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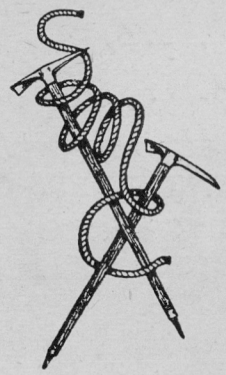
THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL

EDITED BY J. H. B. BELL



	PAGE
Mountain Memories . . . A. E. Robertson	81
Sutherland Crossing . . . Tom Weir	86
Camping and Climbing on Lewis and Harris . . . R. G. Folkard	96
Highland Patrol . . . E. W. Hodge	105
Mountain Casualties . . . D. G. Duff	111
Munro's Tables . . . John Dow and E. C. Thomson	118
On Editing the "Southern Highlands" Guide . . . J. D. B. Wilson	122
Some New Climbs in the North-West . . . J. H. B. Bell	127
New Climbs—Rum, Skye, Cairngorms, Glencoe, Arrochar and Arran	133
"The Songs of Craig and Ben" . . . Arthur Geddes	142
In Memoriam . . . F. O. Bower; J. C. Thomson; H. E. G. Tyndale	146
Proceedings—Easter and New Year Meets, Dinner and Reception	150
S.M.C. Abroad—Notes—Books—J.M.C.S.	155

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THE

SCOTTISH SKI CLUB JOURNAL

The articles and photographs in this Journal, equally distributed between Scotland and Abroad, are of interest to all mountaineers.

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THE EAST END OF LOCH AFFRIC

A. E. Robertson

THE SCOTTISH
MOUNTAINEERING
CLUB JOURNAL

VOL. XXIV. MAY 1949. NO. 140.

MOUNTAIN MEMORIES.

By Rev. A. E. Robertson.

(Being the concluding article compiled from the original diaries kept by Mr Robertson. Sections in brackets thus [ ] are edited and condensed matter from the diaries.)

[MR ROBERTSON'S Western tour of 1898 came to an end in the latter part of June with ten days' climbing in Skye, the first part in the company of Mr J. A. Parker and Dr and Mrs Inglis Clark.[1] They were based on Sligachan Hotel.] 21st June was a good day, and we made straight for the Pinnacle Route of Sgùrr nan Gillean. Clark and I went on first. I led up and found the rocks delightful, much easier than I expected. On reaching the top of the 3rd Pinnacle we resolved to wait for Parker and Mrs Clark (who were on a separate rope), as we would be better able to help Mrs Clark in the descent of the pinnacle. This descent is the *mauvais pas* of the whole climb: about half-way down you have to go down about 10 feet of perpendicular rock with very poor holds. This lands you on a narrow, sloping ledge which ends in a horrid precipice into the corrie below. Luckily there is an excellent hitch just above the 10-foot drop round which one can pass the spare rope. I let Clark down first and then climbed down carefully to the ledge on which he was standing. I used the spare rope hitched as described. Parker lowered Mrs Clark, who was received into the arms of her husband (and myself!),

and then descended himself, using the spare rope as I had done. The 5th Pinnacle is Sgùrr nan Gillean itself. I followed the recognised route to where it takes to the right up an easy gully, then went up the rocks to the left. They were uncommonly steep and you looked sheer down 1,000 feet, but the holds were magnificent and I shinned up them, coming out on the summit just on the cairn. There was mist on the summit, but when we were in the middle of our lunch the mist thinned, the clouds parted and a wonderful view of Blaven emerging from the clouds suddenly disclosed itself. We descended by the Tourist Route, the first few steps of which must be pretty trying to an ordinary tourist!

On 22nd June Parker and I had a long day on Clach Glas and Blaven. We were out eleven hours, hard going. We had some very difficult rock-work but splendid fun. The rocks are so good and so rough—like sandpaper—if you are careful and have a head, you are all right. On the following day we all did Bruach na Frithe. Clark and I went east along the ridge to the Bhasteir Tooth. We got up this to within 10 feet of the top when a fearful storm of wind, hail and cold rain burst in full fury upon us. The wind was *roaring*. I was first and lying out spread-eagled on a steepish face of rock. The last 10 feet rose right up from this point, but, in the conditions it would not have been safe to try it, so we beat a retreat as hastily as we could. We got off the rocks in due time, but oh, how cold I was!—I don't think I ever was so cold in my life. Part of the way down was a gully, which by this time was a torrent. I had to lie with the water pouring over me while I paid out the rope to Clark. When clear of the rocks we took to our heels and ran. *Ran*, gracious, we ran for miles, ending by coming up to the Inn at the double. I think the people thought we were mad. Clark had a bottle of whisky in his room and he gave me half a tumbler of it—neat. He took the same, and I hurried off to my room and dried myself. The next hour was rather an oblivion to me. I know I got into bed and fell fast asleep, being wakened by the dinner bell. I ate a dinner worthy of the occasion, simply clearing off

everything, and felt as fit as a fiddle: the next day I would never have known I had been out. Clark did not fare so well and had to lie in bed all evening. Parker and I came up to see him after dinner, and I remember standing at the foot of his bed and reproaching him in his excesses!

On 27th June we went to Glen Brittle House, and on 30th had a very long day. We climbed Sgùrr nan Eag and Sgùrr Dubh na Da Bheinn then Sgùrr Dubh and down to Loch Coruisk, and so back to Sligachan by Druim Hain and the glen. On 2nd July I climbed Sgùrr na Banachdich with Dr Alfred Harker, and I well remember the rapidity with which he traversed the ground, and how well he knew the easy and quick routes to go by.

[One major district remained—the Northern Highlands—and Mr Robertson covered this in a long tour in 1899, again using a bicycle for transport. Leaving the train at Lairg (27th April), he cycled, heavily laden, to Altnaharra where he was the only visitor. The evening meal was excellent—" Soup, a delicious salmon cutlet, fresh out of the loch, meat, pudding, cheese and a bottle of beer—everything grand." The following day, after an equally good breakfast, he was off for Ben Hope, cycling as far as Muiseal, and reaching the top in mist and rain at 12.45. The bad weather continued and snow fell low on the hills that night. However, on 2nd May he had a grand day for Ben More Assynt, climbing it from Inchnadamph where he was now based.]

Left hotel at 9.10 and got to the top of Connival at 11.40, then on to the top of Ben More Assynt at 12.30. I got a clear view and could see Handa and the sea away at Ereboll, also Ben Hope, Loyal, the fine peak of Clibreck and Ben Hee. There was a long vista of Loch Shin, and the sea views were very fine—a rich dark wine hue. [From Inchnadamph, on 3rd May, he cycled to Ullapool and thence by the ferry, " and a fearfully steep hill " to Dundonnell. " A man who came over with me in the ferry gave me a hand to push my loaded cycle up the brae, otherwise I would hardly have

managed it." On 4th May he had a splendid clear day for the Teallachs.]

I left Dundonnell at 8.55 up by the path at the back of the steading, and then by easy slopes to Bidean a' Ghlas Thuill at 11.30, and Sgùrr Fiona at 12.20. Left cairn at 12.50—Corrag Bhuidhe buttress at 1.45. Glissaded down 1,000 feet from the Cadha Gobhlach and reached Loch Toll an Lochain at 2.35. Left the loch at 3.30 and was back at Dundonnell at 5.15. [The next day he cycled to Inverlael Farm on Loch Broom, where he stayed for two days and climbed Beinn Dearg and other hills in the area, after which he moved on to Torridon. " Left Inverlael at 7.30 and arrived Torridon 3.30—52 miles." With the head keeper he climbed Liathach on 12th May and Alligin the day after.

The second half of May was spent in the Glen Strath Farrar and Glen Cannich areas. On 27th May, based on Affric Lodge, he climbed Mam Soul.] Left Affric Lodge at 8.15 for Sgùrr na Lapaich. Arrived at top 9.50: left cairn at 10.10 and along ridge to the top of Mam Soul at 11 A.M. A very clear day and perfect view. Ben Lawers seen over the west shoulder of Beinn Eibhinn, also the Tarmachans and Meall Ghaordie. Over the west shoulder of the west Sister (Treig) was a big flat-topped hill with a lot of snow on it. To the right of Nevis were Bidean nam Bian and Aonach Dubh, then Ben Starav, Cruachan and Ben a' Bheithir.

[Few of the Munros remained to be climbed. In the remaining weeks of that year's tour he completed them all, with the sole exception of Meall Dearg on the Aonach Eagach. His ascent of Ben More, Mull, came one beautiful evening in mid-June.] The evening view from the summit of Ben More was an unforgettable one. I have never had quite the like of it either before or since—the sun setting into the Atlantic is making for itself, on the mist below, a shining path of light. As I sit watching and waiting and looking the wisps of mist are gathering together forming a thick ribbed cloud below me which is slowly creeping up the valley and rolling over the bealachs, leaving the tops bright and clear in the evening sun. Looking westward, the cloud

has wholly covered Loch na Keal, leaving only the peak of Gometra rising, Proteus-like, out of the cloud sea. The shoulder of the hill below me is now shrouded, mantled in the wrinkled folds of white, and then, in the twinkling of an eye, the mantle is lifted off and it is all clear again. One could hardly tell where the mist ended and where the sea began. Along the line of the setting sun the rays have made a way for themselves and have pierced through the cloud mist, and you can see the sea along the path of light.

[During 1900 Mr Robertson had a number of good climbs, including Bidean nam Bian in April]—we climbed it by the north couloir. When on the ridge of Bidean, we saw a tremendous avalanche, a whole steep slope of a corry seemed to peel off and slide away down. We were thankful to be off its track! In September W. W. Naismith asked me to join him in an expedition to climb the Tower Ridge and N.E. Buttress on Ben Nevis. Needless to say, I eagerly accepted, and we journeyed to Fort William by the afternoon train on the 5th. We left the Alexandra Hotel at 7.30 on the 6th, and went up the path and over into the Allt a' Mhuilinn past the Luncheon Stone and so to Coire na Ciste. We climbed up to the neck between the Douglas Boulder and the Tower Ridge by the scree gully. From the neck we climbed to the top of Douglas Boulder and down again, then up the Tower Ridge to the foot of the Tower. Naismith, always on the look-out for new routes, made his way along a ledge which runs across the eastern face of the Tower, and then up steep rocks to the Tower summit. We reached the summit at 2 o'clock—misty but fine—and then essayed to descend by the N.E. Buttress. After a few hundred feet down I got off the right route. We fumbled about for a bit, always getting hung up, and so decided to climb up back again to the summit. We descended by the path and got back to the hotel at 7.45.

[Meall Dearg—the last of the Scottish Munros still to be climbed by Mr Robertson—remained: the opportunity for the ascent of it did not come until September 1901 when he was staying with his wife and Alex.

Moncrieff, advocate, now Lord Moncrieff, at Clachaig Inn.] 28th September. Climbed Meall Dearg, 3,118 feet, Aonach Eagach ridge, east end. This was a great day for me! The last of my 283 separate mountains over 3,000 feet in Scotland.[2]

From Clachaig Inn, with Kate and Sandy Moncrieff, we took the main road east up Glencoe for 2½ miles and then north up a horrible loose scree gully to the ridge. A short scramble westwards took us to the cairn. On the cairn we broached the champagne which Sandy had provided and I had carried up (a quart of Ayala), and we toasted ourselves and the day and the event. Sandy made me first kiss the cairn and then my wife! We inserted a card with our names and the special event into the now empty bottle, which we carefully packed away among the stones of the cairn. This bottle, intact, was still there in 1930. Cameron, the keeper, was on the top with Lord Strathcona and they handled it with interest and replaced it. We descended the steep scree gully with ease! I, at any rate, never descended a scree slope with less trouble!

References to *S.M.C.J.*—(1) V., 144; (2) VII., 10.

SUTHERLAND CROSSING.

By Tom Weir.

WITH the temperature at 84° F. and a heat-wave showing no signs of a break we made our plans. We would cross over Ben Klibreck, go through by Strath Mor and Glen Golly to Strath Dionard, explore the peaks of the Reay Forest and finish up at Cló Mòr for some bird-watching on the biggest cliffs on the British mainland. Geese were supposed to nest on the moors somewhere, and snow buntings were reputed to nest on the tops. There was the chance, too, of seeing the pine martin on its home ground, for this sparsely inhabited country which stretches to Cape Wrath is said to be its real stronghold in Scotland.

But, to accomplish this, some staff work was necessary, for we wanted to be self-supporting yet carry the bare minimum of equipment. Some letter-writing, and we had the generous offer of a bothy in the wilds of Strath Dionard, and another at Gobernuisgach, handy for Glen Golly. This would save us carrying tents for the first part of the trip. A depot for tents and surplus stores was fixed at Gualin House. So all was arranged.

The day was cloudy and the chill round our ears was not all imagination as we loaded our kit aboard the train. The newspapers forecast sleet and snow on the high ground. At Drumochter the hail was lashing on the windows, and the clouds advancing to meet us were unmistakeably snow clouds. The papers were dead right. At Aviemore the wind cut like a knife, and the snowy-white hills had a January look. It was strange to see the smouldering ashes of a great forest fire that had swept from Carr Bridge to Aviemore.

At Inverness we picked up the third member of the party, Arthur MacPherson, brown as a berry and looking his old cheery self. Ben Wyvis was a sight, snow-capped and vasty brown against fast-moving clouds. Over the firth we could see waders flighting, and catch glimpses of terns as they swooped to the water.

It is a slow journey to Lairg with long halts at each stop, and a leisurely wait at this terminus while mails are sorted out and cars brought up. However, it gave us a chance to do some shopping and divide our gear into six loads, three of which went on the Durness car, ourselves and the other three going on the Tongue bus.

Crask was our destination for a traverse of Ben Klibreck, but the scene was far from reassuring. Clouds trailed on the moors and hail beat from time to time on the windows of the bus. Klibreck itself thrust a snowy shoulder into black cloud, boding ill for our plan. However, after the inactivity of the long journey, we were glad to get out, hail or no, and by a fine path we took to the hill at a furious pace, disturbing a greenshank which rose from the burnside in a flash of white. This was taken as a good omen.

The climb was up a long peaty shoulder. On the summit ridge things were more interesting. A blink of sun cleared the mist off the top and lit up a towering bank of cumulus which stood above the vastness of inky moors and trailing vapours. The snow was deep for a May fall, 5 inches to a foot being average for the last 600 feet, very hard going, but making for glorious scenic contrasts of height and depth.

From the summit we plunged steeply to the little inn at Altnahara where our rucksacks awaited us. The staff work was paying its dividends, for not only was a car provided to take us to Gobernuisgach but a hot dinner awaited us.

It was dusk and the drear landscape looked empty and forlorn, as only Sutherland can look, as we bumped our way to Strath Mor to reach the oasis of Gobernuisgach at the entrance to Glen Golly. The keeper was as good as his word, and we were soon lodged in the wash-house with our wet clothes steaming in front of a peat fire, while we lay snug in our sleeping-bags on the floor.

Sunshine streaming in through the window roused us, though the time was only 6.30 A.M. The ground was hard with frost and Ben Hope glistened in crinkled snow high above the shadowy strath. Every little pocket was revealed in the slanting sunlight. Towards Reay Forest the peaks were filmy, with morning mist hanging on their quartz crests. The river was a thread of blue and gold edged with brilliant birches. The " chick-chee, chick-chee " of snipe, the tinkle of willow warblers and the loud rattle of a whitethroat made the dawn chorus. Later on we were surprised to hear the " sizzling " of lesser redpolls among some alders.

Unfortunately this brilliant spell was short-lived; it soon changed to hail and rain showers as we made off up Glen Golly. It is a lovely place of birch and mountain ash, with a river that runs through rocky walls, a glen beloved of pine martens, and, although we did not see any, I am quite sure that a few saw us. In a charmed corner of the glen we drummed up with a fire of birch to boil our tea and eggs before pushing into the bare rocks of the hill pass to Dionard.

May 1948

CLIFFS OF THE CLÓ MÓR, SUTHERLAND
(A Fulmar Petrel soars aloft on the right)

Tom Weir

Rain met us on the pass, and in storms we climbed into this stony wilderness, to look down at last on Loch Dionard and its great crag. Up here we sat down to watch the play of light on Meall Horn and Arkle and to speculate on possible routes on the massive face that lay before us, a thousand feet of it waiting to be explored.

MacPherson stayed to fish, but Matt and I pushed onwards to the glen. This upper part of the Dionard is very heavy walking, and we were glad, after a mile or two, to strike a track which led us to the promised hut whose location we had plotted on the map. Two camp beds, a little table and stove made up its furnishings, and the place was spotlessly clean. We lost no time in brewing up.

The clansman arrived two hours after us, drenched but carrying four fish which he threw down in triumph. Undoubtedly they were half-pounders. He emphasised the intense cold and the rainy conditions in which they were caught; indeed he expressed great surprise that fish thought of poking their snouts above water in such conditions. Our praise of this achievement quite swept him off his feet.

Two camp beds among three demands a spin of the coin, and MacPherson and myself were lucky. We got down to it. I was awakened in the night by the chattering of teeth at my side. I was soon aware that my own were in duet, for the cold was striking right through the bottom canvas of the beds. We abandoned them forthwith and huddled together on the floor for whatever heat we could muster amongst us, Matt being the chief victim. With the stove going and all our spare clothes on, it was good to feel the heat beginning to flow.

That stove must have been giving off paraffin fumes, for I awoke with a headache and a feeling of listlessness and the others complained of a similar feeling. This was a pity, as it was a perfect morning with the sun shining and the river reflecting the rolling clouds. All the tops were showing off their fancy colours to great effect, but it was a crag, marked on the map A' Cheir Gorm, which held our interest, a pyramid of grey rock

offering a climb from the corrie floor to the crest of a narrow ridge.

After a breakfast of MacPherson's trout we made off to inspect that fine face at close quarters. But the rain beat us to it; indeed, snow was falling as we tied on the rope below the chosen start. It was bitter on the hands for such a difficult introduction, as the first hundred feet were very hard indeed. As it was too cold to continue on stuff of this standard, we traversed left to where the angle eased a bit, and got to the top by an interesting if rather loose route. Undoubtedly there is good climbing to be had on this face.

Now that the climb was over, the weather began to pick up. Below us, Coire Duall with its ice-worn slabs was like a Cuillin corrie. Loch Eriboll was blue as the patches of sky between drifting clouds. Shadows floated over the green patches by its shores in contrast with the velvet grey of Conamheall and the wild rocks stretching to the face of Ben Hope and its 1,000 feet of snow. Away to the north the little gannet isle of Sule Stack was a shadow on the sea.

We made our way over the narrow ridge, rejoicing in the fine conditions. Lord Reay's Seat was a tooth of rock which we had to visit, and from it we watched snow showers expend themselves to reveal the triple head of Suilven, Quinag, Canisp, and, in the far distance, An Teallach. In the west, the high hills of Harris and even the Cuillin were visible on the vivid sea. Above this wonderful horizon miles of silvery clouds floated. From Rudha Stoer to Eddrachillis Bay and Handa the coast was just a mass of sparkling lochans and silhouettes of headlands and islands.

Descending, we had a surprise encounter with an eagle which gave a forty-foot range view of the great bird. It was grand to be out of the wind in this colourful evening, to come down to the corrie floor where, amongst the piled boulders, cushion pink and rose-root were blooming, touches of charm in a sterile landscape.

I know of no other area in Scotland so barren of life; even the hoodie crow is absent from this glen. During a walk on the following morning, taken specially for

birds, I heard only a ring ousel calling from where a couple of rowan trees grew from some rocks, saw three greenshank in courtship pursuit, two or three pairs of sandpipers and a wheatear, meadow pipit, wren and cuckoo. That was the lot.

What a place to spend a lifetime, where the only signs of spring are the return of a few birds to the moor and the appearance of the little flowers of the bog, buck bean, lousewort, milkwort, tormentil, rose-root and a few Alpines. Only by Loch Dionard was there any sign of permanent habitation. The legend of the place is that the woman of the house was left by herself at childbirth, her agony deranging her mind ever afterwards. It must have been a lonely life, hard even for this country of Sutherland.

Packing up, we cleaned the bothy and made across to Gualin House, where our depot of stores awaited collection. Although we had never met the people, no time was lost in providing us with tea, and all too quickly we had to cut our ceilidh as the mail car drove up to take us to Keoldale, where we were to ferry over the Kyle of Durness.

