

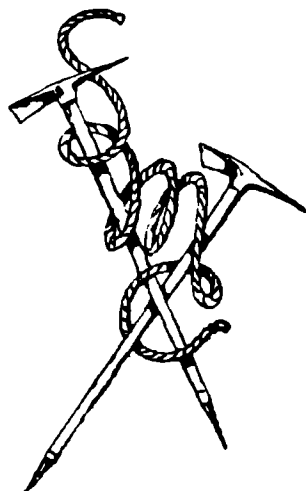
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# THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.

EDITED BY  
G. B. GREEN.



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*Moffat, Edinburgh*

*Photo*

MR ERIC PATON BUCHANAN

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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VOL. XVII.

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ERIC PATON BUCHANAN, *Honorary Editor*,  
1921-1924.

ANOTHER name has been added to the list of editors of the Club *Journal*; that of Buchanan takes its place now alongside those of Stott, Douglas, and Goggs; they have all given equally devoted service to the Club, and its best thanks are due to Buchanan no less than they were to his distinguished predecessors.

He entered upon his office at a time of peculiar difficulty, when the increased price of printing and all other necessities of publication made the cost of each number of the *Journal* much greater than it had been in the past. He made it his business, soon after he took up his office, to obtain estimates from various printing firms, so as to discover how the *Journal* could be most economically published. Fortunately, we may consider, he was able to decide in favour of the Darien Press, which had before produced the *Journal* in such excellent style, and has continued to do so during the years of his editorship. In every way he studied economy of production; he reintroduced advertisements, which have contributed something towards the cost of each number; he also made great efforts to increase sales by sending out samples in all directions, to booksellers, other clubs, and hotels. If these efforts have not attained the success which they deserved, the fault has not been his, but that of the reading public.

All the articles which he has admitted to the *Journal* in the eight numbers of his editorship have thoroughly

kept up the style of the *Journal* ; there have been excellent accounts of new climbs, interesting records of ordinary mountain exploration, both past and present, and full reports of the doings both of the Club and of its individual members. He has not allowed any article, not even a sentence or a word, which might offend a critical taste, to appear. Some, too, of the illustrations which have accompanied the articles have rivalled the best which have ever delighted our readers ; more cannot be said.

During all the years of his editorship, Buchanan has been very hard worked ; in addition to the exacting claims of his profession, he has had other imperative demands on his spare time which have increased the weight of his editorial duties. However, he has borne the burden with all success ; now that at last he has found it beyond his powers, we hope that he will enjoy his increased leisure, and be able in the future to attack the mountains more frequently in deed, instead of dealing with them mostly in words. After all he is still one of the younger members of the Club in years, if not in experience ; his editorial work has taught him what has been done on our mountains, and how much there remains to do ; if he makes any new climbs or expeditions, he cannot plead that he lacks the skill to describe them. Yet perhaps it is not fair to ask him at once to do further services for the *Journal* at this moment. All the members of the Club will agree that he has fully deserved a rest.

## MOUNTAIN REVERIES.

BY A. ERNEST MAYLARD.

WHEN one has reached and passed that milestone of life which has engraved upon it threescore years and ten, one is apt to become somewhat exclusively reminiscent. The lessening activities and excitements of modern life, often more realised and manifested in the lapse of physical energy than in any diminution of mental vigour, leads to an attitude of introspection that may find expression in what has been more than in what is or what will be. One thinks and ponders over the days that have passed, those days that were spent when muscular exertion sent a glow of physical fitness through every member of one's being.

To be reminiscent is often only to stimulate and gratify a purely selfish personal interest. To give expression, by word of mouth or by written letter, to any such reminiscences that bear only upon the experiences and deeds of the narrator is to lay one's self open to the just imprecation of being a bit of a bore whose words may not be worth listening to nor his writings worth reading. It need hardly be indicated that, in these few introductory discursive remarks, I have in my mind the mountaineer; not he whose life may be a record of useful and distinguished activity in the wider sphere of social life, but the man who, in years gone by, spent his pastimes on the slopes and summits of the mountains: who, in the full vigour of youth and manhood, gloried in the difficulties he encountered and successfully overcame: who felt the very blood within his veins tingle and flow with an increased sense of exhilaration as he breasted the fresh mountain breezes that blew across his track. We each and all of us like to recall those happy days. But are we sure that that which affords us so much delight to remember, and presents us with a picture that for the moment makes the present a vivid reproduction of the past, will have anything like a similar effect upon the man who, in the heyday of life, is happily passing through that halcyon

period of his existence when his own deeds rather than those of others are of most interest to him? On such reasoning, I am not quite sure whether I am right, Mr Editor, in acceding to your kind request by venturing to recall for the perusal of others any of the very humble performances of one who never claimed to be anything more than a simple lover of the mountains and for all they stand for: who never accomplished any feat worthy of distinction: and who never in the Alps—but some four or five times—ventured to climb without guides. I dare not, therefore, lay myself open to the just charge and stigma of being possibly styled a bore—pride forbids that—by narrating anything in the way of a climb that in the opinions of many a modern mountaineer would be deemed devoid of interest, much more of value. But—and it is a very big “but”—if I cannot claim to have accomplished anything in the way of exceptional mechanical merit or of prolonged physiological endurance, I can at least say that, as a simple lover of the mountains and valleys, be they Scotch or Swiss, I have frequently experienced reveries of a nature that I have felt many a climber to his disadvantage has lacked, and so lacking has lost much that the beautiful world around him sought to inspire.

The mind, if not actually engaged in the all-absorbing interest and vitally important consideration of personal safety—the sure footing or the secure handhold—“may be occupied, according to the age, tastes, or pursuits of the individual, by calculations, by profound metaphysical speculations, by fanciful visions or by such transitory and trifling objects as to make no impression on consciousness so that the period of reverie is left an entire blank in the memory. The most obvious external feature marking this state is the apparent unconsciousness or partial perception of external objects.” The working of any man’s mind remains a hidden secret unless in some form given expression.

The silent tramp from the mountain hut or the valley inn before the dawn of day, when darkness enshrouds all Nature, or the ghostly light of the moon dimly illumines

the path, or the flickering candle sheds its feeble rays on the otherwise indistinguishable track, at such times and under such conditions reverie runs rampant, for there is little to attract the mind to externals. It may be that, from a temporary feeling of physical unfitness incumbent on the early rising from a comfortable—or uncomfortable!—bed or bunk coupled with the hurried ingestion of a meal that required some moral courage to swallow, the train of thought is more in keeping with the sluggish sense with which one leg is made to advance in front of the other. Such may be the silent reverie of one man; while his companion, who follows or precedes him, when not needing to be wholly occupied in watching his footsteps, looks up into a deep blue sky lost in wonder and admiration at the stars that in that clear and frosty atmosphere shine so brightly. The freshness and keenness of the air exhilarate, and the silence and solitude of Nature around add to the pleasure of the thoughts to which he may give no expression.

As the darkness disappears and the grey light gives place to “the roseate hues of early dawn,” how different again may be the thoughts that occupy the mind of each as these changes of light and colour pass on with their varied effects on rock and snow and ice. The advancing daylight calls forth in the mind of one the stimulus and desire to press onward to the summit, the sole aim and end for which the expedition was undertaken; but in the mind of another there is a longing to pause and ponder over this glorious awakening of a new day. If he is of an artistic temperament, colour, light, and shade may make the most insistent impression on his mind. If the soul’s sympathy is awakened it will be in simple and humble admiration of the Creator’s love and works. A silent and reflective response to that appeal for gratitude which all these beautiful effects call forth will, for the time, absorb all thoughts to the exclusion of other more material considerations.

The sun has now risen; and—if in the Alps, where, be it said, my mountain reveries are trending more than among our Scottish hills—we may have reached one of



those high-lying snow fields approaching our final climb to the summit. There will arise again conflicting thoughts in the minds of each as the eye scans the surroundings. There is the peak not far ahead of us, and the thoughts of one are concentrated on reaching the summit. But with another there arises the lingering desire to stop from no other cause than that he is obsessed with a longing to enjoy a sight that cannot be seen under any other circumstances than those which now lie at his feet and around him. The slanting rays of the newly-risen sun make the crystals of snow sparkle like diamonds. No! the diamonds are like these beautiful crystals which Nature has made to dazzle by their countless billions. No human hand has cut them into artificial shape; they and the sun work together to create this glistening field of beauty. What silent reveries of reverence and gratitude are awakened by these glorious gifts for the joy and admiration of the eye that can see them in the light of divinely endowed vision.

The summit is at last reached. Valley and mountain-stream lie far below. All is hushed in the calm stillness of a perfect day. But there rises from the distant village to break the silence the melodious clang of the early morning bell, sending its message from tower and steeple to the workman to worship ere he enters upon his daily toil.

Physical rest is the first call upon partially exhausted nature, but the mind is active in reverie, and varied will be the thoughts of each. The satisfaction of accomplishment will be common to all; and as rest brings with it a renewed sense of bodily and mental vigour, the scenes far and near soon arrest attention. But here, again, how different may be the working of the minds of each. To one the topography of the surrounding country will prove the most attractive feature in his brief sojourn: to another "the intellectual delight of looking with the seeing eye, of explaining, interpreting, and understanding the gigantic forces which have wrought these wonders; if by these studies one's vision may be extended past the sublime beauties of the present down the dim ages of the past

until each carved and bastion peak tells a romance above words." The silent reverie of another, bursting with the desire, possibly, of giving expression to the thoughts that rise uppermost in his mind, sees through his mind's eye the might and majesty of Him who made the world "so full of splendour and joy, beauty and light." Poetical imagination may evoke in the mind of another silent observer and cause him to visualise those well-known lines of Ruskin: "Mountains are the great cathedrals of the earth, with their gates of rock, pavements of cloud, choirs of stream and stone, altars of snow, and vaults of purple traversed by the continual stars." But how few and feeble are the words that can adequately depict and express all that the eye sees or the ear hears, as the mind dwells on what these organs of sight and hearing present.

The summit left, a hasty descent soon brings the climber down from the eternal snows to the fresh verdure of the valleys with their flower-bedecked meadows. What a change of scenery from the wide fields of dazzling whiteness to the bright green of the Alpine pastures. The very beauty of the contrast itself seems to enhance and deepen the colour of every blossom so that the gentian looks bluer, and many an unobtrusive flower more conspicuous. "Cannot we rest here for a short time?" is the request of one touched by the appreciation of beauty that so strongly appeals to his nature-loving sense. Again the mind is led silently to contemplate the joys which Nature so lavishly provides, and to extend that attribute of gratitude to the Giver of so many good and perfect gifts.

And now the day has drawn to a close, and varied thoughts arise in the minds of all of what has been seen and what accomplished. To most, and possibly all, there is the healthful feeling of bodily recuperation, that delightful sense of exhilaration that results from the exercise of every organ of the body; for be it remembered that the employment of the muscles and the inspiration of pure mountain air so vivifies the blood that every tissue of one's frame is refreshed, waste products are removed,

and repair effected where needed.\* But apart from the natural results of these purely physical and physiological effects, what are the thoughts that linger in the mind of each as he contemplates the various stages and incidences of the expedition? The predilection of each for certain aspects of life will likely prove the guide to the line of thought that may be evoked. The scientist, be he geographer, geologist, botanist, &c., will, when left to his own cogitations, ponder over the varied scenes and objects that met his eye. The climber, like the fisher, the golfer, and all true sportsmen, will be full of the incidents connected with his sport, the rock climb here, the snow traverse there, and the many other interesting details that usually accompany a mountain expedition. But how many will entertain in the secret recesses of their minds the sentiments expressed in those words of the ever revered and lamented old member of the Alpine Club, Professor Bonney: "The mountains give rest to the fevered brains, peace to the weary heart, and life to the languid frame; but better still than this, few can return from wandering among the solitudes without a deeper sense of the infinite wisdom and loving-kindness of our Almighty Creator"?

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\* See the author's articles in Vol. IV., p. 267, and Vol. V., p. 17, of the *Club Journal* on "Climbing Considered in its Physiological Aspects."



*March 1924*

BEN NEVIS RIDGE FROM CARN MHOR DEARG ARÊTE

*C. E. Andreae*

## FIVE NIGHTS IN THE SCOTTISH HUT.

BY R. N. RUTHERFURD.

THE Half-Way Hut on Ben Nevis is, I believe, the only mountain shelter of its kind in Scotland. It is still in tolerably good repair, but has reached the stage at which if nothing is done it will soon disintegrate. This would be a great pity because, besides being a valuable shelter for tourists who ascend the Ben for the sunrise, it is also a habitable place in which climbers may spend a few nights. May I suggest that the Club acquire the hut as it stands, and have it refloored and a couple of hinged shutters made for the windows? If this were done and the whole given several coats of paint it would last for years to come and, I feel sure, be appreciated by many.

On a drizzling evening in March 1924 three knights of the alpenstock, as the local press described us, arrived in Fort William and informed their landlady that they intended taking up their quarters in the hut on the Ben. This information was received with grave doubts as to its wisdom, but as a party had done it the previous Easter no serious objections were raised.

Detailed plans had been made weeks before and we knew to an ounce how much stuff we had to carry. Next morning, each with a strong resemblance to Santa Claus, we set off with an average load of 35 lbs. Going along the road was easy enough, and we reached Achintee in fifty minutes. Once on the track our work began in earnest. It was one of those calm, misty days, and the sun shone wanly through a blanket of thick mist. We soon got very hot and required frequent rests as we zig-zagged up. Round the corner from which the first view of the hut is obtained a welcome breeze met us, and we completed the journey in three hours from the start. When we examined the hut we found the walls and roof were wind and rainproof, but, having stripped the floor of its variegated carpet of newspapers and chocolate

wrappings, we found a large hole in the rotten wood at one end. The door fitted well and we were able to go down the track again confident that, with a stone to block the hole in the floor and some sacking for the windows, we should spend a comfortable night.

After lunch in Fort William we got together our stores and with the addition of a gallon of paraffin set off again at 5 o'clock. This time we had only about 15 lbs. to carry, and the journey was much easier. The party did not lack cooks experienced in the use of Primus stoves, so that, with a couple of those indispensables, we were able to sit round a three course dinner very soon after our arrival. In the solemn rite of tossing for berths I secured the centre one on the floor and its consequent advantages. The process of going to bed consisted in putting on more and more clothes as if expecting to face a blizzard, and then creeping into a double Jaeger bag in turn surrounded by a rug.

In the morning we left the hut at 10, and crossed over to the Mhuillin Glen. Our plan was to walk up to Coire Leas in order to get a good look at all the ridges and gullies, and so decide what climbs we should attempt on the following days. We hoped to get on to the Carn Mòr Dearg arête, and so home over the summit of Nevis. Unfortunately the glen was filled with mist and, except for a momentary glimpse of the Tower from some distance past the Luncheon Stone, we saw practically nothing. Using the compass we steered for the lowest point on the arête. We must have walked right over the lochan, for, after passing the foot of the N.E. Buttress, the slope began to steepen, and when it became too hard to kick steps we put on the rope. We climbed steadily till, judging by aneroid, we were 50 feet below the arête and found ourselves checked by rocks. We could only see a few yards ahead, and after vainly spending some time to find a way through we decided to descend and try again much nearer Carn Mòr Dearg. It took an hour to descend to where we had roped up, and at 2.30 we stopped for a very cold lunch in the biting wind which blew down the slope. We walked in a northerly direction for ten minutes without

losing height, and then turned east. We at first appeared to be ascending a large open snow slope, but when black rocks loomed ahead we felt we were to be checked again. This time, however, there seemed to be a weaker part to the left, and making in that direction we soon entered a narrow couloir of hard snow. I had decided to turn at 4.30 if the arête was not reached, but by that time we were a long way up and, knowing how slow the descent would be, we agreed to carry on. There was much steep ice as we got higher, and it was 5 o'clock before the air above grew lighter and we emerged on the arête close to the point where it bends.

It seemed inadvisable to walk over Nevis in mist and fading daylight, so we turned towards Carn Mòr Dearg, which we reached in three-quarters of an hour. We walked on to Carn Dearg Meadhonach, and then turned down the big scree slope. The sun was setting when we crossed the Mhuillin, and by the time we had dragged ourselves up to the deer fence it was dark. We got back to the hut at 8, having had a longer first day than we expected.

The sky was wonderfully clear when I went out to get water for breakfast next morning. The hut was still in shadow, but rosy light tinged the snowy tops of Gulvain, Streap, and the endless peaks beyond. While we were at breakfast the shadow of Carn Dearg crept slowly down the side of Meal an t' Suidhe until the sun's rays were almost parallel to the hillside on which the hut is perched. The roof caught the light first, and a few minutes later we ran out into the sunlight to pose for our photographs.

We walked over to the Luncheon Stone as we had done the day before, and from there decided to try the South Castle Gully, the only route which looked possible for us under the snowy conditions. We had got some distance up the gully when, on rounding a bend, we found ourselves confronted by what in summer would be a steep rock pitch. The snow had filled up the gully and took us almost to the level of the top of the pitch. Unfortunately quite a respectable bergschrund separated us from the upper snow slope and, try as we might, we were unable

to bridge it. There was nothing for it but to go down and have a go at the North Castle Gully. We reached a point higher than we had reached before, and having dug large soup plates sat down for lunch. From our elevated perches we had a commanding view of the glen and the gully we had come up. At about 3,000 feet we came upon an obstacle similar to but smaller than the one in the other gully. We overcame it with a struggle and plugged up much softer snow till we emerged on to a gentle slope of hard snow which ran behind the Castle up to Carn Dearg. As we passed the top of the South Castle Gully we noticed that it was heavily corniced, and began to wonder whether, had we passed the lower obstacle, we could have found a way out at the top.

From the cairn on Carn Dearg we enjoyed that grand view of the ridges of Ben Nevis under snow which we knew so well from photographs. The motion to walk on to Nevis was defeated by two to one, and we set off to look for the Allt Dearg. We found it easily, and in good condition for glissading. Good firm snow covered with a fine dry powder produced tremendous pace and smothering showers of snow which sparkled in the western sun. This pleasant descent took us rapidly almost down to the track, and a few hundred yards to the right brought us back to the hut.

Three people cannot exist as we did without consuming large quantities of food. A journey to Fort William seemed necessary, so we spent a day getting stores and letting people know we were still alive. Whether we really felt the effects of increased pressure on returning to sea level is an open question, but we made it an excuse for taking things easily, and returned leisurely to the hut at dusk.

Hitherto I had been priding myself on the way in which I filled the role of chanticleer, and so I was naturally rather cross when, at 6.15, I was rudely awakened and told to look out of the door. To my sleepy eyes there seemed far too much cloud floating about to promise a good day. It was very cold, our boots were frozen stiff, and the porridge water inside the hut bore a thick layer of ice, so that it





*March 1924*

CARN MHOR DEARG ARÊTE

*C. E. Andreac*

was not without protest that we obeyed the energetic member of the party. It was after breakfast before I again looked out and realised that the day was in our favour. The opal tint of the sky behind Mull and the tongues of golden light springing from Rum were sights to be remembered. Full of hope we hastened to get ready, but as every camper knows, it is hard to reduce the time necessary to get up and have a good breakfast. At 8.25 we set off up the Ben by the track, which was mostly under snow and soon became obliterated.

The sun was fully out when we reached the head of No. 4 Gully, but a very thin haze hid the Tower and the summit. This soon cleared away, and when we reached the gentle mound indicating the cairn the light was so dazzling that we were lucky to have brought sun glasses. We could have lingered long in the warmth and mysterious stillness only broken by the noise of an avalanche that sounded, as it were, beneath our feet, but the day was young and we must be doing. A soft glissade took us to the beginning of the Carn Mòr Dearg arête. From here we were able to trace our footprints of three days before, and see how very nearly we had won on to the arête at our first attempt. We walked along the arête to within half a mile of Carn Mòr Dearg, and there we stopped to lunch and photograph.

Aonach Beag looked invitingly near across the glen, and we decided to make straight for it. The snow on the eastern slopes of the arête was very hard and we dared not glissade. We laboriously kicked down and picked our way through the only convenient gap in a belt of rocks which crossed the slope. Below this the snow was out of the shade and soft enough to give a few short glissades. We did not trouble to unrope and got well mixed up, as the last man usually got such a jerk that he reached the bottom first dragging the others higgledy piggledy after him. We had a short rest where we crossed the Allt Coire Giubsachan at 2,000 ft., and at 3 o'clock attacked a straight gully that apparently led right to the summit of Aonach Beag. Deep, soft snow made heavy going till about 3,700 feet, at which height it grew harder, and

had eventually to be cut. As we emerged from the bell mouth of our gully we felt that we were on the surface of a huge white sphere set in a blue universe. There were no signs of a cairn, but at 4.40 we reached the highest point where the sphere seemed to terminate in abrupt cornices on its eastern edge. We basked there in the sun and gazed on the wonderful view in all directions from Ben Wyvis to Goat Fell. At last we had to make up our minds about going home. Nevis and Carn Mòr Dearg lay in a direct line between us and our supper, but we had not the energy to traverse them at that time of day. The only possible route seemed to be to go round the foot of Carn Beag Dearg. This we did by contouring at about 2,000 feet, and at last stumbled down into the Mhuillin in the gloaming. A herd of deer, disturbed at our approach, trotted off like phantoms up the glen. Once more we found that pull up to the deer fence a severe tax on weary limbs, but the thought of our evening meal was enough to keep us going. And what a feast it was, with baked beans as the *pièce de résistance* !

Next morning being the Sabbath, we had a very late breakfast. It was a fine bright day, and the artist sat close to the hut and sketched, while the photographer trotted over to Meall an t' Suidhe. The former achieved the best results as the latter failed to see the signal and returned late for lunch with only some fogged pictures of the Lochan and Stob Ban.

In the afternoon we packed up and, leaving nothing but a pint or two of paraffin, set off down the track at about 5 o'clock. Our return to civilisation was nicely timed, for, as we crossed the Bridge of Nevis, we saw all the good folk of Maryburgh hurrying on to the kirk leaving the streets empty as we tramped up to our base laden with impedimenta. One of the party went off by train on the Monday morning. The other two spent two fine spring days bicycling back to Glasgow via Connel, with a night at Crianlarich on the way.

## WIND ON THE FELS.

THE rugged clouds drive swiftly o'er the fells,  
And down the vales come sheets of hail and rain ;  
The squalls descend upon the mountain tarns,  
And weave their waters in wild whirling spray ;  
The rude wind howls, and tears the naked earth  
From off the rock-girt edges of the hills ;  
For Nature opens wide her portal now  
To drive the winter forth—while the gales rage,  
Let those that love the wind-swept fells go out  
Into the storm, and wrestle with the gusts  
Among the rock-towers of some lofty ridge,  
In full enjoyment of the mighty blast  
That roars up through the rough-ribbed battlements.  
For now each scarp is filled with loud-voiced joy  
Of falling torrents and of wind-swept scree.  
Yet ere the day is past, the sun may break  
Through the unwilling clouds, displaying all  
The swiftly-changing glories of the fells.

LAWRENCE PILKINGTON.

## EARLY WINTER CLIMBING.

BY W. W. NAISMITH.

I HAVE little sympathy with the people who "live in the past," for I hold with Browning that the best of life is still ahead ; but it is good sometimes to look backwards, and when the Editor suggested a paper with the above title, I agreed to send him something. When an old traveller like the writer surveys the long road he has come, he sees many things to regret, as well as much to be grateful for ; and among the agreeable memories those connected with mountaineering are always recalled with the most unalloyed pleasure. It is hoped that my readers will forgive a rambling paper of a somewhat autobiographical character.

By way of introduction, may I say that both my parents being fond of hills, their son took to hill-climbing about as naturally as a duck to the water, and remembers being taken up a hill of over 1,000 feet when six or seven, and Ben Lomond when about nine. From that time to this, no holiday seemed quite complete unless it contained some climbing. Flat countries were troublesome, but even there one could often find a ruined temple, or a pyramid, or something else to practise scrambling on.

The Bible speaks of "the treasures of the snow," and it seems to me that all healthy children respond by instinct to the charms of snow and ice. Can we not all remember the sheer delight of looking out of nursery windows on a winter morning and finding everything white—promising the delights of snowballing and sliding ? Even now we probably prefer snow to rain, and when the snow turns into slush, are we not glad in our secret hearts to have the chance of wearing hobnailers in town ? I doubt also whether any of us ever steps off *terra firma* on to ice or hard snow without feeling an agreeable thrill.

As a training for later mountaineering, and to learn the art of balancing, juveniles cannot do better than

follow Mr Pickwick's example, and practise sliding on the ice. Skating will soon follow, and perhaps ski-ing. The writer well remembers his first day on skates (sixty years ago !), when a kind but reckless school friend hauled him about at the end of a muffler—resulting in twenty-two tumbles, but no broken bones. After that experience one was afraid of nothing on skates, and whenever a spell of frost came—much oftener than now—along with a congenial companion if possible, we used to explore the frozen reaches of the Clyde and its tributary the Avon ; or still better, cover mile after mile of virgin ice on Loch Lomond or other smaller lochs.

At the age of twelve the writer had his earliest winter climb—a hill of 1,500 feet near Tighnabruaich—in snow and hard frost. I was accompanied by an active friend, who is now an old lady of seventy-five, and still recalls our joint adventure whenever we meet. A burn which we followed for more than a mile was so solidly frozen that we amused ourselves by walking and sliding along its channel. Near the top of the hill we had to kick steps and plunge our hands into the snow for a short distance, but on most of the way we found no difficulty whatever.

Professor Ramsay gave his Junior Latin Class a fascinating lecture on Alpine Climbing in 1872, and showed us his ice-axe and how to use it. About the same time there fell into my hands Whympers' "Scrambles" (a book that every boy ought to possess), and I devoured it with the most intense delight, although it then appeared too much to hope that I would ever myself ascend the Matterhorn.

In 1880, as related in the *S.M.C. Journal* (Vol. I., pp. 56 and 215), after returning from the Cuillins, I took part in a first ascent of Ben Nevis for the year on 1st May with two friends. The conditions were wintry, and we got good practice in glissading, with the help of stout walking-sticks, on the slopes above Lochan Meall an t' Suidhe. The upper 2,000 feet of the mountain being in cloud, we steered almost entirely by map and compass, but we found the top all right. There were then no

buildings on the summit—only a big lonely cairn, the top of which was just visible above the snow. This ascent was regarded as sufficiently unusual to be referred to in several newspapers.]

Two years after that my mother and sister came back from Switzerland so full of the beauties of Zermatt, that next year they urged me to go and see it too—at least my sister did : my mother was afraid that her son would “go into dangerous places.” No intimate friends at that time being Alpine climbers, one had to find one’s way about without much help, beyond the information in “Baedeker’s Guide.” A lot of hard work was put into that holiday, and not far short of 100,000 feet was ascended in a month ; but the snow climbs were only of minor difficulty. Somebody lent me an ice-axe for two climbs, but for the others an alpenstock sufficed.

At that time I regarded with great respect anyone brave enough to tackle the Cervin, and one day at luncheon in the Mont Cervin Hotel I felt much honoured by sitting next a man about to start for the Matterhorn Hut. It was gratifying to find him affable, and able to eat a square meal, as though he were an ordinary mortal.

In March of the following year (1884) I ascended Ben More, Perthshire, and a short account may be given of that solitary expedition, which changed my ideas about winter climbing in Scotland.

[Staying overnight at Luib Inn, I asked the innkeeper whether anyone had climbed Ben More yet. His reply was emphatic that it would be quite impossible at that season, and that if anybody were foolish enough to try it, he would likely lose his life ; “and besides,” he added, “if a man *did* get to the top he might see ghosts !”] In these tragic circumstances, it seemed to be judicious to conceal my project, and merely refer to my intention to cross the hills to Balquhider, without mentioning any route.

[In the morning I started early, carrying an alpenstock. The weather was fair but cold, and above 2,000 feet the ground was covered with snow. Leaving the road at Rob Roy’s ruined house, I first approached the north-east

base of Ben More, but found the slope too formidable. So a traverse was made to the left above the Allt Coire Choarach, until below the col between Ben More and Stobinian—the V-shaped gap as it is often called. There an easier snow-slope presented itself, and was mounted with little difficulty. From the col to the top of Ben More was, however, a different story, for the snow was covered in most places with a sheet of ice, the surface having evidently melted and frozen again, and my alpenstock was, of course, useless for making steps. Fortunately, however, the angle was not severe, and by going now to the right and now to the left one could often avoid the most slippery parts. There were also rocks and stones projecting from the ice, and so, by dodging about from one rock or platform to another, the cairn was at last reached without any mishap.

