view on both sides, down to Harta Corrie and to Loch Coruisk, is magnificent and most impressive from the upper end of the big drop. The latter is very steep indeed, and consists mostly of one unbroken wall. There is no way down, even on the double rope, therefore I went back from the end of the ridge for about 20 feet, where I had seen a crack on the Coruisk side. There it would have been possible to lower myself down, but a big stone moved by touching it. I was afraid to get it on my head. The next chimney on the same side had no such danger,



*June 1902*

CARN DEARG OF BEN NEVIS

*W. Inglis Clark*

and I went down on the double rope about 20 feet. I think it possible to climb up the same place. I found myself on a ledge, slanting down to the right and apparently easy to follow. I preferred to lower myself down to another ledge, wherefrom I could climb directly down to the foot of the big drop. The work done, I had a second lunch and a long rest. The climb may have taken half-an-hour from the top. The Central peak of Bidein Druim na Ramh shows its best side seen from the ridge of Druim na Ramh itself. It has a certain resemblance to the Matterhorn. I could even recognise the Zmutt Nose on it. So I often looked back, climbing and scrambling along the ridge. Where it becomes broad and begins to go slightly up again I found a nice little pool, made for a cold bath. Since days of a deep blue sky and no clouds at all are rare in the "Island of Mist," I enjoyed the sun to the full till the shadows came up from Loch Coruisk and Harta Corrie. A cool wind drove me away at last, and I walked home through Harta Corrie and Glen Sligachan (6.45).

The following weeks I had a good many more climbs, easy and difficult ones, in good and in bad weather; and the more I went out the more I liked those hills. It is interesting to see a new country, but one loves only a known one. Every top and every ridge has then its remembrances, and tells of work and joy. And there is another reason which made me sorry to leave Skye: the evenings at Sligachan Inn round the fireplace, with its talks about climbing and fishing. There is not much difference between a small hotel in our mountains and that excellent inn. So I felt at home, and made good friends. I especially remember with great pleasure all those climbs I did with Mr Bell. I owe to his kindness a good deal of my knowledge of British hills and their climbers, and also the honour and pleasure of writing in this *Journal*.

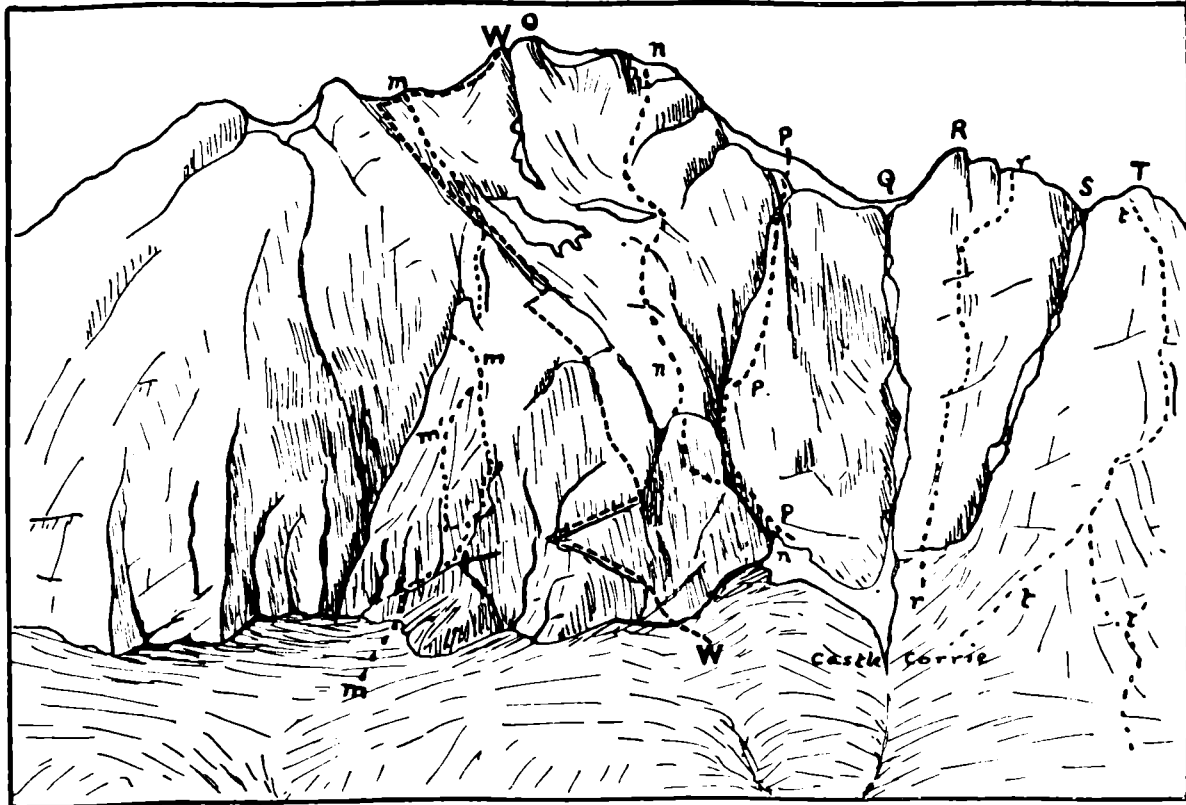
At the beginning of September I stayed at Fort William, with the intention to have a look at Ben Nevis. When I came to the foot of the north side for the first time I did not see much of the crags, but I had the



impression that I was going to climb a real mountain, and snow patches here and there confirmed my opinion. Empty boxes and broken bottles indicate the Gardyloo Gully (I was grateful to my former French teacher), and so I found the beginning of the north-east buttress in spite of rain and storm. Where I went up exactly I don't know ; but I reached a cairn at last, and soon afterwards the Observatory. I was glad that a good path led me down safely through the dense mist.

The weather was still changeable when I walked up the path from Achintee the second time, and a threatening shower quickened my pace across the moor and down to the "Lunching-Stone" at the foot of the Castle Ridge (Fort William, 9.20 ; "Lunching-Stone," 11.15 to 11.40). It gives a good shelter, and helped me to a dry lunch. I thought of doing a good climb, but the strong wind, driving heavy clouds along the rocks of Carn Dearg, did not favour my intention. Sometimes the mist came down to the foot ; sometimes I could even see the skyline. Anyhow, I started for the Castle Corrie without decided plan. Over wet rocks and wet grass I reached the screes in the corrie. The weather was clearing up a bit, and the big face to my left struck my attention. I saw ledges slanting upwards in both directions, and it did not seem impossible to me to climb from one to the other. I had not read anything about a climb up that wall, and I determined on trying it. I am well aware how difficult it is to describe a new climb properly, especially if one did it alone, and if one had to pay the whole attention to the finding of the way. This is my excuse for the insufficiency of my description.

I went half-way up the scree, crossed the small burn to the left, and reached a grassy ledge slanting up to the left on to the wall of Carn Dearg, between the "Staircase" climb and "Cousin's" buttress. Though steep at the beginning, it was easy to follow. The ledge then becomes horizontal, and is formed by an enormous slab split off vertically from the main mass. I worked through a narrow cleft between the two still to the left. Then I



CARN DEARG OF BEN NEVIS

Dr Lüscher's climb is marked W-W. The other routes are as shown on similar plate in "Ben Nevis Guide"

came to a curious place, where the cleft is broader and filled with scree, the slab projecting from about shoulder-height. The wall just above is very steep, but standing on the edge of the slab I could reach a few handholds higher up, and with a slight swing I came back to the wall. I gained a less steep part, but a little bit higher up the rock was overhanging. So I went down to my ledge on the double rope. One can't see the end of the ledge to the left, the cleft between wall and slab becoming again narrower there, and the slab itself forming a high pinnacle. This is visible as a bright point on the photo. There is no danger of coming off, but of getting jammed, and one has to work with back and knees. Coming through I saw the ledge slanting steeply down and ending after a short distance. So I went back through the two narrow clefts and followed the ledge to the right. It led me nearly horizontally to a point just opposite the foot of the pinnacle mentioned in the description of Cousin's climb. The photo shows this broad and grassy part of the ledge clearly. From there another ledge begins, slanting steeply up to the left. It is narrow and slabby. Though not difficult, it requires a good deal of care. I fastened my bag and my boots to one end of the rope and pulled them up, after having reached another grassy ledge high up on the wall. Neither my bag nor my camera in it liked such traverses, since they could not stick to the ledge, but swung several times hither and thither till they joined me. On the second ledge I went again to the left, round a corner. Then I could climb up directly over a mossy slab to a prominent point. A slight overhang with good handholds was the next difficulty. It brought me to a narrow short ledge leading to the left. After managing the latter I made an awkward traverse along the wall to the left. So I came round a corner to an open chimney with smooth walls. Since it was wet, I did not even try it. I had to go back, and looked for a way to the right that seemed possible. I had now reached the height of the scree above the steep part of Cousin's climb.

A short scramble over grass, and a descent of about

two yards behind a rock, led me to the worst place of the whole climb. It was a wet slab with few and small hand-holds, and not much to step on. Though not very steeply inclined, and only three or four steps long, I had to think about the best way of traversing it for a good while. Perhaps one would not hesitate a moment if it were a few yards above the sure ground. But the look down on the scree deep below in Castle Corrie shows too clearly the way one would take after coming off. Waving aside such ideas I did it, and was glad it was behind me. My bag did not like that place either, and disappeared for a short time till I had taken it in. From there it would have been easy to reach the less steep part of Cousin's climb, but I preferred the steep direct ascent; that gives a hard but safe climb. By means of a crack it is possible to overcome the last very steep bit. Swinging over its top stone the last obstacle lay behind me.

I changed my wet stockings, put on my boots, and built a cairn. It was 3 o'clock, so the climbing of the wall had taken about three hours. Much time was spent in looking for the way. The climb is a serious one; besides technical difficulties it is not easy to find the way. The cairn stands at the end of the crest of the buttress. A scramble partly over scree, partly over firm rock, led me up to the end of the Staircase climb, and I followed more or less the last part of it to the top of Carn Dearg (3.40). I was again caught in mist, and steered across the vast scree slopes to where I guessed the path to be. A little above the Half-way Hut I got free of the mist, and had a view over Loch Linnhe and Loch Eil beneath dark fast-wandering clouds. I rested in the Half-way Hut from 4.15 to 4.40, having "tea," and reached Fort William at 6 o'clock.

Two days afterwards, sitting on the boat on the Caledonian Canal, the foregoing six weeks of climbing passed through my mind. Since the last summer that has often happened to me, and I only hope to come again to Scotland, and to enjoy again the grand wild nature and the steep hard climbs.

## REMINISCENCES OF THE CAIRNGORMS.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

ABOUT fifty years ago I made my acquaintance with the Cairngorms, and recently I had an opportunity of reviewing my opinion regarding this group of mountains. Before giving any indication of any heresies I may have held, I may, however, be allowed to explain how I first came to visit this region. When I was a boy, my circumstances were such as to develop early a spirit of adventure and independence, and no doubt wise parents will shake their heads when they learn that, at the age of eight, I enjoyed mountain and other experiences, untrammelled by restriction of those older than myself.

I was still but a boy when, in company with another lad of equal age, I took the train to Strathyre. As far as I can remember the train went no farther, for I have a distinct recollection of the navvies working at the track of the now well-established Callander and Oban Railway. It must have been some time during August, and, although this was by no means my first acquaintance with the Highlands, the rich colouring of heather and bracken produced a profound impression on my imagination. An ambitious programme had been devised, and it may interest our members to know the amount of ground covered each day. As a start, we climbed Shitheim—the “hill of the fairies”—and, returning to Strathyre, crossed the ridge, traversing Stuc an Chroin and Ben Voirlich, and, after a good feed of gooseberries at Ardvorlich, ended up at St Fillans. Next day we walked to Lochearnhead, up Glen Ogle to Killin, traversed Ben Lawers, descended into Glen Lyon, and spent the night in a cottage somewhere near the foot of that glen. It was dark when we reached the cottage, to which we were guided by the beam of the lamp which lit up the wee kitchen. In answer to our knock a kind-hearted woman opened the door, and, after

a scrutinising glance, bade us come in. We were hungry and footsore, and her resources were scant—a simple “but and a ben.” Yet she would not let us trudge on down the valley. She gave up her own bed to us, and, before we turned in, she set us down to milk and scones. After a crack at the cosy wood and peat fire we were soon in the land of nod.

An early awakening introduced us to porridge and milk, and, on being asked for her bill, after much modest hesitation she said, “Mebbe the gentry would not think saxpence ower muckle for a’.” Such was the Highland hospitality of those days! We had a long step before us, for our day’s march took us by Aberfeldy, Ballinluig, Dunkeld and Pitlochry, to Blair Atholl. Here we heard alarming tales of the stepping-stones over the Tilt, and, as the rivers were in flood, we were urged to give up our project of going to Braemar. Traversing the Ben y Gloe, we found the stepping-stones partly covered, but in due course reached Braemar without mishap.

Next day we made a late start, and, after purchasing a kettle, trudged off in the direction of Corrie Etchachan. In those days aluminium cookers and rucksacks were unknown, and a cast-iron kettle, along with a schoolboy’s book-bag, made but a clumsy package on the back. Feather-weight waterproofs had still to be produced, so that our equipment would seem strange at a modern meet of the Club. The vogue of double socks was beyond my knowledge, and copious anointings with soap were used to stave off or mitigate the blisters, which were only too common. An evening hour was generally spent in sewing up any unburst blisters with a darning needle and worsted, my record number reaching 31 as the day’s total. As a result, in course of a fortnight my feet gradually took on the appearance of a ragged pair of socks, the pieces of worsted, of course, being removed when the blisters healed. A plaid of shepherd tartan, draped in orthodox fashion, was our only protection against the weather, but in this respect we were no worse off than our Highland ancestors. We had but incomplete maps of the district,

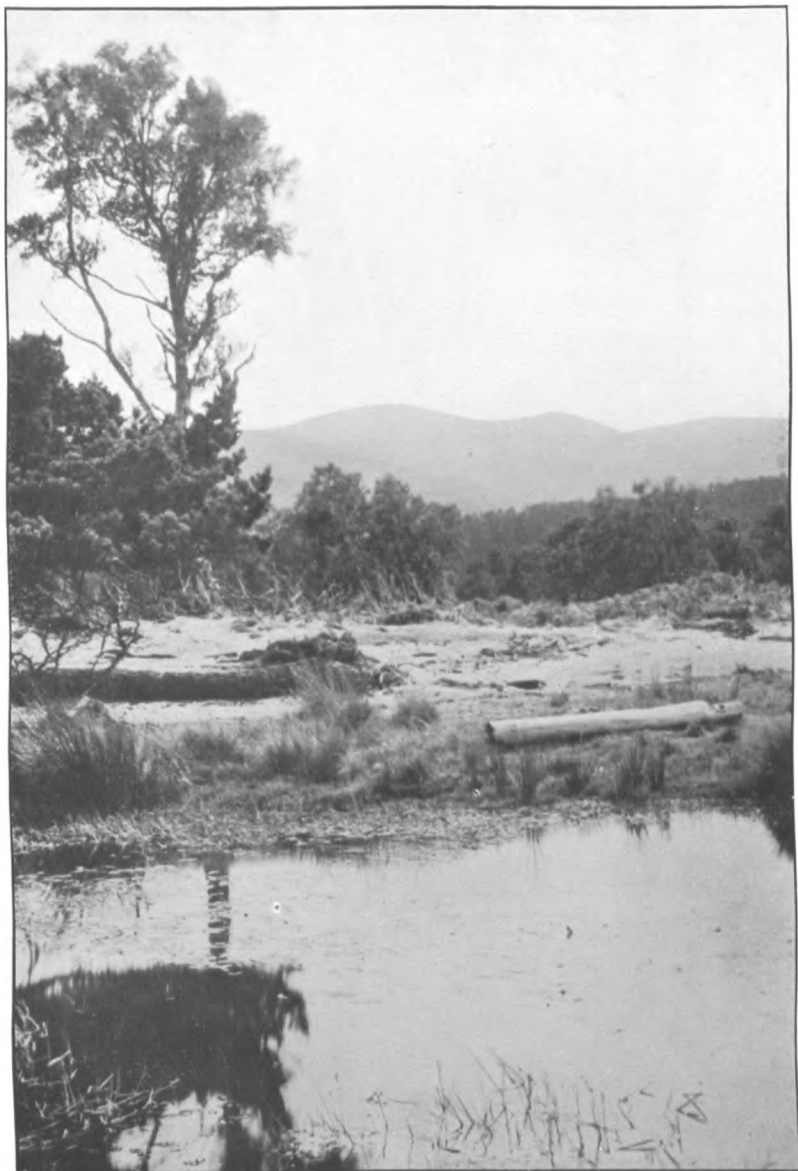
and, owing to clouds and mists, were late in reaching the top of Ben Muichdhui.

Full of confidence in our powers we had projected to reach Aviemore that day, but night began to fall ere we left the summit. It was decided rather to retreat to the Shelter Stone, and there to wait till morning. But how to find it in that chaos of stones, with driving clouds and increasing gloom? Mainly by compass we came in sight of Loch Avon, and, just as hope was given up, we stumbled on the Shelter Stone. It could be no other, for traces of habitation were below, and, though a piercing wind searched every corner, we were glad to creep in and start a fire. In the neighbourhood we gathered heather, and, despite the wetness of everything, got our fire alight—but what a smoke! In vain we tried to get to windward; our eyes, our lungs, were filled with the pungent cloud, and after many struggles we were fain to extinguish our fire and try to boil the kettle outside. I have no recollection of success, and wet, shivering, and hungry, we had to be satisfied with a cold collation. We had a candle which refused to burn in the rising gale, and many a knock did we receive from projecting knobs above, below, and apparently on every side. Rolling our plaids around us we fell asleep. It was about 10 P.M. Some time later we were awakened by the sound of voices, and two men burst in with “horrid din,” only to express their disgust at finding us in possession. Who they were we never knew, but after striking a light they made for the outside, and their strange oaths gradually faded in the distance. Poachers, we thought, but in any case sleep was now impossible. Our backs were racked with cold pains and our teeth chattering, so we endeavoured again to boil some water. Outside, snow was steadily falling, and inside the smoke effectually stopped us, so that at 2 A.M. we decided as our only hope of existence to make our way to the summit and put some blood through our veins. On emerging, we found snow to a depth of perhaps six inches, but as the sky cleared we reached the summit of Ben Muichdhui for the second time.

The day had not yet commenced, and we made for Cairngorm, and then, retracing our steps, made for the March Burn. The descent seemed interminable, and somewhere above the Pools of Dee we finished our last scrap of provisions. My companion, of less robust frame than the writer, now crocked up, and declared by the side of the "Pool" that he would die rather than move another step. It may seem strange that one so young and so abstemious as myself should possess a flask of whisky, but it was at that time considered to be the correct thing to carry, and, if possible, to bring home untouched. I was able to get my companion to proceed slowly, though his condition became worse, and a sort of delirium set in. Hours elapsed ere we reached the fringe of Rothiemurchus forest, then much denser than at present, and when the junipers were met with I seized the opportunity of slipping some berries into my flask, and, with a few drops of the fortified whisky, gradually inveigled my friend, a few steps at a time, into the forest. It was pouring hard, and clouds lay low, but at last a distant hut or bothy was descried, and a bee-line made for it. These hours of horror are shortened in memory till the moment when we reached Coylum Bridge. It was Sunday, and the hour of evening service, but we were hardly prepared to find every door closed to us. "Na! Na! gae awa, ye'll no' get onything here. Breakin' the Saabath Day. Gang on tae Lynwilg. Mebbe there ye may get a bite." In vain I pointed to my exhausted comrade—the answer was always the same, and so, with the fingers of warning pointed at us, we had no alternative but to trudge on.

At 8.30 P.M. we reached Lynwilg Inn—not the present modern structure, but a simple old inn. The landlord had a human heart, and, although no doubt condemning our wickedness, was prepared to give us food and shelter. While he was engaged in preparing supper, we descried a nicely laid table spread with cold viands, and I am sorry to say made free use of it to allay our hunger. Before our kindly landlord returned we had reached our bedroom,





CAIRNGORM

*J. H. Buchanan*

thrown ourselves on the bed, boots and all, and were soon fast asleep.

Thirteen hours of unbroken sleep do wonders for young boys, and when, next forenoon, we awoke to find ourselves still fully dressed, the writer at least was fit for the road. Recuperation is rapid in the young, and so that same day Kingussie and Loch Laggan were passed, and finally Roy Bridge Hotel sheltered us that night. To tell of our further exploits by Ben Nevis, Glencoe, and Loch Lomond might be tedious, but I may at least give a little incident which illustrates the state of dilapidation to which our boots were reduced by that time. Taking the steamer from Fort William to Ballachulish, we were favoured with the music of an itinerant German band. In due course the cornet player came round hat in hand for the usual contribution, but, looking at my feet, and noticing that the soles of each boot were tied with string to the uppers, he gave me a glance of deep compassion, and moved on swiftly to another.

Since those days I have paid many visits to the Cairngorms, but gradually, as the love of rock-climbing grew, I began (shall I say?) to undervalue them. Mountains of greater form, the Lochaber peaks, the Cuillin, the Sutherland and Ross-shire peaks, attracted me more, and even photographically the Cairngorm district seemed less repaying than the other districts. I read the laudatory articles in the *Journal*, heard our Editor and others place the Cairngorms on a high pedestal, but was not moved. A rank heretic I felt myself. Still there were visits full of pure delight. I remember walking with my wife from Grantown to Nethy Bridge one morning, the glorious pine forests giving us a taste of those delights that have inspired not only great painters, but great musicians. Some of Schubert's lovely music was inspired by the turbulent streams and the gloomy forests. From Nethy Bridge we walked to Rebhoan, the view from which struck me as being one of surpassing beauty and grandeur. In the foreground lay the Lochan na Garbhcoire, hemmed in with trees of great age, which also climbed among the

scree below the neighbouring crags, where they could get the last glimpse of the setting sun. Below and beyond the grand forest of Glenmore, then still retaining veteran trees that had been spared a century before when the great forest was decimated, stretched to Loch Morlich. The grand ridges of Sgoran Dubh and other peaks formed a background of noble proportions. At that time no contractors had desecrated the solitude of Loch Morlich with light railway or snorting locomotive. All was nature, sublime and rich, and the mountain and forest spirits brooded over the scene. Even yet the view is beautiful and impressive, but the sad havoc of wood-cutting is rapidly robbing it of its superlative beauty. From Rebhoan or Glenmore Forest we climbed Cairngorm, descended to Loch Morlich, and reached Aviemore that night.

Then there have been the meets of the S.M.C. at Braemar and Aviemore, when virgin snow has covered Cairn Toul and Braeriach from foot to summit. On such occasions the dark pines below take on a bluer colouring than in summer, and the Cairngorms appear more as Alpine peaks with forest valleys than at any other time. These meets have each left some definite and charming memory behind. On that occasion, when the apartments at Derry Lodge were allotted to candidates by ballot, and Dr Macmillan (whose cheery and eager nature led him to attempts far beyond his strength) complained that he had been coupled with another, of whom he said—"Who am I that I should go with that old dodderer?"—on that famous occasion, Cairn Toul was deep-sheeted to the valley, and Harry Walker, C. W. Walker and myself made the ascent under peerless conditions, to find the summit a jelly of ice, affording the slenderest of foothold, and the descent over caked snow, through which one sank to the waist, one of the most trying experiences possible. Those who were present at Aviemore will remember the famous boulder which blocked the road to Loch Eunaich, and which was removed by the combined efforts of the party. And Cairngorm and Corrie Sneachda are for ever associated

with that brilliant conversationalist, the late Prof. G. G. Ramsay, who, notwithstanding the stress of climbing in snow condition, simply bubbled over with wit and humour, his spirits corresponding to the splendour of the scenery.