"Just wave a hankie," the car driver told us, "and the ferryman will be over for you." Standing waving a hankie across half a mile of water seemed a rather hopeless sort of business, but we did not grudge the wait, for, after the rocky wilderness we had left, the green turf and fields and stone walls seemed delightfully inviting. Even the few houses put the landscape in a different key. Corncrakes were sounding, and from a wire a corn bunting jangled, civilised sounds like the music of blackbird and thrush.

This Kyle of Durness is a narrow sea loch with wide stretches of firm sand between green shores. As foreground to the grey quartz of the Reay mountains, it seemed particularly attractive on this sunny evening. At last the silhouette of a small boat made over to us, testifying to the keen sight of the ferryman or the whiteness of our hankie.

Once aboard the boat we were invited to camp near the house at a fine clearing on the edge of a birch gully

above the sea. The trees and the chorus of bird song at once put us in favour of the place, and soon we had the tents down, a floor of bracken laid and a meal on the go. A pair of ravens doing battle with an intruding buzzard, rock doves nesting in a cave at our side, oyster catchers sitting on eggs by the shore and the sound of the sea rolling in were things to put us in the right tune. All of us felt cheerier here than in the gloomy recesses of Reay.

Rain woke me in the night, but it dawned fine so that we were up and away early, to go at last to Cló Mòr. The luck was in, for we got a lift by tractor to within a couple of miles of our cliffs. Beyond that the rough road was impassable for wheeled vehicles, and we said good-bye to our road building party. The country around was unexciting, reminding one, by its gentle contour, more of the Border hills than of remotest Sutherland. Long-legged Cheviot sheep were grazing where we had hoped to find geese nesting, but wild duck skimming a lochan and the twisting flight of waders promised better things.

Turning north, we followed the stream, knowing that in a mile we would come to the sea. Kearvaig Bay was as dramatic as the Cló Mòr, a little curve of silver sand, a cottage, and beyond it rollers of sea crashing in mushrooms of spray against rock skerries and cliffs. Kittiwake gulls were a fringe of white on a square-topped skerry, ring plovers ran about our feet and on the sea were masses of swimming birds, eiders, razorbills, guillemots, shags. The whole impression was of colour and movement and an excitement of noise: blue sea and sky, silver spray, great cliffs of red stone, the beat of waves and the crying of birds.

At once we were among nesting birds. Puffins dodged out of burrows, scurrying away, black wings flickering, red legs hung out behind, and out in front that remarkable ornament which can only be called a " beak," not a very teetotal one either. On the skerries and cliffs the ledges were crammed, razorbills on the lower tiers, fulmars on the upper, and everywhere, going in and out of burrows, puffins. The air was full of the sound of crying birds, like school children in a playing field, a joyous, heartening

sound: and like bees in a hive they buzzed back and forward.

It was comical to watch the antics of the razorbills. Where two or more were gathered together they indulged in much neck stretching, a kind of communal P.T. Fulmars showed off their wonderful soaring powers in the intervals of love-making on ledges. Interesting, too, that kittiwakes, those black-eyed, black-legged gulls, were compelled by the wind to float in backwards to the cliffs in order to make a landing on the ledges where grew the kind of grasses they plucked in beakfuls for their nests.

The turf round the head of these cliffs made delightful walking. Rose-root was in a profusion of vivid green and yellow, flowering among bluebells and great sprays of sea pinks. Down the cliffs were sweet scented, white flowers which I could not name.

But how can I convey the thrill of a coastline so full of movement that one cannot take in any portion at a glance? Standing on the edge of these 900-foot cliffs, one is hypnotised by the very act of looking down. Birds criss-cross in so many different layers of air that one is almost compelled to join the rhythmic pattern. Look at them long enough and there is no knowing what might happen. Deep down is the charging sea, churned to milk and showering columns of spray as a skerry is half submerged. There is nothing we meet on mountains so frightening as the sheer plunge of those walls of Torridonian Red Sandstone.

Eastwards from Cló Mòr the cliffs gradually fall in height, the herbage becoming coarser as nesting numbers diminish. What we wanted was a stream and some wood for a fire, and both were provided at an appropriate gully. It was fine to bask in the sunshine, drinking tea and watching the wheel of a buzzard overhead. I was accused of imagining things when I declared that I could see through the glass the waves breaking on Sule Stack, over 30 miles to the north. But it was no imagination, and the others verified it.

A small lochan marked on the map attracted MacPherson. While he went to try a cast we explored a

cunningly chosen gullery, a little headland defended on all sides by rock walls and caves where the sea boomed fiercely. Here, amongst a garden of sea pinks, lesser black-backed gulls and herring gulls had hundreds of nests. The birds were glad to see us off as we climbed our way out on the steep but incredibly rough rock. The problem was not to find holds but to avoid the needle-like rock crystals.

The evening was now at its best, with the turf of Faraid Head showing emerald beyond the white sands of Balnakeil Bay. We met the fisherman a couple of miles from home, very disgusted at not getting as much as a rise.

This remarkable climate of ours! A warm evening in the tent, with a genial sunny morning following. Yet, before breakfast was over, the temperature had jumped down 10 degrees or more, and hail was lashing down followed by heavy rain. We went exploring for birds, beginning with the hill Beinn an Amair and crossing to Loch Airidh na Beinne, then down the Dall River. But we saw no geese, only a pair of greenshank, a few mallard and an odd snipe among other things. So we had drawn a blank with snow bunting, geese and pine marten. But that is the way with natural history sometimes.

The day was not without reward, however, for Arthur caught five fish. Instead of showing enthusiasm he sneaked them out of his bag in melancholy, apologising for their small size. Obviously the black dog was on him. We praised this $1\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of fish so generously that he bore up visibly. And, to cheer us all up, the rain of the day cleared to the most delightful of May evenings, with the Kyle showing off its shades of blue and green, glowing rocks and heather. Even the birds' song had a more joyous ring to it, a chorus made up of linnet, wren, blackbird, thrush, hedge sparrow, chaffinch, willow warbler and the shrill pipings of wading birds.

This bay was to show us even finer colours in the morning as we packed up to cross the water for a journey to Faraid Head, to spend our last night camping there. We were looking forward to Balnakeil Bay and the sands we had admired at a distance, as fine a sweep of white

sand as there is in the whole of Scotland. We did not expect to find a dozen whimbrel feeding there. Later, we were to see a small party of sanderlings, almost on the same patch of sand, wanderers like the whimbrel, halting a little while before flying north to nest over the sea towards the midnight sun.

Then we came to the cliffs of this grassy headland, a miniature Cló Mòr with the same sounds and excitement of sea and movement. Fulmars were everywhere, and eggs or birds packed the ledges. It was good to see puffin burrows again and a cliff full of kittiwakes. Under an overhang we could see a buzzard's nest, but it was in a fearfully exposed place, a wonderful eyrie set dizzily above the crashing surf and half-submerged skerries.

On a little lochan was a gullery, a place of clustering marsh marigolds and buck bean. We took nineteen eggs from the nesting, black-headed gulls, but felt rather guilty about it although we needed the food. Every burrow of this sandy soil seemed to contain a nesting wheatear.

By a spring of clear water we pitched our tents, too lovely a spot for our last night under canvas. In the dusk the rasping sounds of corncrakes and the whirr of drumming snipe were comforting, but carried a portent of rain on this cloudy night.

We packed up in a downpour to catch the mail car south. On such a morning the run to Lairg was desolation itself, a desolation of boulders and tumbled rocks without grandeur. For more miles than one cares to count the country is bare of vegetation, peat banks laid out with newly cut turfs being the only signs of human life. Little tracks and stony roads leading westward indicated their destination, to the fringe where the last lonely settlements live their crofter lives by the seashore.

The rich farms of Evanton and the green fields, Speyside and its wealth of trees, struck us strangely after the winter of Cape Wrath and the wild hills of Sutherland.

CAMPING AND CLIMBING IN LEWIS AND HARRIS.

By R. G. Folkard.

APART from the visit of Messrs W. Ewen and G. R. Symmers to the Uig hills in 1933 * and of Messrs H. J. Irens, F. Solari and A. Kinnear to Strone Ulladale in 1938,† there appears to have been no serious investigation of the rock climbing possibilities of either of these districts. Awakening interest is indicated by the more frequent visits that have been made in recent years. In July and August of this year (1948) a party of four, consisting of M. de V. Wills, R. G. Folkard (both J.M.C.S., London Section), Miss M. J. Fox and Mrs M. Wills, spent a fortnight camping in the island. For the benefit of other parties who may also wish to camp, and all accommodation, public or even private, if available, seems to be hopelessly remote, the brief details of our arrangements are given.

There is a twice-weekly bus service from Tarbert to Husinish, leaving Tarbert at midday on Tuesday. This took us to Amhuinnsuidhe. From here a camp was established in Glen Ulladale fairly high up the glen. There are several good camp sites available, and near the loch, among the chaos of boulders at the foot of the great overhang of Strone Ulladale, there is at least one good potential bivouac, which should, with little adaptation, provide comfort and shelter against anything (except insect life). In addition to the climbing immediately accessible in Glen Ulladale, the crags of Husival Mòr, Taran, Strone Scourst and Craig Stulaval are not very far distant, and may well be explored.

A two-day cross-country trek passing by the remote and isolated crofts of Kinlochresort took us to our second camp, which was near the head of Glen Raonasgail. A certain amount of ingenuity was necessary to find a suitable site; more extensive sites are available lower down the glen, but there is a tendency towards midge

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* " Islands of Scotland " Guide, pp. 104-107.

† *S.M.C.J.*, No. 127, p. 72.

May 1948

BALNAKEIL BAY AND THE ROCKS OF FARAID HEAD

Tom Weir

infestation there. Supplies of food were collected from Islivig Post Office. It is necessary to send all supplies by post, as only milk and eggs are available locally. The head of Glen Raonasgail is magnificently situated for rock climbing, as, in addition to the excellent climbing to be had in the glen itself, practically every other crag in the Uig hills is quite easily accessible. On departure, we trekked cross-country to Morsgail Lodge and the road. The bus service, which is daily (except Sundays), leaves Brenish for Stornoway at 9 A.M. It is to be noted that the hotel at Garynahine, marked on the Ordinance Survey Map and mentioned in the Guide, has now been closed.

In the climbing that is described below, the quality of the rock on the routes done was found to be exceedingly good, but major lines of weakness almost invariably carry plenty of vegetation, and where the rock is very broken it is also much overgrown. This was also the case on the lower rocks of Strone Ulladale. The gullies are mostly to be avoided, as they are generally extremely wet and vegetatious. The rock on the steeper faces and buttresses is in the main clean, and much of it is slabby, but the texture is superbly rough and there is no lack of small incut holds and projecting quartz crystals. Very little loose stuff was encountered, and all the climbs were on sound rock.* There is a local belief that there is some bad rock in Glen Raonasgail, and we were also informed by Mr MacDonald, the postman, who lives near Loch Tamanavay, that small rock falls in Glen Raonasgail are frequent. Mr MacDonald has an unrivalled knowledge of the district, and we are indebted to him for most of the information about footpaths given below.

Footpaths.

Amhuinnsuidhe—Kinlochresort.—A stalker's path goes as far as Loch Ulladale; beyond there is easy going, by skirting the loch on the right, and making a direct line south of the burn.

* There is one possible exception to this, No. 1 Rib on Sgorran Dubh Theinneasbhal described on p. 103.

Kinlochresort—Tamanavay.—Follow the loch as far as the last building (derelict) on the north side, strike up the hill to the large cairn visible from below. From here there is a path, rough but very well cairned, to Loch Tamanavay. This path appears to be largely maintained by Mr MacDonald, who traverses it three times a week.

Tamanavay—Ardroil.—There is a path most of the way, it does not quite reach Ardroil and tends to disappear in places.

Head of Glen Raonasgail—Morsgail Lodge.—There is no path, but the best direct route crosses the bealach between Teinnsval and Tamanaisval, then traverses round above Loch Dibadale and takes a fairly direct line well up on the south slopes of Kiraval and Beinn Mheadhonach, and so to the path between Morsgail Lodge and the road.

The following is the result of the party's exploration of the rock climbing:—

Forest of Harris.

Strone Ulladale.—In order to describe the climbs done it is proposed to give some account of the topography of the central face. The crag is divided vertically by two huge gullies, the Great Gully on the left, which stretches from the base to the top of the crag, and an equally imposing gully at the back of the recess on the right, known as the Amphitheatre. The floor of the Amphitheatre consists of a large grassy recess cut off from below by rock faces with considerable areas of vegetation. Two grassy rakes extend to the left from the Amphitheatre, starting below the buttress, dividing the Amphitheatre from the Great Gully (Amphitheatre Buttress), and one of these rises slowly as far as the Great Gully, where it virtually peters out. The other consists of a steep grassy rake immediately below the left base of Amphitheatre Buttress, and continues as far as the Great Gully, where there is an easy grass crossing.* Here a small branch gully enters the main gully on the left.

* This is on the route followed by Irens' party in 1938.

To the right of the Amphitheatre and just above the grass slopes below it is a small rush-covered shelf * (Rush Shelf) immediately below the Great Overhang.

The central face on which all the climbing has so far been done will be considered as consisting of a lower and upper crag.

Lower Crag—Slab Route.—400 feet. Last pitch Very Difficult. R. G. F. and M. de V. W., 28th July. Starts from grass platform (cairn) surmounting small rock buttress and slightly right of the Great Overhang. A long tongue of slabby rock stretches down to the platform and gives a fine pitch of 100 feet. Then follows 200 feet of easy climbing, trending left. The steeper rocks above were climbed direct to Rush Shelf (block belay at 120 feet).

A short descending traverse left leads to the grass slopes of the Amphitheatre.

Amphitheatre Approach.—330 feet. Difficult. R. G. F., M. de V. W. and M. J. F., 30th July. Except for the first pitch the climbing is on clean rock. Start, below and right of Amphitheatre, scramble to foot of rock and Heather Buttress immediately left of wet black wall (cairn). This gave 120 feet of steep climbing, with occasionally some rock, to grass slope and block belay. At the back of the large grass recess a steep slab, right of a gully, was climbed until it was possible to step into the gully above a small cave, then up the gully to rock platform and belay on left (60 feet). Climb up to the left then straight up, thread belay at 90 feet; a further 50 feet to block belay (cairn) on grass slopes leading to the Amphitheatre.

Upper Crag — Amphitheatre Buttress.—465 feet. Severe. R. G. F. and M. de V. W., 28th July. Start at foot of buttress (cairn).

1. Up grassy rake for 30 feet, when lodgement was secured on buttress and an ascending traverse was made left for 70 feet to small cave (poor stance and belay).

2. A traverse right, until the wall could be climbed to grass ledge (50 feet).

* This shelf or platform is referred to in the "Islands of Scotland." Guide, p. 101.

3. The slab above was climbed to heather ledge (50 feet).

4. A 40-foot wall, climbed first left then right, then 15 feet of heather to small stance.

5. The wall above was climbed to left to below overhang, which was by-passed to the right first on rock, then steep moss; the rock above the overhang was regained as soon as possible, and the ascent continued to good stance overlooking Great Gully (100 feet).

6. The rib above was climbed to commodious platform, which has huge boulder at back and overlooks the Great Gully (60 feet).

7. The crux. The wall on the right was climbed by combined tactics; there is a short slab above followed by a small holdless rib (40 feet), then 40 feet of scrambling to a good stance (cairn). Leader climbed this pitch with one boot removed. 50 feet of scrambling to the top.

No. 1 *Buttress* (this is between the two branches of the Great Gully above the easy upper grass crossing).—250 feet. Difficult. R. G. F., M. de V. W. and M. J. F., 30th July. Starts in the lesser branch gully to the left of the buttress and a few feet above its base. A direct start at the base of the buttress could not be made, and the gully above has two parallel overhanging chimneys. A short traverse was made into a groove to the left, and this was ascended to a grass slope above the overhang (70 feet). A traverse right was now made on to the buttress to some large blocks. This was climbed to the top, keeping as much to the right as possible as this gave the most interesting climbing (180 feet of climbing, then scrambling).

No. 3 *Buttress* (numbered from the right).—Difficult. R. G. F., M. de V. W. and M. J. F., 29th July. The lower grass slopes are followed to the Great Gully. This is entered by an airy walk along a ledge, the departure on other side is more awkward (two pitches, perhaps Difficult). A grassy rake is then followed and the base of No. 2 Buttress (on the upper part of which Irens' route finishes) is passed and the start is made from the grass to the left of No. 3 Buttress (cairn). This gives a somewhat artificial route with 145 feet of climbing followed by 120 feet of scrambling.

From the base of No. 3 Buttress the top can obviously be reached by scrambling or walking if a route to the left is selected.

Crags in Glen Ulladale.—There should be some climbs on the west side of the glen. Creagan Leathan might

also provide some routes, but these would be fairly short. Nothing was examined here.

Husival Mòr, N.E. Face.—A visit was made to Glen Cravadale to look at these crags. They seemed to be too broken to provide more than short rock climbs, except in a small corrie towards the north-west, where it appeared one or two longer routes might be possible. No climbing was done; the day was intensely hot, so a memorable bathe was had in the loch.

Uig Hills.

Teinnasval—Sgorran Dubh Theinneasbhal.—This is described in the "Islands of Scotland" Guide (pp. 106-107). The following nomenclature is suggested: the buttress to the left of the main forked gully, North Buttress; that between the two branches of the fork, Central Buttress; that to the right, South Buttress; and the buttress south of the three parallel gullies, Far South Buttress; the three gullies, Nos. 1, 2 and 3 Gullies respectively, No. 1 being the nearest to Far South Buttress.

North Buttress.—Some broken rock might give a certain amount of scrambling.

Central Buttress.—The lower part looks impracticable and the upper part an easy scramble.

South Buttress.—490 feet. Severe. R. G. F. and M. de V. W., 4th August; leader wore rubbers. Start at the lowest part of the buttress overlooking the main gully (cairn).

1. 20 feet. The steep rib was climbed to a grass platform.

2. 25 feet. Traverse left on to triangular rock projecting over the gully and climb the slab to small stance, thread belay.

3. 80 feet of climbing mainly on slabs to platform.

4. 50 feet. Either the crack above or the slab on the right can be climbed, then continue to the foot of a grassy rake sloping up to the left.

5. 65 feet. At the far end of the rake, climb another slab to a roomy niche.

6. 60 feet. Straight up to a heather and moss slope.

7. At the back of this slope climb 15 feet to a good stance and belay behind a pile of blocks. The slabs leading upwards from here are at a fairly high angle, and a huge overlapping slab, like a

tile on a gargantuan roof, blocks the way except to the right. Still higher there is a considerable overhang guarding the final exit.

8. 95 feet. Traverse right and upwards until level with the base of the overlapping slab, then continue straight up, keeping a few feet away from its right edge until half-way up it; traverse left and surmount the overlap by a delicate move and continue upwards to a fine stance consisting of a sheltered nook behind a pile of rocks.

9. 80 feet. Climb out of the stance on the right and traverse left immediately below the final overhang until a small bulge is reached; this is surmounted on good holds and leads to easier rocks which are ascended until it is possible to scramble on to the roof of the overhang (cairn). Scrambling to the top.

*Far South Buttress.**—440 feet. Very Difficult. R. G. F. and M. J. F., 3rd August. The lowest portion of the buttress can be avoided by walking on to a grassy shelf from the right. Start, just left of and a little above the lowest point of the lower section of the buttress (cairn).

Three short pitches give 85 feet of moderate climbing to the grassy shelf, this is followed by 90 feet of scrambling to the foot of a large slab lowest at its right end.

1. 20 feet. Climb slab to grass slope.

2. 15 feet. The overhanging chimney in the wall on the right is ascended on good holds to stance.

3. 30 feet. Traverse left along sloping ledges to stance below black groove.

4. 40 feet. The black groove is climbed on awkward holds until an escape can be made on to the rock platform on the left, belay.

5. 80 feet. Climb the corner above the belay for about 20 feet, then traverse left to a line of weakness going up to a grass slope and a good stance.

6. 100 feet. Continue up, trending slightly right and passing overhanging rectangular block on the right, to a stance and belay just above the block.

7. 30 feet. A slab of superb roughness leads to a stance and belay just left of a small overhang.

8. 30 feet. Step into a small crack on the right, which is climbed, and continue up the slab above to a grass platform.