The cairn itself and the rocks below it were smothered up in heavy snow-wreaths and fog crystals. The view of the Perthshire mountains, all dressed in white, was impressive, but the day was too cold to allow one to stop long and enjoy it. In the descent great care was taken, for a slip might readily have occurred, and it would have been difficult to stop it without an axe. A fatal accident of that kind did actually happen some years earlier on an icy slope on the north side of the mountain. From the col a climb of a couple of hundred feet up the north end of Stobinian proved that the ascent of that mountain must be left for another occasion, for the whole of the ground and any projecting rocks were sheeted in ice, on which there was no secure footing. I have visited the "twin peaks" several times since 1884, but have never found them so icy as then.

Returning to near the col, a slope of reasonable snow was found, suitable for a standing glissade, and from the foot of it a course was laid for the low pass leading to Loch Doine, Balquhiddy, and Strathgryre.

The experience of that day proved to me that in winter and spring the higher Scottish mountains ought to be treated as seriously as Alpine peaks—with the same equipment of axes and a rope. To use a rope the party



must, of course, consist of at least two climbers, and the trouble was that I did not at that early period know a single friend who would care to join me at such an absurd game.

As I hoped to go back to the Alps, I sent to London for an ice-axe after Whymper's pattern. Although badly balanced as compared with modern Swiss axes, it served its owner well, and in due time took him to the top of the Matterhorn and many other peaks in Switzerland, Norway, and Scotland. But it came to a bad end, through no fault of its own, and for more than thirty years now it has reposed in the depths of a crevasse in the Gabelhorn Glacier, unless, indeed, the latter has got tired of it and ejected it.

For years after the Ben More climb people got no encouragement to use their axes near home, and winter climbing in Scotland, as far as the writer was concerned, was left alone until the S.M.C. came into being. The formation of the Club in 1889 changed the situation altogether. Almost from the start snow climbing began to be popular, and the difficulty of finding companions disappeared, while the public, who had hitherto looked on an ice-axe as a strange and rather fearsome implement, soon became accustomed to see it among climbers' luggage.

I propose now to refer very shortly to a dozen snow climbs, all done within the first eight years of the Club's existence, which stand out in one's memory as specially interesting. They recall many delightful days and happy friendships.

BIDEAN NAM BIAN and the two Buchaille Etives on 4th April 1890, with Gilbert Thomson (Vol. I. 89). This was a strenuous day of thirteen hours, with many ups and downs, for the three mountains are separated by deep valleys. The views were gloriously clear, and there was such brilliant sunshine that we wore coloured goggles in the middle of the day. On Buchaille Etive Mor we had to mount a steep snow slope, in shadow and frozen hard, where much step-cutting was needed. We reached Kingshouse about 9 o'clock, in the dark, ravenously hungry.

BEN CRUACHAN.—From Taynuilt to Dalmally—over six tops, in March 1891—alone. The Eastern “Horse-Shoe” Corrie was descended by steep snow of over  $45^{\circ}$ , with a ripple-marked surface and very solid. Descended backwards for a good way, kicking “pigeon-holes,” each step taking two or more kicks. The late Sir James Ramsay at an S.M.C. Dinner spoke of the “fearful joy” of climbing alone, and I think his opinion was that it was a luxury only to be indulged in now and then. As one who has frequently transgressed, the writer agrees that one ought not to make a practice of solitary climbing in snow.

BEN LUI.—Descent of Central Gully in April 1891, with Fraser Campbell and Lester (Vol. I. 214). This was apparently the first climb done in the Eastern Corrie of Ben Lui. The snow was firm and reliable, but as the inclination of the upper part was over  $50^{\circ}$ , it involved much step-cutting, and only one man moved while the others anchored. After the angle eased off, and the surface become softer, we unroped, and had a glorious glissade, which landed us down on the floor of the corrie. The evening was lovely, and the walk back to Tyndrum enjoyable.

STOB GHABHAIR (Upper Couloir).—In April 1892, with Professor Ramsay, Coats, and Maylard (Vol. II. 126). The snow on the east side of the mountain being frozen too hard for kicking, steps were cut in zigzags most of the way from the valley to the Upper Couloir. The frozen waterfall in the middle of the gully was overcome, after some difficulty, by the rocks on the right. Good views were obtained from the summit. Maylard and I went down the face by a steepish snow-slope and a short rock ridge further to the north, while the others followed the tourist route (south ridge).

BEN MORE AND STOBINIAN.—In February 1894, with Douglas (Vol. III. 106). We ascended Ben More on steep snow in the middle of the north face, and had to do a good deal of cutting for part of the way. We crossed Ben More and the V-shaped gap, and ascended Stobinian, returning to the gap and thence descending to Rob Roy’s Burn and Luib. Most of the way we

floundered in terribly soft snow. We were in mist and driving snow for the whole day, steering by compass, and never seeing 100 yards ahead—indeed, hardly 10 yards sometimes. We were plastered all over with snow, and my companion looked like an amiable polar bear. At times the combination of fog and snowy hillside, and a snowstorm driven horizontally, was so bewildering that we did not know whether our next step was going to be uphill or downhill. We thoroughly enjoyed it, however, and Douglas wrote, "As an experience of the joys of climbing in bad weather this expedition could hardly be surpassed."

BUCHAILLE ETIVE MOR (by the Great Gully).—In March 1894, with Brown, Douglas, and Thomson (Vol. III. 103). This gave a very interesting climb of 2,000 feet of a snow couloir. A large part of the gully is a sombre gorge hemmed in by rock walls and most impressive. We only touched rock at one place, where there is in summer a waterfall of considerable height. There we traversed across a rock face with indifferent holds. Above that place we crossed a regular bergschrund, perhaps 5 feet wide and 10 to 20 feet deep. The average angle of the snow in the gully was about  $40^{\circ}$ , except at the top, where it was slightly steeper. Being in shadow the surface was frozen and the axes were needed to scrape steps. After enjoying a rest and view at the summit we descended into Glen Etive.

BEN DOTHAIDH (NORTH FACE).—In March 1894, with H. C. Boyd, Douglas, W. Ramsay, and Thomson (Vol. III. 76). Douglas and the writer cut up very steep snow, the angle rising at last to  $59^{\circ}$ , and, of course, good steps had to be excavated. A 10-foot cornice then confronted us, but a partial break at one point encouraged the hope that it might be scaled. Our friends, who had climbed by another route, were now lying on the snow above the cornice and watching our proceedings. Although we protested that we did not need help, the upshot of the discussion was the end of a rope being lowered to us, and with its moral and material support, the party was soon reunited. Going over Ben Doran we got splendid

glissading on its far side, a single slide accounting for a drop of fully 1,000 feet shown by the aneroid. At Tyndrum Hotel we had "high tea," with Finnan haddocks, poached eggs and toast, and didn't we do justice to it!

**BEN NEVIS (CASTLE RIDGE).**—In April 1895, with Collie, Thomson, and Travers. A first ascent of a nice ridge of firm rock, with a tremendous drop on the right side. A good deal of snow lay on the upper parts of the ridge, but the steeper rocks below were almost clear. The climb lies at a much lower elevation above the sea than either the Tower Ridge or the North-East Buttress, and it is usually available in winter, when the two other routes are considered hopeless. Collie unfortunately lost a signet ring somewhere during the ascent. After visiting the Observatory, we descended by the ordinary route, and, along with a large S.M.C. crowd, enjoyed the usual long sitting glissade on our homeward way.

**AONACHS BEAG AND MÒR.**—In April 1895, with Maclay and Thomson (Vol. III. 332). We ascended Aonach Beag by its north-east ridge, a new climb suggested by Professor Collie, who could not wait to take part in it. The ridge has several prominent pinnacles, which made the climb one of great interest and well worth doing. The rocks were loaded with masses of snow, sometimes frozen hard, and at one or two places the climbers had to help one another. After visiting Aonach Mòr, we went obliquely down a long snow-slope, where steps had to be made, and finally dropped into the head of Glen Nevis some time after the last of the daylight had gone. It is verily a "lang glen," and the time was nearly midnight when we reached Fort William and prevented the dispatch of a search party.

**BEN NEVIS (NORTH-EAST BUTTRESS).**—On 3rd April 1896, with Brunskill, Kennedy, King, and Squance. This was a long day, for we were on the buttress for nearly seven hours. The party was a jolly one, but rather large for speed. The rocks were plastered with ice and snow and distinctly difficult. At one or two places the route followed by the first climbers (Brown and Tough on 25th May 1885) was impossible, and had to be varied. Until

we actually reached the summit, there was a slight doubt as to whether the top would "go" or not, for a pitch that Brown had climbed with difficulty was now found to be iced and hopeless; but by crossing to the left side of the buttress, we followed a narrow gully, at first hard ice but afterwards good snow, which led us past the last obstacle. It was pitch dark long before we arrived at the Alexandra Hotel.

BEINN LAOIGH IN A BLIZZARD.—In March 1897, with Douglas (Vol. IV. 276). In spite of a tempest of drifting snow we made our way up and down the face of the big corrie, ascending by the Central Gully, and varying the line of descent slightly. The wintry blast blew *up* the slope, and so had us rather at a disadvantage, for our wetter mantles were not meant to protect us from snow coming from below! The first part of the descent we did backwards, kicking steps, with our *eyes shut*. In spite of some inconveniences, such as our pockets being full of snowballs, the day was voted a great success.

STOB CHOIRE CLAURIGH.—In April 1897, with King, the two Squances, and Gilbert Thomson. We ascended the great North Corrie, and chose as steep a snow-slope above as we could see. Dividing into two parties, we cut steps up the snow by different routes. When the writer's party reached the huge cornice, which we had seen ominously frowning down on us, it overhung so much as to be clearly unclimbable by any outside route. But fortunately our party included an engineer, who immediately set to work to tunnel through the obstacle. Soon big chunks of frozen snow were flying down the slope, while the rest of us sheltered in a groove or crevasse under the overhang. In about thirty or forty minutes Thomson's axe broke through the surface behind the cornice, and before long we all passed through the tunnel, and found the other party waiting, as they had not been delayed by a cornice. One of the members of our party happened to be stoutish, and the aperture had not been measured for his girth, but the friends above hauled on the rope with a good will, and got their man through! They afterwards averred that he came out of the hole with a "pop," like the cork of a soda-water bottle.

## THE SCOTTISH FOUR THOUSANDS IN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

BY EUSTACE THOMAS.

THE idea arose in the twisty convolutions of Rooke Corbett's brain. It was a younger brother of a numerous family. Some years before he and the writer within twenty-four hours stood together on all the two thousand five hundreds in South Wales, beginning with the Black Mountains and finishing with Carmarthen Van. This involved over 60 map miles and some 14,000 feet vertically. Later we stood on all the three thousands of Wales in twenty-four hours. Then followed the three thousands of England between sunset and sunrise—not accomplished quite within the time. There was a blizzard on Skiddaw, rain and falling snow on Helvellyn, and deep soft snow to plough through on all the uplands. An attempt to stand on Carnedd Llewellyn, Glyder Fawr, and Snowdon between sunset and sunrise was easily successful, in spite of mist and twelve hours of steady rain.

To stand on all the four thousands of Scotland within twenty-four hours was the latest idea. A car was to be used between Ben Nevis and the Cairngorms. It was first seriously discussed at Fort William at Easter, but it became a definite plan about a fortnight before Whitsuntide. The latter half of Whit-week is a universal holiday in Manchester. The nights are short, and there is a reasonable likelihood that the weather will not be too hot or too cold.

On Wednesday afternoon, 11th June 1924, the writer started in his car from Borrowdale. Heardman and Gilliat were picked up at Carlisle, and the night was spent at Hamilton. Next morning Richards joined in, in Glasgow. The journey was then resumed via Kingshouse, the Glencoe Pass, and Kinlochleven to Fort William. The morning of the following day, Saturday, 14th June, was spent in overhauling the car and other easy work. In the afternoon we were driven in a hired car along General

Wade's Road. At 3.2 P.M. we left the car and started up the slope towards Aonach Mòr. Each of the four went as he pleased and only the fastest times are given. At 4.40 Aonach Mòr was reached, and at 5.1 Aonach Beag. An oblique descent was made to the foot of the ridge leading to Carn Mòr Dearg. Carn Mòr Dearg was then bagged, and the horseshoe ridge followed to the summit of Ben Nevis, which was reached about 6.44. A lengthy stop was made for food, and the foot of Ben Nevis at Achintee Farm was reached at 8.10 P.M. A car was to meet us there at 9.30, but as we were so much before time the road to Fort William was covered on foot.

Here we were made very comfortable at Macpherson's Hotel, and after a good meal left about 11.25 P.M. in the writer's car. At Aviemore, Manning joined us, and we drove out to Glenmore Lodge. The road was only just possible to a car with good clearances, and at one place had broken away, and the two wheels at one side had to be driven over a single strong plank.

Glenmore Lodge was left at 3.55 A.M., and the top of Cairngorm was reached at 5.36. A long stop was made for food, and it was felt that work ahead was well in hand. The three summits of Ben Macdhui were reached at 7.8, 7.38, and 7.59.

At this stage we believe we ought to have followed a snow-filled gully, the Allt Clach Nan Taillear. Instead we returned and descended the Allt a Choire Mhoir. Probably it mattered little. It was now almost oppressively hot, and a long time was taken over a meal on the banks of the Dee. Finally, the steep flank of Cairn Toul was attacked, and the summit reached with much labour in the hot sun at 10.50 by the first man, the party being a good deal spread out. The worst of the labour was now over, and after all had arrived at the top and had some rest the remaining peaks were bagged by the whole party as follows: Angel's Peak, 12.12; the three cairns about Wells of Dee at 12.46, 1.10, and 1.25, and finally Braeriach at 1.40.

The descent was made to Glenmore Lodge by varying routes by different members of the party; and after tea

at the Lodge the journey was made—via Aviemore to pick up the party's luggage—to Pitlochry. We were treated very well in the Hotel, and left the next morning at 6.30 A.M. With clear, and on the whole quite good roads, rapid progress was made. One tyre, however, shed a large piece of rubber rather violently when the car was going rather fast, and the wheel had to be changed. Also the unhappy driver was fighting all the time a most powerful inclination to sleep, and several stops were made for strong tea in the interest of the general safety. Carlisle was finally reached soon after 2 P.M., and four of the party reached Manchester that evening. The driver carried on to Borrowdale, but gave way to an hour's sleep by the wayside.

Later it was discovered that a certain well-known mountaineer had decided to forestall us. He, and a friend who acted as chauffeur, left Borrowdale in a car early in Whit-week and drove straight through to Fort William. Knowing that we should follow on he kept up fast time all through, doing the walk alone, and made better time than we did, as we did not know there was any competition and did not try at all to complete the whole journey in the shortest possible time. It was only poetic justice that he missed out the last 4,000 cairn of Ben Macdhui, and thus technically failed in his object. Otherwise his effort was a very strong one, and the planning and division of labour were good.

For fast times the walking party should not be more than two in number, and should take no part in driving the car. The route could then be covered in many less hours.



## In Memoriam.

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SIR ARCHIBALD GEIKIE, O.M., K.C.B., &c.

BY the death of Sir Archibald Geikie, full of years and honours, another name has been added to the roll of distinguished Scottish geologists of the past—Hutton, Murchison, Miller, Nicol, Ramsay, Lapworth, and James Geikie—whose labours during the last century did so much to advance geological knowledge.

Apart from his purely scientific work, of which this is no place to speak, the power of graphic description and charm of style displayed in Geikie's more popular writings, such as "*The Scenery and Geology of Scotland*" and "*Scottish Reminiscences*," make a wide appeal to all those who appreciate good English literature.

An early article on the geology of Arran, published in an Edinburgh newspaper in 1851, brought young Geikie to the notice of Hugh Miller and Andrew Ramsay, and eventually led to his joining the staff of the Geological Survey in 1855, soon after the beginning of its work in Scotland.

Geikie's official duties took him into every part of Scotland, and when his long period of service ended with his retirement as Director-General of the Survey in 1901, there were few districts, either of the Highlands or Lowlands, with which he was not more or less intimately acquainted.

Survey life also brought him into contact with interesting men and women in all classes of the community, and his "*Scottish Reminiscences*" contain many valuable and amusing impressions of men and manners in the Scotland of fifty and sixty years ago.

Never a climber in the accepted sense of the word, Geikie was a good hill-walker, with a keen appreciation of mountain scenery. In the "Reminiscences," Chapter IV., he describes a long Sunday's tramp, not ended until nearly midnight, over the wild peaks and corries of the Torridon and Achnashellach Forests. The story also illustrates the extreme Sabbatarianism of West Ross-shire in 1860.

In the year 1892 Geikie was elected an honorary member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and though there is no record of his having attended any of the Meets, he was present at the Annual Dinner in Glasgow in 1891, when he responded to the toast of "The Bens and Glens" in a speech which may still live in the recollection of some of the older members of the Club.

An article from his pen, under the title of "The Scottish Mountains," appeared in Vol. IV. of the *Journal* (May 1896). In it he traces the influence of the structure and component materials on the form and character of our Scottish Hills.

L. W. H.

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SIR JAMES H. RAMSAY OF BAMFF,  
BART., LL.D., HON. LITT.D.

By the death, at the advanced age of ninety-two, of Sir James Ramsay, the Club has lost a valued honorary member, and the country a distinguished scholar and historian. He was educated at Rugby and at Oxford, where he took a double first in Classics and in Law and History, and was appointed Public Examiner in Law and Modern History. He was called to the Bar, and was a member of Lincoln's Inn, but his life was devoted mainly to the study of history, and he published many works, which were distinguished for their accuracy and lucidity, particularly his "Lancaster and York: A Century of English History, A.D. 1399-1485," and "The Angevin Empire, or the Three Reigns of Henry II., Richard I., and John, A.D. 1154-1216."

His last book was published on his seventieth birthday. His labours were recognised by the conferment of many honorary degrees.

To his mental vigour was added a physical vigour, which remained with him throughout his long life. In July 1855 he discovered the route up Mont Blanc over M. Blanc de Tacul and Mont Maudit to the Corridor, though he was unfortunately obliged to turn within an hour of the summit. Two years ago, at the age of ninety, he ascended the Eildon Hills, surely a unique record.

All through his life he was keenly interested in the heights, and the writer remembers one very pleasant evening spent with him in Couttet's garden in Chamonix in August 1908, and his eager questioning about the details of a particularly arduous crossing of the two Drus, involving a night out in a snowstorm, which the writer and a companion had just completed. This same year, at the age of seventy-five, he climbed the Aiguille de l'M., a good rock climb. He joined the Alpine Club in 1859, and was generally to be found at their meetings when he was in London. His knowledge of the Scottish hills was very extensive, as was to be expected from the brother of our first President, but it was not until 1910 that he joined the Club, which honoured itself by electing him Honorary Member in 1921. A charming article on his climbs in 1872 appeared in the *Alpine Journal* of November 1921. His death leaves a blank in many circles, and he will long be remembered as a scholar, a mountaineer, and a fine example of *mens sana in corpore sano*, the best type of a Highland gentleman.

W. N. L.



*January 1925*

A SNOW-CLEARED ATMOSPHERE

*G. Sang*

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

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THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL  
MEETING.

UNDER Mr J. H. BELL'S presidency the Reception, Annual General Meeting, and Dinner of the Club were held in Edinburgh on Friday, 5th December. A departure from the customary proceeding was made this year at the instance of the 1924 Dinner Committee which had, as its result, the holding of all three functions in the same building. To this end rooms were engaged at the Royal Arch Halls in Queen Street, where the Reception commenced at 3.30 P.M. This function, which took the form of afternoon tea to the members and their friends, followed by a demonstration of lantern slides of the Lofoten Islands, kindly delivered by Mr Steeple, was well attended, over 200 persons being present. As Mr Steeple's demonstration did not begin until 4.20 P.M. ample time was given for members meeting their friends. The Egyptian Hall was found suitable for this purpose, tea being served there, and the upper room being laid out as a theatre for the purpose of the demonstration, with ample seating accommodation for the whole audience. It was, perhaps, a little unfortunate that the projection lantern, hired specially for the purpose of exhibiting Mr Steeple's slides, failed in exact focus, and also that the hall appeared not particularly suited for acoustics, so that at the back of the hall only those of acute hearing were able to follow all Mr Steeple's interesting description during his demonstration. Dressing rooms had been engaged in the hall for the use of members, and the Annual General Meeting commenced promptly at 6 P.M., when the President took the Chair. There was a fairly representative turn-out of members, and proceedings were commenced by the Secretary, Mr SANG, reading, at the President's request, the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, held in Glasgow. These minutes were

approved and, there being no business directly arising from them, Mr MACROBERT, the Hon. Treasurer, next made his annual statement upon the present financial position of the Club. He pointed out to the members that, with the approval of the Committee, it was his intention to alter the date of the closing of the Club accounts so that in future he might present to the Committee Meeting in October the completed account with the Auditors' docket appended. In describing the printed account already circularised to the members with the notice of meeting, he explained that, while the cost of publication of the November issue of the *Journal* was not included in the account, owing to the fact that details were not yet in his hands, they would find that the accounts closed with a small surplus; this, however, would be more than swallowed up when the expenses of the total year's workings were met, and the Club must not therefore be disappointed if, instead of a surplus, the year closed with a slight deficit. He made special reference to the state of the commutation fund which had now reached an allocation of £5. 0s. 6½d. per head, and he also went into details of Guide-Book finance, explaining to the meeting that only when the present published stocks had been disposed of could the Club look to the combined issue for a substantial profit. On the motion of Mr LING seconded by Mr PARKER, Mr MacRobert was accorded a very hearty vote of thanks for his explanation and for all the work which he had done in connection with the Club's finances for the past year. The meeting expressed its approval of the alteration in the date of closing the accounts and accepted Mr MacRobert's statements with much appreciation.

The HON. SECRETARY, in reporting upon the doings of the season just closed, stated that the membership of the Club had reached the figure of 221, a high-water mark in the history of the Club. This figure included eleven new members added to the roll by the postal ballot, which closed on 28th November 1924; namely, Messrs L. St C. Bartholomew, W. J. Bannister, J. W. W. Drysdale, A. J. Frazer, K. K. Hunter, T. Hutson, D. C. MacDonald, A. N. Maclaurin, J. C. Maclaurin, H. F. B. Sharp, and

Dr A. G. W. Thomson. A hearty welcome was accorded to these new recruits to the Club's ranks. During the year the Club had lost through death its senior Honorary member, Sir Archibald Geikie, F.R.S. Sir Archibald was elected an honorary member in the year 1892. The Club had also lost through death one of its original members, Professor William Jack, LL.D. Two members had resigned owing to their business taking them to India, and there was one other resignation. The Secretary informed the meeting that he should like the question put to the Committee whether it might not be advantageous to have some form of reduced subscription for members resident out of the country. He explained that the Club had been indebted during the year to several of the kindred clubs, who had again most kindly asked the attendance of Club representatives at their annual dinners, and he took the opportunity of informing the meeting that the representatives sent to the various kindred club functions had expressed themselves delighted with the cordiality of their reception, and at the expression in every instance of good fellowship and kindly feeling towards the Scottish Mountaineering Club.

He referred to the application made to members during the year to contribute towards the fund raised on behalf of the Skye Crofters, and explained that owing to the kindness of the Hon. Secretary of the Alpine Club, Mr Spencer, and the practical help of Mr H. P. Cain, who is intimately connected with the Fell and Rock and the Rucksack Clubs, the Scottish Mountaineering Club had been able to forward to the Committee for the distribution of relief in Portree three sums of £70 each, and he read to the Club Mr George Mackay Fraser's appreciative letter of thanks on behalf of that Committee.

He referred also to the Meets of the Club at New Year, Easter, and in June, and stated that the suggestion of an Autumn Meet in the Lake District had been abandoned, partly because it was not permissible according to a strict interpretation of Club Rules, and partly owing to the fact that the weather at that time was of a very depressing nature.

The Secretary also embodied in his report a short statement upon the remit by the Advisory Council of British Mountaineering Clubs to the Scottish Mountaineering Club and the Rucksack Club for their views upon the proposed Access to Mountains Bill. He explained that our representative, Mr F. S. Goggs, had met the Rucksack Club's representative, Mr Morley Wood, and that, together, they had submitted a joint report embodying what each considered to be the views of his particular Club ; that this joint report had been returned to the Advisory Council for their consideration, beyond which point nothing was known. It might be that the Advisory Council had not met again since the receipt of the joint report, or it might be that, owing to the change in Government, it was unlikely that the Bill would find a place upon the Statute Book.

The Secretary also, in his report, advocated the advertising in some form of the stock of Guide Books in order to prevent stagnation.

The meeting accepted the Secretary's report, and remitted to the Committee for consideration the question of the advisability of members resident abroad paying a reduced subscription.

With reference to the position of the Guide Book, it was suggested that an effort might be made by the Sub-Editors of the various Guide Book Sections to complete the manuscripts of the Guide Book, prepare them for the printer, and then come forward to the Club for a subsidy and orders. This idea appeared to receive the support of the meeting, which gave the Committee instructions to consider the advisability of adopting this procedure.

Mr E. P. BUCHANAN, who completes his period of Editorship of the *Journal*, next read his report, in which he thanked the Club for their support of him during his period of Editorship, and expressed his regret that the numerous calls upon his time prevented his continuance of the post. He had, however, pleasure in being able to hand over his duties to the Hon. Librarian, Mr G. B. Green, who had consented to act as Editor of the *Journal* in his place. " He had no doubt," he said, " that in Mr



Green's capable hands the *Journal* would continue to be a pleasure to the members and a faithful record of mountaineering expeditions in Scotland." He pointed out that the outside subscribers to the *Journal* were gradually increasing, and that the advertisement returns were satisfactory. At the conclusion of his report, after an expression of cordial appreciation on the part of the President, he was warmly thanked for his work.

Mr G. B. GREEN presented to the meeting his report as Hon. Librarian, in which he embraced the report of the Custodian of Slides. Mr Green, as Convener of the Club-Room Committee, explained to the meeting that a new Caretaker had been appointed to the rooms with whom it had been arranged that constant attendance should be given so that in future it would be unnecessary for members to apply to Messrs Douglas & Foulis for the key to the rooms. He also explained that it had been found necessary to expend the sum of about £8. 10s. upon redecoration, the Club having come to an agreement with the landlord for a five years' lease of the premises at a very moderate rent on the understanding that they would hold themselves responsible for interior decoration during their tenancy. The meeting accorded a hearty vote of thanks to Mr Green and Mr Murray Lawson for their work as Librarian and Custodian of Slides respectively.

Mr SOLLV mentioned that he considered that the attendance of the new Caretaker at the Club-Rooms was not satisfactory, as he had been unable to obtain admission to the rooms on his first time of calling. He also pointed out to the meeting that in his opinion something should be done, without loss of time, to repair the wooden frame in which the War Memorial was contained, and he requested that the attention of the Club-Room Committee be drawn to this matter. At the same time it was also considered advisable that something be done to protect from damage the gift of Mr Priestman's Relief Map of the Cuillin Hills, and the Club-Room Committee were instructed to consider this question.

Mr GREEN again explained to the meeting that the

collection of old *Journals* had now become so large that it formed an encumbrance upon the limited space in the Club-Room, and he asked the consent of the meeting to dispose of these as waste paper. Dr INGLIS CLARK, protesting that it was a pity such valuable publications should be destroyed, expressed himself willing to give the back numbers house-room during the period of his life without expense to the Club, an offer which was thankfully accepted by the Club-Room Committee. Incidentally it may be remarked that Mr Murray Lawson has now removed close on half a ton of back numbers to 22 Buckingham Terrace.

The meeting next intimated their acceptance of the Committee's nomination of Office-Bearers, viz., Mr J. A. Parker as President in place of Mr J. H. Bell who retires ; Mr G. B. Green as Editor in place of Mr E. P. Buchanan who retires ; Mr G. Murray Lawson as Hon. Librarian in place of Mr Green ; and Mr E. C. Thomson as Hon. Custodian of Slides in place of Mr G. Murray Lawson ; in this connection we greatly regret to have to intimate that owing to Mr E. C. Thomson changing his place of business he will be unable to fulfil the duties of Custodian of Slides, Mr Percy Donald has, however, very kindly placed his services for this office at the Club's disposal ; the remaining Office-Bearers, Members of Committee, and Trustees of the Club Funds were re-elected in conformity with Rule No. 26.

Mr ALEXANDER HARRISON, seconded by Mr PARKER, moved an alteration upon Rule No. 26, which deals with the period of office of the President of the Club. The gist of his motion was that in place of three years' period of office as at present, in future the President and the two Vice-Presidents should only hold office for two consecutive years. This motion being put to the vote was duly declared carried, with the result that the new President, Mr Parker, will be the first in the Club's history to hold his office for two years only under rule.

