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MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.

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CONTENTS.

(Names of Authors in Italics.)

	PAGE
The North Wall Variation of the Crowberry Ridge. <i>By J. A. Garrick</i> - - - - -	I
A Pedestrian Excursion in the Highlands. <i>Written by Charles Simpson Inglis in 1856. Edited by J. Gall Inglis.</i>	
Parts II. and III. - - - - -	11, 254
The Miseries of Mountaineering. <i>By A. M. Macrae Williamson</i> - - - - -	26
Night Up There. <i>By G. D. Valentine</i> - - - - -	35
Skye Relief Fund - - - - -	41
Skye Ridges, Cracks, and Staircases. <i>By J. H. B. Bell</i> - - - - -	63
"I to the Hills." <i>By Anon</i> - - - - -	71
Lochnagar at Easter. <i>By A. J. Rusk</i> - - - - -	72
Recollections of Over Sixty Years' Rambling on Scottish Hills. <i>By Walter A. Smith</i> - - - - -	77
In Memoriam—	
David Sloan Arthur - - - - -	83
Sir Archibald Geikie - - - - -	136
Sir James H. Ramsay of Bamff - - - - -	137
James Maclay - - - - -	202
Benjamin Neeve Peach - - - - -	275
T. R. Marshall - - - - -	276
Eric Paton Buchanan. <i>Honorary Editor, 1921-24</i> - - - - -	109
Mountain Reveries. <i>By A. Ernest Maylard</i> - - - - -	111
Five Nights in the Scottish Hut. <i>By R. N. Rutherford</i> - - - - -	117
Wind on the Fells. <i>By Lawrence Pilkington</i> - - - - -	123
Early Winter Climbing. <i>By W. W. Naismith</i> - - - - -	124
The Scottish Four Thousands in Twenty-Four Hours. <i>By Eustace Thomas</i> - - - - -	133
The 100th Number of the <i>Journal</i> . <i>By J. G. Stott</i> - - - - -	161
" " " " <i>By W. Douglas</i> - - - - -	162
" " " " <i>By F. S. Goggs</i> - - - - -	164
" " " " <i>By E. P. Buchanan</i> - - - - -	167
" " " " <i>By the Editor</i> - - - - -	168
An Adventure on Ben Nevis in 1861. <i>By the late William Henry Burroughes</i> - - - - -	169
Note on the Above. <i>By Godfrey A. Solly</i> - - - - -	172
Three Men with a Tent Through Lorne and Benderloch. <i>By Percy Donald</i> - - - - -	175

	PAGE
The Achallader Accident. <i>By George Sang</i> - - -	179
Eating Between Meals. <i>By J. A. Garrick</i> - - -	190
Stob a' Choire Claurigh. <i>By Sean Fhada</i> - - -	199
West Buttress of Corrie Brochain, Braeriach. <i>By Alex. Harrison</i> - - -	200
Mountain Fantasy. <i>By E. A. B.</i> - - -	204
Events of Note - - -	235
The Club Dinners. <i>By T. Fraser Campbell</i> - - -	241
Hill Walks by the Sound of Mull. <i>By Arthur W. Russell</i> -	249
Stob Ghabhar. <i>By A. J. R.</i> - - -	268
Gathering for the Meet - - -	287
Correspondence—Menu Cards - - -	288
" Ramblings " About Lorn. <i>By Alastair C. M'Laren</i> -	313
Glenfinnan to Glenelg. <i>By F. S. Goggs</i> - - -	317
Summer Days in Skye. <i>By A. G. Hutchison</i> - - -	329
The Saddle. <i>By A. J. Rusk</i> - - -	337
Of Sutherland. <i>By George Sang</i> - - -	342

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES :—

Glen Clova District - - -	60
Ben More, Mull - - -	100
Campsie Fells - - -	101
Coir' a' Ghrunnda—The Owl Buttress - - -	102
Sgùrr a' Ghreadaidh—The Terrace, West Buttress -	102
Ben Nevis Castle Ridge - - -	102
Arran at Easter, 1924 - - -	104
S.M.C. Abroad, 1924 - - -	104
" " 1925 - - -	227
" " 1926 - - -	365
Fannich Forest - - -	218
Excerpts from Sligachan Climbers' Book - - -	220
Sgùrr Dhomhnuill - - -	221
Meaning of Bhàsteir (Skye) - - -	223
Four Novices in Skye - - -	224
The Height of Carn Dearg (North), Ben Nevis - - -	226
The Donegal Highlands - - -	227
Invergarry and Kinlochquoich Motor - - -	300
Sgùrr a' Mhuilinn : A Cartographical Error or Two -	300
Note on Curved Ridge and Easy Gully, Buchaille Etive, New Year, 1926 - - -	302
A Ghurr Thionail - - -	363
Rule for Estimating Times for Hill Walks - - -	363
Visit of Slovene Mountaineers - - -	364

REVIEWS AND NOTICES :—

George D. Abraham's " First Steps to Climbing " -	57
Arthur Gardner's " The Peaks, Lochs, and Coasts of the Western Highlands " - - -	58

REVIEWS AND NOTICES—*continued.*

	PAGE
Rev T. Ratcliffe Barnett's "The Road to Rannoch and the Summer Isles" - - - - -	98
Walter A. Smith's "The Hill Paths, Drove Roads, and Cross-Country Routes in Scotland" - - - - -	99
Lawrence Pilkington's "An Alpine Valley and Other Poems" - - - - -	157
Herbert C. Carr and George A. Lister (edited by), "The Mountains of Snowdonia" - - - - -	237
Lieutenant-Colonel E. F. Norton's "The Fight for Everest, 1924" - - - - -	304
G. I. Finch's "The Making of a Mountaineer" - - - - -	305
Seton Gordon's "The Cairngorm Hills of Scotland" - - - - -	306

FULL OR HALF-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS : —

The Crowberry Ridge—Buchaille Etive - - - - -	1
The Crowberry Tower—Buchaille Etive - - - - -	4
The Crowberry Ridge (showing Various Routes) - - - - -	10
Ben Avon (Summit Rocks) - - - - -	28
Beinn a' Ghlo (from above Shinagag) - - - - -	49
The Cioch - - - - -	63
The Cioch and Sgùrr Sgumain (Diagrams) - - - - -	68
Snow Cornices—Lochnagar - - - - -	72
The Cliffs of Lochnagar - - - - -	76
Looking Southward from Rathad a' Gharaidh Dhuibh - - - - -	91
Belig and Garbh-bheinn - - - - -	93
Eric Paton Buchanan - - - - -	109
Ben Nevis Ridge from Carn Mhor Dearg Arête - - - - -	117
Carn Mhor Dearg Arête - - - - -	120
A Snow-cleared Atmosphere - - - - -	139
Ben Cruachan Main Top from Stob Dearg - - - - -	147
Ben Cruachan Main Top and Stob Dearg from Drochaid Glas - - - - -	153
Ben Achallader from Crannach Wood - - - - -	161
Glas Bheinn Mhor and Ben Starav from Stob Coir' an Albannaich - - - - -	175
View to South from Stob Coir' an Albannaich - - - - -	178
Ben Achallader (North-East Face) - - - - -	184
Ben Achallader and Achallader Farm - - - - -	188
Sugach Rocks - - - - -	192
Cir Mhor - - - - -	196
Storm Clouds over Coire an-t-Sneachda, Ben Macdhuil - - - - -	241
A' Chioch of Ben More (Mull) - - - - -	252
Maps to Illustrate "A Tour in the Highlands in 1861" - - - - -	256
Stob Ghabhar from below the Lochain - - - - -	268
Loch Tulla and Stob Ghabhar - - - - -	272
Clach Leathad and Sron na Crèise - - - - -	297

	PAGE
FULL OR HALF-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS—<i>continued</i>.	
Buchaille Etive Mor and Bheag from Glen Etive -	302
Knoydart, Lochan nam Breac, and Luinne Bheinn -	313
Dunan Creagach, Argyllshire - - -	314
Sgùrr na Ciche and Ben Aden from near Kinlochquoich -	322
Ladhar Bheinn from North-East - - -	329
Saddle, The, Loch Duich, on the Sgùrr nan Forcan Ridge	337
Ladhar Bheinn Looking East from Summit of - -	337
Ben Laoghal from Road North of Altnaharra - -	342
An Caisteal (Sutherland), Summit Rocks of - -	343
Ben Hope (North-West Aspect) - - -	346
" Western Bastion of - - -	347
Coire Garbh, Ben Attow - - -	353
Meall Buidhe and Luinne Bheinn—Views from the Summit of Ben Aden - - -	356
Spearhead Arête, Beinn Narnain—East Face - -	376
Ben Lomond from " Jean " - - -	378

ILLUSTRATION IN TEXT:—

Corrie Brochain (Braeriach) - - -	201
-----------------------------------	-----

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB:—

Thirty-fifth Annual General Meeting and Dinner, 1923 -	44
New Year Meet, Blair Atholl, 1923-24 - - -	48
Autumn Meet, Seathwaite, 1923 - - -	52
Library and Club-Room - - - 53, 94, 154, 217, 286,	361
Easter Meet—Braemar, 1924 - - -	85
" " Tyndrum, 1924 - - -	89
Summer Meet, Skye, 1924 - - -	91
Thirty-sixth Annual General Meeting and Dinner, 1924 -	139
New Year Meet, Loch Awe, 1924-25 - - -	146
Easter Meet, Fortwilliam, 1925 - - -	206
Skye Meet, June 1925 - - -	214
Thirty-seventh Annual General Meeting and Dinner, 1925	277
New Year Meet—Tyndrum, 1925-26 - - -	289
" " Inveroran, 1925-26 - - -	294
" " Bridge of Orchy, 1925-26 - - -	298
Easter Meet—Cluanie, Tomdoun, and Glen Shiel, 1926 -	349
" " Bridge of Lochay, 1926 - - -	359
The Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland -	307, 375

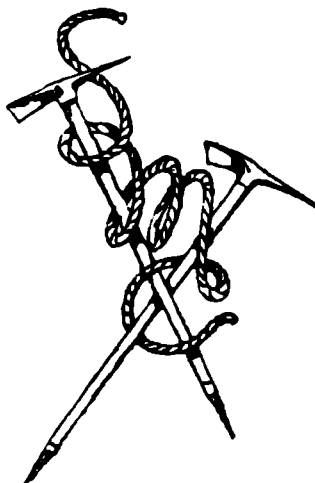
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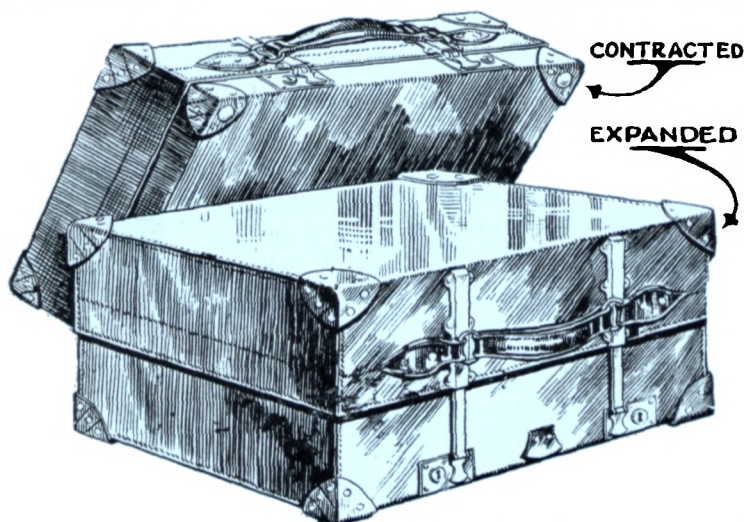
All Notices for the November Number should be sent to E. P. BUCHANAN, 6 Alva Street, Edinburgh, as soon as possible, and not later than 15th September 1924.

CONTENTS.

The North Wall Variation of the Crowberry Ridge ...	J. A. Garrick.
With Note	by H. MacRobert
A Pedestrian Excursion in the Highlands—	
2. Invercannich to Lungard	J. Gall Inglis.
The Miseries of Mountaineering	A. M. Macrae Williamson.
Night Up There	G. D. Valentine.
Skye Relief Fund.	
Proceedings of the Club—	
Thirty-fifth Annual General Meeting.	
New Year Meet, 1923-24.	
Autumn Meet, October 1923.	
Library and Club-Room.	
Reviews.	
Excursions and Notes.	
Office-Bearers for 1924.	

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Crowberry Ridge—	Buchaille Etive.
The Crowberry Tower—	Buchaille Etive.
The Crowberry Ridge (showing various routes).	
Ben Avon (summit rocks).	
Beinn a' Ghlo (from above Shinagag).	



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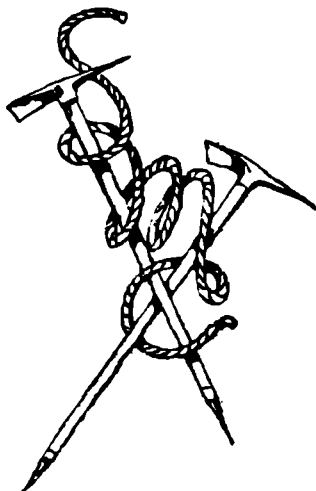
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CONTENTS.

Skye Ridges, Cracks, and Staircases	J. H. B. Bell.
"I to the Hills"	Anonymous.
Lochnagar at Easter	A. J. Rusk.
Sixty Years' Rambling on Scottish Hills	Walter A. Smith.
In Memoriam—Major David Sloan Arthur, M.C.	
Proceedings of the Club—	
Easter Meet, 1924—Braemar.	
Tyndrum.	
Summer Meet, 1924—Skye.	
Library and Club-Room.	
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Excursions and Notes.	
S.M.C. Abroad.	

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Cioch
Diagrams—The Cioch and Sgumain.
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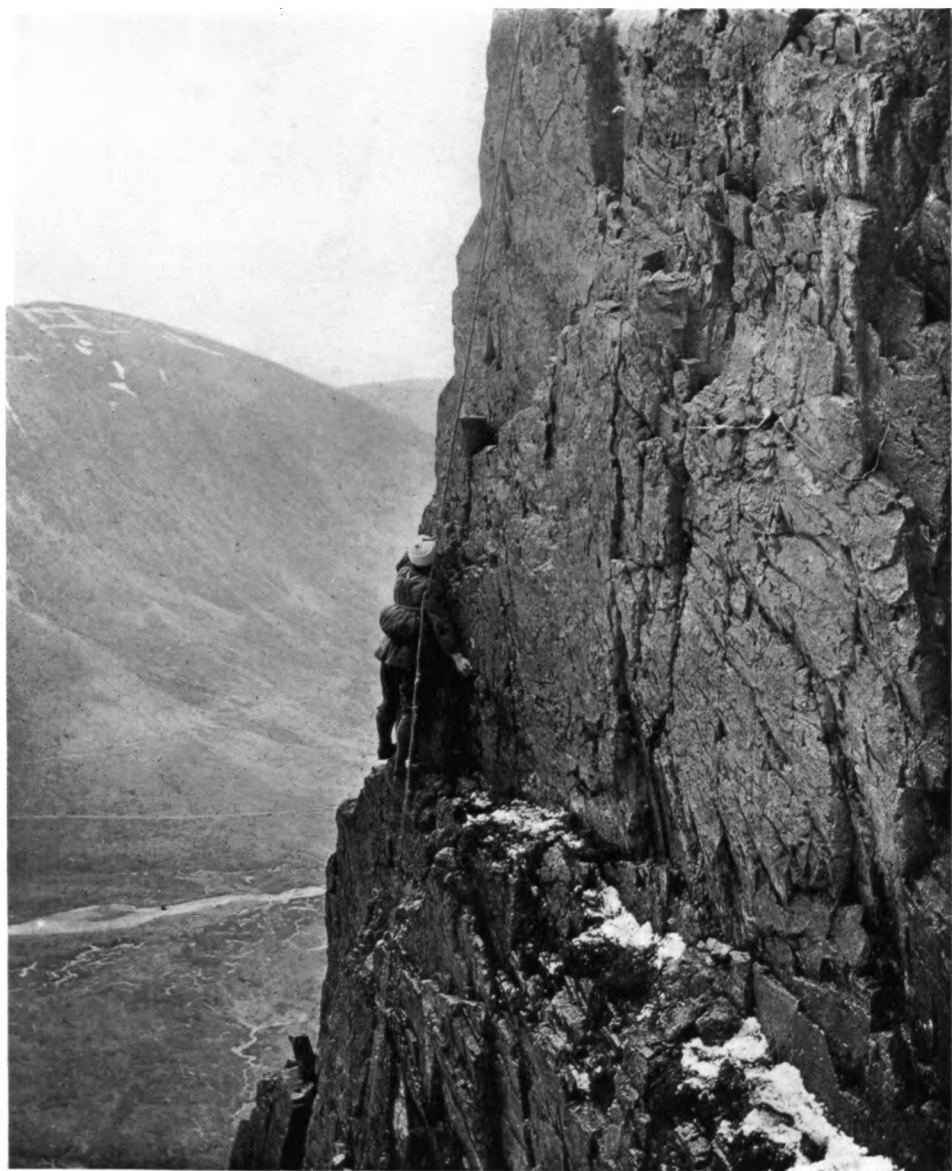


PLATE I.

THE CROWBERRY RIDGE
(THE EASY VARIATION OF THE DIRECT ROUTE)

Dr Gibson

THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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THE NORTH WALL VARIATION OF THE CROWBERRY RIDGE.

BY J. A. GARRICK.

IT is one of the misfortunes of my young life to be compelled, during ten months of the year, to take my scansorial exercises in penny numbers and at long intervals, and, in consequence, to get shockingly out of condition. Unlike those happy climbers who are out almost every week-end, gliding up something "severe and exposed," or prancing about on some icy steep with all the agility of youthful chamois in the pink of condition, I sometimes go for months together without even seeing a mountain, except, perhaps, at long range. It is true that every summer I have an orgy of climbing which may last about two months, but I have to start short of wind and flabby of muscle, and the first few days are apt to be rather disconcerting. It is not nice to be as nervous as a cat, nor to get cramp in both legs simultaneously; nor is it particularly comforting to feel large holds as mere rugosities, and small ones not at all. But bitter experience has shown that no climbing holiday begins without these unpleasant sensations manifesting themselves singly, together, or so many at a time.

Towards the end of May 1923, with a heavy Alpine programme billed to commence in the middle of July, I was oppressed by gloomy forebodings. Clearly something would have to be done about getting rid of the fatty products of eight months' inactivity. In my extremity

I turned to my friend Biggart, who was just back from the Lake District, and game for anything, and, as neither of us had been on Buachaille Etive, the Crowberry Ridge by the direct route, coveted for many moons, was agreed upon as an excellent expedition in all respects. Thus it was that one Friday, undeterred by the obviously unsettled state of the weather, but hoping for a thin streak of dry in a thick layer of wet, we set forth to Clachaig.

It has always been a source of wonder to me how one can, year after year, go on being optimistic about the weather when one is so often badly let down by it. Driving up from Ballachulish, we searched a rain-bleared landscape for familiar mountain forms, and saw them not. Yet for no stronger reason than that the downpour ceased for an hour or two in the evening, we were prepared to trust the weather merchants to serve up something really good on the morrow, and retired to rest accordingly.

Next morning there was indisputable evidence that it had rained heavily while we slept. All the previous night's puddles were bigger, and there were several new ones, while foaming cataracts rioted down the mountain-sides, and filled the air with the sweet sound of many waters. It was not actually raining, but the south-west wind was packing clouds into the glen with devilish haste and steadfastness of purpose, and the weak spirit within me whispered, "The Crowberry is no place for you on a day like this; you'd better try something a bit easier." I wavered, and might have been lost had not the thought occurred to me that it was unwise to expect too much of the gods—or are they devils?—who look after the weather, and that the freedom from rain which we enjoyed at the moment might be all that they were disposed to vouchsafe to us. All this time B. had been straining at the leash, and when I had informed him of the momentous decision to submit my enfeebled person to the rigours of a difficult climb under bad conditions, we trekked off up the glen without further ado.

We left the road at Alltnafeadh just as the rain re-asserted itself in no uncertain manner, and approached the crags obliquely across the moor. Somehow or other we

took to the rocks too soon, and we seemed to have been scrambling and traversing for hours in a wilderness of rock, when a fine steeply suddenly came into sight as we rounded a corner. It could be none other than our ridge; but just to make absolutely certain, we went still farther to the left to a prominent knife-edge which bounded our vision in that direction. A brief survey of the country beyond convinced us that the steeply was the oft-quoted "300-foot nose" of the Crowberry, and traversing back we reached, in the course of time, the large platform at its base. Thence we mounted rapidly to Abraham's Ledge, and after I had securely tied myself on to one of a very excellent collection of hitches which adorns it, B. went out along the traverse and gazed up at the direct route. It had been raining hard for two or three hours, and the rocks were beginning to look unpleasantly wet, so it was decided to avoid the *mauvais pas* by making use of the traverse invented for that very purpose. B. was in great form, and very keen to try the direct route, and it was I who vetoed the idea. But in view of what happened later, I feel now that he could have done it comfortably.

We commenced the turning movement by descending a little chimney from the right-hand end of the ledge, and traversing an awkward slab to a large grass patch. Then we looked round for a well-marked gully, which a description of the route had promised us. We found *two*; one, near the ridge, wet, grassy, and altogether repulsive; the other, on the right of the first, cleaner, more conspicuous, and seductive by comparison. We chose the latter for its more gentlemanly qualities, and because we thought we saw a possible traverse back towards the crest of the ridge from the top of its first pitch.

After proceeding a short way up the bed of the gully we escaped on to a steep buttress on its right, and had a bit of climbing harder than anything lower down on the ridge. One move in particular recurs vividly to my memory. It produced a sensation which is so common during one's novitiate: that of rising with wobbly knees from a cramped position on a small and very greasy ledge, and balancing up and up to a distant hand-hold of a

retiring disposition. At the top of the pitch we found ourselves on a long horizontal grass ledge, with a bulging wall above and a plunging drop into the Crowberry North Gully below. We had been grossly deceived in the matter of the traverse, and the only means of getting off the ledge in an upward direction was a continuation of the gully which sprang up from its farther end. Of course, we could have gone down the way we had come and tried the grassy gully, but with a vague idea that we might be on Naismith's route, we decided to investigate the gully in front. It had a chock-stone half-way up, and it looked as though we might be able to traverse out from it on to the wall above the bulge.

We reached the chock-stone by keeping out on the buttress on the right of the gully and then traversing in, only to find that the next move, on to the wall, was most unattractive under the prevailing conditions, so on we went up the gully, ploughing in soft snow, and emerged on another horizontal ledge. Along this the gully continued as a shallow trough until it once more steepened, and thinned down to a scoop lying in the angle between the ridge and a wall which, rising out of the Crowberry North Gully, cut right across the ridge.

The pitch looked harmless enough, and it was only when B. was nearing the top of the scoop that its disreputable character was revealed to us. The passage of the scoop was guarded by a large and angular block of sinister aspect, delicately poised and ready to precipitate itself upon us if annoyed. It was really most unsafe. I was about 20 feet below B., on an exposed grass ledge, and he called down to inquire if I thought the stone would hit me if he pulled it off. My reply was that the possibility was not remote, whereupon he remarked that it might be just as well to leave it where it was, as it would most certainly knock him off first before passing on to deal with me. Scarcely daring to breathe lest the terror might be loosed upon us, B. rejoined me on the ledge to discuss the possibilities of a narrow chimney on the extreme right of the transverse wall, which looked as though it might go. I anchored myself to the ledge by thrusting a



PLATE II.

THE CROWBERRY TOWER
(FROM NORTH BUTTRESS)

E. R. Beard

leg over an uncomfortably sharp stone wedged in a cleft, and safeguarded B. while he traversed out over the depths of the Crowberry North Gully and tucked himself out of sight in the chimney. Sounds of scraping transmitted through the rock were followed by ominous rumblings, which I diagnosed as a loose chock-stone, and he reappeared with an adverse report on the internal structure of the chimney. I would fain have untwined my leg from the infernal stone and nursed it back to life, but, faced with defeat, B. was off again, perched in a precarious position on top of a square recess a few feet to the right of the forbidden scoop. For several minutes he remained straddled over the recess, his left foot seeking support on a hold sloping at an almost impossible angle, and well lubricated with a plentiful supply of slime, which oozed from every pore of the rock. Then he suddenly launched himself across, effected an astonishing foot-change on the sloping hold, and with swift, gliding movements crossed the top of the scoop into perfect safety beyond. It was a magnificent feat, but how on earth was I, in my decrepit state, to reproduce it? I had come up thus far without bearing the least resemblance to "heavy luggage"—and this in spite of an ice-axe which, true to type, had resorted to all manner of unfair practices in its endeavours to stay my progress—but this pitch was altogether different from the others. I felt sure that any attempt to follow my leader exactly would result in a swing and dangle, whereas if I attacked the low wall on the left of the scoop the worst that could happen would be the dangle. The easier route was evil enough, and my ascent was a succession of bad frights tempered by the sustaining influence of the rope, and finally set at rest by a heaven-sent hand-hold with which I drew myself up to B., but not before I had swung out over the scoop, and, with a triumphant yell, kicked off the offending block.

After a well-earned rest we traversed over gently-inclined slabs to the crest of the ridge, to find that nothing remained of it but easy scrambling, and ere long we were on the summit of the mountain, where we found little footprints in the snow, and judged them to be the tracks

of members of the Ladies' Club, who were known to be operating in the vicinity. We followed them down the ridge and into Coire Tulaich, and galloped down a long slope of snow to a point where the burn disappears into a tumble-down ravine. Here we suddenly remembered the famous River Coupal, and all the stories we had heard of its diabolical habit of frustrating the schemes of those who, without taking thought, essay to cross its perilous waters. We therefore resolved to steal a march on it by getting it young, so to speak, and accordingly turned sharply to the left, crossed the retaining wall of the corrie, and crept down a remarkably steep slope of mixed grass and rock upon our unsuspecting victim. Our cunning was rewarded, for although a robust youngster, he was not strong enough to stop us, and we were soon squelching over the last thin strip of moorland.

During the walk back through the glen we were confirmed in the opinion—which we hold in our less rabid moments when the climbing fever is at a low ebb—that unkind as bad weather undoubtedly can be to the ardent “ultramontane,” it has a wonderful way of extracting the very last spot of beauty from our Scottish hills; so we thought as we ambled down the glen, and we stopped so often to look around us that it was nearly 9 o'clock when we reached Clachaig. Despite the lateness of the hour and the low dryness fraction of our climbing rags, we were received with smiles and overwhelmed with comforts: baths of such thermal excellence that their steam belched forth whenever the bathroom door was opened, and hung about the landing as a thick fog; a dinner to match our appetites; and finally, a roaring fire in the smoke-room, where we sprawled, blinking contentedly, and talking of good days past and to come. We were particularly satisfied with the one which was just passing, for we felt that our route had been unusual, and under the bad conditions it was certainly difficult enough, but we were puzzled, and could not trace its relation to the other routes on the ridge.