Yes, these mountains have for me a strange commanding attraction, the united result of early experience, lovely companionship with those who remain, and with those who have passed over to the other side. But it was left to this year of grace and the hamlet of Kincaig to let me more into the secret of the Cairngorms, and to foster my desire still further to explore their recesses. I was fortunate in having my daughter to show me that he who would know their attraction must not fly straight to their rocky plateaux by aeroplane, but must rather patiently enter the forest recesses, and, from wooded gorges, view the mountain forms standing up in blue or purple haze behind the underlying forest-covered hills. And I can see that no passing scamper can do justice to this region, but that time is necessary. From my relatively slender knowledge of the Cairngorms, I gather that the approach from Speyside is greater and more convincing than the approach from Deeside. For one thing, here is a wider valley before the hills rise, and this valley holds lochs like Loch Geal, lying practically unknown, unseen, and unvisited in the great forests which fortunately cover the Strath. In these one feels the freshness of the backwoods, and seems to lose touch with civilisation, while the numerous glades with their rich vegetation of heather afford mountain views of a surpassing quality.

Among the excursions which remain vivid in my memory I recall going up Glen Feshie to the point beyond a gamekeeper's cottage where a bridge crosses the stream. The water was of that gorgeous blue so common in Scotland, and, rising on the eastern bank, was a well-marked moraine, the sandy colour of which would have given sunshine even on a dull day. This was followed by a plain of luxuriant heather, and then, if one persevered, the narrow-cut corrie of Garbh a Lach, where, to begin with, moraine banks held in the impetuous torrent.

Where the gradient was gentler, the foxglove had taken possession of river bed and river bank, and in early August gave a glorious foreground of colour, its spires of rose grouping themselves enchantingly. As the impending walls rose higher and higher, the bed of the stream, still rising, lay 1,000 feet or more below the craggy skyline; and finally Meall Duabh with rocky walls resembling the summit of Narnain, appeared. The views from these heights extended more to the south and west, and embraced numerous lochs embosomed in heather and forest. Our next summit was Carn Ban, from which a shooting track gave easy descent to the little forest below. But what a lovely little forest! The trees are sufficiently old to have distinction, and the heather is rich and luxuriant. But the crowning charm is the continuous waterfall which flashes over ledgy rock for many hundred feet, and wakes the forest echoes with its fascinating music. The path finally leaves the forest, and crosses the heather to our original bridge.

There are many excursions to be made. Each one has its own charm—Glen Tromie, Glen Feshie, the Larig Ghru, Sgoran Dubh by Alt Ruadh. I have not attempted to speak of the lochs—Gamnha, Vaa, Tromie, Insh, and so on. One must go to see these. If you are a colour photographer, you have a tenfold advantage over the ordinary photographer. The Cairngorms are essentially background mountains, and, with varying heights, grand ones at that. But they must have foregrounds, and surely nowhere in Britain are nobler foregrounds to be met with—foregrounds which herald in these mighty mountains, the monuments of a denudation period in our country's history.



IN GLEN FESHIE

*J. H. Buchanan*

ANOTHER CHRONICLE OF THE OLD MEN.\*

By J. G. STOTT.

Ho ! I mind me, clear and gladly, how we came to Inverarnan,  
Tramping up from old Ardlui, all upon a summer evening.  
Six were we, a band of pilgrims, on a mountain quest embarking.  
Genus? Oromaniacal—Species? Well, say, ultramontane,  
Though we aimed at naught heroic ; though we were not record-  
breakers.

Thus, amid the perfumed larches and the gently sighing birches,  
And the hawthorns piled like snowdrifts at the foot of crags  
impending ;

All along the Falloch, gliding o'er its beds of golden gravel,  
And its linns where leaping, boiling, hissing, seething, and  
turmoiling,

Round and over grey rocks rushing, through encumbered channels  
gushing,

Where the river demon tarries and the Kelpie black and horrid ;  
Thus we came to Inverarnan.

Then the pilgrims, rising early, plunged them in the chilly river  
That their muscles might be strengthened and their appetites be  
lengthened

For the task that lay before them. Thence they hied them back  
rejoicing

To the hostel's well-filled larder ; and, with rib-expanding porridge,

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\* The following is a quotation from Mr Stott's letter, in which he sends the verses now printed :—"The *Journal* for October 1918 contains some fantastic notes of an expedition made nigh on forty years ago. We were young and verdant then, and as we had tackled a difficult route under hostile conditions, we were defeated. That narrative brought me greetings from comrades in the adventure, and I have been informed that there were others who found it not unentertaining. This prompts me to send you another effusive description of how much the same party wiped out that defeat about a month later. Alas, three of that sextette have since 'gone west.' Sound be your rest, good my comrades ! I lay a stone upon your cairns ! and as I write I have the memory of glad days that can never be again."

Mutton chops and eggs and troutlings—and such viands most  
 sustaining—  
 All the needs of life containing—filled their paunches most  
 capacious.  
 Then the captain and the pilgrims,  
 Strapping on impedimenta, plunged into the darksome thickets,  
 Twisting, twining, ever rising up the steeps and through the wood-  
 lands,  
 Where they clothe the braes of Falloch ; so we went, most toughly  
 toiling  
 Up the steeps ; and sweating, broiling, won our way without the  
 valley.  
 Round us monstrous rocks outcropping, bearded all with hoary  
 mosses,  
 Dripping all with limpid waters, which, collecting, trickling, run-  
 ning,  
 Gathering into rill and streamlet, pouring down in fall and  
 rapid  
 Through the hanging ferns and frondage, underneath the roots  
 and boulders,  
 Till they gushed into the river. Overhead the doves and magpies  
 Made commotion in the branches, and across the glen the cuckoo  
 Loudly sent his salutations. Many other cockyollies  
 That frequent such bosky places also made a joyful clangour.  
 Thus at length, in state of langour, 'scaping from the tepid wood-  
 lands,  
 We set foot upon the moorlands, on the breezy, bracing moor-  
 lands,  
 Stretching lengthy leagues before us at the back of high Ben Lui.  
 With the view thus op'ning round us, now we saw the soaring  
 mountains,  
 Green and brown with grass and bracken, russet slopes of bent  
 and heather ;  
 And their grim and lofty summits, fenced with rock and scarr'd  
 with shingle,  
 Bearing ragged robes of winter—snow-fill'd rifts and shoots and  
 corries.  
 Blue the heavens spread above us, flecked with swiftly-flying  
 cloudlets,  
 And at times a louring stormcloud, flung despitefully by winter—  
 Which had not as yet entirely loosed his hold upon the moun-  
 tains—



Darken'd all the sunny landscape and discharged the stinging  
raindrops.

Not for long! for, shouting loudly, troop'd the joyous springtime  
breezes,

Chased the stormclouds with the sunbeams, chased them like the  
very devil!

Stagnant pools now lay around us, black and horrid holes and  
peat-swamps;

But across them, stepping longly, surely, swiftly, firmly, strongly,  
Stoutly went the good hobnailers. From the pool upshot the  
wild duck

Swiftly on his whistling pinion; and the heron—watchful, patient—  
Urg'd his way with heavy wingstroke to haunts far from our  
intrusion.

To and fro, and wierdly wailing, flew the whaups; and on the  
boulder

Stood the cock-grouse, bright of plumage, with his ringing, cheery  
challenge.

And before us, winning upwards, scampered off the mountain  
rabbits,

Now were we upon the mountain, straining up the stiff'ning  
gradients,

Twisting round great rocks impending, over crags and cliffs  
unending,

'Till we won, with exultation, to the summit of Ben Lui;

And in gladness straightway sitting, utter'd joyous ululations,

Mopp'd our red, perspiring faces; loosened buckles, belts, and  
braces.

And around, in all directions, spread a prospect of perfections;

Leagues on leagues of bens and hills, lochs and rivers, woods  
and rills,

All the peaks of all the counties, set in order round about us.

Ho! indeed 'twas very goodly basking on the sun-warmed  
boulders.

Straight below us, grim and fearsome, yawned the mighty northern  
corrie.

Headlong from our feet it open'd, filled with snow where snow  
could harbour,

Whitest snow and shot with shadows, blue and green, where  
gaped the crevasse,

Or where drifts had curl'd them over in the fury of the  
tempest.

And the rocks hung o'er impending, black and bristling, down-  
 wards trending ;  
 And from far beneath there reach'd us sounds of winds and  
 many waters.  
 And from Blackmount came an eagle, came on broad and level  
 pinions,  
 There we smoked the joyous peace-pipe, and we quaffed a certain  
 nectar  
 Pour'd from out of gold-topp'd bottles cooled beneath the snows  
 of Lui.  
 All good things must have an ending, and at length we turn'd us  
 homeward ;  
 And in due course, downward plunging, found us back at  
 Inverarnan.  
 All too short the time to tarry in the pleasant Falloch valley.  
 Ferrying o'er its limpid waters straight we took the eastern hillside.  
 Starkly rose the slope before us, hotly pour'd the sun behind us,  
 Toilsomely we clambered upwards. Long and steep the climb  
 extended,  
 And 'mid rocks and bogs amany came at last to Kinloch Katrine  
 As the day was fading, dying. Now began a progress weary,  
 In the darkness very weary, toilsome, tiring, very dreary ;  
 For we had miscalculated : first the time to reach Ben Lui,  
 Next the time spent on its summit, and the heavy climb and  
 lengthy  
 From Glen Falloch to Loch Katrine ; and the long and tangl'd  
 heather  
 And the villainous morasses in Glengyle we had to traverse.  
 Wherefore now 'mid glacial hummocks—hungrily with empty  
 stomachs—  
 Splashing through the watercourses, reckless charging through the  
 peat hags,  
 Whilst anon the good hobnailers scatter'd sparks athwart the  
 darkness—  
 As they bang'd against the boulders, as they scraped across the  
 ledges—  
 And anon, engulfing deeply in the peat holes black and slimy,  
 Were withdrawn by cracking sinew, with a sound like giants  
 kissing.  
 Then the moon rose to befriend us,  
 Pouring floods of silver radiance over wood and loch and  
 mountain.

And our leader, lion-hearted, cheered us with his bright example:  
"Stick it, boys! We've got to do it. Stick it and we must win  
through it."

So we did, and after midnight reached the Trossachs welcome  
hostel,

All too late for dinner ordered. Very sleepy, very weary,  
Nathless happy in the knowledge that we'd done our great  
endeavour.

## MOUNTAINEERING IN IONA.

BY THOS. FRASER CAMPBELL.

To those who are mountaineers, and to those—mountaineers or others—who know Iona, the above title may seem absurd, if taken at its face value; but it is here where we join issue.

It is true that if one goes to Iona, armed with ice-axe, Alpine rope, or other of the impedimenta of mountain warfare, and expecting to find “Munros,” he will be disappointed; for the highest point on the island—“Dun-I”—is only some 330 feet high, and there is nothing more formidable in its ascent than that, let us say, of the “Mound” in Edinburgh, of Garnet Hill in Glasgow, or even of Primrose Hill in London—though I must confess that I have never, knowingly, made the ascent of the last-named peak. But if he go with his eyes and his mind closed to mere questions of height, and in the spirit of the true lover of the hills, he will not indeed be unrewarded.

For what is a hill? And when does a hill become a mountain? And when does a mountain hold, undisputed, the right to its title? I have just read in one of the “Marvellous Tales” of Anatole France how, at the birth of a daughter to King Cloche and to his Royal Consort, Queen Satine, the parents (or perhaps King Cloche was alone to blame) had refused an invitation, for the christening ceremony, to the Fairy Alcuine, because she lacked the one quartering which would have entitled her to claim the entrée to Court circles; from which refusal resulted the veracious story of the “Sleeping Beauty”—to the great delight of countless generations of children of all ages: but doubtless to the great discomfiture of the good King Cloche and of his Queen Satine.

And to appeal further to the records of authentic history, it may be recalled that when the giants, or

Titans, of old made war upon the gods, they "piled Pelion on Ossa" to enable them, as they hoped, to scale the heights of Olympus. In our own day, when the ascent of Mount Everest has become at least a possibility, it would be necessary for the Expeditionary Force, were they to adopt the same tactics, not only to pile Pelion on Ossa, but to pile Olympus itself on the top of that, and then to add Mont Blanc to the whole. Are we, therefore, to say that Mont Blanc is not a mountain? Or Olympus—or Pelion—or Ossa—or Ben Nevis! Ye gods the very question, reverently as it may be put, reeks of blasphemy!

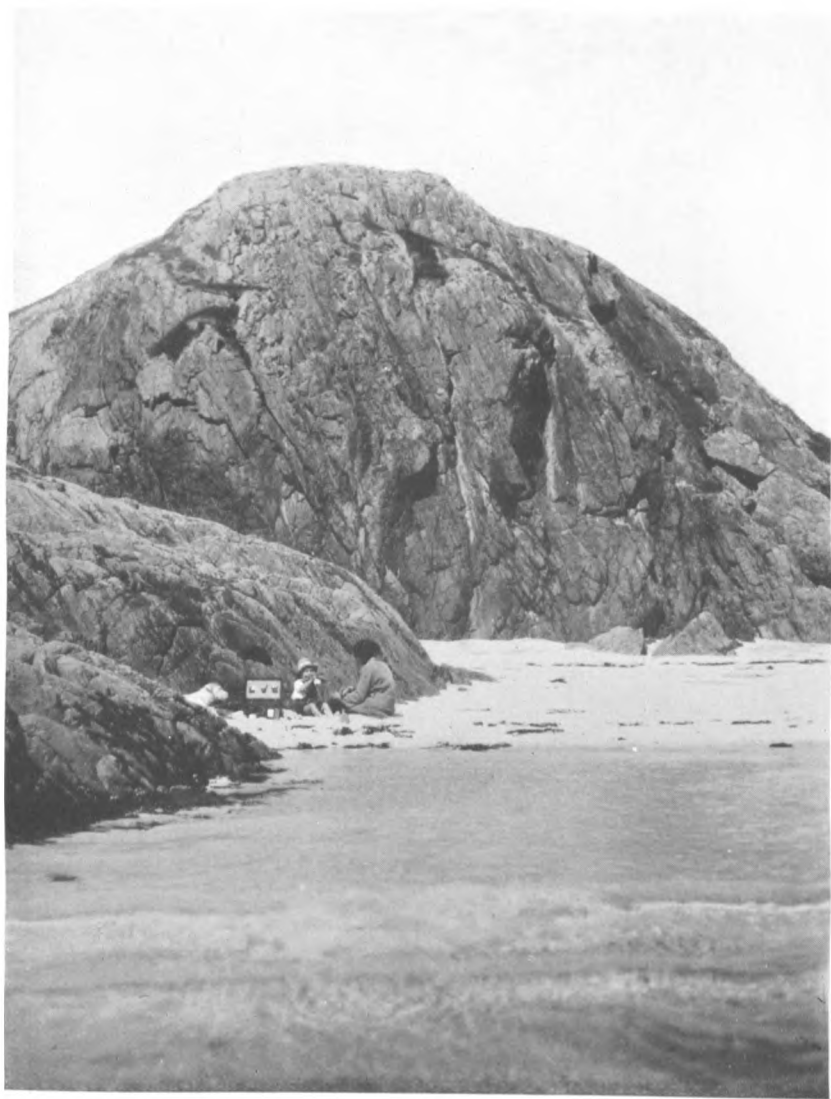
"The Cobbler" is not a "Munro," nor is "Cir Mohr"—each lacks that one quartering which excluded the Fairy Alcuine from the gathering of the Fairy Godmothers at the christening of the infant daughter of good King Cloche and of his Queen Satine. But will any member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club dare to rise in his place, at the next Annual Meeting, and say that "The Cobbler" or "Cir Mohr," "Narnain," "Suilven," or "Stac Polly" are not mountains? He would be put to sleep—not for a hundred years, but until the very hills themselves had crumbled into dust. And will anyone say me nay if I claim for "Arthur's Seat" some title at least to the same distinction?

We are told—and I am without the knowledge necessary to dispute it, if it may, indeed, be disputed—that the island of Iona is a part of the oldest world formation known to geologists. May we not picture then, in our imagination, that, when Iona itself was young, it may have been peopled by a race of pigmies to whom the present pigmies of Central Africa would be as giants; a race whose bones, if found, might be mistaken for those of mice; a race existing before Nature had begun to think in terms of Megatheria, or Ichthyosauria, or Pterodactyls, or other such fearful wild-fowl; when she was trying her prentice hand on man, and making, in miniature, models of that super-animal to whom all the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, and all who move in the great

waters, should be subject. To such a race "Dun-I" might indeed have seemed as formidable as is Buchaille Etive to ourselves; for "Dun-I" is no mere grassy mound, or casual outcrop of rock and turf. It is in form a veritable mountain, rising from its foothills at a gradually increasing angle by pitches of grass and heather, guarded by rocky escarpments, until it ends in a perfect cone overlooking the whole of its own small domain, and commanding a wide view of surpassing beauty and interest. Just below the summit, towards the south, there nestles a tiny lochan—the "Well of Youth," or "Pool of Healing," the touch of whose waters was believed to bring healing to the sick and to the aged, and to renew the beauty and fervour of their departed youth. But I know of no member of the Club who, up to the present, has evoked its aid.

The northern part of the island consists of a fairly level plain, dotted with crofts, and edged with sandy bays; and, southward of "Dun-I" and its surrounding uplands, lies a larger stretch of arable country, known as the "Machair," on part of which might be formed a very fine, if somewhat restricted, golf-course; but the southern end, equal to about a third of the island, consists entirely of a high-lying plateau of moor and hill, surrounded by steep cliffs, in the centre of which one might wander for hours out of sight of the all-surrounding sea, where no living thing is seen except a few cattle, or sheep, or birds—and where, in mist, it would be very easy to lose oneself, as the whole consists of a jumble of little hills and valleys almost identical in appearance. On this plateau lies Loch Staonaig, in which the monks were wont to fish; and at the extreme south of the island is "Port na Curaich"—the "Bay of the Coracle"—where tradition holds that St Columba first landed with his twelve companions.

Although on the plateau itself there is no climbing, in the stricter sense, the cliffs all round the coasts, cleft as they are by numerous breaks, such as the "Marble Quarries" and the "Pigeons' Cave"; the rocks by the



CLIFFS AT PORT BAN, IONA

*A. Moray Mackay*

Spouting Cave; and also the innumerable islets and isolated rocks which guard the shores to the north, and south, and west, should afford good sport to the rock-climber. But the delights of climbing are too many and too various to be defined within the narrow limits of any formula, and, although it is the natural and laudable ambition of most of the Club members to make new ascents on rock or snow, or at least to exploit the various ascents already famous, it is not given to every one to be a Naismith, a Raeburn, or a Ling—to name three only of the many whom the Club delights to honour; and there comes a time even to the most athletic, and the most expert, when he must bid farewell to the Crowberry Ridge of Buchaille Etive, the Church Door Buttress, the ridges and gullies of Ben Nevis and the Cuillins, the “demned, moist, unpleasant body” of the Black Shoot of Ben Anea, and content himself with the lowlier pleasures which are still possible to all who have loved the hills. To them belong the moors, wide-stretching to the sky: the shadows playing on the sun-kissed hills, the corries white, in the warm days of Easter, with the snows of winter; and the never-ending hymn of the winds and of the burns. It is almost an axiom that the object of a climb is the climb itself, and I myself look back with delight on many an ascent in rain, and wind, and snow, when the view was bounded, one might almost say, by the rim of one's hat; but there is an added glory in looking down upon long stretches of sea or loch, dotted perhaps with a hundred islands, and gleaming in the noonday sun; in lying outstretched upon the warm heather, and watching the floating clouds sail by, or in gazing at a world of snow-clad heights and black rock faces, glittering in the winter sunshine.

Grudge not then to him, whose highest ascent has been “Dun-I,” the delights of viewing from its cairn all the wonders it can show. Across the narrow waters of the Sound, blue, or green, or crimson, as it may please the sun to make them, his eye rests upon Ben More of Mull, while to the south, beyond the Isle of Colonsay,



rise the Paps of Jura. To the north, beyond the rocky islet of Staffa, "Ulva's Isle," Muich and Eigg, and the mountainous Island of Rum, he can pick up, in clear weather, the distant ridge of the Cuillins. Returning south and west, he sees the long, low ridge of Coll and Tiree, the Dutchman's Cap, and the rest of the Treshnish Isles; and to the west he looks upon the vast expanse of the Atlantic, whose waters stretch unbroken till they dash themselves upon the coast of Labrador, two thousand miles away. And at his feet lies one of the Holy Places of the world, the Shrine of Martyrs, the last resting-place of kings. The final burying-place of St Columba is still a matter of some doubt; but there is not a foot of soil on the island which is not hallowed by memories of the great apostle and of his immediate followers, and though there may be no direct record of his having ascended to the top of "Dun-I," we may well believe that he did so, turning his eyes, as he is reported to have done, from Port na Curaich, over the waste of waters towards his earlier home, now invisible to him—and according to some so undesired. But that is another story!

I have already quoted from the writings of Anatole France, and I may fitly close with a further brief quotation from the same author. It is from a story called "The Shirt": le bon curé, Miton, is describing to his visitors the duties of his daily life, and after telling them of the many cares and hardships of his lonely charge among the mountains, he adds:—

"I have also my hours of amusement. I go for walks—they are always the same—and they are infinitely varied."

Could anything truer be spoken of the hills?

A FRENCH TRAVELLER IN THE HIGHLANDS  
IN 1784.\*

BY ARTHUR R. ANDERSON.

OUR Club "Guide-Book" shows that we are not solely mountaineers, and that geology, meteorology, botany, and ornithology come within the scope of our interests. To these subjects may be added the history of early travel. The "Half-Hours in the Club Library" carry us back to the days when the Highlands were an unknown country, and the journey to the Hebrides was an adventure.

One of these early travellers was Barthélemy Faujas de Saint Fond, a distinguished French scientist, who came over to visit our country in 1784, when he was forty-three years of age. He was mainly interested in geology, the principal object of his journey being to visit the Island of Staffa, which had just recently been made known by the publication of Pennant's "Tour in Scotland." Saint Fond had as companions on his travels Count Paul Andreani, of Milan; William Thornton, an American who had studied at Edinburgh University and in Paris; and M. de Mecies, a young naturalist whom he had met in London.

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\* Travels / in / England, Scotland, / and the / Hebrides ; / undertaken for the purpose of examining / the state of / the Arts, the Sciences, Natural / History, and Manners / in / Great Britain ; / containing / mineralogical descriptions of the country round Newcastle ; of the / mountains of Derbyshire ; of the environs of Edinburgh, Glasgow, / Perth, and St Andrews ; of Inverary, and other parts / of Argyleshire ; and of / the Cave of Fingal, / in two volumes, with plates, / translated from the French of / B. Faujas Saint Fond, / member of the National Institute, and Professor / of Geology in the Museum of Natural / History of Paris. / London. / 1799.