9. 15 feet of easy climbing to a broad ledge (cairn.)

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* This buttress was climbed by the 1933 party ("Islands of Scotland" Guide, pp. 106-107). Their route is described as follows: "The direct route up the centre of the buttress was not practicable on account of the smoothness of the rock, and the party were forced more and more to the right before they got to the top." The route we climbed goes directly up the buttress and more or less overlooks the parallel gullies all the way up. Once on the upper part of the buttress no escape seemed possible either to the left or right.

The Three Gullies.—Nos. 1 and 3 are well defined for most of their height, and might possibly give some climbing. No. 2 Gully is mostly very indefinite and is hardly a gully at all when seen close up.

No. 1 Rib (lies between Nos. 1 and 2 Gullies).—445 feet. Very Difficult. R. G. F., M. J. F. and M. de V. W., 4th August. Start, scramble up slabby rocks to a tongue of rock coming down from rib into No. 2 Gully (cairn).

1. 100 feet. A scramble up easy slab (stance), then climb rib to small stance beside gully.

2. 50 feet. Climb wall to a fine stance among a pile of immense blocks, apparently firm.

3. 45 feet. Continue up the wall above, passing some large blocks that appear insecure. Poor stance and belay just above sloping platform.

4. 60 feet. First a small rib, then ascend either a slab on the right (delicate) or a crack on the left (strenuous) and finish up the wall on the right to a small stance and poor belay.

5. 30 feet. Near the top of the nose above the holds virtually disappear, but the angle soon eases, stance and small belay. (Leader in socks on this pitch, would be at least severe in boots.)

6. 80 feet. A small wall then continues directly up a rib to a grassy stance.

7. 80 feet. Easy climbing directly up the rib, which is now rather broken, stance and cairn.

The rib between No. 3 Gully and the South Buttress looks as if it would give a good climb.

Tamanaisval—Creag Dhùbh Dhibadail.—These are described in the "Islands of Scotland" Guide (p. 107). R. G. F. and M. J. F. examined this crag on 6th August. It is the most unrelenting wall of rock that we have seen anywhere. The average angle is about 85 degrees. The rock is of a smoother texture than that of Teinnasval just near-by, and it is extraordinarily firm. Despite its steepness very few boulders have fallen.

A line of weakness was explored to a height of about 150 feet, and a grass ledge at nearly two-thirds of the height of the crag could no doubt have been attained without excessive difficulty, although we found the climbing by no means easy. The most obvious exit from the ledge was by a crack with a fierce overhang at the top, above which the angle of the rocks appears to relent a little. A route might perhaps be forced here.

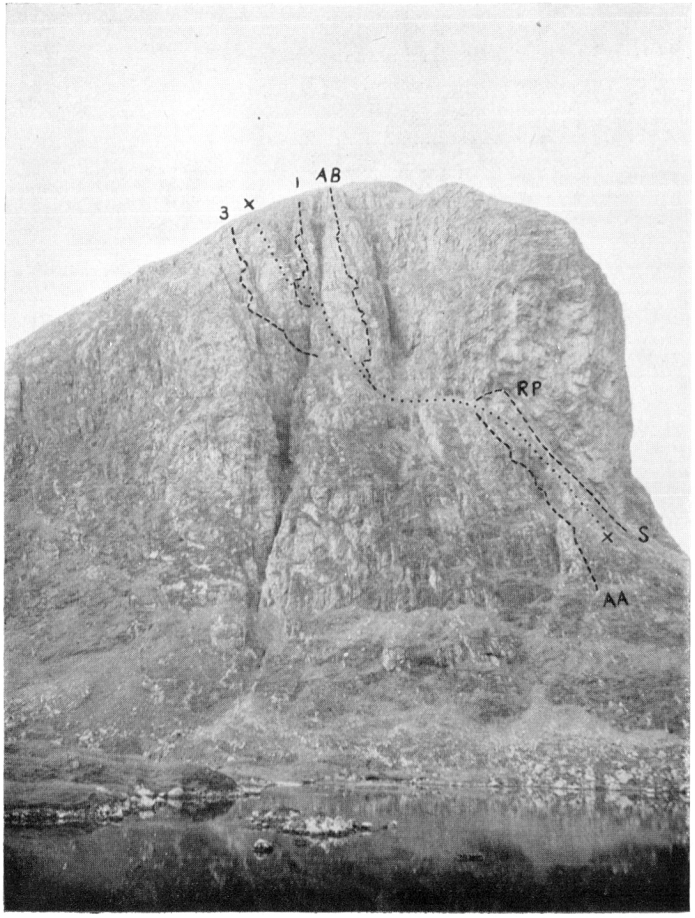
The rocks at either end of the crag are not quite so steep and might give some climbing, but most of the central portion appears to be too steep and unbroken to be climbable.

Mealisval—Creagan Thealastail.—Described in the "Islands of Scotland" Guide (pp. 102-104). To the right of the ridge adjacent to Palla Glas that was climbed by the 1933 party, a grass terrace slopes up to the right. Below the terrace three shallow gullies divide the rock into three buttresses (and an insignificant buttress at the left end). Above the grass terrace the crags are rather broken, but are more continuous above the right buttress, where the grass terrace virtually terminates.

A route was made up the central buttress and the face above the right buttress by R. G. F., M. J. F. and M. de V. W. on 5th August. 710 feet of climbing. Standard Difficult. The texture of the rock on the lower buttress is very smooth, in the upper part of the climb it is much rougher.* Start, in the centre of the central buttress to the left of a black section of rock (cairn). 100 feet of climbing led to a stance and belay below a small overhang. Continue up the slab to the left to easier ground, then traverse right to a stance behind a block. The traverse was continued to the right, and the slab immediately left of a long greasy crack was climbed to a stance and belay at 100 feet. 150 feet of scrambling followed to the terrace. We walked right, along the terrace, to a small rocky pinnacle just beyond a large area of overhanging black rock (cairn). The pinnacle was climbed and the ridge on the other side traversed to a heather ledge at the foot of a vertical wall. The wall was climbed on the right and a direct route continued above in four pitches, giving 295 feet of varied climbing ending on a grassy rake. This was ascended to the left for a few feet to a 40-foot chimney with a large chockstone at the top. This was climbed, and the exit over the chockstone gave an interesting finish. A 15-foot slab led to easy ground.

With regard to the other two buttresses, that to the

* This is the only smooth, slippery rock that we encountered.



July 1948 *R. G. Folkard*

STRONE ULLADALE, HARRIS

RP—Rush Platform.
S—Slab Route, approximate line only indicated.
AA—Amphitheatre Approach.
AB—Amphitheatre Buttress.
1—No. 1 Buttress.
3—No. 3 Buttress.
XX—Approximate line taken by Irens' party in 1938.

left appeared to be rather easier than the central buttress, and that to the right would undoubtedly be harder. The steep rocks between the middle and upper part of Palla Glas and the easy slabs to the east look as if they might give some interesting climbing.

All our climbs were done under warm dry conditions, in boots, except where stated to the contrary. One or two lengths of 120-foot nylon were used according to the number in the party.

HIGHLAND PATROL.

By E. W. Hodge.

CYRIL and I decided to have a climbing holiday last summer and thought we would go to Scotland.

The first thing was to get fitted out, so, of course, we went to that big shop in Piccadilly. They have a retired general in charge of the mountain sports department, and several very glamorous ski-ing champions. We produced our list and found that the items, " hummel doddies " and " quaich " rather foxed them, but they said that they would get their quaich maker to make us one out of suede leather, and strongly advised a chromium finish for the doddies. When they realised that we wanted to go to Scotland, which they seemed to think a very original idea, the salesman was frightfully keen on our taking one of their portable igloos, but as it cost forty guineas we had to pass it by. When we said we had heard a howff was the best place to stay at, they seemed to loose interest in us.

Well, at last the great day came. After weeks of practising exercises in the bathroom for strengthening the ankles and all that, we were actually at the Border and amongst the picturesque passport and customs formalities, the reintroduction of which has done so much to attract English tourists to Scotland by making them feel they are really abroad.

Towards sunset our little Morris brought us to Blawearie, where we meant to begin on the hills. In the

hotel bar there was a notice to walkers and mountain climbers from the chief constable of the county. It gave warning about the dangers of walking on ice, snow, rock, scree, steep grass, prohibited places, quicksands, pinnacles, ridges and allotments subject to the Defence Regulations, and also against mixed company and getting the feet wet. It emphasised that one should consult the local constable before planning any excursion, informing him of one's route, intended time of return and names of next-of-kin.

After dinner we went to the police station. "He's just finishing his tea," said the police matron. "He's had a hard day up on the moors after the 'hikkers.' We had some of them round here buying glasses of milk without proper ration cards." The few minutes' wait in the small, dark-green-painted room with its heavily barred windows depressed our spirits. "Mmphmm," said the policeman, as he rummaged through a dusty pile of circulars. "Going climbing, are you? Dangerous, is climbing. What would you do, now, if the rope broke?" he asked with a ferocious chuckle which almost made him genial. "Rocks, screws, graass . . ." he growled as he thumbed his circulars. "So ye want to go on the graass, do ye? Well, I'd best see your identity cards. Have ye ever thought of going to one of these national parks? Is this your full name, sir? You wouldn't be leaving your car on the road, would you?" A dreadful doubt had begun to grip me whether I had forgotten to renew my driving licence, the penalties for which have lately been so drastically increased. Hastily signalling to Cyril behind the officer's back, I told the latter I thought his suggestion about the national park was a good one, and we edged ourselves out.

In due time we found ourselves at the park entrance, close to where the Cluanie Inn used to be, at the top of Glenshiel. The big mansion in the pinewood on the hillside, Glengyle Lodge, is now the residence of the assistant park commissioner. The park administrative building was most noticeable, with behind it the park forestry workers' housing estate showing its thatched

roofs. Then came the park rangers' bungalows, the agricultural housing, the press club, the mortuary, the tartan-weaving workshops and a lot more. We found it just a little overpowering at first, but we pressed on and noted with pleasure that the whole thing was well done—rather like the Highland village in the Empire Exhibition at Bellahouston Park before the war.

Hours passed and gradually the big hills folded around us. London seemed very far away, and we felt we were getting into country suitable for our bivouac. With the tranquil rhythm of physical effort the ancient peace of the waste places seeped into us. A calm and mighty personality—was it that of Ben Ceathreamhnan ?—brooded over the scene, hypnotising mere mortals into harmony with its thoughts. One hesitated to break the silence in case the mountain should speak. Suddenly it did. " This is the Glenaffric National Park Radio Station greeting all open-air folk. Many apologies for the technical hitch which has caused such a lengthy interruption in our programme. For the talk you heard on ' The Romance of National Parks ' you were indebted to William MacBrewer, Deputy Assistant Youth Organiser, Ian Stewart, Agricultural Costume Adviser, and Thomas MacCobley, Pestological Adviser. We have now some announcements. Trail-riding parties seven, eight and nine will leave by the Summer Isles Heather Track . . ."

The technical hitch seemed to reassert itself. " Can I help you ? " said a voice at my elbow. I saw beside me a little man in the workman-like green uniform of the park rangers, so coloured (like the bye-law boards) to harmonise with the landscape. To facilitate recognition at a distance he was wearing a red cap and badge of a white owl's feather. Five or six proficiency chevrons were sewn on his sleeve. We explained that this was our first day in the park and that we were just going to put up our tent. " You will want one of the recommended lone wolf camp sites," he said; " but didn't you check in at the park entrance ? " We admitted our oversight. " Well, never mind, I'll go back with you and help you get your song book, your copy of ' Open

Air in the Footsteps of Prince Charlie,' the National Bus Company's Adventure Guide, and of course all your forms. What, no badge ? Well we can enter you as probationary third-class hunters until you pass your test. No, it's not too much trouble at all. The park is the people's. Not like the old days of the landlords, when they used to send round the fiery cross and evict anyone who gave shelter to a Sassenach." Cyril, who likes to appear well-informed, replied, " Yes, of course, I've seen it all in ' The Swordsman ' with Errol Flynn," and went on to tell the ranger a wholly invented and rather rash story about how his grandfather had owned a deer forest. This led to a very unnecessary argument about blood sports. " For goodness' sake," I whispered to him, " remember S.I.5."

At the Alltbeath park post we stopped for an ice-cream and a coke. There is a small agricultural resettlement centre here. " A warm day," I said to a man who was wheeling a barrow-load of muck out of a cowshed. He was wearing a flat blue bonnet and a leather jerkin, with a belted plaid in the Ministry's tartan. " Yes, I wish I could leave off some of this," he replied, " but you can never tell when some of them ones from Invercannich are snooping around." " Well, anyway, it must be a fine life in these wonderful surroundings. Could anyone get a job here ? " " Ay," he said, " most of the crofters here are volunteers. They stay six months or even a couple of years, according as whether it's articles or a book they want to write. I have a job offered me as second engineer on a cargo boat, but the Ministry of Social Adjustment won't release me. You see, I was bred on a farm in Clackmannan and worked there till it was requisitioned for the greyhound racing for the miners, and they've got to keep a few of us here who understand farming."

" Why, there he is back again," said our guide, as we passed a tall elderly man with a long nose and a humorous eye. " They call him Jinnah; I couldn't tell you why. Just after the park opened for last season one of our rangers met him right away from any of the marked trails. As he hadn't any badge, and said he didn't

even know it was a national park, the ranger had to take him all the way to Invercannich. When they got there Jinnah offered him a sandwich, and what should drop out with the package but a first-class veteran's badge, which entitles him to go anywhere he likes without joining an excursion. All Jinnah said to him was, 'You're the second I've caught to-day, ha, ha.'" As our guide told us this, Jinnah (I knew him quite well in London) gave me such a stony stare as almost to amount to a wink.

When we at last got back to the park entrance the ranger took us to the canteen while he went to see about our papers. There we had leisure to look at our fellow-climbers. As we entered, they were just finishing singing the beautiful park anthem. There was a little difficulty about getting our park ration cards, as we weren't members of any club, not even the YoHo, but the officials were very kind. Quite near to us was a very haughty and experienced looking climber, in simply incredibly dirty and patched clothes, so much so that they couldn't possibly have got like that by mere wear and tear. He hadn't shaved for a week. Two karabiners on each side were attached to his belt, an extremely old-looking rope hung from his shoulder, and under it were a lot of badges. "A gold supersevere," whispered my neighbour, with awe. "His portrait appeared last month as 'Leading Climbing Personalities, Number Seven.' He is Honorary Secretary of the Council for Co-ordinating the Activities of the Federated Associations of Co-ordinating Councils of Climbing Clubs." "Surely his rope is worn out," I said. "Oh, yes, but he is only going down the valley to the dance."

"Would you mind having a word with Mr Talking-horne in his office," said our ranger, who had now returned. Mr Talkinghorne, the Deputy Park Commissioner, wore the practical air of genial camaraderie which official persons assume when they are going to do something particularly firm. Just before we had been shown in, the door of his room had opened an inch and we had caught the word "Blawearie." "I am afraid there is a bit of a hitch about your registration," he began.

" I suppose you don't really mind if you don't do any actual hill walking, do you ? " He shuffled importantly among the papers in his " pending " tray and gave us a dazzling smile. " You haven't any membership of any club or trade union, I think you said. Of course, if you would like to make use of our canteen here—I believe it is a very good one—full facilities, you know—and just the immediate neighbourhood, we could register you as temporary clansmen . . ."

" Well, you've done it now, Cyril," I said as we went out. " S.I.5 has got you properly taped." " Well, you shouldn't have winked at Jinnah. Why, fancy telling the ranger you couldn't see the difference between deer stalking and ecological control." Anyway, there was nothing we could do about it. That evening, which was wet in any case, a crowd of American park tourists arrived, and we won quite a lot off them at a game called Copacabana.

Next year, for our holiday, Cyril and I are going to take over a " Walls' " ice-cream barrow at a place called Fazackerley in Lancashire. There are some very good stances, I believe, outside the cinemas and next to the public park, and some good pubs for evenings. We shall find it less strenuous than climbing and be able to watch how ordinary people really live, and it will be a complete change—and it won't be anybody's business to amuse or uplift us. Good idea, don't you think ?

MOUNTAIN CASUALTIES.

By Dr D. G. Duff.

DURING the past two years we have had a most undesirable increase in the number of casualties among hill walkers and climbers. Glencoe hills have seen nine deaths in eighteen months, Ben Nevis has had one killed and one missing, presumed killed. As we have come to expect, these figures concern hill walkers rather than rock climbers. Certainly, the risk for the experienced rock climber, while properly concentrated on a rock climb, is comparatively small. It may be argued that the total number of accidents is not very large, and we may be shown figures, for example, from Oslo, indicating that, in ski-ing weather, there are in the hills adjacent to that town, on every Sunday, thirty accidents. These, however, mostly involve broken arms and legs, and so are of less significance since they should be soon mended with modern treatment. In the Swiss Alps the records kept only concern fatalities, and these average about eighty yearly among alpinists and tourists, the proportion being roughly one in winter to every two in summer months.

In this country there is understandably much public concern over the subject, and sensational newspaper reports do nothing to mitigate the anxiety of relatives and others. There is, of course, no doubt that most of these accidents are preventable by knowledge and due care, and we may well ask, as King Edward VII. did when told about infectious illness, " If preventable, why not prevented." Prevention in the case of climbing accidents is peculiarly difficult. We do not wish to see any diminution in the spirit of adventure in our younger generation. The survival of the nation may depend on it. But this same spirit of adventure, uncurbed by instruction and discipline, is largely responsible for accidents. " Danger is delicious, but death is not," as G. B. S. says. " We court danger, but the real delight is in escaping." Instruction in the mistakes of others, the development of good technique until it becomes " second

nature," constant awareness and calculation of the risks involved will give safe mountaineering. Such training can only be got in clubs or organisations of some sort. The development of schools such as that opened by the C.C.P.R. at Glenmore, or the " Outward Bound " School at Aberdovey will be of the greatest value. Meanwhile, despite warning notices in hotels, boarding houses and hostels, people persistently go light-heartedly on to the hills, lacking in due respect for weather and the effects of altitude, without adequate equipment or forethought and without the necessary knowledge of map reading.

Perhaps I should try to detail actual faults which, to the best of my belief, have been responsible in the last eighteen incidents in the Glencoe and Ben Nevis area. The most frequent cause is the lack of carefulness in placing the feet. This fault, perhaps associated with lack of training, may follow a long day of ridge walking. Too much may have been attempted, and insufficient regard may be paid to icy Arctic conditions. Boots may be without edge nails and the completely necessary ice-axe may be wanting. There was the very serious fault of trying to climb a steep snow gully on Ben Nevis without ice-axes and unroped by climbers who should have known better. There have been uncontrolled falls on snow slopes because the ice-axe had been let go at the start of the slide. There have been injuries to the head and face when, during such a fall, the ice-axe head has been held too close by a short wrist sling. My personal practice is to have a nylon cord of length equal to the ice-axe attached with a loop to the wrist. There was one completely reckless attempt at a long climb on Stob Coire nam Beith involving step cutting far beyond the available strength. Climbing in a particularly difficult gully in wet weather with vulcanised rubber soles preceded a fall of about 40 feet, fortunately without a serious result. Apparently, careless rope technique and choice of stance, without taking advantage of a possible belay, pulled a climber to a disastrous fall. Greater attention by most rock climbers to the mechanics of stance and belay is very much wanted, and to this end

I would commend the stimulating work of K. Tarbuck.* Taking a wrong route down a steep face from the top of a high peak, possibly in one case in mist, accounted for deaths on two occasions.

A certain route down seems feasible, though possibly insufficient consideration has been given to its choice. Later on, there is obstinate refusal, even in the face of increasing and dangerous steepness, to change one's mind, admit error and climb up again to try a better way. Another fatal fall may have occurred from such a cause in the case of an experienced climber descending a steep gully alone after a day's good rock climbing. Mistaken map reading was, I think, the cause of the disaster in the case of one hill walker who tried to descend from Ben Nevis to the arête for Coire Leis. He fell about 600 feet from the N.E. Buttress. Insufficient respect for the inexorable force of a Highland burn in spate caused the death of a southern member of a rescue party; another fatal result might have been prevented if the rope had been used by a novice on a moderately difficult rock climb. Lone climbing when staying alone at a remote hut, so that there was no indication for a rescue party till too late, has brought grief and anxious uncertainty to relatives once again. Single bookings at climbing huts should be vetoed.