The mystery was cleared up a few days later by Mac-Robert, who knew something of the early history of the

gully which had lured us from the straight and narrow path, and has undertaken to contribute a general note on the ridge. Our discovery of the gully may be looked upon as the result of a natural desire to avoid getting unnecessarily wet in the grassy gully when a drier alternative lay ready at hand, a desire in which we were ably assisted by our extremely hazy ideas concerning the general topography of the ridge. To MacRobert's party the gully was the only means of getting beyond Abraham's Ledge, all the known routes being under ice and quite impossible. Four hours of step-cutting in hard ice and snow took them to the foot of the transverse wall, but there the conditions became altogether too bad, and they were forced to return, eventually regaining Abraham's Ledge after a further three hours of what must have been very trying work.

It only remains to add that the gully would be more accurately described as a gangway, or staircase, with three flights and two landings. It slants up the north wall of the ridge in much the same way as an emergency fire-escape staircase on the wall of a building, and ends at the foot of the last easy rocks leading to the Crowberry Tower.

NOTE ON THE CROWBERRY RIDGE.

THE Crowberry Ridge route on Buchaille Etive Mor has been one of the classic climbs of Scotland since the story of its discovery and first ascent was so charmingly told by Mr Naismith in Vol. IV. of the *Club Journal*.

Since that date only two articles descriptive of the Ridge have appeared in the *Journal*, namely, Dr Inglis Clark's in Vol. VII., and Mr Maclay's in Vol. VIII. Mr Garrick's new route on the Ridge is an excellent excuse for reopening the subject, and these notes are intended to bring the climbing history up to date, and to clear up doubtful points about the routes.

The Crowberry Ridge lies between two very well-marked gullies, the Easy Gully on the left and the Crowberry Gully on the right, and, once committed to its ascent, the climber, on its lower crags, has little choice of route and no ways of escape into the bounding gullies. The pioneers naturally climbed the Ridge by what they believed to be the easiest way. Those who followed, just as naturally, tried to

straighten out and improve the route from a climbing point of view.

Naismith's original route started from the foot of the Crowberry Gully and went up a shallow subsidiary gully which led up slightly to the left, but never touched the actual crest of the Ridge until above the steep lower portion. Thereafter the crest was followed over the Tower to the summit.

Some years later a party of English climbers, led by Mr G. D. Abraham, after careful prospecting, found a more direct way up the steep lower rocks. The first part of this variation is easy, but a 40-foot pitch in the middle, the well-known Abraham Traverse, is very difficult and exposed. Except for this formidable pitch, Abraham's route is probably easier than the original route, as the rocks, although very steep, have excellent holds.

For the first 300 feet of the climb there were now, therefore, two roughly parallel routes. To make the Abraham route practicable to ordinary climbers, the obvious method was to cut out the bad pitch by traversing out to the right below it on to Naismith's route, and returning above it. When this was first done is not quite clear, but the first note in print about it was Maclay's article. Unfortunately, the diagram attached to this article had a mistake in it, and this led to some confusion. Abraham's Ledge, as it is called, from which the difficult pitch starts by a traverse to the left, was misplaced, and hence also Maclay's variation to the right. Maclay's description, however, was quite clear, but the variation indicated by him and now followed was not completed at that time. This was left to Greig, who, following up later, traversed up and out to the right from Abraham's Ledge on to Naismith's route, and coming back almost at once by a higher ledge, regained the crest of the ridge some 50 feet above the Ledge. Greig's short note of this climb appeared in Vol. X., p. 121.

This completes the climbing history of the Ridge, so far as related in the pages of the *Journal*, except a note as to a traverse on to the Ridge high up just below the Crowberry Tower from the left-hand or Easy Gully, and a direct ascent to the Tower by a chimney from that Gully (Vol. V., p. 90).

The ordinary route up the Crowberry Ridge is now as follows: The lowest rocks of the Ridge, which lie close to the Crowberry Gully, are generally reached from the Kingshouse direction by crossing the foot of the Curved Ridge, where it curves round towards the Crowberry Gully. These rocks are inclined at an easy angle and abut on the steep 300-foot buttress of the lower ridge, and form the natural approach to it. The buttress is then climbed up almost perpendicular but easy rocks to Abraham's Ledge. The direct route goes out to the left on small foot-holds with only one hand-hold—for the right hand—which must eventually be relinquished and the body hoisted up on to a large sloping slab, breast-high, with no hand-holds. This slab is climbed to a shallow corner which leads to easier ground above. There is only one record of a descent of this pitch—by Harold

Raeburn alone. The ordinary route goes up from the right-hand end of the ledge, and traverses into a square-cut corner and out round a projecting buttress. The step round this buttress on to a very convenient ledge is the crux of the climb (see Illustration). The ledge leads easily to Naismith's route—here a shallow open water slide. A few feet up this and a narrow ledge leads back to the left, round the same projecting buttress to the crest of the Ridge. Above this the route goes slightly to the left and up an open chimney to easier rocks, which soon lead to grass and screes at the top of the steep part of the Ridge. The way then lies up gradually steepening rocks to the Crowberry Tower. The descent from here to the connecting gap is over horribly rotten rock, which needs some care. Easy scrambling thereafter leads to the summit cairn.

This ordinary route can be made even easier by taking the route actually followed by Maclay when he discovered the route now in use. This traverses to the right some 15 feet below Abraham's Ledge on easy rocks and grass ledges, which lead as before to Naismith's route. The rather tricky corner in Greig's route is thus avoided. This easier route can also be reached by descending a little chimney from the right-hand end of Abraham's Ledge.

To come now to Garrick's new route described above. This starts from Naismith's route, just above where the easy traverse referred to in the foregoing paragraph comes in. Looking up from here, as Garrick points out, the most tempting route leads slightly to the right by a well-defined narrow gully. This gully, however, is really a ledge or rake running up the steep bounding wall of the deeply-cut Crowberry Gully. On its left the wall rises steeply to the Ridge, shutting off all access thereto, while on its right the climber looks down into the dark rift of the Crowberry Gully.

On Easter Monday 1910 Arnold Brown and I, after a Sunday of torrential rains, followed by a night of keen frost, set off for the Crowberry Ridge. It was, as we expected, badly iced, and the 100 feet of steep rock below Abraham's Ledge took us over an hour to negotiate. It took another hour to descend the little chimney on the right and cross over to Naismith's route. This was sheeted in ice, and so we tried the more broken-up gully to the right (Garrick's route). After a further strenuous four hours we had reached the final difficult pitch referred to by Garrick. Here the take-off was badly iced, and the second man had neither secure stance nor hitch. The place completely beat us, and we turned at 3 P.M. The descent of the ice-pitches and the glazed rocks took some time, and it was not till 6.30 P.M. that we got off the rocks on to the snow slope between the foot of the Crowberry and Curved Ridges.

Garrick's climb, combined with the lower part of Naismith's, gives now an independent route up the lower part of the Ridge, and of a character quite distinct from the direct route. These alternative routes might now be considered to have opened the Ridge to attack under any reasonable climatic conditions.

The following are A. E. Robertson's estimated heights (aneroid) of the climb :—

Foot of rocks	—	—	—	—	2,400
Abraham's Ledge	—	—	—	—	2,550
Top of steep part	—	—	—	—	2,700
Crowberry Tower	—	—	—	—	3,000
Summit cairn	—	—	—	—	3,345

H. MACROBERT.

NOTES ON PHOTOGRAPHS.

PLATE I.—This is taken from Naismith's route near (e) on Plate III. The climber is coming round the awkward corner on to Greig's Ledge. The conspicuous spike of rock low down on the left is on Abraham's Ledge (c) on Plate III. The road near Kingshouse is seen in the valley.

PLATE II.—This is taken from the North Buttress, and shows in profile the upper portion of the ridge which is so badly foreshortened on Plate III. The gully running up to the gap on the right is the unclimbed Crowberry Tower branch of the Crowberry Gully. This branch is also shown on Plate III.

PLATE III.—This is taken from the foot of the North Buttress with the camera tilted, and consequently is only of use as a diagram of the lowest 300 feet of the ridge. The slope from the upper letter A to E, the Crowberry Tower, is shown in profile on Plate II. Abraham's direct route A runs up the steep slabs on the left. The steep portion starts at (a) and reaches a small platform (b), from which Naismith's route can be reached easily. Abraham's Ledge (c) is clearly shown, and the difficult traverse goes out almost to the tip of the arrow, then straight up to platform (d). The easier variation goes up from (c) towards (e), then back at once to (d). The arrow at (e) points to Greig's Ledge. Garrick's route C is clearly shown, and at (f) may be seen the final difficult pitch which leads to the easier rocks shown at bottom left-hand corner of Plate II.

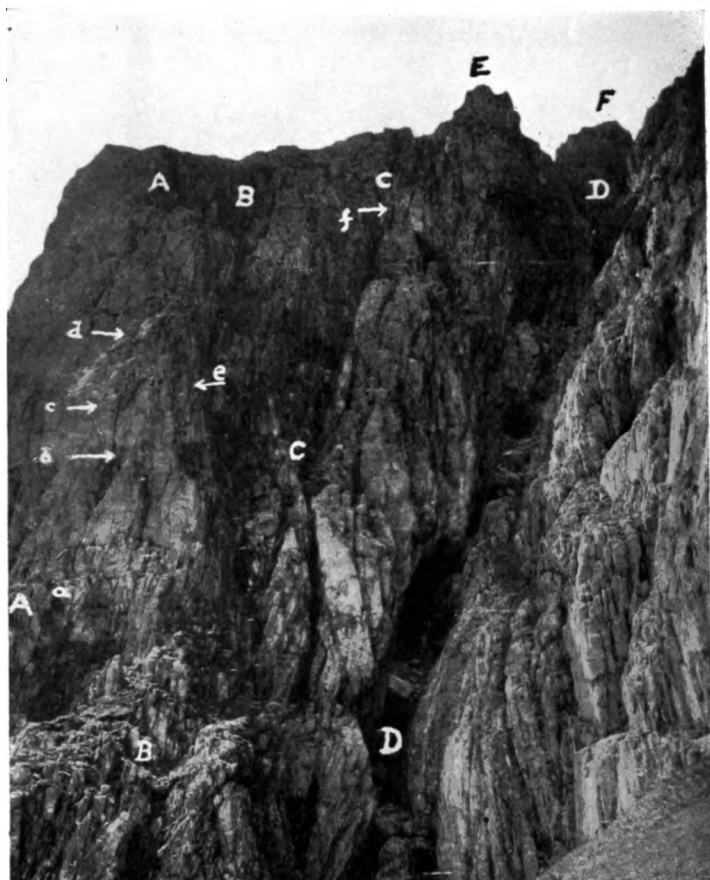


PLATE III.

J. H. Watson

THE CROWBERRY RIDGE

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| A.—Direct Route | B.—Original Route | C.—Route Described |
| D.—Crowberry Gully | E.—Crowberry Tower | F.—Summit |

(For further description see note at end of Article)

A PEDESTRIAN EXCURSION IN THE HIGHLANDS.

WRITTEN BY CHARLES SIMPSON INGLIS IN 1856,
AND EDITED BY J. GALL INGLIS.

II. INVERCANNICH TO LUNGARD VIA MAM SOUL.

NEXT morning, about 8 o'clock, we left Invercannich in a cart—the only conveyance to be had—and had a pleasant drive up Strath Affaric. The lower part of it is comparatively uninteresting, but as you advance it becomes more beautiful, and has in many places that mixture of softness and wildness which forms so striking a contrast in the mind of any true lover of Nature. The shores of Loch Benevian are in many places wooded to the water's edge, and the romantic sweep of the promontories that here and there jut out picturesquely, serve to relieve the sameness that one is apt to feel in going along the side of a large loch.

Above Loch Benevian the scenery assumes a grander character. The hills are higher, more rocky, and much steeper, and the road winds considerably until you are perhaps 2,000 feet * above the river, the whole scenery being quite of the "Killiecrankie" order, the water roaring and foaming far beneath you, through a fearful rocky chasm, two or three miles in length, and some hundreds of feet in depth, while the hills around are clothed with the silver birch, the mountain ash, and here and there patches of the dark Scottish pine, so much in keeping with the character of the wild scenery in the background.

* There is some great mistake here: the present carriage road never rises more than 844 feet above sea-level, and does not vary 100 feet after Loch Benevian. Judging from the O.S. maps, there seems no likelihood of any change subsequently in the course of the road.

At one exposed part of the glen, where there had evidently been at one time a tremendous hurricane, there was for about half a mile scarcely anything else but the remains of a pine forest. The blast had snapped some of the trees through the middle, others had only the stump left, others the top branches cut off as by a knife. One large tree, broken through, leaned against another still growing, but slender, and bending beneath its weight, like a young child trying to bear the burden of supporting an aged parent. Many had been entirely torn up by the roots, and lay in every imaginable position. Another large tree had a very singular appearance; it seemed to have been carried some short distance by the wind until it alighted, so to speak, on the crown of its head with its roots up in the air. It was a sad and ghastly sight to see this mountain-side covered with so many slain warriors, who even in death had become their own monuments.

Above this striking and magnificent part of the strath the road gradually descends until you reach the banks of the river that connects Loch Affaric and Loch Benevian. Skirting its banks, we passed many a strange-looking stone "as big as a parish church," as Wilson * [said].

Having taken our cart as far as the road admitted, we took to walking, and followed a track which after a mile or two led us close past Colonel Ing's shooting lodge.† It is remarkably situated on one of the promontories of Loch Affaric already referred to, which runs nearly across that part of the Loch, leaving only a narrow channel betwixt it. All the ground surrounding the house was covered by freshly [cut ?] green grass, and the house itself being neatly whitewashed, and having a handsome bell-tent on one side and one or two flagstaffs with gay streamers floating in the wind, the whole formed a very striking contrast to the dark moorland and mountains all around.

Just as we were coming near the lodge, still following the track, a respectable-looking gentleman's servant came

* A page of the original MS. has, unfortunately, been excised after this, at a later period: it apparently described the east end of Loch Affaric.

† Affric Lodge. (See Note at end.)

out to meet us and, accosting us, politely invited us, in his master's name, to come into the lodge and take lunch.

Colonel Ing, he said, was out on an excursion among the hills, but his directions were always to ask any stranger passing to partake of his hospitality, as there was no place of entertainment for 15 or 20 miles.

We said that we intended to go that night to a place called Culevie, about 3 miles farther on, where we understood that something in the shape of eatables could be procured. He informed us that it was a very poor place up the glen; that nobody could stay at it, and we would get nothing but cakes and whisky; and it would be much better for us to take some refreshments before going farther. We had a consultation among ourselves.

"I would like very much to accept Colonel Ing's offer," said Wilson.

"So would I," said Robertson. "The very idea of something to eat makes me hungry, and if instead of going to Culevie we have to climb that range of hills this evening—3,000 feet high, besides nobody knows how many miles on the other side—I should like to have some strength laid in beforehand."

"But it is taking advantage of Colonel Ing's kindness. We have no particular need of food just now, and if we had, we should just put up with Culevie."

"No need of food!" said Robertson; "why, we breakfasted at half-past 7, and it is now 2 o'clock. I feel a considerable vacuity."

"Vacuity! tighten your belt then," said I. "I think most decidedly we should not go to the lodge. If it was necessary, I would have no hesitation, but merely because one feels a little hungry——"

"I think," said Wilson, "that we should go in, and that it would be treating Colonel Ing very ill indeed not to accept his invitation."

"So say I," said Robertson. "Long live Colonel Ing! I vote that we go in."

The argument was conducted by two stomachs against

one, and I very unwillingly gave in. The serving man led us with much alacrity into a nice room, and placed before us bread, butter, cheese, porter, milk, &c., talking occasionally, and conducting himself with that happy mixture of manly freedom and politeness which was equally far from servility and vulgar familiarity. My two companions did ample justice to everything that was set before them, while I kept modestly in the background. They alleged, however, that with all my unwillingness to enter the lodge, once in, I did my duty to the viands with even greater energy than themselves !

After leaving the lodge we followed the track for more than a mile farther. The clouds, however, had been looking gloomy and threatening, and now began to discharge their watery treasures upon us—to our extreme dissatisfaction. The waterproof coats were in immediate request, and with our plaids folded in beneath us we trudged manfully along.

It being now about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, we had to decide whether or not we were to stay in Culevie, Strath Affaric, or cross the hills to Glen Cannich. One great reason we had for taking this route was not only to see Strath Affaric, but to climb the mountain called Mam Soul, for the purpose of seeing the prospect, and it was not a little discouraging to find this very mountain, at the base of which we now were, clothed in dense fog, and the rain driving. Having, therefore, arrived at the place where it was best to begin our ascent, we sat down on three separate stones to consult together in the midst of wind, fog, and rain. Clad in our rainproof armour, however, "we did not mind the storm a whistle." After sitting for some little time, and turning our eyes wistfully up to the top of the mountain, which the mist seemed resolved not to leave, we at last agreed to take our chance and go to the top in the first place, in case the mist might clear up ; if it did not, we could there decide whether or not we should return to Strath Affaric or go down the hill on the other side to Glen Cannich.

There was a track leading up the mountain-side which we followed. The climbing, though long, was not at all

difficult, and in due time we found ourselves on the perfectly naked top of Mam Soul.* The view is doubtless magnificent, but the dense mist effectually prevented us from seeing any farther than a few yards around. We sat down for shelter on one side of a small cairn, and waited to see if the mist would leave us ; but it was of no use, and we made up our minds to descend the hill on the side next Glen Cannich. We would have liked much to have got a general view of how the hills lay in that direction, as we were by no means sure of where we were going. The only guide we had, besides a pocket compass, was two lines of stones lying across one another on the hill,† and which we guessed to be designed to point in the direction of the glen we had left, and the one we intended to go to. Every one that knows anything of mist and hills will be aware of the use of such marks.

After descending a few hundred feet, we came to a part which was very steep, and seemed as if it ended in a precipice. As we did not wish to run any unnecessary risk, and as evening was drawing in, I was despatched in advance of my companions along the hillside to see if there was any practicable place for getting down safely : a few yards was sufficient to make me lose sight of my companions in the fog. I walked along the side of the hill ‡ for a good way, and at last found that we had fairly got among a chain of precipices, running along the side of the hill for an unknown distance, and of an unknown depth. Now, had it been a clear day there would have been no difficulty, but in a mist, depth and distance and everything else are so completely hidden that much of what you do must be mere guesswork.

After going along the top of the precipices for two or three hundred yards, I at last observed a chasm or gap in

* Actually Ciste Dhubh (3,606 feet), one mile south-west of the real top—for the reasons given in the Note at the end.

† Prof. Heddle, in Vol. V., *S.M.C. Journal*, p. 28, states that a line of stone blocks marks the way from Ciste Dhubh to the top of Mam Soul. (Date not given, but before 1898.)

‡ To the north-west.

the face of one of them, down which it seemed there might be a chance of finding a path. This gap was about 15 feet wide, with stones of various sizes lying along the bottom, the rock rising perpendicularly on each side to the height of one or two hundred feet. The depth below—partly owing to the nature of the place, and partly to the mist—could not be seen. The sight of this place was fearfully grand: the huge rugged rocks, the terrible yawning chasm, the unfathomable black abyss below, and the increasing darkness from the dense mist, acted most powerfully on the imagination and excited the grandest emotions. One felt inclined to stand and gaze as if looking into a dark unknown eternity.

After looking at the scene for a short time I began the descent, and though the stones lay in a very steep incline, and did not require much to set them in motion, yet I accomplished two or three hundred feet without any great difficulty. Hill climbers are aware that in many cases a place can be descended safely even though one cannot see all the way to the bottom, owing to the inequalities near the person concealing the rest of the ground. With this in view I looked down, but could not see far enough so as thoroughly to know what was below, but I could see that for 200 yards more it was practicable: what was beyond that I could not tell. At one part of this 200 yards there was, however, a difficulty: we would have to slide down a smooth part of the rock for about 10 feet to a small ledging in order to go on to another part; this would be easily done, but the question was, supposing that we had to turn back after all, how could we get up again, as there was nothing to hold on by, either by hands or feet; and besides, as a little spring of water was running over it, it would be very slippery. Leaving the question for after decision, I climbed upwards, and by whistling and halloing found my companions again and told them what I had seen, saying that they could judge for themselves, and that at all events it was worth going to see.

When they came to the place they were equally struck with the grand and awful character of the scene. They

were, however, *not* enchanted with it as a road to the foot, but all agreed to go down so far and form an opinion. Robertson and I went down farthest, nearly to the smooth part already referred to, and in order to test the nature of the descent that lay beyond our view, we threw down one or two stones : these went rolling and crashing down the incline and then made a clear leap into vacancy. We listened, but no sound returned to show where or when they struck the ground. We sent others after them, but they bounded off in like manner. It was almost startling to listen to the intense silence that succeeded the noise and crashing of each stone as it leapt into the air, and fell into the misty ocean boiling beneath.

One thing was certain from this experiment, namely, that if we went down that way our travels would be at an end. We therefore beat a retreat and ascended to the top, and I was despatched farther along the hill in search of a more practicable place. Several more places were tried in vain ; all were practicable for one to two or three hundred feet, and then stopped short in a sheer precipice. One green grass slope, however, seemed to promise better things, and I had descended about 500 feet when I observed something a little different in the appearance of the mist beneath. While standing looking at it, in one instant, as if by magic, the whole curtain of mist lifted up and showed the evening sun shining far down in the valley beneath ; and not only that, but it showed me the whole side of the hill, where the precipices ended, and the slope and part of the hill down which we could go easily and safely, the descent being only a matter of time. The next instant the mist closed again, but our hill difficulties were at an end. I hastened up the slope to my companions. My first question was, " Have you seen anything ? " Theirs was, " Have you ? " We had both seen the same magical sight, and a most extraordinary one it was.

Our way was now plain. We skirted along the hill in a different direction * from the one we had been taking, and, arriving at the end of the precipitous part, began our

* To the north-east. (See Note at end.)

descent, and it proved a long one. When we were about 2,000 feet down, we found ourselves quite clear of the mist, though it still lingered on the upper part of the hill. On looking up to the place where we had attempted to descend, we saw that it would have been perfect madness to have proceeded. These precipices ran along the north side of the hill for about a mile and a half, and had an average height of from 1,000 to 1,500 feet of perfectly perpendicular rock, and by no possibility could we have got down in safety among such rugged cliffs.

We now found ourselves in a narrow valley, with high mountains on each side and all around,* none of them less than 3,000 feet, and as the twilight was coming on we had impressive scenery of a different character. Along the valley we saw and followed one of the common mountain paths down the glen. After some time we noticed on the hillside a shepherd's hut, and went to it to obtain information. We were assured that by following that path, which went down to Glen Cannich—which was at right angles to the glen we were now in—we would be sure to fall in with a shepherd's house called Lungard, and there no doubt we could spend the night.

With this assurance we proceeded at a good pace along the path referred to, and after some time my companions began to talk about a house, and make some remarks respecting it. I could not understand them, and at last asked what house they were speaking about.

They laughed, and Robertson said, "Oh, come now, that's good!"

"But where is the house?" said I.

"A man that knows the road down precipices is surely able to see a house!" said Robertson.

"But I see no house."

"If it had been a precipice you would have scented it at once, but a house is so commonplace after what you have been at that you can't see it! Are you in earnest?"

* Glen a' Choilich, with Creag a' Choir' Aird on the west, and Carn Eige and Beinn Fhionnlaidh on the east.

"Yes, I am. Are you speaking of the house where we spoke to the shepherd's wife?"

"No, indeed! Don't you see the house we are going to, straight before you?"

"Where?"

"There!"

I laughed, and said, "If there is a house in that direction, it is more than I can see."

"Oh, of course, if a man shuts his eyes he can see nothing! I see the house quite plainly: it is a white one, and I have no doubt it is slated. The woman said there was a slated house down this way," said Wilson.

"Yes, that was in Glen Cannich, not here. As for your white slated house, it is neither more nor less than a rock!"

There was a laugh at my expense, but in a little while it appeared that the supposed house was a large stone standing by itself, with the top sloped on each side so as somewhat to resemble the gable of a house, though only a near inspection convinced my companions to the contrary.

"Well," said I, as we stood by the stone, "this would be a fine house to stay at all night, only I doubt we should have some difficulty in getting in!"

We were proceeding down the glen briskly and confidently when our path suddenly stopped short. Having had some experience of the capricious appearing and disappearing of mountain tracks, we knew that a road that led nowhere was utterly inconsistent and illogical, and we therefore scattered along the hillside in search of the remainder, but to no purpose. Had it been daylight we might have found it, but the darkness prevented us from seeing above a yard or two on the dark heather-covered ground.

What was to be done? We knew that Glen Cannich lay before us, with the water running from left to right, and according to our maps a regular macadamised road ran down by its side in the same direction.* We argued,

* The maps were quite wrong. (See Note at end.)

therefore, that if we went across the glen * in the direction of some lights we had seen at a distance, but which had now disappeared, we would be sure to strike the road somewhere, and it would lead us to some house.

Acting on this we proceeded, feeling our steps—for seeing was out of the question—and were not long in coming to the water, into which we waded cautiously, not knowing its depth. It was, however, shallow and narrow, and we soon forded it and proceeded onwards, up and down, through and over moss hags, stones, pools of water, and damp mixtures of every kind, and then to our surprise came to another burn to be crossed.

There was no help for it, and we prepared to ford again, choosing a place which we guessed to be shallow by hearing the water running over stones. I was the first to wade in, and had proceeded two or three steps when I stopped and called out, "Hallo! The water is running the contrary way!"

The first burn we had crossed had been running lawfully down the glen from left to right, but this one was running the opposite way, quite contrary to the nature of burns in general. A consultation ensued, and a conjecture was made—which proved to be correct—that this was one of the turns or bends of the same burn, and that unless we went higher up we might have to cross it several times before getting to the opposite side of the glen.†

To avoid these wimples, that sound prettily in poetry but are not so pleasant in a dark night and among darker heather, we went a little higher up, and stumbled along for a considerable time over very rough and uneven ground, a tumble now and then giving variety to the exercise. At last we became convinced that not only had we in the darkness crossed the glen, but had actually ascended some

* Glen Cannich, apparently, which they had nearly reached by this time. The lights would be Lungard.

† My father stated definitely that they waded the river *several* times, and were surprised at the number of "big burns" encountered.

way up on the other side. Where, then, was the road to Lungard ?