The meeting next passed to the consideration of Meets of the Club. It was agreed that the last annual general meeting's selections of Loch Awe for the New Year and

Fort William for Easter should be confirmed. Messrs GARDEN and LING moved that the Committee's suggestion for holding the Easter Meet, 1926, at Tomdoun and Cluanie with an alternative of Bridge of Lochay, Killin, should be confirmed, and this having been put to the vote the suggestion was carried. Messrs HARRISON and ALLAN ARTHUR next moved that the New Year Meet, 1925-26, be held at Tyndrum and Inveroran, which also was voted upon and agreed to

The SECRETARY next brought before the meeting a proposal for the alteration of Rule No. 45. This proposal had for its purpose the legalising of the fixing of a centre by the annual general meeting not only for the year immediately succeeding the meeting, but also for the year following that, with the view of giving a sufficiency of time for the arrangement with hotels and the intimation of Meets to members ; also the legalising of the holding of additional Meets beyond the New Year and Easter at centres outside Scotland. Considerable discussion followed upon this, and the result was that after votes had been taken, the Secretary's motion was passed only so far as regards the first portion, enabling the selection of centres to be made two years ahead, and failed as far as regards the holding of Meets outside Scotland. It seemed to be the feeling of the meeting that as the Club was a national Club which had made it traditional to deal only with national interests it would be contrary to the constitution to extend Meets to what was regarded as alien soil.

The EDITOR reported to the meeting upon the Committee's decision with regard to the question of an additional publication in the shape of selected blocks from old *Journals*, which at one time it was thought might form a repaying issue if it were timed to appear about Christmas and could be put on the market at a small figure. Mr Buchanan said that the Committee had considered the matter, but that they felt that the Club funds were not at present in a condition to allow the incurring of additional expense in this direction ; also that the publication of such a book might detract from the selling value of the

Guide Books which was one of the Club's present chief concerns.

After this there followed a general discussion upon several letters which had appeared in the Glasgow papers in connection with the formation of a Club to enable candidates to qualify themselves for membership of the Scottish Mountaineering Club. It was considered that the letters had been too indefinite in character to allow of any particular line of action being adopted by the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and this concluding the business the meeting adjourned to dinner.

The meeting had been held in the room in which the slide demonstration had been given, and while it was in progress the caterer had rearranged the ground floor hall as a dining-room. Sixty-six sat down to dinner, and the President read a telegram from the Hon. President expressing his regret at his inability to be present and wishing the Club all happiness and prosperity. At the close of the dinner Mr J. H. Bell proposed from the President's chair the toast of the Club; Mr John MacRobert proposed the toast of the Guests, which was responded to by Mr James Paterson, R.S.A.; Mr A. J. Rusk proposed the toast of the Kindred Clubs to which Mr E. E. Roberts, the President of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, replied; and the speeches were concluded by Mr J. A. Parker proposing the toast of the retiring President. The Club had as its guests at this dinner the Presidents of the Yorkshire Ramblers, the Rucksack, and the Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District. In addition to Mr Roberts' speech already referred to, Dr Wakefield of the Fell and Rock and Mr Eustace Thomas of the Rucksack Club also said a few words.

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#### NEW YEAR MEET, 1924-25—LOCH AWE.

PRESENT :—*Members*—J. A. Parker (*President*), W. J. Bannister, L. St C. Bartholomew, C. E. Bell, J. H. Bell, E. P. Buchanan, D. A. Clapperton, J. Rooke Corbett,



*April 1922*

BEN CRUACHAN MAIN TOP FROM STOB DEARG

*P. Donald*

H. J. Craig, J. Craig, P. Donald, A. J. Frazer, G. B. Green, A. Harrison, J. Harrison, K. K. Hunter, A. G. Hutchison, J. S. M. Jack, G. M. Lawson, W. N. Ling, D. C. Macdonald, A. C. M'Laren, H. MacRobert, J. MacRobert, E. N. Marshall, D. H. Menzies, W. A. Morrison, R. C. Paterson, J. R. Philip, H. Priestman, A. K. Reid, A. E. Robertson, A. J. Rusk, A. W. Russell, R. N. Rutherford, G. Sang, J. A. Scott, T. Shaw, E. C. Thomson, Gilbert Thomson, G. D. Valentine. *Guests*—J. Fallowes, W. Fallowes, J. E. Lyle, — MacNab, D. F. Pilkington, C. W. Parry, W. B. Speirs, G. R. Speirs, — Burt, E. A. Hutchison, J. M. Thomson, T. E. Thomson, A. C. Russell, W. P. Scott, R. T. Sellar, Rainy Brown, J. Roberts, — Martin, T. Gibson, and J. M. Rusk.

The New Year Meet of 1924-25, although not phenomenal for fine weather, will long be remembered as one of the happiest gatherings of the Club, and was certainly a record Meet as far as numbers went, sixty-one members and guests being present. During the previous week wild stormy weather had been the weather clerk's Christmas portion for the greater part of Britain, and the hills were thickly mantled in snow. The Meet officially commenced on Tuesday, 30th December, and by Wednesday night the numbers reached quite average proportions. Previous to that the first-comers were Macdonald and Corbett, who arrived on Monday evening. On Tuesday they made an ascent of Meall Cuanail and found the snow dry and powdery and also encountered a thunderstorm near the top. Then Pilkington arrived and walked to Falls of Cruachan, while later Robertson, Green, and Valentine came by the four o'clock train.

*Wednesday, 31st December.*

This day, which early in the forenoon showed signs of being good, broke down completely, and the weather conditions on the tops were unpleasant. Corbett, Macdonald, and Pilkington climbed Beinn a' Chochuill, while the other three, Robertson, Green, and Valentine,

had a walk by the Loch. In the afternoon Rutherford and Hutchison arrived, having walked from Inveroran via Glen Orchy. They got a lift in Lawson's car for the last mile or so, he being on his way from Edinburgh. The train then brought Clapperton, Reid, Lyle, Paterson, and Priestman, and to complete the party that sat down to dinner that night, Frazer, Hunter, and Parry arrived by road, and Burt, who had traversed over Laoigh and Binn a' Chleibh. The evening train, which was very late, brought a further increase in numbers of twenty-one members and guests.

*Thursday, 1st January.*

New Year's Day dawned cheerless and moist, with low clouds racing from the south-west. Nevertheless, although the atmospheric conditions were so poor, many parties were on the hills that day. The President and his guest Sellar walked up Allt Mhoille Glen to the Larig Noe with the intention of climbing Beinn a' Chochuill. After climbing for several hundred feet they found the wind so strong and squally that they gave it up. Rutherford, Hunter, Frazer, Bannister, W. B. Speirs, Parry, and the two Hutchisons started off to do the round of the Horse Shoe of Cruachan. Above 2,500 feet the wind was very fierce on the exposed ridge, so after reaching one top they promptly descended into the corrie by a series of wet glissades. Murray Lawson, Burt, and the two Fallows also were on the Horse Shoe, starting from the Bhuiridh end and went over two tops. Marshall, Lyle, and the two Craigs ascended Beinn Eunaich, where the wind, also in boisterous mood, took its toll of hats, Marshall losing three. Another party, consisting of Ling, Jack, MacRobert, Philip, Valentine, C. E. Bell, Corbett, J. M. Thomson, Rainy Brown, and MacNab, started for Cruachan, intending to descend by the Drochaid Glas ridge; seven did so, while four of the party—Ling, Philip, Valentine, and Corbett—came back after doing Meall Cuanail. Donald and Macdonald were on Beinn Bhuiridh, and Menzies and Buchanan went up

Beinn Mhic Mhonaidh, a fine-looking hill at the head of Glen Strae which is rarely visited. Reid and Paterson walked to Brander station via the hill-track and back by the road, while Pilkington did likewise. Glen Strae was also patronised by walkers, Clapperton and Green going there while G. Thomson and Robertson discussed the old days by its murmuring river. Priestman went for a walk along the road and was the interested spectator of a motor smash.

Some members and guests had been staying over night at Crianlarich, and that day one party, J. A. Scott, E. C. Thomson, the two Harrisons, W. P. Scott, T. E. Thomson, Gibson, Roberts, and A. C. Russell left to traverse Laoigh, climbing it by the South Rib. J. A. Scott and the Harrisons caught the train at Dalmally for Loch Awe; the rest walked the whole distance. The other party from Crianlarich, consisting of Rusk, Bartholomew, and Martin, went by car to Tyndrum. Thence they went to Laoigh with two members of the Ladies' Club who joined their party. The attack on Beinn Laoigh failed, however, owing to the bad weather conditions, but Rusk was much impressed by the high standard of mountaineering as demonstrated by the ladies. They retired again to Tyndrum and then proceeded to Loch Awe by car.

The other arrivals that evening were J. H. Bell and M'Laren who came by train from Connel, and also A. W. Russell and J. MacRobert who walked from Tyndrum. Owing to a slight mistake with his luggage the latter was destitute of his climbing gear and sadly had to walk in his "Sunday" clothes. As one member remarked, he was like the old Scotsman who could bear "ony pairtin' but no pairtin' wi' his claes." In the evening at dinner Jack introduced the Cruachan Operatic and Asthmatic Club, who begged, requested, and even demanded to be allowed to perform afterwards. This society, to which anyone who could sing or could not, as the case might be, might belong, furnished entertainment for most of the evening with occasional intervals while John kept bringing more coffee. Jack and others sang



many old Gilbert and Sullivan favourites, while the songs of Buchanan, Rusk, Hunter, and M'Laren (who also played his pipes) made a very pleasing diversion from these. Sang also gave us selections from "Songs of the Mountaineers," many of which are well worth learning for choruses.

*Friday, 2nd January.*

On Friday there was no change in weather conditions except for the fact that the wind was from an easterly direction. In spite of that, however, many parties set off after claiming their properties from the quantities of light outer garments which festooned the mantelpieces and fireplaces of the hotel. The President, with the Russells, Sang, and Sellar, ascended Meall Cuanail, but did not go on to Cruachan, as the conditions were the worst possible. They came down by the Cruachan Burn and home by the High Level route. Rutherford, Bannister, A. G. Hutchison, and Parry also went up Meall Cuanail after leaving the hotel very late. Conditions had much improved by the time they reached the top, and they were there able to enjoy the most excellent jam sandwiches which the hotel provided. Time prevented further climbing on to Cruachan, and they returned via Falls of Cruachan track to the road. Ling, Jack, H. MacRobert, Reid, and Paterson climbed Beinn Eunaich from the farm of Duiletter, and were accompanied so far by Shaw. On the top they were treated to a display of electricity, and report has it that MacRobert said his hair was standing on end. They came home descending by the col. Another party, consisting of Lawson, Corbett, and Burt, went up the same mountain and were accompanied a part of the way by the Fallows. E. C. Thomson, T. E. Thomson, Philip, Hunter, and Frazer went up Beinn a' Chochuill from the Cruachan-Chochuill col, where the conditions were not too unpleasant, and then descended into the corrie again. J. MacRobert and M'Laren also were on Beinn a' Chochuill. Rusk drove another party—J. Harrison, J. A. Scott, Bartholomew, Martin, and Gibson

—to Brander, where they tackled the Taynuilt Peak. Rusk himself devoted the day to playing “fives” and drying clothes. Donald, Macdonald, and Pilkington energetically walked round the Cruachan massif, starting from the Glen Noe end and met a blizzard at the summit of the pass. Several other members went for walks, the Craigs, Lyle, and Marshall going up Glen Strae and back, while Priestman went for a constitutional along the road. This evening, after the President’s remarks had been made, we were treated to a long speech from J. MacRobert, who introduced the New Wine in Old Bottles Middle-Aged Spirit Society as a counterblast to the Cruachan crowd. He explained in flowing language that there was much talent in the bridge-playing section of the Club which, though hitherto latent, he intended to bring forward that evening. Further, to stimulate a friendly rivalry between the two, he suggested a game should be played afterwards which entailed the use of a blown egg and an “aura” (a gentle wind), and that there might be a competition between married and single men. Later, a programme similar to that of the previous evening was carried through, but with the addition of a song from Clapperton and stories from gentlemen in the Old Wine and New Bottles Camp. J. MacRobert had also apparently been in touch with the spirits of the mountains, for he reproduced for our benefit their message in a few lines of verse, as follows :—

LINES BY J. MACROBERT, RECITED ON FRIDAY EVENING.

Cruachan called to Chochuill, Chochuill spoke aloud,  
Eunaich called to Bhuiridh out of wind-swept cloud :  
“ Do you see the climbers coming ?  
Do you hear their voices humming ?  
Do you mark their trampling feet ?  
A gathering for the New Year Meet ! ”  
O’er the crest of Laoigh, down by Beinn a’ Chleibh ;  
Sons of Spartan mothers, boys of yesterday ;  
Cruachan called to Chochuill, Chochuill spoke again :  
“ Give them all our greeting, cheer them thro’ the rain,  
Bearded sires are welcome, youths who never fear  
Rain or wind or thunder, wish them Glad New Year ! ”

During these proceedings a blown egg was brought in and placed on a polished table, and there followed a game of breathless excitement when a succession of opponents, married *versus* single, tried to puff the egg into each other's goal. Result, 5-2 for the singles. The evening's programme was wound up with jolly eightsome and foursome reels danced to M'Laren's pipes.

*Saturday, 3rd January.*

Saturday showed a decided improvement in weather from the previous days ; there were even occasions when the sun was seen. Many members had to leave and the numbers that went on the hills were greatly diminished. Rusk, Bartholomew, J. A. Scott, and Martin made for the north face of Cruachan by the Allt Mhoille, and passing below Coire an Lochain, found a gully leading up to the 3,312 top, which was reached at 4.30 P.M. Some very fine views were obtained, the country being all clear to the north. Several other parties went to Cruachan. E. C. and T. E. Thomson, Rutherford, Frazer, W. P. Scott, and Philip took the early train to Taynuilt and ascended the Taynuilt peak, thence traversing along the ridge to the main top and coming down over Meall Cuanail. They found it windy on the ridge. Lawson, the Fallows, and Burt were also on Meall Cuanail, and came down into the Cruachan corrie. J. and A. Harrison, A. C. Russell, and Roberts went up Eunaich and found very pleasant conditions on the top, while the two Craigs and Lyle did the round of the Horse Shoe. Another party, of Sang, Morrison, Donald, Macdonald, and Pilkington, went into Corrie Dearg but found the going very tedious, the snow being soft, so did not go above the 3,000 feet line. Shaw, Hunter, and Parry walked to Falls of Cruachan.

*Sunday, 4th January.*

Sunday turned out at last a good day, and practically all those who remained were out on the hills. Rusk took his party of Bartholomew, Martin, and Roberts to Beinn



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*P. Donald*

**BEN CRUACHAN MAIN TOP AND STOB DEARG FROM DROCHAID GLAS**

Bhuiridh, approaching it by the north face. After unsuccessful attempts on Ravens Crag Gully and an unnamed gully to the right of it, they made the ascent by an easy gully with soft snow. Hunter and Parry also had a gully climb. They attempted the White Shoot of Beinn Eunaich, but the snow was so soft they had to give it up. Another party was also on Eunaich, consisting of E. C. and T. E. Thomson, the two Scotts, and Donald. They descended towards the Chochuill-Eunaich col, where J. A. Scott dropped out. The rest went on to Beinn a' Chochuill and then down to the Cruachan-Chochuill col, whence W. P. Scott and Donald returned home. The indefatigable Thomsons went on and did the Horse Shoe of Cruachan, returning to the hotel over Bhuiridh in the moonlight. They reported good going on the Horse Shoe.

Cruachan was once more visited, this time by Lawson, Macdonald, Pilkington, Burt, and the Fallows, who followed the ridge from Beinn Bhuiridh to the main peak. Burt and Pilkington then finished a good day by including Meall Cuanail, and the rest came back by the Cruachan corrie. Shaw and Philip also came down that corrie, having started in the morning on the south side of the Horse Shoe and subsequently crossing the ridge. Tempted by the fine weather many members made a last long day of it before going back to business life. Rusk's party left by car at 7.30 P.M. and reached Edinburgh in the small hours, while practically all the others left next morning.

Donald and Pilkington were, however, exceptions, and on the Monday they ascended Eunaich by the Stob Maol ridge and returned the same way. Donald went home at night and left Pilkington to hold the fort alone.

It remains to record our hearty thanks due to Mr Currie and the members of his staff for their ready and thoughtful attention during the course of the Meet.

A. G. H.

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

### ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

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

“Caledonia Illustrated.” 2 vols. By William Beattie, M.D.  
Presented by J. Rennie.

“An Alpine Valley, and Other Poems.” By Lawrence Pilkington. Presented by Mr Pilkington.

“The Making of a Mountaineer.” By G. I. Finch. Purchased.

The thanks of the Club are tendered to Mr Rennie and Mr Pilkington.

The following periodicals have also been received :—

Sangaku, Japanese Alpine Club Journal. Vol. XVIII., Nos. 1 and 2, 1924.

Bulletin Pyrénéen. November-December 1924 ; January-February 1925.

Echo des Alpes. October, November, December 1924.

Italian Alpine Club Journal. October, November, December 1924.

La Montagne. October, November, December 1924 ; January 1925.

Geographical Journal. Vol. LXIV., No. 4, October 1924.

Oxford and Cambridge Mountaineering. 1924.

Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club. Annual Record. 1923-24, 1924-25.

New Zealand Alpine Journal. Vol. III., No. 13.

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

Alpine Club Journal. Vol. XXXVI., No. 229.

Les Alpes. Vol. I. January, February.

Map No. 12, Central Perthshire, Bartholomew's Reduced Survey.

There has also been received a Catalogue of Maps, &c., published by the Ordnance Survey.

Dr Inglis Clark has very kindly allowed the Club to store the back numbers of the *Journal* at 22 Buckingham Terrace, thus relieving the congestion in the Club-Rooms.

## CLUB-ROOM MEETINGS.

Up to the date of issue four meetings have been held in the rooms this winter, at which lantern slides were shown by the following members, viz. : The Rev. A. E. Robertson, illustrating "Some Far Away Bens and Glens in Western Inverness-shire and Wester Ross"; J. A. Parker, illustrating his wanderings in the Pyrenees; and by J. Rennie, illustrating a visit to the Californian Sierras. The meetings were well attended by the Edinburgh members and much appreciated.

## REVIEWS.

**The Alpine Journal**, November 1924, Vol. XXXVI., No. 229.

No. 229 will be for ever memorable in the long series of *Alpine Journals* for its account of the Everest Expedition of 1924. In it are included a message from H.M. the King, the Mount Everest Dispatches, accounts of different aspects and parts of the Expedition by Brigadier-General the Hon. C. G. Bruce, Lieutenant-Colonel E. F. Norton, Captain Geoffrey Bruce, and Mr N. E. Odell, a report of the Memorial Service held in honour of Messrs G. H. Leigh Mallory and A. C. Irvine, a short poem by D. W. F., and a consideration of the "Battle with Everest," by "A Himalayan Traveller." Everything that is narrated fills us with admiration for all that was done by the members of the expedition, the perfection of the organisation, the successful struggle with bad weather, in spite of the ill-health of more than one of the party, in establishing the various camps, the splendid effort of Colonel Norton and Mr Somervell in reaching over 28,000 feet without oxygen, Mr Odell's two marvellous ascents to over 27,000 feet, and, above all, the last, the highest, and most mournful climb of Messrs Mallory and Irvine. The whole story is such as to make the humblest hill-climber proud to be able to claim any sort of fellowship with such men. Several remarkable photographs illustrate the accounts.

Other notable articles are Mr Porter's on the "Southern Alps of New Zealand," Dr Thorington's on the "Mountains of the Whirlpool," Mr Finn's "First Ascents of Mt. Barbican and Mt. Geikie" (both accompanied by illustrations of very fine peaks), Mr Wyatt's "Some Climbs in 1911," Mr Carr's "A Week-end in Dauphiné," and our own President, Mr J. A. Parker's article on the "Pyrenees." The "In Memoriam" articles on Messrs Mallory and Irvine are perfect in their knowledge and sympathy, and reveal two noble and lovable characters.

There are the usual accounts of new expeditions, Alpine, Himalayan, Canadian, and American notes, &c. Altogether it is a number of surpassing interest.

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**The Seventeenth Annual Record of the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club, from January 1924 to January 1925.**

This record shows that the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club is in a most healthy and vigorous condition; the activities of its members are not confined to Scotland, as the reports show that climbs have been done also in the English Lake District, in the Alpes Maritimes, in Spain, in the Ligurian Alps, in Tyrol, in the Pyrenees, and, of course,



in Switzerland. Many of the climbs, too, were of a very high order, as for example the Matterhorn by the Z'Mutt arête, the Dent Blanche, traverses of the Grande and Petits Charmoz, and of the Grand and Petit Dru, and many good climbs in Skye and the English Lake District. The regular (monthly?) hill-walks of the Club are an admirable feature, and invite imitation by clubs of the other sex. Altogether we congratulate the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club on their record.

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**An Alpine Valley, and Other Poems.** By Lawrence Pilkington, with woodcuts by Margaret Pilkington. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

So far as we can discover, these poems represent Mr Pilkington's first adventure in poetry, but they do not in any respect suggest the work of a novice: his subjects, his treatment of them, his language, his imagery, and his versification are alike excellent. Several of the poems have a particular appeal to mountain climbers; in them are to be found many passages of vivid description, as for example—

“ At eventide I watched the daylight wane  
Upon the great snow peaks, and when it failed  
Their crimson mantles turned to ghostly green,  
Cold, cold as death.”

In other poems Mr Pilkington treats of the deepest questions of human conduct and morality, of life and of death, in verses such as—

“ We need a many-coloured skein to weave  
The varied patterns that the soul conceives.”

And again—

“ Beauty, and truth, and faith, and hope, and love,  
These are the garments of Almighty God.”

And

“ The best work is for others spent,  
Life's time-sheet all filled up;  
This is the strong soul's sacrament,  
Its bread, its wine, its cup.”

In other poems a lighter, more satirical, more humorous touch is manifested: we may quote—

“ They may not need to laugh in heaven,  
They need, but may not laugh in hell,  
But here bright laughter is the heaven  
That makes it good on earth to dwell.”

Reference may also be made especially to the poems entitled “Ruth,” the “Egoist,” and the “Vagrant.” In all these various styles it seems to us that Mr Pilkington has achieved the end at which he aimed. It is not the least of his merits that he makes his meaning

always perfectly intelligible. We congratulate him on his book, and hope that it will not be his last.

Miss Pilkington's wood engravings are effective and striking, and aptly illustrate the poems which they accompany.

By Mr Pilkington's kind permission, we print one of his poems in the current number.

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**The Bulletin of the Climbers' Club, New Series, Vol. I., No. 2, January 1925.**

Many climbers will be interested to know that the Climbers' Club has renewed publication of its *Bulletin*. The present number contains notes on climbs, mostly from the Welsh books, and reviews, one of which, on Mr W. A. Smith's "Hill Paths in Scotland," is very commendatory. Particulars are also given of a fund which is being raised in memory of the late Mr A. C. Irvine, to help junior members of Oxford University, who could not otherwise do so, to take holidays among the mountains. Such a fund will certainly make the memory of a young mountaineer like Irvine live in the minds of many keen young climbers, as it deserves to do.

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**Oxford and Cambridge Mountaineering Club Journal, 1924.**

In the preface the editors state that two years have elapsed before the issue of this, the third number of the *Journal*. Their policy evidently is to wait until something good turns up. We heartily congratulate them on their success, and also on the excellence of the illustrations.

In an interesting article on "Mountain Climbing and Antarctic Exploration," Mr R. C. Priestley enlightens the reader on the difficulties attending mountaineering in the Antarctic, and deals at some length with the crevasse trouble. A review of this article is not complete without mention of the fine photograph of Mount Lester, South Victoria Rand, by Mr H. G. Ponting.

Perhaps of more interest to the S.M.C. is an account of Messrs Goodfellow's and Yates's wanderings in Scotland last summer. Like most visitors from the south they make for Skye, but visit Buchaille Etive on the way north and spend a profitable day ascending the Crowberry Ridge and descending the Northern Buttress. They complete their holiday with the traverse of the main Cuillin Ridge.

The number contains several accounts of the two Clubs' activities abroad and at home, an interesting account of mountain rambles in Roumania by Mr L. A. Ellwood, and copious notes ranging from the Carpathians to Salisbury Crags. Even the climbing possibilities of Salisbury Cathedral are discussed. There are also two fitting obituary notices to the late Messrs Leigh, Mallory, and Irvine, the latter a member of the Oxford University Mountaineering Club. We offer the Club our sincere sympathy in the loss they have sustained.

**Bartholomew's New Reduced Survey, Sheet 12, Central Perthshire.**

This map reproduces all the excellences of Messrs Bartholomew's well-known series ; it is improved—as all S.M.C. men will think—by having the heights of all “Munro's” included in it taken from the revised list in Section A of the Club Guide Book. It also marks roads as classified and numbered by the Ministry of Transport, a feature which will be useful to motorists. Its clear printing, distinct colouring, and marked contour lines make it a valuable guide to all walkers, whether they only follow the roads or venture on the hills.

---

We have been favoured with an advance notice of **The Mountains of Snowdonia, in History, the Sciences, Literature, and Sport.** Edited by H. R. C. Carr, M.A., F.R.G.S., Member of the Alpine Club, and G. A. Lister, B.Sc. The work is to be illustrated with a coloured frontispiece and original photographs, diagrams, and sketch maps. It treats both of the legends and history of the district, of its geology, botany, weather, poetry, climbing, and camping—indeed, of every subject that can interest the tourist and the mountaineer. The various articles are by many hands, all experts, so far as our knowledge goes ; among their names those of Messrs E. W. Steeple and E. A. Baker are well known to the S.M.C. It seems likely to be a book worth having at its fairly cheap price—sixteen shillings ; it may attract some of our readers to Wales, a country of which few Scotsmen know as much as they ought.

# Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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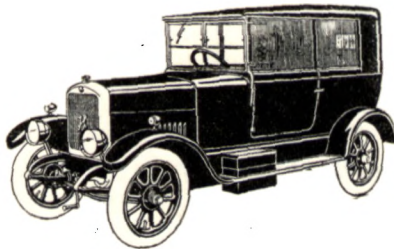
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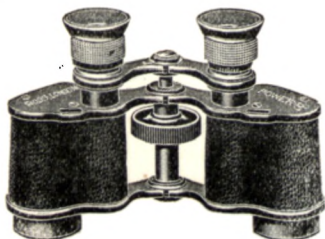
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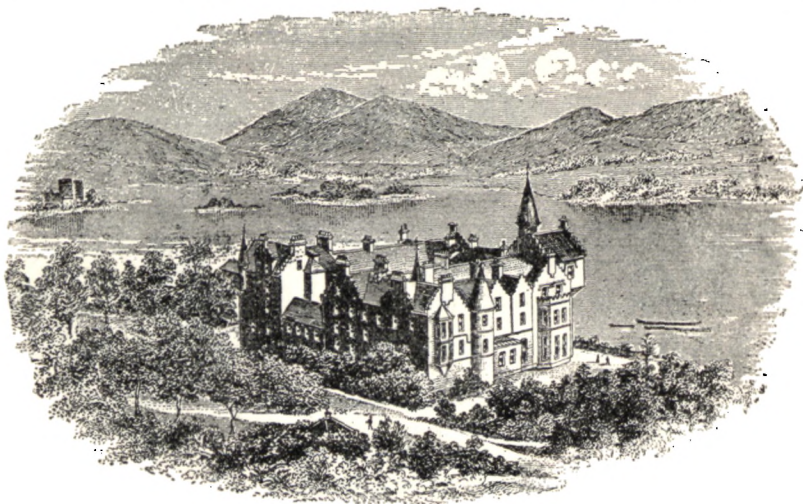
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November 1925

No. 100.

# THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.

EDITED BY

G. B. GREEN.



ISSUED TWICE A YEAR—APRIL AND NOVEMBER.

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*22nd March 1925*

*Rev. A. F. Robertson*

BEN ACHALLADER FROM CRANNACH WOOD

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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VOL. XVII.

NOVEMBER 1925.

No. 100.

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## THE 100TH NUMBER OF THE *JOURNAL*.

By J. G. STOTT,

*Honorary Editor, 1890-1892.*

DEAR MR EDITOR,—You have pointed out to me that the forthcoming number of our *Journal* is No. 100, and you have called on me to try to say something appropriate to so momentous an occasion. Well! what is there that I can say beyond expressing my pleasure and congratulations upon the continued success of our literary effort? There is something appropriate, perhaps, that the Centenary—so to speak—of the *Journal* should synchronise with the return to dear old Scotland—for a time, at any rate—of its first Editor.