It might be contended that to concentrate attention on such incidents may upset climbing confidence and even induce nervousness in a climber. I am quite sure that this is not true, the effect is rather to put a finer point on technique generally. For climbers early in their apprenticeship on hills, actual experience in the rescue of a serious casualty should have a salutary influence. On the other hand, I feel that to call on a climber repeatedly to help in melancholy rescue scenes is not advisable. Rescue work, where a fellow-climber can be helped, saved from pain and shock and got down to allow surgery to get him fit to climb again can, on the other hand, be one of the greatest satisfactions.

The knowledge required for this is not at all difficult

* *Rucksack Club Journal*, 1947, and *Wayfarers' Journal*, 1947.

to acquire. Although expert first-aid can do more good than in any other kind of accident, a very few first principles are all that the experienced mountaineer need add to his armamentarium. He need not worry about tourniquets for bleeding, for a clean pad on the wound with a bandage tightened over it will stop any bleeding likely to be met with on hills. A possible fracture or dislocation of arm, collar-bone or ribs is put at rest when the hand is placed near the opposite shoulder and the injured limb bandaged firmly to the chest with scarf or handkerchiefs. A possible fracture of the leg may be treated by binding it firmly to its fellow, if it is very important because of exposure to get the patient down quickly; otherwise, and especially if it is an " open fracture " (broken bone coming through a wound), it may be better to await the arrival of the " Thomas splint " which will come up with the first-aid rucksacks and stretcher. Always, the first thing to think about is making the patient comfortable and warm with all available extra clothing or the eiderdown wrap quickly got up from below. He must be kept from cold, wet ground with bracken or grass, heather, rope coils or ground-sheet. The directions in first-aid rucksack for the giving of morphia or the putting on of a Thomas splint are very clear.

Giving morphine, however, worries some potential first-aiders. There should be no fear about giving the full dose, plunging the needle boldly through the skin of the forearm. The dose may be repeated if pain demands this. A proportionately smaller dose is given to children.

Frostbite is another subject which may seem difficult. It happens not infrequently, though in minor degree, on Scottish hills in winter, most often affecting one or two finger-tips, where they have been allowed to come in contact with the bare metal of an ice-axe head at high, cold altitudes. There is at first merely a not unusual numbness, usually overlooked, as it progresses to a cold, dead whiteness of skin and even of the underlying tissues. When the process has gone beyond the first stage it is quite wrong to do as the books advise, *i.e.*, to rub the

part with snow or try to thaw out with warmth. This would do harm. Circulation must be restored very slowly and gradually, the thawing-out process taking place as naturally as possible over a long period while the person affected descends to the less Arctic temperatures of lower slopes.

The building of a wind-break of stones or snow, if it is necessary to wait for a stretcher party, will occupy waiting time very profitably. I have not known of any case in Britain where the ability to build an igloo has saved life, but it is quite conceivable that the necessity may arise, for example in the Cairngorms. I have found it fairly easy to make one, and they are surprisingly warm. Mr Malavielle * describes how two climbers were able to live for twenty days in igloos built on Mont Blanc though the weather was bad. With sufficient practice, he says, an igloo of 8 feet base, 4 feet high, can be built in about an hour.

All mountaineers should know how to make a rope stretcher and also an ice-axe stretcher, for this simple knowledge may easily prove life-saving. In wintry or wet weather it will nearly always be best to get the patient down with all despatch to the comfort of civilisation, and if there is even a small party available the rope or ice-axe stretcher should be used. There is an understandable tendency for the layman, unfamiliar with modern surgery, to feel diffident about taking any responsibility for a seriously injured patient, and especially where head, chest or abdomen is involved. Generally speaking, the only good treatment in these cases is a surgical operation in hospital, and the more quickly the patient can be got down the better his chance of survival. To await the arrival of skilled help from the nearest centre may result in death from internal hæmorrhage, or from shock which might well have been avoided. To wait, for example, in one of the Glencoe corries for the arrival of a doctor from Ballachulish might mean a delay of an extra four or five hours compared with the time spent if a rope stretcher could be made

* "La Montagne," May 1939.

and used by a mountaineering party. At least four bearers are required to carry a rope stretcher. The simple details of its making will be found in the Penguin "Climbing in Britain." An even simpler knot will suffice.

There are some important considerations in regard to the organisation of rescue parties. There must be a recognised leader who should have all possible information about the resources of man-power, equipment, routes and methods of evacuation. The whole party must keep together; individuals or small parties must be careful to inform the leader of their actions and proposals so that the whole party can act as a co-ordinated unit. It will be difficult at times for all to keep in touch, especially on dark nights in bad weather. A system of signalling is a necessity, and a knowledge of Morse is most valuable. Bright and distinctive articles of clothing, *e.g.*, a yellow scarf or red and white headgear, may help in daylight. Individuals should, I think, be responsible for their own rationing, and will give careful thought to clothing if there is any chance of an all-night search. Usually the call-out will come late in the evening, and frequently it will be best not to bring the whole rescue party out in long dark nights of winter. It will always be essential, however, if the position of the casualty is known, that two men should go up as quickly as possible, carrying the No. 1 Rucksack. The patient can then be made warm and comfortable, and that will be half the battle won. The waterproof sheet and warm eiderdown will be put snugly round him, simple first-aid effected, morphine given and possibly a tin of the "self-heating" soup, if available. Then, with the first satisfactory light the main party will arrive with the sledge stretcher.

For a long rough descent the party should number at least twelve. At times it may be necessary to get the casualty from a difficult position on a ledge or in a gully. The triple looped bowline knot—bosun's chair—may be used, but generally it will be best to take the sledge stretcher and the Thomas splint (if required) to where the patient is lying, putting on the Thomas splint for

any kind of fractured leg before the patient is moved. The sledge stretcher will facilitate raising and lowering (even vertically), not too uncomfortably, to a safe place where stretcher-bearers, perhaps less experienced in rock work, can take over. Knowledge of the Bilgeri and Prusik sling methods of raising a man from the depths of a crack are not often required, though we had one such recovery from a *bergschrund* on Ben Nevis this summer.

It will be worth while to detail the men for each of the carrying parties—a certain rivalry will not be a disadvantage—and sizing off will make a difference to their comfort and endurance. A little discipline is needed, for it is not unknown for individuals or groups to straggle or take alternative by-paths and so throw more strain on a conscientious and devoted few. Parties of six each will change over about every quarter mile, and it may be found convenient, especially in windy weather, when the voice does not carry to have a whistle blast as the signal for the change over. They should change, too, from side to side and from front to back of the stretcher, so as to put the stress on different muscles all the time. They should hold themselves well up and not crouch as they walk. On every possible occasion the stretcher should be drawn as a sledge with bearers ready to check on steeper slopes. Carrying should be reduced to a minimum, and may only be necessary on particularly rough, boulder-strewn ground. In cases where there is an inadequate party with four bearers only may the stretcher be carried on the shoulders—and then only on level ground. The method is used in the Alps, but I know of two deaths, apparently due to falls when tipped off stretchers carried in this way. In the Services the instruction to stretcher-bearers is to walk with bent knees, and breaking the step so that there is no rhythmic jolting. Where one has as many as six bearers on a rough hillside this injunction will not apply, but it may be well to remember it when a party comes to a not too strong wooden bridge over a swollen stream, as in Glencoe, where a careful crossing with reduction of the load to two bearers only is necessary.

The estimation of the time of the descent is difficult, but it is important to give the ambulance a time and a meeting point as accurate as it can be made. The patient should not be kept waiting on the roadside, but neither should an ambulance, liable to urgent calls, be kept for many hours, as I have known in Glencoe, owing to insufficient forethought. If there are plenty of bearers, one may be sent ahead to phone the ambulance when the party is about half-way down.

And so we hope to get our patient safely to hospital for due rehabilitation as a wiser and better climber, but always let us remember the mighty Whymper's expression of his own unfortunate experience.

" There have been joys too great to be described in words, and there have been griefs upon which I have not dared to dwell; and with these in mind I say: Climb if you will, but remember that courage and strength are nought without prudence, and that a momentary negligence may destroy the happiness of a life-time. Do nothing in haste; look well to each step; and from the beginning think well what may be the end."

MUNRO'S TABLES—TWO CONTRASTING VIEWS.

1. By John Dow.

AT the General Meeting there was some criticism of the proposal to reprint unaltered in the new edition of the " General Guide Book " the Munro List of Mountains and Tops, one member alleging inconsistency in the combination of a revised Guide Book with unrevised Munro's Tables. As noted on p. iii of Section II. of the 1933 edition, Sir Hugh's untimely death did not permit him to complete his task, and it is not unreasonable to assume that, had he lived, he would himself have removed a number of the anomalies which are obvious to anyone who has visited all the listed heights, including the " Tops." It is of course true, as the Guide Book Editor remarked, that general agreement as to what

constitutes a "Munro" and what a "Top," apart from the 3,000 feet requirement, could not be obtained. Sir Hugh himself attempted no exact definition, and my own view, for what it is worth, is that each doubtful case would have to be decided on its merits after careful examination of the ground; the contour lines shown on the Ordnance Survey Map are not always infallible!

In a previous article I suggested that the important factors to consider are distance, dip and difficulty, which can be roughly judged by time taken from point to point. On my journeys I always kept a record of times, and after giving due weight to all these points I submit a list of summits which, in my opinion, might fairly be added to the roll of separate mountains as being at least as well defined as many of the heights already included in the total of 276. All of these were entered in the Tables as Tops, with the exception of Beinn Tarsuinn in Section 11.

I might add that most people who have completed the traverses would probably agree that Buachaille Etive Mor, Bidean nam Bian, Liathach, Beinn Eighe and An Teallach could fairly be described as mountain ranges rather than as single peaks with outliers.

	Feet.
SECTION 3.	
An Stuc (Ben Lawers group)	3,643
Beinn nan Eachan, W. Top (Tarmachan group)	3,265
SECTION 4.	
Stob na Doire (Buachaille Etive Mor)	3,250
Stob na Broige (Buachaille Etive Mor)	3,120
Stob Coire Raineach (Buachaille Etive Bheag)	3,029
Stob Coire nan Lochan (Bidean nam Bian)	3,657
Beinn Fhada, Stob Coire Sgreamhach (Bidean nam Bian)	3,497
SECTION 7.	
Garbh Cioch Mor (Sgùrr na Ciche, Knoydart)	3,365
Am Bathaich (Sgùrr a' Mhaoraich)	3,055
SECTION 8.	
Sgùrr nan Carnach (Sgùrr Fhuaran)	3,270
Stuc Mor (Sgùrr nan Ceathreamhnan)	3,496
Sgùrr na Lapaich (Mam Soul)	3,401
SECTION 9.	
Creag Dubh (Carn nan Gobhar)	3,102
Bidean an Eoin Deirg	3,430

SECTION 10.	
Tom na Gruagaich (Alligin)	3,021
Mullach an Rathain (Liathach)	3,358
Meall Dearg (Liathach)	3,150
Sail Mhor (Beinn Eighe)	3,217
Spidean Coire nan Clach (Beinn Eighe)	3,220
Creag Dubh (Beinn Eighe)	3,050
SECTION 11.	
Beinn Tarsuinn	3,080
Glas Meall Mhor (An Teallach)	3,176
Sgùrr Fiona (An Teallach)	3,474
Sail Liath (An Teallach)	3,100
SECTION 12.	
Glas Leathad Beag (Centre Top)	3,077
SECTION 14.	
Carn Eas	3,556
Creag an Leth Choin, S. Top	3,448
Sgor an Lochan Uaine	4,095
SECTION 15.	
Beinn Iutharn Beag	3,121
Carn Bhinnein	3,006
SECTION 17.	
Bhasteir Tooth	3,000

Effectively to revise the list of 267 Tops would be a much more difficult proposition, as deletions as well as additions would be involved. In any case the necessary space is not available in this issue of the *Journal*.

2. By E. C. Thomson.

A General Guide Book Sub-Committee has recommended that Munro's Tables be re-published without alteration, and the Club has endorsed this recommendation. In my view the decision is a wise one. It has been argued against it that Munro was not infallible. We revise "Goudie" on the Law of Bankruptcy or Grove's Dictionary of Music, why not Munro's Tables? They would still be Munro's Tables. And certainly, if the whole country were thoroughly re-surveyed and substantial differences in heights discovered, something would have to be done about it. Or if a sound scientific principle were laid down which truly reflected the complexities of mountain structure and stood up to the

criticisms of geographers and statisticians, as well as the mere mountaineer, some valuable progress might be made. But such a task would be very difficult and, so far as I know, has never been seriously attempted.

Munro simply attempted to enumerate the "separate mountains" and "tops" over 3,000 feet in height, viewing the matter very objectively and recognising that a "separate mountain" might be a simple, single formation like Schiehallion or a complex structure with twin peaks and a lot of subsidiary tops like Bidean nam Bian. When we consider that ranges, peaks of ranges, separate mountains, peaks of separate mountains, subsidiary tops on ranges, subsidiary tops of mountains, plateaus, ridges, shoulders and what you will are all reduced to the common denominators of "separate mountains" and "tops," we must realise that there are bound to be anomalies, and the less we worry about them the better. In my view Sir Hugh only went seriously astray when he allowed his common sense to be overruled by the fear that an anomaly would arise if he counted Braeriach and Cairn Toul as two mountains and Ben Cruachan as only one. He, therefore, split Ben Cruachan into a western and an eastern mountain because the dips and distances were rather similar to an example in the Cairngorms.* To my mind there is no comparison between the well-defined, compact mass of Ben Cruachan, falling, on all sides, apart from a narrow neck, for practically 100 per cent. of its total elevation, and the wide plateau above the Garbh-Choire, losing only one-third of its elevation to the Lairig Ghru.

But let that be. Until we can agree on an accurate scientific principle, let us stick to Sir Hugh as the commonly accepted yard-stick.

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* See Sir Hugh's preface.

ON EDITING THE "SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS" GUIDE.

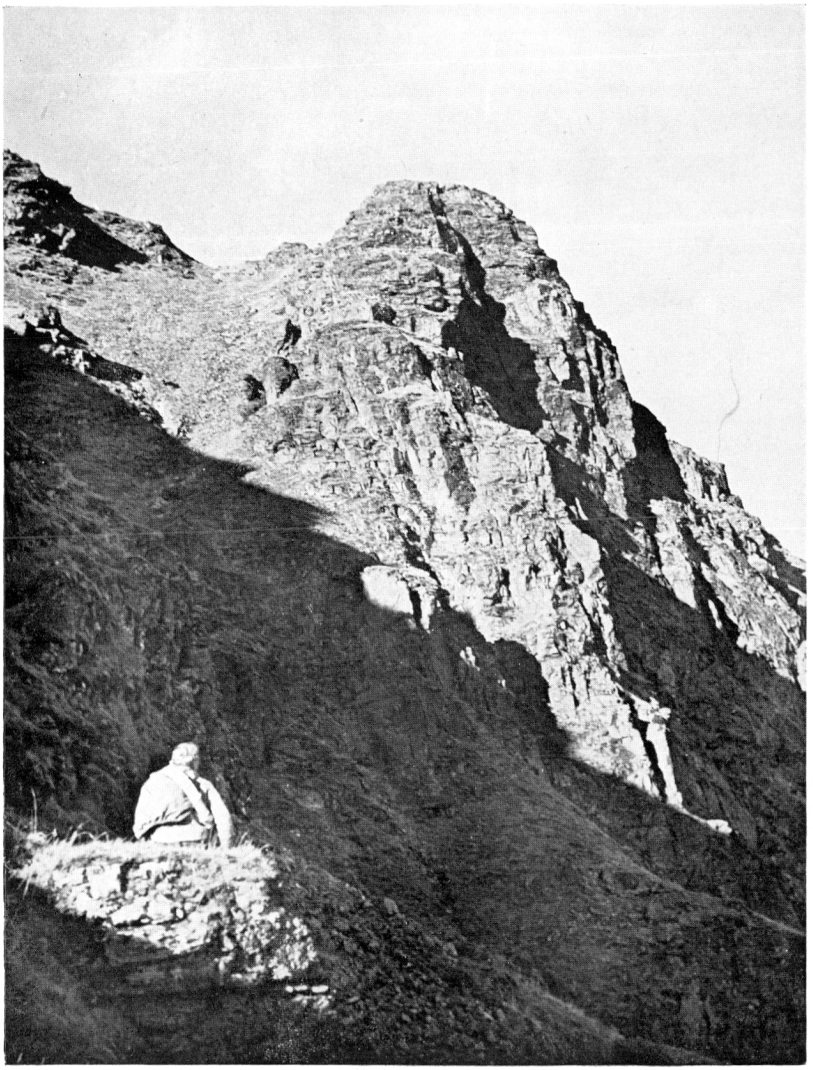
By John D. B. Wilson.

FOR many years I had walked and climbed over the hills of Perthshire without experiencing the want of a guide book to a district with which I felt that I was fairly well acquainted. Then I was told that the "Southern Highlands" required an Editor. Faced with the threat that the responsibility might become *mine*, the whole question took on a very different aspect. Several days later, with very mixed feelings, I received a letter from the General Editor confirming my appointment.

The Guide had been in preparation for many years, and was, in fact, long overdue, but it was only after I was fairly launched on the venture that I realised how much remained to be done. B. H. Humble and J. B. Nimlin were preparing the rock-climbing guide to the Arrochar district, and a reduced version of this was to be included in "Southern." E. C. Thomson supplied a finished chapter on the Crianlarich hills, and the late J. C. Thomson, who had been Editor for a number of years, had gathered together many useful notes which were passed to me.

From the nature of the district, apart from Arrochar, there was little scope for rock climbing, and the bulk of the Guide must therefore be pedestrian. On the other hand, I had started my rock climbing in the district, and had a very soft spot for the short schistose scrambles which could be enjoyed all over the Southern Highlands. There can be little doubt that one who starts his climbing on schist or conglomerate will climb at least as safely on porphyry or gabbro, and this fact, coupled with the accessibility of the district for those living in our large towns, encouraged me to give some prominence in the Guide to climbs which would pass unnoticed in more exciting districts.

Ben Ledi gave me my first experience of rock climbing. It was on a week-end away from school, and four of us were in the Stank Glen. There, on the north of the



November 1947 *David Easson*

FAN GULLY BUTTRESS, BEN IME

(The cliff between the two shadows gives an easy climb. The fault beyond was explored by Humble and Stephen in June 1947, the first ascent being made in November by Nimlin and Easson)

hill, lie some large boulders and bizarre pinnacles, and the discovery of these gave us many happy hours. It is a good place to learn the rudiments, for there are climbs of all degrees of difficulty, and a fall could hardly do more than point a salutary lesson. The same could not be said of a climb done later, up among the pinnacles. It started with a rather innocuous-looking crack which defied our best efforts on two visits, but yielded on the third. Ben A'n, at the Trossachs, followed. Here, there is much for the aspiring cragsman. It is the most genial of little hills, and I have nothing but pleasurable memories of days spent there alone and with friends. This hill soon teaches the value—and dangers—of heather to the climber: my own lesson came during a solitary attempt on the right-hand gully in the lowest tier of rock. After making the awkward move out to the right, below the overhang in the gully, I felt the climb was mine, and grasped a tempting heather tuft with my left hand. The next moment I was completely out of balance, the tuft still in my grasp, but now unattached to rock. After that I stepped warily and relied on rock alone. Heather is not always untrustworthy, quite the reverse on occasions, but it never enjoys rough usage. The hardest problem we found on Ben A'n was the narrow crack in the top tier of rock below the summit, which Nimlin has since named the Rent. But then, we had not discovered the other, harder routes which Nimlin has worked out on the lowest tier. These fine problems will occupy many a pleasant hour of anyone's endeavour.

The Campsies cannot be recommended to beginners. With a little experience, sound routes may be found. Without that experience I spent an anxious time on my first visit, rescuing myself from an unfavourable position on near-vertical turf, and further anxious minutes with a friend on decaying rock. Subsequent visits have strengthened my belief that basalt climbing is at least an experience. The same may be said of the dolerite of the Fife Lomonds. Not even with a well-held rope from above would I care to attempt the Split Nose of Craigengaw. Others might, but for those of like

mind as myself there are plenty of short climbs of more amenable character. Variety is given by the dolerite, for in its decay the shape of some of the climbs will alter. It appears that the Moonshine Gully has already shed its cave pitch. Conglomerate forms the bulk of Dumyat in the Ochils. In places it has to be treated with great respect in order to avoid pulling plums from the "pudding"; in others it is quite sound and gives plenty of good routes. Dumyat, in fact, forms a useful practice ground for those in the Stirling area.