We retraced our steps and descended into the valley to search for the missing road and house. On we stumbled in the darkness, till all at once I fell over a low dyke into a potato field ! We concluded that where potatoes are, people to use them could not be far off, and we searched carefully all round but could not *feel* the smallest vestige of a house, so we continued our course farther down the hillside.

Not many yards on, as we came near the banks of a burn that ran down the hillside, I said, " Hush, speak quietly. I think we are near the house. Look there ! "

" What is that ? " said Wilson. " That is a strange sight," and we all stood together looking steadfastly across the burn.

We saw before us light shining along the water, as if proceeding from a window or open door when the house is lighted within. We proceeded cautiously along, but a short inspection convinced us that no house was there, and our next conjecture was that it proceeded from the mouth of a cavern with a fire lighted within. Under this impression we examined the bank of the burn as well as we could in the darkness, but as we could find no appearance of any cavern, we began to descend into the channel of the burn with the intention of crossing to the other side, to find out by looking back where the light proceeded from.

As soon as we got to the waterside, the illusion—for illusion it was—was dispelled. The cave mouth and shining light existed only in our perplexed imaginations, but instead we saw a very beautiful phenomenon, namely, the dashing of the water against the stones, and the falling of numerous little cascades, all sparkling with phosphorescent light. The effect of this, seen in the midst of the deep darkness around, was very striking, and will not be easily forgotten. This burn seems to run through ground containing a good deal of decayed and decaying vegetable substances, and had in this way no doubt been highly

charged with phosphorescent matter, thus causing the singular appearance which had deceived us.

After a hearty laugh at our mistake, we clambered out of the channel of the burn and once more set out in search of a house. For some time we had occasionally seen "will-o'-the-wisps" dancing here and there in the moss. Some of them continued very steadily in one place, and it was only by standing still and observing the peculiar flickering appearance of these lights that we could see that the hand that held them was not mortal. It may be mentioned also that our path up and down this moss could be sometimes distinguished even in the darkness by small spots of shining light that marked each step we took, and it would sometimes happen, too, that a stumble or fall would not only make the light flash from our eyes, but produce the same effect on the moss, the place we fell upon firing up indignantly at the insult!

A short time after this we saw something whiter in the midst of the darkness that very slightly resembled a foot-path, and we followed it a little way until it disappeared. We then separated a few yards from one another and groped our way onwards. All at once I got a hard bump against a stone standing straight before me. Groping about to feel where I was, it struck me that it exceedingly resembled the side of a house, and I felt my way until at last I got round a corner and into a kind of hollow place, two or three feet lower than the ground in the neighbourhood. Here my eyes were dazzled by a light, and on proceeding to the place from which it came I was agreeably gratified by the sight of a man preparing to go to rest.

"Is this Lungard?" I shouted.

"Eh? Ay! What! E-whow!" cried he in astonishment, and then looking towards the window through which I was looking: "What's that?"

"Can you give us shelter here to-night?" I said.

"Yes, yes, come in."

"But how can I get in? Where is the door?"

"That's the wrang gate; gang round to the ither side and I'll open the door."

I groped my way along the wall and soon heard the

voices of my companions : " Hallo ! Where are you ? We have found the door." About the same time I had seen the light they had stumbled upon the door, and thus by the merest accident we found the shepherd's house we were in search of.

The shepherd, who proved to be a man from one of the glens of Teviotdale, received us most hospitably. The gudewife and the whole family were roused, sheep dogs included : by the first we were received most warmly, by the second most noisily, their barking and howling being only silenced by scolding and the administration of a few judicious kicks, which seemed to act as a specific. When we were fairly housed, the fire was kindled afresh, and more peats put on ; the kettle was hung on the crook, and the gudewife, Mrs Sword by name, got out a large dish of curds and cream " to keep us going," she said, " until the tea would be ready." We took off our boots and stockings, and from our knapsacks supplied ourselves with much comfort in the shape of dry stockings and slippers. The stockings we took off, as well as the legs of our trousers, were completely plastered over with the peat moss compound in which we had been roaming for the last hour, and as we went through the operation of cleansing ourselves, we were gazed at with looks of most unmitigated astonishment by the whole generation of young Swords, and the amused looks of the elder members of the family.

By and by tea was ready, and along with it an accompaniment of such other things as Mrs Sword could provide. There was one thing, she said, she had not, and that was wheat bread : they always used oatmeal, and there was nothing else for 20 miles round. We, however, fared well. After tea, when we retired to rest, they gave us the best end of the house—indeed, their own sleeping room, a homely but clean apartment.

This glen which we had come down in the dark is like Strath Affaric, wild and desolate. The mountains are high, precipitous, and frowning, with one or two lochs * lying

* Lochs Lungard and Mullardich evidently.

between, into which these giants shed their tears. The houses are few and far between, therefore though peats are plenty, peat reek is scanty, there not being above a square inch of mankind to each square mile. The agricultural produce consists chiefly of heather, bogs, and will-o'-the-wisps !

COLONEL ING'S SHOOTING LODGE.—The description of its situation agrees exactly with that of the present Affric Lodge ; and with the distances from Culavie and the beginning of the Mam Soul path : in Black's quarter-inch map, *circ.* 1870, it is given as " The Chisholm's Shooting Lodge." But Black's " Guide," 1857, says—evidently mistakenly—" Near the head of Loch Affric (and about 25 miles from Struy) is Col. Ing's shooting lodge, and there is a footpath from the west end of the Loch to the top of Mam Soul." An old map of the period—scale 10 miles to an inch—marks " Shooting Lo." about a mile from the west end of the Loch, but there is no indication in the 6-inch O.S. of any house in that locality. The Lodge is actually only $19\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Struy.

THE PEAK ACTUALLY CLIMBED.—From comparison of the narrative with the O.S. map, it seems certain that Mam Soul itself—nearly half a mile N.N.E. of the place where the present path comes to the top of the ridge—was not climbed, as none of the facts fit. That peak was a main station of the recently executed first triangulation of the O.S., and still has " a large cairn " and " traces of the foundations of houses " (*Journal*, Vol. V., p. 108) ; they only found a small cairn. Their destination was Lungard—to the N.N.W. by their maps—therefore they must have begun to descend in that direction, and would have found, on Mam Soul itself, a uniform and not steep slope right to the bottom of the glen, according to the O.S. contours and hill shading : great precipices, however, were encountered some hundreds of feet down. Also, when finally clear of the mist, they saw that " these precipices ran along the north side of the hill for about a mile and a half " (this seems greatly overestimated). The north side of Mam Soul, however, is a narrow ridge leading to Carn Eige. But if, on reaching the top of the ridge, in the mist they were confused by the line of stones (see also narrative), which on the same page of the *Journal* is mentioned as extending from Ciste Dhubh to Mam Soul, following the western stones—as seeming, for some reason or other, the proper course—they would come in 400 yards to the former top : finding the stones stop, and a small cairn, they would naturally believe they were on Mam Soul (the path and stones would no doubt have been made for the benefit of the O.S. observers). Descending 500 feet towards the N.N.W., they would land at the very point where the contours are steepest on the map, and where the shading indicates a horse-shoe

of precipitous ground running a considerable distance to the N.W., but less to the N.E. Naturally they tried to turn the cliffs to the N.W., but during the momentary clearing of the mist they saw that by a short traverse to the N.E. they could reach the easy slopes of what was the real Mam Soul: and 2,000 feet down they would be looking straight across the corrie at the precipitous north face of Ciste Dhubh, which is 3,606 feet high, and half a mile S.W. of Mam Soul proper.

THE MISSING "MACADAMISED ROAD."—There is some uncertainty as to what happened between leaving the boulder and the losing of the path half an hour or so later, as a page of the original MS. has been excised later and replaced by a few lines. Anyhow, they kept a very accurate course for Lungard—which lay directly in the line through the three large bends in the river shown on the O.S., just as mentioned in the narrative—doubtless locating its "disappeared" lights by the outline of the hills above, as they seem to have had no matches and could not consult the compass. It is a mystery, however, why they forded the river at the time mentioned, expecting, apparently, to find the road on the other side, in view of the fact that all maps of the period which I have seen show the road as running along the *south* side of Lochs Mullardoch and Lungard, and onwards for two or three miles at least. As late as *circ.* 1870, Black's quarter-inch map shows this road as a carriage one, which only stopped a mile or so west of the end of Glen Choilich. If this road had existed, the brothers were bound to strike it by continuing their course till they reached the river running down Glen Cannich. I am inclined to think that they may have been told at the shepherd's house that there was no carriage road on the south side, hence they crossed the river, which they evidently knew to be the main stream ("we were not long in coming to the water," an expression which would hardly have been used for the Glen Choilich burn, which had been a hundred yards or two on their left all the way), so as to keep their line for Lungard. The present carriage road is along the *north* side of Loch Mullardoch, and stops at Ben Ula Lodge at the S.W. end of Loch Lungard, about two miles from Lungard itself.

A note on the maps probably used will, if possible, be given with the next stage of the tour, which was disorganised by the difficulty of reconciling the maps with the actual features of the country.

THE MISERIES OF MOUNTAINEERING.

BY A. M. MACRAE WILLIAMSON.

SO much has been written about the pleasures of mountaineering that I am convinced that the non-climber is under the impression that, through some remarkable dispensation of providence, mountaineers invariably meet with splendid weather ; that in the " higher purer air " tiredness does not exist, and in general that the hobby forms a pleasant diversion from the more strenuous occupation of pottering round the country roads or the golf links. The comments that the climber makes after an expedition, such as " wouldn't have missed it for worlds " or " best day I ever spent in my life," lead the casual hearer to think that an average day in the hills follows somewhat the following line : A start is made about 11 o'clock after a sumptuous breakfast—the inn or house where one is staying is, of course, situated on the moor, and but a short distance from the objective (this idea is accounted for by the suppression in the usual " travellers' tales " of the miles of hard road that are often traversed before a start on the real climb is made). After a pleasant tramp across the moor, plentifully interspersed with halts for a smoke and to admire the view, a somewhat longer halt is made for lunch. This is a vast meal, and tea or coffee is produced in a surprising manner apparently from the hillside. The day is, of course, very fine, the pure blue of the sky being flecked with only a few fleecy clouds ; a pleasant breeze which gently fans the cheek of the climber tempers the heat of the sun, and everywhere is the pleasing scent of bog myrtle and young birch. There are no troublesome flies, much less vindictive midges, and high in the sky flies the inevitable golden eagle. The afternoon follows somewhat the same course as the morning and, the climb accomplished, a return is made in the scented twilight.

The fact is, however, that such ideal conditions rarely prevail, and though the expedition may be pleasurable to the climber, a non-climber may well find it the reverse.

The following account of two expeditions undertaken by A. J. Rusk and myself may serve to indicate that mountain climbing is not all "jam."

The first expedition took place in the summer of 1919. The two of us were encamped by the side of the Loinherry burn, about half a mile west of the little inn at Corgarff, on Donside. We had intended to have a lazy holiday, and were having it. The weather had been of the best, and we had spent our time in fishing and in making short strolls across the moors what time we were not cooking, eating, or sleeping. After about a fortnight of this peaceful existence, Rusk, who had been gradually getting more and more restless, announced with an air of finality that we must do something to justify our existence. I had had experience before of what was meant by justifying one's existence, but I knew it was useless to protest. The map was accordingly produced, and, after the discovery being made that neither of us had climbed the Cairngorms from the north-east side, Rusk decided that Ben Avon and Beinn a Bhuird in one day from our camp would be all that we would require to do to safeguard ourselves from the reproach of having wasted a holiday. It was arranged, therefore, that a start should be made next morning about 4 o'clock, which, according to Rusk, would allow us to be back in camp in time to cook a large midday meal.

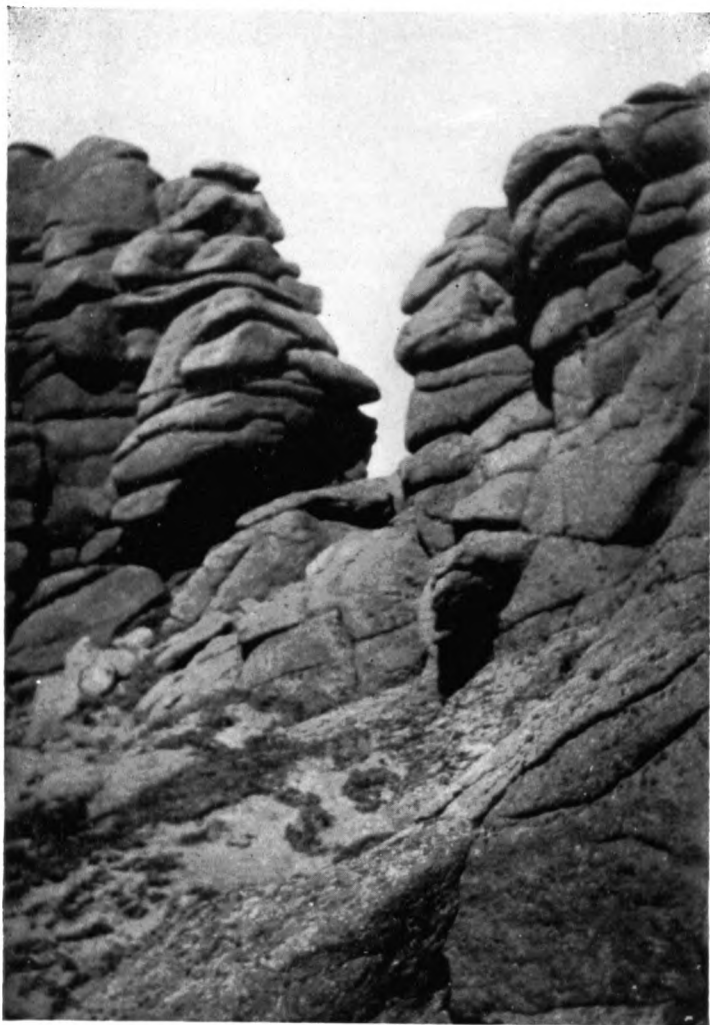
The evening was fine, and the morrow promised to be excellent, perhaps a trifle hot for fast walking in the valleys, but it would be pleasantly cool on the top. Alas! at 4 o'clock next morning we could scarcely see outside the tent door; a thick hill mist obscured everything outside a fifteen yard radius. The optimist was heard to remark that the morning mists, though sometimes thick, soon dispersed under the influence of the sun. Breakfast was accordingly cooked (and eaten), provisions safely stowed away in pockets, and the great adventure commenced. I may say here that at this time we were wholly

ignorant of proper "staff" work, and the provisions that we carried were such as would make any experienced mountaineer have a fit. Briefly, they consisted of a small tin of corned beef, half a loaf of bread, and a small fruitarian cake. We had not yet learned the wisdom of carrying only such food as would be easily digested.

In silence we trudged down the side of the little stream until it joined the Don; this latter, though small at this point, is nevertheless quite deep, and, not to dwell too long on a painful subject, we were somewhat damped at the start. At this stage a small patch of blue sky was observed through the prevailing mist, and the spirits of the expedition rose considerably.

We soon settled down into our stride, and before long had passed Delnadamp, had gained the rise, and were looking down into Glen Avon. It was not a cheering prospect. The Glen was filled with nasty wet-looking mist, and a particularly wet and cold wind was blowing in our faces. The optimist was still bright and cheerful, and was making gurgling noises in his throat indicative of enjoyment, so that the pessimist had not the heart to suggest a return, and a move was made in the direction in which the map stated our objective to lie. After passing the little farm of Lagganau, we struck a stalker's path up Glen Avon, and though the weather did not improve, progress was not too uncomfortable. I can imagine that under ideal conditions Glen Avon would be very beautiful. The water in the river is remarkably clear, and there are numerous waterfalls both on the main stream and the small burns, which in bright sunlight would be entrancing. There were no such conditions on the day in question, the weather seemed to get worse rather than better, and the cold wind kept on blowing the wetting mist in our faces.

About 7 o'clock we turned off the path on the left and struck out for the Meall na Gainamh, which, according to the map, was on the direct route to the top of Ben Avon. About this time, too, the rain came on in real earnest. The compass was continually in use, but even with its aid we seemed unable to hit the summit. After hours of



August 1922

BEN AVON
(SUMMIT ROCKS)

E. P. Buchanan

wandering backwards and forwards on the large plateau which forms the top of Ben Avon, we came across a small stream which by means of the compass and map we identified, and were thus enabled to place our position approximately. By this time we were both feeling somewhat low in spirit, and by a unanimous vote it was decided to get back to Glen Avon as quickly as possible. Though the rain had stopped, the mist was as thick as ever, the biting wind still blew, and it was a somewhat dejected pair that came down over the north face of the Big Brae and headed for the River Avon, which was reached about 1 P.M. We crossed the Avon to the stalker's path, which at this point is on the north bank, and by the side of a little knoll sat down to eat our lunch. The conditions in the valley were much better than on the hill; in particular the change in temperature was appreciated. After lunch we looked about us, and, to our surprise, discovered that the clouds were breaking up, and that the mist was rapidly disappearing off the hills. After watching this for about half an hour, a resolution was put to the meeting and passed *nem. con.*, that we return to Ben Avon to get the view. Who originally suggested it is now not known, as neither would take the blame for it when the expedition was discussed next day, although at the time each of us regarded the idea as his own. The route chosen for the second ascent was that by which we had descended, and it was with a light heart that the expedition tackled the steep face of the Big Brae, as the weather conditions seemed to be fast approaching the ideal. No sooner had we reached the plateau, however, than the mist came down as thickly as ever, and the spirit of the party went back to zero. We stuck it out this time, however, and about 3.30 reached the summit, where the conditions were not such as encouraged a halt to admire the view, and incidentally the view was non-existent.

We felt a little cheered that we had at least done half our intended programme, and struck out for Beinn a Bhuid, with a view to putting "paid" to the other half of the account. The "Sneck" was soon reached, and from this vantage point, which was below the level of the

thick mist, we got our one view of the day. It was towards the south-east. Deeside lay basking in the sun, we could see the sunlight glinting on some windows in Braemar, and Lochnagar was a magnificent sight. Just at that moment, however, a particularly biting blast of wind came swirling out of the great corrie on the Glen Avon side, and we were only too glad to get on the move again and so keep warm. By now the effects of want of food were beginning to tell, for by the time-table we were long overdue at camp, and our last food had been eaten some time before. We stilled the voice of the stomach by discussing where and when we had had the finest meal of our lives, and when that topic was exhausted we amused ourselves by compiling an ideal menu for a dinner. Passing the time thus, the top of Beinn a Bhuird was soon reached, and without delay we proceeded along the ridge northwards towards Glen Avon, taking in the Stob an Sluichd on the way. The day, or rather evening, was rapidly clearing up, and by the time we reached the valley it was really quite fine. Once more we crossed the Avon and reached the stalker's path, and here Rusk, like a horse that has its head turned towards home, took the lead and set a great pace. The distance to the farm of Lagganauld was covered at a fraction under 5 miles an hour, which, considering all things, we flattered ourselves was quite good. At Lagganauld we were able to get something to keep the inner man quiet until we could reach camp, which we did about 11.30. I was too tired to do anything but sleep, but before doing so I characterised the expedition as the most miserable in my short experience. By next day, however, after the map had been examined and the distance worked out (it came to approximately 45 miles, and about 8,000 feet of climbing), we both agreed that "we wouldn't have missed it for worlds," and accordingly our friends regard us as lunatics or liars.

The second expedition was made in the following year. Rusk and I were once more in camp, this time on the south side of the Cairngorms, not far from Derry Lodge. The weather had been all that could be desired, and an excellent holiday had been the result. Thus

when it came to the day before our departure, the only fly in the ointment was that the time was up. The day was a gorgeous one, the sun beat down out of a cloudless sky, and all the air seemed to quiver in the heat ; it was far too hot to do any climbing. The result was that the idea of doing a climb worthy of the last day was given up, and we adjourned to a nice deep pool on the Lui, and there bathed and incidentally discovered that it takes more than a week of fine weather to warm up the water in the Cairngorm streams. After our bathe we lay on the heather and watched two misguided people toil up the shoulder of the Carn a Mhaim *en route* for the Lairig. It was after they had passed out of sight that the great idea struck us (neither will undertake sole liability for the idea). It was shortly this : a night climb. The prospect seemed enchanting, and we thought with a pleasing sensation of a charming walk down some moonlit glen. The next thing to be decided was, where was the " great idea " to be put into practice, and after careful consideration it was decided that Beinn a Bhuird from Glen Derry with a return via Glen Quoich and Glen Derry was an unbeatable scheme. We slowly returned to camp and began to prepare the necessary sandwiches. Profiting by our experience the year before, we took plenty of food, the bulk of which was composed of prune sandwiches. (We had by this time heard the maxim, " On no account should meat be eaten on a strenuous expedition.") As the day passed, the indications of a fine night grew stronger, and when we set out up Glen Derry about 7 o'clock the conditions were ideal. We made leisurely progress up the Glen, discussing the warped mentality of those who never went in for mountaineering, and the absolute depravity of those who, having done some hill climbing, were not obsessed with the idea that it was an essential adjunct to perfect sanity.

When we had reached a point almost opposite the mouth of Corrie Etchecan, we turned off to the right by the side of the Glass Allt, and as we climbed slowly up the hillside we were favoured with some fine light effects on the top of Ben Muic Dhui. What an evening it was !

Not a breath of wind and scarcely a cloud in the sky. The only sound that broke the stillness was the tinkling of the little stream or the hoarse, excited call of a disturbed grouse. It seemed almost sacrilege to speak. We soon reached the large plateau, along the east side of which the ridge of Beinn a Bhuid rises. Large herds of deer were feeding in this sanctuary, and so intent were they on their food that they paid no attention to us. About 10.30 P.M. we reached the summit ridge, slightly south of the north top, and progressed northwards along it. The air had a decided nip in it now, and we were somewhat disconcerted to see that Cairngorm was thickly clothed in mist, and that a sea of cloud was settling on Ben Avon, while away to the south-east the Dee valley was filled with mist. The mist descended on us with astonishing suddenness just as we reached the Cairn, and with the mist (which was decidedly damp) there came a bitterly cold wind. The optimist once more lifted up his voice and spoke in an authoritative way of how the evening mists, after resting for a short time on the hill tops, settled in the valleys and left the summits clear beneath the moon. The pessimist merely swore, as he had not clothed himself to withstand Arctic conditions. There was no encouragement to linger on the top, and we immediately made tracks southwards, intending to include the south top in our "bag" before we descended to the valley. The mist was very thick, and it was now quite dark. We made good progress, however, and reached the south top about 11.30. As there was no view on which to waste our time, we set off down the south-west slope towards Glen Quoich, hoping to get clear of the mist. In this we were unsuccessful, and in about half an hour it began to rain quite heavily—a miserable ending to what had promised to be an excellent expedition, but we soon found that our trials had but begun. We were without lanterns, and it was as dark as the pit in the valley; we kept falling into streams and over fallen trees, and everywhere was the soaking heather; we were chilled to the bone, and could wring the water out of our clothes; our hands, legs, and faces were scratched with pine branches, and we each began

to cast about in our minds to see if we couldn't blame the other for suggesting this more than mad scheme. At length we got down to the side of the Quoich, where we hoped to find a path ; but there evidently is not one, or else it proved too elusive for us that night, so we had to keep on through the heather and over the fallen trees. We found that progress was easier if we kept close to the river ; but as the banks were occasionally very steep, this necessitated frequent detours into the jungle. Every time we heard an extra strong rush in the river, we imagined we were at the Linn of Quoich and momentarily took heart, only to have our hopes dashed to the ground when we discovered that a rock in the middle of the stream was causing all the disturbance. Meanwhile, the rain continued to fall in a steady, persistent fashion. At last we did reach the Linn, and from there were able to strike the road leading towards the Dee, and walking was thus rendered much more comfortable. All this time we had eaten nothing, being too wet and miserable to stop. Our tempers were decidedly frayed, and speech would probably have led to murder. By the time we reached the bridge over the Derry just before it enters the Dee, the rain had stopped and the dawn was breaking. The weather quickly improved, and before we were half-way to our tent the sun was shining, but we were too dejected to appreciate it. By this time we had begun to speak, and the one point on which we were agreed was that mountaineering, and especially night climbing, was a pastime fitted only for the mentally deficient. Arrived at our tent, we changed our wet clothes to the accompaniment of vague swearing, but after a mugful of a beverage, which was then and there invented, the composition of which is a secret, but which was christened "Etchecan Cocoa," we cheered up sufficiently to pack up our kit, and by 9 o'clock we were riding down Glen Derry on our motor bikes *en route* for civilisation. By the time we arrived there we had decided that if we got the chance we would do it all over again.

These two expeditions, then, were certainly not undertaken under ideal conditions, and yet we enjoyed them,

or at least, looking back on them now, we say we enjoyed them, and it is this fact that makes non-climbers think that we exaggerate the conditions, and that the real conditions were ideal, or else that we are not really safe to be allowed about loose. But there are no "ideal" conditions to a climber; wet or fine, hot or cold, it is the doing that counts. The hardness of the conditions are soon softened when the expedition is looked at in retrospect.

NIGHT UP THERE.

BY G. D. VALENTINE.

WE all know the hills well by day ; by night, perhaps, some have but their distant acquaintance. Yet night is not inferior to day, though it has a different glory. The first creeping shade, the tender gloom at midsummer, the chilly radiance of dawn—each possesses a peculiar beauty. Of the last the Alpine wanderer has vivid impressions. How often has he set forth from his hut, after a few hours of restless sleep and a discontented breakfast, to stumble in darkness over a wilderness of boulders, goaded on by the oft repeated words, "The stones will fall here when the sun touches them." Or is it the selective memory that recalls those early slopes as always stone-swept? Surely they cannot be so invariably. As a pale glow begins to suffuse the sky, the warning voice grows more insistent ; the pace becomes more hurried ; banks of dully glimmering snow break the monotony. Then the climber strides out on to the level expanse of the glacier. "All is well now!" He pauses to wipe the sweat from his brow, and, even as he does so, the cold morning lays hold on him. It is better to move forward. In the west the peaks stand up pallid and sombre against a colourless sky. To the east sunbeams are striking over distant mountains, while the white mists sink deeper into their recesses. Suddenly the rim of the sun appears. In an instant the western summits start into life. The air is already warm and genial. Some one says, "We shall halt for a proper meal now!"