I well remember the difficulties that were raised at that meeting of members at which the proposal for the issue of a journal was discussed, and at which certain sceptics disapproved of the scheme and prophesied its early failure from want of material. The *puir bairn* was to be starved and doomed to die of anæmia. You will remember how it was resolved, with some hesitation, to give the idea of a journal a trial, and how in the Preface to its first number I combated the views of those sceptics. Well! after thirty-five years I can say that all I then wrote in that Preface has been more than justified. It is one of the proudest things in my life.

Far away from the scenes described and the expeditions recorded, during all these years I have watched the continuous success of the *Journal*, its well-maintained standard of merit, and the steady and continued growth of the Club, which I believe has been promoted and

fostered by the existence of such a medium as the *Journal*. Seventeen volumes—one hundred numbers—thirty-five years—goodly accomplishment truly! Well have my friends Douglas, Goggs, Buchanan kept the flag flying until now, like the Standard on the Braes o' Mar, it is "up and flying fairly." That it will continue to do so I have little doubt; and long after it has chronicled the obituary notices of us veterans, for whom already, alas! the high tops are no more, it will continue to chronicle the records of our successors.

In those early days we aimed at a modest membership of one hundred. There are now, I believe, over two hundred, with a steady stream of candidates.

Therefore, Mr Editor, do I ask you to accept my congratulations. "Here's to the S.M.C.! And continued success to the *Journal*."

BY W. DOUGLAS,

*Honorary Editor, 1892-1909.*

It was with extreme reluctance that I consented to consider the appeal from our Editor, that I should write a word or two about the Club and its *Journal* in the time of my editorship. I felt that too many years had elapsed since I ceased to play a part in its life, and that anything I could write would be, like myself, somewhat of the nature of a back number. It was therefore with much misgiving that I planted a ladder against my book-shelves and took down from the giddy heights of a top shelf nine fat volumes of the *Journal*—fat to bursting with the interleaving of numerous letters written to me from the authors of the various papers and with notes of criticism which I had placed therein many years ago. After banging and thumping these volumes one against the other, and sending out clouds of dust, I sat down and slowly turned their pages. Then as I progressed, the evil complexion of my thoughts regarding Mr Green and his appeal vanished, and in its place came a feeling akin to a blessing. For, as I read, visions of my old friends, of half-forgotten incidents, of the joyous days

when one "came travelling in the greatness of his strength," and pictures of the bens and glens under their changing atmosphere of storm and sunshine, began to rise before me, and as I felt some of my old enthusiasm returning, it gave me many a pleasant thrill.

The first number to appear with my name on its cover was that of May 1892, and I remember well my feelings of pride and joy that so many of the veterans of our young Club had rallied to its support. Professor Veitch contributed a charming paper on "Androwhinnie," a little hill lying within his much-loved Southern Uplands; H. T. Munro wrote one of his characteristic articles on "Winter Ascents"; Harvie-Brown, the eminent ornithologist, one on "Sutherland"—all these writers have, alas! joined the great majority. From that time onward my interests, outside my business life, were centred in the Club and its activities, and thus I was in the happy position of being in touch with all its members and with everything that was going there. It was therefore easy to scent out, if not to initiate, many of the papers that appeared in the *Journal*. The Club was fortunate in numbering among its members many capable writers. William Brown, that bright and clever spirit, who died just as his great talents were being recognised in his profession, was one of my best advisers, and the *Journal* gained much from having his contributions and from his often revising for me the proof sheets of others. H. T. Munro's enthusiasm was also an inspiration. His frequent breezy visits, even during business hours, were always welcome. We were a jolly crew in those days, full of talk, full of enthusiasm, and loving to share the joy of our new experiences with other congenial spirits. We sometimes, perhaps, gave the impression of blowing our own trumpets too vigorously, but we all enjoyed a clever gibe that fell from the lips of a dignitary of the Alpine Club at one of our Club dinners. He said it was delightful to be among such a company of heroes. He knew of their marvellous climbs, and knew also that they were true, for he had the accounts of them from the surest source of all, and that was from the climbers themselves.

Of course, I had to give an immense amount of time and thought to the *Journal* and to the affairs of the Club, so much so that all other forms of amusement had to take a very secondary place ; but what I gave to the Club was a great joy to me, and it was returned a hundred-fold in the friendships it brought and in the happy hours spent with its members.

During the eighteen years the *Journal* was under my care, many noble ranges of mountains yielded their secrets. Skye was explored from end to end. The ridges on the north face of Ben Nevis were one by one conquered. The mountains of Glencoe were climbed by many different ways, and the Club " Guide Book " was completed and ran gaily through the pages of the *Journal*. We were taught how to use the axe on Scottish snow and ice, and advised to put on the rope even before it was really necessary, so that we might become accustomed to its feel and, with practice, adepts in its use. To particularise further would be out of place, for the *Journal* still speaks for itself.

It was with great regret that I had to give up its editorship at the conclusion of Vol. X., and if anything could console me—and it did console me—it was to see the splendid results achieved by my successor, Mr Goggs, who, with commendable energy, continued to carry it on with such marked success.

I feel, with regard to its future, that though journals may come and journals may go, so long as the mysterious spirit of the mountains dwells in our hearts and the glamour of the unknown continues to allure, the *Journal* of the S.M.C. will go on for ever.

BY F. S. GOGGS,

*Honorary Editor, 1909-1920.*

The gentleman now sitting in the S.M.C. editorial chair sends out a fiat that I shall "write a couple of pages or so about my 'Editorship.'" I obediently take down the five volumes for which I was responsible, from the book-shelves. To me there are no more delightful volumes in existence : they are a veritable storehouse of friendships



then begun and ever existing; they bring to my mind scenes of beauty, days of storm and sunshine, icy couloirs, snowy ridges, rocky buttresses, tiny lochans, and the great western sea.

Looked at from another standpoint the five volumes are to me what the heads, antlers, and skins adorning his house are to the big game hunter.

What a nuisance this man was to bring to the scratch! But at length his manuscript was in my hands. How carefully did I stalk that man for a required article! And lo, the reward of my importunity is there. With what care did I encourage the budding genius! With what effrontery did I approach the well-known author! Almost every article has a history of its own known only to me.

Yet was mine no selfish aim. I was hunting for meat to sustain the life of my Club.

Then when the article had been secured illustrations had to be obtained, and these often involved another chase.

The hunter before me (Douglas) was a professional and I, an amateur, was somewhat alarmed at having to succeed him. However, the old hunter helped the young aspirant till such time as he could be trusted to fend for himself. Douglas was strongly of opinion that the *S.M.C. Journal* should not be an olla-podrida, but should confine itself to Scotland. I thoroughly agreed with him, and the members of the Club have, I know, appreciated the fact that the *Journal* is distinctively Scottish. Further, at a time when the illustrations of climbing journals were comparatively poor, the *S.M.C. Journal* was noted for its excellence in this direction. The Club had many good photographers—the names of Howie and Clark occur to one at once—and Cameron Swan took a personal interest in the reproduction of the selected photographs.

Two other points I strove to keep in view—the *Journal* must appear on the first of the month in which it was due—misprints must be conspicuous by their absence. As regards the latter point Gaelic names are none too easy, as may be seen by referring to the pages of any English climbing journal, and from time to time I had correspondence with Gaelic enthusiasts who wanted me to

adopt this system or that, but by taking the spelling of the O.S. map as the standard and refusing to budge therefrom I kept a consistent course. During my term of office the index to each volume was considerably improved. Messrs Parker and Garden prepared an index to the first ten volumes, and the index to the subsequent volumes was made out on the basis they had adopted.

Half-way through my third volume the war came, and increasing difficulty was found in filling the pages of the *Journal*: the younger members were engaged in a more serious sport than climbing, and the older members were busy too in various directions. The water had to be thrashed by the Editor more and more assiduously, but the fish landed were fewer and fewer.

With Vol. XV., April 1918, it was decided to reduce the annual number of issues from three to two, and owing to the heavy increase in the cost of production to raise the price from one shilling to one shilling and sixpence per number.

During the war, when one's mind was bent on other matters, one wondered sometimes whether the effort of producing the *Journal* was worth while, but several men at the front said each issue came as a welcome reminder of the hills, and that they looked forward to its appearance.

In April 1919 appeared the "In Memoriam" number which, thanks largely to Mr Colin Phillip's ungrudging assistance, was much appreciated by the relatives and friends of those whom we lost from our midst.

No. 90, October 1920, was my last issue. I had come south at the beginning of the war, and—as in my opinion the Editor should be able to be in close touch with the members of the Club and their doings—I had then sent in my resignation, but as no one was available to take up the reins of office I drove the coach for another six years.

On reading through the above I am struck with its egotistical vein: the subject is really of no interest to anyone but myself—a prosy old gentleman, living in the past. If the Editor agrees with me he will suppress it, if he does not he makes himself responsible for the readers' ennui.

BY ERIC P. BUCHANAN,

*Honorary Editor, 1920-1924.*

It is not for an ex-editor to question the commands of his successor, and I must therefore comply with the editorial order which I have received to write something about my experiences during my term of office.

I confess, however, that I was sorely puzzled to know how to make such a contribution of interest, while the fact that I was made aware that what I said would appear in conjunction with similar articles by my more distinguished predecessors did not lessen my difficulty. Apart from grateful recollections of the support and consideration extended to me during my period of editorship, matters of a commercial nature seemed to preponderate in my memory. I had not, like Stott, acted as Editor in those romantic times when the Club was nursed through its early childhood; nor could I, like Douglas, look back on the pioneering days of its adolescence; nor did I, like Goggs, hold office during the war when the Club, in the fullness of its manhood, gave of its best.

It was only a few days ago as I travelled up Speyside and saw the rolling Cairngorms standing clear and sharply outlined behind wide stretches of forest and heather moor that I realised that my term of office coincided with a stage in the history of the Club as unique in its way as was any of the periods during which my predecessors had acted. For as I saw those great hills amongst which I had tramped since I was a boy, early memories crowded upon me: of the ash cudgel which I used to carry and notch with pride as each fresh top was reached; of my ambition to own a pair of real hobnailers; of my first rock climb, on the Cobbler, when Raeburn, with his characteristic and gracious readiness to help the young and inexperienced, turned aside to lead two entire strangers, my brother and myself, up the Right Angle Gully; of early snow climbs under the cheery guidance of Alastair M'Laren; of my introduction to the Club by Charlie Clark; and of many another happy time.

In the recollection of my own boyish enthusiasm I came to understand the potency with which the hills

call to youth, and how eager is the response of youth to their appeal, and so it became clear to me that the years during which I had been privileged to act as Editor had been the years of the Club's rejuvenation, when its vitality, impaired by the inexorable demands of war, had been renewed and enriched by a great influx of young and keen manhood. In retrospect it is hard to say whether, when the war ended, we were sure that the Club would continue to grow and flourish—that the call of the hills would still be heard by the rising generations. Perhaps we doubted a little. If we did, we know now that our fears were groundless, and that whatever may come, the successive generations will spread and spread again the creed of the climber—not the narrow creed of those who climb but to outshine their fellows, but the broad and generous creed of the S.M.C., love of the hills and the spirit of true comradeship.

#### BY THE EDITOR.

The present Editor of the *Journal*, whose fortune and privilege it is to present the 100th number to its readers, has little to say himself on this occasion. He has to thank his predecessors heartily for their interesting contributions, which breathe the true spirit of the S.M.C., and show why the Club and its *Journal* have prospered. He congratulates the twenty-one original members and others who have read all the one hundred numbers of the *Journal* as they came out: how few of the present members will be alive in 1975 to welcome No. 200! It may be that before that date there will be only one issue of the *Journal* a year, as the subject of mountaineering in Scotland becomes exhausted, but the spirit of the *Journal* will survive unimpaired. The strength of the Club lies in its large and increasing number of young members; the Editor implores them not only to make new expeditions and new climbs, but also to describe them; new impressions of old climbs too will be full of interest. Nothing can cause the failure of the *Journal* but a dearth of contributions; may they be so many that rejection as well as acceptance of them may be possible.

## AN ADVENTURE ON BEN NEVIS IN 1861.

BY THE LATE WILLIAM HENRY BURROUGHES.

*(With a Note by Godfrey A. Solly.)*

DURING the autumn of last year, 1861, a party of gentlemen making a tour through the Highlands, reached Fort William by steamer one afternoon and started at once, accompanied by an experienced guide, for the purpose of ascending Ben Nevis, with the prospect before them of a fine view from its summit (4,380 feet above the level of the sea) of the splendid mountainous scenery for which that part of Scotland is so deservedly noted. Owing to the great quantity of rain which had fallen during several preceding weeks, the ascent at all times attended with difficulty and danger, from the route being nearly perpendicular the greater part of the way and in many places nothing but rough loose stones, was so much more so at the time referred to that the party soon became aware of the arduous and somewhat dangerous task they had imposed on themselves, for it must be borne in mind that although the perpendicular height is but about three-quarters of a mile, the tortuous path that had to be followed increased the ascent to nearly 4 miles, the going and returning being calculated by the guides to occupy about seven or eight hours. Although the party saw that darkness must inevitably come upon them before their return, they determined to proceed under the direction of their guide, not being willing to lose the opportunity presented to them. On account of the steepness of the ascent they were obliged to rest at short intervals, and it became apparent that one of their members was unable to proceed with the same speed as his companions, some of whom, in their desire to reach the summit, got so far in advance of the guide that, fearing an accident might happen to them, he hastened on, thus increasing the distance between the party and

the straggler. This continued until they were within perhaps a quarter of a mile of the summit, and while the weather continued fine it was immaterial the party being within sight of one another ; but at this juncture the gentleman referred to, feeling tired, declared his intention of waiting their return to the Spring Nevis which they had then reached, the guide directing him the route to follow, so that he might come up with them at his leisure should he desire it, and he was following slowly until he was shut out from sight and communication with his companions by a dense mist, accompanied by rain, suddenly capping the mountain top, which, considering the height they had attained, was not an extraordinary event, for they had then reached an altitude of more than 4,000 feet above the level of the sea ; but still it had the effect of leaving him to the unpleasant conviction that he was benighted and, to all appearances, lost, unless he could by his observations made during the ascent so far find out the path to descend. Beginning to feel the danger of his position, it occurred to him that if his party did not soon return (and he imagined they might also be lost) he would attempt the descent as far as he was able, and this, after waiting for more than an hour, he commenced to do, crawling and sliding down the side he believed he had ascended by ; but after going down more than 1,000 feet, he found to his dismay that in the mist he had mistaken the path and was overtaken by night in an immense hollow between the various mountain tops surrounding the summit of Ben Nevis.

Should not his companions find him on their return, he felt that he had to choose between staying through the night in the spot he had reached, or else endeavouring to proceed still further in the hope of finding the right path ; he wisely chose the former alternative and made himself as comfortable as circumstances would permit, and they were not very favourable, as the mist and rain continued all night and until late the next day, and, added to this, neither he nor the rest of the party had any provisions with them, expecting that they would reach Fort William again at night.

He was fortunately provided with a waterproof cape, or certainly could not have endured his trying situation ; but selecting a position between two immense blocks of granite on the side of the mountain, and close to one of the numerous streams of water winding down its stupendous sides, he passed the night either sitting or walking about briskly to counteract the effects of cold and damp, as well as to prevent sleep, which would have been attended with serious, if not fatal, results.

At daybreak he commenced ascending again for the purpose of learning, if possible, from the situation of the surrounding country, in what direction he should steer his course ; but the mist still continuing, he was in the same difficulty as before, when he decided on descending in a fresh direction, trusting it might prove the proper path. It was not so, however, yet after toiling the new route and reaching a vast winding valley called Glen Nevis, and traversing it for more than 6 miles through water and bog and loose stones, he found, late in the afternoon, to his great joy that the mist was gradually clearing away, revealing to him the sea and country which he had left the preceding day illuminated by the bright rays of the setting sun.

This, of course, inspired him with renewed energy, and he went speedily forward, following the winding course of a swollen torrent, which he must cross before he could follow his proper course ; it was no easy task, however, owing to its deep, rough bed and the numberless rapids in its course, and it took him more than an hour to decide on a place at all safe to ford it. He, however, at length accomplished it in safety, but not before being nearly carried away by the rapid torrent, only saving himself by clinging to the bank.

There was then some hundreds of feet to descend when he gladly descried a shepherd accompanied by his dog, who he supposed had been sent out to search for him, and after explaining to him the situation in which he had been placed (for he had not heard of the occurrence), he at once offered to lead him to Fort William, begging him to first go to his cottage a mile distant and take the

best refreshments he could offer ; this was, of course, gladly accepted, and he then drove him in his rough pony cart to the hotel, a distance of 5 miles, where he arrived to the great joy of his friends as well as the villagers, for they all supposed he was lost beyond recovery.

He afterwards learned that the party had expected to find him where they had left him, for they came back the same way exactly, and although surprised to some extent at not finding him there, they felt assured they would meet him lower down, so contented themselves with shouting ; and then not finding him at the base they concluded he must have got back to the hotel, and not until they reached there did the danger of their missing companion fully present itself to them ; and being night it was quite impossible to prosecute a search until the next day when, according to arrangement, eight guides were sent out at daybreak, not returning till night, and just before the safe arrival of the missing tourist, they being quite dispirited and sad, more so especially the one who had been their guide in the ascent.

This, therefore, terminated an adventure in which the tourist had endured a most trying journey of more than 20 miles in twenty-eight hours without accident, he himself having the pleasing duty of rewarding the guides who had been searching for him for more than eighteen hours, and being by the mercy of God preserved from an awful and untimely death.

#### NOTE.

The manuscript of the foregoing narrative was found by Mr A. F. de Fonblanque, a well-known member of the Alpine Club, amongst the papers of Mrs Burroughes after her death in 1921, and there is no doubt that the writer was her husband, Mr William Henry Burroughes, who died in 1909, and who was formerly a partner in the famous London firm of Burroughes & Watts, Billiard Table Makers. Nothing more is known of the adventure except that in *The Times* of Saturday, 7th September 1861, there is a paragraph from which it appears that the party



consisted of seven travellers with the guide Duncan M'Millan, and that they left Fort William a little before 3 P.M. The rest of the party completed the ascent and, not finding Mr Burroughes where they had left him, they searched and shouted for him all the way down, but it was not until they arrived back at the Caledonian Hotel that they realised that he was still on the mountain. Guides were sent out early next morning, but when the press correspondent left on the Tuesday afternoon the traveller had not returned. There is no further notice of the incident in *The Times*, but the paragraph probably appeared also in the *North British Mail*, and a search of the file of that paper might afford further particulars.

The route taken was no doubt that which was usual at that date, and indeed until the Observatory path was made in 1883. Starting from the distillery, the path followed the burn which flows out of Loch Meall an Suidhe, then passing two or three hundred feet above the loch and making height all the time, it crossed the Red Burn to a point on the main west shoulder of Ben Nevis at a height of about 2,600 feet. Here it turned due east and went on to about the head of No. 4 Gully, thereafter edging the cliffs to the summit. There are a number of fine springs at the head of the Red Burn, one of which may then have been known as "Spring Nevis." It is perhaps the spring now called Buchan's Well, after the late Dr Buchan, one of the founders of the Observatory.

It seems likely that Mr Burroughes after leaving the spring wandered away in the mist too far to the south, getting over the rather indefinite ridge between Nevis and Carn Dearg at a height of some 3,300 feet.

He would then have got into the big rough corrie to the south of Ben Nevis and spent the night there, eventually reaching the Nevis about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles above Polldubh, where he met the shepherd. His estimate of 6 miles must be wrong, but the rough and trackless mountain-side may well have seemed long to a tired and hungry man. Few climbers now visit that side of the mountain, as the ridges and gullies are not well defined enough

to give good climbing, but in many places it is difficult to traverse even by daylight.

Mountaineers of to-day will wonder at this revelation of the practices of sixty years ago.

There were evidently many guides for the mountain, and this man is described in *The Times* as most trustworthy, and he certainly showed skill in getting to the summit and back in mist. But what can be said of his starting off with seven novices at 3 P.M. without any food on an expedition that was expected to take seven hours?

*The Times* reporter adds that "the only safety of travellers in ascending these mountains is to abide by their guide." But if a traveller could walk no further, it was obviously the duty of the guide not to leave him alone with night coming on and the mists not far above. At least one of the party should have given up the expedition and remained with him, or the guide should have refused to go on. However, all is well that ends well, and happily Mr Burroughes survived his adventure for nearly fifty years, and we in 1925 pay tribute to the spirit of adventure that took his party to the unknown hills on a September afternoon, and has led his successors to the exploration of all the mountains of the world, and are glad to have the opportunity of recording their exploits in our *Journal*.

I may add that I am much indebted to the Rev. A. E. Robertson for help in describing the route taken.

GODFREY A. SOLLY.



*April 1925*

*P. Donald*

**GLAS BHEINN MHOR AND BEN STARAV FROM STOB COIR' AN ALBANNAICH**

### THREE MEN WITH A TENT THROUGH LORNE AND BENDERLOCH.

BY PERCY DONALD.

IT was not the first camping trek the trio had made together, but it differed very materially as regards the weather from those which had preceded it. Indeed, on their first trip from Aviemore by the Larig an Laoigh and Glen Tilt to Blair Atholl, the weather encountered in that last five hours down Glen Tilt must have been specially blown over from Skye for their delectation. However, it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and the local store in Blair did a roaring trade in gent.'s dry underwear that evening.

But to return to that extremely wet Saturday morning immediately preceding the Edinburgh Spring Holiday. In spite of the weather, it was agreed to go at least as far as Crianlarich and, if necessary, hold a council of war there; whence, if so decided, a return to town could be made via Callander. However, the optimist was justified, and by the time Loch Lomond was reached, the sun was breaking through the clouds. And now the secret of this remarkably fine week-end may be divulged. A bag containing dry changes had been sent to Creagan to await the arrival of the party there. Prospective holiday-makers please note!

Having emerged from the warmth of the compartment at Bridge of Orchy, a snell northerly blast was encountered, which augured ill for the night's rest; but, still hopeful, the party pushed on towards Loch Tulla. On the way many deer were seen quite close to the road and completely undisturbed by the passage of two local motors, although they did condescend to look up inquiringly at the three strange beings who apparently intended to invade their fastnesses. The cynic, having been successfully convoyed past Inveroran, where he would have liked to lay in a supply of the Stott elixirs,\* or

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\* See *Journal*, XVI., p. 216.

possibly a selection of his own, a sheltered site was eventually located at the edge of a small plantation near Victoria Bridge. The tent was pitched, and by the following morning the packs were lighter by two meals and about half a pint of paraffin.

And what a morning! The cynic certainly claims to have experienced a day in June on Bruach na Frithe which was as good, and a few days in Egypt which were as warm, but in April he had never before encountered its equal. Of course, the scout had never been on a "Munro" before, so he has doubtless carried away the impression that mountaineering in Scotland as a pastime for old men and convalescents has no doubt something to commend it.

The walk up Glen Dochard was uneventful, and two excellent suspension bridges over two very easily (for the nonce) fordable rivers were crossed. At Loch Dochard a short halt was made and the assault on Stob Coir' an Albannaich definitely decided on. From the summit of Glen Kinglass a magnificent view of Ben Cruachan was had, but unfortunately a telephoto lens did not form a portion of the party's equipment. Some little way up Glen Kinglass a halt was made for lunch and a bathe, after which, invigorated and refreshed, the party made for the col, where the kits were dumped and a dated and timed message written on the snow, warning all whom it might concern that a search party would not be required until one hour before sunset. Even without the loads the preliminary ascent from the col proved quite steep enough, and periodical halts were made for the purpose of investigating photographic potentialities. A camera is a useful article—much more artistic than an untied bootlace—when a breather is required.

On the summit there was not a breath of wind, and a tropical sun beat down from an almost cloudless sky. A complete description of the view would merely be a list of about half the mountains of Central Scotland, so a few brief observations must serve. To the north Ben Nevis was actually free from mist, and along with the Carn Mor Dearg made an unmistakable landmark.

The Mamore mass with the hills between could only be picked out with difficulty, as the extraordinary clearness of the atmosphere made it practically impossible to locate the positions of the Glen Coe and Loch Leven gaps. The finest view, however, was to the south, where the sun showed up, in bold relief, Ben Cruachan, flanked nearer at hand by Beinn nan Aighenan and Glas Bheinn Mhor. Glasses, having proved so useless on previous occasions, had been left at home, and mackintoshes being of little assistance in the identification of distant peaks, the party had to be content with spotting the more obvious tops, such as Ben More, the Paps of Jura, and the hills of Mull. Finally, after a few well-chosen remarks to the scout again to impress upon him the fact that he would never again meet a day like this on the hills, even if he spent all his spare time climbing and lived to be an oldest inhabitant, a return was made to the Glas Bheinn Mhor col, where the optimist decided to make some tea on the primus and the cynic had his first snow bathe, which he found to be much warmer than a water one and extremely invigorating. The descent to Glen Etive was without incident, and an excellent camp site was found beside the river near Coileitir.

The next day was also fine, and in the first flush of after-breakfast enthusiasm it was decided that Beinn Sguliaird should be bagged on the way to Creagan. From above Glenetive House another magnificent view of Ben Cruachan was had with Loch Etive as a foreground, and then began the struggle up to the col at the head of Glen Ure, which, according to the map, does not reach an altitude of 1,000 feet, but appears to involve double that amount of climbing. Accordingly, at the Lochan the previous motion was rescinded by three votes to none, and a proposal tabled and approved which incorporated an easy walk followed by a bathe. So Beinn Sguliaird remained unvisited. For wildness the upper reaches of Glen Ure compare favourably with the Bealach Dubh of Ben Alder, although, of course, it is not so long. Fortunately, there is a good track throughout its length, so the bathe, which was obtained

above Glenure House, was enjoyed without unseemly haste.

Glen Creran proved to be the hottest glen in Scotland, and frequent halts were made for liquid refreshment at streams by the way. Incidentally, the supply of the cynic's particular brand of elixir was exhausted before the Pullman reached Stirling.



*April 1925*

VIEW TO SOUTH FROM STOB COIR AN ALBANNAICH

*P. Donald*



## THE ACHALLADER ACCIDENT.

BY GEORGE SANG.

FREQUENTLY it may be noticed that the historian of any happening has but slender appreciation of the actual facts. The doers of a deed, as distinct from the narrators, are often averse, either from diffidence or distaste for the task of letters, from putting their personal experiences into the cold storage of black and white. Therefore it falls to the lot of some chronicler, who either likes writing, or feels it a duty to write, to try and satisfy the curiosity of the chance reader on the circumstances of any past event. Is this, perhaps, why it is so very seldom we can trust to the truth of the written word? Take press reports, for instance. Was there ever so profound a pit of ill-digested misstatements? Can it be wondered at indeed? The unfortunate reporter builds a mind picture on the instant of interview with his informant, tones it to the subsequent talks with others differently informed, then sits down to spin the fabric of his tale, interweaving the richly coloured threads of a vivid but misguided imagination and embellishing it with the gaudy tassels of his flagrant art. There is a safe maxim, "Trust but half of what you see and none of what you're told."

Although neither the victim of the accident nor his companions were in any way connected with our Club, the Honorary Editor has thought it as well that there should be some official statement of the tragedy which occurred on Achallader early last spring. He has therefore laid upon me the task of telling, as near as may be, the actual facts of the case. For the following history, then, I am indebted to the kind consideration of Mr Maclay Thomson and Mr Ewen, who were the late Mr Henderson's companions on the day of the tragedy; to A. E. Robertson for photographs, facts, interviews with doctor and police, and the patient revisal of this MS.; to Mr Stewart of Tyndrum, Mr Smith of Achallader Farm; to G. R.

Donald and the other members who so kindly and freely gave their services on the dismal quest, and also to my own personal observation. I feel indeed that it is only right and fitting in the interests of all concerned that the *Journal* should hold in its pages an accurate account of the tragic story, and I have done my best to make no statement which has not been satisfactorily supported by proof.

First I shall ask you to come back with me in time to that Wednesday evening when our President, J. A. Parker, read to an interested gathering in the Club-Room an account of the installation by the Cairngorm Club of a mountain indicator on the summit of Lochnagar. For me, and I suspect also for certain others, the full pleasure of that illuminating address was spoilt by the knowledge that we had that evening discovered at the Club-Room a telegram, despatched at 6.30 P.M. from Bridge of Orchy on the preceding Monday. The caretaker told us that it had been handed in to her at 7.30 on Tuesday evening, but could give no explanation worth accepting why it had not been forwarded to the Secretary or some other official for attention. This telegram appealed to the Club to render assistance in the search for a young climber who had disappeared on Achallader on Sunday, 22nd March 1925. We could not rid our minds of an uncomfortable feeling that had the telegram reached us on Monday, something helpful might have been done. By Wednesday night, however, it could but mean that the search was for a dead body. That an injured man could survive the awful cold of a couple of Highland hill March nights was inconceivable; besides snow had fallen heavily almost all day on Wednesday.