It is, of course, to Arrochar that one must go in order to find rock climbs of any appreciable length in the Southern Highlands. There both beginner and expert will find plenty. For the beginner there is nothing so pleasant as a traverse of the Cobbler peaks. This was my first real climb, and I have a vivid memory of a day which started in pouring rain, continued in mist, and broke in glorious sunshine on the top of "Jean." We failed to find the Right-angled Gully, and after crossing the North Peak consoled ourselves with an unidentified climb back to the main summit. Narnain, too, is full of surprises, and I say "full" advisedly, for there is fascination amongst the summit cliffs.

There are literally dozens of places in the southern area where one may come across interesting little climbs—Clach Bheinn in Cowal, for instance, or in the corries of Ben-y-Hone, on Ben Udlaidh or the May Island, on the cliffs at Easdale or in the forest of Glen Artney. They need not be catalogued further, for almost anywhere in the area you may find something new to claim as your own. It surprised me to find, on nearly every hill I investigated during the preparation of the Guide, some scramble or amusement. Some, perhaps, were not amusing, as, for instance, an occasion when I tried to get up a little buttress in the valley a mile beyond Glenartney Lodge. On it I stuck—and there were other similar occasions. Solitary exploration has its own peculiar pitfalls. But there were other scrambles which gave as much pleasure as ever I had on the Buachaille. There was a happy December day on Meall Dubh, investigating the climbs in the corrie. How airy it

was on the top of the Pinnacle that day, and how much time did I waste before stepping over to the cliff above and beyond! There was another grand day spent on the Tarmachans, and ending on Creag na Caillich attempting to locate the Great Gully. Original accounts of this climb had given me such a wrong impression that I wonder even now if I climbed the right one.

As I have already said, the southern area must remain pedestrian. What climbs I had were mostly incidental to the work of tracing walking routes. Of the latter there are plenty. When starting on the Guide I felt that I had a fair knowledge of the hills in the area, but I soon found a number of flagrant omissions. These had to be remedied, and quickly, for there were many. This involved hard but enjoyable graft. A typical instance was the Carn Mairg range, about which the O.S. map gave little information and references in the *Journal* appeared to be conflicting. Until that time my own knowledge of the range was perfunctory in the extreme.

I got away from home latish one Saturday in May and motored by the Sma' Glen to Carn Bàn by the Lyon. There I parked the car at 9.30 P.M. and set off up the hillside of Creag Mhor, soon picking up a path leading by easy gradients into Coir' Chearcaill. It had been a hot day, and now, as the sun went down, great clouds descended on the Lawers range on the opposite side of the valley. A lurid sunset gave little promise of a dry night, and I began to regret not having slept in the car. However, the path led pleasantly enough into the corrie, and I soon beheld, in the deepening gloom, a small building beyond a stream. The door of the stable was open, and it did not take long to collect enough heather to make myself comfortable. Later on, when it was quite dark, I was awakened by a heavy sound outside, seemingly close by the door which was ajar. As I sat up, now fully awake, there came three heavy *thumps*—then silence. I could see nothing, and cannot give any explanation, unless the noise was caused by deer. As I lay awake listening, there was the equally disturbing

sound of rain on the roof, but when I got up and out at 5.30 it had ceased.

Heavy mist enveloped me on the way up the slopes of Creag Mhor, but after a shower of rain it lifted, enabling me to determine to my own satisfaction which of the two summits was the higher. The mist again descended, and in the grey obscurity I wandered to the col and up Meall Liath. On the summit of Carn Mairg, twenty minutes later, I halted for a second breakfast, afterwards going a little down on the south side to see what rocks there were. Satisfied that nothing need delay me, I continued on to the Meall a' Bharr ridge, over its four undulating tops, and descended to the bouldery col beneath Meall Garbh. From the latter summit it seemed desirable to visit the two tops off the main ridge before continuing on the main circuit. That accomplished, the main ridge required some careful compass work from there to the top of An Sgor. The latter top is unmistakable, being the only defined one in the group. It rises steeply on all sides, in the form of a cone. More by luck than good judgment I found its top and continued to the last summit of the range. It seemed a long pull up the north ridge of Carn Gorm, and I was glad to pass the cairn.

On the way to the valley a break in the mist appeared, followed, quite illogically it seemed, by a blink of sun. When I got back to the car at midday not a cloud remained in the sky. Such weather could not be wasted, so, after a welcome lunch, I took the car to Bridge of Balgie and continued on foot along past Meggernie and up the road to Lochs. Here was absolute contentment after the morning's labours—a hot sun, deep heather and the sparkling waters of the Allt Conait. A perfect bathe was followed by a long siesta in the heather. All around me the hills shimmered in the sun, while across the way the shoulders of Meall Ghaordie held long dark arms of shadow to the valley. At that moment, as had happened on other occasions, it came to me that Guide writing had its better moments.

THE LAWERS RANGE FROM THE ROAD TO THE LOCHS

J. D. B. Wilson

SOME NEW CLIMBS IN THE NORTH-WEST.

By J. H. B. Bell.

THE following new climbs, done in the years 1946 and 1947, are of varying type, district, and length. One or two are specially interesting as breaking new ground which, it is hoped, may afford more routes, both pleasant and interesting, to other climbers in the future. They are ordered according to the type of rock, all four types being characteristic of the region, the schist being the youngest and the gneiss the oldest rock. They thus offer varied scope for technique. They were all climbed by my wife and myself.

Beinn Dearg (Ross); Ghrannda Slabs (Schist).—This ascent of close on 500 feet was made on wet rock after a few hours of rainfall on 23rd June 1946, and occupied three hours. The standard must be rated as severe, being raised to that level by the last three pitches. Approaching the Lochan Coire Ghrannda from below, a steep wall of slabs rises to the Beinn Dearg ridge from the left shore of the loch. As the author found during a first visit in 1942, it is possible to traverse by more than one horizontal ledge, from the grassy side of the deep gully on the left, on to the slabs, but it is better to start at the bottom from the lowest rocks. From the end of the loch where the stream issues proceed to the left round a little bay, past a prominent loose boulder to where a little peninsula protrudes into the water. The start of the climb is close above this on the lowest rocks. Remember that schist is generally sound rock which offers good, small holds, especially where there are quartz nodules. Between the steep sections there are usually thin horizontal ledges. The climb steepens near the top. But, be warned, for there are very few belays. We found three where they were exceedingly welcome. The route is directly upwards with only minor zigzags. Rough details are as follows:—

1. The first four rope-spans of about 50 feet each progress up steep slabs, straight up on small holds, although the start is awkward. Then one crosses a terrace, and the next run-out takes one to a

second horizontal terrace. After crossing this another length of rope enables one to gain a third terrace. It will be seen that, especially to the right, it looks possible to climb the intervening slabs by another route. This freedom of movement is gradually curtailed and finally lost as one rises. It is, I think, possible to traverse off the rocks leftwards by this third terrace, and possibly by the lower ones.

2. The next step upward is by a difficult, steep corner on the left. Some steep scrambling and another steep pitch on clean rock with small holds brings one to the upper, steepening wall of cliff. There is yet another steep run-out on good holds to the last continuous horizontal ledge where freedom of lateral movement is still possible. About 10 feet above this is an excellent and necessary belay.

3. An exceedingly steep pitch on a smooth, severe slab follows. Holds are exceedingly small but sound. At a critical point a step to the left is necessary, and a thin horizontal ledge is gained a few feet higher. The ledge peters out quickly on the left and at a short distance to the right. Advance is only possible straight up. A wedging stance about 10 feet up serves for security. The next pitch was climbed in stocking soles on wet rock, about 30 feet. The first 15 feet are only difficult, but an exposed and delicate move to the left is then necessary into a steep, open, overhanging corner which was very wet. About 10 feet higher is a good stance in a green recess. The final exit cannot be made directly. One traverses right to a slabby, rounded rock, then back to the left at a higher level, and finally up to the right to a niche beneath the plateau, which contains a huge belay. This pitch of 20 feet is exceedingly exposed and somewhat vegetatious, but the final exit is easy. The rock is safe and sound on this climb, but it is no place for any party with a weak member, owing to the paucity of belays.

Beinn a' Mhuinidh (*Kinlochewe*).—The quartzite crags facing Kinlochewe across the valley, and especially those at and round the left corner of the mountain (The Bonaid Donn) facing the head of Loch Maree and above the lower reaches of the Fasagh Glen (Glen Bannisdail), have been undeservedly neglected since Dr Inglis Clark, Colonel Glover, and an unnamed third climbed the cliffs to the west of the Allt a' Mhuinidh Waterfall at Easter 1899. My wife and I paid several visits during our short sojourns at Kinlochewe in the summers of 1946 and 1947. We found many attractive possibilities for the making of a delightful and quickly accessible arena for good climbing routes of moderate length on steep, sound rock. A few of our routes will be briefly mentioned.

Waterfall Climb, Variation Route.—The route starts up the next rib of rock to the left of the classical route. It is a face climb with

one or two short sections which are almost severe. Details are roughly as follows: 30 feet moderate followed by 40 feet steeply to a fir tree, then 15 feet of walking; a severe pitch up a wall, then round a delicate corner to the right until one can again climb straight up the wall on very small holds to a good stance; 70 feet of steep face work on small rounded holds, finishing with 100 feet of moderate climbing.

The Double Flake Route is on a higher band of rocks to the right of and above the Waterfall face. Half-way along the band is a double flake with a tunnelled eye between the flakes. The lower flake can be climbed both from right and left. Sixty feet of good climbing from the bottom leads to the flake. The severe part comes later. A 75-foot pitch goes up the wall behind the lower flake to a good belay. There is now a conspicuous cave ahead (well seen from below with its canopy). Traverse up slabs to the right, creeping along under the upper wall until it is possible to climb a steep, 8-foot crack. The exit is exceedingly exposed and difficult on to a smooth, steep slab on the left. Friction and a gentle tension on the heather roots above the slab help to solve the problem. There is good rock higher up on the right. A hundred feet of moderate climbing leads to the top of the cliff. These cliffs will probably repay further exploration.

The Bonaidh Donn, Route I.—From Kinlochewe, looking beyond and higher than the Allt a' Mhuinidh Waterfall, one can see a band of cliff extending obliquely upward to the left to the corner of Beinn Mhuinidh, overlooking the Fasagh glen which separates that mountain from the mass of Slioch to the north-west. A rising terrace leads up to the corner, dividing the continuously steep upper cliff from the more broken rocks below. Near the corner, the terrace is a narrow, well-marked track which continues beyond in an undulating manner beneath the wall of cliff, and an inspection from the lower slopes of Slioch will show that the wall extends much farther, high above the glen. We did not explore the cliff for more than 200 yards beyond the corner, and our first and best route started only just beyond a recess under an overhang, where we left a cairn. It gave us an excellent steep climb of about 400 feet on sound quartzite with small, square-cut holds.

The details are as follows:—

Sixty-five feet of steep slabs to a recess, then by the edge of a rock rib to a belay; after a move to the right climb a wall from a huge square block for 35 feet; 55 feet good moderate climbing to

a stance, followed by 45 feet up a rib; 50 feet continuation to a short steep wall; 60 feet up two consecutive steep ribs to easy ground (cairn); final wall and crux, about 80 feet, exceedingly steep and exposed on very small, square-cut holds, very airy and delightful, followed by 30 feet of final scrambling to the top of the cliff. Standard a good Very Difficult.

Route I. on the Bonaidh Donn was climbed on 9th August 1946, and the routes near the waterfall on 1st July 1947. On the following day we were again on the Bonaidh Donn, investigating a smooth wall of rock a little farther along the terrace above the Fasagh glen. This climb, which might be named Route II., as there are few really distinctive features on this crag, involved a steep lower section, a walk of 15 yards to the right and an upper section, the two sections being about 180 feet and 150 feet respectively, and the general standard Very Difficult on good rock. Brief details are given:—

Sixty feet up face to right of a crack, very steep on small holds with delicate traverse to avoid an overhang; 30 feet of a broad, slabby rib with an overhanging wall on the left; 30 feet more on a steep, rounded rib, climbing a nose at the end; 15 feet up a chimney, rather difficult, to a ledge and 50 feet to the base of the upper cliff by an arête. After an easy walk to the right for 15 yards, a 40-foot climb up the wall to the right of a chimney, followed by 20 feet in the chimney takes one above the overhang. The next 50 feet, on good holds straight up, ends the difficulty, and 30 feet of scrambling gains the top of the rocks. We took nearly two and a half hours.

We then climbed one more route on the Kinlochewe side of Route I., which was not so interesting. It may be observed that there is quite an easy way down these cliffs only a little way to the right of this latter route. This would be useful to a party doing several routes. It seems probable that the cliffs offer the steepest and longest climbs near Route I., but there may be unknown opportunities farther to the north.

Coire na Caime, Liathach, A Buttress Climb.—On 30th June 1947 my wife and I revisited Coire na Caime. After a scrutiny of the rock buttresses between Mullach an Rathain and the Fasarinen we selected the broad buttress leading up to the subsidiary top next to the former, and enjoyed nearly three hours of rock climbing on variegated Torridon sandstone. It is hardly feasible to describe our

G. Sang

CLIFFS OF BEINN DEARG
(From Loch a Choire Ghranda)

route in detail, and subsequent parties must make their own choice on this complex face of rock. We set out by selecting the left-hand and steeper of the lowest tiers of cliff. This gave a good climb which was almost severe for short pitches, where stocking-sole technique proved excellent on the rough dry rock. We left a cairn. At the top we walked 20 yards to the right and started up the next section, which was very difficult in parts, but not continuously. There was easy scrambling between the difficulties. The chief features were a series of long, steep scoops which were only made possible by jointing cracks at various places. The rock scenery was very fine. In general, we were on a wavy, upward route with most of the overhung parts of the cliff on our left. The final 100 feet of scrambling took us directly to the cairn on the subsidiary top, on the main ridge of Liathach. The whole route must have involved more than 500 feet of climbing, and is splendid practice on the rough, rounded holds of Torridon red sandstone.

The Cioch of Sgorr na Caorach, Applecross.—On 29th June 1947 we set off investigating the possibility of climbing the cliff by the right profile of the photograph facing p. 18 of the "Northern Highlands" Guide. We traversed the ledge which is well seen in the photograph, disappearing round the corner at the little notch midway up the right skyline. The ledge can be negotiated for quite a long way round, but there is no chance of climbing upwards before reaching a point where it thins away almost to nothing. I believe that this hiatus could be passed, but there is no belay available. Beyond the gap there seems to be a possibility of making a start on the rocks above. We came, saw, but did not conquer.

Having returned to the point on the ledge almost directly underneath the junction of Collie's and Glover's routes (marked on the photograph), we started directly upwards where the cliff was broken and recessed. There did not appear to be a practicable start more to our right. The serious difficulties extended over 120 feet of vertical height, above which we easily attained the junction, afterwards completing the delightful climb to the top of

Sgorr na Caorach by a similar route to the original one. Our difficulties were accentuated by rainfall and wet Torridon sandstone rocks. The rain ceased when we approached the junction. Brief details are as follows :—

Twenty feet up steep grassy rocks and another 20 feet, almost severe, to a ledge. After a few steps to the right ascend 20 feet up a chimney, rather holdless at the foot. There is a belay before the next pitch. Twenty feet up a rib to the left of chimney to a small stance is followed by 15 feet obliquely to the right on a steep rib with few holds, ending with an exposed move to the right on to grass above a pitch in original chimney. There is here another necessary belay. The chimney above looks impossible, so one traverses left to the upper part of original rib, and climbs a groove to the face of the buttress to a good stance and belay, at the end of the difficulties.

Climbs round Gruinard Bay.—In early August 1946 we stayed for three days at Laide, a delightful little hamlet at the southern corner of Gruinard Bay. For those who like to combine interesting, short rock climbs with lazy off-days on one of the most attractive coast lines of Scotland, with perfect beaches of white sand, rocky coves and island vistas, there is no more attractive place for a holiday.

Only two masses of gneiss rock deserve special praise. The first of these, Carn na h'Aire, dominates the bridge where the main road crosses the Gruinard River. It is about 500 feet in height and presents a vertical face on the right and an expanse of exceedingly steep slab to its left. The rock is sound and the variation of gradient offers routes of graded difficulty, so that one may also enjoy practice in descending steep slabs. The rock is rough gneiss.

Beyond Gruinard House, where the road runs along the shore, is the most delightful boss of gneiss cliff, almost overhanging the road and nearly opposite a small jetty. We named it Gruinard Jetty Buttress. We made two perfectly distinct and excellent routes of Very Difficult standard up the left face of the cliff, starting a few yards above the lowest rocks. Each route, about 200 feet in height, ended at the top of the buttress. The Red Slab Route, more to the right, was rather shorter and just severe at the crux. The holds are exceedingly small, but the rock is perfect. The left-hand or Crack

Route is of Very Difficult standard, and tends to follow a line of cracks. It is easy to descend by keeping on the easier rocks and finishing higher up on the slope below the cliff. There are a number of possible variations beside the above.

We did not find any climbing on the rocks above the road near Mungasdale (which the locals call Monk's Castle), but did find a remarkable undercut face of Torridon sandstone on Carn Dearg an Droma, about a mile to the north-west of the road. This afforded a few short climbs.

NEW CLIMBS.

RUM.

The North-West Buttress of Askival.

Atlantic Ridge.—350 feet. Very Difficult. First ascent, May 1948, by Michael Ward and W. H. Murray (through leads). When the N.W. Buttress is seen from Trallval, two long ribs stand out clearly. The right-hand rib is the Atlantic Ridge. The rock is gabbro.

Start a few feet to the right of the sharp left-hand edge. Cairn. By way of a shallow crack climb 90 feet to a platform on the sharp left-hand ridge. A tempting route round a corner on the left leads into a deep groove demarcating the ridge. The severities of this groove have not yet been overcome.

The route continues a few yards to the right up a very steep wall of 50 feet. Thereafter the climb goes direct all the way to the top. It ends suddenly at the summit.

Triangular Buttress of Trallval.

In the upper west corrie of Trallval, a few hundred feet below the summit, are two great masses of rock. The bigger cliff is the Lower S.W. Buttress. To the left of it, on the south-east face of a westward-running ridge, are smaller and more broken outcrops of peridotite, about 150 feet at the highest point. At their left half is the Triangular Buttress. The main features of this buttress are a central gully, wide, wet and broken, and

to the right of it a high-angle slab, about 100 feet high and 150 feet across.

Ptarmigan Crack.—150 feet. Difficult. First ascent, May 1948, by Michael Ward and W. H. Murray (through leads). The crack is on the right of the big slab, and is named from a ptarmigan, thought to be the only one in Rum, heard on the screes below.

Bloodstone Crack.—100 feet. Very Severe. First ascent, May 1948, by Michael Ward and W. H. Murray.

To the left of the central gully is a steep, short crack named from a bloodstone found at the foot of it. Cairn. The first pitch of 50 feet is very severe. The start is strenuous and goes by the right wall. At 15 feet the holds become tiny. Good stance above.

A short way to the west of Bloodstone Crack a slanting slab of 120 feet gives an easy descent. The two cracks and gully are most easily seen from the foot of the Lower S.W. Buttress, which will henceforth be called the Harris Buttress.