Such is the glimpse of night and morning most familiar to the climber. Rarely he may see them under other aspects. I remember one August evening being in the Karl Franz Joseph Hutte on the Stubai alpen. This comfortable little house is built at a height of more than

10,000 feet, on a reef in the midst of the glacier. On every side it is surrounded by ice and by snow peaks. A bend in the valley and an ice-fall shut out the low ground. Nothing green, and but few black crags are visible. It had been snowing till afternoon, so that all was freshly wound in white. The last flush of twilight had gone, the moon was full, and the sky cloudless. We stepped out only for a single moment, since though the wind was dead, the frost stung like a serpent. The moon rode high, and beyond the deep black shadow of the hut each crystal of snow gleamed brilliantly. Tracks we had made that afternoon brimmed with azure, and were plain till lost in the distance. By day no one would look on such a scene without darkened glasses. Did one dare, detail would be lost in dazzle. But in the moonlight the eyes remained cool and unbewildered. In spite of the clearness of each feature there was no crude opposition of black and white blots. The shade of the Wilde Pfaff, which extended nearly to our feet, merged gradually but rapidly into the full blaze of moonlight that swept over the ice and ascended to the summit of the Sonklar beyond.

Those who grow most familiar with the night are the stalwart band of campers. I cannot claim to associate myself with that company. Rocks are but hard lying, moss is damp, and the flesh is weak. In the open the rain assails every aperture ; in the wood, ants break through and devour. No ! give me a lodge in the wilderness, a hovel however rude, provided always it is not, like a hut I once visited, filled with one lump of snow from the floor to the ceiling. Tents I eschew ; my veins hold no Arab blood. But from my tenderest age I have been quite ready to stay up as late as you please, being allowed, of course, compensation in due course.

For many years it was the custom of a small party of friends to give a midsummer night to a mountain, usually one of the Cairngorms, since a convenient train left Edinburgh on Saturday afternoon and another returned on Sunday. By 9 o'clock we were strolling amongst the pines of Rothiemurchus. There was no need for haste ; we had a long evening and a longer morning

before us. A little way beyond the bridge over the Allt Druidh lies a meadow. What it is called I know not, but every mountaineer will recognise the spot. There are a ruined cottage and a field, once no doubt dug and harrowed, now a breadth of grass, the favourite evening haunt of troops of deer. At this place we used to boil our kettle, and the smoke of the pipe also ascended. Then on toward the Lairig, whose summit we reached near midnight, a diaphanous midnight. If the sky was overcast we had sometimes to loiter a space before storming the slopes ; more often we were able to go right on, mistaking now and then a stone for a hole or a hole for a stone, but always stumbling forward. As we emerged on the ridge of Sron na Lairig the first red streaks were appearing, and day gradually broke while we tramped over the grey moss and the grey boulders between the snow patches on Braeriach. Somewhere hereabouts we would make a fire with twigs carried up from the forest, and enjoy what the ladies inform me is called a raking cup of tea. As to the mere pyrotechnic show of dawn, I pretend to no raptures ; I value it under the sunset. It is not to see the sun rise that I lose my sleep, but to see the night. The descents, too, by Loch Eunach and down the long glen have left scant memories. I think the last 5 miles were walked by somnambulists. But I have not forgotten the delicious awakening to breakfast, nor that exquisite slumber in the train.

Another hill that can be very pleasantly ascended from Edinburgh in a single night is Ben Lomond. Starting from Aberfoyle, if you are not torn to pieces by the lank, ill-favoured sheep-dogs which infest the foothills, you will reach the mountain about ten o'clock. The evening we chose was almost too fine. As we wandered slowly up the rim of the great corrie, we never enjoyed any genuine darkness. The twilight and the moon cast a bewildering multiplicity of conflicting shadows amidst the gaunt precipices, and gave them an air of unsubstantiality. The summit was overcrowded. Our idea of seeing the sun rise from Ben Lomond had struck others that evening. But does not this prove it good ? In a dell 1,000 feet

nearer the lake we spread our frugal table. Hot and dusty was the trudge to the cars at Balloch, and 3 o'clock, when we heard their bells, was certainly a rather late hour in the morning.

Still summer can never bring the mountaineer full satisfaction. Like Mephistopheles, I must confess that

“ My body is all wintry, and I wish
The flowers upon our path were frost and snow.”

I have never in cold blood sought the mountains on a winter night, but, like most of us, I have been there. Once about the beginning of February I was one of a party that climbed Ben Lui. The snow in the central gully was in a state so vile that it was 4 o'clock before we emerged at the cairn. Return that way was not tempting. We remembered how easily in summer we had walked down towards Ben a' Clee, and set our faces thither. But we went very slowly. The banks of small stones which decline to the west were encased in a coat of hard black ice, formed, perhaps, by alternate frosts and thaws, or possibly by a line of springs. However caused, it was full 4 inches thick, smooth and slippery. The enchanted hill of glass that the fairy prince mounts in the story of our childhood must have been such another. Though the slope was gentle and we used every projecting point, the axe was never at rest. At times we yearned for the rattling spindrift, the trickles of softly swishing snow, and the treacherous steps of the gully.

At half-past 5 the sun set in a yellow blaze, reflected from Loch Awe ; but twilight lasted well. Still it was all but quite dark when about 7 o'clock we found ourselves at the lowest part of the dip. There was a crescent moon in the sky, and beside it one most radiant planet. On our left, a long declivity stretched (we had marked) almost imperceptibly downwards ; but it would have brought us over miles of bog and many large burns to Ardlui, far from our harbourage. On our right, the road to Tyndrum was but a mile and a half away. On that side fell a steep snow-slope. We recollected no crag below. Stepping over the edge we found it firm, yet not too hard to tread. We would risk it. The ghostly whiteness around and

something dark where there was a rock close at hand were just visible, but no man could distinctly see on what his feet were placed. The snow in the dark seemed to rise up toward the eyes, a delusion I have several times experienced. When the feet were put down, they went further than expected before meeting with support. Only those who have descended snow by night can realise how hard it is to do so in security. There are many little variations in slope and consistency to which the climber ordinarily adapts his step almost unconsciously. In the dark each of these comes as a surprise and a stumbling-block. Again, by day each man is watching his comrades, and if one trips, is ready to give support. But when he cannot see he cannot aid; the first notice he gets is a jerk at his waist, which may find him ill-placed for resistance. On that night we did not descend without incident. A rapid and rough slide was checked by a patch of softer consistency.

We picked ourselves up and looked around. The moon had set now, but the bright star above gave a quite perceptible light. In the little space we could see all was still snow, still falling away from our stance, but it was soft and we walked down it easily. In a quarter of an hour squares of black soil soaking with icy water began to appear; in ten minutes more we were struggling over an interminable bog, with the noise of pouring streams in our ears. When one cannot perceive and avoid the holes, it is difficult to express how damp and disagreeable is a bog. It is surprising, too, how nasty an obstacle even a small burn can be, when it is heard only, not seen. Once a wanderer suddenly and completely disappeared into one of these channels, and all had many leg-racking stumbles. Luckily, this glen is not very rough, so by keeping up the hillside a little way we got tolerable going, and about 10 o'clock unexpectedly found ourselves on the railway line.

By its side a solitary light cast a cheerful ray. We knocked at the door of the tiny cabin of sleepers. The candle was instantly quenched. We raised our voices, but no man answered. Only a muffled rumble within suggested that the table was being dragged in front of the

door. A long and pathetic harangue led to a longer parley. I do not wonder at the alarm of the lonely watcher. When at last the door was cautiously opened, I am certain he was not entirely reassured by the incursion of three figures scratched, dishevelled, ragged, and caked with mud. Convinced reluctantly of our unblemished honesty, he grew the more hospitable for the rebound of his spirits. The lamp was trimmed and water set on the stove. With anxious care our flask was drawn forth—undamaged; nay more, intact. The surfaceman was a lively young fellow, and a brew of hot toddy brought a genial hour. Then, like Christian and his companions, we took up our burdens and went our way.

SKYE RELIEF FUND.

WE are, as a race, singularly inarticulate : and though we, who love the hills, often feel a vehement desire to express the deep emotions which the mountains arouse in us, it is only the gifted few who, through the medium of painting, poetry, or delicate prose, can find an outlet for their feelings.

Happy mountain lovers like D. Y. Cameron, Geoffrey Young, Montagne, or Collie, with brush or pen can pour themselves out, but the rest of us remain dumb, or at best, with awkward gestures or bad jokes, try to convey obliquely what is filling our hearts.

Sometimes, however, an unexpected outlet presents itself, and the distress prevailing in Skye this last winter has been a case in point. Scores of us thrill at the very mention of Skye and the memories of climbing holidays there ; and it has been a source of very great happiness to many S.M.C. members and others to express their gratitude for such halcyon memories by combining in a " Climbers' Contribution " to the fund for relieving the distress in the island. Over £210 has been collected from willing donors. It has not been a case of extracting money : climbers have been eager to help and to show in this unromantic but useful way how deeply they love the place to which they owe so much happiness.

The following letter was recently received by the Secretary from the Treasurer of the Skye Relief Fund :—

PORTREE, 19th April 1924.

DEAR SIR,—At a recent meeting of the Committee of the above I submitted your last letter of 26th March, and the members learned with very great satisfaction that your Club had now subscribed £210 towards the relief of distress in the island. They accordingly passed a special minute of thanks to the members of the Club, and I have very great pleasure in conveying to you the high appreciation

of the Relief Committee of this most generous contribution towards meeting the needs of the islanders in the difficult situation in which they have found themselves during this season. The Club's contribution has been of very material assistance in providing the relief required. Will you kindly convey to the members in such way as you may consider most suitable the gratitude of the Relief Committee and, may I add, of the whole inhabitants of the island, for the very great interest they have shown in their welfare? — Believe me, yours very truly,

GEO. M. FRASER.

The following is a List of Subscribers up to the time of going to press:—

A. Arthur - - -	£1 1 0	C. K. M. Douglas -	£1 1 0
H. Alexander - -	0 10 0	H. M. F. Dodd -	1 1 0
J. C. Appleyard -	0 10 0	Dr R. G. Elwell -	1 1 0
Anonymous - - -	5 5 0	Francis N. Ellis -	1 0 0
E. P. Buchanan -	1 1 0	John Fisher - - -	1 0 0
Guy Barlow - - -	2 0 0	Rev. T. H. Fitzpatrick	1 0 0
J. H. Bell - - -	1 1 0	V. le Neve Foster -	1 0 0
Charles E. Bell -	1 1 0	L. R. Furneaux -	0 5 0
G. L. Bartrum - -	0 10 0	G. B. Green - - -	1 0 0
Walter Barrow -	5 0 0	S. A. Gillon - - -	1 0 0
Sir T. Fowell Buxton,		Francis Greig - - -	1 1 0
Bart. - - -	3 3 0	John Grove - - -	0 10 0
Lieut. - Col. W. S.		Col. G. T. Glover -	5 0 0
Blunt - - -	3 0 0	Hugh Gardner - - -	5 5 0
J. H. B. Bell - - -	0 10 0	Geo. Gask - - -	1 1 0
R. A. Brown - - -	2 2 0	F. S. Goggs - - -	1 0 0
A. M. Buchanan -	1 0 0	Prof. P. A. Hillhouse	5 5 0
F. R. Burnett - -	0 10 0	Alfred Harker - -	5 0 0
Harrison Barrow -	0 10 0	Alex. Harrison - -	0 10 0
Geo. P. Baker - -	4 4 0	A. G. Hutchison -	0 10 0
H. E. Bury - - -	1 1 0	Lionel Hinxman -	0 10 0
John J. Brigg - -	2 2 0	G. E. Howard - - -	10 0 0
W. A. Brigg - - -	1 0 0	C. F. Howard - - -	0 10 0
R. W. Brant - - -	1 0 0	J. Harrison - - -	0 10 0
D. A. Clapperton -	0 10 0	D. W. Inglis - - -	1 1 3
Robert Corry - -	3 3 0	J. S. M. Jack - - -	1 0 0
S. F. M. Cumming -	1 1 0	W. G. C. Johnston -	0 10 0
T. Fraser Campbell	0 5 0	G. Murray Lawson -	1 0 0
J. N. Collie - - -	1 0 0	R. S. Low - - -	1 1 0
Jas. Craig - - -	4 0 0	W. N. Ling - - -	2 2 0
Ellis Carr - - -	5 0 0	Dr T. G. Longstaff -	1 0 0
G. Reid Donald -	1 1 0	E. N. Marshall - -	1 1 0
J. W. Drummond -	5 0 0	Johnstone Macfie -	1 1 0
Percy Donald - -	1 0 0	W. A. Morrison - -	1 1 0

W. A. Mounsey	-	£2	2	0	A. W. Russell	-	-	£2	0	0
H. P. Macmillan	-	1	0	0	Prof. J. E. A. Steggall	-	-	0	10	0
T. R. Marshall	-	1	0	0	L. G. Shadbolt	-	-	1	1	0
Thomas Meares	-	2	0	0	F. C. Squance	-	-	1	1	0
A. L. Mumm	-	5	0	0	L. W. Somervell	-	-	2	2	0
H. A. Millington	-	1	1	0	H. E. Scott	-	-	1	0	0
J. B. Meldrum	-	1	1	0	D. W. Stable	-	-	0	10	0
Wm. W. Naismith	-	5	0	0	H. E. M. Stretfield	-	-	2	0	0
G. H. Neame	-	1	1	0	G. O. Howard Smith	-	-	2	2	0
Judge Osborne	-	5	0	0	H. J. Sedgwick	-	-	0	10	0
R. C. Paterson	-	1	0	0	C. M. Sleeman	-	-	1	1	0
Sheriff S. M. Penney	-	2	10	0	G. L. Stewart	-	-	3	3	0
Mr and Mrs Howard	-	-	-	-	H. Tomkinson	-	-	10	0	0
Priestman	-	5	0	0	E. C. Thomson	-	-	1	0	0
L. Pilkington	-	2	2	0	F. Newton Trier	-	-	2	2	0
A. J. Paton	-	0	10	0	W. A. Tribe	-	-	0	10	0
W. G. Pape	-	0	10	0	H. G. Walker	-	-	1	0	0
Jas. Pilkington	-	1	1	0	Dr A. R. Wilson	-	-	0	10	6
W. W. Richmond	-	-	-	-	J. J. Waugh	-	-	1	1	0
Powell	-	1	1	0	R. W. Worsdell	-	-	1	1	0
C. W. Patchell	-	0	10	0	Robert Watson	-	-	1	0	0
A. J. Rusk	-	2	10	0	J. M. Wordie	-	-	1	0	0
A. Graham Ritchie	-	2	0	0	G. Wilson	-	-	0	10	0
E. B. Robertson	-	1	1	0	J. B. Wilton	-	-	0	10	0
C. E. E. Riley	-	0	10	6	A. M. M. Williamson	-	-	0	10	0
John G. Reid	-	0	10	6	Dr Claude Wilson	-	-	2	2	0
Capt. D. G. Romanis	-	0	10	6	W. B. Worthington	-	-	1	1	0
H. H. Ross	-	1	0	0	H. G. Willink	-	-	2	0	0
Sir J. H. Ramsay	-	1	0	0	J. Osborne Walker	-	-	1	1	0
Sir T. K. and J. Rose	-	1	1	0	Frank E. Young	-	-	1	0	0
Harry Runge	-	2	2	0	G. Orleton Yeld	-	-	0	10	6

Note.—The cost of all stationery, postages, etc., has been defrayed by Mr Sang.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THIRTY-FIFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

ON the first Friday in December the customary reception was held by the Club at the Athenæum Restaurant and Hall in Buchanan Street, Glasgow. The President and Mrs Bell received a large company of members and their friends, who were entertained to tea and afterwards attended an interesting demonstration of views of Scotland given by the kindness of Dr Inglis Clark.

At the conclusion of the reception an adjournment was made to the St Enoch Station Hotel, where the Annual General Meeting was timed to commence at 6.30. The President was in the Chair at the appointed hour, and a few members having at that time put in an appearance, the proceedings were commenced by the Secretary reading the minutes of the last General Meeting, held in Edinburgh on 1st December 1922. This occupied a little time, and when the meeting was called upon to approve the minutes, the number of members attending had very greatly increased. During the rest of the proceedings members continued to drop in as their trains arrived, or as they were able to find time to dress for the dinner which was arranged to commence at the conclusion of the meeting.

At the request of the President, Mr HARRY MACROBERT, the Hon. Treasurer, reported upon the financial condition of the Club, drawing members' attention to the account which had been circularised amongst them. It was his pleasant duty, he said, to intimate that the funds were increasing, and showed a considerable improvement upon the balance brought out in the last statement; at the same time he had to remind the meeting that, up to date, he was

unable to present more than an estimate of the printing costs of the *Journal*, owing to the fact that (as the Hon. Editor would explain to the meeting) the publication of the *Journal* number which should have appeared in October had only just been made, and he was without the details of costs. He commented upon the improvement of the Commutation Fund, and gave details of the state of the fund which was kept separate for the purpose of publication of the three Guide Books now issued. During this statement he explained that, so far as regards the General Section A of the Guide Book, there was a loss of £86, that the Secretary had in his hands a considerable number of copies of this Section, but that the sale of these at their present price would not anything like meet the loss which the Club would have to bear upon the expense of publication. The other two numbers, however, were in a better financial condition, as both were now in a position to show profit on all future sales. There were no comments upon the accounts, and, on the motion of Mr LING, seconded by Sheriff PENNEY, the accounts were approved, and a vote of thanks was passed by the meeting to Mr MacRobert for his work as Treasurer of the Club Funds.

The HON. SECRETARY delivered his report upon the season just past, mentioning that the Club membership had reached its high-water mark of 216. He reminded the meeting that a departure had been made from the ordinary procedure during the season, in so far that four Meets had been held, all of which had received considerable support. The first Meet was the official one held at New Year at Crianlarich, the second the official Easter Meet held at Kinlochewe, both of which had been favoured with exceptionally fine weather and a very good attendance. Then there had followed the Meet held in the end of May at Sligachan, the first half of which had been very successful, and the second half had been discouraging owing to exceptionally unfavourable weather conditions. He also stated that following upon the mandate granted him by the last Annual General Meeting, he had arranged an Autumn Meet in the English Lake District at Seathwaite. Here

there had been a gratifying attendance of eleven members. but unfortunately the weather had proved so exceptionally bad that nothing beyond ordinary hill walking could be attempted. He suggested to the meeting that with its acquiescence he was prepared to repeat the programme for the coming season, and at the close of his report was accorded the hearty thanks of the meeting.

Mr E. P. BUCHANAN, the Hon. Editor, in his report upon the *Journal*, explained that the delay in the issue of the last number had been due to the fact that an index had to be compiled for issue with the number, which entailed a great deal of extra work, and he suggested that he would find it more suitable in future—if the *Journal* were to be continued as a six-monthly issue—that the one number should be published in April and the autumn issue delayed until November, which would give him more time to collect the material, always received at the last moment from persons on holiday during the summer months. This suggestion received the approval of the meeting. He also urged an appeal to the younger members of the Club to come forward with contributions for the *Journal* without waiting to be asked to do so. Following upon this, he made a suggestion that an additional publication containing a selected reproduction of the best blocks in the possession of the Club should appear annually, and this question was remitted to the Committee for consideration, and report to the next Annual General Meeting. Mr Buchanan was warmly thanked by the meeting for his work as Hon. Editor of the Club.

The Hon. Librarian, Mr G. B. GREEN, reported on the condition of the Library and Club-Room, and told the meeting that he had not been able to collect more than £5 as a result of sale of back numbers of the *Journal*. He asked, and received, authority to use his discretion in the purchase of certain volumes which did not deal specially with Scottish mountaineering, among others His Holiness the Pope's book and Mr Douglas Freshfield's "Below the Snow Line."

The PRESIDENT next asked the meeting formally to confirm the election of His Grace the Duke of Atholl as

Hon. President of the Club, a request which was received with much approbation.

The meeting instructed the Hon. Secretary to convey to Mr Murray Lawson their appreciation of his work as Hon. Custodian of Slides for the past season, and passed to the consideration of places for the Meets. On the motion of Mr GREEN, seconded by Mr RUSSELL, it was agreed that the Club should hold its Easter Meet at Braemar. On the motion of Mr EUAN ROBERTSON, seconded by Mr LING, the meeting agreed to hold the New Year gathering at Blair Atholl. Following upon this, Mr ALEXANDER HARRISON proposed that, in order to simplify the working of arrangements for the Meets, the present meeting should decide upon places for the New Year and Easter Meet, 1925. This proposal was ruled out of order by the Chairman. Upon an explanation by the Secretary, however, the approval of the meeting was given to arrangements fixing the destinations of the two Meets in question provisionally, in the expectation that the Annual General Meeting to be held in Edinburgh on 5th December 1924 would confirm the selection, and, without discussion, the meeting agreed that the New Year Meet, 1924-25, should be held at Loch Awe, and the Easter Meet, 1925, at Fort William.

This finished the business upon the agenda paper, and, before the meeting finally rose the Secretary asked and received its consent to the representation of the Club by Messrs Goggs and Unna of London at any meeting of the Advisory Council of British Mountaineering Clubs, giving them full power to vote as they considered appropriate in the interests of the Scottish Mountaineering Club.

The meeting then adjourned to dinner

ANNUAL DINNER.

The Annual Dinner was held in the St Enoch's Station Hotel. There was a good attendance of members and guests.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1923-24—BLAIR ATHOLL

PRESENT :—*Members*—The President (J. H. Bell), Alexander, Anderson, Clapperton, Inglis Clark, P. Donald, C. K. M. Douglas, Garrick, G. B. Green, A. Harrison, Hutchison, J. Gall Inglis, J. S. M. Jack, Lawson, Ling, H. MacRobert, J. MacRobert, E. N. Marshall, Menzies, Morrison, J. R. Philip, Priestman, Euan Robertson, A. W. Russell, Rutherford, Sang, Shaw, Steggall, E. C. Thomson, Gilbert Thomson, and Valentine. *Guests*—Rainy Brown, Stewart Brown, A. T. Frazer, T. H. Gibson, K. Hunter, R. Gall Inglis, J. E. Lyall, Colin Russell, and T. E. Thomson.

BEINN A' CHAIT.

The New Year Meet was held at the Atholl Arms, Blair Atholl, and it was well attended. The weather, which commenced by being bleak and cold, turning on the last day of the year to rain, made gallant amends on New Year's Day with a glorious flood of sunshine and blue sky. The following day broke dull and misty, and remained so in the valleys until evening; but those who sought the higher levels rose above the mist and found the conditions rather better. Snow did not play a large part in the proceedings. A fall at the beginning of the Meet encouraged certain of the members to take out their skis, and on Saturday, 29th, Sang, Philip, and Priestman spent the forenoon ski-ing on the low grounds, Sang and Philip afterwards making an ascent of Beinn a' Chait, but owing to the unsatisfactory condition of the snow they found it exceedingly strenuous.

The Meet had officially commenced on Thursday, 27th December, when Douglas joined the President, who had been spending Christmas in Blair Atholl; but they, along with Green and Sang, who arrived by the Friday morning train, had so far confined their energies to the lower levels.



January 1924

BEINN A' GHLO FROM ABOVE SHINAGAG

E. C. Thomson

BEINN A' GHLO.

Beinn a' Ghlo received most attention, and Carn Liath from its proximity proved much the most popular of its t ps. The President, Clapperton, Green, and Valentine climbed it on Saturday, the 29th, Valentine then joining a party consisting of Douglas, A. Harrison, Lawson, Ling, and T. E. Thomson, who continued in mist over Braigh Coire Chruinn-bhagain to Càrn nan Gabhar, and down the north ridge to the Tilt. The long walk down Glen Tilt was broken by an excellent tea at Forest Lodge, and the party arrived back at the hotel about 9 P.M.

On Sunday, the greater part of the Meet removed itself to the summit of Càrn Liath. Devious routes were taken. Jack, H. MacRobert, Robertson, Sang, Rainy Brown, and Stewart Brown in one party, and J. Harrison, Menzies, and Gibson in another, made the ascent direct, while Anderson, Garrick, Hutchison, Marshall, Rutherford, Frazer, Hunter, and Lyall climbed the hill from Marble Lodge. Some glissading was obtained coming home. The pilgrimage was resumed on New Year's Day, and the cairn must have grown considerably in the course of the Meet if every member faithfully deposited his contribution. J. MacRobert, Morrison, A. W. and Colin Russell, and Gilbert Thomson all visited the summit, going by the Shinagag road, and were rewarded by a fine view. J. Harrison, Menzies and Gibson walked to Marble Lodge and climbed Braigh Coire Chruinn-bhagain. Another party of Hutchison, Philip, Rutherford, E. C. Thomson, and Frazer skirted the base of Càrn Liath by the Shinagag road and crossed the moor to Airgiod-Bheinn and the three cairns of Càrn nan Gabhar. They then crossed Braigh Coire Chruinn-bhagain to Marble Lodge, completing the descent in the dark.

CÀRN CHLAMAIN.

Two parties visited Càrn a' Chlamain on New Year's Day. Anderson, Marshall, and Lyall made up the one

party; Donald, Douglas, A. Harrison, and Lawson the other. They reported it to be one of the best hills in the district, and having seen the Brocken spectre, returned very pleased with their expedition.

BEINN DEARG.

It is a far cry to Beinn Dearg, but, encouraged by the fine weather on New Year's Day, Jack, Ling, and H. MacRobert made the ascent. MacRobert provided a thrilling one-act "film stunt" by crossing a foaming torrent astride a weather-beaten, decayed, and extremely ancient plank which groaned ominously under such treatment. The other members of the party took the hint, and, having immortalised our intrepid Honorary Treasurer with their cameras, found a less sensational means of crossing the stream for themselves. (I wonder, does the Honorary Treasurer carry the Club Funds upon him when he does these things?)

The views obtained on New Year's Day were wonderful, though not very distant except to the south-east, and in particular, far across the moors, Cairn Toul, towering out of a mass of rolling cloud, was a sight not soon to be forgotten.

Next day Donald, accompanied by D. C. Macdonald of Blair Atholl, also climbed Beinn Dearg via the Banvie Burn, returning by the Allt Slanaidh. Though they soon rose above the mists which were hanging in the valley, the day remained rather cloudy and dull.

BEN VRACKIE.

Ben Vrackie received its fair share of the Club's attention. Garrick, Hutchison, and Rutherford broke their journey to the Meet on the 29th at Pitlochry, and climbed it from that side. Near the summit they found a short ice-gully in which to give vent to their surplus energy. They then walked over the top, and arrived at the Meet on foot. Ling, H. MacRobert, and Sang, who visited the hill on the 31st, found some good snow and

even had to cut steps, while J. MacRobert, with A. W. and Colin Russell, made the traverse from Pitlochry on the same day, arriving at the Meet in the evening. On New Year's Day two parties visited Ben Vrackie. The President, with Alexander, Gall Inglis, and his son, took the train to Pitlochry, where they met Mrs Bell and Miss Raeburn, and climbed the hill from that side, while Clapperton, Green, and Valentine chose the north-west side for their ascent.

COIRE DHOMHAIN.