The President put the circumstances to the meeting in the Club-Room, and it was arranged that a small party should start that night by car and do what they could to aid the search. This party consisted of Alex. Harrison, G. M. Lawson, Evershed Thomson, and the writer. They left Edinburgh at midnight, arriving at Tyndrum before the daylight of Thursday broke, had a couple of hours sleep, a little breakfast, and were on the lower slopes of Achallader by 10 A.M. On arrival at Tyndrum they

found E. C. Thomson, J. H. B. Bell, and A. J. Rusk already there, all doing what they could by deduction and diligence to trace the missing man.

Let us look now at the facts of the case. On Sunday, 22nd March, three young men, Alexander Lawson Henderson, aged thirty, a clerk in the Inland Revenue Service, A. Maclay Thomson, of Glasgow, and his friend Douglas Ewen, left Inveroran Hotel at 5.30 A.M. Proceeding by the north side of Loch Tulla, they forded the Water of Tulla at Achallader Farm and walked south-east to the railway, where they arrived at 7.30 A.M. They continued north-east along the railway to the cairn which commemorates the death of a former pedestrian who failed to hear the approach of the train. Leaving the metals there at 7.45 they started by making a more or less direct line for the summit of Achallader. The day was ideal for their expedition, the air being exceptionally clear and the ground frozen. The hill did not carry a very great quantity of snow, and they decided to ascend by an evident wide snow gully which, in their inexperience, appeared to give an obviously simple route to the summit.

At 9.45 A.M. they stopped for breakfast at approximately 2,000 feet above sea level. They cannot, therefore, be accused of overstraining their pace, for that represents only some 1,700 feet in two hours. Poor going on a clear, frosty, spring morning! They spent fifty minutes over their meal, and must have been pretty well chilled down before they got moving again. I am almost inclined to put the blame for the whole sad occurrence on this lengthy stop in the cold. At any rate, Henderson felt the chill so badly that he did not sit at the meal. He wandered about restlessly during the halt, and started off ten minutes before the others were packed up and ready to move. Now, ten minutes is a long time on a hillside, and he must have been a considerable way in advance of his companions before they commenced to follow. There, of course, is the first error upon which the old stager will put his accusing finger.

For about half an hour Henderson climbed in the

direction of the snow gully spotted from below. Then for another fifteen minutes he bore to the left and was lost sight of. Then comes the second error in mountaineering tactics. The two following failed to make the pace of the leader and, instead of overtaking him, rather fell further behind. Where he had branched off to the left they continued to adhere to the original plan of a direct ascent, perhaps because they considered it easier going on the snow of the gully than on the broken ground which the leader was by now traversing. Note, however, that higher up on the route they followed, they encountered several heavily iced rocks in their path which called for very considerable caution and occasioned much delay. The route they chose followed the shallow snow gully and eventually forced them on to the rocks on its left-hand wall. It proved much more difficult, in its then condition, than they had anticipated; in fact, so impressed were they by the difficulties and dangers overcome in their ascent, that they freely admitted to each other that nothing would induce them to descend by the same route.

One can only presume that they found themselves so engrossed in their climbing that all thought of their companion was driven from their minds. Having seen him well ahead, though on a different line, they naturally enough expected to find him awaiting them on their arrival at the cairn, which point they reached at 1.25. Five hours and forty minutes with fifty minutes off for food to climb some 3,100 feet gives some idea of the "difficulties" they must have encountered; for we must consider difficulty as a term of degree, and we have to remember that none of these young men were experts in the climber's art, although all appear to have been well equipped with climber's tools. They were correctly shod and all carried axes. Mr Maclay Thomson tells me that none of them had had any previous snow experience.

On arrival at the cairn they were greatly surprised not to find Henderson awaiting them. They immediately commenced wandering around and shouting in the hope of getting a reply which would indicate his position.

Going to the point where they expected his route might finish they were dismayed to find that it appeared to them practically unscalable from below.

There are few things more trying to the novice, and sometimes even to the expert, than looking down over steep ice-covered rocks: a feeling of extreme insecurity that strikes chill terror to the stoutest heart. We cannot wonder, then, that those two young men used the rope, and one remaining on top lowered the other to its extremity, to permit him to see over the cliff, whether there might be any sign of his missing companion. So forbidding did the place appear, they concluded that only with considerable difficulty could a route be forced up it, and therefore the probability was that the missing man had been deflected across the great north-east corrie to avoid the steep glazed pitches which would obstruct his direct ascent. Thomson and Ewen spent a long time shouting and whistling without obtaining any reply. Still, it was quite conceivable that, as two hours had elapsed since last they saw Henderson, he might well be out of earshot by then.

Somewhat baffled, we suppose, by circumstances, the companions decided to make for the col between Achallader and Meall Buidhe; but before doing this they searched the whole summit plateau for traces of footmarks in the most thorough manner. This occupied a great deal of valuable time, so much so indeed that we note, with some surprise, that they did not leave the cairn for the second time until 6.10 P.M. The steep descent to the Achallader-Buidhe col bothered them, as it has bothered many others, for the ground was very hard. They had to cut steps in the frozen snow, thus occupying another thirty minutes.

From the col and on their ascent to the summit of Meall Buidhe they got a perfect view of the north-east face and corrie of Achallader. There they saw many rocks and stones and patches of moss showing through the snow, any one of which might prove on closer inspection to be their companion, outstretched as the result of a fatal slip; we can well imagine that

this did not in any way serve to soothe their already overstrained nerves.

The slopes of Meall Buidhe are, as the name implies, simple of negotiation. In fact, as events proved, a party such as theirs would have been much wiser to commence their climb from the Meall, and it is interesting to note that this had been their original intention when they set out, for one of them was anxious to get in his qualifying ascents for the Club, and had marked down Achallader from Meall Buidhe, Dóthaidh, and Dorain as that day's bag for his list.

By the time they got down to the foot of the north-east corrie there was little daylight left, and they had only time to make a hurried circle of the base of the steep slopes, from which point they satisfied themselves that the only marks showing on the snow had been made by falling cornices. They could also see that there was no footmark in the corrie, but they could not tell whether the upper more broken-up slopes at the top of the big central gully were tracked or not.

In the corrie, at 7.7 P.M., the light failed them completely, and they abandoned their search. They made for Achallader Farm, and were most kindly welcomed by Mr and Mrs Smith, who did all they could to assist the tired youths. There they fed and rested. Mr Smith pressed them to stay for the night, but they felt that there was a possibility that Henderson might have crossed the hills and even now be waiting them at Tyndrum. Therefore they reluctantly declined Mr Smith's kindly invitation and, tired as they were, set out about midnight to walk the sixteen miles to the Royal Hotel, where they eventually arrived in a condition bordering on absolute exhaustion.

Of course, it is easy to be wise after the event, and perhaps it is natural to criticise these men's actions and to ask why, when first they missed their companion, they did not immediately return to the point where last they had seen him? Had they done so there is little doubt that they would have found him; although it is exceedingly improbable that they would have been in



*26th March 1925*

*A. Harrison*

**BEN ACHALLADER, NORTH-EAST FACE**

time to render any assistance. Only their admitted reluctance and inability to descend as they had come can be advanced in explanation of their failure to pursue this most obvious course ; for, reviewing the danger experienced in their own ascent, there was surely the greater reason to fear some mischance to a solitary climber on what was, in all probability, an even more hazardous route than that which they themselves had found so arduous.

At the farm and its neighbourhood, as at Tyndrum, they succeeded in raising a hue and cry. The whole active countryside was searching for the two weeks that followed the accident. Sufficient praise cannot be given to Mr Smith, whose efforts were eventually crowned with success, and to his numerous helpers who did all that was humanly possible to ascertain the fate of the missing man.

None can take the faintest exception to the conduct of the missing climber's companions. They certainly did all they could in starting, aiding, and maintaining the arduous search for trace of his whereabouts. Not even when it was obvious that there was no longer any hope of finding him alive were the toilsome endeavours relaxed. The whole neighbourhood was thoroughly aroused, and notice given to every outlying cottage or bothy within a radius of 15 miles, with the result that all the surrounding country possible of access had been thoroughly searched by both dogs and men within a week of the fatal Sunday.

The excellent weather conditions which favoured the unfortunate trio on Sunday did not last. Mist, high wind, and finally snow did an immense amount to hinder the efforts of the searchers. It was not until Thursday, 26th March, that the weather improved sufficiently to give a really good chance of solving the mystery. I say "mystery" advisedly, for it must be remembered that it was all conjecture as to what had become of the missing man. He might have descended the hill and got strayed in the Moor of Rannoch. He might have reached the top long before his companions ; half an hour from the



point where he was last seen would, under normal conditions, have been ample to let him gain the cairn ; from which point he could have gone southwards over easy ground, leaving but little trace, and misfortune might have befallen him in Glen Lyon or on some of the adjoining hills. These conjectures became more tempting when a detailed search of the highest rocks and the difficult ground on the upper portions of the north ridge failed to reveal any trace of him. On Monday some of his tracks had been found and followed, but so broken was the ground and so treacherous the conditions that the searchers were unable to follow them to finality. A slight fall of snow had obliterated the tracks where they would have been of most help.

Thursday, the 26th, found the S.M.C. party on the scent, and they had the advantage—or perhaps in fairness to them we might say the apparent advantage—of the personal direction of one of the missing man's companions. As it turned out, they acted too much upon conjecture and wasted their efforts by searching the most inaccessible portions of the mountain, believing that these were the places where a mountaineer would most probably come to grief.

It is worthy of note that some of the parties on this and subsequent occasions must have passed within a very few feet of the unfortunate man's body, but whether, as is probable, the snow covered it, for there had been a fresh fall of 18 in. on the 25th, or it really lay on such simple ground that they had not started to look for it, or would not credit the finding of it in such a place, it is hard to say. At any rate, all the difficult places were searched without result. Time and again parties went out on to the hill, but the quantity of snow and the prevailing conditions were against them, and their efforts proved fruitless. During all this time the lower ground was quartered by shepherds and their dogs, until at last it seemed almost impossible that the body could lie on Achallader at all.

At this period came certain letters containing psychical communications from anonymous persons in Peterhead.

Had they not been anonymous and had the person who took upon himself the task of conveying them been more concisely business-like, they might have proved of the greatest interest to all who find themselves able to credit the present-day advance into this realm of the future. As it was, the communications were of that cryptic order which emanated some time ago from the city of Delphi, and the plans which accompanied them were so unintelligible and vague that there was a doubt whether they should be read from the front or back of the thin paper on which they were traced. These letters (there are four or five of them purporting to give directions from a disembodied scout) may be read by the curious in the edition of *Light*, No. 2312, vol. xlv., of Saturday, 2nd May. They spoke of a tin box with linen in it which would help the searchers towards the body. Despite the assertions of the daily press, no such box has so far been found. In fact, unless a broken thermos flask in Henderson's rucksack can be the accepted translation of the word "mullie," all this portion of the phenomenal communications is still open to proof.

At the same time the letters asserted that the body lay on Achallander (the correct old name, by the way), about 3,060 feet above sea level, in the north-west corrie, and that, after all, is a fair description of the place where it was eventually found by Mr Smith of the farm on Easter Sunday, three complete weeks after the accident.

I would not care to suggest to Mr Smith that he had obtained any assistance in the finding of the body from the information contained in the letters or so-called plans. He most emphatically desired it to be known that, apart from aiding him, the plans actually led him 7 miles out of his way, and the venue of his search was the outcome of observation and deduction in no way influenced by any spiritual communications. The coming of fine weather and a considerable thaw put fresh hope into the searchers, and the first really well-organised search, which was energetically prosecuted by between sixty and seventy persons, could hardly have failed to find the object of its quest.

The body lay on its face in a shallow, sloping gully on easy ground. To say that it was easy ground when the body was found does not necessarily imply that it was so when the unfortunate man met with his fatal accident. He was under, but some considerable distance from, some steep and broken rocks, over which he probably fell. No bones were broken, but he had a deep wound in his forehead, above the nose, two of his upper teeth were broken, and his lower front teeth were missing, the under lip being cut through. It looks almost as though he had fallen on his ice-axe, the adze end, or possibly on a rock; all is pure conjecture now. It is a simple matter to miss one's footing on rocks, glazed as they were on the day of his ascent, and the resulting fall might send the unfortunate sliding down a hillside for a long way. To buttress this theory there was a large stone under the trunk at the fork of the legs which might have served to support his weight and check the slide. Long after the finding of the body the ice-axe was found almost directly and about 150 feet above. It had no marks upon it and there was nothing to give any further indication of the cause of the fatality. Henderson's cap and one glove were found 30 feet above him. Medical evidence, we thankfully note, goes to decide that he died without regaining consciousness, and that is indeed a mercy when we think of the exposed position and the nature of the weather that supervened.

Reviewing the whole tragic occurrence we cannot resist again urging the necessity for counting the risk in solitary climbing, especially in winter, and the advisability of a party who set out to climb a hill keeping within touch as much as possible, and in difficult or dangerous ground within line of support. In mountaineering there must be an element of forbearance on the part of the fastest mover. It is his place to stay his pace to suit the slowest man, and he must never let his impatience get the better of his caution, at times a very hard task indeed, but no less than a duty, as this lesson shows. We might also say that any party having agreed on an ascent, and one having constituted himself leader, the duty rests with



22nd March 1925

*Rev. A. E. Robertson*

**BEN ACHALLADER AND ACHALLADER FARM**  
The cross indicates the place where the body was found

the others to follow in his tracks; and should they have any reason for considering the going difficult, to adhere all the more doggedly to his exact line of ascent, or on their discovering, for any reason, their inability to do so, to warn him of the circumstances and request his aid or change of route. No matter whether a man be a self-constituted leader or not, his duty is to his party; in fact I should say all the more so if he has reason to believe himself the most expert, so must he exercise the greater vigilance over the behaviour of his following.

We should like to think, of course, that had these three men been members of the Club and so benefited by its traditions and training, such an accident could not have occurred. Even had one of them been a member they surely would have been roped together and the fatal slip would thus have been checked. With the conditions that prevailed on that Sunday old-time caution would have put on the rope after breakfast. Modern climbers tend to regard the rope too much as a resort of the timorous. It is certainly not that—rather is it the "Safety First" device of the mountaineer. It is one of the qualifications of the true mountaineer that he can climb as well, as quickly, and as freely roped in a party as by himself. It takes a lot of practice not to trip over or stand upon the beastly thing, and to manipulate it so that it does not hitch itself round every loose stone or annoy his companions. With the faintest excuse the beginner should use the rope just for the purpose of getting thoroughly accustomed to its inherent cussedness. Certainly, had the unfortunate trio been connected with the Club, they would without doubt have had a strong search party on the hill by Monday afternoon, and I hold to the theory that a search in the correct line started then, would have been crowned with success.

## EATING BETWEEN MEALS.

BY J. A. GARRICK.

THE qualities that gain for climbing the devout worship and unending praises of its votaries are its perennial freshness and infinite variety. To go much further into the matter is to become involved in a maze of analysis and comparison to no useful end. For climbing motives are as numerous as climbers themselves, varying in depth and complexity with the individual, while climbing itself, a function of such moody variables as man, mountains, and meteorological conditions, is never the same for more than a few hours at a time.

It is, however, fairly safe to set up a standard of excellence in rock-climbs—a certain amount of fastidiousness on the part of the climber being assumed—and to recognise two degrees of climbing appetite.

First and foremost, a really good rock-climb should be on pure rock, and not on that unpleasant mixture of rock and turf usually qualified as “vegetable”: furthermore, the rock should be solid, and unencumbered by moss and other parasitic growths. Then the length and steepness should be sufficient to give rise to that airy, bird-like feeling which has a special kind of thrill all its own, defying adequate description. Finally, the difficulties should be varied, and should follow one another continuously, for nothing destroys the spell of a climb more than having to break off into periods of walking.

A climb possessing all these fine qualities can never be dull. On the other hand, an inferior climb soon loses its charm, and if fate condemns a man to repeat it often, he will probably come to regard it as a species of Müller's exercise, to be undertaken in an appropriate spirit of early morning mouldiness.

Climbers may be classified according to their appetite for the sport into the moderate eaters and the gluttons. The first, fully alive to the wickedness of excess, allow

themselves one good climbing meal annually and make that suffice. The second, far beyond hope of redemption, eat between meals, and supplement their ordinary rations by frequent day and week-end nibblings.

A climber of the latter type is, to some extent, protected against himself in Scotland: for, owing to some caprice on the part of the geological agencies, nearly all the good climbing rock is tucked away in districts remote from the plains where most of us drag out our earthly existence. Consequently, whenever our greedy brother has the premonitory rumblings of mountain hunger and entertains visions of lofty cliffs and wind-swept ledges, he realises with a sinking feeling, which all the Bovril in the world could not prevent, that the desired nourishment is a terribly long way off. Impelled by his voracious appetite, he seeks to satisfy it in the nearer districts, where the climbs are few in number and, with one or two notable exceptions, of inferior quality. Vain effort. Soon he knows the climbs so well that he might, if he cared to try, "lie in bed and picture every step of the way up"; a rather dreadful possibility, which nevertheless has its good side, in that it may drive him forth in search of something new.

Indications of the more promising lines of search have not been wanting in the *Journal*, and as far back as 1902 there appeared an article dealing with the rocks of Corrie Sugach at Arrochar.\* One of the notes to this article contained the suggestion that these cliffs merited further attention, and subsequently a very good climb, known as M'Laren's Chimney, was discovered.† On the whole, however, the place seems to have been neglected.

To those who believe that the climbing delights of Arrochar begin and end on the Cobbler and the Spear-Head Arête, it may be interesting to know that the rocks of Corrie Sugach are by far the finest in the district, and give at least two climbs that would hold their own in the most distinguished company. Moreover, the rock on these two routes is splendid; a happy accident which

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\* *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VII., p. 70.

† *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IX., p. 143.

all who have had evil moments on neighbouring outcrops will fully appreciate, and for which they should be duly grateful.

M'Laren's Chimney should on no account be missed. It cuts obliquely into the rock for a considerable distance, but the line of ascent is always near the opening, and in places appears to overhang the base of the crag. Boulders wedged at convenient intervals provide facilities for perching in unique situations and mark the stages of the ascent, which culminates in a rather sensational move outwards in order to clear an obstruction closing the exit.

The first ascent of the South Buttress was recorded in the article already mentioned, and it was mainly due to this article, and the photograph that accompanied it, that Biggart and I conceived the idea of a direct route on this buttress, a route giving at least 300 feet of climbing. The opportunity of putting this idea to the test occurred in the spring of 1921, and the result of our efforts has already been made known in the *Journal*.\* It was a day to be remembered, not for the climb alone, but also for the abnormal brilliance of the weather and the absolute perfection of climbing conditions. A beneficent sun had lapped up almost every drop of moisture from the hill-sides, leaving the rocks beautifully warm and dry; fortunately so, for no sooner had we set foot on the buttress than we were on an almost vertical slab, where the moves were delicate and absolute steadiness essential. The rock is irreproachable, but the holds are small and few, and "the higher you go the fewer." The leader thought it a severe pitch of 80 feet, but he had got into a tight corner by keeping too much to the left, and had had to make a rather tricky traverse back; so that his estimates of length and difficulty were not to be trusted. We revisited the buttress after a lapse of two years and decided that the length was somewhat overestimated, but since, on this occasion, we failed to get higher than about 20 feet, the rocks being slightly damp, there is

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\* *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. XVI., p. 90.





*J. A. Garrick*

SUGACH ROCKS

C C M'LAREN'S CHIMNEY  
D D SOUTH BUTTRESS: "DIRECT" ROUTE

probably no exaggeration in describing the climbing as severe. The standard set by this first pitch is maintained throughout the climb and reaches its highest in the last few feet, where, in addition to the technical difficulty, there is a considerable degree of exposure, and it was only by addressing himself in the most encouraging terms that the leader finally emerged in safety at the top.

As will be seen from the photograph, we did not make the route as direct as we had wished, the failure being due to the unyielding nature of a certain slab which mocked at all our pains. Had we been in rubbers, the last laugh might still have been ours, but we had none with us ; nor did we think to remove our boots and tackle the difficulty in that way, because, at the time, neither of us had tasted the superlative joys of climbing in stockings. So the slab still awaits a conqueror, and is sure to fight hard to preserve its inviolability.

In the late winter of 1921 a friend and I were spending a week-end at Tyndrum, and in a spirit of inquisitiveness we bent our steps towards the little corrie dimpling the eastern face of Beinn Chuirn. What we found there may induce others to do likewise, but we accept no responsibility for any disappointment which may come of it. They will find there a line of steep cliffs from 150 to 200 feet in height, flanked by easy gullies and lacking the " climber's nightmare " appearance so common to schistose rocks.

Our first scramble was near the left-hand flanking gully, and long before it was over we began to wonder what had induced us to commit ourselves to such a disconcerting mixture of steep turf, doubtfully stable blocks and disintegrating ledges, the whole covered with pernicious new snow. Conditions on the summit were arctic and we scuttled back into the corrie to investigate a shallow V-shaped gully in the centre of the face. During the descent my companion was lured away by some other possibility and disappeared, leaving me to try the gully alone, which I forthwith did, and got up about half-way without much trouble. Then the ever-widening bed of

the gully merged into the face, and I was forced out on the right to a small grassy knob below a steep and moss-grown wall. My guardian angel counselled immediate retreat, and I was just about to acquiesce when I caught sight of the lost one strolling along the top of the cliff. After much gesticulation and bawling we established communications, and he let down his 80-foot rope, which just reached me. Thus safeguarded, I mounted the wall, gardening vigorously with my axe the while and unearthing a sufficient number of good holds to believe that there were the makings of a nice little climb if only some one would complete the cleaning up.

On the summit for the second time, we observed that the short winter day was drawing to a close, and prompted by some whispering of Satan, we elected to descend into Glen Lochy, the scheme being to cross a bridge which, according to our 1-in. O.S. map, spanned the river just below the outlet from Lochan na Bi, and having thus reached the main road, to proceed sedately along it until we came to Tyndrum. That the bridge did or did not exist we were never able to discover, for it was more than half dark when we reached its vicinity. There we encountered an unexpected sheet of water which, from its apparent extent, might have been the Atlantic Ocean itself. But it was only the overfull lochan spreading itself over the surrounding country and transforming the humps and hollows of its southern shore into the islands and straits of a complicated archipelago, through which we had, *faute de mieux*, to steer a course towards our now indefinitely postponed dinner. In the fullness of time we arrived, but our progress was interrupted by much futile and anxious probing into apparently bottomless pools whenever a fancied isthmus turned out to be nothing more than a peninsula. Many were the ungraceful flounderings and floppings hidden from the eye by a night of more than Egyptian blackness, which, however, availed not to muffle the splashes and the impious ejaculations which accompanied them.

And now my somewhat wandering memories light upon Arran, an island whose beauties have been so often

extolled that I should hesitate to say more, were it not that a record of two days' climbing there might be of interest to week-end "nibblers."

My first visit to Arran was with Biggart in September 1920, and I agreed with nearly everything I had heard or read of the place. But was Glen Sannox *always* as full of heather and holes as it is now? When the sun is performing his earth-warming duties with unaccustomed ardour one should, I suppose, be devoutly thankful—even ecstatic—if basking in his rays on some grassy bank or indulging in other forms of slothfulness. But to be labouring up Glen Sannox at such a time, crinolined with divested upper garments, is to be in altogether different circumstances; circumstances indeed in which the chief seraph himself could scarcely be blamed if his thoughts declined to less celestial planes. And all because of the heather and holes! This form of tribulation is common enough in climbing, and in the case of Glen Sannox it lasts for about an hour and a half. The sadly reduced climber is then in the shadow of Cir Mhor, possibly being blown upon by chilly blasts coming from goodness only knows where.

The rapid over-cooling produced by these mysterious air currents is not conducive to dawdling; and to make a careful examination of a rock face, comparing it with diagrams and disconnected notes scrawled illegibly on soiled fragments of paper, is almost an impossibility when the human frame and all the appurtenances thereof are executing rapid oscillations in different planes at the same instant. The tendency is to pronounce a curse on all guide books, and to make for the gully or buttress which promises most, trusting that fate and instinct combined will lead to something good.

Phenomena of a like kind occurred on our first contact with Cir Mhor. In no other way is it possible to explain why we chose the Pinnacle Ridge in preference to any other, or why the predilection remained in spite of the disappointing appearance presented by the lower part when we came to inspect it more closely. We went round the corner into the Western Stone Shoot to see if we

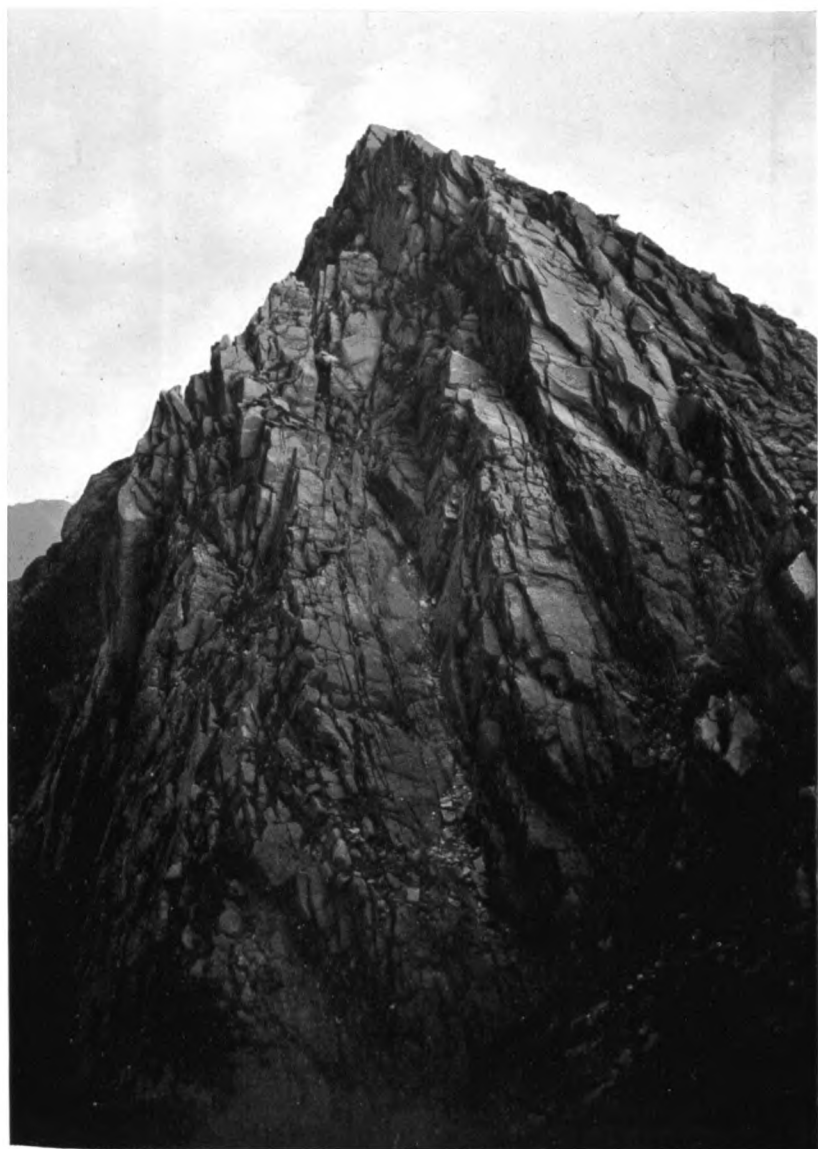
could not get up more pleasantly from there, and eventually we found a satisfactory starting place ; but by that time we had passed the last rocks of the Pinnacle Ridge and were on an unnamed buttress higher up. For the first few feet we had to go very carefully, because the holds showed a disposition to shear off without warning, and some of the ledges sloped at rather awkward angles. As we progressed, however, the quality of the rock improved, and before long we stepped out on to typical Arran granite.

The climber who goes on to Arran granite with any preconceived notions of style will quickly discover that he must change his methods in order to deal effectually with the holdless slabs and cracks which are the rock's chief structural peculiarities. Passage along and up the cracks must be effected by jamming the elbow and knee alternately, and the slabs can only be surmounted by a high angle crawling movement made possible by the extraordinary roughness of the rock surface, which looks—and feels—like coagulated gravel ; so that to achieve locomotion of any kind the climber must make inordinate use of his knees—a practice which the stylist abhors. His pain is therefore a double one, partly in his knees and partly in his *amour-propre*.