"A Journey Through / England and Scotland / to the Hebrides / in 1784," / By B. Faujas Saint Fond. / A revised edition of the English Translation / Edited with Notes / and a Memoir of the Author. / By Sir Archibald Geikie, D.C.L., Sec.R.S., / correspondent of the Institute of France. / 2 vols. / Glasgow : Hugh Hopkins. / 1907.

In September 1784 the party entered Scotland at Coldstream, and posted by Greenlaw to Edinburgh. From the capital Saint Fond visited the salt works at Prestonpans, and also the iron works at Carron, and the towns of Linlithgow and Stirling. On leaving Edinburgh he remarks :—

“The bill presented to us was more than an ell long, and adorned with flowered ornament and vignettes ; and, to prove that nothing had been forgotten in it, they had not failed to set down half a sheet of paper, which one of us had called for, to save the trouble of opening his portfolio.”

For this paper they were charged sixpence, and they resolved to return no more to Dun’s Inn. Leaving Edinburgh early, they reached Glasgow that night, and next day called with letters of introduction on Glasgow men, and visited the University. Of the women, he remarks :—

“They have an elegance and agility in their gait so much the more striking, as they are in general tall, well-made, and of a charming figure. In a word the women of Glasgow will always be seen with pleasure by the lovers of fair nature.”

At Glasgow they hired horses and post drivers for the journey to the Highlands, and on 14th September they left for Dumbarton. Regarding the remains of the Roman Wall he says :—

“The Romans were obliged to erect the wall in the time of Agricola, to secure themselves against the incessant incursions of the indomitable Caledonians, whom these conquerors of the world were never able to subdue.”

The party arrived at Luss at ten o’clock, and had intended to put up at the inn there, but were turned away by the hostess, who told them :—

“The lord judge does me the honour to lodge here when on circuit. He is there ; everybody must respect him. He is asleep. His horses are in the stable ; so you see there is no more room for yours ; have the goodness then to go away. No noise ; don’t disturb his lordship’s sleep, respect for the law. May you be happy ! and be off.”

Saint Fond humorously remarks that such respect for a judge is a fine thing, but the postillions wished all

the judges in the world a hundred times to the devil. They had to make the best of a bad job, and drive on in a very wet night to Tarbet, where they arrived at half-past three in the morning. Here the inn was full of jurymen, who occupied all the beds, but the landlady had mercy on the unfortunate travellers and made up mattresses for them. After these adventures they slept for three hours. Next morning our friend was in good spirits, for he records :—

“The most lovely day succeeded to the ugliest night. The sun was brilliant and warm ; the sky a fine azure. We breathed pure air on the banks of the lake, and saluted the nymph who presided over its beautiful waters. From this point of view the appearance of the lake is superb, though only part of it can be seen, on account of its great extent. The banks of the lake near us were surrounded with rocks of Mica-Schist, the layers of which in wavy ridges shine as if silvered, and a multitude of mosses, mostly in flower, form little clumps of verdure in the shelter of these rocks. This beautiful prospect forms a fine contrast with the ordinary aspect of the mountains of Scotland, so severe from the sombre colour of the heather. I shall often dream of Tarbet, even in the midst of lovely Italy with its oranges, its myrtles, its laurels, and jessamins.”

They spent some hours at Tarbet and then proceeded on their journey by Glen Croe to Inveraray, but he was not delighted with the contrast, for he writes :—

“We entered a narrow pass between two chains of high mountains. This defile is so narrow, and the mountains are so high and steep, that the rays of the sun can scarcely reach the place and be seen for the space of an hour in the twenty-four. There is neither house nor cottage nor living creature except a few fishes in a small lake (Loch Restil). The sheep that feed on the heights are at so great an elevation that they may be taken to be stones rather than living animals.”

They were all more cheerful on reaching Inveraray, but as all accommodation at the inn was reserved for the “lord judge” and the jurymen, the travellers availed themselves of letters of introduction to the Duke, and were most hospitably received at the Castle, where they stayed for three days.

The Duke at this time was John, the 5th Duke of

Argyll. The Duchess was the celebrated Elizabeth Gunning. At dinner one night they met the judge, and found him to be "a good loyal Scot, worthy of all the respect that had been paid to him, for he filled his office with justice and humanity." They made peace with his lordship in the midst of toasts.

The party left Inveraray Castle early in the morning for Dalmally, and again they were rather awe-struck by the wild scenery, for Saint Fond states:—

"The contrast now experienced was striking, for scarcely had we lost sight of the most charming abode, and the most amiable hosts, when we entered a chain of arid mountains of the most savage aspect. This melancholy and painful road, where during eight hours we met with no living creature, neither habitations, trees, nor verdure, is alike fatiguing to the body and to the imagination."

They were very pleased on approaching Glen Orchy, and at Dalmally were delighted and astonished at the elegance of the inn. They were somewhat surprised at the number of men about the place, and were informed that it was the Sabbath.

"We knew, indeed, that the Highlanders, being very zealous Presbyterians, are rigid observers of religious worship, and will not indulge themselves on that day in the most trifling amusement. They had just come from sermon, and were resting themselves a little before retiring to their respective homes."

Saint Fond gives a very full description of their dress, the old Highland garb. At Dalmally he met Patrick Fraser, the local schoolmaster, who seems to have been a remarkable man. A graduate of Edinburgh University, he had a thorough knowledge of Latin, Greek, English, and the Celtic language. Fraser received permission from the children's parents to be away for ten days, and went to Mull and Staffa with our friend's party.

The churchyard at Dalmally in those days contained a number of ancient tombstones, and Saint Fond was very much interested in these specimens of Celtic Art. He was also anxious to learn about the remains of Ossianic poetry, and they called on MacNab, the blacksmith, who

was the owner of some ancient manuscripts. He was much impressed by the hospitality which he received in MacNab's cottage. The travellers went on to Oban, and were greatly delighted with Loch Awe, though somewhat alarmed at the road.

"The road is really as perilous as it is dreadful ; hence it is prudent to take to one's feet at the most dangerous places. The distant prospect and the nearer view are otherwise delightful. This beautiful lake is strewn with little wooded islands. One of these is remarkable for the extensive Gothic ruins of Kilchurn Castle ; a second shows a fortress, partly destroyed ; and a third is marked by an ancient picturesque chapel. High mountains circumscribe this landscape, and give it a solitary aspect, softened by the beautiful waters of the lake, by the copsewoods which line its slopes, and by these remains of buildings which fill the mind with recollections of ancient times. In some places this route resembles that between Monaco and Genoa, called 'Cornice.'"

A thunderstorm came on after they had left Bonawe, and near Oban the carriages by mistake seemed to have left the road in the darkness and got into the bed of a burn, where one of them was overturned. In getting it up again all the party of course got very wet, but they took things philosophically and remarked :—

"Not one of our party was either hurt or ill, so we determined not to be dejected ; but on the contrary, to enliven our talk with some jokes. Thornton declared that if he had the good luck to warm himself with a glass of rum, he should feel able to write an ode immediately."

By good luck a miller and several "obliging Highlanders" came to the rescue ; the carriages were pulled out from the bed of the burn, and the party reached the inn at Oban at half-past one in the morning. At that time Oban was a hamlet of seven houses. Most of the party went on next day to Mull in two small open boats, but Saint Fond waited for a large smack that was due in a few days, and filled up his time by geological expeditions. A piper came each evening to honour the distinguished visitor, but French ears did not appreciate this mark of respect.

At Oban, Saint Fond met a MacDonald of Skye, an officer in the army who spoke French well, and who very kindly placed himself at Saint Fond's disposal for the visit to Mull. On arrival of the smack they left Oban at seven in the morning, and reached Aros early in the afternoon, Saint Fond being greatly impressed with the strength and rapidity of the sea currents. At Aros they were cordially received by Campbell of Aros, and requested to stay at the Castle, but, having procured ponies from Campbell, they pressed on across Mull to the house of MacLean of Torloisk.

At Aros, MacDonald changed his garb from English regimentals to the Highland dress, or as Saint Fond calls it, "the complete habiliment of the inhabitants of the Isles." He has a good word for the strong little horses, and appreciates the attention of the "young Hebrideans" who look after the horses, but he did not appreciate the road :—

"The track grew detestable, and we were often obliged to alight, sometimes on the verge of marshes, and sometimes in the midst of heaths, from which we had a good deal of trouble to extricate ourselves. The miles of Scotland, particularly those of the Isles, are nearly double the length of those in England."

After losing the road and finding it again they arrived at Torloisk at eleven o'clock at night, where they received a very warm welcome. The advance party who had left Oban a few days earlier had gone on to Staffa the same day as Saint Fond had arrived at Torloisk, but had not returned that night. They did not return till the third day, having had to spend two nights on Staffa. They were none the worse for the adventure except for the lice picked up in a hut on the island, but a good bath soon got rid of that little trouble. Saint Fond and MacDonald were more fortunate in the weather; leaving Torloisk at four in the morning they got back again at nine in the evening.

Saint Fond was deeply impressed with Fingal's Cave, of which he gives a very full description, and took most careful measurements. His notes are of historic value, as he was the first geologist to visit the cave, "this superb

monument of nature." On the return voyage the boatmen sang Gaelic songs. The party stayed at Torlosk for several days, and Saint Fond gives most enthusiastic descriptions of the breakfasts, the dinners, and the suppers, and of the custom of drinking toasts:—

"Such is the life that is led in a country where there is not a road nor a tree, where the mountains are covered only with heath, where it rains for eight months of the year, and where the sea, always in motion, seems to be in perpetual convulsions."

Saint Fond is a man of many interests, and describes Highland poetry, the tartan, the making of whisky, the houses, the cattle, the sheep, and, of course, the Islanders. Always gallant, he pays a pretty compliment to Miss MacLean, and, after having enjoyed every attention from the MacLean, the party returned to Aros.

From there Saint Fond and Thornton attempted the ascent of Ben More. Thornton bagged his top, but Saint Fond had to give up.

"In my journeys among the High Alps I never found so much difficulty as here. Almost impenetrable heather, above a soil saturated with water, covers the lower ground, the middle, and the summit of the mountain, which rises in the shape of a sugar loaf. It is impossible to make any progress save by the following the small gullies which the waters have worn, and these narrow and steep tracks are, as it were, so many threads of water in the midst of which one has to walk. I had reached a great height when, wearied with seeing only the same lavas, and meeting with no other plants but the toilsome heather, whence started from time to time some blackcocks, I resolved to go no further."

From this description it would seem that our friend had, after all, not ascended to any great height, for had he got above the heather zone he would have found light springy turf and then bare stones, and at the top a most glorious and extensive view. This seems to have been the one and only attempt to climb a Highland mountain, and it is the only one which he mentions by name.

From Aros they travelled to near Duart, ferried in stormy weather over to Kerrera, crossed that island and ferried to Oban. They left Oban again by post-



chaise and visited the iron works at Bonaw—the iron was imported and the local woods provided the fuel at that time. At Dalmally he bade farewell to Fraser the schoolmaster, and they drove on to Tyndrum. The lead mines were then at work, but do not seem to have been profitable.

Glen Dochart is appreciated for its “limpid and copious streams teeming with fish.” The inn at Killin is described as “plain but tolerably good, and the landlord is a very civil man.” At Killin they met a Frenchman, M. de Bombelles, travelling like themselves for “pleasure and instruction.” They drove along Loch Tay to Kenmore, which had then a fairly commodious inn. Here Saint Fond took leave of the Highlands with very considerable relief, for he writes :—

“The traveller begins here to perceive that he is drawing near to a more open country, and that he is about to leave behind him the barren mountains of the north of Scotland. The air which he breathes, the cultivation, the people—everything proclaims it ; and this first shade of change fills his soul with one of these gentler pleasures, which I cannot better express than by comparing it to that which one feels on the return of spring, though at this time we were at the end of autumn. But it may be said that all is winter, all is wild, dreary, and sterile in the regions which I have just traversed.”

The party travelled to Dunkeld, Perth, Cupar, St Andrews, Largo, Kirkcaldy, and Kinghorn. They crossed the Forth to Leith, and so to Edinburgh. Saint Fond had introductions to the professors at St Andrews University and at Edinburgh University, and he gives very interesting notes of the men who at that time occupied the various chairs. At Edinburgh, Adam Smith, author of the “Wealth of Nations,” took him to a great bagpipe competition, at which eight pipers competed, the judges being landlords from the Highlands. Saint Fond confesses :—

“That it was impossible for me to admire any of them. I thought them all of equal proficiency ; that is to say, the one was as bad as the other ; and the air that was played, as well as the instrument itself, involuntarily put me in mind of a bear’s dance.”

Yet Saint Fond had some idea of the different kinds of bagpipe music, for he remarks of a piper playing a lament :—

“The sounds of his instrument were plaintive, languishing, as if lamenting the slain who were being carried off from the field of battle. This was the part which drew tears from the eyes of the beautiful Scottish ladies. But the impression which this wild music made upon me contrasted so strongly with that which is made upon the inhabitants of the country, that I am convinced we should look upon this strange composition not as essentially belonging to music, but to history.”

Saint Fond had made a large collection of geological specimens during his tour in Scotland, and these were shipped in cases from Leith, but most unfortunately the ship was lost off Dunkirk. On his return home he was thus not able to compare in detail his notes with his collection of specimens.

Bidding farewell to Edinburgh and “the respected men who had loaded me with kindness during my stay,” they took the road by Hawick and Langholm, and crossed the Border near Carlisle. Here we may bid him adieu, and leave him to the care of our President’s ancestors. We feel that Saint Fond was a jolly, kindly gentleman, who appreciated many things in our country, even though, as was usual in his day, he disliked the wilder scenery of the North. We feel the force of his personality and admire his unfailing good nature in all his adventures and discomforts of travelling in a rougher age than our own. In recent years his countrymen and our men have in an equal measure shared the dangers and hardships of the Great War, and together we have won the victory. The sons of France and the sons of Scotland went forth to that “awfully big adventure,” and the memory of the sacrifice of all those who lie “somewhere in France” is now our common heritage.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL  
MEETING.

THE meeting was held in St Enoch's Station Hotel, Glasgow, on Friday, 2nd December 1921, the President, Mr W. N. Ling, being in the chair. The minutes of the last Annual Meeting, held in Edinburgh on 3rd December 1920, were read by the Hon. Secretary, and duly approved by the meeting.

THE HON. TREASURER made a report upon the funds of the Club, referring to the printed account circularised with the notice calling the meeting. He stated that there was again a deficit on the year's working, and that this was mainly due to a falling off in the sale of old numbers of the *Journal*, and the present high cost of printing, postages, &c. He stated that the Commutation Fund had increased, but that the money was locked up at present in a depreciated security. He was thanked for his clear explanation of the Club accounts, and there being no comments the accounts were adopted.

THE HON. SECRETARY next read his report on the past season, stating that the total membership of the Club now reached its high water mark of 202. Mr Solly gave an explanation of the proposed aims of the Association of the British Climbing Clubs, recommending that the Scottish Mountaineering Club strengthen the hands of the Association by agreeing to membership, and the question was remitted for the further consideration of the Committee at such time as additional information upon the working of the Association should be available. The Hon. Secretary explained that, for easy reference, the blocks used for illustration of the past numbers of the *Journal* had been catalogued and stored in the Club-Room, and that it was now possible to segregate any

illustration that might be required for the purpose of the "Guide-Books." A question was raised upon the insurance of these blocks against loss by fire, and the Hon. Treasurer informed the meeting that the insurance had been increased. The meeting thought it undesirable that any of the blocks or more valuable books should be kept in a safer place than the Club-Room, as this would hinder easy reference.

The HON. EDITOR read an exhaustive report upon the *Journal*, and explained that his success in obtaining cheaper rates for printing had enabled him to exceed forty-eight pages, and allow for an increase in the number of illustrations. He explained that, by purchasing separately the paper for printing the *Journal*, he had effected a very considerable saving in the expense. The sum received from the inclusion of advertisements in the *Journal* had also proved satisfactory, and his efforts to obtain additional subscribers had met with reasonable success. He hoped that he would be able to run the *Journal* still more economically in future. He was thanked for the creditable work which he had undertaken in connection with the publications for which he was responsible.

The HON. LIBRARIAN reported upon the Club-Room and Library, stating that the increase in rent, &c., would necessitate the setting aside of £50 to meet expenses. He asked the members present to assist him in doing what they could to sell the back numbers of the *Journal*, which were threatening to take up too much space in the Club-Room. He read a report by the Hon. Custodian of Slides upon the condition of the photographic slide collection, which was increasing gradually, and now necessitated the purchase of additional storing boxes, especially for the new foreign collection, to which numerous additions had been made. Dr Inglis Clark and other donors of photographic slides were thanked for their gifts, and the meeting cordially thanked the Hon. Librarian and the Hon. Custodian of Slides for their work on behalf of the Club. Mr NELSON, seconded by Mr GILBERT THOMSON, spoke upon the suggestion of giving

exhibitions of the Club slides in Glasgow, and they were informed that this could be simply arranged for if any Glasgow members were prepared to take up the organisation of such exhibitions, the Hon. Custodian of Slides being always willing and anxious to assist any member desiring to borrow slides for the purpose of exhibition.

A short report was made by the HON. SECRETARY upon the position of the "Guide-Book." He explained to the meeting that the "Ben Nevis Guide-Book" had now reached a point when all further sales were a gain to the Club, and that, owing to the exceptional cost in production of the General Section, the Club could not look for any profit, even were all the copies to be sold at the present price of 7s. 6d. each. He explained that practically half the issue of the General Section was still in hand, and asked the members present to assist in selling off these copies. He informed the meeting that the Committee had sanctioned the production of the "Guides" dealing with the Islands, including Skye, and that the Hon. Treasurer and he were prepared to act as joint editors for the purpose of this publication, but that they would not be able to go ahead with the printing until some settlement was arrived at for the expenses of Section "A."

The Office-Bearers, the Members of Committee, and Trustees of the Club Funds were re-elected in accordance with Rule No. 26.

Mr BELL moved, and the HON. SECRETARY seconded, a motion that Rule No. 26 be temporarily amended by the passing of a special resolution that one of the two Vice-Presidents and three of the six Senior Members of Committee be empowered to take office for the further period of one year in order to equalise the renewal rotation of Vice-Presidents and Members of Committee in 1922-23, the selection of those to be continued to be made by drawing of lots conform to Rule No. 27. The motion was agreed to.

The meeting decided to hold the New Year Meet at Brodick, and the Easter Meet at Aviemore and Linwilg.

This concluding the business, the meeting adjourned.

## ANNUAL DINNER.

The Annual Dinner was held in Messrs Ferguson & Forrester's Rooms, Buchanan Street, Glasgow. There was a good attendance of members and guests. The toast of "The King," "The Imperial Forces," and "The S.M.C." were proposed by the President. "Kindred Societies" was proposed by Mr George Sang, Mr W. A. Brigg, President of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, and Mr H. E. Scott, President of the Rucksack Club, being responsible for the replies.

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## DINNER IN LONDON.

The Dinner was held in Pagoni's Restaurant on 6th February, Sir Alexander Kennedy being in the chair. The attendance was small, partly on account of the illness of various members, and partly because of the absence of other members in Switzerland. An enjoyable evening was, however, spent.

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## NEW YEAR MEET AT BRODICK—1921-22.

*Thursday, 29th December 1921 to 3rd January 1922.*

PRESENT—*Members.*—W. N. Ling (President), J. H. Bell, W. Inglis Clark, D. A. Clapperton, J. Craig, H. J. Craig, G. B. Green, J. S. M. Jack, K. G. M'Lean, H. MacRobert, J. MacRobert, E. N. Marshall, J. Rennie, E. C. Thomson. *Guests.*—C. E. Bell, Gunn, Rutherford, Scott.

It was perhaps to be regretted that the facilities for reaching Brodick on this occasion made it difficult for those residing outside Glasgow to reach the Island without spending a night on the journey. One missed the usual cheery contingents from Aberdeen and Dundee usually present at the Club gatherings. The members were also sorry that the Hon. Secretary was unavoidably detained at home.

Prior to the Meet the weather conditions were not promising, high westerly gales with heavy rain having been prevalent.

On Friday, the 30th, the weather was such as to raise doubts in the minds of those proposing to make the journey from Ardrossan whether the steamer would be able to sail. Eight members and guests, however, turned up on the pier and faced the crossing, and no one was sorry when the boat reached the shelter of the Arran hills. The party consisted of:—Ling, J. H. Bell, Green, M'Lean, Jack, H. MacRobert, Clapperton, and two guests, C. E. Bell and Rutherford. Ednie had preceded them by a day, and climbed Goat Fell on Friday.

After luncheon in the hotel a walk was taken up Glen Rosa, the return being made over the moor by the String Road.

On Saturday, the 31st, the weather conditions were more propitious, and it was decided to climb the A'Chir Ridge. Eight made this excursion—Ling, C. E. Bell, Clapperton, Jack, M'Lean, H. MacRobert, Rutherford, and J. H. Bell. The top of Glen Rosa was reached by noon, and the party roped up in the order named in two parties of four, the climb taking about two hours. The conditions were favourable, but, owing to fog, the view to the north and west was not clear. A few showers of rain were encountered, and the glen and the moor were extremely wet. Six of the party returned home over Ben Tarsuinn and Ben Nuis. Green and Ednie did these two hills with the addition of Chliabhain.

On returning to Brodick other arrivals were met, consisting of Dr Inglis Clark, J. Rennie, J. MacRobert, E. N. Marshall, H. J. Craig, and Thomson, with two guests, Scott and Gunn, the maximum number of eighteen now being reached. On arrival Thomson and Scott had climbed Goat Fell and J. MacRobert and Gunn did Ben Nuis.

For New Year's Day the energetic President had organised a motor party to start early for the foot of Glen Sannox, and fifteen set out in a tempest of wind

and rain. Clark and Rennie returned by road and did not face the climb. Ling, Jack, the MacRoberts, Gunn, C. E. Bell, E. N. Marshall, H. J. Craig, and Ednie climbed Cioch na h'Oighe, the weather continuing diabolical, various members of the party being blown over by the wind on the ridge. They had to skirt the sheltered side of the ridge and of Goat Fell, by which route they returned to Brodick. Four younger men—M'Lean, Rutherford, Thomson, and Scott—climbed Suidhe Fhearghas, descending thereafter into the glen and reaching home by the Saddle. They frequently had to lie down as the wind blew with hurricane force.

On Monday, 2nd January, the Glen Sannox party being tired out after their rough experiences, practically every one decided to make a mass excursion to Goat Fell by the path. Ling, Clark, Rennie, Green, J. H. Bell, Clapperton, Jack, Ednie, Gunn, and Rutherford set off, and all reached the summit by one o'clock. There was a high wind from the north-west with snow showers, the wind having a curious swirling effect, which made one stagger when struck by the eddies. Apart from the hard work involved in facing the breeze, the day was a good one. At intervals snow showers obscured the hills, but on the whole the different and varying views were much enjoyed. Two of the number—Thomson and Scott—did Ben Nuis by No. 5 gully and Ben Tarsuinn, returning by Chlianbhain.

J. Craig arrived and did Goat Fell in the afternoon with Marshall.

Four members left by boat—H. and J. MacRobert, C. E. Bell, and H. J. Craig.

In the evening songs were provided by Jack and Clapperton to the accompaniment of Thomson. The programme included Scotch songs and selections from Gilbert & Sullivan's operas, and of course the Club song, which was, as usual, delightfully rendered by Rennie.

On Tuesday, 3rd, as nearly all were leaving by the afternoon steamer, the majority contented themselves



with a walk to the old fort near Corrygills. The views were particularly fine, as the mountains were all covered with snow, and the sun was brilliant between the short snow showers. Jack and Rutherford made an early start, and climbed Cir Mhor, going and returning by Glen Rosa. Marshall and J. Craig made a shorter excursion to Chliabhain. The crossing to Ardrossan was stormy, but not so unpleasant as on Friday. J. H. Bell and James Craig were left behind. On Wednesday, the 4th, they went up to A'Chruach, the highest point on the south side of the String Road, coming back by Glen Cloy in good weather, with a strong, cold north wind. Craig left by the afternoon steamer.

On Thursday, the 5th, J. H. Bell did the famous round walk by Glen Rosa over the Saddle down Glen Sannox and back by the road in seven hours, which showed that his powers are not waning. There had been hard frost over night, and the going in the Glens was much improved. Bell left on Friday, the 6th, and thus the Meet came to an end.

It only remains to mention that members much appreciated their comfortable quarters in the Douglas Hotel, and the attention received at the hands of the manageress and staff.



CIR MOHR

*Stuart Cumming*

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

The following additions have been made to the Library :—

- "A Fortnight in our Hills and Glens." Anonymous. 1866. And
- "The Braemar Highlands : their Tales, Tradition, and History." By Elizabeth Taylor. Presented by Mr William Low.
- "The Old Deeside Road : its Course, History, and Associations." By G. M. Fraser. Presented by the Author.
- "The New Zealanders in France." By Colonel H. Stewart, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C. Presented by the Author.
- "Handbook of Mr Albert Smith's Ascent of Mont Blanc," with outline engravings. Presented by Mr Leonard Eagleton.
- "Travels in England and Scotland, 1784." By Faujas de Saint Fond. Presented by A. R. Anderson.

Our hearty thanks are due to the gentlemen who have given the books noted above.

The following periodicals have been received :—

- Oxford and Cambridge Mountaineering. 1921.
- Bulletin Pyrénéen. October-December 1921 ; January-March 1922.
- Appalachia. August 1921.
- Canadian Alpine Club Journal. 1920.
- Cairngorm Club Journal. January 1922 (No. 58).
- Mazama. December 1921.
- Alpine Club Journal. November 1921 (No. 223).
- L'Echo des Alpes. October, November, December 1921 ; January, February 1922.
- La Montagne. September-October, November-December 1921.
- Rucksack Club Journal. 1922.
- Club Alpino Italiano. July-December 1922.
- Zeitschrift des Deutschen und Österreichischen Alpenvereins. 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1921.
- Fell and Rock Climbing Journal. 1921. (Vol. V., No. 3.)
- La Montagne. January-February 1922.

Mr T. Meares has kindly presented to the Library the following numbers of the *Alpine Club Journal* :— 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 61, 65, 68, 69, 73, 80, 82, 83, 84, 110, 183. As the Club possesses a complete set of

the *Alpine Club Journal*, these numbers can be sold to any members who wish to possess them.

Dr Inglis Clark has kindly presented some half-dozen old numbers of the *S.M.C. Journal* and several Skye maps, which also will be sold to any members who want any of them.

#### BACK NUMBERS OF THE JOURNAL.

Numbers 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28, 32, 33, 34, 36, 45, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 59, and 61-92 are still for sale at the original price, *i.e.*, 1s. each up to 84; 85-90, 1s. 6d. each; 91 and 92, 2s. 6d. each. A few copies of numbers 10, 12, 15, 22, 31, 37, 54, 57, 58, and 60 are to be sold at higher prices; and Vols. IX. (49-54) and X. (55-60), unbound, are also to be sold at £1 a volume. Applications for any of these numbers should be made to the Hon. Librarian.

#### SLIDE COLLECTION.

The collection has been enriched by some fifty slides, kindly presented to the Club by Dr Inglis Clark, dealing both with home and foreign mountain scenery.

Thirty-two new slides obtained from negatives, lent by Mr E. C. Thomson, Mr R. C. Paterson, and Mr Alex. Harrison, have been added to the collection. These refer wholly to home mountain scenery.

We are indebted to Mr A. Moray Mackay for the loan of the negative of the photo reproduced to illustrate Mr Fraser Campbell's article on "Iona."

## REVIEWS.

**The Old Deeside Road (Aberdeen to Braemar): its Course, History, and Associations**, by G. M. Fraser, Librarian, Aberdeen Public Library. Aberdeen: The University Press. 1921. 10s. 6d.—In this handsome volume, written at the suggestion of the 'Aberdeen Natural History and Antiquarian Society, by Mr G. M. Fraser, an antiquary and local historian, who enjoys much more than a local reputation, the author has set himself to describe the course, history, and associations of the old Deeside Road, which leads from Aberdeen to Braemar, along with the Mounth Passes over the Grampians, the ferries and fords on the Dee, and the cross-country roads to the North which were connected with the old highway. He has done so with great learning and after much detailed investigation of the course of the road and a careful examination of the portions of it which are still extant and in actual use, and the result is a volume of very high historical and topographical value. To members of the Club possibly the most interesting portion of Mr Fraser's work is the part in which he gives the first complete study which has ever been published of these passes or "Mounths," fifteen in number, which lead over the Grampians and connect Deeside with other parts of Scotland. The nearest of these "Mounths" to Aberdeen is the historic Causey or Cowie Mounth, which was the main connecting link between Aberdeen and the south country till the making of the present north turnpike road in the closing years of the eighteenth century. Another is the now disused Cryne's Cross Mounth, the route by which Edward I. marched with his forces on his memorable journey North in 1296, when he visited Aberdeen and received the homage of the burghers. The same route was frequently used, during the Covenanted troubles, by Montrose. Better known is the Cairn a' Mounth, which was crossed by Edward I. on his return journey in 1296, and which is

still the main thoroughfare between Kincardineshire and lower Deeside. One of the most interesting of these old passes is the Fir Mounth, which has recently been described in detail in the *Journal*, and further west are the Capel Mounth, leading from Clova to Loch Muick, and the Tol Mounth which connects Clova and Glen Doll with Glen Callater and Braemar, both of which are well known and frequently used by climbers. All these and the other Mounth tracks are fully described by Mr Fraser, and their historical associations are narrated in a most attractive fashion. But the other sections of Mr Fraser's work are no less interesting and valuable, and the book as a whole can be most cordially recommended to all who take an interest in topographical investigation. A word of commendation is due to the printers for the admirable way in which the book has been produced, and it should be noted how much the interest and value of the work is enhanced by a large number of illustrations and an excellent map.

G. D.

**The New Zealand Division, 1916-19:** A Popular History based on Official Records, by Colonel H. Stewart, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C. (late commanding 2nd Battalion Canterbury Regiment). Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd., Auckland, &c. 1921.—This book is the second of four parts of the official history of New Zealand's effort in the Great War. It picks up the story of the New Zealand Division after the evacuation of Gallipoli at the end of 1915, and describes its training in Egypt, and then its removal to France. There it soon began to play its part, first in the trenches near Armentières; next in the Somme fighting; again, in the winter of 1916-17, in trenches on the Lys. In 1917 it shared in the victory of Messines and the advance beyond Ypres, in the neighbourhood of which town it wintered. In 1918 it was busily occupied in resisting the German offensive, and later on in the victories of Bapaume, Cambrai, the second battle of Le Cateau, and the battle of La Sambre, after which it entered Germany. Whether its fighting was offensive

or defensive, it always played its part manfully. And Colonel Stewart has told its story with wonderful detail and clearness. Every performance of each individual regiment, company, platoon, almost of each man, is described in such a way as to make his book a valuable possession to every home in New Zealand, and to all readers anywhere who are interested in military exploits well done and equally well told.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the book is its description of feats of individual gallantry. Again and again we read how some man saw that a machine gun was doing damage to his fellows, and charged on it alone and put it out of action. Such a feat was that of Sergeant Travis, V.C., who shot 7 men of 2 machine gun crews, and then an officer and 3 men who came to their rescue; or that of Sergeant Laurent, who with 7 other men killed over 20 of the enemy, and took prisoners 111 and an officer. The saddest part of the story is that, like Travis, many of these heroes were fated to die in France, but they showed the courage and initiative of their breed, and the value of the aid given by New Zealand to the Mother Country.

The author, Colonel Stewart, has presented his book to the Club, and in a letter apologises for its slight connection with mountaineering. If it does no more than give the members of the Club examples of coolness, endurance, and resource, it does enough; more than that, the Club may be proud that it was written by one of its own members, who says little or nothing of himself, but whose distinctions prove that he played his part as a soldier, and whose book gives him a claim to rank as an excellent historian.

G. B. G.

**The Alpine Journal**, Vol. XXXIV., No. 223.—This number contains a notable article, by Mr A. L. Mumm, entitled "A History of the Alpine Club." Mr Mumm gives an exhaustive account of the growth and progress of the Club from the time of its inception at a meeting held at Ashley's Hotel, Covent Garden, on 22nd December

1857. The article contains many interesting particulars of the pioneer work in mountain exploration carried out by members of the Club, not only in the Alps but in other parts of the world.

The thoughts of all climbers are at present turned to the coming attempt on Mount Everest, and the article on the Mount Everest Expedition of 1921 by Professor Norman Collie, and also Mr Raeburn's graphic account of his Himalayan Expedition of 1920 are therefore of special interest. Professor Collie's article is illustrated by a magnificent panoramic photograph of Mount Everest, with the great E. Rongbuk glacier in the foreground.

**The Cairngorm Club Journal**, January 1922 (Vol. X., No. 58).—We always welcome each number of this publication as it appears. Its very cover inspires us with fraternal feelings, and we can always count on finding interesting material within. The January number is no exception to this rule. Dr Levack gives some details of climbing on the rocks of Clochnaben, and Mr A. M. Macrae Williamson contributes an article, entitled "Climbing in Skye in Wet Weather." Of particular interest is a paper dealing with the straths of the Tummel, the Dee, and the Spey. The article is based on notes made nearly a century ago by the late Mr Peter Anderson, Accountant, Inverness, during a walking tour through the districts in question. Mr William Barclay writes on "More Summer Days on the Mountains."

**Oxford and Cambridge Mountaineering**, 1921 (published by S. G. Marshall, Cambridge).—In the preface to this volume the joint authors, Mr Raymond Greene, Pembroke College, Oxford, and Mr E. Wallis, King's College, Cambridge, draw attention to the effort which has been made to revive the mountaineering clubs of their respective universities, these clubs having ceased their activities during the war-time period. New clubs have been formed in connection with each of the universities, and, judging by the particulars given in the volume under



review, these post-war organisations are already becoming solidly established. We offer the new clubs all good wishes, and trust that as each year passes they may be the means of drawing more and more of our young manhood to the sport of mountaineering.

The editors are to be congratulated on producing a most attractive volume, containing a series of well-written articles of varied interest. Mr J. M. Wordie and Mr T. C. Lethbridge give an interesting account of an ascent of the Arctic mountain of Bierenberg. Mr J. H. Wolfenden tells of a visit to the Austrian Tyrol, and brings out that at the then rate of exchange the cost of living per day was from 2s. 6d. in the small villages to 7s. in first-class hotels. Mr R. G. Collingwood writes on "Ruskin and the Mountains." The other articles all make interesting reading. We are sure that the publication of the volume will do much to attract recruits of the right kind to the ranks of the two clubs.

**The Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal**, 1921, Vol. V., No. 3 (No. 15 of Series).—Our Lakeland friends always give full measure in their annual publications, and their number for 1921 is brimming over with good things. The climbing articles include "More Climbs Around Wasdale," by Mr H. M. Kelly; "Climbs in Birkness Coombe," by Mr A. C. Pigou; "The Great Central Buttress of Scafell," by Mr C. F. Holland; and "Scafell Central Buttress," by Mr Bentley Beetham. Miss Dora Benson contributes "A Day on the Arran Hills." The illustrations for this article include a very beautiful photograph of Glen Sannox, by Mr H. MacRobert. Councillor Isaac Hinchliffe (of Manchester) gives an interesting account of the Mardale district, where a new reservoir is to be formed. The volume is illustrated by a large number of excellent photographs.

**The Rucksack Club Journal**, 1922, Vol. IV., No. 3 (No. 16 of Series).—We regret to learn that Mr Harry E. Scott, who has acted as Editor of this Journal for the past

eight years, is retiring from office. Mr Scott maintains in this issue the usual high standard which one expects from him; Mr E. W. Steeple writes on "Some Recent Climbs Around Ogwen"; Mr A. S. Pigott contributes "On Skye"; while several excellent Swiss articles are included. We have read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested Mr Hirst's verses on "How to Become an Editor"—printed at the express command of the Club's Committee.

**Alpine Ski-ing at all Heights and Seasons**, by Arnold Lunn (Methuen).—This is a companion volume to "Cross-Country Ski-ing." The author here treats his subject on more general lines than in the case of his former work, which dealt with the technique of the sport. Chapters on Snowcraft, Avalanches, Glacier Ski-ing (Roped and Unroped), Making the Best of Bad Conditions, Spring and Summer in the High Alps, and other subjects are included. The book is written in a clear and attractive way, and includes several excellent illustrations. We are sure that it will be of real interest and great practical use to all ski-ing enthusiasts.

**The Roof Climbers' Guide to St John's**, 1921 (published by Metcalfe & Co. Ltd., Cambridge).—This little book gives an exhaustive description of various climbs to be obtained on the building of St John's College, Cambridge. The climbs have all been systematically worked out, and those of our members who, *faute de mieux*, feel disposed, between visits to the mountains, to exercise themselves on the buttresses and ridges of some local edifice of suitable structure, may usefully study the methods discussed in the book. We rather fancy that this kind of climbing must require a somewhat stronger head than is necessary in the case of ordinary mountaineering. Personally, we are almost sure we should feel more at ease on the "Crowberry" Ridge

# 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.*

## S.M.C. ABROAD.

MESSRS J. A. PARKER and W. A. REID were in the Central Pyrenees for about two and a half weeks towards the end of last September, with headquarters at Luchon. The weather was perfect and the following ascents were made :—Pic de Céciré (7,875 feet), Pic de Sauvegarde (9,145 feet), Pic de l'Entécade (7,285 feet), and, in the Maladetta group, the Pic de Néthou (11,170 feet), and the Pics Occidentaux (10,510 feet). The two last were climbed from Rencluse, where there is now a very comfortable mountain inn or chalet which was opened in 1916 and can accommodate about twenty people. The Pics Occidentaux were traversed from Rencluse to Venasque, in which town one night, and one night only, was spent. The hotel there was fairly good, but the town appears to have stood still for at least three hundred years, especially in the matter of cleanliness.

From Luchon the usual excursions were made to the Valles du Lys and the Lac d'Oô. The latter is now being "harnessed" to supply water to drive a big power station at Luchon, and has thereby been deprived of some of its beauty. The celebrated 895 feet waterfall at the head of the lake has, however, not been affected.

Lourdes and Cauterets were visited per motor char-a-banc, and Parker on his way home climbed the Puy de Dôme in Auvergne.

# Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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*F. W. Steeple*

THE TERMINAL TOWER—WESTERN BUTTRESS OF SGURR SGUMAIN

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## SOME NEW CLIMBS FROM GLEN BRITTLE.

BY E. W. STEEPLE.

IN April 1921 a short note appeared in the *Journal* concerning some new climbs which were made in the Cuillin in 1920 by Dr G. Barlow and myself. In the present paper a more detailed account is given of some of these climbs, together with a description of one or two additional routes which were discovered during the two following seasons. In the case of the Terrace Gully, the Parallel Cracks route, and the Gullies of Sgurr a' Choire Bhig we were accompanied by A. H. Doughty.

A number of new climbs were also made on a hitherto unexplored crag in Coir a' Ghrunnda, particulars of which will be given in a future number.

### SOUTH FACE OF SGURR A' GHREADAIDH.

*The Terrace Gully.*—This is a Coruisk climb, and like all other Coruisk climbs it requires a long day, whether taken from Sligachan or from Glen Brittle. The gully is one, however, which deserves attention, as it is undoubtedly one of the very finest gullies in Skye, both in respect to rock scenery and the quality of climbing it affords. It faces Sgurr Coire an Lochain, and is a noticeable feature in the view from that charming little peak; and it was from this point that it attracted our attention in the summer of 1919. Its position is shown in the

illustration facing page 57 of the present volume of the *Journal*, where it will be seen cutting through the lower cliffs of Ghreadaidh, apparently in a vertical line drawn from the Ghreadaidh-Thormaid gap. We visited the gully in August 1920 at the end of a dry week, but as some of its pitches were still decidedly wet, it is probable that, like the Banachaig Gully, it is better avoided in rainy weather. The climb commences on a green terrace in Coireachan Ruadha, cut off by a low, vertical wall, but easily attained at either end.

From the foot of the gully we scrambled up a few feet of easy rock into a deeply-cut cave. A narrow ledge on the left wall led to a stance on a wedged block. A second block was surmounted and a damp flue ascended to an opening between the highest boulders. Emerging into daylight, we clambered over one or two small obstacles to the foot of a chockstone pitch which was both smooth and wet. An attempt to climb the wall close in failed, so we mounted the edge of the buttress on the left and traversed to the top of the pitch. Several large boulders in the gully bed were easily passed, above which a fine branch chimney sprang upward on the right. The dividing rib narrowed the main channel considerably, and a short but slippery pitch gave trouble to each man in turn, and amusement to the onlookers. Beyond this pitch the gully widens, owing to the cutting away of its left wall, and an impressive view was obtained of the next obstruction—a high cave pitch with an immense square chockstone. Steep water-worn slabs were ascended to the scree slope below the cave. A direct ascent from beneath the chockstone did not seem feasible, so we attacked the vertical right wall from a point near the foot of the scree slope. After reaching with some difficulty a small resting-place on the wall, we traversed an exposed rock ledge leading upwards to the left, and, rounding a bulge, ascended steep rock ledges to a deep recess beside the block, where good anchorage was obtained. The escape from the recess by backing up against the chockstone and pulling over to the right wall, though sensational, was unexpectedly easy. A short staircase pitch now led

to a long and narrow chimney containing an arched block. This was so wet that it appeared quite impracticable, though after a long spell of dry weather it may make a good if exacting pitch. Failing this phenomenal occurrence, most parties will probably prefer to utilise a crack which starts at a slightly higher level on the right side of the gully bed. We found this crack quite dry, but narrow and severe, and had some trouble with loose rock in its upper part. At a height of 40 feet we traversed a dyke-line to the left to the top of the chimney. Easy rocks then led to a high chockstone pitch, over which a small cascade was falling. We climbed this by good holds on its left wall. A short scramble remained, and we built our final cairn on a grass-covered beak of rock projecting into the gully. We now emerged on the great scree-covered terrace which runs across the south face of Ghreadaidh. The total height to this point is about 600 feet.

A late start prevented our continuing to the summit of Ghreadaidh, so we descended a watercourse at the west end of the terrace and crossed the Banachaig-Thormaidd pass into Coire a' Ghreadaidh. Normally this should provide a fairly quick return to Glen Brittle, but rain, mist, and darkness overtook us in the western corrie, and we broke no records. Neither, by good fortune, did we break any heads, and a bruised shin was the only casualty.

*The Terrace Buttress.*—This buttress, which lies immediately to the right of the Terrace Gully, was climbed in August last. It forms an excellent alternative to the gully, should the latter be found uncomfortably wet.

The climb was commenced at a little chimney a few yards west of the angle of the buttress. This chimney trended slightly to the right and led to a large, sloping patch of grass, 120 feet above the commencement. From the upper limit of the grass we ascended on the left edge of a long chimney bearing upwards to the left across the buttress. At a height of about 350 feet above the grass the chimney terminated, and we traversed a little to the left on to a very exposed and almost vertical wall of rough gabbro with satisfactory holds. This was ascended in the



same general direction as the chimney to a narrow grass ledge. A similarly steep wall above the ledge was climbed directly upwards. Here the difficult climbing ended, and easy slabs for 200 feet led to the top of the buttress, close to the exit of the gully. The total height to this point is 800 feet.

Crossing the Terrace, we continued straight ahead up a well-marked rock rib in the centre of the Ghreadaidh face, above which easy scrambling led to the main ridge a few feet below the south summit. By this addition we obtained a very enjoyable climb of 1,600 feet.

#### SOUTH FACE OF SGURR ALASDAIR.

*Central Route.*—Alasdair is one of those accommodating peaks, like Mhadaidh and Ghreadaidh, which provide good climbing on both sides. It would be difficult, however, to picture anything more dissimilar than the two sides in question. The south face is not more than 400 feet in height, but it endeavours to atone for its lack of inches by an unusual perpendicularity in its lower part. The general angle here is  $80^{\circ}$ , and in places it plainly overhangs. The face is scored by various vertical flutings, but no easy line presents itself. The only climbs made previous to the route now to be described were the West Gully, climbed by our party in 1912, and the more recent route made by Messrs Bower and Meldrum from the foot of the Gap Gully to the head of the Stone Shoot.

A few feet to the right of the West Gully a square-cut depression can be climbed for a short distance to a slight overhang, above which the rocks appear hopeless. Still further to the right a large cave can be entered from below, but has no visible exit. Beyond the cave a curious double chimney cuts up at the side of a huge impending nose. I once ascended this for about 90 feet, but was stopped by an overhang of wet rock. The remaining cracks appear to be still more hopeless, but in July 1921 we found that a short, protruding buttress on the left of the cave, being set at a slightly easier angle, enabled us to make a successful attack on the overhanging rocks above.



*G. Barlow*

**SOUTH FACE OF SGURR ALASDAIR**

**A. THE WEST GULLY**

**B. THE CENTRAL ROUTE**

Commencing at the left edge of the buttress, we ascended for 25 feet, past three little grass patches, to a belay-pin. Twenty feet higher the blunt end of a thin rib was overcome with some difficulty, and a green stance was reached. A recessed corner with few holds was climbed to a sloping foothold on the right. A long stride again to the right led to easier rocks. Here the buttress impinges against a smooth and holdless wall, and we bore upwards to the right to a shallow gully of formidable aspect, which in its lower reaches descends to the roof of the cave. We were at once confronted by a protruding tongue of rock, sloping downwards. It was hard to pass, and as its upper surface gave no foothold, I stepped across a little rib on to a steep slab on the left. The chimney above this slab was excessively difficult, but at the level of the top of the rib it was possible to attain a foothold on its edge, and a belay-pin immediately above relieved the tension. A 60-foot rope just enables the leader to utilise this belay, but the position is exposed, and I preferred to tie on the spare rope and ascend a further 30 feet. An open trench was first climbed for 15 feet, when overhanging rocks made it necessary to traverse to the left. A swing on the hands on a sharp edge of rock left one leg dangling in a holdless crack, whilst the other sought friction hold on the rough wall of the trench. A stiff pull on the arms brought a foothold within reach, and 15 feet higher a good stance was found. The difficulties were now over, and we enjoyed a welcome rest on a patch of grass, from which easy rocks led to the summit of Alasdair.

This climb is exceptionally severe, and demands a sustained effort on the part of the leader. The rock on the whole of this face appears to be a fine-grained dolerite, and is much smoother than ordinary gabbro. The holds, however, though not very plentiful, are clean-cut and reliable.

#### SGURR SGUMAIN—WESTERN BUTTRESS.

*The Terminal Tower.*—From the far end of the narrow and shattered ridge near the top of the Western Buttress a bold tower springs vertically upwards for 200 feet. It

is usually turned by means of a little chimney away to the right. For some years Barlow and I had contemplated a more direct ascent of this tower, but our visits to its foot generally synchronised with wet or cold weather. Our opportunity came, however, one afternoon in July 1921, when the weather cleared after a shower of rain.

From the narrow ridge we ascended an easy wall to the horizontal ledge running across the base of the tower, putting on the rope at the foot of a right-angled depression at its north-west edge. A rough 10-foot slab led to a sloping stance. Then by working well up into the corner we were able to reach a flake of rock on the right wall, and a strenuous pull on the arms, with little for the feet, brought us to the shelf above. We again attacked the corner, but a bulge of rock and a scarcity of holds gave us trouble. After a severe struggle we overcame the bulge and entered a narrow crack, and a few feet higher a good stance was obtained on some shattered rocks on the left. Returning to the original line we reached a narrow chimney, undercut at the foot. This commenced awkwardly, but the holds gradually improved, and a small chockstone was easily surmounted to a platform above. Ascending a few feet, and passing behind a block, we entered a large, square recess, and climbed the slabby right wall for 40 feet to the flat top of the tower.

Our route makes a new and particularly interesting finish to the Western Buttress. It is harder than the Inaccessible Pinnacle by the South-West Crack, but is not quite so exposed. The clean-cut character of the rough gabbro induced us to make the ascent in shoes.

#### SRON NA CICHE—WESTERN BUTTRESS.

*Parallel Cracks Route.*—Previous to the summer of 1920 the stretch of rock to the left of the Western Gully had apparently not been explored. A route which we took in August of that year gave a difficult climb of much interest, and as it is one of the nearest climbs to Glen Brittle, it should be useful for a short day.

We started at the foot of a steep rib which forms the

left boundary of a large, slabby depression, immediately above the commencement of the West Central Route. This rib is cut by two parallel cracks, of which that on the right thins out at a height of 150 feet. A short vertical wall was surmounted, and this crack ascended until a slight overhang induced us to bear upwards to the right to the edge of the rib. We then worked gradually back to the left across steep slabs until at a height of 100 feet or so we reached a grass patch in the crack. Twenty-five feet higher there was a good stance behind a spike of rock. Here the right-hand crack became indefinite, and we continued, partly on the slabs and partly in the parallel crack on the left, for 120 feet to a rock platform, where we built a cairn. Two short pitches led into a corner with a high vertical wall on the left. A species of balustrade against the wall enabled us to enter a crack, at the top of which a grass shelf was reached at the foot of a fine chimney, 40 feet high, with an arched block at the top. It was narrow and vertical, but contained good holds. Above this attractive pitch easy ground led to the edge of the Western Gully.

Owing to its slabby character this climb was made in shoes.

#### SGURR A' CHOIRE BHIG.

On the north side of Sgurr a' Choire Bhig, and near to the bealach between that peak and Sgurr nan Eag, there is a small but very fine crag, some three or four hundred feet in height. It is romantically situated above some sloping terraces overlooking Garbh Choire, with charming views of Coruisk and the Dubhs.

The two prominent gullies in the face were climbed in July 1921. The East Gully contains several chockstone pitches, of which the first was easy, the second rather hard. The third gave a little trouble, as the holds were wet, but would make a neat pitch when dry. Above the short fourth pitch a long rake ran up towards the ridge, with overhanging rock on the left. Two small obstacles were met with, and the climb ended at a deep notch on the main ridge.

The West Gully is divided at its foot by a rib of rock, and is also marked by a branch chimney on the right, which is closed in at the top. We ascended for 60 feet or so, partly on the rib and partly in the right-hand division, to the threshold of a large cave. This could apparently be turned on the left, but a direct ascent through a skylight seemed much more attractive. Climbing as high as possible in the back of the cave a long stride was made, with careful attention to balance, to a little window-ledge, from which the aperture was easily reached. Above this the branch chimney rose forbiddingly on the right. The next pitch in the main gully was a slabby wall guarded by undercut rock, above which we climbed a square block by a crack on its right. We were now confronted by a second fine cave pitch, which from below appeared very formidable. Fortunately, however, it contained a through route, which was reached without difficulty by means of a little ledge on the left wall. A short upper section led to a much smaller cave, which proved to be the final pitch, from which easy rocks led to the summit ridge.

This little crag is well worth a visit, as good and interesting climbing on splendid gabbro may be combined with a walk through three of the finest corries in the Cuillin.

THE CARN MAIRG RANGE (GLEN LYON).

BY J. GALL INGLIS.

ALTHOUGH not far from civilisation, the Carn Mairg Range seems very little visited by members of the S.M.C.—at least the references to it in the *Journal* since the early days of the Club are almost nil. This can hardly be on the score of inaccessibility, for it is no further from Fortingal and Fearnan than Meall nan Tarmachan and the western Lawers peaks are from Killin; and seeing its southern spurs form one side of the wildest and most beautiful part of far-famed Glen Lyon, there seems no reason why it should not be more frequented. The main ridge is essentially a hunting-ground for the hill walker, up and down over half a dozen peaks, with the Lawers range towering on the one side, and the Rannoch hills standing out above the Moor of Rannoch on the other. The range, however, is still very much a *terra incognita*, for it may be whispered that, judging by the records in the *Journal*, its meteorological conditions seem to be rather unsatisfactory, no party that has visited it hitherto having recorded it free from mist for at least a considerable portion of the day. So far as seen, however, rocks are conspicuously absent, except on the highest peak and on the spurs overlooking the entrance to Glen Lyon.

On New Year's morning, 1921, at the belated hour of 10.15 A.M., the Fortingal Hotel motor drew up at the door of the hotel, where Ednie, Parker, and the writer had been anxiously awaiting it for some time. We took our seats, and in a few minutes were speeding up the windings of Glen Lyon, enjoying—in so far as visible beneath the hood, which had, unfortunately, been left up—the wonderful and ever-changing vistas of crag and tree and rushing stream which characterise the lower part of the Glen. We wished, however, that it had been possible to start earlier, as our programme was fairly ambitious, considering the time of the year, for it contem-

plated the ascent of no less than four "separate mountains," comprising eight different tops, and there was some reason to suspect that there might be other 3,000-foot tops not mentioned in Munro's Tables.

Some six miles up the Glen, about a quarter of a mile before the U.F. church, we got out of the car, and before leaving the road took stock of the weather, which had been looking rather doubtful. The high hills at the head of the glen had their tops shrouded in drifting clouds and their lower slopes blurred by fine rain, while the speed at which the clouds were travelling gave every promise of a good "blow" higher up. However, it was phenomenally mild—by far the mildest day the writer has ever experienced at a New Year Meet—and, comforting ourselves with the thought that conditions might have been "waur," we left the road and proceeded up a rather watery footpath towards Carn Gorm, the easternmost "Munro" of the range.

Now the Carn Maig Range has been rather badly treated by the Ordnance Survey. Munro enumerates two "separate mountains" and two "separate tops" that are only represented in the O.S. maps by 3,000-foot contours. While Carn Gorm is not one of these, three-quarters of a mile to the W.N.W. of it there is a 3,000-foot contour of which Munro's Tables took no notice, and it seemed desirable to find out if it had any claims to be considered a "top." So instead of going straight up the south-west ridge of Carn Gorm, we crossed the narrow Coire nam Fraochag, and climbed diagonally up a subsidiary ridge that leads to the col between the 3,000-foot contour and Carn Gorm.

By this time the fine rain we had seen in the distance had reached us, borne on a tolerably strong blast, which, however, was fortunately at our backs. Across the corrie Carn Gorm was shrouded in mist, which trailed lower and lower as we ascended, enveloping us at last when we had reached about 2,800 feet. It was not very dense, however, so that when the col was reached (about 2,990 feet) we could tell without the compass where the 3,000-foot contour lay. Ednie and the writer proceeded to investigate it, but Parker preferred to find "shelter" on the lee-side of



the col till we returned. We hoped he would find it, for little signs of it had been seen, and we ourselves found the combination of drizzle and wind right in our faces rather trying.

The 3,000-foot contour proved to be a flat, muddy ridge of very slight gradient, highest at its western end, from which point, so far as could be seen, the ground fell more steeply westwards. The aneroids made it about 50 feet above the col, or 3,040 feet, and as the average gradient works out at about 1 in 50 only, this elevation is obviously only to be considered a shoulder of Carn Gorm. But we wished we could have seen it free of mist.

We thankfully turned our backs to the wind once more, and retracing our steps, picked up Parker after an absence of some twenty minutes. Presently we were breasting the tolerably steep slopes of the final 400 feet of Carn Gorm, and at last what appeared to be a cairn loomed through the mist. It proved to be merely an outcrop of rock, however, the probable true top (3,370 feet, O.S.) being reached a hundred yards or so further on, but apparently only a trifle higher.

Our next objective was An Sgor (3,002 feet, O.S.), an outlying top of the next "separate mountain," Meall Garbh, described by Goggs (*Journal*, Vol. IX., p. 235) as being separated by a drop of 400 feet from Meall Garbh (assuming the latter to be 3,200 feet), and as being 450 feet above the Carn Gorm col, which in its turn is 600 feet below the top of Carn Gorm. To this hill Parker now led us, descending northwards down a rather steep slope for 575 feet, reaching the latter col at 2,795 feet, which is in fair agreement with Goggs' figures. On the other side of the col the ground rose quite steeply to the summit of An Sgor, which was found to be a sharp, well-defined peak, unlike most of the other Carn Mairg tops, which are mostly of the rounded-hump or hog-back type. The aneroid, however, made it only 207 feet above the col, and there is obviously a misprint, or *lapsus calami*, in the 450 feet mentioned by Goggs, as it would make the col 800 feet below Carn Gorm. In spite of the lower altitude of An Sgor, the mist was as dense as it was higher

up, and as nothing was to be seen, we pushed on for Meall Garbh itself.

Meall Garbh had long aroused the writer's curiosity, from the cartographer's point of view. Munro's Tables give it as being 3,200 feet, on the authority of Mr Colin Phillip; but as the 3,000-foot contour is fairly large, there is nothing to indicate the whereabouts of the summit. The 6-inch map is practically blank, but the hill-shaded 1-inch map shows four fairly distinct tops within the contour, one of which is Meall Luaidhe. A point 3,048 on the 1-inch map appeared by the shading to be merely a point on the ridge, and was guessed by analogy to be at the corner of a fence, so when the col was passed—the aneroid made it 2,760 feet, 242 feet below An Sgor—a bright lookout was kept for any landmark which could be identified as this point. Sure enough, when we had climbed 200 feet, the corner of a deer fence appeared through the mist, but the aneroid recorded only 2,960 feet instead of 3,048.

The fence kept to the ridge, so we followed it, and, after a quarter of a mile, came out on what was evidently the top plateau of Meall Garbh. The highest point at this end of it—just at the "M" of "Meall" on the 1-inch map, and the actual summit, if the hill-shading is to be trusted—was made 3,145 feet, 55 feet lower than Mr Colin Phillip's figures, but in close agreement with Goggs' 400 feet above the col (= 3,160 feet). However, the ground seemed to rise further to the east, and after a slight dip, another rounded top was reached, a quarter of a mile east of the other, which the barometer gave as being 5 or 10 feet lower than the west top. But, again, the ground seemed to rise, this time on the south, and being determined to get at the bottom of the mystery, we descended some 50 or 70 feet, and mounting a gentle slope on the other side came, after ten minutes, to a third top, which was made 3,120 feet. A number of cairns were passed *en route*, but we could not imagine why they should have been erected where they were.

The mist had grown a little thinner during the last twenty minutes, and now, very obligingly, it suddenly

rolled away as we came to this top, affording us a splendid view of the eastern slopes of Meall Garbh. Below us, two-thirds of a mile to the east, lay a small hump, Meall Luaidhe. Behind were the slopes along which we had come, and to the north-east, beyond a dreary waste of broken bog, a high green "hog-back" stretched eastwards, with another hill behind it, off which the mist had not cleared; these were evidently Meall a' Bharr and Carn Mairg.

After a little "swithering," we made up our minds to go on to Meall Luaidhe, for though it took us still further out of our way than the top we were on, it seemed a pity to pass it by, seeing there was no "approximate" height for it in the Tables. The col was made 2,995 or thereby (the O.S. gives it as over the 3,000), and Luaidhe itself 3,035.\* But, standing on the top, we all agreed that its status as a true "Munro" was very doubtful indeed, although, viewed from above, it had seemed quite distinct. This was confirmed a little later when it was seen in profile from the north; it is just the first step of a "steps and stairs" ridge. The amount of its rise from the Meall Garbh col is only 50 feet or thereby.

A monotonous tramp for a mile across the boggy waste already mentioned brought us once more to the main ridge, from which there is a fine view of Schichallion. By including Luaidhe we had missed traversing a sixth top of Meall Garbh, to the north-east, situated on the main ridge, which from the hill-shaded map *might* possibly be a "Munro." Looking back, it was now seen standing up as a fairly steep dome—which ought to be measured at the first opportunity. Then we proceeded along the lengthy and tolerably level neck which connects Meall Garbh with Meall a' Bharr, following a deer fence which runs along the top. After a while it turned to the south-east up the slopes of the latter hill, but, just as

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\* In view of the discrepancy at the 3,048 point, and in the height of Meall Garbh, from Mr Colin Phillip's estimate, the writer is inclined to suspect that there may have been a sudden temporary rise in the barometer about this time, due to the weather improving, and that the readings may therefore be too low by, say, 40 feet or so.

the gradient became steeper, to our great disappointment the mist began to trail just above us, and soon we were again enveloped in it, which was a considerable handicap in determining the unmeasured height of the long, gently undulating hog-back on which we now found ourselves. The hill-shading indicated two possible positions for the top, one at each end of the ridge, but that at the east end—which was made 3,315 feet—seemed to be a trifle higher than the other; it has a well-built circular enclosure beside the cairn, which offered a welcome shelter from the wind. Here a sudden and wholly unexpected swirl of wind carried off beyond recall the paper with the writer's record of the aneroid readings, and had he not luckily already transferred these up to Meall Luaidhe into a notebook, much of this article might not have been written.

From Meall a' Bharr—the name, by the way, on the new 1-inch map is half a mile south of the top—to the final peak of Carn Mairg involved little descent; indeed it was so gradual that it was impossible to tell in the mist where the col actually was, and we were glad to have the deer fence—which was at times sadly dilapidated—to guide us along what was, so far as we could see, a broad, flat plateau. Here, for the first time that day, we encountered considerable patches of hard snow, the altitude being about 150 feet greater than Meall Garbh. On the final peak of Carn Mairg itself (3,419 feet, O.S.), however, the nature of the ground changed. Following the deer fence, we came to a place where it ran along the edge of a precipitous descent, leaving only a narrow track between. We happened to be on the wrong side of the fence, nevertheless managed for a while to thread our way along; but as the ground was covered with hard snow which was sometimes inclined to be icy, we were forced at last to cross the fence. Soon a dark shape loomed up in the mist, which resolved itself into a huge well-built cairn, and on climbing to the top of it the aneroids were consulted with considerable curiosity to see if there had been any change since setting them at Carn Gorm and An Sgor. For the first time in the writer's experience, he found three

readings, taken at considerable intervals, all to agree with the O.S. within two or three feet.

After the writer had paid a hasty visit to another dark shape to the south-east seen through the mist, and which turned out to be a rocky pinnacle apparently rather lower than the cairn, Parker led us down the south face of the mountain, which was steep and rocky, with numerous fallen blocks which made progress slow. It was now very late, and with the mist it seemed unlikely that it would be possible to visit the remaining tops of the range. Suddenly, without any warning, as we were slowly clambering over the blocks, the mist rolled away, revealing the whole eastern part of the range. Meall Liath—a rounded hump of no particular individuality—rose three-quarters of a mile to the north-east, quite out of our way, and in front of us, a mile away across a deep drop, was a long green ridge with two tops of equal height at the west end, and a third, considerably lower, but pointed and rocky, at the east end. And now—

The Vice-President's brow was sad,  
Anxious his voice, and low;  
And darkly looked he on Creag Mhor,  
And darkly on the foe !

the "foe" being the position of the sun, which was very near to setting. We were all very anxious to complete our programme, but with the full view of what it involved, the unwisdom of attempting to carry it out seemed obvious. A hasty consultation was held, in which common sense so far prevailed; but, after a hundred yards, discretion was flung to the winds, and we turned out of our way to do Meall Liath, silencing the inward counsellor by the thought that "Parker had a lantern, anyhow!" And it seemed as if the evening was to be clear, and twilight long.

We pushed up the heathery slopes as fast as tired legs would carry us, reached the rounded top and, barely stopping long enough to record the aneroid reading, turned our faces for the road, via Creag Mhor. Down and down we went, breaking into a run whenever the ground permitted, and after descending 400 feet, reached

the fairly level col (about 2,835 feet) connecting Creag Mhor with Carn Maig; it was, however, heavy going, being much broken up by knolls, hags, and heather.

The last 400 feet of ascent remain as a kind of nightmare to the writer. When he came to tackle them his legs refused their office, and it was only by dint of pausing every 40 or 50 feet that he was able to climb at all. What he most regretted was keeping back the other members of the party, but it was beyond his power to do better, and his companions were most considerate, in spite of the ever-increasing darkness—now accentuated by mist—which had once more descended. However, the strain was over at last, and we stood on the westmost top of the mountain, which proved to be a rounded hump, 3,230 feet high. A hasty descent of 50 or 75 feet of moderate gradient, and a corresponding ascent on the other side, brought us to the eastern top, the summit of which proved to be a small, sharp, rocky point 3,240 feet high, just 10 feet higher, according to the aneroid, than the western top, thereby confirming the conclusions come to (on very unscientific grounds!) of Goggs' party in 1907. In the writer's opinion these tops should certainly not be called Creag Mhor, which name on the O.S. map is three-quarters of a mile to the east, and obviously applies to the much lower rocky point we saw from Carn Maig, perhaps 2,900 feet or so high. So far as we could see, there were no rocks or crags at all on the western tops.

And now for home! It was more than time, for it had got so dark that it was barely possible to read the aneroid, but as yet there was sufficient light to pick our way down the easy southern slopes of the hill at a fair speed. Soon we were clear of the mist, and Parker led us towards a kind of pass seen far below us, which was probably the shortest way to the road. What seemed a narrow belt of scattered trees could be dimly descried in front of it; but when it was reached it proved to be a densely packed plantation of young trees, through which a small burn ran in a narrow rocky bed, with steep sides. For a time we followed the stream, stumbling over the rocks at first, and then holding on to a very convenient wire fence at

the top of the bank, which enabled us to progress at a tolerable speed, though it was practically impossible to see the ground. Parker had lit his lantern by this time, and every now and then stopped to light his companions over awkward pitches. At last, however, the bank grew so steep that there was nothing for it but to cross the fence and take to the plantation.

It was a weird experience amid the low, closely-packed trees: the leader zigzagged here and there, backwards and forwards, and the man next him was near enough to the light to avoid most of the obstacles. But whoever happened to be the last man was in inky darkness, and usually could only see a faint spot of light some 15 or 20 feet away. Unseen obstacles brushed his face or displaced his hat as he zigzagged round the low trees or dived under branches, which the man in front of him often considerably held aside. Once when crossing a wire fence in a difficult situation, the writer's eyeglasses were gently, yet suddenly, removed from his nose, as if by a fairy hand, and it was some time before they were recovered by the aid of the lantern.

This kind of thing went on for about half an hour, but at length the trees got taller, and began to thin out and be further apart, whereupon one of the party remarked that another twenty minutes would see us on the road. Fifty yards further on a wire fence was crossed, a few steps more and we found ourselves—on the road! We found afterwards from the map that we had traversed about half a mile of that dense plantation.

We had come out on the road a short distance east of Woodend, and had still over a couple of miles to walk before reaching the hotel. How we wished for the car! However, in due course we arrived at our destination, well satisfied with the day's work, which Parker estimated as having amounted to about 5,000 feet of actual climbing. It will be seen that there is still plenty of scope for investigating the possibilities of the Carn Mairg range.

One thing may be mentioned before closing. In the 6-inch map a height, 3,124 feet, is given for Creag Mhor, which does not coincide with either of the tops shown on the hill-shaded map. Mr John Mathieson, late of the O.S.,

expressed to the writer the strong opinion that this height does not refer to a top, but is merely a height recorded by a surveyor who was following the course of a burn. Possibly it might be the col, however.

A short note regarding Stott's puzzling experiences on this range may be of interest, as it clears up a topographical mystery.\* There can be no doubt that what he took to be Meall Garbh was really An Sgor, which he does not mention, although from the lie of the ground he must have passed over it on the way to the former. Meall Garbh is not a "somewhat narrow peak," but this exactly describes An Sgor. Thirty-five minutes is about the time that should be taken to reach An Sgor from Carn Gorm, but is quite inadequate for the two miles with steep ascents and descents which he supposed he had covered in that time. He would lunch at the col east of An Sgor, and from there saw the "confusing summits" of Meall Garbh, a description that does not apply to Carn Maigr or Meall a' Bharr. E.N.E. would lead them straight to the top of Meall Garbh, from which E.S.E. for half a mile would land them in the corrie just north of Meall Luaidhe, from which point, when the mist thinned, they saw the burn "rising" to the north-west, as the O.S. map indicates, and a "bold ridge," which exactly describes Meall a' Bharr as we saw it from the same point; the height recorded for it, 3,300 feet, and the description of the ridge to Carn Maigr, also exactly correspond with our observations.

The "500 or 600 feet to the col" from the top of An Sgor—which in reality is only 200 feet—doubtless arose by subtracting the aneroid height of the col from 3,200, the height given for Meall Garbh in Munro's Tables instead of from the actual barometer reading on the top of the hill (3,002 feet, O.S.).

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\* Already briefly pointed out by Parker, in the April *Journal*.



## AN EARLY CLIMB ON BLAVEN.

AT a meeting of the Alpine Club in May last, during a discussion upon British Mountaineering, Mr H. G. Willink mentioned an ascent of Blaven in 1873. As this had not been recorded I wrote to ask if he had any notes or sketches of his expeditions in Skye, and he has kindly sent the letter which follows. It is probable that Blaven has been ascended by shepherds or sportsmen from time immemorial, but it is doubtful whether there was any earlier traverse of it by the rock faces and gullies that are here mentioned.

It should be remembered that Sheriff Nicholson's well-known articles in *Good Words* were not published until two years later in 1875, and that the brothers Pilkington did not begin their explorations until 1880.

Mr Willink has never been a member of the S.M.C., but he has been a member of the Alpine Club for over forty years, and was Vice-President in 1899; and most climbers will be familiar with his humorous sketches of life in the Alps, some of which were published a few years ago.

GODFREY A. SOLLY.

I AM afraid I can tell you very little about my visit to the Cuchullins in 1873. My brother and I knew as little about them as our wretched map did, *i.e.* nothing. And we just rambled and scrambled there, as elsewhere, at our own sweet will—a jolly six weeks of knapsacks and mixed weather in Scotland, all on foot except one drive.

On 5th Sept. I rambled up Ben na Cailleach from Broadford to spy out the land, and fell in love with Blaven. Next morning, starting at 8.45, we walked round the head of Loch Slapin, fording the shallows at low water, and then up by Allt na Dunaiche (modern Ordnance, not then published) past the waterfall, to the foot of the S.E. face of the mountain (Blaven), and then going up straight by the big gully—we loved gullies in those days—"loose stones and a steep scramble near end," my diary says. Reached top at 1.30. Clear to W. and N., clouds behind us. Snow fell. Then, seeing the head of a gully on the N.W. face, apparently corresponding to the one we had come up, we gaily started down it, assuming it

would be similar in character, and carry us right down. It might have indeed, but in uncomfortable fashion! Of course we had no rope, and should not have known how to use it if we had. And a knapsack is an unfriendly beast for an amateur descending steep, wet, unknown pitches. "All went swimmingly at first. Stones not too big and quite loose. Gully got narrower. Ledges appeared. The water had to take larger and larger leaps; and at last we found ourselves brought to a standstill. Hopeless! The sides of the gully were at this time quite close, overhanging on one side and perpendicular on the other. Turned back. Went up some distance. Scrambled up to left" (*i.e.* northerly, out on to open face).



Blaven and Marsco.

(From a sketch made by Mr Willink in 1873.)

"Then over side of hill, &c., &c. Rough work." As a fact we made a sort of traverse till we hit another kinder gully, which did possess a lovely stoneshoot all the way from the top: if only we had known it! Reached Sligachan at 6.

On the 7th we went up Glamaig, from which the two Blaven gullies can be studied.

On the 8th Scur-na-Gilleann. Diary says, after leaving the Dunvegan road, "past keeper's cottage, then over moors for east shoulder; crossing one or two spurs and going up a gully of loose stones brought us on to the large shoulder. Lunch. Mist, of course, plentiful" (we generally had mist, but that never bothered us as we carried compasses and knew how to use them, after considerable

experience in Wales and the Lakes). "Even Glamaig's top quite hidden. Up quietly, in hopes of clearing. Left little marks to know the way down again by. Top at about 1.15. Splendid top. Narrow, short ridge. Steep all round. Jagged Cuchullin peaks looming out of mist, but we could see no further than 100 or 200 yards at most. At 1.45, after much stone-throwing" (naughty, but delicious), "we came down in rain and mist, upsetting our landmarks on the way, lest, not being quite in the right line, they should mislead others."—How virtuous!

The next day in rain and cloud we walked that weary path to Coruisk and I conscientiously tramped round the loch. But we had no more climbing in Skye, though we went to Quiraing. (That was our one drive; but we made a point of walking one way to preserve our continuous pedestrian line.)

## A DAY ON BRAERIACH.

BY ALEXANDER B. BEATTIE.

[Mr Beattie, though not a member of the Club, knows, and is known to many of us. He has been good enough to send me this article which I am sure will be appreciated.—ED.]

FROM brief newspaper reports, it would appear that the happy band of Scottish mountaineering enthusiasts who assembled at Aviemore for a brief Easter holiday, had a rough time on the slopes of Braeriach and the pitches of Sgoran Dubh. We anticipate a more detailed account of their exploits, and meantime the following narrative of an easy day spent on the former mountain under more pleasant weather conditions, may be of some little interest.

A boisterous gale that ushered in the month of July dropped suddenly, and gave place to a peaceful sunrise of gold, pink, and opal. The Cairngorm summits caught up the glow, and Braeriach looked particularly attractive in its long frilled bonnet of mist.

Breakfasting early, we left our comfortable rooms at Aviemore by car so that we might enjoy the better part of the day on the mountains. We crossed Spey Bridge, followed the course of the Druie, and then proceeded to the left towards Coylum Bridge. At that point, where the road to Loch-an-Eilan leads to the right, a tiny wisp of blue smoke rising from among the pine trees at the forest edge, proclaimed the abode of a poor itinerant china-mender. He was busily engaged preparing the morning meal in front of his rudely constructed shelter of bamboo and patched canvas. A small cart contained his stock-in-trade, and a pony grazed near by. Proceeding, we sped through the sweet morning air, and entered the Rothiemurchus Forest road near Coylum Bridge. This rough, narrow forest track demanded cautious driving. Later, it developed into switchback formation. Added to this attraction, were numerous natural "pot-



IN GLEN EUNACH

*A. B. Beattie*

holes " of varying depth, tree roots, and other obstructions. After this sylvan joy-ride, we swung into the old Braemar right-of-way near Tullochghru, where cultivated land may be seen at about 1,000 feet above sea-level. Here a crisp breeze greeted us, and the mountains seemed very near. We could hear the restless waters of the Bennie, and on entering Glen Eunach proper, it was good to renew acquaintance with our old sentinel friends—Cadha Mor, towering above us on the right, and Carn Elrick, with its steep scree and graceful cone form, guarding the glen on the far bank of the stream to the left. The mountain road rises steadily to Windy Point. Here we halted to enjoy the fine view both up and down the glen. From here onwards the journey increased in interest and difficulty, and our road eventually deteriorated into a very uneven track almost entirely overgrown with heather and grass. We made fair progress, and in due course arrived at the lower bothy, where we parted company with our car and its trusty boy driver.

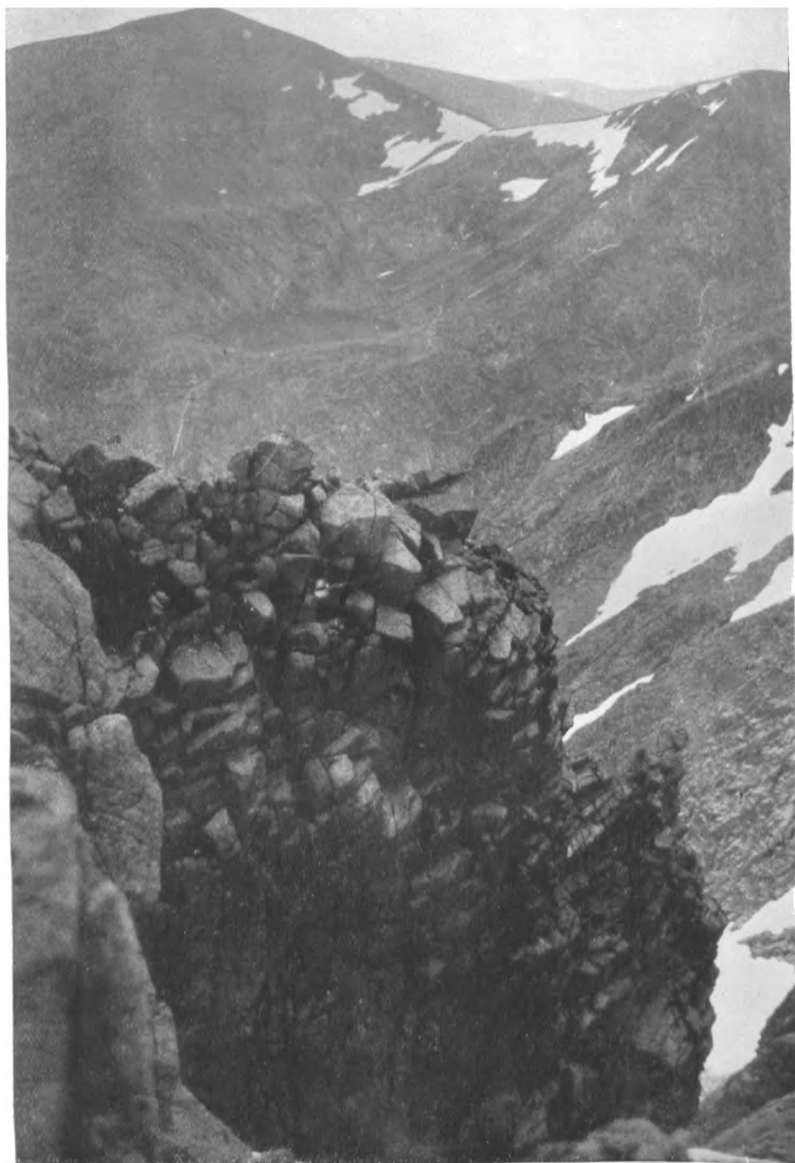
The stream from Corrie Bennie at this point joins the burn flowing from Loch Eunach at the head of the glen. We decided to climb via Coire-an-Lochan, and we soon covered the heather slopes rising gradually to a point where the brook from Loch Coire-an-Lochan plunges down a steep, rocky ravine. The sparkling purity of the water added a touch of brilliance to the varied colour scheme of mosses. It is considered unsafe to drink over much spring water, but we derived much satisfaction from the simple expedient of dipping our hands in the running water.

We followed the course of the stream, and rose slowly over a steep section of the mountain side. Heather and other vegetation soon became scarce, and almost ceased to exist where we set foot on snow. We avoided this melting remnant of winter garb, and the remainder of the journey to the loch, over firm ground, revealed little of note beyond the swift overhead passage of a brace of ptarmigan. Loch Coire-an-Lochan, the highest sheet of water in Britain, lies in the basin of the corrie fully 3,250 feet above the level of the sea. It is well sheltered from

the east winds by a fine precipice some 500 feet or more in height. Large patches of deep snow-drift still clung to the precipice and the steep scree, and a vast, firm snowfield, pleasant to walk on, covered the approach to the southern shore. I am informed that the head of Coire-an-Lochan is a fine hunting-ground for the celebrated Cairngorm quartz, and several excellent specimens have been brought to light here by the action of the elements.

The charm of the corrie lies in the wild splendour of its majestic setting. On a calm day it is truly a peaceful spot, but those who ventured there at Eastertide will doubtless have another story to relate. The eye requires to travel far in order to cover the magnificent panorama of the Spey valley. It is a glorious view, but there was even better in store for us. We hastened to negotiate the granite boulders along the northern margin of the water, and gained the summit plateau via the narrow neck which separates Coire-an-Lochan from Corrie Ruadh. We had now crossed the 4,000 foot level, where large numbers of tiny circular patches of flowering cushion-pink attracted the eye. Bearing to the left, we reached the west summit cairn (4,248 feet) at the lip of the great precipices of the Garbhchoire. The Cairngorm mountain masses are so huddled together that many of the summit views are somewhat disappointing, but the panorama which is suddenly revealed to the eye at this cairn is one of the finest of its kind in the Grampians. To the left, and on the east side of the Larig Pass—that wild and narrow defile which links Speyside with Deeside—is the mountain of Cairngorm, Ben Mheadoin (east of Loch Avon), Beinn-a'-Bhuird (in the distance), and next that, the huge bulk of Ben Muichdhuì. In front is Glen Dee, which is really a continuation of the Larig.

From our view point, the infant Dee appeared like a tortuous thread of sparkling silver. One source of the River Dee is on Ben Muichdhuì, forming what is known as the March Burn. This tiny stream flows into the Larig, disappears underground, and forces its way through the stone barrier. The water percolates to the



CAIRN TOUL FROM BRAERIACH

*A. B. Beattie*



surface, and forms the " Pools of Dee " at the highest point of the pass. The stream finds an outlet down the remaining portion of the Larig into Glen Dee. The other source of the river is to be found on the plateau of Braeriach, where the waters collect from a number of magnificent springs to form a stream which flows to the edge of the precipice. The resulting waterfall is called the Falls of Dee, and the burn continues, to join the other water flowing from the Pools of Dee in the glen below. It is interesting to note that these two streams meet, separate, come quite close, and flow apart again, before finally joining to form the main stream of the Dee. On the right is Cairn Toul with the beautiful circular Loch Uaine (green loch) lying in the basin of a large corrie below the summit. A tiny tributary of the Dee issues from it. Further to the right we have the Angel's Peak, the Horseman's Corrie, and, circling round to the point on which we stood, the famous Garbh-choire precipices averaging 2,000 feet in height and extending for about two miles along the edge of the Braeriach plateau.

We enjoyed a bite of lunch, and had a satisfying smoke before leaving the cairn. The exercise, seasoned with the pure mountain atmosphere, created a more than ordinary appetite, and our store of tomatoes and marmalade sandwiches rapidly disappeared. Intense stillness brooded over this wild amphitheatre of granite cliffs, and the air seemed unusually sweet and cool.

So far we had seen little sign of bird life, but we were now fortunate enough to secure a fine view of a golden eagle. He sailed over majestically from the direction of Loch Avon, circled three times above Loch Uaine, and ultimately settled on the remainder of a small snow cornice at the precipice edge overlooking the loch.

During a previous visit to Braeriach, in 1914, I addressed a post card to myself, requesting the finder to post same. It was carefully wrapped in brown paper and secured to the cairn by means of a strong piece of string. I had entirely forgotten this incident, until the card was discovered and posted to me under envelope cover towards

the end of the war. It showed considerable evidence of exposure to the elements during those four winters. It was, in fact, reduced to a series of tattered layers, and but for the brown jacket, it might never have been discovered.

We were preparing to depart from the cairn when two small black moving objects appeared on the northern edge of the plateau. The glass revealed them to be two mountaineering enthusiasts, and we awaited their arrival. They made a brief stay, as they were bound for Cairntoul.

We then visited the Wells of Dee. Many a dry household during last season's drought would have given much to be able to tap those magnificent springs. We spent an interesting hour gathering Alpine mosses along the margin of "the wells" and the clear streams which issue therefrom. At the Falls of Dee a snow cornice of considerable depth spanned the burn and overhung at the precipice. The snow had melted gradually on the underside of the wreath, forming a large cavern, and producing a peculiar series of large cup markings. An aperture in the top admitted sufficient light to enable me to secure a photograph of the interior. Quite a number of ptarmigan were seen. We discovered a fortnight old chick. The mother bird feigned a broken wing and circled round us in evident distress for the safety of her offspring. Her performance proved successful. The chick mysteriously disappeared, and was only discovered after very careful search. The colour of the ground proved sufficient to conceal the fluffy little ball. It did not object to being handled and photographed, and when returned to the ground, it allowed me about six seconds' grace to snatch another picture. When the camera shutter clicked our little feathered friend found its feet, used them to some purpose, and disappeared from view. It was a good example of Nature's protective colouring, and the photograph is an instructive record of the fact.

So engrossed were we in the interests of bird and plant life, that we were quite unconscious of the thick film of cloud which now obscured the sky, and the warning puffs of mist smoke coming over the precipices from the Larig.

A hasty exit from the tableland was decided on, and we journeyed towards the head of Glen Eunach. The Garbhchoire precipices are wonderful in mist. Outstanding buttresses pierce the veil like ugly jagged teeth, while the wind roars in the "chimneys." Soon the landscape was completely blotted out. Suddenly an opening appeared in the dense wall of drifting vapour and, widening rapidly, momentarily revealed an impressive snapshot view of the landscape 2,000 feet below. The mist again closed in, and we were left with the vivid recollection of an aerial picture of Glen Dee framed complete by Nature's hand.

On this occasion we succeeded in keeping free of the mist, and we moved into the head of Corrie Dhondail overlooking Loch Eunach and the fine precipices of Sgoran Dubh which rise sheer from the western shore. The water appeared a dark peacock green, and contrasted vividly in colour with the narrow band of golden granite shingle.

At the edge of a long scree we found and extracted a healthy plant of parsley fern. Fortunately for us, the mist kept well to the tops, and we rested awhile to enjoy a near view of the wonderful horse-shoe precipices of Corrour which continue from Sgoran Dubh round the end of the loch. What a glorious and peaceful sanctuary for deer! The thought had barely passed when one of my friends, who was carefully scanning the ground, spotted a number of fine stags. They were moving slowly along the floor of the corrie in single file. The glass was produced, and we watched them climb a steep face of 1,500 feet. They accomplished it comfortably in the brief space of eight minutes.

The great delight to me was the refined colouring of the landscape, so enriched by subdued and softened light as to produce the appearance of velvet texture.

A steep, narrow pony path leads from the corrie to the small wooden stalkers' bothy near the loch. Quite a number of small streams flowing from Braeriach cross this path. One of these forms into a fine triple waterfall. Near this point we made the most noteworthy find of the

day, viz., the high heel of a lady's shoe. Who the lady adventurer was, or what advantage accrued from mountaineering footwear loaded with  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inch heels, we were unable to discover. We certainly expected to find the other heel before arriving at the bothy, but in this we were disappointed. The bothy door was open, and there was considerable evidence that the building had recently been occupied. A sea-gull persistently circled round outside. In one of the apartments a set of boarding, covered with heather and supported by means of an old bench and a number of large stones, had served as a bed. There were many cooking implements, including a rather formidable girdle or frying-pan of open design. A cupboard revealed a wonderful collection of empty tins with familiar labels. Further inspection of the interior provided me with conclusive evidence that the temporary tenant who had just vacated this humble abode was no amateur at photography.

A heavy pall of cloud and mist now settled down at the head of Corrour, and rain descended. The awe-inspiring precipices which close in on the loch make a fitting termination to this romantic glen. The face of these cliffs was broken up into rifts of varying depth, with long trailing screes at the base. A curious darkness gathered, and the tinkling of tiny cascades seemed to intensify the sublime silence. Rain came in torrents for a time, and we were grateful of shelter.

The clouds lifted, and with the passing of the shower we watched and marvelled at the mist churning around the snow-patched crest of Corrour. Presently the rain ceased, and we said good-bye to the solemn grandeur of dark Loch Eunach and the gigantic granite walls of Sgoran Dubh. We thoroughly enjoyed the remaining seven mile tramp back through the glen. The wild music of the Bennie accompanied us. The air was charged with the sweet scent of the mountains, which rain had extracted from mother earth. Twisted, irregular forms of solitary pine trees—remnants of the old Caledonian forests—seemed ghost-like in the dim light, and in the direction of Loch Morlich a peculiar smoke haze from

smouldering peat hung over the scene of the recent Rothiemurchus Forest fire.

We turned in to the left by Loch-an-Eilañ in order to get a glimpse of evening reflections in this mirror gem. Other two miles, and Craigellachie Rock loomed in sight. With it came visions of a hot bath and supper. Soon the latter became an enjoyable reality.

Later, when pipes were set agoing, elfin spirits of the mountains cast their magic spell, and we smoked on in silence. The mountains were still calling, and our thoughts were far away on the giant shoulders of Braeriach.

## A GLIMPSE AT THE LUNAR MOUNTAINS

(THROUGH THE TELESCOPE AND AT CLOSE QUARTERS)

BY J. M'COSS.

IF we look at the moon through a refracting telescope, its mountainous character is at once apparent. If we examine the eastern edge where the sun is rising we see the great shadows of the mountains clearly cast on the plains by the sun's slanting rays, and the peaks are caught in a noose of light, while their lower spurs and valleys are still in darkness.

The sharpness of the shadows is caused by the extreme rarity of the moon's atmosphere, if indeed it has any atmosphere at all.

It is obvious then, that the sunshine, as it creeps over these Alpine landscapes, casting the black shadows of the peaks many miles across the plains, and capping the summits of lofty mountains with light, must clearly reveal the character of the lunar surface. Mountains that cannot be seen at all when the light falls perpendicularly upon them, or, at the most, appear then merely shining points, reveal themselves by their shadows in startling silhouettes when illuminated by the rising sun.

Our satellite has been studied most carefully ever since the telescope was invented, but no observer has ever beheld any disturbance on its surface which could be interpreted as a volcanic eruption in progress. The moon was no doubt once the seat of volcanic outbreaks of tremendous intensity, but these days have long since passed, probably millions of years ago. Notwithstanding the antiquity of the lunar features, the observer is struck with the wonderful sharpness and definiteness of outline which their details exhibit. The sharp angles of the lunar rocks have never been rounded off by the action of air and water, these two agents which have been of such conspicuous importance in the sculpture of our own globe.

As is the usual custom in mountaineering, we will explore with the telescope a few individual and typical parts of the surface before we actually go a-climbing on the moon itself.

If we turn our glass on the lunar landscape, when the sun has been rising on it for rather more than five days after new moon, we find (about  $15^{\circ}$  south \* of the lunar equator) the morning terminator on one of the most stupendous formations on the lunar world, in the shape of a chain of three craters.

The great mountain ring Theophilus, noticeably regular in outline and perfect in the completeness of its lofty wall, is the most northerly of the three. The circular interior, which contains a central group of beautiful mountains, one of whose peaks is 6,000 feet high, sinks 10,000 † feet below the general level of the moon outside the wall. One of the peaks on the western wall towers more than 18,000 feet above the floor within, while several of the peaks attain elevations of 15,000 and 16,000 feet in height. The diameter of the ring from crest to crest of the wall is 64 miles. Theophilus is especially wonderful at this period when the sun climbs its shining pinnacles and slowly discloses the tremendous chasm that lies within its circle of terrible precipices.

The shattered ring of Cyrillus looks as if its huge surrounding wall, as high as Mont Blanc, had been completely finished before the volcanic forces commenced the formation of Theophilus, the ring of which encroaches considerably on its older neighbour. It is 60 miles in diameter, and has a central peak 5,800 feet high.

Catharina, the most southerly of the three, is connected

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\* In a refracting telescope an object is seen upside down, therefore the west will be seen on the left side, and the north will be observed at the foot.

† Generally speaking, the so called craters on the moon are simply cavities in the lunar surface, whose bottoms lie deep below the general level, surrounded by tremendous cliffs, instead of being elevated on the summits of mountains, and enclosed in a conical peak as upon the earth. The height of a mountain wall is reckoned from the level of the interior floor of the crater. The elevation from the outer side is always very much less.

by a system of broken walls. It is a still larger crater, being 65 miles across, and is more than 16,000 feet deep; its half-ruined walls and numerous crater pits present a fascinating spectacle as the shadows retreat before the sunrise advancing across them.

Although Theophilus is one of the deepest craters we can see in the moon, it has suffered little or no deformation from secondary eruption, while the floor and walls of Catharina show a complete sequence of lesser craters of various sizes that have broken in upon, and partly destroyed each other.

These three craters constitute a scene of surpassing magnificence, a glimpse of wonders in another world sufficient to satisfy the most riotous imagination.

When the moon is between seven or eight days old, we find the sun rising in the neighbourhood of the greatest mountain chains on the moon.

The Caucasus Mountains are a mass of highlands and peaks which introduce us to a series of formations resembling those of the mountain regions of the earth. The range contains many lofty peaks, one of which is about 19,000 feet high, while several others rise to between 11,000 and 14,000 feet in height.

North of the Caucasus are the Alps, a mountain-mass of great elevation, containing some 700 peaked mountains. The highest peak is a good match for the Mont Blanc of the earth, after which it has been named. As the line of sunrise runs directly across their high peaks the effect is startling. The observer's eye is instantly caught by a great glen running like a furrow through the centre of the range. This valley is about eighty or ninety miles in length, and three and a half to six miles in width. It is at least 11,500 feet deep, and appears to cut through the loftiest of the mountains. It is narrow and broken at the southern end, and is almost lost among the great peaks.

To the south is the Apennines, the greatest of the lunar mountain chains, extending some 450 miles, and is estimated to contain upwards of 3,000 peaks. One peak rises to the altitude of 21,000 feet, and many range



from 12,000 to nearly 20,000 feet in height. The Apennines of the earth sink to insignificance in comparison with their gigantic namesake on the moon. As the range runs at a considerable angle to the line of sunrise, its high peaks are seen tipped with sunlight for a long distance beyond the generally illuminated edge. Even with the naked eye the sun-touched summits of the range may at this period be detected as a tongue of light projecting into the dark side of the moon.