On Monday, the 31st, a party of eight decided to strike out on original lines, and accordingly departed for Dalnaspidal by the 7.15. They consisted of Hutchison, Jack, Philip, Rutherford, E. C. Thomson, Rainy Brown, Frazer, and Hunter, and their objective was the round of Coire Dhomhain. The Boar of Badenoch was crossed on the way to A' Mharconaich, where Hutchison led the party up the only reported cornice at the Meet. Ben Udlamain was traversed *en route* for Sgairneach Mhor which, with Coire Creagach, is the finest hill of the group. There was some doubt as to the location of the summit in the mist. The first cairn they came to was duly recorded on Thomson's aneroid at 3,300 feet—not bad for a hill with an O.S. height of 3,210 feet—so Rutherford handed raisins round to celebrate the summit. However, a second cairn was struck well on the way to 5,000 feet. Rutherford came up to the scratch again, and the party modestly withdrew to the Atholl Sow, feeling that the discovery of any more cairns should be left to the Mount Everest Expedition! They were relieved, therefore, when the mist lifted and they were assured that they had crossed the summit.

While waiting for the train at Dalnaspidal, they were entertained to tea by the stationmaster, and listened spellbound to a description of some of Ronald Burn's herculean efforts last summer, when he completed the ascent of all Munro's tops—surely the only authenticated instance of a burn that runs uphill!

A number of walks were taken when the weather was

at its worst. A. Harrison, Lawson, Priestman, and T. E. Thomson crossed Tulach Hill to Glen Fincastle on the Sunday, and returned by the road, while the President, accompanied by Clapperton, Morrison, and Gall Inglis, jun., visited Tulach Hill on the last day of the Meet. The Banvie and the Bruar, too, were well patronised.

The enjoyable entertainments provided in the evenings by a number of the guests and members form a very pleasant recollection, and it is hoped that this is a feature which will not be absent in the future. It only remains to be recorded that, at the Atholl Arms, every attention was given to the comforts of those present by the management and staff of the hotel.

E. C. T.

AUTUMN MEET—SEATHWAITE,

5th to 9th October 1923.

THE first arrivals were A. and J. Harrison, G. Sang, and W. A. Morrison, who reached Seathwaite on Thursday evening. Friday was unfortunately wet, but, not to be deterred, they set off for Ennerdale and the Pillar Rock. The mist and rain, however, proved too much, and they crossed Scarth Gap to Buttermere, thence over the Honister Pass to Seathwaite.

R. S. Low walked over from Langdale by Rossett Ghyll and Esk Hawse in heavy rain. W. N. Ling came by car from Keswick.

Saturday morning broke very wet, and it was not till midday that the party was able to start out. Brunskill paid a visit by car, and Howard Priestman with two guests, Wilson and Farrer, came up from Seatoller. The party walked round by Castle Crag and Grange, some beautiful views being obtained when the sky cleared. Two or three heavy showers were avoided by sheltering, and an excellent tea, with the Lake District delicacies, was enjoyed at the Bowder Stone.

E. W. Steeple and Allan Brown (guest) arrived in the evening.

Sunday was still under the influence of the south-west wind, but about eleven the rain ceased, though the tops were still covered with mist. H. P. Cain and Pape (guest) paid us a visit from Thornythwaite. Sang, Morrison, Steeple, Brown, and the two Harrisons went up Scawfell Pike in thick mist. Low and Ling walked round to Langstrath, meeting Colin Phillip and Squance, who had motored over from Grasmere to visit the Meet on the way. Priestman and his party were also in Langstrath.

Monday also was wet. Ling left to catch the early train from Keswick. The remainder of the party went to Great Gable, and A. Harrison, Morrison, Brown, and Low climbed Kern Knotts Chimney, and then went on to Napes Needle. Heavy rain and a high wind, however, turned them back from the summit, and they returned to Seathwaite, and next day walked in to Keswick in another gale and rainstorm.

It was very unfortunate that the weather should have proved so unfavourable, as, generally speaking, October is one of the best months in the year for weather, and for the colouring of the hills.

At Seathwaite we were made most comfortable, and were excellently catered for by Mrs and Miss Edmondson, to whom our best thanks are due.

W. N. L.

LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

NEW CATALOGUE.

An alphabetical catalogue of additions to the Library since the Catalogue was printed in 1907 has been made in a loose-leaf book, which can be kept up to date, and joined to the old Catalogue without much trouble, if the Club at any time decides to issue a new printed Catalogue.

CLUB-ROOM MEETINGS.

Meetings have been held at monthly intervals during the winter, at which slides have been shown and described as follows : Alpine Views, by the President ; Views of Kinlochewe, Torridon, and Dundonell, by the Secretary ; Climbs on the Salisbury Crags, by Mr W. A. Morrison ; Climbs in the Neighbourhood of Mont Blanc, by Mr J. S. Garrick ; and Views of Norway, by Dr W. G. C. Johnston. On each occasion the exhibition was much appreciated by a fairly large attendance of members.

SLIDE COLLECTION.

We are asked by the custodian of slides to convey the thanks of the Club to Mr George Sang for presenting various Ross-shire slides, and also to Mr W. A. Morrison for a gift of slides of the Crags and Arthur's Seat.

REVISED BY-LAWS.

The By-Laws for the Club-Room have been recently revised, and now read as follows :—

1. The Club-Room premises will be available for Members daily from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M., Sundays and public holidays excepted. The Caretaker is in attendance only from 6 P.M. to 10 P.M. on weekdays, except Saturday, and in her absence a key of the outer door may be procured from Messrs Douglas & Foulis, Librarians, 9 Castle Street (opposite). After use the key must be returned to them.

2. Members using the gas fire shall for each hour or part of an hour the fire is used, deposit the sum of sixpence in the box on the mantelpiece. Coal fire not to be used.

3. On leaving the Club-Room premises, care must be taken that all lights are put out and gas fire turned off, and that the outer door is properly shut.

4. Guests may be admitted to the Club-Room on a

Member's personal introduction. The names of all guests should be entered in the Guest Book.

5. Tea and Coffee can be obtained from the Caretaker, Mrs Fergie, at the price of sixpence per head.

6. None of the Club's property, except as after-noted, shall be removed from the Club-Room.

7. Members desiring to borrow books from the Library must enter the name of each book borrowed, along with the name of the borrower and the date, in the "Lending Book" kept for that purpose. No book shall be retained for longer than one month. The *Alpine Journal* and the *S.M.C. Journal* are not to be borrowed without direct application to the Hon. Librarian, Mr G. B. Green, 21 Dean Terrace, Edinburgh. Only certain of the Maps may be borrowed.

8. Members, on returning books, shall enter the day of return in the "Lending Book," and leave the volumes on the Library table.

9. Lantern Slides may be borrowed on application to Mr G. Murray Lawson, Hon. Custodian, 13 Melville Street, Edinburgh, and no slides may be removed from the cabinet or boxes without his consent first being obtained.

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11. All Slides borrowed must be returned either to the Club-Room or to Mr Murray Lawson at 13 Melville Street on the morning succeeding the date of lecture.

12. The Club Electric Lantern shall not be used by Members until arrangements have been made with the Hon. Librarian or the Hon. Custodian. For the use of the Lantern, otherwise than at an official meeting of the Club, the sum of One Shilling per hour or part of an hour shall be paid to the Hon. Librarian or Hon. Custodian. Members' attention is directed to the special instructions as to care of Slides exhibited on the inside of Slide Cabinet doors.

13. Skis may be borrowed on application to the Hon. Librarian.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

The following books, &c., have been purchased since the last issue of the *Journal* :—

- “ The Assault on Mount Everest, 1922.” By Brigadier-General Hon. C. G. Bruce. C.B., M.V.O., and other Members of the Expedition. Purchased.
- “ Below the Snow Line.” By Douglas W. Freshfield, D.C.L. Purchased.
- “ Climbs on Alpine Peaks.” By Abate Achille Ratti (now Pope Pius XI.). Purchased.

The Editor has received for review a copy of

- “ The Peaks, Lochs, and Coasts of the Western Highlands.” By Arthur Gardner, M.A., F.S.A.

This attractive volume has been added to the Club Library.

The following periodicals have been received :—

- Alpine Club Journal. November 1923 (No. 227).
- The Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal. 1923.
- The Rucksack Club Journal. 1924.
- Climber's Club Journal. 1923.
- Canadian Alpine Club Journal. 1923.
- L'Écho des Alpes. September-December 1923, January, February, March 1924.
- La Montagne. August-December 1923, January, February 1924.
- Italian Alpine Club Journal. September-December 1923, January-February 1924.
- Bulletin Pyrénéen. September-December 1923, January-February 1924.
- Den Norske Turistforenings Aarbok. 1923.
- Mazama. December 1923.

REVIEWS.

First Steps to Climbing. George D. Abraham (Author of "British Mountain Climbs," &c.). (Mills & Boon, London. 5s. net.)

That well-known mountain enthusiast, Mr George D. Abraham, of Keswick, has added to the collection of the "First Steps Series," which at present embraces the games of lawn tennis, golf, and rugby football, a very appetising little volume, superbly illustrated, with the purpose of introducing the absolute novice to the sport of mountaineering. It is unlikely that the mountaineer of average experience will find much in this volume which he is not already prepared to amplify from his own personal knowledge; at the same time there are numerous valuable little suggestions and pronouncements upon the vexed question of equipment, evidently from the pen of one who has been at the game long enough to learn where the line is to be drawn between absolute necessities and amusing accessories. We would only feel inclined to question his omission of a reliable compass and a fairly accurate map from the inventory of climbing necessities mentioned in the second chapter. He states there that a rope, an ice axe, and suitable footwear and clothing are all that are necessary for an expedition; and from this we are inclined to surmise that Mr Abraham's experience has centred more in his well-known homeland hills and the Welsh mountains than in the mist-bound regions of Scotland, where death by exposure through ignorance of one's locality is as real a danger as any of those to be faced by the cragsman or the ridge-walker.

No review of this book would be complete without a word of praise for the twenty-four illustrations from photographs which embellish its pages. They embrace some of the very finest work which the well-known photographers of Keswick have produced in the line of figure studies in climbing, and we do not think greater praise could be bestowed.

About the only portion of the book where we find ourselves in entire disagreement with the author's statements occurs in Chapter IV., where he puts rock climbing at the head of the list of a mountaineer's accomplishments, and buttresses his statement with the assertion that this year's Everest climbing party were chosen for their pre-eminence in this branch of the sport. To our mind this is most misleading, for so far as it has already been explored there is very little in the chosen route up the highest mountain in the world necessitating any particular skill in the art of climbing rocks, and the gentlemen who have undertaken this severest of all mountaineering exploits

were in no way singled out because of their skill upon the stiffest courses on the crags of the Lake District or elsewhere. To our mind it is much more important that a man knows the vagaries of snow and ice, the results of cold and exposure in a high wind, the dangers of nights out with insufficient clothing and shelter, than that he is able to circumvent an overhang by removing his footgear at the accepted moment, or by utilising his chin and the back of his head for ascending more than vertical chimneys. In fine weather we agree that rocks may be the safest, the most expeditious, and the most amusing method of gaining the summit of a mountain, but the occasions are all too numerous when the natural stairway that they present is changed to a veritable death trap through a thin transparent coat of ice, or the unstable natural forces of erosion and thaw.

On behalf of the beginners in the sport, we would extend a hearty welcome to Mr Abraham's book, feeling sure that throughout its pages he has held up a warning finger to fatal accident as the penalty for straying from the narrow path directed by the accepted rules of the game. The book is exceptionally readable, and its sound sense and interesting pictures should make it a popular volume.

The Peaks, Lochs, and Coasts of the Western Highlands.
Arthur Gardner, M.A., F.S.A. (H. F. & G. Witherby, London.
15s. net.)

Mr Gardner, in his opening remarks, apologises for his presumption in venturing, "as a mere Englishman," to write a book about the Highlands. We hasten to assure him that such an apology is unnecessary when he has so amply demonstrated in his book, both pictorially and verbally, his genuine love of the Scottish hills.

Mr Gardner's book, as he tells us in his Introduction, has been designed to make its appeal by means of the illustrations which it contains, rather than through the medium of the text, which is really explanatory of the photographs reproduced. So far as the text is concerned, we confess that we were more interested in the Introduction than in the explanations of the photographs, though these will, no doubt, be of value to those who are unfamiliar with the districts described. We notice that Mr Gardner refers to the vexed question of access to the mountains and, while we are by no means at one with him in all his remarks, we heartily support his suggestions in regard to a Scottish equivalent of the National Trust in the English Lake District. We regret that Mr Gardner has not found more to attract him in the wonderfully beautiful and unique districts of the Cairngorms. We cannot understand why.

But the photographs, of which there are 100, all taken by the author, are undoubtedly the principal feature of the book, and we heartily congratulate Mr Gardner on the attractive selection which he has provided. The illustrations are, without exception, characterised by excellence of composition, and show clearly that the

photographer possesses great artistic sense. Those of the Ben Nevis district and the sunset effects from Morar and over Rum are particularly striking. In the case of some of the illustrations, those responsible for their reproduction do not appear to have done the photographer full justice.

Altogether a very charming and attractive volume !

The Rucksack Club Journal, 1924 (No. 18), Vol. V., No. 2.

In this number the Scottish hills are favoured by two contributions : one, by Mr J. Rooke Corbett, is entitled " In Unknown Lochaber," and deals with an ascent of Stob Choire Claurigh. Mr Corbett very nearly accuses us of overlooking altogether this member of the Easain Group, but we can assure him that it is referred to in no less than six out of the first ten volumes of the *S.M.C. Journal*. The other Scottish article is by Mr N. Freedman, and deals with Ben Alder. He seems to have been favoured with plenty of snow during his visit to the Highlands, for he says : " I have seen more snow in Scotland than anywhere since I left the arctic regions of Russia." The number includes an article by Mr E. W. Steeple, on the " Lofoten," and some interesting notes on " Birds of the British Hills," by Mr Arnold W. Boyd. The illustrations are of a high standard.

The Fell and Rock-Climbing Club Journal, 1923. Vol. VI., No. 2 (No. 17 of Series).

Mr Chorley has given his readers full measure in this number, which extends to nearly 150 pages, and incorporates a liberal supply of excellent illustrations, including a particularly attractive one of Yewbarrow. Mr Kelly's " Guide to the Pillar Rock and Neighbouring Climbs " (which is also published separately) forms the principal article. There are also various other contributions, some dealing with the Lakeland district ; some, such as Capt. Howard Somervell's interesting description of " Climbing North of Kanchenjunga," with foreign parts ; and others in lighter vein. A review of this number would not be complete without reference to Mr Chorley's account of the negotiations which culminated in the acquisition by the members of Fell and Rock Club of a large tract of the Lakeland hills as a memorial to their comrades who fell in the war. Such a memorial is an inspiration to all climbers. We can enter fully into the sentiments of the members of this kindred Club, which are so adequately expressed by Mr Chorley when he says : " If our friends died, there is a corner of their own dear land which will for ever bear witness to the memory of them and of the work they did—' they have found an eternal monument among the everlasting hills.' "

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.



The Editor will be glad to receive brief notices of any noteworthy expeditions.

These are not meant to supersede longer articles, but many members who may not care to undertake the one will have no difficulty in imparting information in the other form.

GLEN CLOVA DISTRICT.

MESSRS W. GALBRAITH and G. B. GREEN spent three days in February at the Hotel, Clova. As the district is not often visited, a few notes of their walks may be of some interest. On Saturday, 16th February, a fine, clear day with little wind, they left the Hotel at 9.40 A.M., and, crossing the river, went almost straight up a steepish slope, through fairly deep soft snow at times, to the top of Cairn Mhag (2,483 feet) by 11.10. Thence, going a little north of west, they rose gradually, passing between the Hill of Strom and the Bassies to over 2,700 feet, and then found a descent to about 2,300 feet, in snow so soft that even descending was hard work; a steep rise followed, made easier for a time by a "fixed rope" (in fact, a wire fence), but the heavy going made the time seem long to the top of Driesh (3,105 feet), which was reached at 1.5. There was a wide view of snow-covered hills to the south-west and west, which all looked very much alike; at any rate, it was not worth while identifying them. To the north, Cairn Toul, Braeriach, and Ben Macdhuì stood out splendidly, and to the north-east, Mount Keen. A short drop followed, to a col where lunch was taken from 1.30 to 2; after that a gently rising slope at first and last, with an almost level stretch in between, led to the top of Magar (3,043 feet) at 2.45 P.M. From it they descended due north to the head of the Fee Burn Glen, which gave a rough and toilsome descent at first. It may be pointed out that all the western side of this glen is precipitous, and can only be climbed down; the easiest way to descend would be to retrace one's steps east to the Shank of Drumfollow, taking its eastern side, down which a path runs into Glen Doll. The walk was continued into Glen Doll, on to a path past Glen Doll Lodge, near which the main road was reached, and the Hotel at 6.20, after 4 miles road walking.

On Sunday, the 17th, Messrs Galbraith and Green started up Glen Clova, at 10 A.M., and, continuing up Glen Esk, which turns

west at its upper end, under a fine crag called Juangorge, reached a ruined house, Bachnagairn, at 12.40, where they lunched. As the tops were in mist, they decided only to cross into Glen Doll; in doing so they were in mist when above 2,000 feet; after going to the 2,500 contour, over heavy snow, they went down into Glen Doll, and followed the path past Glen Doll Lodge to the road again, reaching the Hotel at 5.20. In good conditions of snow, or in the absence of snow, these times could be made much shorter. The hill-tops of the districts are rounded and tame, but the sides of the glens have many fine crags, notably Craig Rennet; on them some climbing has been done, and no doubt more could be.

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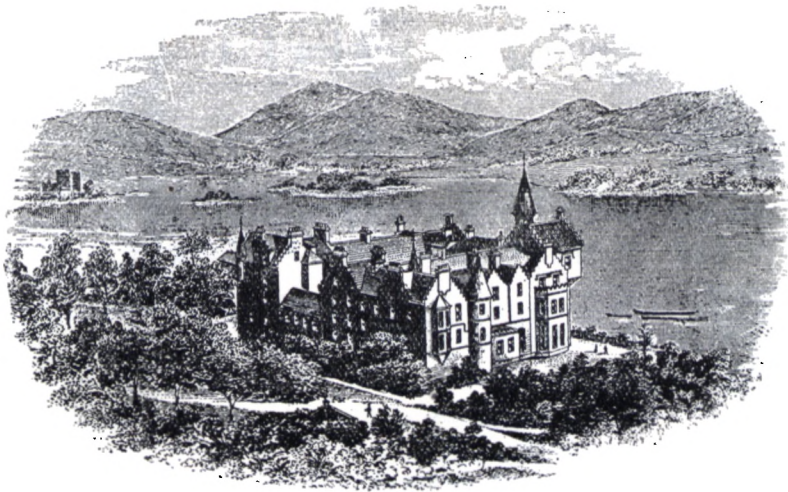
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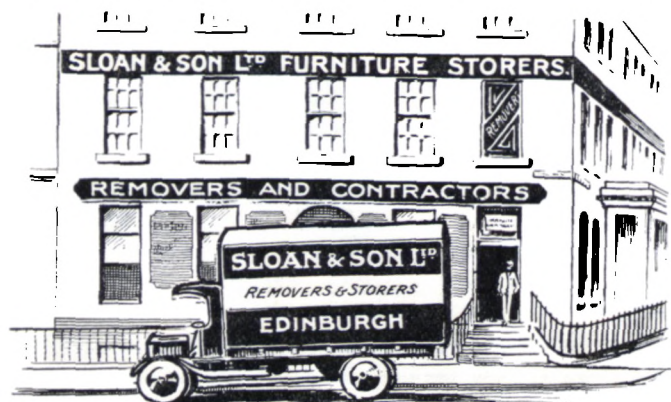
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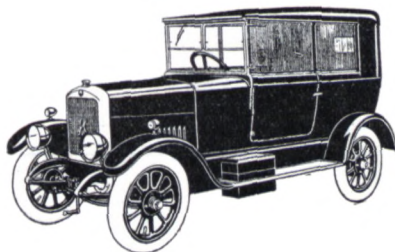
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THE CLOCH

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THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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SKYE RIDGES, CRACKS, AND STAIRCASES.

By J. H. B. BELL.

IT is a considerable achievement during such a deplorable summer as that of 1924 to record any decent climbs, new or old, in the misty Isle of Skye. Yet it has been my good fortune not only to snatch a week of good weather in Skye at the S.M.C. Meet in June, but, with considerable effrontery, to repeat the performance in mid-July. I was accompanied by F. S. Smythe, of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, and during the first few days we rather despaired of seeing the Cuillin at all, although we had even then succeeded in climbing on them. By a stroke of genius we defeated the weather, persuading Barlow to plant the Coire Lagan thickly with rain gauges, an artifice which promptly resulted in a shift of the wind to the north-west, with ideal weather for the traverse of the main ridge.

The Editor has kindly allowed me to append to this article three notes descriptive of the alleged new climbs and of our ridge traverse times. This allows me to discourse in a rambling manner about the holiday and yet leave a description by which the climbs can be identified by anyone interested.

The traverse of the main Cuillin ridge is the finest prolonged rock climb in Britain. Smythe and I had discussed it well beforehand. With Somervell's remarkable performance of 1919 in our minds, we had no hopes of making records. Barlow and Steeple tried to persuade us to do something new—either to do all the Skye Munros

in a day, or to visit all the cols and corries, bathing in all the lochans and avoiding all the tops. Smythe, however, aptly pointed out that a more remarkable achievement would be to do the ridge carrying with us the new edition of the " *Encyclopædia Britannica* " in twenty-nine volumes. The morning of Saturday, 19th July, was rainy, with a sullen mist to within 200 feet of sea level. We had completed breakfast at 3 A.M., and the weather was so unutterably depressing that I went to sleep again. However, Smythe wakened me about 5 A.M. with the news that Alasdair was clear, and we sallied forth across the bogs towards Garsbheinn. The view from the summit of Garsbheinn was unique. The night's storm clouds had now disappeared and Scavaig lay, a marvellous tracery of interlacing wavelets, gleaming in the early morning sunshine. Close underneath us lay a yacht at anchor, so close underneath that it almost seemed possible to throw a stone down her funnel. Away to the west the sea was still grey and the last remains of cloud clung to the hills of Harris. Coruisk was a wonderful deep blue, and at the head of it were the three tops of Bidein—many hours distant. Beautiful as Coruisk was, I am afraid we were glad to see the last of it in the afternoon; it is a long corrie to get round. The conditions for ridge walking were ideal. We had some mist on Thearlaich, but for the rest we had a hot sun, tempered by a north-westerly breeze. We roped only four times—for the Thearlaich-Dubh Gap, for King's Chimney on Mhic-Choinnich, for the short side of the Inaccessible, and for Naismith's route on the Tooth. Smythe did the journey in crêpe rubbers, which lasted surprisingly well, though I noticed he did descend Sgurr nan Gillean a bit gingerly. Our provision for water was a short length of rubber tube by means of which the least rock pool could be sucked dry. Even so, as the day got hotter we had to descend twice from the ridge—at the Glaic Moire and below Sgurr a' Fionn Choire. Smythe did not descend the latter time and, as a result, could not eat on the top of Sgurr nan Gillean. The most pleasing part of the ridge for speed was from Dearg to the Glaic Moire, especially over Ghreadaidh: the least

was the long, weary slog up Bruach na Frithe, and just here the breeze failed us and the sun scorched us out of a cloudless July sky. When we reached the top of Sgurr nan Gillean we unanimously denounced the detestable heresy of Somervell in including Sgurr na h'Uamha in the main ridge. We considered the job was done, and we certainly wasted much time in the descent to Sligachan. This was mainly due to a dispute as to the best side of the Bhasteir gorge to descend by from the foot of the Fourth-Fifth Pinnacle Gully: we lost each other and, after much delay, found that each, by an excess of politeness, had chosen the other's route. At any rate we crossed the bogs to Sligachan in fine style and enjoyed the rest of the evening thoroughly. The ridge is a grand expedition, and the next day was the first day I felt ideally fit. Two Rucksack Club men traversed the ridge in the opposite direction, in mist, two days before—a remarkably fine performance.

But now for the new climbs! The first is what I would call the Cioch West Ridge route (Fig. 1). This was rather attractively revealed to us from the lower Ccire Lagan by a sudden clearing in a dense mist which threw the whole of the Cioch Buttress into striking relief against the rest of the Sron na Ciche face. The remarks in the note describe the main features of the climb. The crux is at the point *p* in the diagram. This is a very awkward mantel-shelf problem and took us some time to surmount. It needs good balancing and a hefty pull. The climbing was interesting right up to *v*, above which is a delightful, nearly vertical pitch on good rough rock with sufficient holds. The final part of the climb on to the Cioch itself has obviously been climbed often, probably from the Terrace, or the branch Cioch Gully. We finished the climb above the Cioch by the Archer Thomson upper buttress route, which was most enjoyable, and gave us a glimpse down the awe-inspiring Crack of Doom.

This latter is the finest short rock climb either Smythe or I has done. We visited it two days after our traverse of the main ridge. We ascended the Cioch direct from the corrie, enjoying the climb to the full and doing the upper part as direct as possible from the Terrace up the

north-west corner of the Cioch. After lunch we approached the foot of the Crack of Doom by the Girdle Traverse. When there are only two in the party, I cannot recommend bringing the second man up to the first chockstone at the *mauvais pas*. I did the climb with one run out of rope which meant fully 70 feet, until I was safely ensconced above the upper chockstone. The upper part of the climb is splendid. The true left wall is slimy and wet, and in the upper part there are no holds on either wall. One struggles and wedges up inch by inch until close under the overhanging chock, where a prodigious pull is necessary to surmount it just when, by all standards of climbing decency, one is entitled to feel thoroughly exhausted. We reached the top of Sron na Ciche by the direct Pigott and Wilding finish, which contains a few more good pitches.

Our last day's climbing resulted in the discovery of a fine new staircase on Sgumain (Fig. 2). The note describes the climb, and we cairned it a little, too. The initial section contains one or two quite interesting mantel-shelf problems, but the grand feature is the chimney C. I examined the face carefully just below this, and I fail to see how it can very well be avoided without completely altering the location of the climb on the face. I should say the near-by alternatives are worse, so that, like the orthodox mathematical problem, the solution is unique, but it took us a very long time to find it. The chimney is, I should think, barely 40 feet high, but it abounds in situations where bulging rocks and scarcity of holds call for the most uncomfortable and contorted positions. It has these merits without being at all a dangerous place. We halted above it to erect a cairn and smoke a well-earned pipe. The next little flake problem, K, did not detain us long, and a little higher I heard a delighted shout from Smythe to come on and upstairs to bed ! Certainly it was a most wonderful staircase, so well preserved that in parts it had no support on either side. The dyke fixed the rest of the climb for us ; we walked upstairs. At one point a broad terrace is crossed, but even there the dyke can be traced underneath. Above we found a fine short

crack pitch where the dyke was vertical. Higher up there was only one further pitch where the dyke became very steep and curved. The climb petered out among the shattered rocks beneath the west ridge of Sgumain, which we followed to the base of the north-west tower. This we climbed by Steeple and Barlow's 1920 route, which made a splendid difficult finish to our new climb. Indeed, as we finished in a dense mist, I may say that I was greatly comforted to find half-way up a cairn, as I had little desire to go down again by the route I had ascended. When I think over this last part I am not sure, even now, that we did follow the pioneers' route. The Steeple and Barlow route may be a little to the left of ours, or farther out on the upper Coire Lagan face.