Ruminating thus, we shuffled and levered ourselves up the buttress until it faded out on a broad, grassy ledge. Hereabouts it might have been possible to escape on to the hillside without further climbing had it not been that a prominent slabby nose \* had captured and was holding our attention. It formed the right-hand edge of the little gap between the Pinnacle Ridge and the summit rocks, and was crying aloud to have some one go and climb it. Perfectly willing to oblige, we ascended a shadowy recess until an oblique crack on the left tempted us to take a little sun and air on the bridge of the nose.

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\* The top of the nose is seen  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. to the right of the summit in the photograph, and the "tunnel" shows as an irregular cleft on the immediate left of the nose. The buttress ascended in 1920 lies directly below the nose, and on the right of the prominent stone shoot seen in the centre of the photograph.



CIR MHOR

*W. A. Mounsey*

Wide enough at first to admit a leg, this crack gradually narrowed to finger width, and at the far end, where it was necessary to pause and meditate on the best means of attaining the desired crest, there was no more standing room than that provided by a trifling asperity on the slab below. These few moments of delicate balancing were undoubtedly the best on the climb, which shortly afterwards finished in pleasantly airy fashion on a steep little ridge of splendid rock.

An amusing variation on the "nose" route was discovered in May of this year (1925). This time we were a party of four. We had just finished a climb on the Pinnacle Ridge and had arrived at the gap below the nose. From that point we could have reached the route of 1920 by a simple walk of a few yards to the right, but such a thing was not to be thought of until all efforts to find an independent finish had failed. A few minutes' search round the base of the nose produced an inviting chimney, up which the leader disappeared in a succession of graceful backing-up attitudes. Immediately afterwards his muffled voice proclaimed that he was in a kind of tunnel, and we hurried up to him to join in the fun. Curious what pleasurable thrills one can have in a cave, or a subterranean passage of any kind. The new discovery was a handsome construction with windows at the top and side. A steep rise in the floor provided amusement for three-fourths of the party while the odd fourth, invisible except for his legs, which resembled somewhat a pair of animated stalactites, burrowed through a plug of old snow at the upper exit. Squirming through the somewhat tortuous hole produced by his efforts, we came to the surface in the pure air of a narrow ledge and craned our necks over the very straight drop below. It was a fine exposed situation, and the next pitch, had there been one, would have been very choice. Unfortunately there was none. All that remained for us to do was to scale a low wall; then we were out on the hillside and the climb was over.

A great deal of the charm of these last two climbs lay, I think, in their being unpremeditated. On each

occasion we set out with no definite plan. We simply followed where fancy led, caring little that the climbs might have been done before, because to us they were as new and untrodden, and as such we enjoyed them. The general character of Cir Mhor suggests that one might have many delightful days by approaching it in this spirit, for one cannot help wondering how many curious places there are on it into which inquisitive climbers have not yet poked their heads. If such exist, the surest way of finding them seems to be to ignore the guide book and go out in a spirit of adventure. It would be impossible to avoid getting on to old climbs at some time or other, and perhaps just as easy to get off them again. In any case, a complete lack of fore-knowledge can only add to the enjoyment of the climb by inducing the pleasing illusion that it is wholly new. Later, when the climb is over, there is time enough to set about discovering how much of it was new, and what parts had received their baptism of hobnailers.

But why dispel illusion by delving in musty records! Or why have records at all! Ask the editors of mountaineering club journals; they know.



STOB A CHOIRE CLAURIGH.

LOCHABER's hills are steep and high,  
Her glens are sweet and baurigh,  
When far away, our thoughts still fly  
To Stob a Choire Claurigh.

Its lines and curves are finer far  
Than maid or lass of Gaurigh ;  
Soft falls the light of evening star  
On Stob a Choire Claurigh.

The wind that wanders through its howes  
Has sweeter notes than haurigh,  
The deer aye love the grassy knowes  
Of Stob a Choire Claurigh.

I know a man who loved to climb,  
I think his name was Laurigh,  
Who took his way at Eastertime  
To Stob a Choire Claurigh.

He sweated up the snowy mound  
Like nigger, tramp, or maurigh ;  
He loathed the name, the very sound,  
Of Stob a Choire Claurigh.

And then he swore and flung his sack  
With language free and flaurigh,  
" Beshrew me if I e'er come back  
To Stob a Choire Claurigh ! "

SEAN FHADA.

WEST BUTTRESS OF CORRIE BROCHAIN,  
BRAERiach.

BY ALEX. HARRISON.

ON 20th August L. St C. Bartholomew and I went to the Shelter Stone of Lochavon with two days' provisions and the intention of exploring the rocks of the neighbourhood. The morning of the 21st was cold and misty and the rocks above looked most uninviting, so we decided to give them a miss and went up Ben Macdhui. Incidentally we had a thick mist on the top and only got the summit on the second attempt. The new indicator was found intact, but we regret that it did not indicate the cairn, the only object visible. However, it was always something to be shown where Ben Nevis should have been visible.

Our provisions only allowed for one more day away from supplies, so, as the next morning was fine, we decided to go and have a look at Corrie Brochain of Braeriach.

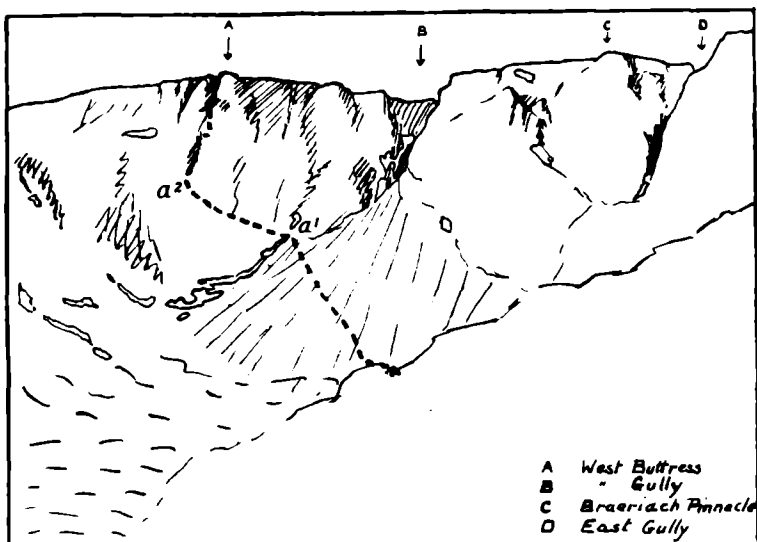
On a previous visit to the Ben, the rocks of the corrie had taken Bartholomew's fancy, and he had then resolved to explore them on a future occasion.

We crossed over to the Pools of Dee, where we deposited our rucksacks and had lunch. I may say that our bread supply was somewhat limited, and it was necessary at each meal to calculate how many more meals would be required before reaching civilisation, and the bread available for each. As Bartholomew on such occasions always insisted on making notches in the loaf to mark the slices, it by this time presented rather a curious appearance. However, we left the remainder of the bread with the other impedimenta at the Pools and made for the corrie.

The wall of the corrie consists of three buttresses divided by gullies. It seemed to us that the top of the Ben was about the centre of the western buttress (it is really on the centre buttress) and there appeared what looked like a pinnacle in the centre (see photograph, Vol. XII., p. 85). We decided to have a try at this pinnacle, our exact route to be worked out as we went.

We made up the slope to the east of our objective and took to the rocks at the top of a patch of snow at point  $a^1$  on diagram. (There was less snow this year than when Parker's photograph was taken.) Our route led upwards and to the left over rocks which, although slabby, were sound and had good holds.

When we got to a point  $a^2$  below our pinnacle we decided that an open chimney to the west of the buttress



gave the best route, and this we followed sometimes in the chimney and sometimes on the east side of it. The going was good, and the only difficult pitch, about 150 feet from the top, was turned on the east. When we got immediately below our supposed pinnacle, we found that it was not really a pinnacle but merely the point of the buttress.

The final rocks were taken from the west. We arrived at the top, one hour and twenty minutes from the foot of the rocks, the vertical distance according to the aneroid being 650 feet.

The climb presents no special difficulty, but is quite enjoyable, and we are sure that further exploration in the corrie would give several additional climbs.

## In Memoriam.

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JAMES MACLAY, LL.B.

ON 13th July last there passed away, with startling suddenness, one of the Club's most notable members, and one much loved by those who knew him well.

While holidaying with his wife and family near Loch Lochay, on the Caledonian Canal, Mr Maclay died suddenly of heart failure, on his way to the canal steamer after a day's outing.

Although not an original member, he joined the Club very early in its history—in 1892. For a long time he was a prominent figure at the Meets, took part in several new and arduous expeditions, and often contributed interesting articles to the *Journal*.

For many years also he was to be found regularly climbing in the Alps, in the company of his sisters and his brother-in-law, Mr Godfrey Solly. Latterly, however, under his doctor's advice, he had given up mountaineering, although still able to enjoy good walks on the level.

A partner of a distinguished legal firm, Mr Maclay remained in harness to the end, and in addition to his zealous attention to his own profession, he gave up much of his evening time to Church and Mission work in Glasgow. He devoted himself heart and soul to anything he undertook, and did not allow himself, and apparently did not covet, the long periods of rest and relaxation which many of us think we need.

In Scotland several rock climbs are associated with Maclay's name, among others a well-known chimney on the north peak of the Cobbler ("Maclay's Chimney").

Our friend was one of the most unselfish of men, and was always looking for opportunities to be of help to others. The writer has a far-back vision of him standing up to his knees in a Highland burn in spate, in order to assist his companions to cross the stream dry-shod.

James Maclay feared God, and seemed to know no other fear. One Easter a mountaineering party climbed into Ossian's Cave in Glencoe, under very icy and dangerous conditions. No hitch could be found for the rope, and the position of the last man descending was not an enviable one, but Maclay, who was very muscular, cheerfully undertook that task.

On another occasion, Maclay led up an unclimbed chimney on the face of Cir Mhor. The rocks were steep and smooth and covered with wet moss, which came away in large lumps when touched by foot or hand. But the leader kept his balance somehow, as well as his head, and as one grip after another gave way, and he seemed to be on the point of slithering down, he calmly tried new holds, until at last, with an effort, he overcame the difficulty and reached an anchorage. His companions below were much relieved, for they were not well placed themselves, and could not have "fielded" him if he had fallen.

Mr Maclay was a generous supporter of all good causes, with both his time and his means, and he will be greatly missed by a very wide circle, as well as by all his mountaineering friends.

His two sons follow their father's example in their love of the hills.

W. W. N.

## MOUNTAIN FANTASY.

SWIFT as surges that roar on an ocean-beat shore,  
 See the mists swirling up from the air's azure main,  
 How impetuously o'er the dark ridges they pour,  
 And round the proud summits triumphantly soar,  
 Ere they melt in blue ether again.

And their thin snowy wings, as they storm overhead,  
 Are flecked with a glory of vanishing dyes ;  
 But when for a space the fierce splendour has fled,  
 They are pale as the wraiths of the reef-foundered dead  
 Flitting o'er where a good vessel lies.

Far below, far away, the bright squadrons of day  
 Are galloping wild o'er the lakes and the sea ;  
 And on foreland and bay the sun's couriers play,  
 And bathe their gold sides in the rush of the spray,  
 And their foes to the mountain-head flee.

And there wizard fragments of corrie and stream  
 Are charioted by on fleet pinions of cloud ;  
 Frail as visions that gleam through the mist of a dream,  
 Or the spells in a sorcerer's mirror they seem ;  
 For the cliffs by the storm-torrent ploughed.

And the forests are whirled, in white fog billows furled,  
 The burns lace with silver the canopy gleaming ;  
 Like wrecks of a world the far mountains are hurled,  
 And the snows on their dark granite frontlets empearled  
 Down the track of the sunbeams are streaming.

For the bountiful spirits that keep the sweet springs,  
 With the fairies that long from the lowlands have  
 vanished,  
 Every elfin that flings high his butterfly wings  
 And in mad choric measure trips round the green rings,  
 To this sky-girt pavilion are banished.

But when from the shore sounds the earth-shaking roar  
Of the tempest, the goblins and witches are driven  
With the javelins frore of the sleet-rack to soar,  
And in turbulent dance 'mid the pinnacles hoar  
Hurtle crags by the thunderbolt riven.

Till, calm on the edge of the tumult, a shade  
With halo encircled rides awful and vast,  
Like the sky-god arrayed in the sun's burning braid,  
Or the herald whose robe of the rainbow is made,  
Throning silent and dim on the blast.

For the Spirit endued with this monarchy rude,  
Though mortal man know not his altar or shrine,  
He quells the fierce feud of the wild winter's brood,  
Till they bring him pure snow-wreaths in penitent mood,  
And are hushed to a stillness divine.

Happy he who can hear the deep pine-forests singing,  
And breathe the faint incense borne up from the vale,  
Where censers are swinging and waterfalls ringing ;  
Oh ! list, what sweet canticles upward are winging !  
Nor let thine own orisons fail.

E. A. B.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

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### EASTER MEET, 1925—FORT WILLIAM.

PRESENT :—Forty-one members and fourteen guests.  
The following members were present :—

IMPERIAL HOTEL.—Gilbert Thomson, J. S. M. Jack, Ronald Burn, Kenneth K. Hunter, E. C. Thomson, W. J. Bannister.

STATION HOTEL.—E. A. Baker, H. Tomkinson, D. A. Clapperton, J. H. B. Bell, Dr Levack, D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, J. A. Scott, L. St C. Bartholomew, J. C. Maclaurin, J. W. W. Drysdale, P. Donald, C. W. Walker, H. F. B. Sharp, A. E. Robertson.

ALEXANDRA HOTEL.—J. A. Parker (*President*), A. Ernest Maylard, Godfrey A. Solly, W. N. Ling, G. B. Green, George Sang, J. Rennie, H. MacRobert, Allan Arthur, George T. Glover, Arthur W. Russell, Henry Alexander, G. Murray Lawson, Alexander Harrison, J. Harrison, Geoffrey E. Howard, William Douglas, John G. Reid.

HALF-WAY HUT.—A. J. Rusk and R. N. Rutherford.

*Guests.*—A. D. M'Nab, Robert R. Morrison, J. M. Thomson, Charles W. Parry, Robert R. Elton, F. S. Smythe, W. G. P. Douglas, R. W. Martin, Joseph H. Roberts, Bernard F. Howard, David T. Maclay, Gavin Douglas, J. Burt, Colin Russell.

The Easter Meet was held at Fort William, some of the Members arriving as early as Tuesday, the 7th April. It was regrettable that accommodation could not be got for all the members and guests attending in any one of the numerous hotels in the town (it is *verboten* to speak of Fort William as a village). The result was that the President with the several other Office-bearers and a proportion of guests monopolised the accommodation in the Alexandra, while the remainder were housed in the Station and Imperial Hotels. Two of the members,



Rusk and Rutherford, disdained the flesh pots of Fort William, and camped out in the palatial Rest House, half-way up the Ben, the comforts of which they shared together with a number of unusually active rats. There were no grumbles heard against the Clerk of the Weather, who, with unusual good humour, provided admirable weather until the close of the Meet, when he evidently repented, and sent a first-class gale, accompanied by real West Highland rain, before which those who outstayed the others had to fly southwards. The snow conditions were good, but there was less snow than usual for April. Friday and Saturday before Easter were unusually fine days for the season. On Saturday some of the members were observed sitting in their shirt sleeves at above the 3,000 feet line. The visibility on several days was rather better than usual, but there was a good deal of east wind haze. The Ben showed his hoary head at brief intervals. Some of the rocks in the Allt a Mhuillin Glen were rather iced, but on the whole conditions were fairly good. The majority of the climbs were on snow, most of the members preferring to traverse the higher ridges, including the Aonachs and Easains. Several members came thoughtfully provided with motors, which were in great demand during the Meet, and saved shoe leather in Glen Nevis and further afield. A member of the Executive was heard to remark that he would move at the next General Meeting that all Presidents and Past Presidents should in future attend the Meets accompanied by five-seater cars. It is understood that he will not lack a seconder.

*Thursday, 9th April.*

Ling, Murray Lawson, Burn, Burt, and Gavin Douglas ascended the Allt a Mhuillin to the head, whence they climbed the Carn Mòr Dearg arête, and thence over the Ben and Carn Dearg. They experienced no difficulty in ascending the arête by kicking steps, as the snow was in excellent condition. Several members travelled by train from Glasgow on Thursday, arriving late the same evening.

*Friday, 10th April.*

The President, accompanied by Scott, Bartholomew, Martin (*Guest*), Russell, and Colin Russell (*Guest*), walked from Corrou on the West Highland Railway to Fort William over Sgurr Eilde Mòr; the President and Russell (senior) skirting Binnein Mòr and climbing Binnein Beag, the remainder of the party traversing Binnein Mòr. J. Harrison, A. Harrison, J. Roberts (*Guest*) descended from the express at Roy Bridge, and traversed the Easains. *En route* they met H. MacRobert, E. C. Thomson, Bannister, and Elton, who had all followed suit. The parties joined forces, and came like wolves on the fold down from Glen Nevis. On the same day Ling, Solly, Green, and Arthur ascended Stob Ban from Poll Dhu, Green and Solly returning from the summit, and Ling and Arthur continuing over the Devil's Ridge to Sgurr a' Mhaim, whence they got a sitting glissade down to Poll Dhu. There is no record mentioned of any interview with the gentleman after whom the ridge is named. Sang, Glover, Geoffrey Howard, and Reid, with Bernard Howard (*Guest*), motored to Poll Dhu, and climbed Stob Ban, and thence over the col, between Sgurr a' Mhaim and Am Bodach, where Glover and Reid enjoyed a sitting glissade. The party then walked down Coire a' Mhaim, and descended near Steall Falls into Glen Nevis. The rocks here were very slippery, and most of the party will remember the descent in their dreams.

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*Saturday, 11th April.*

The President, with Dr Levack, J. R. Levack, D. P. Levack, and W. G. P. Douglas (*Guest*), climbed Ben Nevis by the Allt a' Mhuillin Glen to the Carn Mòr Dearg arête, and down by the path.

Russell (sen.), Russell (jun.), H. MacRobert, Stewart Jack, J. Harrison, Alexander, Drysdale, MacNab (*Guest*), and Morrison (*Guest*) drove round the old road, and having climbed the Aonachs and various other peaks in detachments, all descended to Steall.

Allan Arthur, with A. Harrison and J. Roberts (*Guest*), ascended the Castle Ridge and traversed the summit, returning by the ordinary track. J. H. B. Bell and Smythe (*Guest*) climbed the Tower Ridge as far as the gap, where they were turned back by ice.

E. C. Thomson and Elton (*Guest*) went up Carn Mòr Dearg and returned home over the Ben. Hunter and Bannister ascended the Castle Ridge, and went over the summit. Burt, Murray Lawson, and Douglas (jun.) (*Guest*) also ascended the Castle Ridge, and another party, consisting of Sharp, Maclay (*Guest*), and Parry (*Guest*), also accomplished the same climb, Maclay and Parry continuing to the top of Ben Nevis, while Sharp returned to Fort William.

There were five parties on the Castle Ridge this day, in spite of which fact it is understood that a portion of the ridge still remains.

Gilbert Thomson, with Clapperton and J. M. Thomson (*Guest*), climbed Sgurr a' Mhaim. Baker and Burn were also climbing on the same hill.

Solly climbed the South Castle gully alone. There was a considerable quantity of snow at the head of this gully, but by traversing slightly he was able to get over without much difficulty.

Sang motored Ling, Glover, and Reid, and C. W. Walker motored with the two Howards to Glen Fionnlaighe on Locheilside, whence they all walked to the top of Gulvain. In the evening Rennie delivered a very interesting lecture on Ben Nevis and the Lochaber Hills, illustrated by the Club slides, in the Masonic Hall, at which there was a good attendance. The proceeds were in aid of the Lochaber Museum Fund.

### *Sunday, 12th April.*

Rennie motored William Douglas and the President to Laggan and foot of Loch Arkaig. Burt, Colin Russell, Murray Lawson, Gavin Douglas, and Parry traversed Stob Ban and Sgurr a' Mhaim. Ling, Sharp, and Glover went up the Allt a' Mhuillin Glen over the arête and summit

to Ben Nevis. E. C. Thomson, with Hunter, Bannister, and Elton, traversed Sgurr a' Mhaim, Stob Ban, and Mullach nan Coirean.

Russell (sen.), Green, C. W. Walker, Geoffrey Howard, Bernard Howard, and Reid walked to the Half-Way Hut on Ben Nevis, and over into the Allt a' Mhuillin Glen.

*Monday, 13th April.*

Solly, Ling, Sang, Alexander, and Gavin Douglas motored to Roy Bridge, and thence ascended Stob a Choire Claurigh by Stob Coire na Ceannain and many other Stobs too difficult to mention. The botanical treasures observed on this expedition, including a solitary primrose, attracted much attention from certain members of the party.

J. Harrison, A. Harrison, Arthur, Roberts, and Russell (jun.) were on the Castle Ridge. J. H. B. Bell, with F. S. Smythe (*Guest*), sweated up Ben Nevis by the pony track, reached the top at 2.40 P.M. in a blizzard, and returned, festooned with icicles, by the same route; the four others leaving to catch a train, Arthur went on alone over the arête where he found some new ice, which required care. He descended over Carn Mòr Dearg.

Murray Lawson, with Burt and Parry, motored to the Stage House Inn, where, having found a convenient boulder under a bridge, they made history upon it.

The President climbed the Ben by the path in the vain hope of getting a view, and returned by same route. He was accompanied by J. M. Thomson and Bernard Howard (*Guests*). Gilbert Thomson accompanied them part of the way.

Reid walked by the hill road to the Vitriified Fort, where he annexed portions of the architecture, and returned down Glen Nevis accompanied by a gale.

*Tuesday, 14th April.*

Arthur and Dr Barlow walked to Steall from Achriabhach and climbed Binnein Mòr. When Arthur reached

the summit he was twenty minutes in advance of Barlow, and disappeared into the mist crossing Am Bodach and descended the Coire a' Mhaim to Achriabhach, where he picked up his car and Solly, who had accompanied them from Fort William in the morning. They reached the town between 2 and 3 P.M. Barlow followed in Arthur's tracks as far as Am Bodach, and then followed the ridge, and crossed Stob Ban, descending to Poll Dhu, and returned to Fort William on foot about 8 P.M. The Rev. A. E. Robertson, Sang, and Alexander ascended Stob Ban by the north ridge, descended by the eastern ridge, thence over the Devil's Ridge to the summit of Sgurr a' Mhaim, from which they descended direct to Achriabhach, returning to Fort William by car.

On the following day three-fourths of a gale was blowing from the south-west, with very heavy rain, and all the members left except Rev. A. E. Robertson and Baker.

Sang's report of his journey by motor through Kinlochleven to Bridge of Coe, and thence to Edinburgh, via Appin, Connel Ferry, and Taynuilt, contains numerous thrills, especially when he speaks of his car trying to roll over on its back, and kick up its wheels in the air. He does not state the number or locality of his halts.

#### DIARY OF A. R. RUSK AND R. N. RUTHERFURD AT HALF-WAY HUT, BEN NEVIS.

##### *Friday, 10th April.*

Left Glasgow by early train, along with large party. Trained to Fort William, thence to hut, carrying all gear for the week-end.

In the evening went up Carn Dearg, and got wonderful view of town in evening sun ; also got some good glissades on descent.

##### *Saturday, 11th April.*

Left early and made for Tower Ridge by West Gully. Thence to Douglas Boulder, and continued up the ridge to below little Tower. This could be turned on the right,

but as ice, &c., was falling, we returned, descended East Gully, and joined the President's party in Coire Leas, with whom we ascended to the arête. They turned right and we turned left, and went up Carn Mòr Dearg. Thence we got a long glissade down, and coming down the Glen we climbed the Castle Ridge *en route* for the Hut.

*Sunday, 12th April.*

Went down to Glen Nevis, crossed the river, and made for Mullach nan Coirean by Sgor Chalum Ridge. Then made the round of Mullach nan Coirean, Stob Ban, and Sgurr a' Mhaim. We reached the hut just as darkness fell, having a wonderful view to the west as the light faded.

*Monday, 13th April.*

This was a wet morning and we started late and walked up to the top of Ben Nevis. The snow on the top was frozen very hard, and there was a strong wind with occasional bright glimpses. On return to the hut we were pleased to meet two or three parties, including that of the President which we had met on top. We came down to Fort William with lightened loads for the train in the afternoon, and had a most refreshing change and shave on the way down in the train. J. G. R.

REPORT FROM THE STATION HOTEL.

*Friday, 10th April.*

President, two Russells, Bartholomew, Martin, and Scott went from Edinburgh by 4.30 A.M. train to Corrour. Walked through Glen Nevis to Polldubh *en route*; all ascended Sgurr Eilde Mòr. Parker and A. W. Russell climbed Binnein Beg, the rest of the party climbed Binnein Mòr. Enjoyed very fine views and a good glissade.

Tomkinson explored the beauty spots in the Glen. Baker, Maylard, and Douglas walked to parallel roads in Glen Roy.

Maclaurin and Drysdale—Aonach Beag and Carn Bhuic; Bell and Smythe—the Castle from Allt a' Mhuillinn.

*Saturday, 11th April.*

Tomkinson, Clapperton, Baker, and Donald were on Sgurr a' Mhaim.

Sharp, Bartholomew, Martin, and Scott were involved in two of the five parties on the Castle Ridge; thereafter the Ben was bagged. A long glissade down the Red Burn.

Ling, Sang, Glover, Howard, and Walker motored to Kinlocheil and climbed Gulvain.

Bell and Smythe made an attack on the "Tower" via Douglas Boulder. The Tower Ridge was next won, then a traverse on the east side of the Tower, which was heavily iced, brought them to the Tower Gap; time, 5.45 P.M. Further progress was impossible. They descended by the same route.

*Sunday, 12th April.*

Donald, Maclaurin, Drysdale, and Thomson climbed the Ben from the head of the Glen Nevis road, then followed round the arête to Carn Mòr Dearg and Carn Beag Dearg.

Tomkinson, along with C. S. M. Jack and two others, ascended the Ben by the path.

Sharp climbed Nevis by way of Allt a' Mhuillin and the Carn Mòr Dearg arête.

Bell, Smythe, Scott, Bartholomew, and Martin drove to the head of the Glen Nevis road, then took the ridge by Sgurr a' Mhaim, Stob Ban, and Mullach nan Coirean.

L. St C. B.

*Monday, 13th April.*

P. Donald went by morning train to Spean Bridge, climbed the two north tops of Stob Choire Claurigh, but failed to reach main top owing to a blizzard; he returned to Spean Bridge, whence he returned to Edinburgh by the evening train.

*Tuesday, 14th April.*

E. A. Baker and H. Tomkinson, having gone to Spean Bridge by the morning train, had a good day on Beinn a Chaoruinn, a shapeless hill west of Creag Meaghaidh ; fine views ; on by the evening train.

J. G. R.

## THE SKYE MEET.

*29th May to 10th June 1925.*

THE S.M.C. were represented in Skye this year by Messrs Bartholomew, Lawson, Morrison, Priestman, and J. A. Scott. The latter was accompanied by his younger brother, W. P. Scott.

Mr Priestman spent his time at Sligachan with Mrs Priestman and a friend. No account of his doings has been received, but it is believed he was at least on one top, and it is known that he undertook several walks.

Bartholomew, Lawson, and the Scotts arrived at Sligachan on Monday forenoon, the 1st June, having spent over three days on the journey north from Edinburgh, partly in Bartholomew's car and partly in hotels. The car, suffering from obscure and noisy complaints in the back axle, was finally left with the local plumber for repairs at Kyleakin, and the party hired the remainder of the way to Sligachan, arriving there at twelve o'clock. Sgùrr nan Gilleann was then ascended by the Pinnacle route and descended by the Tourist route. The weather was doubtful to start with, but far from doubtful at the finish. Mist, rain, and snow were going strong at different times on the ridge, and the party returned to Sligachan in a steady downpour.

On Tuesday, the 2nd June, the same party left Sligachan for Glen Brittle. The ridge was followed from Bruach na Frithe to Bidein Druim nan Ramh. Owing to the late hour, and the disinclination of the majority of the party to proceed further, a descent was made into Coire na Creich



from just short of the top of Bidein. At nine o'clock the party arrived at Mary Campbell's, where, needless to say, a warm welcome awaited them. The weather during the day was cold but fine. There was mist on the ridge, but on the rare occasions when it lifted or was blown past grand views were obtained of the Cuillin Ridge.

Wednesday, the 3rd June, was an off-day. Heavy rain kept the party indoors part of the day, and a walk of a few miles along the coast in the afternoon was all that was done.

Thursday, the 4th June, was also wet, and dense mist filled every corrie. In attempting to find the Cioch the party landed half-way up the Sgumain stone shoot. Plans were altered to suit the circumstances, and a traverse was made of Sgumain, Alasdair, and Tearlach. That night Morrison arrived in Glen Brittle, having come over from Sligachan via the Bealach a' Mhain.

Friday, the 5th June, commenced with a promise of a fine day, but bad weather dies hard. The reinforced party made for Sgùrr Dearg by the Window Tower Buttress. Bartholomew led Morrison and Scott over the Inaccessible, ascending the long side and descending the short side. The return journey to Glen Brittle was accompanied by mist on the higher level and much rain lower down.

Saturday, the 6th June, was all that could be desired in the way of weather. It was decided to celebrate the event by an off-day, and the Rudh' an Dùnain was visited, where bathes were the order of the day. Three members of the Gritstone Club in residence at the Post Office accompanied the party. That evening the Scotts left for Sligachan.

The Glen Brittlites spent Sunday, the 7th June, in bathing in Coire Banachdich, and later (much later) in basking in the sun on the top of Sgùrr na Banachdich. The Scotts at Sligachan were on Bruach na Frithe the same day.

On Monday, the 8th June, the Scotts left for home. Morrison returned to Sligachan by the way he had come. Bartholomew and Lawson humped their packs over Banachdich, Thormaigh, and Greadaidh, descended via

An Dorus, and finally deposited them and themselves in the hotel. The day was fine and excessively hot.

On Tuesday, the 9th June, Bartholomew, Lawson, and Morrison, the first named leading, climbed Knight's Pinnacle direct from the Bhasteir Corrie. The descent was made down the gully between the Pinnacle and Sgùrr nan Gilleann, at first keeping to the rock and then glissading down the snow which filled the gully. The party had intended finishing by the western ridge, but suffice it to say that the day was again very hot.

It was agreed by all that Wednesday, the 10th June, should be an off-day, and a couple of hours or so in the forenoon quickly passed away in pleasant conversation in front of the hotel. The inevitable bathe followed, and in the afternoon a visit was paid to the arched rocks and caves on the coast opposite Raasay.

The next day the Meet broke up, Morrison leaving to join friends at Mallaig, and Bartholomew and Lawson to recover their abandoned car at Kyleakin.

Although few members attended the Meet it was in every way a thorough success, and the Club again thank their hosts at Glen Brittle and Sligachan for their never-failing kindness and courtesy, which at times must be sorely tried.

## LIBRARY.

Since the last issue of the *Journal* the Library has been increased by the addition of the following books and maps :—

The Six-Inch Ordnance Map—Skye—Sheets 25, 38, 39, and 44.  
Presented by A. E. Maylard.

"The Lamont Tartan." Presented by Lieut.-Col. Lamont,  
Ardfenaig, Ardrishaig.

"Les Avalanches." By André Allix. Presented by the author.

"The Mountains of Snowdonia." Edited and compiled by  
H. R. C. Carr and G. A. Lister. Presented by George  
Sang.

The Club tenders its thanks to these gentlemen.

The following periodicals have also been received :—

The Ladies' Alpine Club Journal. 1925.

Bulletin of the Climbers' Club. January 1925, Vol. I., No. 2,  
and July 1925, Vol. I., No. 3.

Eighth Report by the Royal Commission of Ancient Monuments,  
&c.—East Lothian.

Société des Touristes du Dauphiné. 1920-23.

Fell and Rock Journal. Vol. VI., No. 3, 1924.

Alpine Club of Canada—Constitution and List of Members.

Alpinisme Hivernal. By Marcel Kurz.

Bulletin of the Appalachian Mountain Club—Supplement to  
March 1925 ; and Vol. XVI., No. 2, June 1925.

Svenska Turistforeningens Årsskrift. 1925, &c.

Touristik Alpinismus und Wintersport. July-August 1924.

Canadian Alpine Journal. Vol. XIV., 1924.

Alpine Journal. Vol. XXXVII., No. 230.

Den Norske Turistforenings Year-Book. 1925.

Rucksack Club Journal. Vol. V., Nos. 3-19, 1925.

Italian Alpine Club Journal. January to September 1925.

French Alpine Club Bulletin, Section S.W. 1915-21, 1922, and  
1923-24.

Gritstone Club Journal. Vol. II., No. 2.

Bulletin of the Sierra Club. Vol. XII., No. 2.

Swiss Monthly. January to September 1925.

La Montagne. February to September 1925.

Cairngorm Club Journal. Vol. XI., No. 63.

Zeitschrift des Deutschen und Österreichischen Alpenvereins.  
Vol. LV., 1924.

Les Alpes. Vol. I. March to June, and August and September.

Bulletin Pyrénéen. March-April, May-June.

Sangaku (Japanese Alpine Club Journal). Vol. XVIII.,  
No. 3, and Vol. XIX., No. 1.

## 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.*



## FANNICH FOREST.

IN setting down these notes I hope that I may be allowed to explain that I have made no attempt to refresh my memory by re-reading the back numbers of the *Journal*, so that if I repeat, or—still worse—contradict any previous article, I must ask the parties concerned to accept my humble apology, and my assurance that I do so without malice aforethought.

When I decided to include Sgùrr Mor Fannaich in the programme for my spring holiday the first difficulty was to procure a map. As often happens with mountaineering difficulties, the thing seemed quite simple until one tried to do it. Are not the reference numbers of the appropriate Ordnance Maps given for all Scottish mountains in the "S.M.C. Guide"? I looked up the Guide and instructed the nearest dealer to get me Sheet No. 92.

The map which came was a beautiful production, clearly printed, with contour lines every 50 feet, with the roads carefully coloured according to the class of traffic for which they were suitable, and with railway stations and other important points plainly marked. It was, in fact, uniform with the series of "Popular" one-inch Ordnance Maps which are now in general use in the south of England. The chief failing of these maps is that as the contour lines are not coloured it is not easy to see at a glance whether a slope is up or down, or in which direction the high ground lies. I find that the best way to get over this is to carry also a map on a smaller scale, such as Bartholomew's half-inch or the quarter-inch Ordnance Map, on which the higher ground is indicated by deeper layers of colour.

Sheet No. 92 had, however, another failing which rendered it quite useless from my point of view, and that was that the country which it depicted was on the south coast of Scotland, about Kirkcudbright and Castle Douglas. I returned it to Southampton and received the Fannich sheet in exchange, along with a courteous letter explaining that a new series of numbers had been adopted for the "Popular" maps, and that in order to procure the map I wanted I should have specified Sheet 92 of the "Coloured" series.

Had Sgùrr Mor Fannaich been the only mountain I wanted to climb in that part of Scotland I should probably have approached

it from some point on the Dingwall and Skye railway so as to take advantage of the paths in Fannich Forest, but I wanted to do Beinn Dearg as well, so I made my centre at the inn at Aultguish, and took a bicycle to save walking on the road. From this side there does not appear to be any way of avoiding a walk of several miles across a stretch of peat and heather like that between Sligachan and Sgùrr nan Gillean.

On leaving the heather behind, at the usual level of about 2,250 feet, one finds oneself on an easy undulating ridge with several ramifications and a number of tops just over 3,000 feet. Above these tower two handsome cones five or six hundred feet higher, namely Sgùrr Mor and Sgùrr nan Clach Geala. The whole mountain reminded me of Cruachan, only that the two high points are rather further apart and the dip between them is much deeper. As in the case of Cruachan there is a good deal of ground on the sides of the ridges which is steep and rocky enough to inconvenience a pedestrian, but not very much that is steep enough to interest rock-climbers.

I only ascended the more easterly of the two high peaks. I had left my bicycle at Torrandhu bridge where the main road crosses the Abhunn a Ghiubhais Li, and my route was approximately a circuit of the watershed of that stream from Beinn Liath Mhor Fannaich to An Coileachan.

A more interesting expedition from Aultguish is that over Beinn Dearg round the watershed of the Allt Lair and the Allt a Gharbhrain. About three and a half miles above Aultguish the river may be crossed by a light wire footbridge. It is a very light and narrow bridge—the footway is only one plank wide and it is not a wide plank—but the next bridge is at Strathvaich Lodge, seven miles away. Across this footbridge the ground rises almost immediately, so that one is above the heather in less than a mile, after which a series of rounded mossy shoulders lead one to the summit of Am Faochagach.

If the Fannich Hills make one think of Cruachan, Ben Dearg makes one think of Ben Nevis, with Am Faochagach for its Carn Mòr Dearg. It is true that you would have to put your Ben Nevis through the looking-glass, and reduce your altitudes all round by about 900 feet, besides several minor changes, such as the introduction of a few small lakes into Coire Leis; but the main features are there, the gently sloping hill on the one side of a corrie overlooked by great crags on the other. The analogy may be carried still further, for the easy way up Ben Dearg is by a stalker's track from Loch Droma, which runs up the west side of the mountain and misses the local scenery as completely as does the pony track up the higher mountain, but which commands a view of the Teallach Hills and Loch Broom, comparable to the view from the Ben Nevis path over Loch Linnhe and the mountains of Glencoe.

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## EXCERPTS FROM SLIGACHAN CLIMBERS' BOOK.

17th July 1924.—Traverse of the main Cuillin ridge from Sgùrr nan Gillean to Gars Bheinn. Leaving Sligachan, 6.55 A.M. ; Sgùrr nan Gillean reached, 8.50 ; Am Bhasteir, 9.20 ; Sgùrr a Fionn Choire, 10.2 ; Bruach na Frithe, 10.12 ; Sgùrr na Bhairnich, 10.30 ; Bidein (Central Peak), 11.30 (20 mins. halt) ; Sgùrr a' Mhadaidh (South-West Peak), 1.0 ; Sgùrr a' Ghreadaidh (North Top), 1.23 ; Sgùrr na Banachdich, 2.30 ; Sgùrr Dearg, 3.2 (35 mins. halt) ; Inaccessible Pinnacle, 3.50 ; Sgùrr Mhic Choinnich, 4.53 ; Sgùrr Tearlaich, 5.40 ; Sgùrr Alasdair, 5.50 (25 mins. halt) ; Sgùrr Dubh na da Bheinn, 7.15 ; Sgùrr nan Eag, 8.9 (35 mins. delay through lost route) ; Gars Bheinn, 9.40 ; Glen Brittle Post Office, 11.47 P.M. Total time, 16 hours 52 mins.

The ridge was in mist the whole way and the rocks were wet throughout. All tops on the ridge were traversed.

B. R. GOODFELLOW, } *Rucksack*  
F. YATES, } *Club.*

17th July 1924 (CIOCH WEST BUTTRESS).—This route lies to the right of Holland's route, the buttress being climbed direct from near the junction of the Cioch Gully with the continuation of the easy initial gully. Easy slabs for some distance lead to a steep slab. A long grassy ledge was gained above this which ran across the buttress for some distance. Above this a mantelshelf lands one at the foot of a steep smooth slab, which is severe. Above this the crest of the west ridge is gained without further difficulty.

F. S. SMYTHE (*Yorkshire R.C.*).  
J. H. B. BELL (*S.M.C.*).

19th July 1924 (TRAVERSE OF THE MAIN CUILLIN RIDGE).—Leave Glen Brittle, 5.15 A.M. ; top Gars Bheinn, 7.53 (halt, 30 mins.) ; top Sgùrr nan Eag, 8.58 ; Dubh na da Bheinn, 9.43 ; Alasdair, 10.50 ; Tearlaich, 10.57 ; Mhic Choinnich, 11.45 (halt beneath An Stac, 25 mins.) ; Inaccessible, 12.57 ; Dearg, 1.10 ; Banachdich, 1.41 (halt, 7 mins.) ; Thormaid, 1.56 ; Ghreadaidh, 2.21 ; Mhadaidh, 2.44 (halt, 40 mins., Glac Mor, for water) ; Bidein (Mid-top), 4.20 ; Bruach na Frithe, 5.43 ; Sgùrr a Fionn Choire, 5.50 (short halt for water, &c.) ; Tooth, 6.21 ; Am Bhasteir, 6.30 (halt, 10 mins.) ; Sgùrr nan Gillean, 7.3 ; descent via 4th and 5th Pinnacle gully, much halting owing to refreshing bathes and losing each other ; Sligachan reached, 9.26. Weather good ; mist occasional ; cool north wind most of time.

J. H. B. BELL (*S.M.C.*).  
F. S. SMYTHE (*Yorkshire R.C.*).

## SGÜRR DHOMNUILL.

Who of the brethren is there at all conversant with the best part of our land—I mean, of course, North-West Inverness and Wester Ross—who has not been haunted with the persistent appearance of a sharp high peak, evidently in the Ardgour district, name possibly unknown? All will remember the tall, shapely mountain that follows one up from, say, Loch Nevis to the Saddle, and is then dwarfed by stony, grassy Ben Screel and so fades gradually out of the prominent view.

Sitting (as I am) in the lap of the incoming tide aneath the pier of Fort William, there are who could write an epic to the hill which I want merely to introduce to any who will have patience to read prose. I am no poet, no word-painter, not even a photographer, but having at last accomplished an ambition that many others must have had, I want to help them to explore where few have penetrated.

In the June heat-wave (Monday, 8th) I arrived from Glasgow by the early train in time to see the Fort William ferryman's oars plashing merrily well across the loch. The only alternative seemed the Ballachulish motor to Corran, which did not start for some forty minutes and took me four miles too far down. But the ferryman seems to have his own times and no one encouraged the idea that he would come back soon. Luckily, two very kind men and a boat heard my plight and went out of their way to row me straight across, thus bringing me two miles nearer Inverscaddle than Charon would: putting me down where the milestone says 10 miles to Corran. I then walked down Loch Linnhe to Inverscaddle Bay. [Name is mis-spelt in maps and should be -sgatal, with the usual quasi-aspiration before the "t." Not every one, I found, understood the map spelling. This, by the way, is one reason why it is important to take the trouble to pronounce Gaelic words correctly, and not to carry about a private interpretation of the place-name scriptures as the manner of some is.]

The road past the confluence of the Abh. Cona-ghleann is very bad and hardly deserves the double line of dots given it by the O.S. Sheet 53 C 5. But Gleann Sgatal is unusual in having west of Creagbheitheachain a path on each side—that on the south is not shown in the map: it continues up Gleann Mhic Phàil, but I don't know for how far. That on the north side should be shown keeping along Sròn Beinne Mheadhoin some two miles well above the stream of Gleann na Cloiche Sgoilte, and ending at a stell near the burn bank. Thus one can approach Sgürr Dhomhnuill right to the very foot by two paths. Possibly that on the south side is slightly the least consistently bad. Carts just manage Creagbheitheachain, but Tighnacomaire has to carry food up by horses. The glen is open, rather wooded and bonny. It was at this (the last) house that I slept. "At" but not "in." For they were full (?) and I shared quarters with the hens in a shed and had to be up at 6 o'clock to let the cattle in for milking. On sacks, using one as a sleeping-bag, I got a rather

wakeful night, troubled with cramp for some hours and indigestion (since evening), and from before dawn the roosters found it essential to crow every quarter hour. They also did a sort of snore all night.

Tuesday broke cloudless, windless, but by no means sunless, and at 7.50 I was off. The climb to the summit is an exceptionally easy and gentle one considering the roughness of what I saw of the other sides of the hill. There are two shoulders and then a short steep piece below the top, rough and bluff. (There is no rock climbing at all, I think, anywhere.) The cairn is large, being built of flags in a saucer shape, and has a big stick in the middle, as have most remote seldom-climbed hills. This fine hill misses its place on the tables by eighty-five feet, but it deserves a place in *Journal* and "Guide-Book." The other side is very steep and broken, and would be troublesome under ice. It is decidedly not the best ascent. I zigzagged down to the col between Sgùrr Dhomhnuill and Druim Garbh to its west. Then down the little stream on the south-west, there being a good spring near its rise some distance below the col. Perhaps I should say "first col," for the dip as seen from the cairn is broken up into two pieces on about the same level. This was the first nice water I got since leaving the main stream of Gleann Sgatal. I kept to the same side of this little south-westerly burn, the right bank, and it was certainly the best side.

And now I can report a helpful path not marked in the map. In Sheet 52 C 12, starting just about where the dissection-edge comes, say a quarter of a mile north-east of spot marked "Old Shafts" (but on the other bank), a track begins and continues south-west high up. Perhaps I might add that there is a bridge (not in map) just below the "O" of "Old Lead Mines" across the burn going south-east. A little west-south-west of the bridge and on the west side of the path is a ruined house with a most delicious well below it draining across the path. There is no more water like it till one comes to another ruined cottage fairly near the main Strontian road. This information seems worth giving since the burn waters were entirely sweet and sun-kissed the whole way to Strontian. They created thirst and were insipid. The sun blazed strong all day with heat haze and no view.

Well, keeping two contour-lines above the uninhabited (?) Ceann a' Chreagain the path, by now a widish cart-road, descends at a fairly uniform and steep angle till it joins the track (marked in the map (52)) just above the 4 of 400 about opposite to the confluence of the Allt Coire nan Capull. A closer look at the rather too darkly-printed map (52) seems to reveal a track ascending for half a mile from this point, and suggests that it may be meant for the one I have detailed. But I should have thought that my track kept higher, cutting steadily across contours and just within the 700 contour above the uninhabited house and not, as the line-slope of the map would suggest, being only 100 feet above it. Though no expert as to what motors can climb, I fancy that the kind of car the Yanks term a "flivver" could be forced right up to the point where my unmarked track ceases



to be motor-wide, say to before the top of the 700 feet contour. This would save a long steep walk up a stuffy, airless wood if the peak were being climbed from Strontian, the nearest hotel but not the smoothest approach. The only snag is a bridge on a Skye style of turn high above a gorge, railless on either side. The bridge is in good order and well built, the stream being much doctored up with flat stones beneath it. But a driver who wanted to lose his head would certainly choose this spot to do so, and the road seems to narrow slightly here. The surface is hardly worse than Skye or Glen Nevis.

It was 7.45 before I reached Strontian Hotel, and my climb had involved a twelve-hour day, as I took it very easy with long rests and a snail's pace all the time. I should guess that seven hours would normally have sufficed. Will the reader believe me that I actually and literally did that long day on three-quarters of a slice of bread and a bowl of tea? Yet such is the fact. Cause? Acute indigestion.

The name Sgùrr Dhomhnuill arises from a double tragedy. Lost in the mist, Donald's body was found on Sgùrr Dhomhnuill, and his lassie's on Sg. na h-Ighinn = the daughter's peak.

Strontian, it may be worth mentioning, would be a possible centre for Garbh Bheinn (2,903) of Ardgour, for a mail coach starts from the hotel at 9.45 and could be left at Lochan a' Chothruinn beneath the top, about half an hour after departure. Loch Suaineart is beautiful as seen from Strontian, and Ben Resipol could be managed thence—when the sun is merciful! No coach plies to Acharacle, but a machine can be hired.

One other route to Sgùrr Dhomhnuill deserves mention as being of no use. A nice path is marked on the O.S. maps as going south from between Glen Finnan and Lochelside stations, and as descending eventually to Glen Hurich (Gleann na h-Iùbhraich). I found out last year at Glen Finnan hotel that it does not exist much beyond Callop Farm near its start. And the round to Gleann na h-Iùbhraich is very long and undulating. So there are but two accessible sides to the hill—those detailed.

RONALD BURN, B.A.

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#### MEANING OF BHÀSTEIR (SKYE).

The usual interpretation of this hill is "executioner," a connexion with bàs, death, being assumed. But no such word appears in the dictionaries nor is the medial "t" so usual as "d" in *uerba agentis*. Indeed, too, there are few derivatives from bàs, and the verb bàsaich is applied to animals almost universally, not to persons, as there is on the whole a prejudice against bàsaich used of men: the feeling being that bàs. implies dead (and done for, too). So though we say bhàsaich am bó, the cow died, we would say chaochail an duine (or shiubhail), the man travelled off, departed. Besides, the usual word for "executioner" is crochadair, from croch, to hang; and

"killer" is marbhaiche, from marbh, dead. So that one would naturally look elsewhere for the meaning of the Cuillin peak, and this, I think, I have at last found. In Kintail a rock with a huge split down it wherein a stone thrown can be heard jingling and rattling as it makes its long descent, is named basdar (sounded bassadur, with svarabhaktic vowel). The middle letter is "d" and the "a" is short, and doubtless the same is true of the Skye name which I have spelt above as it is commonly but unphonetically, *i.e.*, unpronounceably, printed. Am Basdar is in Glen Lichd on "Ben Attow," north of the keeper's house and about the 1,000 feet contour near the "o" of "Forest" in 1-inch Sheet 72 E 4. Above this boulder cliff lies Glac a' Bhasdair. Basdar is in no dictionary, but this is not surprising: I have at present passing through the press some 2,600 words or meanings unknown to all the lexicons, and am always adding to them. Presumably the word is a separate one and the -dar there not a suffix. Skye "Vashtjur" I suggest, therefore, to be named on its cleft, and so Am Basdar = the deep-split cliff. There is no such word recorded as Bhàsteir, but did it exist it would have to spell Bàsdar (-tar) to derive from "death" (bàs). But even so, it could not mean "executioner," for bàs does not mean execution. It could only = "death-er," "die-er," the suffix -dar being equivalent to English -er of the doer. These coinages are no more absurd than the spurious bàsteir whose very spelling is outlandish and reaks Priscian's head.

RONALD BURN.

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#### FOUR NOVICES IN SKYE.

On Monday, the 20th July, four would-be climbers set out from their tent in Glen Brittle to get their first experience of climbing in Skye. The weather was beautifully clear and sufficiently warm to restrain those carrying the packs and rucksacks. The climb had been chosen with a view to providing something of greater interest than a mere scramble, and the actual route chosen was the Cioch, by the Cioch Gully, on Sron na Ciche, with a finish towards Sgumain. The fact that this course was classified as "difficult" in the "S.M.C. Guide" was to some extent modified by the description of only "moderate" elsewhere. Each person has his own idea of difficulty, and we felt that a retreat should at any time be possible. We therefore set out in high spirits, looking forward to an excellent climb, lunch on the Cioch, and a fine view from the summit. On arrival at the foot of the rocks a halt was called to put on the rope and adjust our loads, the leader insisting on carrying nothing but his clothes. The leader had 35 and the second and third men 26-27 feet of rope, as we had only 100 feet between the four of us.

A start was made at a point some distance to the left of the foot of the gully proper, and the route slanted up to the right till the gully was reached higher up. The cave pitch was the first cause

of trouble, being fairly wet, and necessitated the unroping of the last two men on the rope. Firmly belayed from below, the leader then made the ascent, his companions following without difficulty. All went well for a short time till the upper pitch was reached, and here again the third man unroped to save the last man the trouble. This pitch was taken direct by all without preliminary survey, the leader being held from below the jammed stones at the back while ascending the crack on the left of the jammed boulder. The others then followed quickly and the climb eased off to the Cioch arête, where lunch was taken. The Cioch was then climbed from the gully side and the upward route prospected.

The examination was not encouraging ; apparently the only route continuing the gully was part of the Girdle traverse, which we noted with displeasure was marked "exceptionally severe," so this was vetoed. Finally it was decided to attempt J. M. A. Thompson's route on the upper buttress, and a start was made accordingly. Here, however, the leader made a mistake and set off slightly downwards instead of the correct route, which slants upwards to the right. Finally it was decided to descend to the terrace. An overhang of 10 feet was then descended, the last man using a doubled rope, when we were confronted with a very steep sloping crack where the first man took out nearly 90 feet of rope. This, of course, meant a general unroping, but finally the difficulty was over and we set out, roped, to walk up the terrace. We had, however, forgotten that this was not continuous, so we had to make a traverse well into the left wall of the central gully and round a sensational corner. Fifteen feet higher up there was a belay and the party soon gathered on a small shelf to continue the steep climb up the ridge. Though very loose, requiring great care, the whole way up this ridge gave fine interesting climbing with several nasty pitches till the angle eased off and left nothing but easy scrambling to the summit. Here we unroped and lazed about for some time, some of the party being delighted to have got up the climb, the remainder being quite unnecessarily surprised at the same feat. We descended eventually by the easy, if exasperating, scree walk along the top of Sron na Ciche, and down by the slopes above the western gully, with many halts to admire the views. Eventually we reached the camp about 8.30 P.M., very tired but very pleased.

For the next few days the party were comatose and little serious climbing was done. The weather remained perfect, but it was not till Friday that we started out to do another climb. By then the whole party had so far recovered their nerve and enthusiasm as to set out for the north buttress of Sgumain with a view to traversing a large part of the main ridge, and descending at our own convenience (if at all possible). We therefore started off up the north buttress of Sgumain, rounding a steep corner about half-way up on to the north-west face, by which the climb was completed. We then had our lunch and went on to the top of Alasdair, climbing one rather

awkward pitch on the way, permission to try the difficult variation on the left being flatly refused the leader by the remainder of the party. The view from the summit was simply magnificent, the foreground and distance being beautifully blended. After we had made a long pause for the three photographers of the party to take in the entire view, we descended to the head of the great stone shoot in the reverse order. The ascent to the summit of Sgurr Tearlaich was soon accomplished, and we then started the ridge descent to the Mhic-Coinnich-Tearlaich Col. The last part of this proved so difficult to the first man, as to inspire candidly expressed belief in the erstwhile leader's total inability to descend by other than purely involuntary means. A momentary inspection to the right, however, revealed a simple slab by which the remaining three soon reached the col. As the light was beginning to fail, we decided on an immediate descent. This was made by the col, eventually striking the great stone shoot about half-way down. Thence the descent was mainly made up of short runs, with here and there a pause to survey rapidly disintegrating boots.

This was our last climb. We were pleased to have had a ridge traverse and also a climb of a certain degree of difficulty, the Cioch, for our first. This latter would scarcely have been attempted had we not realised the wonderful nature of the rock which, if loose on the upper reaches, is none the less magnificent. Our next holiday in Glen Brittle may see four experienced climbers "doing" the ridges and buttresses at dawn. At all events, the writer will certainly return but with a larger supply of rope, as 100 feet is certainly not enough for four comparative novices on a climb professing any degree of difficulty whatever. We were forced to unrope too often, but "where there's a will . . ."

C. W. PARRY.

## THE HEIGHT OF CARN DEARG (NORTH) BEN NEVIS.

Having only been once on this top in mist, after climbing the North Castle Gully in May 1899, I paid a visit to it last September, and made two interesting discoveries. The first was that the O.S. cairn (3,961 feet) is not the actual summit; the second, that the real top is certainly well over 4,000 feet. My aneroid made it about 330 feet below the summit of the Ben = 4,070 feet, but it may be a little higher, as the barometer was falling, and the 4,406 feet reading was taken some time before leaving the Observatory. In confirmation of the barometer, Meall Bhanavie (1,071 feet only) was seen right over the highest northern portion of the hill where the O.S. cairn is situated. Unfortunately I had not the O.S. map with me, and I have found it impossible to locate the actual position of the top exactly on the map in the "Guide Book," but it is about 300 yards or so south-east of the 3,961 O.S. cairn, on a small rock absolutely on the edge of the precipice.

J. G. I.

## THE DONEGAL HIGHLANDS.

The writer spent about ten days last September in County Donegal. From Gweedore, where there is a good hotel, Errigal, 2,466 feet, was climbed; first by the easy but rather steep south slope, and again by the north-west ridge which gave quite an interesting scramble of about 1,000 feet, especially as it was done in a stiff westerly gale. The upper part of the hill is quartzite and consists of a long, and in places very narrow ridge running generally from north-west to south-east. It is plentifully supplied with screes, and as seen from the west looks like a small edition of a part of Ben Eighé. On the west face there is at least one buttress that looks as if it might give a climb. None of the other Donegal hills seemed to have anything that would be of interest to the climber.

Ardara, where there is a good hotel, was next visited, and from it Sleave League was climbed by way of the One Man's Path. The view of Donegal Bay from the summit of the 1,972 feet drop into the Atlantic is magnificent. There used to be a good hotel at Carrick, but it was destroyed during "the trouble."

J. A. PARKER.

## S.M.C. ABROAD.

In the third week of July a party, mainly S.M.C., assembled at Fafleralp in the Lötschenthal. Were it not that S.M.C. meets cannot take place abroad (see *Journal*, Vol. XVII., p. 145), one might have imagined that there was one in the valley. The party consisted of P. Donald, C. K. M. Douglas, F. S. Goggs, A. Harrison, W. N. Ling, G. Sang, P. J. H. Unna, of the S.M.C., J. W. Brown, A.C., and J. Kirkland. Solly with Mrs Solly and Miss Maclay were also met at the hotel. The party was nearly complete by the 20th, Douglas coming across country from Kandersteg, the remainder by train.

On the 21st Donald, Douglas, Harrison, Kirkland, and Ling ascended the Tschingelhorn via the Petersgrat, and the next day the same party, with the addition of Brown, Goggs, and Sang, did the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn. This made an interesting climb.

The weather on the 23rd was bad, and the day was spent in working out the exact quantities of food required for the coming tour, but next day Goggs, full of energy, collected a party consisting of Douglas, Harrison, and Kirkland and did the Berghorn. Brown and Unna descended to the plains and returned in the evening heavily laden with provisions, and reported that besides having had an excellent lunch, Brown had spent some hours at the telephone inflicting his French and German on the owners of the chief

provision stores in Switzerland. Apparently Brown's French and German were both good, and Unna's staff work excellent, for the consignments of supplies were delivered without a hitch at the various points throughout the route. The black cherry jam was specially good, and a certain excess of beans was bartered for tea at one of the huts.

On the 25th the party started the tour through the Oberland, making the Egon von Steiger Hut that evening in a snowstorm.

The weather was still bad early next morning so we had an extra lie in bed, and when the weather cleared made for the Concordia Hut. It had been intended to do the Ebnefluh *en route*, but owing to the late start this was given a miss, which was probably no loss as the peak did not look interesting. The Concordia Platz was a morass as usual.

Next day's journey took the party over the Grünhornlücke and Rothorn saddle to the Oberaarjoch Hut, Goggs, Ling, Unna, Douglas, Harrison, and Kirkland ascending the Finsteraar Rothorn from the Rothorn saddle. The climb was quite interesting, but there is much rotten rock on the ridge. Some fine views were obtained through the rifts in the clouds. At the Oberaar Hut Unna rendered first aid to a Switzer who had a frostbitten hand. He had been on the Finsteraarhorn with either no gloves or else bad ones.

On the 28th the route led down the Oberaar glacier and then to the left over the Scheuchzerjoch and down to the Pavilion Dollfus which stands above the Unteraar glacier. The descent entailed a considerable amount of step cutting. The Pavilion Dollfus was the most pleasant hut visited by the party. It holds ten, and has no guardian. The views from the hut are magnificent, and there are also two bathing pools (water not too cold) which were greatly appreciated. A specially fine tea was prepared that afternoon, and it was a pleasant sight to see one of our eminent actuaries clad in pyjamas acting as waiter. Our party was the second for the season.

The 29th was the last day of the tour, the route taken being by the Finsteraar glacier, Strahleggfirn and Strahlegg Pass to the Strahlegg Hut. From the hut, the party, with the exception of Douglas and Harrison, went down to Grindelwald.

At the Strahlegg Hut we met J. H. B. Bell and F. S. Smythe of the Yorkshire Ramblers. They intended to do a new climb on the Fiescherhorn, but next morning Bell found that a sprained ankle rendered him *hors de combat*, so Smythe joined Douglas and Harrison for a day on the Schreckhorn, greatly to the advantage of the party. The route chosen was the south-west ridge which Smythe and Bell had done a few days previously. When about 600 feet from the summit a storm was seen to be approaching and shelter was taken below some overhanging rocks. The storm was fairly violent, with lightning and hail, but when it cleared the weather conditions seemed comparatively favourable. The meteorologist wisely decided to make

quite certain of the weather before continuing the ascent, and it was soon apparent that really bad weather was about to set in, so the party turned and commenced to descend as quickly as possible. The storm came on exceedingly rapidly and broke just as the party was leaving the south-west ridge for the steep couloir which gives access to the ridge from the south. Smythe, who was last, had rather a severe shock from lightning, coming off his holds on to his belay. The storm continued for the whole time of the descent, reaching at times hurricane strength, and it was with great relief that the party jumped the Bergschrund after a six-hour struggle, mainly on slabs covered with snow and ice. In a short time the hut was reached where Bell dispensed large quantities of tea and soup to a ravenous party, whose sole food for nine hours had been one bar of chocolate each, weather conditions having made any halt inadvisable.

It is perhaps worth recording that the sunset on the 29th was specially brilliant, and that it was followed on the 30th by a greenish sunrise which was very noticeable.

A week or two later Smythe and a companion, when starting on a climb, observed another green sunrise and returned to the hut. The green sunrise in this case also was followed by a storm, which lasted for twenty-four hours.

The party broke up at Grindelwald, Goggs and Donald walking to Lucerne via the Grosse Scheidegg and Meiringen. Ling, Unna, Brown, and Harrison stayed on for a few days in the hope that the weather might clear sufficiently to allow of some more climbs being done, but as the weather seemed hopeless, Harrison departed for home, the other three going south to Italy in search of better weather.

Considering the general bad nature of this season, the party was extremely fortunate in the weather, and the route taken through the Oberland gave a comprehensive survey of the great mountain massive. The enforced waits in the huts were profitably spent basking in the sun and admiring the views.

Special mention must be made of Unna's staff work in the commissariat department, the vitamins and food calories being calculated to a nicety; but what about revising the bean rations!!

ALEX. HARRISON.

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Mr G. A. SOLLY writes:—I went out about the middle of July to the Engstlen Alp, which is an excellent place for training walks and small expeditions, of which I made four, all under 10,000 feet—(1) the ridge north-west from the Joch Pass to point 2,529; (2) the Gadmer Flüh ridge to somewhere near point 2,597, north-east of the Tellstock; (3) the Gwärtler; (4) the Graustock. All these are scrambles that can be made difficult or easy, according to the taste of the climber.

From there I went to Gletsch, where I met Dr Claude Wilson (an S.M.C. member) and H. J. Mothersill, with whom I had a capital day's climbing upon the Galengrat, which is visible from the hotel on the right of the Galenstock. We found a cairn on the lowest part of the ridge which has been crossed, but there is no trace or record of any climb on the numerous rocky points to the right and left of the col. We climbed one on the left and then, after a squall of snow, another on the right, which was much more difficult. This day reminded us of Scottish expeditions, as we were able to start in a motor car at 8 A.M. and were back in time for a late tea at 6 P.M.

I then went on to the Fafler Alp, where many of the S.M.C. party had arrived. I went for two nights to the Am Steiger Hut, but a heavy snowfall prevented any climb. On my return I was sorry to find that the Scottish party had left, but on my asking for beer at the next meal the landlord said that his British visitors had finished it all, and I realised the position. A few days later I went over the Lötschen Pass to Kandersteg, returning by the Mutthorn Hut and Petersgrat, taking the Tschingelhorn on the way. The weather then became worse, and I went for my last five days to Zermatt, and was present at the unveiling of the Whymper memorial. One always enjoys a Swiss holiday, whatever the weather may be, but, from the climbing point of view, this was one of the worst seasons I have ever had.

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Mr A. J. RUSK writes :—Hutchison, Rutherford, and I arrived in Kandersteg on the 18th July and went up to the Hochtüli Hut in the afternoon. There we did the Wilde Frau and Weisse Frau. On the 21st we went to the Balmhorn Hut and traversed the Balmhorn by the north-east ridge and Zagengrat. On the 24th we went over the Hochtüli Pass to the Gspaltenhorn Hut. The next morning the weather was too bad for the Gspaltenhorn, and we crossed the Gamchilucke for the Tschingelhorn. On the Petersgrat the weather became very bad and we made for the Mutthorn Hut. The next day we climbed the Tschingelhorn and went down to Fafler Alp, where we were disappointed to miss the S.M.C. party. In the afternoon we went up to the Bietschhorn Hut. The next day, the 27th, we traversed the Bietschhorn by west and north ridges in magnificent conditions.

We then had an off-day in camp at the head of the Lötschental, and on the 29th crossed the Lötschenlücke and camped on the Aletschfirn. The next day we climbed the Ebnefluh in bad conditions, and got mixed up with some thunder. We were chased into the Concordia Hut by heavy rain.

As the weather was still bad next day, we made straight for Grindelwald over the Untermönchjoch, and were pleased but not surprised to find the S.M.C. party ensconced in the biggest Patisserie shop.

The weather then broke down, and Hutchison and Rutherford



went home. I went on to Chamonix with my people, and striking a good patch of weather, had three days very enjoyable but undistinguished rock climbing.

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Mr J. H. B. BELL writes :—I went out on 17th July from London with F. S. Smythe, who was with me at Fort William at Easter, and is a Yorkshire Rambler. Rusk, as a matter of fact, went out by the same train. We went to Wengen, where Smythe's mother remained whilst we bagged peaks. Our first day, Sunday, 19th, we went to the New Guggi Hut on a spur of the Mönch, aiming at the north-east route up the Jungfrau. I may say I trusted to Smythe's local knowledge throughout, as he was there two years before with Somervell and others, and on one occasion before that. The north-east route up the Jungfrau was far too much to start off with, but we were fortunate in meeting a young Swiss doctor in the hut with Hans Kaufmann, his guide, who, I am told, is one of the finest snow and ice men in Grindelwald. We descended about 2.45 A.M. to the Guggi glacier, and crossed it towards the Kühlanenen ice-fall. This is the *pièce de résistance* of the climb, and some years does not go at all. As it happened we required combined tactics to get through. By 8 A.M. we had got up, crossed the Kühlanenen plateau, and were breakfasting on the lower rocks of the Schneehorn. The snow was by now very sticky and bad and the day very hot. We carried on over the Schneehorn and across the plateau known, I believe, as the Silbermühle, to the next ice-fall, which went fairly well. Above was a badly crevassed bit and another plateau leading to the ice-wall beneath the Silberlücke. This is supposed to go easily, but it did not. Kaufmann could make nothing of the wall at its lowest part; it was rotten snow on ice. He tried cutting up further along, but Smythe and I went right round and up the ridge to the top of the Silberhorn. This was quite difficult enough, as the snow was near the avalanchy stage. We found the ridge from the summit down to the Silberlücke narrow and difficult for quite a bit, and by way of improving things a thunderstorm caught us on the ridge. Our ice axes sizzled merrily, and we got several shocks, but none serious. The storm lasted perhaps half an hour and blew over. The others were now in front of us. Above the Silberlücke there is an interesting rock ridge so far up the Jungfrau merging higher up into the snows of the Hochfirn. I have never felt so fatigued in my life as the last 200 or 300 feet up the Hochfirn, quite an easy slope, too. I had to practise forced breathing and halt very often. I expect we had done far too much the first day. At any rate, we reached the summit at 5 P.M. and descended to the Jungfrauoch (in bad weather, the last part), reaching there 8 P.M.

Tuesday, 21st, we only did the northernmost summit of the Trugberg from the Obermönchjoch and finished at the Bergli Hut. The snow was horrible slush.

Wednesday, 22nd, we came down to Grindelwald. The heat was

stiffing in the valley. We returned to Wengen where we had two days' bad weather. We reached Grindelwald again on Friday evening, 24th, took five days' grub and started to walk up to the Strahlegg hut by night. Incidentally we lost our way and experienced another thunderstorm and Saturday, 25th, was not good weather. Sunday, 26th, the weather cleared a bit but avalanches were pouring off the peaks. We went up to the Strahlegg Pass and spent hours admiring the view from the summit of the Strahlegghorn. There was quite a bit of new snow on the peaks. Monday was still not good enough for serious work, and we prospected some rocks on the opposite side of the glacier by way of making a new route up the Klein Fiescherhorn. We were assured that this route had not been done. Smythe, as a matter of fact, did it with another man after I left him.

Tuesday we left about 3 A.M. in good conditions towards the south-west ridge of the Schreckhorn. We crossed the Bergschrund at 5.15 A.M. when there was a very fine dawn glow and a very cold wind, which, I may say, continued all day. We lunched at 7 A.M. more than half-way up the ridge. On the lower part were slabby bits and a good deal of snow. Higher up it was a rock climb altogether on good rock. It went very well and we were on the summit at 9.15, before the first guided parties by the Schreckjoch had arrived. We did not delay long and reached the Schreckjoch by 10 A.M. Our objective was now the Lauteraarhorn by the half mile of pinnacled ridge which joins it to the Schreckhorn. We found the ridge of continuous difficulty, but of excellent rock. At one point we probably took the wrong route and lost nearly two hours in descending and regaining the ridge. At any rate, it was fully 5 P.M. when we made our last summit. In my opinion there is nothing of exceptional difficulty in this ridge, but its average is a good bit above that of the main Cuillin ridge. We got off the Lauteraarhorn rocks before 8 P.M. It took us a long time, as we could not make use of snow slopes in their avalanchy state (snow on ice). We got back to the hut (over the Strahlegg Pass) by 10 P.M. in good moonlight. Next day, Wednesday, was an off-day. On Thursday I could not move owing to a swollen ankle, and I was fortunate. I should say that it was on Wednesday that an S.M.C. invasion of the Strahlegg Hut took place, and on Thursday Harrison and Douglas along with Smythe attempted the south-west ridge of the Schreckhorn and had to fight their way back for six or seven hours in a series of very bad thunderstorms. But you will have had their story. On Friday we returned to Grindelwald in bad weather. On Saturday afternoon Smythe and I went from Wengen to Jungfrauoch by rail and spent the night in the Concordia Hut. On Sunday we crossed the Grünhornlücke to the Finsteraarhorn Hut and it blew a blizzard all day and all night. We had hard work next day in returning through deep new snow to the Concordia Hut. It was unfortunately also the end of my holiday. We returned to the Jungfrauoch, and I came home.

H. ALEXANDER spent three weeks in the French Alps. Arriving at Chamonix on 20th August he lost the first week owing to continuous bad weather, experiencing more rain in the time than he had seen in Scotland during the whole season. In the hope of better conditions he moved south to Grenoble and the Dauphiné, where the weather improved, and three days were passed in an excursion from Abriès in the Vallée du Queyras to the Quintino Sella hut on Monte Viso, going by the Col de la Traversette and returning by the Col del Colour del Porco. By means of the P.L.M. motor buses an interesting, and at times exciting journey was made back to Chamonix over the Col du Lauteret and the Col du Galibier, and the holiday ended with an expedition from the Montanvert to the Col du Geant and the ascent of the Aiguille de l'M.

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Mr H. F. B. SHARP writes that he had a short fortnight's holiday, first in the Dauphiné region, climbing the Pic Coolidge, Les Bans, Les Écrins, the Pic Lory, crossing the Col des Écrins, traversing (with Mr H. C. Bowen, A.C.) the Meije; and secondly, at Chamonix, starting whence he traversed the Grépon.

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Mr R. CORRY was at Zermatt for a fortnight, where he did the Zurggengrat, the Trifthorn, and the Dent Blanche; then for a week (19th to 26th August) at Saas Fée, where the weather prevented any climbing.

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W. N. LING spent a month in the Alps from the middle of July, joining the gathering of S.M.C. men at Fafleralp in the Lötschenthal on 20th July.

The party began to disperse at Grindelwald, and when two days of bad and one of moderate weather were followed by a thoroughly bad one, Brown, Unna, and Ling fled to Italy by the Lötschberg and Simplon tunnels.

Arrived at Macugnaga, they went up to the new Zamboni Hut on the Pedriolo Alp to cross the Colle della Loccie to Alagna, but next morning bad weather drove them back to Macugnaga, up the beautiful Val Quarazza and in mist over the Col Piccolo Altare to charming Rima in the Val Sermenza. From there on the following day the Col de Mond was crossed to Alagna. Next day in fine weather to the Col d'Olen and Capanna Gnifetti, whence, the day after, the Signalkuppe of Monte Rosa was climbed, with a fine view from the top.

Descending to Gressaney-la-Trinité, an off-day was spent in that delightful place, and Gressaney-St Jean was also visited. Then on to Fiéry in the Val d'Ayas by the Betta Furka Pass. A

start was made for the Capanna Sella to cross to Zermatt by Castor and Pollux and the Felixjoch Hut. After two hours, heavy rain drove them back to Fiéry.

Next morning the Col Cimes Blanches and the Col Theodul were crossed in cold and misty weather to the Gandegg Hut, where there was much new snow.

There, however, the weather improved, and the views of the mountains in their coating of new snow were very fine. At Zermatt the party finally broke up after a chequered but very interesting tour.

Mr W. GALBRAITH writes :—I was in the Dolomites for about three weeks, and found it a most attractive district. I cannot record any great ascents worthy of the S.M.C. but was able to ascend the Rotwand in the Rosengarten group, and the east peak of the Latemar, both from the Karer Pass Hotel. Baedeker describes them as “not difficult for adepts,” and “not very difficult for experts.” The adepts of the S.M.C. would find a rope unnecessary for the Rotwand, as it entails scrambling rather than climbing. The route to the Latemar along the summit ridge involves some climbing up and down a series of small peaks; it is a very interesting excursion and “not very difficult for anyone.” S.M.C. members would find much scope for their energies in the Rosengarten, which consists of a great series of peaks and rock walls of all scales of difficulty extending over a considerable area—something like the Cuillin—very accessible from several excellent huts. In the later part of my story I was at San Martino di Castrozza, dominated by a most striking chain of peaks, including Cimone della Pala, Cima di Ball, and Saas Maor. To ascend these requires some climbing ability. I contented myself with the Rosetta, reached by a path, but giving a very fine view. English visitors—climbers and others—in all this district are still noticeable from “absence of body.” German, mostly north German, predominate, and the Italians though considerably in evidence in their new territory seem as a general rule to prefer the valleys to the heights.

Mr H. A. NICHOLSON, who was home on leave from the Sudan, spent about a fortnight in the earlier part of August at Saas Fée, and, in the company of Mr R. L. G. Irving, A.C., made the ascents of the Allalinhorn, the Nadelhorn, the Weissmies, the Fletschhorn, and the Laquinhorn; bad conditions prevented attempts on higher summits such as the Dom.

## EVENTS OF NOTE.

ON 23rd June of this year the conquest of Mount Logan, 19,850 feet, the highest mountain in Canadian territory and the second highest peak in North America (exceeded only by Mount M'Kinley in Alaska, the height of which is 20,873 feet), was achieved. The leader of the expedition was Capt. A. H. MacCarthy, A.C., formerly an officer of the United States navy; he was accompanied by Col. W. W. Foster, D.S.O., the chairman of the Canadian Alpine Club Expedition Committee, Andrew Taylor, formerly of Ottawa, H. F. Lambert, of Ottawa, Norman Read, of Boston, and Allan Carpe, of New York; two members of the expedition, Henry S. Hall, of Boston, and Robert M. Morgan, had to return to the base camp from a height of 18,000 feet owing to exhaustion and frost-bite.

The prime difficulty of the ascent was that 250 miles had to be travelled over glaciers and boulder-strewn wastes to the advance camp at the base of the mountain; this, King Coal Camp, was reached on 8th June. Starting thence on 14th June they established Windy Camp on the 16th at a height of 16,800 feet. Then a return for supplies had to be made by some of the party; the rest, in spite of blizzards and temperatures as low as 32° below zero, reconnoitred their route. On the 21st they moved forward supplies to a height of 18,000 feet, and next day to 18,500 feet. The 23rd was fortunately fine: starting at 9 A.M., by 5 P.M. the six climbers stood on one of the Logan peaks at a height of 19,800 feet, but saw a higher peak 2 miles away, which was reached by a snow and ice slope, of 40° to 50° in places, and a knife-edge arête, only at 8 P.M. Descending, the party were compelled to bivouac at 19,000 feet, and next day reached their highest camp through a violent storm, which continued also all the 25th, and it was only at 2 A.M. on the 27th that they reached King Coal Camp. The hands and feet of all were badly frost-bitten. Descending further, they were disappointed to find that bears had broken into their cached supplies and eaten all up. The end of their hardships was reached at Hubricks on 7th July; they had been forty-four days entirely on ice, each man having to carry 70 lbs. for 200 miles over ridges and glaciers; a magnificent mountain exploit.

Mount Logan is in the Yukon territory, 20 miles from the frontier of Alaska; the nearest small town is M'Carthy in Alaska, not named after Capt. M'Carthy.

This account is derived from three numbers of the *Vancouver Daily Province*, kindly sent to the Editor by some unknown friend in that region, to whom he takes this opportunity of expressing his hearty thanks.

We have much pleasure in congratulating the members of the Cairngorm Club on the successful completion of another Indicator—this time on the summit of Ben Macdhui, which is, of course, the

highest, and perhaps most important, mountain in their district. The Indicator is similar to that erected on Lochnagar last year, and consists of a 3 feet high pedestal of granite rubble masonry, carrying a circular slab of glazed Doulton ware 24 in. in diameter. On the upper surface of the latter there are radial lines pointing out the direction, distance, and height of the principal mountains to be seen from the top in clear weather, and a short inscription recording that the Indicator was erected by the Cairngorm Club in 1925, as a tribute to the memory of Mr Alexander Copland, who was the first President of the Club.

The Indicator was built on Saturday, 25th July 1925. The unveiling ceremony took place on the following Saturday, when Mr William Garden, the President of the Club, presided over a gathering of about 140 persons. The actual unveiling of the Indicator was done by Mrs Garden, and the admirable little speech which she then delivered must surely be the highest public speech ever spoken by a woman in this country. Mr J. A. Parker, our President, designed the Indicator, and supervised all the transport and building operations.

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Members will be interested to hear of the formation of a Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland. We reproduce below part of a circular issued to prospective members, which will explain the aims and objects of the Club.

"The object of the Club is to foster the knowledge and love of mountains, and to afford opportunities of climbing and an introduction to mountaineering technique to those to whom the necessary companionship and advice are not available.

"Membership is confined to those who are not yet qualified for the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and who have reached the age of seventeen. The Club is formed in two sections meantime, one in Edinburgh and one in Glasgow, administered by separate Committees. There are elected to the Committee of each section two members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, who have promised to give the necessary advice and assistance to enable parties of members to make expeditions themselves and to gain their own experience without overstepping their limits."

The Club, it is intended, will prove a training ground for men taking up mountaineering, and a source of new members for the Scottish Mountaineering Club. There is already a membership of some fifty or so, an indication of the good work the Club may do, and of the increasing popularity of climbing among younger men, which makes previous methods of introducing beginners to the hills insufficient.

The Hon. Secretaries of the respective sections are W. B. Spiers, 6 Victoria Terrace, Glasgow, W. 2; and T. E. Thomson, 18 Rothesay Place, Edinburgh.

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Members will offer their good wishes to W. W. Naismith, one of the founders of the Club, on his marriage to Miss Edith A. M. Barron, on 29th July last. Mrs Naismith is fond of the hills like her husband.

## REVIEWS.

**"The Mountains of Snowdonia"** in History, the Sciences, Literature, and Sport. Edited by Herbert C. Carr and George A. Lister; with 58 illustrations and diagrams. (John Lane, The Bodley Head Ltd. Price, 25s.)

Messrs Carr and Lister, in producing this beautifully illustrated volume, have given to lovers of the hills yet another claimant for space on the mountaineer's library shelves. The book, which has a frontispiece in colour, from an original painting by David Hewitt, done specially, is not the sort of thing to take out to the hills, especially the Welsh hills, from the writer's knowledge of the conditions usually prevailing among them. It is the sort of book you buy and revel in time and again throughout the long winter evenings.

In their preface, the Editors explain that their publication is an attempt to deal comprehensively with the most mountainous district in Southern Britain.

They go on to say—and I am taking this review direct from their preface, for it seems a pity not to make use of so concise a description of the book's contents—that while seeking to include all the most interesting aspects of the mountains of Wales, it has been impossible to treat exhaustively with any one of them; in every case the chapters have been written for the layman, not for the specialist, and suggestions are made in bibliographical lists to help those who wish to plunge more deeply into the sea of knowledge. For the purposes of compiling the book the Editors acknowledge their indebtedness to such well-known contributors as Professor J. E. Lloyd, the Welsh historian, for a chapter on local history and legend; to Dr Edward Greenly, F.G.S., for that on geology; to Professors Kennedy Orton and Bretland Farmer for studies of the bird life and flora of the region, both recognised authorities in these branches of natural science; Professor Orton also writes on meteorology. Mr R. D. Richards, B.Sc., has dealt comprehensively with the industries of Snowdonia, an important subject which has not, hitherto, been so conveniently summarised. Mr L. J. Roberts, M.A., has made selections from Welsh poetry, and Dr E. A. Baker contributes an interesting paper upon its literature. Carr himself deals with the chapter upon mountaineering, and Winthrop Young writes as delightfully as ever memories of days spent on the Welsh hills, while the history of recent climbing in the Ogwen district is excellently treated by the well-known climber, Mr C. F. Holland. We are glad to see our popular member, Mr E. W. Steeple, writing on the origin and meaning of some of the more interesting place-names, and to read from the pen of that authority on mountain camping, Mr Priestly Smith, words of wisdom on the wandering gipsy life. Mr A. Lockwood,

who ought to know what he writes about, tells us how to distinguish a cloud burst from the usual weather, and contributes some valuable notes upon angling.

The book is arranged in four parts, the various subjects being grouped under the headings of History, the Physical and Natural Sciences, Literature, and Sport.

The first five chapters (Part I.) deal with the history of man in the district, with the facts and fictions of his past, the growth of his recreations, and the varied character of his industries. The sixth chapter (Part II.) passes to the physical side, and there the reader is told the story of Snowdonia as it is written on the rocks. Follows a sketch of the bird life of the region and a survey of its flora. Some notes on mountain weather and a brief historical review of maps complete the second part of the book.

Part III. is devoted to selections from the most representative Welsh poems on Snowdon, some never previously translated into English, and to extracts from well-known English authors both in poetry and prose.

The last five chapters deal with sport, beginning with a survey of the district from the point of view of the mountaineer, the needs of the pedestrian being considered before those of the cragsman, then follow two stirring chapters of personal reminiscences and a chapter on camping, finishing up with a collection of notes for the angler.

The appendices contain (1) an explanation of how Welsh place-names should be pronounced. A moment's consideration of a Welsh place-name will suffice to convince one how important this is, coupled, of course, with surprise that they are capable of being pronounced at all. (2) A series of tables which catalogue the principal features of the district and show at a glance their positions, heights, English meanings, and the O.S. map references.

The Editors admit to having encountered some difficulty in the spelling of Welsh names, but they do it quite gracefully, and the reader must not imagine rashly that the results are *all* printer's errors, for the proof sheets have been conscientiously revised by Dr N. J. Rollason.

It is a good book, and although it costs a lot it is well worth its price.

#### **The Rucksack Club Journal, Vol. V., No. 3, No. 19, 1925.**

This number should be of particular interest to our own members containing as it does several accounts of the Club's activities in Scotland. B. R. Goodfellow's account of the traverse of the Cuillin Ridge in a day and W. C. Richard's article on doing the four-thousand footers within a like period indicate that the Club is certainly progressive. From John Wilding's article on "The High



Levels of Great Britain" in which he suggests traversing the United Kingdom by various high level routes from Land's End to John o' Groats, albeit not within twenty-four hours, we may expect further developments in the near future.

The number also contains articles on climbs in England, Wales, and abroad, and an amusing paper by J. H. Doughty on "The Conventions of Mountaineering."

The illustrations throughout are excellent.

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**The Alpine Journal, May 1925, Vol. XXXVII., No. 230.**

As with No. 229, articles dealing with the Everest Expedition are the outstanding feature. A paper read by Lieut.-Col. Norton, and published in this number, entitled "The Problem of Mount Everest," although somewhat heavy matter, must be intensely interesting to those who follow the fortunes of the Expedition. He first of all deals with the staff work necessary to such an undertaking, then with the causes which contributed towards the failure in 1924, and finally makes several suggestions as to the course to be followed in future. A paper by Major R. W. G. Hingston, dealing with the "Physiological Difficulties in the Ascent of Mount Everest," is also printed in this number. Other outstanding articles are "Some Climbs in New Zealand and Notes on Tasmania in 1921," by Major H. D. Minchinton, and "Side-Valleys and Peaks of the Yellowhead Trail," by J. Monroe Thorington, M.D. An article written in a lighter vein, entitled "Mountains and the Public," comes from the pen of A. D. Godley, whose recent death is so much lamented by all mountaineers and by many others.

# Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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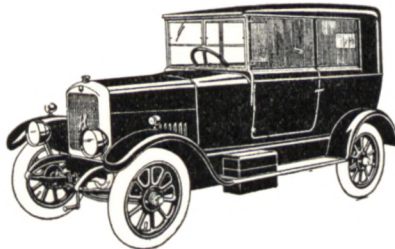
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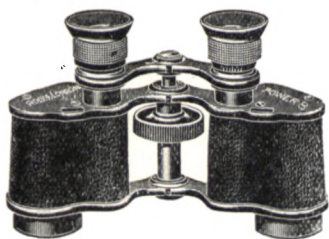
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