At the western end of the range is the precipitous Mount Hadley which rises more than 15,000 feet above the level of the plain. One of the peaks near the eastern end of the chain, exactly south of the great crater Archimedes, is at least 18,000 feet high. This is Mount Huygens.

The northern side of the range terminates abruptly in a very precipitous face, and over the plain beneath intense black spire-like shadows are cast, some of which extend fully 90 miles, till they lose themselves in the general shading due to the curvature of the lunar face, and present a spectacle as beautiful as it is unique.

Near the sixtieth parallel of the lunar south latitude lies the enormous enclosure called Clavius. Both in its interior and on its walls are many peaks and secondary craters. It exceeds 140 miles in diameter, and the fringing wall carries some of the loftiest peaks on the moon, several attaining 17,000 feet in height. One of the peaks rises to a height of 24,000 feet above the bottom of one of the included craters. Clavius is one of the most impressive of all the lunar formations.

When the moon is eight days old, the illumination commences with a few peaks, and rapidly extends along the whole western wall. Then the dark interior, which is two miles below the general level, penetrates far into the illuminated portion of the moon, and the rays of the rising sun touch the summits of the peaks in the interior as points of light, at the same time reaching across the gulf to the further or eastern wall, the extreme summits become illuminated, and lie far into the night side of the moon. Fine streaks of light begin to form across the still dark floor of the crater, from the light breaking through

some of the passes on the western wall. The illumination of the interior of Clavius now proceeds rapidly, and forms a magnificent spectacle, the crater rings on the interior, with their floors still totally immersed in shadow. The immense steep ring of cliffs east and west now brilliantly lit up is thrown strongly into relief against the dark shadows at their base.

Although Clavius is nearly invisible at full moon, at its earlier phases it may be viewed with an opera glass. In this wild neighbourhood there are craters so profound that no ray of sunlight ever penetrates their lower depths, while, as if in compensation, there are peaks whose summits enjoy a mean day almost twice as long as their night.

In the district of the lunar south pole, lat.  $75^{\circ}$  lies the great crater Newton, whose interior is the deepest known depression on the moon. It is so deep that the sunshine never touches the larger part of the floor of the inner abyss, and one of the peaks on the eastern wall rises 24,000 feet above the tremendous pit. The highest peak of the Andes would stand on the floor, and from its summit one would not be able to see over the crater walls. The size of the ring is 140 miles by 70 miles broad, and it is best seen when the moon is ten days old.

If we turn our glass on the moon on the twelfth day, we see at  $45^{\circ}$  south latitude, on the south-eastern limit of the moon, the enormous crater-plain Schichard, surrounded by a mountain wall very much foreshortened. It rises in one place to nearly 10,000 feet, and is more than 460 miles in circumference, which contrasts strikingly with that of the sixteen small craters within its rampart. A ring so vast as this is large even in comparison with the lunar diameter, and consequently a cragsman standing in the centre might well imagine himself on a boundless plain, since, owing to the rapid rounding of the moon's surface, the ring which encompassed him would be wholly out of sight beyond the horizon.

Of the various mountains that are occasionally seen as projections on the actual edge of the moon, those called Leibnitz, at the south pole, seem to be the highest. The

highest peak reaches the height of 41,900 feet above the neighbouring valley.

In comparing these altitudes with the mountains of the earth, we must for the latter add the depth of the sea to the height of the land. Reckoned in this way, our highest mountains are still higher than any we know of upon the moon.

The surface of the moon turned towards us exhibits an area approximately about double the extent of the continent of Europe;\* it is of such a character that it would be difficult for a traveller upon it to make much progress in exploration without encountering great difficulties. Over the greater part of the lunar globe the rocky surface is so rugged and mountainous that but few regions on the earth would bear comparison with it. There is also another class of difficulty which would embarrass a lunar traveller; he would frequently find his progress intercepted by a deep and wide crack. These fissures often extend for hundreds of miles, and are intersected by other similar chasms. Our largest Alpine crevasses are quite insignificant to these immense lunar fractures.

In making our sojourn on the moon, we must ignore the fact that there will probably be only  $\frac{1}{12}$ th of an inch of mercury in the barometric column at its surface, and that life is endangered when the atmosphere is still sufficiently dense to support twelve inches. We must therefore maintain the delusion that we can exist without air, and attempt to realise some of the less discomfiting effects of its absence. During the moon's long day of 304 hours the temperature probably rises to about 500° F. and during the night falls to -250° F., a range of about 750°. The scorching in sunshine, and the freezing in shade with which mountaineers on the earth are familiar is to be experienced in a terribly exaggerated degree.

We propose to ascend the eastern outside wall of the great crater Copernicus, situated near the lunar equator.

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\* The moon always turns the same side towards us. This is caused by the interesting circumstance that the moon takes exactly the same time to turn once round its own axis as it takes to go once round the earth.

The route of ascent we have selected is up a ridge about 4,000 feet in height, composed of a rough overflow of lava, crag rising on crag and precipice upon precipice, mingled with craters and yawning pits, towering pinnacles of rock, and piles of volcanic debris. We climb without great muscular power, owing to the smallness of the lunar gravity, and get six times as high with the energy used upon the earth.

The difficulty of the climb consists largely in the looseness of the debris scattered over the lava, and great care is needed to negotiate this loose material. Falling stones are attended with no sound, and warning cannot be given to one's companions below. Though the lips may move, they give forth no sound, and conversation can only be carried on by signs.

We grope our way among faintly looming objects, under the united illumination of the half-full earth, and the glimmer of the zodiacal light. The earth-moon appears almost fixed in the sky near the zenith, and a glorious moon it is, with a diameter four times as large as the moon appears from the earth.

It is nearing dawn, but there is no blending of night and day, and no atmosphere reflects the solar beams, and from the black horizon the sun suddenly darts his bright untempered rays, and the highest mountain peaks receive the direct rays of a portion \* of the sun's disc as it emerges from below the horizon. The brilliant lighting of these summits serves but to increase by contrast the prevailing darkness, for they seem to float like islands of light in a sea of gloom.

Notwithstanding the sun's presence, the stars continue to shine more brilliantly than we have ever seen them on the clearest night from the earth. The planets and brightest stars are seen even close to the sun. They do not twinkle, and they retain their brightness down to the horizon.

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\* In central latitudes on the earth the average time occupied by the sun in rising, from the first glint of his upper edge till the whole disc is in sight, is but  $2\frac{1}{2}$  minutes. Upon the moon, this time is extended to a few minutes short of an hour.

At length, after a rough climb, we reach the summit of the crater wall. Our rock-climbing resources have been put to the test, and our boots and clothing have suffered considerably. Our rope is nearly cut through in a few places, owing to the sharpness of the lunar rock, and had not our hands been well covered, they would have been useless for further climbing in the immediate future.

At a rate of motion twenty-eight times slower than we are accustomed to, the light creeps down the mountain sides, and as hour succeeds hour, the sunbeams reach peak after peak in slow succession, till at length, in the course of twelve hours, the circle is complete, and the vast crater rim, fifty miles in diameter, glistens like a silver-margined abyss of darkness, unsoftened by a trace of mountain mist.

By-and-by, in the centre, appears a group of bright peaks; these are the illuminated summits of the central cones, and they become an imposing feature of the scene. Their height is about 2,400 feet above the still invisible floor of the crater, and we remember seeing those peaks from the earth, with an ordinary field-glass, as a speck of light, when illuminated by the rising sun.

From our high standpoint, and looking backward, we glance over a vast region of the wildest volcanic desolation. Craters from five miles in diameter downwards crowd together in countless numbers, so that the surface, as far as the eye can reach, looks frothed over with them. Near the base of the ring on which we stand, extensive mountain ridges run to north and south, casting long shadows towards us; and away to northward run several great chasms, a mile wide, of appalling blackness and depth. No heaths or mosses soften the sharp edges and hard surfaces; no tints of lichenous vegetation give a complexion of life to the hard, fire-worn scene—a vision of a world upon which life has never dawned.

Looking again into the crater, after some hours' interval, we see that the rays of the sun have crept down the inner wall; and now its vast landslipped terraces are visible. Half the crater plateau is in shadow 12,000 feet below, with its grand central group of mountains now fully on

sight. Although these peaks are twenty miles away, and the opposite wall fully double that distance, we have no means of judging their remoteness, as distant objects appear as brilliant and distinct as those which are close.

The shadows have an awful blackness, and the inner western side of the crater, many miles in area, is impenetrable to the sight, for there is no object within it receiving sufficient light to render it discernible. The brilliantly illuminated peaks seen against the black starlit sky, and the glaring sun ghastly in its brightness, all conspire to make a scene of desolate grandeur we would scarcely have thought conceivable. There is no wind to murmur, no ocean to boom and foam, and no streams to splash; dead silence reigns on the lunar scene.

The shadows slowly shorten, and the sun slowly rises toward the apparently stationary crescent earth, till it attains the meridian height, and then, from the tropical region upon which we stand, everything is seen in dazzling light. The interior terraced ridges present every appearance of being enormous landslips, resulting from the crushing of their overloaded summits which have slid down in vast segments and scattered their debris on the plateau. Vacancies in the wall of peaks are seen, from whence those masses have broken away. This broad wall, composed of circle within circle of ridges, terraces, and precipices is very steep, cliff falling below cliff, until the bottom of the fearful abyss is attained.

To descend those precipices, and reach the depressed floor 12,000 feet below, would be a feat for the most lusty rock-climber.

The relief of afternoon comes slowly, and darkness drags its slow length along the valleys and creeps sluggishly up the mountain-sides till, in a hundred hours or more, the time of sunset approaches. Sunset is unaccompanied by any of the gorgeous sky tints. The sun declines towards the dark horizon without losing one jot of its brilliancy, and darts the full intensity of its heat upon all it shines on to the last.

In a few hours the sun passes out of view, and we are in the long lunar night.

Meteors are never seen to flash across the sky, as there is no atmospheric friction to consume them, but dark meteoric particles and masses continually bombard the lunar surface, sometimes singly, sometimes in showers, and there is great risk of being hit by these noiseless and invisible missiles of high velocity.

As midnight draws near, the full earth-moon illuminates the landscape sufficiently well for salient features even at a distance to be easily made out, for this great moon, which is never behind a cloud, has thirteen times the light-reflecting area we are accustomed to see of the moon from the earth. As it is almost stationary near the zenith the shadows scarcely alter, but the light will grow fainter toward morning, as the earth-moon commences to wane. Before this happens we grope our way down the ridge in the ghostly earth-shine, to the lower, but just as lifeless region at the foot of the great crater.

## THE AONACHS.

TWO PHOTOGRAPHS DESCRIBED BY REV. R. P. DANSEY.

THE Aonachs, as everybody knows, are near neighbours of Ben Nevis on the north-east side. The northern ridge of Aonach Mor slopes gradually down towards the Fort William Spean Bridge road, while the southern ridge of Aonach Beag descends more steeply to the head of Glen Nevis, above Steall. It is a grand walk from Fort William to breast the gentle slopes of Aonach Mor from just beyond New Inverloch Castle, and to traverse the ridge to the top of Aonach Beag, returning by Glen Nevis. From the Spean Bridge road a stream may be discerned rising high up on Aonach Mor facing the main road. The east side of this affords good going, and near the source of the burn some beautiful snow bridges may generally be seen in early summer. The one illustrated was taken at the end of June some years ago. The rock, grey in the far distance is not water, but flattish rock, near the bottom of the Aonach Mor slopes. The photograph is taken facing the Spean Bridge road. There are no permanent snow beds near this stream, but there are two beds below the cliffs of Aonach Mor facing north-east, which seldom, if ever, entirely disappear, though one of them succumbed in 1918. Were the flat summit ridge wider than it is, the drifting area would be increased enormously, and the semi-permanent snow beds below might partake of a glacial nature. These snow beds are conspicuous from Roy Bridge Station, which is probably the only station in Britain from which snow is always visible.

Aonach Beag is a fine view-point, with a vista almost equalling that from Ben Nevis. The second photograph was taken from the summit, looking along its neighbour, Aonach Mor. The snow-drifts at the edge are the remnants of a late August storm. Below the north-east





SNOW BRIDGE—AONACH MOR

*Rev. R. P. Dansey*



AONACH MOR FROM AONACH BEAG

*Rev. R. P. Dansey*

ridge of Aonach Beag lies another snow bed, which was still in evidence in 1918—a minimum year for Scottish snow. This is only meant to be a short note illustrative of the photographs reproduced. The Editor had kindly asked for an article which I had hoped might have been forthcoming had I been able to visit Scotland this year.

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#### OBITUARY.

WE regret to record the death of Mr Edward Backhouse which occurred a few weeks ago. An "In Memoriam" notice will appear in the April issue

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

## EASTER MEET, 1922—AVIEMORE.

THE Easter Meet was held at Aviemore, the first of the members arriving on Wednesday, the 12th April, and the last leaving on Saturday, the 22nd. During the week-end the weather was exceedingly rough. There was a strong wind from the north, with showers of rain and snow, and the high tops were never clear. Earlier in the year heavy snow had fallen on the hills, and the Easter storm brought almost continuous snow down to the 1,700-foot level. Never have I seen so much snow on the Cairngorms so late in the year. On the Monday the weather began to settle and the rest of the week was splendid.

The Club had its headquarters at the Cairngorm Hotel, where Miss Macdonald made every one very comfortable. There was an overflow to the Station Hotel, and a few members were at Lynwilg Hotel, which has now a delightful verandah and rooms looking out upon Loch Alvie. The Cairngorm Club also held its Meet at Aviemore, with headquarters at the Station Hotel, and as a number of men belong to both Clubs, the two Meets became more or less united. One wet afternoon there was a discussion round the fire as to how these members should be entered—S.M.C. or Cairngorm Club? Could a man attend two Meets at the same time? I ventured to say—"No more than you can be in two places at the same time." But I was told that this is out of date, for Einstein says you can. So I give it up and insert here all the S.M.C. who were present, though they may have been at the Cairngorm Meet :—H. Alexander, A. Arthur, Guy Barlow, A. M. Buchanan, J. H. Bell, H. C. Comber, D. A. Clapperton, W. Inglis Clark, S. F. M. Cumming, G. Ednie, R. Jeffrey, G. B. Green, A. Harrison, F. Greig, J. Gall Inglis, W. Garden, J. S. M. Jack, J. Murray Lawson,

D. P. Levack, J. R. Levack, W. N. Ling, J. M'Coss, J. L. M'Intyre, D. Mackenzie, H. MacRobert, J. MacRobert, G. B. L. Motherwell, J. A. Parker, J. Rennie, M. J. Robb, A. J. Rusk, G. Sang, G. A. Solly, E. W. Steeple, E. C. Thomson, C. W. Walker, A. M. M. Williamson.

There were the following guests:—C. Bell, W. Cuthbertson, H. A. Nicholson, J. R. Philip, A. Scott, R. G. Sharp, H. F. B. Sharp, J. L. Stevenson, G. D. Valentine, and G. Wilson.

A. E. Maylard, T. Meares, W. W. Naismith, and J. E. A. Steggall were at Lynwilg.

Altogether 41 members and 10 guests attended the Meet.

“Have you bought a copy of the map?” This was the question fired at every man as he arrived. The map was the new Ordnance Survey map of the Cairngorms which had just been published; in fact it had been rushed out in time to catch the Meet. Parker deserves the credit of suggesting the map to the Ordnance Survey, and he had brought three dozen copies with him, which he successfully disposed of within two days. The map is an excellent one—one of the best pieces of cartography produced in this country—but, of course, nobody was going to admit this in Parker's presence, and he was rudely asked what commission he was making and unmercifully chaffed about the omission of the Lower Bothy in Glen Eunach, which seemed to have suddenly assumed the most momentous importance. If he had left out Kingussie, nobody would have mentioned it.

This bothy, to do it justice, was a place of some consequence during the Meet. It was the highest motorable point in Glen Eunach. A big snow wreath blocked the road just above it. So the taxi-cab army that set out each morning for Sgoran Dubh or Braeriach had to stop at the Lower Bothy and take to their feet there. Some sharp competition took place between the two Clubs for the available Fords in the village. The old stalwarts spoke of the days when there were no such indulgences as motors and one had to drive slowly in a wagonette up Glen Eunach, and the still older stalwarts spoke con-

temptuously of all traps whatsoever, and told of the days when men—real men—walked the whole way. In this respect Barlow redeemed the reputation of the Club on the last day.

Bell, Cuthbertson, Ednie, Green, Nicholson, Lawson, and Ling arrived on Wednesday and did Braeriach on Thursday in two parties. It was thick on the summit plateau with driving snow and spindrift, and each party informs me that it found the other wandering about in a lost condition and rescued it. I leave it there.

Maylard and Naismith from Lynwilg walked up the Larig to the Pools of Dee on Thursday and the same day Rusk, on his way to Aviemore, did Beinn a Ghlo.

Many members arrived on Thursday, and on the Friday morning practically the whole party motored up Glen Eunach. Arthur (who had his own car with him), Cumming, Jeffrey, and J. MacRobert ascended Braeriach. Arthur had brought ski to the Meet and he scored this day and again on Monday when he repeated the expedition with H. MacRobert, also on ski. Walking on foot in the new snow was very heavy work, and Arthur easily got ahead of the rest and had fine runs down to the bothy again.

A score or more of men climbed Sgoran Dubh by different routes, and it is not easy to disentangle the different parties. Two definite climbs were done. M'Intyre, M'Coss, Robb, Williamson, and W. Levack (of the Cairngorm Club) did the gully which splits No. I. Buttress. It was a pleasant snow climb all the way, taking two hours. Alexander, Garden, D. P. Levack, Parker, Wilson, Valentine, and A. Milne (of the Cairngorm Club) got an interesting two and a half hours' climb up snow and rock in the gully between No. I. and No. II. Buttress. Ling, Sang, Walker, and the Sharps went up in one party, and Buchanan, Greig, Harrison, Lawson, and Nicholson in another. Green was also on the hill. Greig unluckily sprained his knee glissading, and was incapacitated for the rest of the Meet. The day, which had opened fairly well, deteriorated after noon with the approach of the week-end gale. In the gullies on the face

of the hill there was absolute calm, but when one stepped out at the top on to the plateau, it was into a furious storm. The driving snow from the north-east stung one's face and, after ploughing up to the cairn, just to say that they had done the hill, every one was glad to turn and descend.

The Lynwilg party—Maylard and Naismith—turned their backs on the Cairngorms on Friday and went to the Monadhliaths, climbing Geal-Charn Mor.

On Saturday the hills were buried in cloud low down and most of the men contented themselves with walks to Loch an Eilein and Loch Morlich. Much timber has been cut in Rothiemurchus, and during the war the Canadian Forestry Corps had camps and sawmills in Glen More and felled many thousands of trees. But sufficient forest remains to preserve much of the glory of the district, and, wet though it was, it was a joy to wander over the woodland roads and paths where the red firs rise out of the cushioned undergrowth of heather and blaeberry, and the pine needles form a soft carpet for the foot.

One big expedition redeemed the Saturday from absolute idleness so far as climbing is concerned. Charles Bell, Jack. Ling, M'Intyre, H. MacRobert, Sang, and Steeple climbed Cairngorm and came along the ridge to Creag an Leth-choin. The going was heavy, and careful steering by compass was required all the time, especially round the top of the corries where the cornices were big.

A curious coincidence marked the return of the party. On the road from Coylum Bridge they met a keeper who, seeing ice-axes and big boots, said that he had once climbed Suilven with a party of mountaineers. It was the same man as went up with MacRobert in a climb described many years ago in the *Journal* (Vol. X., May 1909). He was then a keeper at Inchnadamff and now he is at Glen More. That he and MacRobert should meet again at Coylum Bridge was strange.

There were other coincidences during the Meet. "You are Garden, aren't you?" said a visitor at the Station Hotel to William Garden. "Yes." "Well, the last time I met you was on the platform at Laggan

in the Rockies." On the Sunday morning Solly and a few others went to the United Free Church at Rothiemurchus. The preacher was a stranger. On leaving the church Solly spoke to the minister, who said that the preacher was his brother-in-law and that he came from England. "Where?" said Solly. "From near Birkenhead," was the reply.

The conversation with the minister was interesting for another reason. He sympathised with us for the bad weather we were having, and then in soft Highland tones he went on: "I like the men that go to the mountains. There is always a core of gold in the heart of a man that goes to the mountains. I never knew a bad man yet that went to the mountains." Could there be a nicer tribute than this?

The only men to go far afield on the Sunday were Walker and the Sharps and J. R. Philip, who climbed Braeriach and found much fresh snow on the top. The high hills were never clear all day. The effects, however, as seen from the low ground were very fine. I walked round by Kincaig and came back from Lynwilg with the President and others who had been exploring a stone circle at Loch Alvie. Spells of brilliant sunshine alternated with fierce showers of snow from the north. At one moment one was battling with a storm. Then it passed like a curtain, and the Spey, rolling in full flood, shone blue under the sun and one saw the dark woods climbing up the hillsides into the snow and above them great glistening snowfields, merging imperceptibly into the cloud and mist that obscured the summits. Winter—winter in mid-April—was making a last desperate struggle to drive back the coming spring.

By Monday morning the gale had abated, and by afternoon the whole range of the Cairngorms—a magnificent expanse of white—was visible. Most of the Aberdeen members left during the day, and many south men went by the afternoon train, some of them with great energy doing Braeriach before leaving. Such were the resources of the hotel Fords which made short work of the journey up Glen Eunach.



For the subsequent notes upon the Meet I am indebted to Green.

Altogether four parties went to Braeriach during Monday. Buchanan, Harrison, Rusk, Scott, Steeple, and Thomson formed one and were back at Aviemore in time to catch the 4.44 train south. Another party was composed of Lawson, M'Intyre, Nicholson, and Solly, while still another group included Charles Bell, Jack, and Ling. These last were up later than the others and had very fine views.

J. H. Bell, Clapperton, and Cuthbertson went part of the way up Sgoran Dubh and spent a good deal of time glissading. Greig, still incapacitated, remained at the bothy and prepared tea for all these parties.

H. MacRobert—wise man—had brought ski with him to the Meet like Arthur, and on the Monday they had a splendid day together, first on Braeriach and then on Sgoran Dubh. On Braeriach Arthur had a bit of an adventure, going over a cornice, but without bad results.

Green and Stevenson went up Geal-Charn, the summit west of Sgoran Dubh. This gave a very pleasant round, past Loch an Eilein and Loch Gamhna, and down the Allt Ruadh to the Feshie and Kincraig, whence home by train.

On Tuesday J. H. Bell, Cuthbertson, Green, and Solly went up Craigellachie and on to Carn Dearg Mor—a long trudge with many ups and downs, none too easy in the snow, but fully rewarded by the glorious prospect of the Cairngorms.

Clapperton, Maylard, and Meares walked between Lynwilg and Feshie Bridge.

In the evening came the sensation of the Meet. I cannot do better than give it in Green's own words.

“Late in the evening Mr Clulow, manager of the Station Hotel, came in to say that a visitor out ski-ing, and having ordered a car to meet him at Glen More Lodge at 4 P.M., had not turned up at 9: it was too late to do anything, so next morning, as nothing had been heard of him, the members present went out in parties as follows:—

“Solly, J. H. Bell, Barlow, and Cuthbertson went up to the Larig below Craig na Leachain, found his tracks, and followed them to Glen More Lodge.

"Green, M'Intyre, and Stevenson went by car about a mile short of the Lower Bothy in Glen Eunach, found the visitor's starting track, followed it below the slopes of Braeriach reaching over 3,000 feet in Sron na Lairig, down to the Larig Pass, when they found the footsteps of the first party, joining and following it, and went down the Larig to the cross-roads near the Cairngorm Club bridge, when their car met them—Stevenson had gone back to the bothy to send it there.

"Maylard, Meares, Clapperton, and J. E. A. Steggall went up to Glen More Lodge, and on the way met the lost visitor. What he had done is not yet fully known. Clapperton and Maylard went up Cairngorm. Meares and Steggall went up to the 2,000-foot line.

"It appears that the visitor arrived at Glen More Lodge at 11.40 P.M., dead beat, and had stayed the night there.

"M'Intyre and Cuthbertson both put off leaving on Wednesday to take part in the search."

The missing man was Garden's friend of Laggan platform.

All the remaining members, save Barlow, left on Thursday. Green and Solly stopped overnight at Blair Atholl and climbed Beinn a Ghlo from Forest Lodge, walking back to Blair Atholl. The snow was firm and good, but there were loose patches even on the top ridge.

The Meet ended on Friday, when Barlow accomplished the longest day of the whole gathering, doing Braeriach and Cairntoul on foot the whole way. He left Aviemore at 7.20 and was on the top of Braeriach at 12.40. The round of the summit plateau to the Angel's Peak and Cairntoul involved hard going in the snow, but Cairntoul was reached at 3. The precipices in the Garbh Choire were magnificent, all plastered with snow and showing very little rock. Barlow intended to descend to Glen Eunach by a different route, but mist came on and he retraced his steps over Braeriach and reached the Lower Bothy at 6.30 and Aviemore at 9.

So ended the Meet. A word of acknowledgment must be given to the staff at the Cairngorm Hotel and at Lynwilg for their unfailing courtesy in wrestling with big appetites and wet clothes.

H. A.

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

The following additions have been made to the Library :—

- "A Short Bibliography of Scottish History and Literature."  
Compiled by Arthur R. Anderson, St Andrew Society,  
Glasgow, 1922. Presented by Mr Anderson.
- "Mount Everest, the Reconnaissance, 1921." Presented by  
Lieut.-Col. Howard-Bury, D.S.O., and other members of  
the expedition.
- "Songs of the Mountaineers." Collected and edited by John  
Hirst, B.A. Cantab., M.I.E.E., for the Rucksack Club.  
Purchased.

The following periodicals have been received :—

- Bulletin Pyrénéen. April-June, July-September 1922.
- Cairngorm Club Journal. July 1922 (No. 59).
- Canadian Alpine Club Journal. 1921 and 1922.
- Alpine Club Journal. May 1922 (No. 224).
- L'Echo des Alpes. March, April, May, June, July, August 1922.
- La Montagne. January-February, March-April, May-June,  
July-August 1922.
- Club Alpino Italiano. January-February, March-April 1922.
- Zeitschrift des Deutschen und Österreichischen Alpenvereins.  
1921.
- Sangaku. 1921, No. 2 (Vol. xvi., No. 2).
- Norske Turistforenings Aarboker. 1868-1918, Hoved Register.
- Svenska Turistforenings Årsskrift. 1922.
- Sierra Club Bulletin. 1922 (Vol. xi., No. 3).
- Norske Turistforenings Aarbok. 1922.
- Annual of the Mountain Club of South Africa. 1921 (No. 24).

## SLIDE COLLECTION.

During the summer months no new slides have been received.

With a view to adding to the collection, and replacing slides which are worn out or broken, the Custodian would be glad to receive on loan any negatives which members may think suitable.

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*The thanks of the Club are due to the Rev. R. P. Danscy and Mr E. W. Steeple who have each presented the block for one of the illustrations to their articles.*

## REVIEWS.

**New Ordnance Survey Map of the Cairngorms.**

Price 3s. and 4s. Scale: one inch to the mile.

Climbers in the Cairngorms have long been hampered by the fact that the district was very awkwardly distributed on the corners of four of the 1-inch Ordnance Maps, the intersection of which took place at a point about one mile south-east from the foot of Loch Avon. To overcome the difficulty the Cairngorm Club, in 1895, published a special map of the Cairngorms which was a reproduction of the necessary parts of the four 1-inch sheets; but this map was hardly extensive enough, and has long been out of print.

Last year it was suggested to the Ordnance Survey Department that they should bring out a district map of the Cairngorms, and they at once agreed to do so. The map was published at the beginning of last April, a special effort having very kindly been made to get the map out in time for the Easter Meets of the Cairngorm Club and the S.M.C. at Aviemore.

The limits of the map were fixed so as to include all the principal resorts from which excursions are usually made into the Cairngorms. The map thus includes the valley of the Spey from Kingussie to Boat of Garten and Nethy Bridge, Tomintoul, Cock Bridge in the valley of the Don, Balmoral, the Summit of Lochnagar and the path to it from Loch Callator, Braemar, the beginning of the Glen Tilt path, and the whole of Glen Feshie. The district shown measures 32 miles from west to east and 22 miles from north to south. The map is ruled into 2-inch squares, identified by letters and numbers on the margins of the map, which are convenient for estimating distances without scaling, and also for referring to places.

The map has many novel features, and is quite a new departure in the Ordnance Survey Maps. Instead of having contour lines at 100 feet intervals to 1,000 feet, and at 250 feet intervals, above that height it is contoured throughout at 50 feet intervals, every fifth contour line—the 250 feet ones—being slightly thicker than the others.

The map is printed in four colours: black for outline, blue for water, deep red for good roads "fit for fast traffic" (of which there are only 29 miles on the map), and brown for contours. In addition, the map is coloured in green and brown to show layers of 500 feet: two shades of green for surfaces under 1,500 feet, and six shades of brown for surfaces above that level. The combined effect of the close contouring and layer colouring is to give an extraordinary appearance of relief, an excellent example of this being the long Derry Cairngorm ridge of Ben Macdhui.

Road surfaces steeper than one in seven are indicated by "V" markings, the Lecht road from Cock Bridge to Tomintoul showing no fewer than seven of these marks.

The map is folded into a convenient size for the pocket, and is published in two forms. Printed on mounted paper, and folded; and printed on paper, and cut and mounted. On the outer cover there is an attractive colour sketch of Loch Morlich and Cairngorm.

J. A. P.

**A Short Bibliography of Scottish History and Literature**, compiled by Arthur R. Anderson, Saint Andrew Society, Glasgow, 1922.

On a first perusal of this little volume, for which our fellow-member, Mr Anderson, is responsible, one is perhaps inclined to be disappointed at the omission of this or that old favourite. On a closer study of the book, however, one realises that to criticise it on the ground of such omissions would be unfair, for the field of Scottish literature is wide, and the space at Mr Anderson's command is limited. It can only have been by careful research and the exercise of considerable discrimination that he has been able to compress within so small a compass a list of works so truly representative of the best in our national history and literature. The volume should be of great use alike to the student and the book lover, and we offer Mr Anderson our hearty congratulations on the result of his labours. E. P. B.

*Owing to lack of space other reviews have unavoidably been left over until April 1923.*

## 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.*

### DARNING OF BLISTERS.

IN my article in the last number of the *Journal*, I spoke of "darning my blisters." Since then I have been asked to explain what is the meaning of the expression, and I apologise for assuming that everyone would understand the process. So far as I know the idea originated with myself, although others may have employed it. When one had blisters, the usual proceeding was either to walk with them till they burst, or to prick them with a pin and let out the fluid. Either method had usually disastrous results. I conceived the idea of taking a darning needle and worsted and passing the thread through the blister taking care not to pierce the inner skin. The worsted was then cut off with scissors, leaving about half-an-inch projecting on either side. Drainage immediately took place, the blister collapsed, no air entered, and one could continue to walk with comparative ease. Healing took place in a few hours, and I never knew of bad results. On one occasion, at Uig, in Skye, I darned thirty-one separate blisters.

W. INGLIS CLARK.

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### SPUT SEILICH OF SGORAN DUBH.

J. W. LEVACK, J. M'COSS, Dr J. L. M'INTYRE, M. J. ROBB, and A. M. M. WILLIAMSON climbed the Sput Seilich (willow spout) on Friday, 14th April. This is the well-defined gully which splits into two, No. 1 Buttress. It was found to be a typical snow gully, and can be recommended. The summit was capped by a bergschrund and cornice, and when the gully is free from snow it probably carries a rock pitch near the middle, of about 15 or 20 feet in height. The climb is about 600 feet high between the rock walls, and it does not appear to have been previously climbed.

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### THE BARNs OF BYNAC.

A party consisting of C. P. Robb, M. J. Robb, R. T. Sellar, and J. M'COSS, visited these three granite tors on the 6th August 1922.

The position of the Barns is half a mile south-east, and about 400 feet below the summit of Ben Bynac. The top of the south and

largest Barn can just be seen from a few yards east from the cairn.

**NORTH BARN.**—We climbed it by the north face, starting up some blocks at the right-hand side. Beyond this point there is a rather tricky step that requires a long reach and a slight swing towards an upright flake of rock. Behind the flake there is a deep slit about an inch wide, and through it the rope was threaded. There is a foothold, but it is not a good one, and most of the staying-on is done by hugging the flake. Round the corner there is a good foothold, and from it the rope is reversed in the slit as a safeguard beyond, where there is another step leading up to a short gully and the summit. In the descent the flake is closely hugged, and the combined persuasion of two men is needed to separate the descending man from his apparently loving embrace.

**SOUTH BARN.**—The two chimneys on the north-west face were tried, but they were found too difficult. We next tried the south-west face, and Marshall Robb led up a long green crack in fine style. He finished without holds, and a back and foot stunt brought us to the bottom of a narrow through-chimney (the head of the right-hand chimney on the north-west face) on our left about 12 feet high. This chimney brought us to the summit arête. At each end of the arête there is a very rounded mass of rock about 10 feet high, which forms the highest points of the Barn. We do not think this final pitch can be climbed, except possibly by two very tall men. The standing room for a back up is small, and the rock above is rounded and holdless.

We descended by the easy hollow gully on the south-east side. Garden and Parker visited the Barns on the 28th June 1914. See Parker's note, *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. XIII., p. 177. JAMES M'CROSS.

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#### S.M.C. ABROAD.

W. W. NAISMITH in July climbed a few French hills, including Mont Lozère (5,600) and Mont Aigonal (5,170) in the Cevennes, also the Puy de Sancy (6,220) and Puy du Dôme (4,830) in Auvergne. The north side of the Puy du Dôme is covered with ling heather, blaeberries, and other familiar plants. From the meteorological observatory on the top of Mont Aigonal, Mont Blanc, 204 miles away, is occasionally seen—" *mais très, très rarement, Monsieur*"—and in the opposite direction, under like conditions, most of the peaks of the Pyrenees are just visible. The distance in a straight line between le Mont Perdu (in Spain) and Mont Blanc (on the borders of Switzerland) is no less than 400 English miles—as far as from Paris to Marseilles, or from the Orkney Islands to Snowdon!

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Mr H. M. D. WATSON writes:—My itinerary last month was as follows: Champex, Finhaut, Chamounix, Bourg St Maurice (*via* Annesy), Courmayeur. I only did one climb with guides, viz., the

Aiguille du Midi from the Torino Hut above Courmayeur. We had planned to do some other more interesting climb the following day, but bad weather prevented this. There was a marked absence of English climbers, both at Chamounix and Courmayeur, but, of course, it was not a good season for weather. The Torino Hut is a good one, food and services excellent, but unpleasantly crowded.

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W. GALBRAITH was, during August, in that part of Tyrol which is now Italian, and was able to ascend Monte Cristallo in the eastern part, and the Ortler in the western.

Monte Cristallo (10,495 feet) is a Dolomite rock hill. It would not be considered difficult by the experts of the S.M.C., but to the less experienced it is a very interesting introduction to the merits of Dolomite rock and the great help given by Kletterschuhe. The view from it of nearer Dolomites and more distant snow hills is very fine, and there is an added interest at present by the traces, up to the very top of the hill, of the strenuous mountain warfare of the Italians and Austrians.

The Ortler (12,800 feet) is a snow hill of the ordinary type. The present ascent was made by the Hintere Grat, a long arête of rock with snow in places, not really difficult, but not to be recommended to persons without previous experience of similar ascents. It is a most attractive route, with fine views of the Königspitze, a beautiful snow hill, and of the Sulden Valley. The descent was by the more usual route to the Payer Hütte, over snow all the way till the actual hill is left, when there are some easy rocks. In one part the snow is fairly steep, and may cause difficulty to novices.

Both ascents demonstrated once again the invaluable training given by the S.M.C. to those who wish to attempt the higher hills of the Continent.

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W. N. LING with G. SANG spent the last week of July and the first three weeks of August at Saas Fee. The weather was broken and uncertain, and not very much was accomplished. The Allalinhorn was ascended, and then (with Mrs and Miss Sang) the Mittaghorn, both fine days.

Two nights were spent at the Weissmies Inn for the Fletschhorn, but each morning the weather was bad. Sang, Mrs Sang, and Ling then walked over the Simplon Pass, drove up to Macuguaga, whence Saas was regained over the Seewinenhorn and glacier. The Egginer from the col by the south wall, a good rock climb, steep and sensational, was the next climb, and then the whole party crossed the Adler Pass to Zermatt. The glacier was rather difficult this year. Sang and Ling then went up to the Dom hut in splendid weather, and next morning raced a storm for the top of the Dom. The summit ridge was gained, half an hour from the top, when the storm



broke and compelled a hasty and not easy retreat, where experience of what Scottish hills are like in winter proved useful. The weather then broke badly, and Ling returned home, Sang and Mrs Sang following three days later.

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Mr H. R. C. CARR sends the following notes :—Graian Alps, Grande Casse, June 30. We found the glacier quite easy, in contrast to last year. In order to avoid the necessity of cutting steps the whole way up the great snow and ice wall, we made for a rock rib on the extreme right. This was a mistake, as the rocks proved to be hopelessly rotten except just near the top, and we did not use them much. The ordinary route (by which we descended) keeps well to the left, *i.e.*, towards the northern end of the great wall. By keeping to the right, we arrived first on the lower summit and took three-quarters of an hour to cross over to the highest point, which was reached by a delightful snow arête. Crampons would be very useful on this climb. The inn on the Col de la Vanoise was very comfortable.

On the next day, we went on over the Col de la Leisse and camped an hour from the col, high above the Lake of Tignes. From the camp, we climbed the Grande Motte in three hours. It was an easy, but most enjoyable snow walk, and the final ridge possessed a curious cornice which overhung first the north side and then the south side of the mountain. The rocks of the south face (a route recommended in Ball) looked very uninteresting.

The ascent of the south-west ridge of the Sassièrè and of the Italian side of the Col de la Galise can only be recommended to those who couple the virtue of patience with the faculty of enjoying endless slopes of steep scree. The so-called hut at Prarion, by the sources of the Isère, is quite unfit for human habitation.

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Mr J. B. MELDRUM sends the following notes :—

29th July.—Left London with Messrs Bentley, Beetham, and Geo. S. Bower.

30th July.—Arrived Saas Fee, where we joined Mr G. A. Solly, and were also pleased to meet our President, Mr Ling, and the Hon. Secretary.

31st July.—Left 2 A.M. for Mischabeljoch. Found the snow in very bad condition, and the going consequently extremely laborious. Arrived Täschalp 9 P.M. much the worse for wear after two sleepless nights.

1st August.—Walked up to Schönbühl Hut, and on the way we were caught in a thunderstorm.

2nd August.—Unable to proceed to Arolla owing to stormy weather.

3rd August.—Crossed Cols d'Hérens and Bertol, arriving at Arolla for lunch.

*4th August.*—Ascent of Mount Collon with Messrs Beetham, Bower, and Chorley by the westerly ridge, and descent by N.N.E. ridge, which latter took about five hours' steady going.

*5th August.*—Over Pas de Chèvres to the Val des Dix Hut (about two and a half hours), where we spent a very pleasant night.

*6th August.*—Spent four hours step-cutting on the steep N.W. ice slopes of La Lurette, where two of the party had slight frost-bite. Descended to the Glacier de Giétroz, and down wearisome shale slopes to the Vallée de Bagnes, where we stayed the night at Fionney.

*7th August.*—Walked up to the Panossière Hut, where we found a Meet of the Geneva Section, C.A.S., in progress.

*8th August.*—Owing to misty and wild weather we changed our plans of ascending the Grand Combin for the Combin de Corbassière, which we gained by the east ridge, and descended by the south-east. Crossing the Glacier de Corbassière we proposed to finally reach the Valsorey Hut for the ascent of the Combin the following day. Owing to a combination of circumstances, including misdirection and bad weather, we descended the Col Maisons Blanches. We found the rocks very rotten, and the route subject to falling ice and stones, one of the party being somewhat damaged by the latter. During our stay at Bourg St Pierre there was heavy rain.

*9th August.*—The day being wet and unpromising we abandoned any further thoughts of the ascent of the Combin, and accordingly joined Solly who had arranged to take the train from Orsières on his return journey to Arolla. As the rain persisted we gave up our intention of crossing the Col de Chardonnet to Chamonix, to which place we travelled by train, arriving the same evening.

*10th August.*—Arrived at Montanvert Hotel.

*11th August.*—Traverse of the Grépon—fourteen hours.

*13th August.*—Ascent of the Requin.

*15th August.*—Abandoned a proposed attempt on the Verte owing to bad weather.

*16th August.*—Ascent of the Blaitière.

*17th August.*—Left Montanvert for Lausanne, Paris, and home.

In passing, it might not be amiss to state that we found the glaciers in very much better condition than they were either of the previous years. Travelling and passport regulations had also improved considerably.

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Dr INGLIS CLARK writes :—Next to climbing the high peaks, the best thing to do is to go near them, or where one can see them to advantage. I had planned a tour which would lead from the top of one valley to another, without necessitating a return to civilisation. Seven thunderstorms, each of from five to twenty hours' duration, interfered with many of our plans, but we managed to put in about twenty days of walking or climbing. It must be remembered that to carry a rucksack

of from 15 to 20 lbs. on even a moderate walk is equivalent to a vastly longer expedition, and that, as the "allotted span" is approached, every additional 1,000 feet in height is a problem. Starting at Adelboden, after exhausting the local excursions, we crossed the Bonder Krinden to Kandersteg (7,850 feet), and were favoured with superb weather. Our endeavour to cross the Hohthürli to Kiental was defeated by violent storms, and we had to be content with walking down to Reichenbach and up the Kiental. It was found impracticable to cross direct to Isenfluh, but, during a brighter interval, we made our way to the Gries Alp, and reached Isenfluh without rain. To those who wish to see the Jungfrau to perfection, I recommend Isenfluh, and the expeditions (3,000 to 4,000 feet) to the points above, are unsurpassed in beauty and grandeur. I draw a veil over our ascent to the Jungfrau Joch by rail—a confession of weakness. Shifting our headquarters to Meiringen, bad weather dogged us, but three lovely days enabled us to tramp up to the neighbourhood of the Scheidegg, and to photograph the Rosenlaui from every view point. Crossing the Grimsel and down to Fiesch, the climb up to the Eggishorn, the subsequent walks to the Riederfurka, and down to Brigue, were a good certificate of our pedestrian and carrying powers. After a visit to the Riffel and Gornergrat, we were fortunate in winding up our holiday by the crossing of the Augstbord Pass and down to Gruben. We were successful in getting into an empty and clean chalet at Jungen (6,400 feet) high above St Niklaus, where, in solitude, but for the restless movements of the neighbouring cows, we cooked an excellent supper, slept the sleep of the just, and wakened at 5 A.M. to see a rosy sunrise on the Weisshorn. After an excellent breakfast we passed through a zone of dense mist, and emerging near the Pass into brilliant sunshine. The finest scenery is on the St Niklaus side, but the descent to Gruben displayed the fine head of the Turtmann Valley. A long, but beautiful descent leads to Turtmann in the Rhone Valley. I have dwelt in detail on this salvationist holiday in order to induce others who may find the high peaks beyond them to try the walking "Bohemian" holiday. I may say that the aggregate total of actual climbing amounted to 35,000 feet.

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Mr R. A. ROBERTSON and Mr G. B. GREEN were at the Riffelalp Hotel, Zermatt, the latter from 2nd to 19th August, the former from the 2nd to the 25th. Mr Robertson was suffering from an injured knee, but it improved so much that before he left he was able to walk down to Zermatt and up again. Owing to the lack of more experienced companions and the expense of guides, Mr Green did no more than the usual walks in the neighbourhood. They went up the Hohthäligrat and the Unter Rothorn with Mr J. H. Wigner, A.C., once a member of the S.M.C. The weather was very fine but for a few days.

Mr and Mrs SOLLY had their headquarters at Arolla for about four weeks from the middle of July. At first the weather was not very good, but they traversed La Roussette, and had an interesting expedition up the icefall of the Vinbez Glacier to the Col de Vuignette, descending by the Glacier de la Piece in a thick fog. At the end of the month Mr Solly joined Mr Meldrum and two other members of the Alpine Club—Messrs Beetham and Bower—at Saas Fée, and with them traversed the Mischabeljoch to Zermatt, and the Col d' Herens and Col de Bertol to Arolla. They then went to the Cabane de Dix with the intention of traversing Mount Pleureur, but there were too many clouds, so they went for La Luette, which is a slightly lower peak, ascending it from the Lendarey glacier by a long and very steep ice slope.

On the next day they went to the Panossière hut, from which they ascended the Combin de Corbassiere, and crossed the Col des Maisons Blanches to Bourg St Pierre.

At this point Mr Solly had to leave his companions, who were on their way to Chamonix.

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Mr E. C. THOMSON writes :—You may wish to have notes of three weeks K. G. M'Lean and I spent in the Austrian Tyrol and the Dolomites in August. We spent a week in the Zillerthal, staying at the Alpenrose Hütte in the Zemmgrund. Climbed the Schönbichler Horn (10,285 feet) and the Rossruckspitze (10,850 feet) without guides. The Alpenrose is small and comfortable. This trip, including fares from Innsbruck, cost 19s. each for the week! We overheard a guide asking 76,000 kronen for the Grosse Greiner, about 6s. 6d. in our money then.

In the Dolomites we climbed the Grosse Formeda (9,405 feet) with guides Joseph Nogler, jun., and Giuseppe Bernardi, both excellent (100 lira each), from St Ulrich, and from Cortina the Croda da Lago (8,885 feet) with a guide (100 lira), and Monte Cristallo (10,495 feet) without guides. We saw relics of the war on the summit of Cristallo in the form of many rounds of small-arm ammunition scattered about, and several small stone shelters.

Guides range from 80-400 lira, the rate being fixed by the Italian Alpine Club. Good hotels charged about 9s. a day (40 lira).

We went to Innsbruck by Laon and Basle, and returned by Munich, Cologne, and Flushing. The latter was much the cheaper route, even allowing for the German transit *visa*.



*June 1922*

FIG. 1

*J. A. Parker*

THE MITRE RIDGE, BEINN A' BHUIRD