NOTE I.

Route up Cioch by West Ridge Crest above Cioch Gully.

(See Fig. 1.)

The climb starts at a point X on Cioch Buttress west side, just where the Cioch Gully begins to be definite, and just above a corner where a cross crack XG goes off towards the Central Gully. The climb practically keeps to the crest of what may be called the Cioch West Ridge and finishes exactly at the Cioch Cairn. It has three well-defined sections, only the upper one of which, ZC, seems to be nail-marked. The lower section is easy till two-thirds of the way up, where there are two mantel-shelf problems, the upper of which is fairly difficult. A cairn has been left above this. Shortly above this, at Y, a grass-filled branch, Cioch Gully, is crossed. Above Y is a 15-feet pitch, nearly vertical, leading to an easy slab and crossing at Z the traverse from Cioch Gully above the Letter Box. ZC, the upmost part of climb, is well nail-marked but interesting. The whole climb is on sound rock and is really well defined. The diagram is ex-Guide Book photo. The climb here described is not all visible, as XY is slightly behind the crest of the ridge.

This climb was finished by Archer Thomson's upper buttress route above Cioch.

NOTE II.

North-West Trap Route on Sgurr Sgumain.

(See Fig. 2.)

The diagram shows Sgumain seen from direction of Loch an Fhir Bhallaich.

Fig. 1.

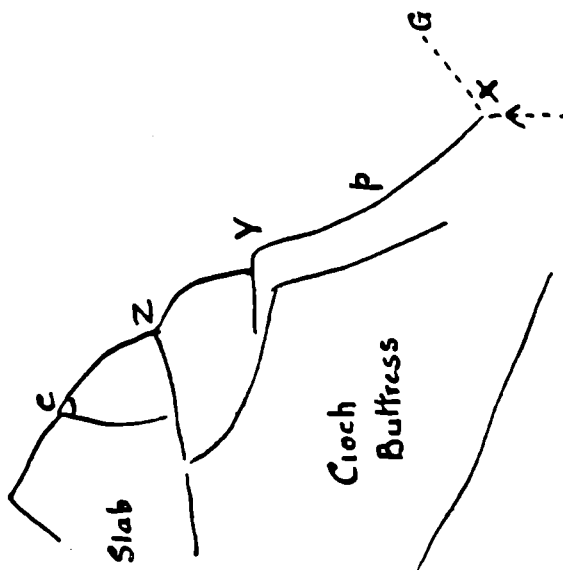
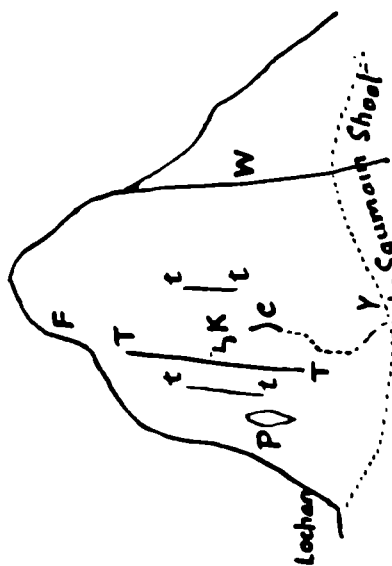
ROUTE UP CLOCH BY WEST RIDGE CREST
ABOVE CLOCH GULLY.

Fig. 2.



NORTH-WEST TRAP ROUTE ON SGURR SGUMAIN.

F, Final Tower of Sgumain.

P, Conspicuous light patch on rocks.

//, Other vertical lines on face.

TT, Trap dyke of climb, which ends below in an overhang.

W, A conspicuous crack in west face of Sgumain, which appears to descend below traverse from Lochan Coire Lagan to foot of Sgumain Shoot.

Y, On this traverse, start of climb, small cairn leaning against rocks.

C, Difficult chimney pitch.

K, Small crack pitch above it.

The route referred to can be readily recognised from Glen Brittle P.O., as dyke TT is quite prominent. The above sketch is fairly accurate, the only error likely to occur in it being that TT ought perhaps to be a little farther to the left.

The start, Y, is about 100 yards from the Lochan. The climb starts up a little chimney. Shortly after is a small slab mantel-shelf problem, then a traverse to right and ascent to beneath chimney C. This is a very worthy chimney. The pitch is 30 to 40 feet high and calls for considerable balance and pull. (A great deal more difficult than King's Chimney on Mhic Choinnich, or the Thearlaich Dhubh Gap, but less so than the Crack of Doom.) It is the best pitch on the climb. There seem to be overhangs on both sides. Above this, a traverse to left brings one to K, a crack between a detached mass of rock and the main mass. It looks like a miniature Kern Knotts, but is easy. Above, one ascends 40 feet or so and traverses to left on to TT, the dyke. The rest of the climb is along this, the most continuous of its kind I have seen anywhere. It runs from level of light-coloured rock patch below, where it peters out into an overhang, probably less than 100 feet above traverse from which climb starts. Above, it runs up to shattered, easy rock beneath ridge leading to final tower of Sgumain. From where the climb gets on to the dyke, 100 feet or so goes easily. Dyke is firm and like a staircase, actually unsupported on one side for a short distance. Then a green recess is reached. Dyke is really continuous across this, after which is a vertical 12 feet pitch, best taken on left gabbro wall. Then up dyke again till it begins to curve and overhangs 6 feet at the end of this stretch. Above this the rocks are easy, but the dyke still continues. The crest of the West Ridge is directly ahead. We followed this to final tower of Sgumain, which we ascended just on northern side of the north-west corner near a cairn. The ascent of the final tower was also splendid climbing and provides two exhilarating chimney pulls before one gets to the top easy pitch. This is, of course, Steeple and Barlow's route of 1920.

NOTE III.

Times of Traverse of the Muin Ridge.

Leave Glen Brittle, 5.15 ; Garsbheinn, 7.53, leave 8.23 ; Sgurr nan Eag, 8.58 ; Dubh na Da Bheinn, 9.43 ; Alasdair, 10.50 ; Thearlaich, 10.57 ; Mhic Choinnich, 11.45 ; Inaccessible, 12.57 (halt twenty-four minutes at An Stac), leave Dearg, 1.10 ; North Banachdich, 1.41 ; Thormaid, 1.56 ; North Ghreadaidh, 2.21, halt forty minutes at Glais Moire ; Bidein Central, 4.20 ; Bruach na Frithe, 5.34 ; Sgurr a' Fionn Choire, 5.50 ; Tooth, 6.21 ; Am Bhasteir, 6.30 ; Sgurr nan Gillean, 7.3 ; Sligachan, 9.26.

Times of Rückackers.

Leave Sligachan, 6.55 ; Sgurr nan Gillean, 8.50 ; Bruach na Frithe, 10.12 ; Bidein, 11.30 ; Banachdich, 2.30 ; Inaccessible, 3.50 ; Alasdair, 5.50 ; Dubh na Da Bheinn, 7.15 ; Garsbheinn, 9.40 ; Glen Brittle, 11.47.

"I TO THE HILLS."

*(Reproduced by kind permission of the Editor
of the "College Magazine.")*

THE mist before us like a curtain fringe
Hangs threatening, while below us, far below,
The valley lies, as bare as furrow ploughed
By God's own finger. Wild and bare around
The mountains rise like huge and rugged giants
Asleep, or resting from their mighty toils.
Asleep, not dead ! For in the huge repose
Of these rough summits there is strength. A strength
Unnamed, unnameable, the silent source
Of our best nature, of our national strength—
A silent spirit that will still outlast
All feeble prettiness ; an unheard voice
That calls to higher lives, to nobler aims ;
An unseen presence, beckoning us to leave
All artificiality behind,
And be ourselves. For peace dwells in the hills
If we can hear her voice, and in the hills
We may escape the tired complexity
Of life, and in the silence vast, absorb
Into our weary spirits rest.

ANON.

Scottish University Verses, 1918-23.

LOCHNAGAR AT EASTER.

BY A. J. RUSK.

THE two days preceding Good Friday, 1924, were perfect examples of what really good weather in this country can be, and on the evening of the first of the two we set out for the Easter Meet at Braemar. The night run was most enjoyable, over good roads, under excellent conditions: a touch of frost made the blood tingle under one's heavy clothing, and the friendly moon made driving pleasantly easy.

Owing to rather overwhelming force of circumstances, plans went aghay, and the time available for a bivouac was reduced to two hours instead of four, as arranged by the General Staff. However, a hearty ration of kidneys and bacon and the first rays of the sun put the party on the top of its form, and Stonehaven was passed for the second time at 6 A.M.

The run over to Banchory and up the Deeside road was one to live in the memory; the clear sparkling air, the cloudless sky, and the bright beams of the sun combined to make it patent to the least weather-wise that one was at the beginning of a day in a thousand. Our spirits overflowed in song, somewhat discordant, but full of the inarticulate spirit of poesy.

We first saw Lochnagar from just beyond Ballater, and by common consent we stopped to give undivided attention to the wonderful sight. One could see right into the corrie, ringed in by the heavily iced cliffs rising above a low heathery ridge of a dull colour in front. We stopped long enough to take in the prospect, and to take a photograph, and then sped on, for we had much to do before reaching Braemar. The way was quite straightforward, up through the woods of Glen Muick, until we came to Inchnabobart. There we stopped to ask how we should go for the path and were directed along the road up to



April 1924

SNOW CORNICES—LOCHNAGAR

A. J. Rusk

Alltnaguisbhach Lodge. We asked if there were any cars there as we had been unable to get petrol in Ballater so early, and were getting near the bottom of the tank. To our surprise and delight, the old lady herself produced a quart bottle, saying that it was a handy thing to have about the house. The only uses in our knowledge were motoring, cleaning kid gloves, and as fuel for a blow lamp. Apparently she had discovered a fourth, for none of these seemed to fit the case.

We got to the Lodge about 9, and after due preparation set off for the col south of the Meikle Pap. The way leads up through trees over a springy carpet of pine needles and into the open up the hillside. The peculiar charm of the Cairngorms was over everything, and being there again made one feel like a wanderer returning home. On such a perfect day the temptation to linger is strong, and it was well after midday by the time we reached the col.

Once there the view of the corrie and cliffs engrossed all attention for a few minutes. After a general view, the first of the details to receive notice was the Black Spout, for this was to be our climb. Under the conditions something good was expected, and expectations were duly realised. From where we were, the upper part looked impressively difficult ; there was apparently a rock pitch of some severity a little below the top, and above that a cornice of visible magnitude. Ice might be expected, and in that case the rocks might prove to be awkward. There was no mistaking the position of the Spout, although neither of us had seen it from there before ; it looked more interesting than report had said, and we decided to have at it forthwith.

At this stage the photographer said that he was not carrying a half-plate camera about for fun, and the spectator accordingly took shelter from the north-west wind which was becoming Arctic. The photographer said that his three remaining plates would do nicely for a two-plate panorama of the corrie, and for an enlarged view of the Spout itself. The first exposure was a great success ; click—and the penny was returned nicely. Unfortunately,

he did not know the camera well, and owing to an unexpected idiosyncrasy thereof the last two plates were irretrievably ruined. Let us draw a kindly veil over the scene for a few minutes. The spectator was greatly impressed; he said that there were several things mentioned that he had never heard of before. The photographer modestly said that anyone could have thought of them in his position.

The surroundings quickly put such unworthy thoughts to flight, and the party set off for the foot of the Spout in good order. This was reached about 2.30, and steps were kicked up at a steady pace. On the way over across the lower slopes of the corrie, it was observed that the apparent rock pitch was really a rock island, and that a way could be found on snow to the right of the rocks. This agreed more closely with what report had said of the place.

However, this part was not so simple as it had looked from below, as the part of the gully beside the rocks was composed of ice at an angle of some 40 to 50 degrees. Above the ice was a snow slope of about the same angle, which steepened rapidly up to the cornice, from which it was separated by a moderately sized bergschrund. The cornice itself overhung considerably, and looked very impressive. At the right-hand end, however, there was a weaker place which offered a chance of escape, and round to the left the cornice decreased in size so that we hoped to find a better exit, at present hidden by the rocks. So far as we could see the snow was of doubtful quality; it was not good hard *névé*, and would probably be dry and powdery. In that case it might prove nasty at such a steep angle.

The rope was put on here, and the leader started up, cutting steadily. The rope was not long enough to let him get over the ice-pitch in one run, and to avoid standing in steps, I waited below and then came up to a specially accommodating soup-plate. From here a slant was made to the left to avoid a steep bulge which blocked the way in front; this threatened to be nasty as the ice was thin. Fortunately, there was not rock

underneath, but softer material, and a composite step could be cut through the ice into the frozen scree.

An anxious moment followed as the leader reached the snow ; however, he said it seemed all right, so I followed up, and a consultation was held. The snow was of a type that we had not encountered before. It was dry and powdery ; one could make a step in it by kicking, and it remained firm and solid. There was no sliding or tendency to avalanche as one might expect from dry loose snow at a fairly steep angle ; it was quite satisfactory.

All doubts were now removed, and we moved quickly upwards to see if there was a good exit available round the corner to the left. Slanting up on a slope of increasing steepness we reached the bergschrund, at a place where it had become merely a flat ledge about 18 inches wide. The cornice overhung here to an impassable extent, but the exit that we had hoped for to the left was there. The ledge gave a good position for the second man to safeguard the leader while he attacked the difficulty, and to photograph him doing so.

It was first necessary to traverse to the left for about 20 feet to get clear of the cornice, and then to climb straight up. The slope along which the traverse had to be made was very steep indeed. After much discussion and subtraction of 5 degrees for impressive surroundings, we arrived at an estimate of 70 degrees. It was impossible to pass one foot between the other and the slope, and the traverse was made face in, as satisfactory handholds could not be made in the loose snow. At the end of the traverse it was necessary to climb up on to a large block of *névé* forming an incipient lower cornice, and then over the actual cornice itself, which here was not very high. This programme was carried out successfully, and the leader's arrival in the sunshine was announced in the usual way. To the photographer who followed, the slope seemed 80 degrees, the lower cornice vertical and the upper cornice overhanging, thus providing the incident with a delightful touch of human nature.

Once on the easy slopes we found ourselves again in the sun, which was very welcome, since we had been in the

shade for some hours. The top was reached at 5 P.M., the cheering ceremony of drinking our own healths was duly performed, and a meal disposed of.

The return to the side-car at Allnaguisbhach Lodge was made along the top of the cliffs and down the Ladder. The heavy cornices and beautiful snow sculpture were very impressive. The top of the Douglas Gully was the most striking ; the upper part resembling a huge vertical bank of organ-pipes with an enormous cornice curling over it and threatening to come away at any minute. The keen frost that still endured where the sun was not striking and the cold north-west wind held these wonderful formations firmly in place, and it was only occasionally that a small icicle fell from the fringe that was feeling the heat of the sun.

Time was, unfortunately, too short to allow us to linger on the upper plateau, and so we made haste for the Lodge, which we reached about half-past seven ; thence to Ballater. Tea for us and petrol for the B.S.A. saw us on the road for Braemar, whither we were preceded by a speedy car, from which issued a multi-lingual greeting and a forest of vigorously waving arms. The white cliffs of Lochnagar were seen to advantage from several points on the road, and more than once we gave him a "rouser" by way of thanks for one of the best days of our respective lives.

Darkness came on before we reached Braemar, and the glorious evening raised high hopes of good days to come. A brilliant display of Northern Lights confirmed our anticipations of bright frosty weather. Unfortunately these were rudely dispelled by an unsympathetic south wind which came during the night and remained for the greater part of the week-end. During the return journey on Sunday the cliffs had a very different aspect as seen from the road. The majority of the snow had gone, and white lines indicating the positions of gullies and remains of the greatly reduced cornices were all that were left of the wonderful display of two or three days before.



April 1924

THE CLIFFS OF LOCHNAGAR

A. J. Rusk

RECOLLECTIONS OF OVER SIXTY YEARS'
RAMBLING ON SCOTTISH HILLS.

BY WALTER A. SMITH.

IN response to a request from the Editor, I venture to submit the following notes :—

I was fortunate in acquiring an early love of the hills from my father who was all his life a good pedestrian. He knew the Pentlands well, and one of my earliest recollections is coming down with him from the back of Castlelaw to the pretty little hamlet of Easter Howgate and having tea and scones at the cosy cottage inn there, now long ago closed. But he explored many parts of the Highlands too. He crossed the Cairngorms, then but little known, in 1847, by Ben Muich Dhui and Loch Avon, along with an old friend who was a well-known Edinburgh botanist. This was long before Hill Burton published his little book about these great hills we all now know so well. I still have, as one of my treasured possessions, a little pen and ink map which these two early Cairngorm enthusiasts prepared of this great mountain group. It is wonderfully accurate.

In my young days, in the early "sixties," there was an annual family picnic on "Good Fridays" to the top of the West Kip. There was no railway to Balerno in these days, so we had to trudge all the way up from Curriehill Station, a good training for young legs from which I suppose I benefited in after years. But my first Highland holiday was in 1864, when we stayed for a month at Aberfeldy. The Highland Railway was only open so far as Dunkeld then, and I remember still my joy in sitting beside the driver of the coach that took the family up Strath Tay that lovely August afternoon. We had a fine time of it there. We climbed Farragon and Schiehallion, for the latter excursion driving to and from the old Inn of Coshieville.

For the years 1868 and 1869 my father rented Reydh House at Kirkmichael from Mr Keir of Kindrogan, and

we had joyful gatherings of friends and happy excursions and merry evenings both in spring and summer and autumn holidays. We climbed Ben-y-Gloe (in snow and startled an eagle from the cairn) from Loch Loch and were several times up Mount Blair. We attended the Glen Isla gathering at "The Kirkton," when one of our guests, a shy English clergyman, was much shocked at the high jumps of stalwart highlanders in their kilts "and not much else"! And the village doctor used often of an evening to come down Glen Derby with his fiddle and play reels for us to dance, and tell us the local tales and humours. One of the local characters was the beadle and gravedigger, who I remember complaining to us "that he hadna buried a *leevin* soul for three years except a bit scarth of a bairn." So you see it was a healthy locality as well as a cheerful one. Before there was a doctor in the Strath the beadle added, "If a body wasna weel we just gave him whuskey and if *that* didna do ony guid he just deed, ye ken."

We and our visitors formed "The Reydhru Club," one of the moving spirits and the Vice-President of which (my father was the President) was a well-known and very learned and humorous old Edinburgh W.S., and he composed "The Club Song." Here are two typical verses of it:—

"Whae'er has been up in Strathardle,
Bear witness that I'm speakin' true
When I threep that in a' bonnie Scotland
There's nae place to match wi' Reydhru.

Oh, the ramblin' and rantin' and roarin',
The jokin' o' yon merry crew!
The liltin' and leevin' and lauchin'
That whuppit auld Time at Reydhru!"

Most of the "merry crew" met again in 1870 at the old house of The Beild at Tweedsmuir, where we climbed Broad Law and reached the wild and rocky solitudes of Loch Skene:—

"Where eagles scream from isle to shore;
Down all the rocks the torrents roar;
O'er the black waves incessant driven,
Dark mists infect the summer heaven."

And of the pleasant reunion here the witty old rhymster of the Club composed about thirty reminiscent stanzas, in each of which, with much ingenuity, he found a word to rhyme with "Bield." This was the first stanza :—

" All know that old hostel, the Bield,
Sweet repose ever ready to yield
To toilers whose brain
Is fatigued by the strain
Of task work done far from the Bield." *

Soon after this memorable holiday in 1870 I went to London for some years to begin my real life's " task work," and had to be content with Sunday rambles in Surrey. But I managed a glorious fortnight one year in Arran, where, of course, I climbed Goat Fell. And in August 1873 my late brother William and I made our first visit to the Cairngorms. We reached Braemar *via* our familiar haunt Kirkmichael, Dirnanean, Bein Earb, and the Spittal of Glen Shee. Leaving Braemar early on rather a doubtful-looking morning, with occasional bright gleams of sunshine that lit up the glorious colours of the valley of the Dee, we walked up the road to the Linn. But, alas, now the clouds gathered and the rain came down in torrents, so we decided not to go up Glen Derry but to continue up the main river and so leave it an open question whether we would leave the mountains behind us and go down Glen Tilt or still farther follow the Dee to near the Pools and climb Ben Muich Dhui from there. When we got to the bridge where the Geldie comes down the weather suddenly cleared, and we were rejoicing in summer radiance with a firmament of blue, and the scarred forehead of Ben Bhrotain untroubled by a cloud in the north-west. So we hopefully turned northwards by the wet and rather elusive track that leads up between the wild heights of the Devil's Point and Cairn á Mhaim to join the Glen Derry path below the Corrie Odhair. By this time the rain came on again, tearing down the dark Glen Geusachan,

* *Old members of the S.M.C. will remember that this region was the scene of one of the very early Meets of the Club, at the Crook Inn, in February 1891.*

and we sought a temporary shelter behind a boulder. But we soon pushed on up the Larig and saw, with wondering eyes, the great corries on the west cloaked with mist and rain. Then the wind rushed through that chaos, and rent it here and there, so that, in the heart of it, you might see the wet black cliffs with occasional wreaths of snow clinging to their crests. And soon, as the mists were scattered by the gale, the flashing lines of the mountain-side streams were seen through the struggling sunshine, which at last triumphed over the storm and revealed the great ridges of Braeriach.* And so, encouraged by these welcome warm gleams of light, we struck up a shoulder of Ben Muich Dhui before reaching the Pools of Dee. A stiff climb brought us to the ghastly wilderness of stones on the ridge and we gained the summit. But the weather got wild and thick again and our labours were not rewarded by the view we had looked forward to. So we groped our way north and descended by the north side of the central stream (the Garbh Uisge Beag?) to Loch Avon, and reached its granite shore at 5 P.M. (we had left Braemar at 7 A.M.), and surely nothing, we thought, could exceed the desolate grandeur of the scene around us. We sought and found the Shelter Stone, that "lodge in this vast wilderness," and made a fire with a little wood and much heather, and after a good supper we slept peacefully through a wet and windy night. Next morning we re-lit our fire, made some hot soup of Liebeg's extract in an empty tin, and by 8 o'clock were on our way down the rough north side of the loch below the steep, rocky sides of Cairngorm to join the Larig an Laoigh, near the little Lochan à Bhainne, which led us round the north side of Ben Bynac to the valley of the River Nethy. Crossing the moor of Tulloch towards Loch Garten, we found a deep well of great purity and coolness. Above it was a small board with this inscription:—

"O Fuaran O Gail, splendidior vitro, dulci digne mero, non sine floribus."

* This "storm picture" in the Larig is adapted from a note by my brother.

We translated *merum* into "Lochnagar," and proceeded, so refreshed, to the Boat of Garten, where we were comfortably fed and housed, and slept on the bed which recently had been occupied by the Ex-Empress of the French. No extra charge was made! Next morning we went south again by train.

My next visit to the Shelter Stone, in July 1875 with Sir Alex. Kennedy, in *much* more favourable weather, is described in the *S.M.C. Journal* of June 1917. And I was there again in 1882, and finally in 1896 with Charles Macpherson, when we ascended Bein-a-Bhuird and Ben Avon and descended to Ballater by Glen Gairn, and afterwards crossed by the top of Mount Keen to the Loch Lee and down to Edzell.

In 1876 I was in Skye for a few days with my brother, when we climbed Scur-na-Gilleann.

The summer of 1877 found me wandering alone for a week in the wilds of Galloway. This was before the day of Crockett's "Raiders." And in July 1882 my brother and I, and my trusty dog Bruin, explored the Minnigaig Pass from Blair Atholl to Kingussie. I remember we left the night train to the north at about 3 A.M., and enjoyed seeing a lovely sunrise as we crossed over the moors to Glen Bruar.

In my holidays from 1885-88 I was busy arranging for the erection of guide posts for the Scottish Rights of Way Society on the Pentlands, at Glen Clova, Braemar, Rothiemurchus, Glen Feshie, and Blair Atholl. And in 1886, 1887, and 1892 Macpherson and I had long memorable walks in the north and north-west, over the Corryarrick, over from Glen Affric to Loch Shiel, over from Corpach to Loch Nevis, over from Poolewe to Dundonnell, &c. Some notes as to these will be found in Volumes I. and XIV. of the *Journal*.

For the next thirty years, with the exception of two visits to Switzerland and one to Egypt and Turkey and Austria, I spent most of my holiday times in Strathspey, a district to which my family and I became much attached. Its mountains, lochs, and rivers were an unwearying delight. But I cannot forget a much enjoyed week at

Tyndrum with Ted Goodeve in 1902, when we climbed Ben Lui, Bein Oss, and Ben More. And I had the pleasure of attending several of the earlier Easter Meets of the Club at Fort William, Ballachulish, Tyndrum, and Inveroran, when I climbed most of the glorious hills in these centres. I well remember being on the top of *the* Ben that wonderfully bright, clear, "Alpine" day when our late dear friend Howie took his famous big photograph of it.

In 1922 I, in good company, fulfilled a long cherished desire to cross the Monega Pass from Glen Isla to Braemar. This interesting old route (over 3,200 feet) is described in Volume XVI.

In 1923 the same party crossed the moor from Kings-house to Loch Rannochhead, from there to Killin by Dall and Glen Lyon, and from Killin (*via* Lochearnhead Railway Station) from Ardvorlich on Loch Earn to Callander by the picturesque narrow Pass to the east of Ben Voirlich. And in June this year we explored these two ancient and very interesting high mountain paths, "The Firmounth" and "The Fungle Road," between the North Esk and the Dee. A short account of this last walk will appear in the forthcoming number of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*.

But now my legs are old and my pen is weary, as must also be any readers who have had the patience to look over this long and too egotistical narration.

In Memoriam.

MAJOR DAVID SLOAN ARTHUR, M.C.

DESPITE the knowledge of his long illness, it was a great shock to his friends to learn that David Arthur had passed away. In a short life—he was only forty-four when he died on 19th April 1924—few gain the affectionate regard that he held so richly.

To him malice, envy, and uncharitableness were utterly unintelligible, and for an ever-widening circle of all classes and every type his quiet unassuming manner could not mask the bright and eager nature aflame with devoted love for his fellows. With his keen, quiet eyes, the slight forward tilt in his alert step, and his spare frame driven by an indomitable and fearless spirit, he had the purposeful directness of a well-balanced rapier.

Following in the footsteps of his father, the late Mr John W. Arthur, a greatly respected business man, philanthropist, and athlete in Glasgow, his life was full of a multitude of activities. He was educated at Glasgow Academy, of which he became Captain in 1897. At the time of his death he was a Governor of the Glasgow Academy Memorial Trust. An all-round sportsman, he was particularly well known as a centre three-quarter for Glasgow Academicals, and on more than one occasion was chosen to represent Glasgow in the Inter-City. Entering on a commercial career, he was associated with his father's firm, Messrs Allan Arthur, Fletcher, & Co., calico printers, and latterly was a director of Messrs James Munro & Co. Ltd., marine publishers.

He was a zealous member of Hillhead Baptist Church. For twenty-one years he was an officer of the Church's Boys' Brigade Company, he was Superintendent of the Sunday School, and also a Manager of the Church. He was for many years on the Council of the Glasgow Battalion

of the Boys' Brigade, and in 1921 was elected Vice-President, a position which he had to resign owing to continued ill-health.

An enthusiastic Territorial, when the war broke out he rejoined his battalion, the 8th Scottish Rifles, becoming later second-in-command of the amalgamated 5th and 8th Battalions. He served in France and Belgium, and was twice wounded. At Glencorse Wood on 26th September 1917, "though wounded he led his Company's attack, established himself in the captured position, organised it and held it under intense shell fire," and for this was awarded the Military Cross, "displaying great courage and skill." From David his friends would expect no less.

His long and painful illness was recognised officially as being due to his war service, and he bore it as a soldier without a murmur and with cheerful fortitude.

He had a good knowledge of our Scottish mountains and an acquaintance with certain of the Alpine districts, and, prior to 1913, when he joined the Club, had attended several of the Meets. To one of his single and open character, the strength and beauty of the hills was bound to appeal, and the inspiration of their "essential silence" could not but hearten and make fruitful his simple faith.

The members of the Club offer to his widow and family sincerest sympathy in their grievous loss. We are proud to think that for him in a special sense as for comrades true to the uttermost, who passed away amid the roar of hostile barrages, is that first and welcoming fanfare which in old Bunyan's words greet the Christian warrior :

"They passed over and all the trumpets sounded on the other side."

J. C. T.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

EASTER MEET, 1924—BRAEMAR.

THE Eastertide has gathered us again from near and far
To tread once more the glorious hills that circle round Braemar.
The President with genial smile of welcome first is seen ;
There are Russell, Ling, and Parker, and a K.C.B. called Green ;
And Glover, he of Liathach, I've got him on the list,
His legs rejuvenated by an osteopathist.
Gilbert Thomson, Goggs and Walker, and Low and Barlow too,
Who alone across Muich Dhui came from Speyside, overdue,
With camel-load, of baggage, though he did the job all right,
He came tramping into Braemar at the witching hour of night.
And Garden on his native heath, M'Coss in native kilt,
And Reid from Free State Ireland, on the lines of Ev'rest built.
The Treasurer with hungry look most certainly appears
To dun the poor unfortunate whose "sub." is in arrears.
Allan and Scott, Senior, who contrived by every dodge
With sundry young companions to camp soft in Derry Lodge.
Euan Robertson and Tomkinson and Thomson (James) and Jack,
Whose task as scribe outweighs by far the rucksack on his back.
And when our ranks are thinning somewhat tardily appears,
To finish off the record and put up the shutters, Meares.
There's Brown and Rusk and Howard, with his fresh Parisian jests,
And a galaxy of eager, youthful, Munro-bagging guests,
Two Maclaurins, Taylor, Sharp, Cairns, Armour, Martin, Scott,
Hardie, Drysdale, Wilson-Niven (the Club must bag the lot).
Bartholomew of map fame, and Gilbert Thomson's son,
Who doubtless longs to emulate the deeds his father's done.
This completes the tale of starters, and their deeds I tell below,
Of their prowess on the mountains amidst rain and mist and
snow—
A prosy, bald, and bare account of climbs and expeditions
As taken down midst copious draughts and cloudy smoke
emissions
In the warm and sleepy smoke-room, after ample well-earned
dinner.
From every blasé veteran, from each verbose beginner.
The weather varied pleasantly from sunshine bright to rain,
From balmy little breezes to a raging hurricane,
From far and glorious visions to a close enfolding mist.
Her whims you must treat leniently, 'tis futile to resist.
The country round about Braemar possesses many charms,
But none I'm sure you'll all agree can rival the "Fife Arms."

There attended twenty-five members and fourteen guests.

Thursday, 17th April.

Rusk and Niven, Lochnagar by the Blackspout ; very fine conditions.

Borlaw, from Aviemore up Larig Ghru over Ben Muich Dhui to Braemar.

Friday, 18th April.

Walker and MacRobert, mostly on ski, from Glen Clova over Tom Buidhc, Carn na Glasha, Carn an Tuirc, and down Glen Callater.

Ling and Low, from Glen Clova over Tom Buidhc.

Rusk and Niven, Cairn Gorm of Derry.

Parker, office 8.10 A.M. till 3.10 P.M. 3.20 train to Ballater, thence by coach to Braemar.

Garden, Goggs, Glover, Tomkinson, and Wilson, from Alltnaguibhsaich Lodge over Lochnagar to Braemar.

Bell, Green, Sharp, Howard, and Reid, car to snow drift, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles short of Derry Lodge, over ridge north of Cairn Gorm of Derry on to Muich Dhui, but failed to find cairn, down to car.

Robertson, Russell, and Hardy, Lochnagar. Allan, two Scotts, Martin, from Aviemore through Larig Ghru, up Cairn Toul, down to Derry Lodge.

Saturday, 19th April.

Parker, Wilson, M'Coss, Niven, Cairns, Armour, by Sneck and Garbh Caire, and over two tops of Beinn a Bhuid.

Ling, Goggs, Sharp, Glover, and Howard, two tops of Beinn a Bhuid.

MacRobert, Brown, Tomkinson, and Jack motored to Derry Lodge, climbed Cairn Toul.

Drysdale and two Maclaurins motored to snowdrift, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles short of Derry Lodge, thence up Cairn Toul with MacRobert's party.

Thomson (J. C.) and Taylor motored about 1 mile short of Cairnwell, climbed Meall Odhar, Glas Maol, Cairn na Glasha, and Carn an Tuirc, and down to bridge at foot of Loch Callater.

Russell, Robertson, Green, and Hardy, Beinn a Bhuird ; the two last-named did the south top only.

Walker and Low practised ski-ing on slopes about Derry Lodge.

Gilbert Thomson (whose climbing on these hills began over forty years ago) with his son and Barlow, Lochnagar by north buttress of Carn Beg and down by Garabh Allt, arriving at the hotel about 11 P.M.

Sunday, 20th April.

Bell motored to Derry Lodge, up Cairn Gorm of Derry and down by Glen Derry.

Ling, Russell, Hardy, Robertson, and Glover motored to Derry Lodge, up Muich Dhui. Russell, Hardy, and Robertson came back over Cairn Gorm of Derry.

MacRobert, Brown, Tomkinson, and Jack motored to the bridge over the Dee on the Glen Geldie Road, thence up Beinn Bhrotain.

Green, Thomson (J. C.), and Taylor walked to Garbh Allt falls.

Parker, Wilson, Sharp, M'Coss, and Cairns drove to Derry Lodge, climbed Cairn Toul by east ridge.

Howard and Reid motored to Loch Callater, up Tolmount, thence by Cairn na Glasha, Carn an Tuirc, Carn Dubh, Creag nan Gabhair to Braemar.

Walker and Low motored to Loch Callater, and walked over to Glen Clova for home.

Drysdale and two Maclaurins motored to Loch Callater, thence to Cairn Taggart, White Mount, Lochnagar (two tops), Cairn Bannoch, Fafernle, Tolmount, Cairn na Glasha, Carn an Tuirc, and down to Loch Callater.

Allan, two Scotts, Martin, Bartholomew, and Mr MacDonald of the " Fife Arms," by Slugain to north top of Beinn a Bhuird, then main top of Ben Avon, then Carn Eas and back to ferry, which would not take them owing

to the rise of the river, so home by Invercauld Bridge, with a welcome lift from Major Ramsay for the last 2 miles.

Monday, 21st April.

MacRobert, Brown, Thomson (Junior), Tomkinson, and Taylor motored to Derry Lodge, over Carn a Mhaim to Ben Muich Dhui, along ridge and down by Cairn Gorm of Derry.

Thomson (G.), Parker, Wilson, and Goggs, same as MacRobert's party, except that they ascended Muich Dhui by Sron Riach.

Thomson (J. C.) motored to Derry Lodge, thence up Ben Bhreac.

Ling, Green, Reid, and Jack motored to Alltna-guibhaich, up Lochnagar, back to the motor, and, after partaking of Mrs Ramsay's kind hospitality, to Braemar.

Allan, two Scotts, Martin, Cairns, and Bartholomew, Lochnagar, by Sandy Loch, down to motor at Alltna-guibhaich for Ballater and home.

Barlow (*not* by motor), by Glen Clunie, over Cairn na Glasha, Tolmount, Fafernie, Cairn Bannoch, Cairn Taggart, home by Glen Callater.

Tuesday, 22nd April.

Bell, Goggs, Barlow, Reid, and Meares walked to head of Coire nan Clach. Reid and Meares returned to Braemar; the others ascended Ben Avon in rough weather.

Wednesday, 23rd April.

Bell, Goggs, Barlow, Reid, and Meares motored to Loch Callater. Reid walked up to Loch Kander and then returned to Braemar with Bell and Meares. Goggs and Barlow ascended the seven following "Munros": Faferne, Carn Bannoch, Broad Cairn, Tolmount, Tom Buidhc, Cairn of Claich (3,484), and Carn an Tuirc.

Thursday, 24th April.

Goggs and Meares walked up Maroon. Bell left for Aberdeen.

Friday, 25th April.

Goggs again walked up Maroon and left with Reid for home.

Saturday, 26th April.

Meares left for home.

The exact times when members left for home are not given with the usual accuracy, in the hope that making a list by inference may wile away some wintry evening for those who have a mind.

Unfortunately for motorists the Spital road was not open for the gathering, but some went south by it on the Tuesday.

A very noticeable and deplorable feature of the Meet was the absence of our worthy Secretary. Day after day came rumours, born of hope, that he was to come "tomorrow," but at last one had to abandon him to his fate in southern climes, commending him to what is probably (for Scotsmen) the best known stanza of "Lochnagar."

Mrs MacDonald's hospitality at the "Fife Arms" left nothing to be desired, and all were glad to welcome her son climbing with one of the parties up Ben Avon.

Our best thanks are due to the proprietors of the various estates, and to their factors, for their kindness in granting free access to the hills, and we were glad to welcome Major Ramsay to dinner, and to accept his kind invitation to tea, of which Ling, Green, Reid, and Jack took advantage on the Monday.

J. S. M. J.

EASTER MEET, 1924—TYNDRUM.

Present.—Tyndrum—A. R. Anderson, J. H. Craig, A. Harrison, G. Murray-Lawson, L. R. Marshall, E. N. Marshall, D. H. Menzies, W. A. Morrison, A. J. Paton.

Guests.—J. A. Lyle, T. E. Thomson.

Crianlarich.—A. G. Hutchison, R. N. Rutherford.

Guests.—A. J. Frazer, E. A. Hutchison, K. N. Hunter

Lawson, Harrison, and Thomson arrived on Thursday evening, and on Friday, 18th, ascended Ben Lui. It was their intention to make the top by the central gully, but owing to mist they took a snow-filled gully further to the east, which led them out on to the east rib, and so to the top. They came down by the west rib.

On Saturday the whole of the Crianlarich party made the ascent of Cruach Ardran by the north-east side, descending by the gully. At the top of the gully they met Menzies, Thomson, and Harrison on their way up. The latter party descended by the Stob Garbh col.

Lawson had, unfortunately, to return to town in the morning.

On Sunday the Glasgow contingent made for Ben Lui, and the Crianlarich people also had the same objective, reaching the foot of the hill on various kinds of bicycles. The route taken was the central gully. The snow was found to be very soft.

The Edinburgh party was tempted by the sunshine in the valley and fell (or rather did not ascend). They spent the morning scrambling in the Conninish Valley enjoying the first fine day. Lunch had a stimulating effect on Paton and Thomson, and in the afternoon they went up Beinn Dubhcraig.

On Monday, Frazer, Hunter, Rutherford, and A. G. Hutchison made an early start for Stob Gabhair. The weather was glorious, but the ice fall in the couloir was running with water, and after an hour and a half step-cutting, that route had to be given up and a different one taken to the top. Anderson, Craig, Lyle, and the Marshalls traversed Ben Dubhcraig and Ben Oss, enjoying glorious views. The "Skye" blue-green effect was very striking in some of the glens to the north. Morrison, Paton, and Thomson did Ben Lui by the Central Gully.

Tuesday was the last day of the Meet. Hunter and E. A. Hutchison had a good day on An Caisteal and Beinn a Chroin.

The Tyndrum Hotel was as comfortable as ever, and Skelton Cottage at Crianlarich left nothing to be desired.



June 1924

LOOKING SOUTHWARD FROM RATHAD A' GHARAIDH DHIUBH

G. S.

SUMMER MEET, 1924—SKYE.

THIS year the Club again held a most successful Meet in Skye. There were present—J. H. B. Bell, Burn, Corbett, Ling, Morrison, Sang, Scott, E. C. Thomson, and T. E. Thomson (*Guest*).

The Centres were Sligachan—where, as ever, Mr Campbell ensured the comfort and well-being of every one, no matter how late the return from the hills—and Glen Brittle, where Miss Campbell's increased accommodation was thoroughly appreciated.

At Sligachan the first to arrive—on 27th May—were the Thomsons and Scott, on two motor cycles, and Burn.

28th May.—The whole party climbed Sgurr nan Gilleann by the Pinnacles, and returned by the Tourist Route, presumably to convince T. E. Thomson that the Pinnacle Route is not the Tourist Route.

29th May.—The same party went to Glen Brittle (by motor cycle) and climbed Sgurr Dearg.

30th May.—The day was apparently too hot for distant expeditions, so it was spent on the Western Buttress of Sgur Sgumain, where some amusing scrambling was found.

31st May.—An off day more or less, Scott and Burn spent it in Coire Lagain. T. E. Thomson played the bagpipes for the delectation of the other Thomson whose activities had unfortunately been limited by a falling stone the previous day. From Sligachan, Bell and Corbett explored King's Cave Route on the Tooth, both from below and above, and found it to be blocked at the foot of the funnel. They thought the blocked section not more than 4 or 5 feet long. Thereafter they climbed the Tooth by Naismith's Route and traversed Am Bhasteir. That night Sang and Mrs Sang arrived by motor.

1st June.—From Sligachan Bell and Corbett traversed Sgurr na Fheadain from the lowest point of the rocks in Coire na Creiche, descending by the Bealach na Glai Moire and Tairneilear, whence Bell went on to Glen Brittle and Corbett returned to Sligachan. The Sangs motored W. M. Glass and Morrison by Bracadale to Dunvegan, returning by Portree. The party were conducted over Dunvegan

Castle and saw its treasures of history and faeries. The famous flag was there, but the magic silver chanter given to Macrimmon had, alas, gone to Wembley.

In Glen Brittle Scott led Burn and T. E. Thomson up the Green Recess Chimney in Coir' a' Ghrunnda, which was thoroughly enjoyed; E. C. Thomson still out of action.

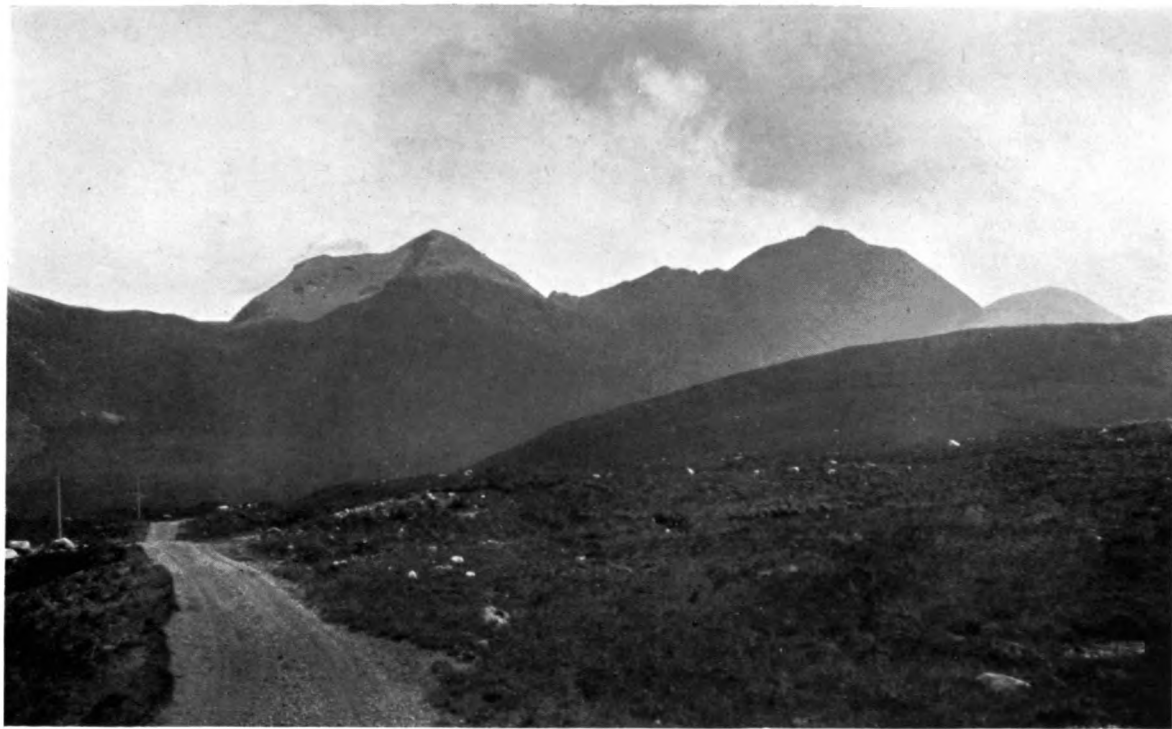
2nd June.—From Glen Brittle Bell and Burn climbed the Cioch by ascending the slab from the Terrace to the Cioch Neck in a snow flurry, thereafter climbing the eastern gully and returning by Sron na Ciche.

Scott and the Thomsons returned to Sligachan and spent an off day at the Storr, a most remarkable piece of rock scenery, and on that account well worth a closer inspection than is possible from the Cuillin; the climbing, however, is not what its remarkable Dolomitic appearance might lead one to expect, the rock being very loose and rotten.

The Pinnacle Ridge and a fine morning lured the Sangs and Morrison into a chilly region of mist, rain, and snow, which plastered the rocks. The descent was made by the West Ridge and Coire a' Bhasteir. Corbett made a solitary ascent of Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh's North Peak.

3rd June.—Though showery at Sligachan in the morning this turned into a perfect day—a vision of sea, sky, and distance. Scott and the Thomsons traversed Clach Glas and Blaven, and enjoyed a magnificent view which included Ben Alder. The Sangs and Morrison had an off day at the Storr, revelling in the gorgeous view across the Sound to Raasay, and the ever-fascinating Ross-shire hills framed by the green headlands of Bearncraig Bay. Corbett tramped over to Glen Brittle, where Bell and Burn had spent an off day visiting the caves and nests by the shores of Loch Brittle.

4th June.—Another day of blazing sun. Scott and the Thomsons spent it in Coire Bhasteir, sleeping and climbing Am Bhasteir. The Sangs and Morrison explored Talisker Bay, the latter going over to Glen Brittle, where Bell, Burn, and Corbett had spent the day on Sgurr Dearg, climbing the Window Tower Buttress by its West Ridge. Inaccessible, up and down the short side, thence—Bell descending



June 1921

BELIG AND GARBH-BHEINN FROM HEAD OF GLEANN TORRA-MHICHAIG

G. S.

An Stac direct to Mhic Coinnich and home by Tearlach col to Coire Lagan.

5th June.—The weather again justified the Meet. Scott and the Thomsons traversed Bruach na Frithe to Bidein inclusive, returning by Tairneilear. The Sangs explored the Storr, picking up Ling at Portree in the evening.

In Glen Brittle Bell, Burn, and Corbett climbed the Cioch by Cioch Gully. Bell's rope persuaded Morrison to join them at the top of the slab, whence the party followed the East Gully, and so to Sgumain and Alasdair (which Burn states should be called Sgumbun and Sgurr na Bìrrach). The latter, Bell climbed by way of the *mauvais pas*, the others by the Easy Chimney; Corbett and Burn descended the Great Stone Shoot, the former climbing Tearlach first, the other two followed the Tearlach Ridge to the Mhic Coinnich col.

6th June.—A wet day. Ling and the Sangs explored the Quirang; Corbett, Scott, and the Thomsons departed; Bell, Burns, and Morrison spent an off day repairing clothes.

7th June.—The day began badly and was very misty. Ling and Sang had some scrambling in Coire Bhasteir. The "Glen Brittleites" spent an off day on the shore and in inspecting the wonders and beauty of the Ghreadaidh Burn Gorge, which is well worth a visit, perhaps the most charming of its pools being barely half a mile from the road.

8th June.—Ling and Sang climbed Blaven; Morrison visited the Dun at Rhudunan.

9th June.—Very misty. Ling and the Sangs motored over to Glen Brittle, climbed Sgurr Dearg; Morrison had a mild day in Coire Lagan.

LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

Since the last issue of the *Journal*, the following books have been added to the Library :—

- “ First Steps to Climbing.” By George D. Abraham. Review Copy.
- “ Pillar Rock and Neighbouring Climbs.” By H. M. Kelly. Presented by the Fell and Rock Climbing Club.
- “ Mountain Madness.” By Helen Hamilton. Presented by K. G. Maclean.
- “ The Road to Rannoch and the Summer Isles.” By the Rev. T. Ratcliffe Barnett. Presented by the author.

The thanks of the Club are tendered to the donors.

The following periodicals have been received :—

- Écho des Alpes. April, May, June, July, August, September 1924.
- La Montagne. March, April, May, June, July-September 1924.
- Italian Alpine Club Journal. March, April, May, June, July, August, September 1924.
- Bulletin Pyrénéen. March-May, June-August, September-October 1924.
- Zeitschrift des Deutschen und Österreichischen Alpenvereins, 1923.
- Svenska Turist föreningens Arsskrift, 1924.
- Sangaku, Japanese Alpine Club Journal. Vol. XVII., Nos. 1, 2, 3, 1924.
- Alpine Club Journal. Vol. XXXVI., No. 228, May 1924.
- Sierra Club Bulletin. Vol. XII., No. 1, 1924.
- Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal. Vol. V., No. 16, 1924.
- Cairngorm Club Journal. Vol. XI., No. 62, September 1924.
- Rucksack Club Journal. Vol. V., No. 2 (No. 18), 1924.
- Den Norske Turist förenings Aarbok, 1924.

Mr Howard Priestman has presented to the Club a large plaster cast of the main Cuillin range. This will be of great interest to members, and is a most valuable acquisition for the Club. We thank Mr Priestman most warmly for his generous gift.

We acknowledge very gratefully Mr Sang's kindness in again presenting to the Club two illustration blocks—namely, those for the two Skye photos appearing in this number.

SLIDE COLLECTION.

During the summer months the slide collection has been further increased by ten new slides. For these the Club is indebted to the following gentlemen, viz., Messrs Clapperton, G. R. Donald, Glover, and Sang.

The monthly meetings will be held in the Club Rooms during the winter, and the Custodian would be obliged by members offering their services either to read papers or show lantern slides at these meetings.

REVIEWS.

Alpine Journal, May 1924, Vol. XXXVI., No. 228.

After reading through the 194 pages of this number one feels as if one had been on a personally conducted world tour. The Alps, Japan, Tibet, New Zealand, and the Canadian Rockies all come in for attention. The illustrations are of a high standard throughout, especially that of the Dent d'Hérens at dawn by Mr Victor Ellwood.

A suitable opening to the number is a contribution from the pen of Mr D. W. Freshfield, entitled "The Conquest of Mount Everest," written evidently on the eve of the departure of the third expedition. He deals with his own personal experiences, and those of other well-known climbers, in climbing at high altitudes, and to sum up his remarks he writes that acclimatisation of the human frame to the altitude is, at least up to 20,000 feet, steady and progressive. This has been borne out by the subsequent experience of the expedition. He also enlightens us on the diplomatic negotiations which were carried through at the inception of the first expedition, and deals with various other matters all of the first importance in an expedition of such magnitude.

"A Mixed Bag" is the title of a paper read before the Alpine Club by Mr A. L. Mumm, who managed to visit the Canadian Rockies and the Japanese and New Zealand Alps all between July 1922 and April 1923.

An account is given by Mr Howard Palmer (Vice-President of the American Alpine Club) of his visit to the Northern Canadian Rockies during the summer of 1923, and of four new ascents he and his party were privileged to make, viz., Replica Peak, Mounts Brazeau, Henry MacLeod, and St Unwin. The number contains also several other excellent articles.

The New Zealand Alpine Journal, Vol. III., December 1923, No. 13. Price 5s.

We envy members of a climbing club who can indulge their tastes for exploration at home and who have untrodden country at their doors, so to speak. The number under review, with one exception, relates wholly to climbs and pioneer work in the New Zealand Alps. The exception is an account of a holiday in Switzerland by Mr H. F. Wright.

The excellent matter which this journal contains is surely worthy of better type and of fewer printer's errors. The photographs with which the articles are illustrated would be seen to better advantage on a full page.

The Climbers' Club Journal, 1923, Vol. II., No. 3. New Series.

Excellent and varied in subject matter are the contributions to this number, which commences with an article headed "Against Parochialism," which seeks to induce the climbing clubs in Britain to unite on the principle of "l'union fait la force." Amongst other things it is suggested that a saving of expense would be incurred thereby. It seems rather more than doubtful whether clubs such as the Cairngorm Club and the S.M.C., with mountaineering in Scotland their chief objects, would benefit by the suggested amalgamation.

Mr G. W. Young gives a charming account of his visits to the West Coast of Ireland, Mount Brandon being the object of his quest. We quote the following lines in which the writer fittingly expresses the feelings which most of us entertain for the hills—

"Greatness in hills is as profitless to compare as greatness in human genius. In all honesty, and without any real contradiction, we may, at different times, affirm to ourselves that a certain view of Ingleborough, of Snowdon, of Ben Nevis, of the Matterhorn, of the south face of Mont Blanc, or of the distant elevation of the Weisshorn and of Siniolchum, is supreme. It was so, in effect, at the time: it remains so, in enjoyment, for the discriminating memory."

"Birds of the Alpine Region" and "The Features of Glaciated Mountains" come respectively from the pens of Messrs Henry Candler and Talbot H. Whitehead. There are several other articles, amusing and otherwise, but all good reading. The illustrations, full page, are excellent.

The Bulletin of the Climbers' Club, Vol. I., No. 1, August 1924. New Series.

We are informed in the foreword to this publication that it has been decided to resuscitate the *Bulletin of the Climbers' Club*, the intention being to publish it at half-yearly intervals. The *Bulletin* consists of an article on "Climbing in the Dolomites," Notes, Reviews, Club News, &c., the items of most interest to us being reviews of the "Skye Guide Book," and Vol. 16, No. 95, of the *S.M.C.J.*

A photograph of the Club's late President, the late Mr Mallory, forms the frontispiece.

Cairngorm Club Journal, September 1924, Vol. XI., No. 62.

This is a special number largely dealing with the mountain indicator designed by Mr J. A. Parker, which has been placed on the summit of Lochnagar. A full description of the origin of the scheme to erect this indicator, and of its building and unveiling, is given with suitable illustrations. We congratulate the members of the Club, and particularly Mr Parker, on the successful result of their enterprise.

The number also includes other attractive articles, and a particularly interesting series of notes on various subjects connected with the mountains—thus maintaining at a high level what has always been rather a feature of this publication. We note with interest that Mr Henry Alexander has succeeded the late Mr Anderson as Editor. An introductory note by the Editor draws attention to the fact that the *Journal* is to be published only once annually in future.

The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal, 1924, Vol. V., No. 16.

Mr Roberts is to be congratulated upon the number and variety of the articles and the excellence of the illustrations contained in the 160 pages of this journal. Mr W. A. Wright gives an interesting account of the traverse of Les Écrins and the Meije during the summer of 1923. Under the title of "A Brief Visit to Jotunheim," Mr C. E. Burrow describes the ascents made by himself and his party of the Store Skagastölstind and the Soleitind. In ascending the former peak he discovers that Tracunies grip better on bald heads than ordinary nails. Moral: When climbing with ordinary nails be careful to select your party. "The Traverse of the Langkofel by the North-East Ridge" is the title of an interesting article by Mr F. S. Smythe on the ascent of that peak, made in company with the brothers Somervell. This number also includes Mr Botterill's experiences on a yachting expedition up the West Coast of Scotland, and several accounts of the activities of ramblers under the earth's surface.

The Road to Rannoch and the Summer Isles, by the Rev. T. Ratcliffe Barnett. (Robert Grant & Son. Price 7s. 6d.)

As stated in the foreword to this publication, most of the articles have already appeared in the press. If this is by way of apology, we hasten to assure the writer that such is unnecessary. As a wanderer on foot through the Highlands, and as a scholar, he is in the happy position of being able to communicate some of his impressions to his less fortunate brethren who may be wanderers—"gangrels" in the writer's words—but who fail to attain his literary standard, and consequently have less facility in expressing their appreciation of the hills.

The book is admirably illustrated by photographs published by permission of Dr Inglis Clark and by a photograph of the Rock of Brissay, taken by an unknown photographer.

The author appears to have taken somewhat circuitous routes to Rannoch, for his book deals not only with the central Highlands, but with the Mull of Kintyre and districts so far south as Traquair. The Summer Isles, where he would fain persuade us is to be found the Land of Eternal Youth (Tir-nan-og), appear to consist

of the Hebrides, both Outer and Inner, with which Mr Barnett has an extensive acquaintance. Almost every chapter deals with some phase in the turbulent history of the country through which the author has wandered, and it is interesting to read in light of present events that there had been attempts to exploit the Lewes so far back as the sixteenth century, and with as little success to the southerner. There is a whole chapter devoted to the legend of the Macgregor's Leap in Glen Lyon, above Fortingal. The story is recounted in a most realistic fashion, and one could almost believe Mr Barnett had been an eye witness of this most sporting event. Many more tales, told in a romantic and vivid style, make most excellent reading. But the book deals with matters other than history and legend. The reader is treated to a chapter on archery, which might be included in the former category; while there is a delightful account of a voyage in a home-made canoe over water and land. A chapter on the Black Mount and its inhabitants, the deer, tempts the reader to leave his work and take the first train north to the Bridge of Orchy.

The true spirit of the hills runs through the whole book and is most fittingly expressed in the words of the blind wanderer, whom the writer met under the shadow of Schiehallion, "Ye can never win close to Him till ye climb high up into the mists, all your lone, where there is never another to break the thrum."

The Hill Paths, Drove Roads, and Cross-Country Routes in Scotland. Compiled by Walter A. Smith, F.F.A., Edinburgh. (Macniven & Wallace. Price 2s. 6d.)

Mr Smith's volume, providing as it does, within convenient compass and at a moderate price, a compendium of the various mountain tracks and cross-country routes in Scotland, fulfils a long-felt want. Mr Smith has, as his article in the present number testifies, been a devotee of the Scottish hills for the last sixty years, and his book is the result of his experience and investigation during this long period. He therefore speaks with the voice of authority. Hill walkers will find the book of great value, not only for the exhaustive information it contains, but also for its literary quality and its interesting historical references.

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.



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

BEN MORE—MULL.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—It strikes me as somewhat strange that a perusal of the pages of the *Journal* fails to reveal any very definite information on the highest point of Mull. Sir Hugh Munro's original note states quite plainly that he wished to descend from the summit of Ben More direct to Loch Scridain, but his companion didn't like the look of it, so they went down the north-east ridge and over A' Chioch, and so to the Ceallach under Creag Mhic Fhionnlaidh marked 1,088 feet on the Ordnance Survey Map. The Rev. A. E. Robertson, who must know the Ben well, followed the same route exactly I infer, and suggests no other.

Alastair M'Laren in his delightful little paper in No. 96 admits to having been on the Ben three times, and even he follows in the footsteps of the great Scottish pioneers. Now I, being radical by nature, found myself directly reversing Munro's route. I felt it to be the most opposite thing I could do. There are quaint traces of a very old causeway over the sloppy high moor between Kinloch, which lies at the head of Loch Scridain, and the Ceallach, where a distinct path drops down to Loch Bà. As usual the start of this road is problematical, and thereby the public use of it is politely discouraged. After all, is there not a good high road round by Kilfinichen and Gleann Seilisdair? (I affirm there is not, but then I cycled it!) Also it is three times as long, and is absolutely fascinating in scenery—coast scenery mostly. To return to my radical wanderings, I went to the 1,088-foot Bealach. There I saw a most awesome cone sticking out of the mist. I had intended to go down to Loch Bà, but that cone was too inviting. That day for some reason it looked almost too steep to walk up, and visions of a climb formulated in my expectation. Half an hour of quite comfortable going took me to the base of it. Of course it turned out to be nothing but a very steep scree heap with some rock ribs. I had to take my hands out of my pockets to hold on to the rocks here and there. To be honest, they were mostly out for the purpose of beating off the midges and scratching. Quarter of an hour took me to the top of A' Chioch. My glass made it over 2,290 feet. Then

followed a really delightful ridge walk with views the most superb. The mist was drifting off, and as the corries revealed themselves I saw the deer basking in the heather and a regatta in progress on Loch Scridain. I hoped the keepers were also yachtsmen, for the deer didn't like me a little bit. Ben More was delightful to go up, and sometimes looked as though it would be quite difficult. I stuck to the actual ridge and got some quite amusing scrambling. Of course there was not a difficulty that could not have been avoided. Yet it was good fun all the time. Ben More has the loveliest view of any Scottish hill I've ever been on. Don't hurry to go and see it. It was only clear twice last August. I spent a leisurely half hour on the top, then made straight for Loch Scridain along the blunt south ridge and towards Maol nan Dámh. I should think I came down about 1,000 feet of scree, and most of it too large to run. It is basalt anyway, and the blocks develop intense friction; from below it looks mighty steep, but I had only 20 feet of very simple rock-climbing, mostly on the seat of my pants. I suppose hundreds of people use that route every year and yet we have no mention of it. Why? The reply may be that no one wishes to get to Loch Scridain, and if they did they'd have to walk back again. But there are as comfortable night quarters round the shore of the Loch as any other where in the wonderful island. If you have left your cycle at Kinloch and are a very expert cyclist you can get to Bunessan, provided you don't meet a wild Ford at a corner or fall off on to the road instead of the ditch. I went up Ben More twice, and now I want to see it under snow and ice. Then it must be really Alpine.

GEORGE SANG.

CAMPSIE FELLS.

The Campsies give any number of breezy hill walks, but are not well suited for rock-climbing, owing to most of the rock being "rotten trap." Some short scrambles have, however, been found on Crichton's Cairn, behind Lennoxtown. In the middle of its southern face there is a line of cliffs, about 200 feet high and 150 yards long, marked by a mass of fallen rocks below. These cliffs are crossed by two horizontal shelves. The upper shelf is easy to follow, but for the lower one it is well to have a short rope and a geological hammer to cut a few steps in hard shale at one point.

Rev. C. G. Monro, A.C., and his daughter Dr Ruth Monro, with the writer, climbed a pinnacle in the lowest section of these cliffs by means of an interesting chimney behind it ("Moabite Chimney"). The cliffs have also been ascended in a nearly straight line, starting at the foot of the Moabite Chimney and crossing the two shelves.

A short distance to the left (west) of the said cliffs is another low cliff containing two climbable chimneys, one with a tree overhanging it; and still further west one or two more very short rock climbs have been done.

W. N. W.

COIR' A' GHRUNNDA—THE OWL BUTTRESS.

The buttress on the right of the South Crag Gully ("Skye Guide," Fig. 15 (*f*)) was climbed in July last by E. W. Steeple and G. Barlow. Commencing near the gully, the route worked gradually away to the right, up a series of slabs. In one place, owing to absence of holds, a short excursion was made into a depression on the left, necessitating a difficult movement back to the slabs. Continuing up these for a further 80 feet a horizontal shelf was reached. A V-shaped chimney led to the Rake, immediately to the left of the Owl Pinnacle. The rocks above the Rake gave easy but interesting climbing.

E. W. S.

SGURR A' GHREADAIDH—THE TERRACE, WEST BUTTRESS.

A few days later the same party climbed the buttress on the left of the Terrace Gully ("Skye Guide," Fig. 10 (*a*)). A start was made on steep rocks near the foot of the gully. At 120 feet a difficult vertical section was encountered. Above this a stretch of open slabs led to a gully or chimney sloping upwards to the left. This was followed to a shelf (400 feet). On the right a fine 80-foot wall led to a ledge of shattered rock. A steep and rather difficult section of trap rock was succeeded by 100 feet or so of climbing on splendidly rough gabbro. The total height to the Terrace was 650 feet.

Crossing the Terrace, a very narrow ledge running upwards towards the Thormaids-Ghreadaidh gap was followed for some distance, until it threatened to become non-existent, when a trap chimney with a difficult pitch at the top was climbed to more open ground above. The main ridge was reached a short distance below the summit.

E. W. S.

BEN NEVIS CASTLE RIDGE.

On 23rd July, with two friends, Messrs Gibson and Jack, of Glasgow, non-members, but whom I hope to see in the S.M.C. ere long, I revisited Fort William and had a very enjoyable climb on the Castle Ridge. I had been up in the Allt à Mhuilinn a month previously, going and coming by the path to near the half-way house. The path, however, is now in a very bad state. It is nobody's business to repair it: great bits of it are all torn away by water spates, and the bridges spanning the gullies on the slopes of Meall an t-Suidhe are so rotten and broken up as to be almost dangerous. I thought I would try, therefore, the more direct route *via* the distillery. It worked out quite all right, and we got to the Luncheon Stone about twenty to thirty minutes quicker than by the old way. Walking along the main road

we crossed the railway by a bridge about a quarter of a mile short of the distillery, then traversing the moor (not very boggy) in a north-east direction and gradually mounting up, crossing the burn which comes out of Loch Meall an t-Suidhe at a height of about 600 feet, and so to the Allt à Mhuilinn. The going is all quite good, and you do not waste anything by having to descend into the glen as in the route from Achintee. Anyhow, we got to the Luncheon Stone in two hours easy walking from Fort William. By the path, we would have taken two and a half hours at the same speed. Note: the Mhuilinn Glen is now under sheep, and consequently the deer fence is more or less broken down.

It had been raining heavily and the rocks were sluicing water, so I judged it better to avoid the lower slabby part of the Castle Ridge. We scrambled up a sort of dry gully, evidently the old track of the burn coming out of the Castle corry; this burn now cascades over the rocks to the right. Just above a very prominent waterfall, and shortly below the snout of the Castle, we crossed the burn and took to the Castle Ridge proper. Some twelve years had passed since I had been on this climb, and it was quite interesting noting what one remembered and what one forgot after so long a time. Whole stretches of it had been entirely forgotten: the moral being that some of us old stagers can revisit many of our old once familiar gullies and ridges and find in them all the zest and interest of a new climb! A little below the very steep bit, where the holds and hitches were found ample as of yore, I came on some nasty loose rocks lying in the track of the obvious way. Giving them a wide berth by a slightly more difficult variation, I made the last man on the rope clear them out, and had the satisfaction of hearing them thundering down out of harm's way to future parties. We soon reached the top of the ridge—about 900 feet of actual climbing—having spent some two and a half hours on the job, a leisured and therefore entirely enjoyable ascent. After this we sauntered round the edge of the cliffs to the summit. It was now a beautiful day with a fine view. I've been fifty-eight times on Nevis and had nineteen clear views, and this was one! I was much shocked at the mess everything was in around the abandoned observatory. One is more often up under snow conditions, when everything is covered over with a mantle clean and white, but this that met my eyes was a revelation. The poor old observatory itself is in a bad way, the tower is gone, the windows and doors broken and gaping, the interior (where one used to receive such kindly hospitality) damp, musty, evil-smelling, a beastly sight. All around outside is a confused jumble of rotten wood, rusty corrugated iron, broken glass, *et hoc genus omne*. It is really a disgrace, and not worthy of Britain's highest top. Can nothing be done? I would like to organise a summer fatigue party of the S.M.C. and pitch all the loose rubbish down the Gardyloo Gully!

A. E. ROBERTSON.

ARRAN AT EASTER, 1924.

After an attack of something like influenza, I was told that the strenuous days and low temperature associated with our Braemar Meets would be too much for me, so I had to cancel my room at the Fife Arms, and instead went with Mrs Solly and Miss Maclay to Corrie. We had the good luck to be joined there by Messrs Maylard and Naismith for several days, and as our party included two original members of the Club, it could in that respect bear comparison, if not with Official Meets, certainly with Cave Meets of the Club.

The weather was broken, with two very fine days thrown in. The hills were white with new snow when we arrived, but this all went next day, and we saw only a few patches in sheltered places. There were many visitors walking over Goat Fell and the adjoining hills, but I did not hear of any rock-climbing party.

Our best day was on the Wednesday, when we walked up Glen Sannox, and then Naismith and I went up Chir Mhor and then back to Caisteal Abhail and along the ridge and over the Witch's Step right on to Glen Sannox again.

According to the *Journal*, Vol. III., p. 204, Naismith and Maclay had climbed all the little tors between the Castles and the Step, but when we were on two of the highest points Naismith said he did not remember them and had some doubt whether they had ever been climbed. Both gave quite interesting little scrambles. In a small hole on the top of one we left a metal disc, which the finder will perhaps report.

As Naismith was of the party, it is almost superfluous to add that the Corrie boulders were properly attended to. G. A. SOLLY.

S.M.C. ABROAD.

Mr LING was out in Switzerland for a month in July and August. The first week was spent at Engstlenalp, above Meiringen, with the President and Mrs Bell, Mr and Mrs Clapperton, and Captain Cuthbertson. The weather was not favourable, but expeditions were made to the Titlis, Gwärtler, Joch Pass, and Tannenwand. A move was then made to Lenk to join H. MacRobert and S. M. Jack. The weather was still bad, and the projected crossing of the Wildhorn and Wildstrubel had to be abandoned. From Iffigen Alp the route to Adelboden over the Ammertenn Pass and Engstlenalp was followed. On a beautiful day, 1st August, the party returned to Engstlenalp to cross the Wildstrubel to the Gemmi Pass, but next morning it was raining again, and the Thierhörnli and Rothe Kummel passes had to be substituted. By these, and the Gemmi Pass, Brig was reached the same evening. Next day the party was joined by Arnold Brown from Belalp, and the united party proceeded to Saas Grund. The weather now showed a temporary improvement, and next day the

party went up to the Weissmies Inn, and on the two following days climbed the Laquinhorn and Fletschhorn in good weather and with fine views. Arnold Brown now left, and the other three, a day later, went to the Britannia Hut, and from there had a fine day for crossing the Strahlhorn and Adler Pass to Zermatt. Next day MacRobert went home. Jack and Ling had only two days left and were anxious to do Monte Rosa. Zermatt was left, with Hermann Pollinger, in pouring rain for the Bétemps Hut. Next morning the weather was doubtful; a start was made and the Sattel, about an hour from the summit, reached. Here the weather ceased to be doubtful, and a first-class storm developed which rendered a rapid retreat necessary and brought a season of unsatisfactory weather conditions to an end.

Mr and Mrs J. H. BELL were in Switzerland from 17th July to 27th August. Most of the time was divided between two high level resorts, Engstlenalp (6,020 feet), above Meiringen, and Riederalp (6,315 feet), above Mörel, in the Rhone Valley. Only minor ascents were made, the highest point reached being the Sitlis (10,627 feet). Both places can be recommended to those who want a comfortable hotel at a high level with beautiful views, pleasant surroundings, and a variety of walks and easy excursions.

Mr G. A. SOLLY went to Zermatt about the middle of July, and after a few training walks, which included a solitary ascent of the Riffelhorn, moved on to Saas Fee, where, after an interval of thirty-five years, he traversed the Portjengrat in company with Dr G. T. Western and Dr Paget Tomlinson. Then the weather became worse, and the only climbing result of three nights spent at huts was a four hours' traverse, mostly in rain, on the arete of the Hinter Allalin leading down to the Britannia Hut. This arete is about equal to a good Skye ridge.

He then crossed by the Rossboden Pass to Simplon, thence by Berisal and Binn to the Belalp. Here the party was joined by Mr G. L. Collins who, with Mr and Mrs Solly and Miss M. Solly, made a traverse of the Hohstock. Mr Solly's last climb was the ascent of the Nesthorn with Dr Western and Mr T. B. Burnett. The party started at 5.30 A.M. from the hut after a very wet night, and the valleys were in cloud throughout the day, but above 10,000 feet it was clear and the view right away to Mont Blanc was magnificent.

Mr Collins also made an ascent of the Laquinhorn in a snowstorm with Mr Burnett and the Rev. E. Freeman, but his holiday was cut short, and he did little more.

Mr RUSK writes :—Owing to extremely bad weather conditions comparatively little could be done. I went out about the 26th July,

and met Harrison and Douglas at Saas Fee. After a day or two waiting for the sun, we climbed the Mittaghorn in about a foot of snow.

Harrison and Douglas then went over to Zermatt, and as I was temporarily indisposed, I remained and made an excellent excursion on the Fee glacier with my father, and went also to the Britannia Hut with him.

The weather then brightened up a little, and with Petre Marie Zuebiggen I traversed the Egginergrat to the Britannia Hut. Thence we climbed the Rimpfischhorn by the ridge from the north, and so to Zermatt. The ridge was stiffish, being fairly heavily iced.

Harrison, Douglas, and I then climbed the Dent Blanche, going from the Schönbühl Hut to the Bertol, thence to Arolla, where we climbed the Aiguilles Rouges.

I returned to Zermatt, but the weather broke completely. After waiting a day or two, Zuebiggen and I went back to Saas Fee and climbed the Jägigrat, making the tenth ascent of the entire ridge. It was free of snow, but difficult.

The weather then broke down again, and time permitted of no further opportunity of climbing.

Mr G. B. GREEN spent about three weeks in Switzerland, dividing his time equally between Mürren and Zermatt. At the former place he did nothing more strenuous than the ascent of the Schilthorn. To reach Zermatt he crossed by the Sefeninfurge into the Kienthal, proceeding thence by train to Brig, and so on to Zermatt. There he went up the Hochthaligrat for the second time, in addition to taking other walks. The weather was by no means favourable. His companions were Mr J. H. Wigner, A.C., a former member of the Club, and Mrs Wigner.

Mr CLAPPERTON writes :—My wife and I were at Engstlenalp for a fortnight, from 19th July. Mr and Mrs Bell, Ling, and Cuthbertson were there also. Weather atrocious; four fine days out of fourteen. I did no climbing. The other three men did the Titlis on 21st July. The Bells and ourselves thereafter went *via* the Grimsel to the Rhone Valley for a fortnight, when the weather was more favourable. We were housed at the Villa Cassel—the first time I have been in a millionaire's house; it is now a *dépendance* of the Hotel Riederfurkr. The Bells were at Riederalp lower down. The situation of both is magnificent, on a high ridge (we were 7,000 feet up). We had numerous walks and were on the Bethmerhorn (9,400 feet), from which you see practically all the Aletsch Glacier and as far off as Mont Blanc; a favourite excursion was to this glacier just below us to the north. We left on 18th August, and had a day in Thun to finish.

Mr H. R. C. CARR sends the following notes:—On ski from Audermatt, in January, did the Piz Lucendro, St Gotthard, Winterhorn, and Maigels Pass; also at Easter with the C.M.D. in the Vanoise, Pointe du Dard, and Pointe de la Réchasse. On 1st June with Alfred Coutlet, of Chamonix, ascended the Grand Pic de la Meije from the Promontoire Hut. The traverse was impossible owing to heavy snow cornices. This is the earliest ascent recorded in any season. From Zermatt, in July, got the traverse of the Matterhorn (first ascent of the year by the Italian ridge), of the Lyskamm (up by the Cresta Rey, down the East ridge), Signal Kuppe, Parrotspitze, Ludwigshöhe, Schwartzhorn, Vincent Pyramid, Castor, Pollux, and Breithorn (in the day), Fillarhorn, Triflhorn traverse, Col de Tracuit. From Eggishorn, attempt at Aletschhorn failed by heavy snow at the Aletschjoch, whence the Dreieckhorn was taken as a *pis aller*.

Among some minor week-end excursions in the spring, I did the Mont Aiguille, a most interesting mountain some 30 miles south of Grenoble. It is seldom visited by British climbers, as it is under 7,000 feet high, but it is well worth doing. The way has been made easy by fixed ropes, but even so there is 800 feet of most sensational climbing. Its ascent in the fifteenth century is, in my opinion, the most remarkable event in Alpine history before the conquest of Mont Blanc. Experts have now two very difficult alternative routes, besides the ordinary way.

Mr C. K. M. DOUGLAS writes:—A. Harrison and I were in the Zermatt area from 21st July to 12th August. The weather broke down on the day we arrived, after having been fine for some weeks, and remained bad for most of our holiday, though towards the end we had a few fine days, almost the only fine weather in the whole of August. During the first fortnight we climbed with Hermann Schaller, an excellent guide and a cheery companion, though perhaps inclined to be too cautious in uncertain weather. We started with a training climb on the Unter Gabelhorn, amid protests from our guide against climbing in such weather (which would not have been considered bad in Scotland), and were rewarded by a break up of the clouds when we were near the summit, with some very fine effects. Next morning we traversed the Triflhorn, the ascent from the Joch providing an interesting short climb. On the 26th we repaired to the Bétemps Hut with the object of traversing the Lyskamm next morning, but the weather broke down again in the night, and we were reduced to scrambling on the Riffelhorn. On the 28th we crossed the Allalin Pass in soft snow to Saas Fee, where the weather became even worse than before. When scrambling up the Mittaghorn on the 30th, with A. J. Rusk and two others, we found 9 inches of new snow near the top. Fortunately this soon wore off, and on 1st August we were able to do the traverse from the Mittaghorn to the Egginer. We spent the

afternoon and night in the Britannia Hut, and intended to traverse the Rimpfischhorn from the north next morning, but while we were in the Allalin Pass the weather broke down for an hour or two, and we descended to Zermatt. On 4th we ascended the Matterhorn from the Belvedere, with a very strong, cold wind and deteriorating weather which rendered rapid progress necessary. Next day we were joined by A. J. Rusk, and for the first time the weather became favourable. On 7th the party ascended the Dent Blanche from the Schönbühl Hut without guides, and then proceeded to the Bertol Hut. In spite of the pessimistic forebodings of a guide at the hut, the mountain was found to be in quite good condition, but soft snow made the long trek over to the Bertol Hut rather trying. Next day we descended to Arolla, and on the 9th traversed the Aiguilles Rouges. Rusk then returned to Zermatt, but the remainder of the party put in Mont Collon on 11th, along with two English climbers, Brown and Herbert. The weather on that day was perfect, though while we descended the valley early next morning the mountains were becoming rapidly covered with heavy storm clouds rolling up from the south.

ERRATA IN LIST OF OFFICE-BEARERS for 1924
contained in Volume XVII., No. 97.

The members of Committee should read as follows :—

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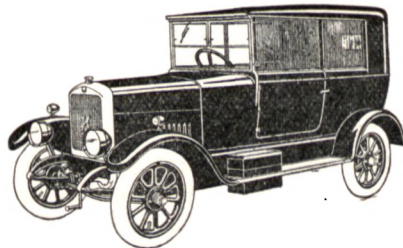
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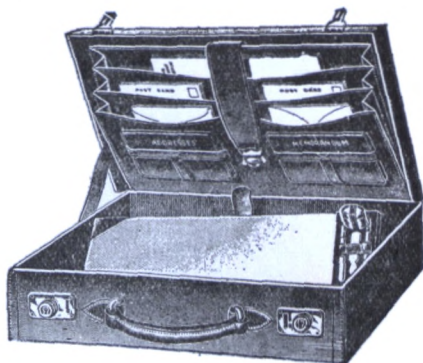
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Trunks	30/-	£15
Manicure Cases	5/-	£7
Kit and Brief Bags	15/-	£10
Collar Bags and Boxes	5/-	£1
Thermos Flasks	5/-	£3
Spirit Flasks	7/6	£3
Treasury Note Cases	3/6	£2
Blouse Cases	35/-	£10
Cases of Scissors	5/-	£1
Card Cases	2/-	£1
Lunch and Tea Baskets	20/-	£18
Music Cases	10/-	£3
Folding Slippers	8/6	£1-10
Document Cases	30/-	£3
Travelling Clocks	60/-	£5
Ladies' Silk Bags	10/-	£5
Military Hair Brushes	5/-	£3
Trouser Presses	15/-	£2
Motor Foot Warmers	50/-	£4
Jewel Cases	5/-	£10
Travelling Rugs	30/-	£5
Travelling Cushions	12/-	£3

CLEGHORN & CO.

100 GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH