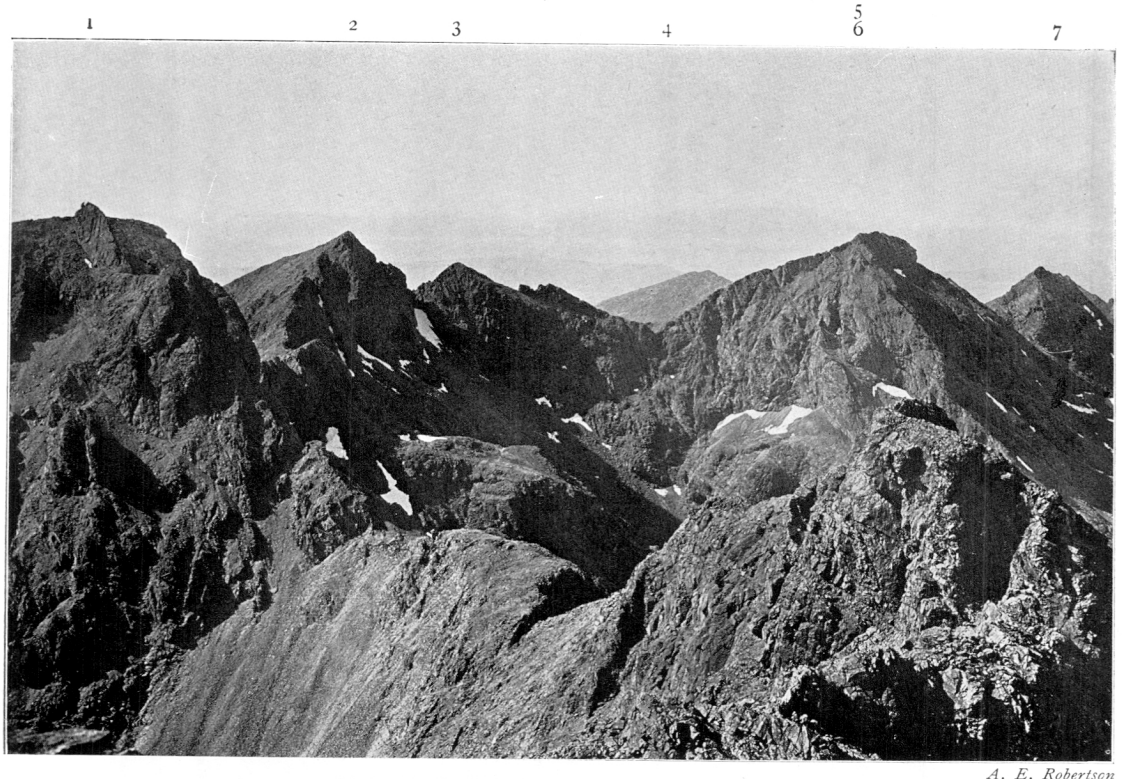
Harris Buttress of Trallval.

The Harris Buttress is the south-west buttress of Trallval. It lies several hundred feet below the summit and overlooks Glen Harris. It is the biggest buttress on Rum and has yielded the best route. The left half rises 500 feet in two tiers. The right half rises 400 feet. The rock is gabbro, distinguished by its great number of overhangs, most of them wet and streaked, black and brown.

Guiding features are as follows. At the centre of the buttress there is a not very definite rib, below which a rock is poised like a capstan. Shallow gullies run up on either side of the rib, each with a large overhang. About 40 feet to the right of the right-hand gully there is a vertical crack of 250 feet. About 40 feet to the right of the crack a shallow and broken depression runs up the rocks: this marks the start of the Archangel Route.

Archangel Route.—400 feet. Very Difficult. First ascent, May 1948, by Michael Ward and W. H. Murray (through leads).

About 60 feet up, at the top left of the depression, there is a block-pinnacle, the base of which is so badly shattered that a direct approach from below looks highly dangerous. Therefore, climb



A. E. Robertson

LOOKING NORTH FROM SGURR THEARLAICH

1—Sgurr Dearg.
2—Sgurr na Banachdich.
3—Sgurr Thormaid.
4—Sgurr Thuilm.
5—Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh.
6—Sgurr Mhic Coinnich.
7—Sgurr a'Mhadaidh.

the rocks on the left of the depression to a platform at the left side of the pinnacle. Scramble over the top of the pinnacle, spread the wings of faith, and take a short, bold flight across the gap to a chimney on the right-hand side of the depression. The chimney becomes a vertical crack of 20 feet with good holds. Follow a broad ledge rightwards and turn a corner into a little bay beneath a great groove. Go 20 feet up the groove, then climb up leftwards on to a narrow ridge. Follow the ridge directly upwards until it falls back among broad slabs which steepen into a line of overhangs running across the buttress. Climb diagonally up to the left, aiming for a sharp, steep corner, where a delightful climb is had up an exposed but rough gabbro slab. That pitch is the last difficulty. The route has character and interest throughout.

W. H. MURRAY.

SKYE.

Sgùrr Mhic Coinnich, Jeffrey's Dyke.—This is the most continuous trap dyke to the left of the long, West Buttress, which reaches down from the summit to the screes above Lochan Coire Lagan. The Guide misleads by asserting that most of this face is too broken to give satisfactory climbing. The route must be close on 1,000 feet in height, as it starts not far above the Lochan and ends on the summit ridge. The ascent was made on 24th May 1948, taking a little over three hours for two parties, variously roped on different sections, the personnel being Mr and Mrs R. Jeffrey, the Editor and Mrs Bell, and Mr C. M. Allan. The general standard is a good Difficult, but at least one harder pitch was encountered on the upper half, at which time the party experienced hail and snow with mild electric discharges. Brief details are as follows:—

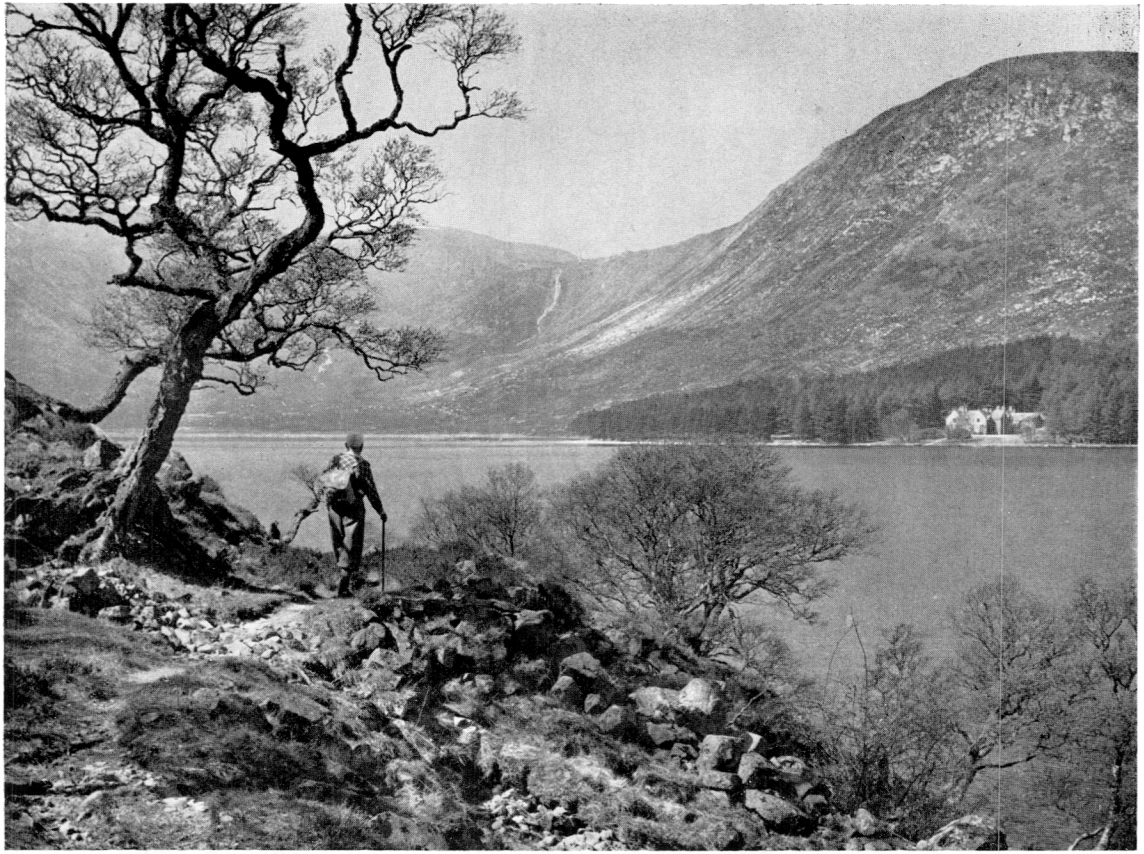
Start up slabby bulge above screes and continue over moderate rocks for 150 to 200 feet to foot of groove or dyke line. Keep to this groove, climbing the bulges with occasional recourse to the walls. Rock is fairly good, but exit is a little difficult, to the right. About 50 feet up is a grass terrace. Crossing this, ascend directly and steeply with a good gabbro rib on the left, which can be used to help at a steep pitch. Straight on again and a little to the left with a gabbro wall on the right. From the top of this is a very short pitch, almost severe, and another grass terrace is soon attained. The storm was now upon us. Move a few yards to the right along this terrace and again go straight up steep rocks, soon traversing obliquely back to the left and upwards on good holds over the rim of the steep

part to a little mossy terrace. Go a few steps to the right and about 15 feet up a deep narrow cleft (really the prolongation of the original dyke) and attain Collie's Ledge. Cross it and climb a 20-foot wall on small holds to the summit ridge. From here it is only about five minutes' walk southwards to the summit of Mhic Coinnich.

West Buttress, Sron na Ciche.—A new variation, starting from near the foot of Central Gully, was climbed on 9th April 1948 by M. Conyngham Greene and F. R. Brooke (both J.M.C.S.). The route is clearly shown on photo in Guide opposite p. 102, starting from a point 3·7 inches and 1·6 inches respectively from right-hand side and bottom of the picture, by a dyke to West Central Gully. Where the dyke seems to fork, they took the right branch as a line of least resistance. The climb required long run-outs on small holds, the most difficult step being somewhat above the fork, at the end of a long lead. Boots were worn, and classification was estimated as Grade 3.

CAIRNGORMS AND LOCHNAGAR.

Creag an Dubh Loch, The Hanging Garden.—This route, located in an upper amphitheatre, to the left of the Labyrinth Route (*Journal* 23, 32), was first climbed on 8th May 1948 by Dr and Mrs J. H. Bell and Mr W. S. Thomson (Lochaber J.M.C.S.). Neglecting the approach by steep slopes and ledges, the actual climb took two and a half hours for a climb of 300 to 350 feet, the standard being Very Difficult. The finish is at the plateau rim close to the summit. The approach from close to foot of Labyrinth is steeply up to the left, by easy rocks and grass, an inclined shelf surmounted on the right by a wall of crags. The first shelf leading back to the right offers no scope for climbing the wall above. A continuation leftwards ultimately leads to a point above the south-east gully, but, before the terrace dips in that direction, one should turn upwards to the right by another inclined shelf. Towards its end, after one short intermediate descent, it is possible to climb directly upwards. There are two possibilities, either to attempt to climb



April 1948

LOCH MUICK

W. S. Thomson

straight up to the left up the edge of a steep wall (which we thought unpromisingly difficult), or to continue straight on over gentler, mossy and bouldery slopes into an upper amphitheatre, ringed by cliffs, named by us the Hanging Garden. The Labyrinth was on our right, beyond the rim of the Garden. The features of the climb are given very briefly, and there appears to be plenty of scope for attractive and more difficult variations.

We made for an upper gully, practicable at first but soon becoming a chimney when we attacked the slabby and broken rocks on its right. As these became continuous, steep and smooth, the only alternative was a 50-foot pitch of the steepest, moss-covered rock, a most interesting place where our ice-axes were indispensable aids to progress. A traverse to the left landed us on clean rock above the smooth slabs, and underneath the final wall of cliff. This offered no loophole on the left, a vertical chimney in front which looked very insecure, but a good opening on the right. The horizontal jointing of the granite provided a mammoth staircase with a smooth wall on the left in default of any handrail. After 80 feet we reached a grand, safe ledge. There was another 100-foot slab above, set at about 60 degrees at least with hair-breadth cracks for holds. It could not be climbed, but a narrow ledge to the right offered an escape. From its end we climbed on to a huge block, and a steep slabby slope led to a short upper gully which led us easily to the rim of the plateau.

Sgoran Dubh, No. 1 *Buttress.*—The Anvil is suggested as an apt name for the pinnacle at the top of Roberts Ridge. Two new routes have recently been climbed on this northern part of the No. 1 Buttress.

Crowberry Rib and Slabs was climbed on 10th October 1947 by Dr and Mrs J. H. Bell, the standard being just difficult. The start is slightly to the left of a long, whitish scree shoot, up a well-broken ridge to the right of the northern wall of Roberts Ridge and, presumably, to the right of A. L. Cram's route of July 1935. The finish is at the short knife-edge beyond the Anvil. A summary of the climb runs as follows:—

Sixty feet up rib; 15 feet up rib steeply until one looks down on a rowan tree; 60 feet up rib to heather platform; 50 feet up heather to little chimney and so to blaeberry ledge; to left round corner and straight up 40 feet; 40 feet over heathery rock to Crowberry Orchard; 60 feet up and slightly right by slabs and cracks; 20 feet up heather and then slabs and grooves for 100 feet to top of climb, rather difficult.

Pinnacle Rib was climbed by Messrs G. S. Ritchie and J. G. Ferguson on 15th May 1948, the standard being difficult. To the right of former route are two well-defined ribs separated by a distinct little gully. Climb is on right-hand rib. Lower down, the route may be varied, but the upper part is well defined, the best pitch being where the pinnacle is climbed on the left.

Up a difficult 40-foot buttress then a little to right along ledge; climb very difficult chimney to a narrower ledge at 40 feet; do not avoid pinnacle by wall on right, but go left up edge of slab into an upper groove behind pinnacle at 30 feet; continue up edge, over block and along neck, and by broken rocks to point level with the Anvil.

No. 2 Buttress.—Careful comparison of accounts has established that Rose Ridge is wrongly indicated in the present "Cairngorms" Guide. Rose Ridge is the one climbed on 31st August 1940 by Dr Bell and Miss Bell (see *Journal* 23, 47). It lies immediately to the right of the longest, thin sandy runnel (seen in Guide photograph facing p. 186), which descends almost to the open moor. The name Decoy Ridge is suggested for the ridge (on right) shown as Rose Ridge on that photograph. (G. R.)

Creag an Fhir Shaighde, Callater; Central Slabs Cleft.—The crags are prominent, about two-thirds of a mile from the head of Loch Callater, to the east of the Tolmount path. The main features are the huge granite slabs which dip lower than the rest of the rocks. A dark narrow cleft runs up the left edge of the slabs, and a scramble up an open gully leads to the start. The cleft is about 200 feet long, the left wall overhangs, and the right is smooth slab. There are few or no belays. If one continues up the main face on good rock a longish climb is possible. This ascent was made on 23rd May 1948 by G. Taggart and K. McLaren, the standard being Difficult.

Sixty feet of broken slab to a stance. Ascend centre rib until cleft bends. Difficult sprachle to left and swing back to bed of cleft and so to below chockstone and belay. Turn chock on right wall. Second chock at 15 feet, where combined tactics needed, at arms' length. Difficulties moderate now. Get on to heather and rock buttress on left and finish by using gully on the right.

GLENCOE AND ARDGOUR.

As the new Glencoe and Ardgour rock-climbing Guide will be published very shortly, it is not intended to reprint any new climbs which are to be included in it. Of recent discoveries this covers (on Buachaille Etive Mor) the direct start to McKenzie slanting shelf route on Central Buttress, June Crack, Guerdon Grooves and Raven's Gully, direct route and on Aonach Dubh a route by Nicol on B. Buttress.

Far Eastern Buttress, Aonach Dubh.—This face, as well as East Face lie high up on the Coire nan Lochan slopes, opposite the flank of Gearr Aonach. The East Face is several hundred feet farther up than Lower North East Nose and Far Eastern Buttress about 300 to 400 feet higher still. Messrs T. J. Ramsley and A. Johnson ascended it on 31st October 1948, the route following the line of least resistance near the left-hand edge of the Buttress on good rock with few belays. The length is about 300 feet, moderately difficult. More difficulty would be found farther to the right.

Summit Buttress, Stob Coire nan Lochan, Boomerang Gully.—This 600-foot gully was first ascended in January 1949 under snow conditions by Messrs John Black, R. G. Donaldson, and W. H. Murray. The gully lies immediately to the left of Bell's Direct Route. It is well defined and has a right-angled bend which is not visible from the corrie. There is one hard pitch just beyond the bend, and thereafter the gully lies at an easy angle. It is not a summer climb. Its chief merit is that, being situated above 3,000 feet, it holds good snow when thaw conditions prevail throughout the rest of Glencoe.

West Face, Stob Coire nan Lochan.— Professor Turnbull reports two climbs on an outcrop of rock about 400 yards south of the Amphitheatre, facing Nos. 3 and 4 Buttresses on Stob Coire nam Beith. Wall is 200 yards to right of prominent collection of boulders seen on skyline from Achtriochtain. J. Purser with D. G. and M. J. Turnbull on 20th December 1948 started at left base, going straight up and diagonally by cracks for a height of 200 feet. The other route by H. W. Turnbull

and G. Pratt starts 100 feet to right, at foot of subsidiary buttress, easily at first and then more steeply over a spike by narrow ledge, mantelshelf, easy slab and detached pillar. Overhang higher is turned about 40 feet below top. Standard is Difficult. This route ends 50 feet higher than the first one.

Garbh Bheinn, Ardgour.—A party of the Moray Mountaineering Club, Messrs F. F. Cunningham, A. G. Mackenzie, and J. R. Brown, investigated some climbs on 18th and 19th September 1948. The Coire Beag disappointed them, the slabs on the left being very easy and other faces being very short. On the right rim of the corrie more difficult climbing was possible to the crest. Between corries Beag and Mor search was also made and a steep short ridge found on the left, as well as some clean slabs to the right, best taken from their left rather than from the lowest point.

Less time was given to Coire Mor, which proved better. There are two large prominent slabs, the lower, at about 1,750-foot level, opposite the lower section of the Great Ridge. This has a lower section of 150 feet, very steep, and an upper of 80 feet. The standard is Very Difficult. They ask if anyone has tried a face climb on the wonderful south wall of the Great Ridge.

ARROCHAR DISTRICT AND ARRAN.

The undernoted climbs will be described briefly in the "Southern Highlands" Guide, and in full detail in the "Arrochar" Guide at a later date.

The Brack.—(1) Split Pinnacle—three short routes; (2) Four Step Ridge—four pitches; (3) May Route—350 feet.

The Cobbler.—(1) North Wall Groove; (2) Slack's variation of Nimlin's direct route; (3) Chimney route on Central Buttress; (4) 100-foot wall (north peak).

Creag Tarsuinn.—Slab and groove.

A' Crois.—(1) Crois Gully; (2) Central Buttress; (3) Pinnacle Gully; (4) North Gully.

Ben Ime.—(1) Fan Gully Buttress; (2) Fan Gully.

Particulars of the undernoted two climbs were too late for inclusion in the "Southern Highlands" Guide.

South Peak, Cobbler: *Dead Man's Groove.*—Very Severe in rubbers.

Climb north wall traverse until belay above crux is reached. Climb up grassy ledges for about 15 feet until traverse can be made to the left into a crack. This lands one below two bulges. The first is climbed with little difficulty; the second, which is the crux of the climb, is climbed with difficulty until grassy ledges are reached. These ledges lead to the groove, which is climbed until the belay below the second last pitch of the Jughandle route is reached. Continue up Jughandle. First ascent, 23rd May 1948. J. Cunningham, W. Smith, S. Smith.

South Peak, The S Crack Route.—Starts 70 feet to right of Jughandle route.

Climb crack until an overhang is reached at 90 feet. This is climbed direct, bringing one beneath another overhang which is also climbed direct. This leads to a grassy ledge with belay at left-hand edge. Climb continuation of crack on good holds until large platform of the Jughandle route is reached (50 feet). First ascent, 20th June 1948. J. Cunningham, C.D.M.C., and W. Smith, C.D.M.C. Standard severe rubbers.

Arran.—Mr G. Scott Johnstone (J.M.C.S.) sends the following notes: When climbing Caliban's Creep on Cir Mhor he made a variant to pitches 5 and 6, which leaves the traverse a few feet beyond the corner, after threading the hole, and climbs straight up for 12 feet on good holds. An overhung ledge then affords an easy stomach traverse to the top of pitch 6

Ben Tarsuinn, Swildon's Gully.—The shallow corrie above the Meadow has a small crag on its left, the southern part of which has a prominent, dark gully, about 150 feet high, with more chockstones than any other, in the author's opinion. It is strenuous, but not difficult. This "ruckle of boulders" recalls Swildon's Hole in the Mendips. The author and Mrs Johnstone descended it.

"THE SONGS OF CRAIG AND BEN" (A Forthcoming Collection), and A SONG OF BEN AVON (*circa* 1795–1815).

By Arthur Geddes.

I. SONGS OF THE BRAES O'MAR.—Members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club may remember with legitimate pride that our founders included men who carried on an ancient and unbroken tradition of love of Craig and Ben, and of their life and lore. Among them was Veitch, the friend of Principal Campbell Shairp, who had learned the Gaelic from his mother's family in Argyll, and who was not only Professor of Poetry at Oxford, but was himself a true poet. He translated parts of Duncan Ban MacIntyre's *Praise of Ben Dò'rain*, a "Great Song" (or *Oran Mor*) composed to the theme and variations of a pibroch. With a Meet on the Braes o' Mar in view, it is worth remembering that Campbell Shairp's enthusiasm as a mountaineer gave the acknowledged inspiration to our best collection of the songs of Badenoch and of Brae-Mar, that of the Rev. Thomas Sinton, a fine collector and a poet too. Sinton's "The Poetry of Badenoch" is scarce and hard to come by, for its sincere and faithful prose translations make it almost as interesting to a mountaineer who has no Gaelic as to one who has. No song book on hill climbing in the Highlands and Isles would be complete without the inclusion of songs from Badenoch and Mar.

From "The Poetry of Badenoch," I have translated four or five fine songs, each in a mood of its own. One song was composed by that keen poacher and loyal clansman, William Gow or Smith, Rynuie (*Ruigh-an-Uighe*), the "High-lying Croft by the Way," or track that leads from Abernethy Forest and Rothiemurchus over to Mar. This song, "The Burn of the Green Lochan" (*Allt an Lochan Uaine*), describes his haunt which I imagine lay below Cairn Toul. William's loyalty to his own chieftain, Grant of Rothiemurchus, made his deer-hunting on the Mar side of the march "honourable," if neither legal nor popular to Fife's

deer foresters, the " Red Foxes " who came hunting him in his high and cauldrife lair! In " My Betty by Spey," Gow tells how he would take his sweetheart to the wilds in despite of " the rich man " whom her parents desire for her. To Betty, whose hair is still in a maiden snood, not yet in a wifely kerchief, he cries:

" But although you forsake me, for my lack of gear,
Though you wed but a weakling to kertch you, my dear,
With his head on the pillow, he'll be useless, asleep,
While I shall be joyously rounding the deer!

" My grief! were my lass and I far off, alone. . .
How warmly I'd shield her in deer-hides from cold."

Yet another love song, to the air " Colin's Cattle," is a girl's, telling how she will escape with her Colin to the sources of Dee and Tay among the hills. A fourth is a shieling lament of Gaick Forest, where the lass sings a last farewell to her wavering lover; her grief (she cries) " Tween my shoen and my feet, is a stone! " I like the lines on her lover and his fondness for the hill:

" Feet to climb to the Stúc
Or descend by stream-loops,
Or to hunt in the dew, and the cold."

Her melting farewell, and her command to him to go, bring him back for ever, as those who hear her song will believe!

II. " THE SONGS OF CRAIG AND BEN."—All these songs of life on the open Bens and in the wilderness form part of a book of grand songs, now fifty in number, which I have been gathering since I returned to Scotland and joined the Club, Junior and Senior, over twenty years ago. Some of these I had first learned years before from Gaelic-speaking men on the hills, reading them over later by their firesides. My first aim was to find translations, true in meaning, rhythm and sound, for the sake of fellow-mountaineers whose knowledge of Gaelic might be nil, or at most not equal to their love of the Roughbounds (*an Garbh-Chrioch*). I did find a few good translations, such as Campbell Shairp's, but all

(*Continued on page* 145.)

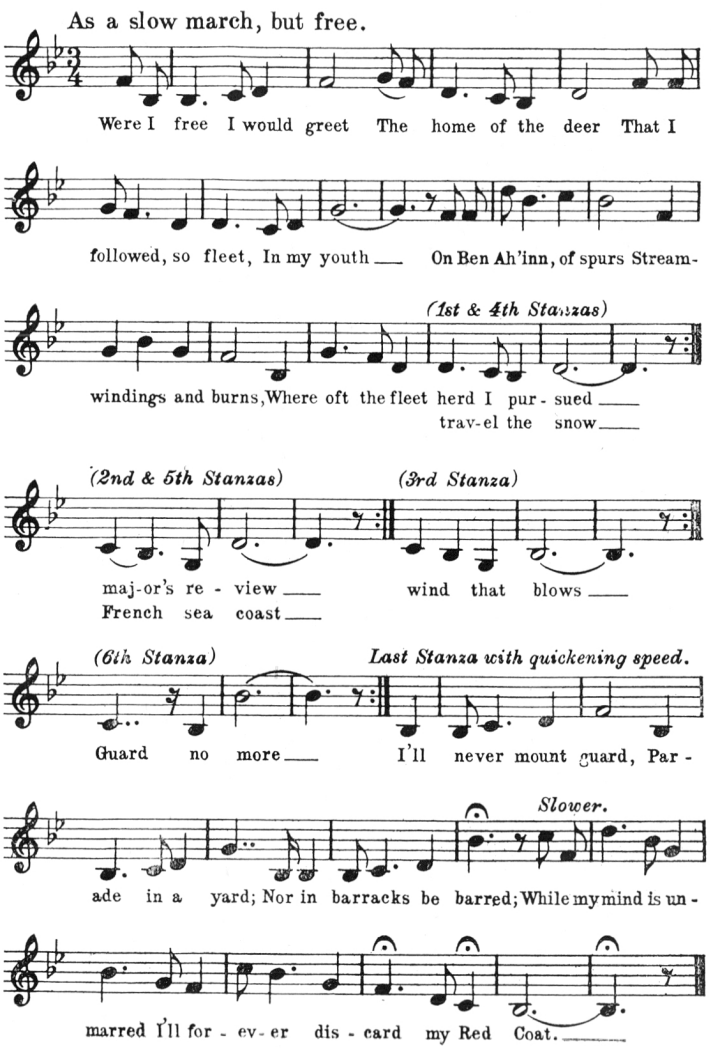
1.	Were I free, I would greet	*mf (not too fast)*
	The home of the deer	*mf*
	That I followed, so fleet, in my youth.	*cr*
	On Ben Ah'inn of spurs,	*cr*
	Stream-windings and burns,	
	Where oft the fleet herd I pursued.	*f*
2.	In the mist of the dawn,	*p*
	With the snow on the sward,	*cr*
	I have heard the deer, warningly croon.	*dim*
	Gallant band on the Braes!	*cr*
	When you troop, on parade,	
	You call for no major's review.	*mf*
3.	No guard need the stags	*cr*
	But the highest of crags:	
	'Tis you, no laggard cajoles.	*f*
	Full keen is your sight,	*mf*
	To rear, left or right,	
	And your scent of the wind that blows.	
4.	For me, now, 'tis hard,	*mp cr*
	We're due for the guard;	
	But here's to you—*Slainte !* ere I go.	*cr*
	Here's a health to my land,	*f*
	And the lads—gallant band!—	
	Light-foot, to travel the snow.	
5.	Tho' my musket's in trim,	*mf*
	'Tis not to my will,—	
	Far frae herds, and frae hills, I know.	*dim*
	No red cock, of the Ben,	*p*
	Black or white cock, or hen,	
	—Their home's not the French sea coast.	
6.	But a grouse cock or hen	*cr*
	Were soon seen, in the glen	
	Where the Loyne meets the Don, as it flows.	*mf*
	And were I, now, afar,	*cr*
	'Neath the spires of the Carn,	
	On my life! I'd mount guard no more!	*f*
7.	I'll never mount guard,	*quickening speed*
	Parade in a yard,	*mf cr*
	Nor in barrack be barred,	
	While my mind is unmarred,	*f slower*
	I'll for ever discard my Red Coat!	*ff*

The Gaelic is from the Rev. Thomas Sinton (Ed.), "The Poetry of Badenoch," 1906, p. 222. Translation and air by A. Geddes.

A SOLDIER'S SALUTE TO THE TROOPS OF BEN AVON (CAIRN GORMS)

Failte an Saighdeair Do'n Trupa Beinn Athfhinn (Monadh Ruadh)

Composed by Archibald Stewart, Glen Avon, when on active service in France with the Gordon Highlanders, about 1795-1815.



Easter 1948 *J. E. McEwen*

IN GARDYLOO GULLY, BEN NEVIS

(The Hon. Secretary has led the great pitch, over the archway)

too few. My next step was to seek for fresh translators; but except for aid by that talented poet in three tongues, A. D. Mackie, I drew blank. The third step, encouraged by several Club Members, was to attempt the job myself. By dint of taking a new song with me each time I revisited the Hills—usually a song born on the very hill-sides I was climbing—the collection has grown year by year.

Now, to most Gaelic bards the air is almost inseparable from the rhythm and vowel-rhyming or " assonance " of the words. And so, with the original song in mind, the translation came; or if it failed to come at a first attempt then one tried again and again, until the Muse relented and the sense and sound came true.

The range of " The Songs of Craig and Ben " is wide, in place, time and mood. In place, they range from cliff-climbing in St Kilda to the chase on the snows of Ben Avon. In time, some come down to us from early centuries, like the splendid lay in praise of " Arran of the many stags." Said to have been sung to Saint Patrick by one of the last survivors of Fingal's Hosts, it is actually about eight hundred years old, but it must go back to traditions far more ancient. And in mood the songs range from grave to gay. The last example I give here contrasts the joy of roaming the Bens with the melancholy of absence and the weariness of barrack-life; and it ends with an outburst that will strike an echo of laughter and fellowship in the heart of many a mountaineer who remembers long, dreich hours of mounting guard in khaki. In this song, as in others, I have aimed at almost literal translation and here this is generally achieved. Having failed so far to find the traditional air, I have composed one of my own, which seems to give pleasure; but for all but a very few other songs, I know and give the authentic, traditional air.

In order to meet the heavy extra costs of printing the airs (in staff and sol-fa) and the Gaelic, my publisher is to issue an appeal for subscribers. Given a good response, the fifty songs could be issued at a moderate price, in a book, which, folded, could slip into the pocket. Thus it could be a companion on the hills, whether one is alone or with fellow-climbers, or among native hillmen such as some I know who have given an enthusiastic and encouraging welcome to my translations of " The Songs of Craig and Ben."

In Memoriam.

FREDERICK ORPEN BOWER, D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S.
1855-1948.

PROFESSOR BOWER, one of the last surviving original members of our Club, died at Ripon last April. He had been living there in retirement since leaving Glasgow, where he had occupied the Chair of Botany in the University for a period of forty years.

He was born at Ripon and educated at Repton School and Trinity College, Cambridge, graduating in 1877 with First Class in the Natural Science Tripos, and, later, studying in Germany at Wurzburg and Strassburg. After acting as Demonstrator at University College, London, and lecturing at South Kensington, he was appointed to the Glasgow Chair at the early age of 30. In 1891 he was elected an F.R.S., winning the Royal Gold Medal in 1910 and the Linnean Gold Medal in 1911. From 1919 to 1924 he was President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. In addition to honours received from other universities, Glasgow University conferred the LL.D. degree on him at his retirement in 1924, and in 1930 he was President of the British Association, having earlier presided over its botanical section on three occasions. He was the author of a number of important works concerned with his own subject. In Glasgow University he was notable both as a stimulating teacher and as an administrator in the Senate and the Court.

His interest and enthusiasm for the Scottish hills, and in our Club, was chiefly manifested in the years before 1914, and few, if any, present-day members appear to have known him with any degree of intimacy. He was present at the Jubilee Dinner of the Club in 1938, when the writer met him, but he still manifested his interest in the welfare of the Club within a year of his death when replying in a firm hand to a letter from the writer about Club affairs. Those who never met him can refer to the Jubilee number of the *Journal* (Vol. 22, p. 6), where he appears in a group of members,

reproduced from a photograph taken at Inveroran at the Easter Meet in the year 1894.

Professor Bower contributed the extensive article on Scottish Mountain Botany which appears in the General Guide, an amplification of a short article which appeared in Vol. 3 of the *Journal*. We mourn the passing of a distinguished member, a man of energy and enthusiasm who enriched Scottish mountaineering by his exploration and publicising of an interesting and beautiful aspect of our bens and glens. J. H. B. BELL.

JAMES CORNWALLIS THOMSON.

1879-1948.

IT is not easy for those of us who knew Jim Thomson to realise that we shall see him no more. He was so full of life and good humour, such a good companion and, above all, so stable and reliable that one did not think of life without him somewhere in the background. He was in many ways the ideal club member—approachable and kindly in his manner, with a tremendous sense of humour which was always good-natured, and completely unselfish; a man to whom one naturally turned for advice or help, a tower of strength and dependability.

A picture of some of these qualities in action has been given me by one of his contemporaries who was a member of a search-party which had spent many long, arduous and fruitless hours upon Ben Nevis. Returning down the mountainside in an exhausted condition, he was met by Jim Thomson coming up to look for the searchers. Jim took charge of him and shepherded him down the hill, giving him such a sense of companionship, security and strength, that all weariness seemed to disappear.

Thomson joined the S.M.C. in 1905, served on the Committee from 1913 to 1915 and, after an interval which included service abroad in the H.L.I., became Vice-President from 1930 to 1932. He was appointed Editor of the " Southern Highlands " Guide Book and laid the foundations of the work which it is hoped to

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

EASTER MEET, 1948—FORT WILLIAM.

IN some ways the Easter Meet this year echoed that of 1937. Days and dates coincided exactly with those of the former year; by a happy coincidence the weather conditions were similarly glorious; lastly, both Easters followed exceptionally wet New Years. There the similarity must end, for this year the snow was high and soft, except in the upper gullies of Nevis. Hard frost on Saturday night made the snow conditions on Sunday the best of the Meet. At times, winds more than tempered the heat of the sun, the tempering process being carried a step further after the week-end by mist on the higher tops.

Members and guests attending amounted to about 35. There were, in addition, large numbers of climbers belonging to kindred Clubs on the hills. Our own members and their guests were comfortably accommodated at the Palace and Cruachan Hotels, and at the C.I.C. Hut.

Some good climbs were enjoyed, and one party accomplished, by a *tour de force*, the traverse of all the Mamores in nineteen and a half hours from Fort William to Kinlochleven. For the most part the ridges were favoured by the majority, and with reason, for the views were fine, though, on the whole, not distant.

Personnel.—The following members were present at one time or another:—Messrs L. St C. Bartholomew, W. G. Blackie, I. M. Campbell, W. C. Carmichael, I. G. Charleson, W. L. Coates, R. R. Elton, J. F. Hamilton, A. H. Hendry, R. M. G. Inglis, R. Jeffrey, J. N. Ledingham, W. N. Ling, R. W. Martin, A. G. Murray, J. E. McEwen, T. D. Mackinnon, G. G. Macphee, F. E. O'Riordan, G. Peat, G. S. Roger, A. M. Smith, W. B. Spiers, E. C. Thomson, T. E. Thomson, H. W. Turnbull, P. J. H. Unna, R. D. Walton, and J. D. B. Wilson.

Guests present were: Messrs C. M. Allan, T. Graham Brown, —. Jones, W. A. Nicol and W. A. W. Russell.

Climbs Done.

Thursday, 25*th March*.—Inglis climbed Ben Dorain *en route* for the Meet. Jeffrey, Ling and Graham Brown did Carn Mor Dearg, and Ledingham bagged Stob Ban of the Easains.

Friday, 26*th March*.—Turnbull, Charleson and O'Riordan took in Garbh-bheinn by way of the Great Ridge. Campbell, both Thomsons and Inglis climbed Gulvain, while Smith by himself was on Stob Ban and Mullach nan Coirean. Jeffrey, Ling and Brown ascended Ben Nevis from Steall; Macphee and Walton reached the same top by way of South Castle Gully. Ledingham and Carmichael climbed Sgùrr a' Mhaim and Stob Ban. Peat and Hendry climbed the N.E. Buttress from the Hut. Unna had an eventful expedition up Glen Nevis culminating in the discovery of a trouser button. Martin, Bartholomew and Elton arrived from Corrour via Glen Nevis.

Saturday, 27*th March*.—Charleson, Smith and O'Riordan over Nevis by way of the Hut and arête. Elton, Campbell and T. E. Thomson climbed the Castle ridge, the last-named continuing on to the top of Nevis. Blackie and Inglis were on Carn Mor Dearg, climbing it by the ridge from the Distillery. Inglis continued to Nevis by the arête. Macphee, Murray and Coates ascended Ben Nevis by the N.E. Buttress. Hendry and Peat climbed the Tower Ridge from the Hut. The only difficulty lay in dodging the queue. Allan, McEwen, Russell and Wilson ascended the Ben by way of Glover's Chimney, augmenting the general chaos at the Gap. This party, less Russell, later visited the Meet at Fort William and re-ascended to the Hut in the small hours of Sunday. Ledingham, Carmichael and Nicol climbed Sgùrr nan Coireachan and Sgùrr Thuilm from Glenfinnan Station. E. C. Thomson, Martin and Bartholomew were over An Gearanach and An Garbhanach. Mackinnon, Roger and Hamilton's *tour de force* consisted of visiting the tops of all the Mamores. This they did by leaving Fort William at 12.30 A.M. and arriving on the first top, after walking up Glen Nevis, at 5 A.M. The last top was left at 6.30 P.M. and Kinlochleven reached at 8 P.M.

Sunday, 28*th March*.—Elton, Spiers and Jones ascended the Tower Ridge; Nicol and Walton made the round of C. M. Dearg and Nevis by the arête, being accompanied by T. E. Thomson for the first part of the day. Carmichael and Ledingham did the round in the opposite direction. Roger, Mackinnon and Hamilton were on Meall na Teanga and Sròn a' Choire Ghairbh. E. C. Thomson climbed Binnein Beag by himself, and Murray and Coates traversed Sgùrr a' Mhaim, Am Bodach and Stob Ban. Ling and Blackie were also on Stob Ban. Peat and Hendry climbed a buttress on the south-west side of Aonach Beag and continued to Aonach Mor. Jeffrey, Graham Brown, Martin and Bartholomew climbed the Castle Ridge and the last two visited the summit of the Ben. Campbell explored the head of Glen Nevis. From the Hut, Charleson, Allan,

McEwen, Russell and Wilson climbed Gardyloo Gully, steps having to be cut from low in No. 1 Gully. They found the upper pitch Severe.

Monday, 29th March.—Macphee, T. E. Thomson and a party of the Midland Association of Mountaineers were force-marched over Sgùrr nan Coireachan and Sgùrr Thuilm, some of the party being content with the first top on account of the pace necessitated by the insufficient interval between trains. Peat and Hendry were on Carn Dearg (Loch Ossian).

Tuesday, 30th March.—T. E. Thomson and Carmichael climbed Beinn a' Chaoruinn from Tulloch, between trains.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1949, AT KILLIN AND LAGANGARBH.

AT Killin the members were mostly at the Bridge of Lochay Hotel, but the overflow went to the Queen's Court and Killin Hotels. Most of those at Lagangarbh were also at Killin for part of the time. A number of western members were at Inverarnan, but that cannot be considered as part of the Meet. The earliest arrivals came on Thursday, 30th December 1948, and all except Hodge and Unna left on Monday, 3rd January. In spite of a phenomenally low barometer weather conditions were amazingly good, but the prevalence of much dry, new snow made the going exceptionally heavy except on parts of the summit ridges. New Year's Day was bright, sunny and comparatively windless. Conditions in Glencoe were not just as good. There was a good deal more snow, just as powdery, and there was much more snowfall over the week-end.

It was noteworthy that those who skied went to Beinn Ghlas, where conditions were not good, but some who had no skis and would like to have used them found conditions on the hills north of Glen Lochay which would have been perfect. Even the Editor was convinced that he could have done his downhill stems on Meall nan Subh or even on Meall Ghaordie. G. J. Ritchie and he consoled themselves with an invigorating snow bath before lunch on the upper slopes of Meall Ghaordie. Macphee's party discovered a new top on the ridge about one-third of a mile south-east of Meall nan Tarmachan.

J. E. McEwen

NEW YEAR MORNING 1949
(From the summit of Ben Ghlas)

This was confirmed in council of experts later on during the evening. The arts (as well as science) were not neglected, as Geddes had his fiddle and Evershed Thomson his pipes. Everyone enjoyed excellent fare at the hotels, especially on New Year's Day. Some spent the evenings upstairs in dialectic, others retired to the basement for less solid forms of amusement. Austerity was banished to Lagangarbh and even farther west, where several members retired to howffs among the caves beneath Beinn Fhada for meditation.

The President, Professor Turnbull, was unfortunately unable to attend. A complete list of those present at both localities, 39 members and 4 guests, runs as follows: Messrs J. F. Anton, J. H. B. Bell, W. C. Carmichael, I. G. Charleson, D. Easson, R. R. Elton, P. A. Fletcher, W. E. Forde, A. Geddes, A. H. Hendry, E. W. Hodge, B. H. Humble, K. K. Hunter, A. G. Hutchison, R. G. Inglis, J. S. M. Jack, J. N. Ledingham, W. N. Ling, J. Y. Macdonald, J. E. McEwen, G. G. Macphee, H. MacRobert, A. I. L. Maitland, R. W. Martin, A. G. Murray, J. B. Nimlin, J. G. Osborne, G. Peat, G. J. Ritchie, T. G. Robinson, R. N. Rutherfurd, W. A. W. Russell, W. B. Spiers, J. McK. Stewart, E. C. Thomson, T. E. Thomson, P. J. H. Unna, W. Waddell, J. D. B. Wilson. The four guests were Messrs M. Blake, Dunlop, Macphee, Jun., and the Vice-President of the J.M.C.S.

Expeditions from Killin:—

31*st December* 1948.—Geddes, Jack and MacRobert ventured out despite snowfall; Wilson, Blake and Russell climbed Heasgarnich.

1*st January* 1949.—Jack, Ling, MacRobert and Unna walked up shoulder of Tarmachan from Lochan na Lairige road, and back to hotel; Waddell, Macphee and Macphee, Jun., went to 3,000-foot top south-east of Meall nan Tarmachan; Speirs, Fletcher, Elton and Murray did all Tarmachan tops but the main one; Hendry, Peat, Stewart and also Hodge and Geddes were on Meall Corranaich; Inglis, Osborne and Dunlop climbed Heasgarnich, as did T. E. Thomson, who also claimed Stob an Fhir Bhoga, whereas Martin did most of it; Ledingham, Maitland and Carmichael climbed Ben Ledi on the way to the Meet; K. K. Hunter climbed Cruach Ardrain along with nine men of the J.M.C.S.; Bell, Ritchie and

and continued on to the Grünhorn, descending by the same route. Guide on the above two expeditions was A. Rubi. Some days later Marshall climbed the Wetterhorn from the Gleckstein hut along with a large party with Fritz Steuri as guide. They reached the summit via the Wettersattel in good weather. A storm broke in the afternoon, however, and forced the return to Scheidegg. The others, D. Henderson, Scott, C. Henderson, W. H. Murray and McKellar climbed the Schreckhorn from the Strahlegg hut by the south-west ridge. They omitted the couloir, which was in bad condition, and commenced on the rocks below this. Time from the hut was seven hours up and seven hours down. W. H. Murray had a very good day's rock-climbing on the Faulhorn on 21st, and climbed the Grüneckhorn the next day. He then returned to the Jungfraujoch and climbed the Mönch. His ascent of the Schreckhorn by the south-west ridge is mentioned above. Bad weather at the Strahlegg prevented a direct transfer to the Gleckstein hut as had been intended; however, from that hut some days later he climbed the Wetterhorn along with Marshall and McKellar. He then moved to Zermatt and joined McIntyre, but bad weather prevented any ascents except the Unter Gabelhorn.

After the day's rock-climbing on the Faulberg with the large party, Charleson and Tilly, along with non-members, traversed the Grüneckhorn and Gr. Grünhorn. This was a long day, the latter part through extremely bad weather with thunderstorms and snow. The cold was intense, and the party was held up two hours on account of lightning on the ridge. They then moved to the Finsteraarhorn hut and climbed the Finsteraarhorn by a rib on the west face. The following day they crossed by the Fieschersattel to the Jungfraujoch, Charleson climbing the Gross and Hinter Fiescherhörner with a small party which included André Roch. From the Jungfraujoch the whole party traversed the Mönch (ascent by south-west, descent by south-east ridges) and descended to Scheidegg. On 29th July they went to the Strahlegg hut and climbed the Schreckhorn on the 30th by the south-west ridge.

V. I. Russell, who joined the Meet on 23rd July (mostly with non-members), made a number of good ascents on fine days. His climbs included the Jungfrau by the Rotthalsattel, the Mönch by the south-east ridge (both from the Jungfraujoch), the Mönch by the Nollen ridge (N. ridge) from the Guggi hut and the Hasler rib of the Aletschhorn from the Concordia. His most enjoyable day was from the Jungfraujoch to Scheidegg by the Eigerjoch and glacier, in bad weather. Russell has since taken up a post at Tripoli and has already started a Ski Club and organised a mountain hut 7,000 feet up in the Lebanon.

In June, with his wife, Angus M. Smith had an enjoyable walking tour, completing three-quarters of the circuit of the Mont Blanc range from Les Contamines, via Chamonix, Martigny, Orsières and La Fouly, to the Grand Col Ferret.

D. B. McIntyre writes: Although I was thirteen months in Switzerland I had no one to climb with the first summer when I was working at Zinal, and the only thing I did was the Rothorn. The winter was exceptionally mild. I skied in the Jura, the Bernese Oberland and at Davos. The real thing was a week in the Bernina in March; it was a special course run by the Central Committee of the S.A.C. to train men as leaders in glacier ski touring. It was a very hard course, and we got quite a number of the peaks done too.

R. Jeffrey and party were thwarted by the prevailing bad weather. In early August they crossed the Loetschenpass from the head of the Gasternthal to the Loetschenthal, from whence, after a short stay, they moved to Zermatt. There they climbed the Ober Rothorn from the Findelen glacier and had a day on the Rotgrat of the Alphubel.

W. N. Ling, P. J. H. Unna and J. M. Davidson were in the Maderanerthal in July and enjoyed some good walks, including ascents to the Hüfi and Windgälle huts in spite of poor weather. During the time they were there very little climbing was being done.

M. Cooke, R. R. Elton, P. A. Fletcher, A. Harrison and A. G. Murray were in the Bernina district for a fortnight in the beginning of August. Weather was bad, but improved later. Il Chapütschin was climbed from the Roseg glacier in doubtful weather and high wind. At the second attempt the summit of the Fortezza was reached in spite of much new snow on the rocks. Deteriorating weather forbade continuing to the Bellavista as had been intended. A descent by compass was made through the Sella Bellavista, and by the Palü glacier, to the Alp Grüm. Following this sixteen-hour expedition the party took train to Morteratsch station next day, re-ascended to the Boval hut and then climbed the Pitz Zupò. From the hut on the Forno glacier, reached in bad weather, they ascended the Cima di Rosso. It was intended to make for the Albigna glacier on the second day. The route by the Colle Casnile was taken, two of the party climbing the Piz Bacone en route. The party descended to Maloja by the Forno glacier instead of by the Albigna hut.

W. A. W. Russell climbed with a party of St Andrews University M.C. members in the second half of July. Starting at Arolla, they climbed the Petite Dent de Veisivi, La Roussette and Pigne d'Arolla and made an attempt on Mont Blanc de Seilon. They then crossed to Zermatt by the Bertol and Schönbühl huts and ascended to the Bétemps, from where, in very cold and windy conditions, they ascended the Dufourspitz, the last 2,000 feet in mist. At the beginning of August, Russell joined J. E. McEwen, J. D. B. Wilson and G. A. Collie (J.M.C.S.) at Zinal. From the Mountet they climbed the Trifthorn, and in bad weather made two abortive attempts on the Rothorn and one on Lo Besso, the latter by the arête Blanc. Disconsolately the party moved to the Italian lakes, returning two days later to Zermatt to find the weather worse. A long day was spent on the Rotgrat of the Alphubel, ice on the rocks defeating the party on the upper section below the summit.

and rescue parties out next morning recovered body and rescued survivor, who had remained all night on rocky ledge, unhurt. Party was inexperienced and unroped.

12*th July*.—William Dryden (45) lost himself on Ardgour hills alone—returned next day while search parties were out.

24*th July*.—Isobel MacLean (21) (S.), novice, fell and was killed when climbing alone on Suilven—stretcher party out.

28*th July*.—Party of seven (E.) traversing the Dubhs from Loch Coruisk to Glen Brittle. Party split up. Five searched Glen Brittle and sent out search party for the other two, who stayed put till daylight and returned under their own power.

August.—Ian Allen (16) (S.) fell when climbing Waterpipe Gully, Skye—head and leg injuries—stretcher party out.

14*th August*.—Dorothy Price (25) (E.), novice, slipped and was killed when passing over Bad Step on Sgumain-Alasdair ridge unroped. Stretcher party out.

7*th September*.—Michael Steane (E.), novice, slipped on scree on Ben Nevis—twisted ankle—stretcher party out.

22*nd September*.—Alma Steer (E.), novice, slipped and was killed near summit of the Chanceller, Glencoe. Stretcher party out.

30*th September*.—C. Anthony (E.), novice, lost in Glencoe, many search parties out. Body found on Stob Coire nam Beith, 9th October.

1*st October*.—Geo. Bull (E.), member of a search party for above, drowned in River Coe.

1*st October*.—Search party out for Edinburgh University student who had not returned from walk to Loch Coruisk—returned under his own power the following afternoon.

7*th November*.—Maurice Bramah (28), J.M.C.S., fell when descending Aonach Dubh—died when being taken down by stretcher party.

12*th November*.—Harold Jones (E.) fell when climbing alone on rock pitch, Meall Cumhan, Glen Nevis—multiple injuries—stretcher party out.

We are asked by the Secretary of the Etchachan Club to correct our 1948 list of accidents as follows. Mr James Morgan was not one of their members. In connection with the avalanche accident on Sgor Mor, Braemar, on 18th January, the injuries received were not " slight " and the four involved were in hospital for some time.

Lui Beg Bridge.—In 1948 the Cairngorm Club invited donations from members and climbing friends (including the S.M.C.) towards the cost of erection of a new bridge over the Lui Beg Burn (two miles west of Derry Lodge), which is here crossed by the main Lairig Ghru route to Speyside. They proposed to associate the bridge with the name of their late Honorary President, James A. Parker, B.Sc., in appreciation of his services to the Club and to Scottish mountaineering in general. The approval of the Fife Estates and a generous response to the appeal allowed them to proceed with the project, and the bridge was completed in August 1948.

The engineer was George A. Taylor, M.A., B.Sc., a member of the Club, and the work was carried out by Messrs William Tawse, Ltd., Aberdeen. The clear span is 23 feet 6 inches; width between handrails, 3 feet; height above normal water level, 6 feet 6 inches. The engineer, foreseeing difficulty in obtaining steel and also in transporting steel parts to the site, decided to build in aluminium alloy (Noral 51 ST). All main and cross beams, bracing, standards and handrails are of this material, while the footway is of reinforced concrete slabs 2½ inches thick. The abutments are built with boulders gathered at the site. All materials were transported to the bridge by volunteer members and friends, with the aid of a home-made hand-barrow on large pneumatic wheels. The main beams were carried on cross poles.

On 7th November 1948 the bridge was formally declared open by Mrs E. Birnie Reid. About 70 members and friends attended the opening ceremony, including two guests from the A.S.C.C. meeting of the previous day. Col. E. B. Reid, President, thanked the engineer for his work, and R. T. Sellar paid tribute to James A. Parker as a man and as a mountaineer. Two plates are attached to standards on the north handrail, one showing distances and the other reading:—

"Luibeg Bridge. In appreciation of the services of James A. Parker to mountaineering in Scotland. Erected by the Cairngorm Club, August 1948."

Upland Shieling Settlement on Ben Lawers.—Mr E. W. Hodge reports an inspection of what may be the remains of the highest village in Scotland, at a height of about 2,000 feet on the Allt Gleann Da Eig or Dubhag on the north side of Ben Lawers.

The houses are very inconspicuous, although the walls stand over 3 feet high in many places. They occupy little rocky knolls by the side of the stream. There are at least twenty of a long rectangular type, as well as a dozen or so, more roughly built, of a circular type which are only 6 feet in diameter. This huge, grassy glen between Meall Corranaich and Meall a' Choire Leith must, indeed, have been a busy scene in the old times. A curious feature is the narrowness of the doorways, which are only 18 inches wide at most, but often not much more than 12. The long type of house has an internal width of only 4 or 5 feet, with a length of 15 or 18. This would make possible the use of very light spars for roofing. The houses are quite well built, and some have four or five storage recesses made of flat slabs in the thickness of the wall. There is no trace of chimney or roof. The settlement can easily be reached from the top of the Lochan na Lairig road, over about half a mile of peaty ground.

I spoke to old Mr Maclaren, who lives at the foot of the Lawers Burn. He remembered the shielings as a matter of tradition, though no one living could have taken part in the system in its prime. "Joy in the shieling," he quoted, "love in the heart."

Two names he remembered: Ruigh na Chulachain or "Shieling of the Flies," and Ruigh nan Righl or "Shieling of the Rule." Exploration of the other big glens on the north side of Lawers might reveal other settlements at a similar height. On the high bank above the Lawers Burn itself, at about 1,300 feet, there are remains, but not so numerous or in anything like such good preservation. I have not been able to find reference to the shielings in any local book.

Another curious survival, on the south side of Ben Lawers itself, is the old road for peat sledges which runs as high as 2,000 feet over the moor to the west of the Lawers Burn, in wide curves like those of a ski-runner. It lies between banks sometimes 4 feet deep, and has a very boggy bottom. It has a bottom of pitched stones under the bog, though these are nowhere visible. This construction, made after the removal of the surface gravel, represents great labour; but without it the road would quickly have become a torrent-bed.

Nearly at the foot of this track I passed a reed-thatch hut which looked so primitive that I thought it could not be inhabited. But it is. Mr Maclaren said that bracken, fixed root upwards, made the best thatch and would last twenty years. He said the centre-point of Scotland was near the top of the road between Lawers and Killin, marked by an old thorn tree in a field above the road; though some say it is at Clachan na Gael in Pitlochry.

Rock-climbing Classification.—The essence of a guide book is that it should be clear and accurate. I am sorry to see in the latest edition of the "Skye" Guide that a system of rock-climbing classification is being adopted which is neither and which has been so added to and tinkered with that it has lost even the simplicity which was the merit of its prototype.

Its fault is that of all jargons in which common words have come to have a specialised meaning—it is ambiguous. Were you, sir, to tell me that a certain climb was difficult, I should be at a loss to know whether you meant that it was a "guide-book" Difficult, which would, of course, be Easy for you but Very Difficult for the likes of me; or whether you had actually found it difficult to get up, in which case the guide would rank it as one of the (at present only four) varieties of Severe, and I should find it Impossible. Many climbers of my acquaintance have now stopped using these ambiguous terms, and refer to the grades by their initials; and to say that "we found the climb easy and would classify it as a D" at least does not sound like nonsense. But if letters are to be used, why have obscure combinations like "M.S." instead of a simple alphabetical arrangement? Or better still, use numbers, the only objections to which I have seen being (1) that the old "Skye" Guide did not use enough of them; and (2) that some foreigners use them. Neither argument seems very cogent.

The only merit of the present system is that it offers almost infinite scope for fine gradation. I am thinking of reclassifying the lower grades of climb, starting with V.E. (very easy); Q.E. (quite easy);

E. (easy); F.E. (fairly easy); and so on all the way to D.D. (—— difficult). One can get plenty of fun out of it anyhow.

JAMES Y. MACDONALD.

Sgurr nan Gillean, 3rd Pinnacle, Slingsby's Route.—Mr G. A. Roberts, owing to the low grading of the following climbs in the Guide, offers the following notes. On 24th June 1948 he and P. Phillips (F. & R.C.C.) followed the route and agree that the grading is too low, especially regarding the cave pitch. There was no jammed stone available for use as handhold, but rubble may have covered it. The pitch has now become Severe. They found, a few days later, that the South Crack of Inaccessible was not so difficult as this. If a party able to climb the normal " 3 " routes were defeated by this pitch they might find a retreat down the slabs underneath to be hazardous.

First Winter Ascents.—The Editor of the " Glencoe " Guide has noticed that winter ascents are being claimed when the rocks are free from snow and ice. The fact that a climb has been made during the six winter months does not of itself qualify the climb as " an ascent under winter conditions " for Guide Book purposes. Such a claim merely misleads other climbers. The Editor has therefore disallowed the claim to a first winter ascent of Clachaig Gully published in the last issue of the *Journal*. The rocks were free of snow. Similar ascents have been disallowed for the Chasm, Church Door Buttress and Rannoch Wall.

Inveroran Hut.—The Glasgow University Mountaineering Club has a hut at Clashgour Schoolhouse, five miles from Bridge of Orchy. It will be known as the Inveroran Hut. There is a new loft which has increased floor space, so that accommodation is available for six persons. There are, as yet, neither palliasses nor blankets, but there is a small coal stove, some pots, kettles, two paraffin lamps but no crockery, etc. Coal and paraffin are available.

Members of other clubs who wish to use the hut should apply to the Custodian, W. Mackie, 10 Norbreck Drive, Giffnock, Glasgow ('phone Merrylee 1322). Keys are obtainable on production of permit, from Mr Menzies, Keeper, Forest Lodge (a mile away). The charge is 1s. 3d. per head per night, payable to the Custodian. The hut is not open from 1st August to 10th October inclusive.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Changes of Address.—(1) Mr P. Armour Brown (formerly Hally Brown) to 14 Mannicotts, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. (2) Mr G. R. Symmers now resides at Thornlea, 307 Cemetery Road, Sheffield, 11.

Snow Beds of Ben Nevis.—Mr Gordon Manley (member) desires information on location and extent of

snow beds at various dates, especially in summer or autumn.

Guide Books.—Members with new information or good photos in area of "Central Highlands" Guide please write to Mr Harry MacRobert. For other areas write to Section Editor or to General Editor, Mr R. G. Inglis, 36 Blacket Place, Edinburgh.

Next Journal.—This is intended to be issued early in March 1950. Contributions, as early as possible, and no later than New Year, should be sent to the **Editor, 3 Park Place, Clackmannan.** Reports on New Climbs must be short and concise, as space is limited. Those about Glencoe and Ardgour should be sent for vetting to Mr W. H. Murray, about Arrochar to Mr B. H. Humble.

Communications about distribution of *Journal* should go to **Mr J. D. B. Wilson, Auchinlay House, Dunblane;** about advertising to **Mr J. E. McEwen, Park Lodge, Stirling.**

BOOKS AND JOURNALS.

Books on Scottish (or English) Mountains.

* *On the Hills of the North*, by J. Hubert Walker. Oliver & Boyd, 15s., 182 pp., 24 full-page illus., and 6 maps.

Natural History of the Highlands and Islands, by F. Fraser Darling. Collins, 16s., 282 pp. and 32 illus.

* *British Mountain Climbs*, by G. D. Abraham. Mills & Boon, 15s., 6th edition, 430 pp. and 19 illus.

* *Climbs on Gritstone, Laddow Area.* Wellmer Bros., Birkenhead, 4s., 68 pp., excellent drawings.

A Climber in Wales, by Showell Styles. Cornish Brothers, Birmingham, 15s., illustrated.

Books, Alpine and others.

* *Again Switzerland*, by F. S. Smythe. Hodder & Stoughton, 20s., 246 pp., 33 illus., and cover maps.

* *Approach to the Hills*, by C. F. Meade. John Murray, 9s. 6d. (reprinted), 255 pp., 9 illus., and 2 maps.

* *Le Cervin*, by Charles Gos (2 vols.). Ed. Victor Attinger, Paris and Neuchâtel. 315 pp. and 327 illus. (In French.)

Alpine Tragedy, by Charles Gos. Allen & Unwin, 18s., 282 pp. and 31 illus.

The Splendid Hills, by Ronald Clark. Phœnix House, 35s., 116 pp. and 160 plates. (Photos by Vittorio Sella, and a biography.)

Mountain Paths, by H. E. G. Tyndale. Eyre & Spottiswoode, 12s. 6d., 208 pp. and 15 illus.

Mountains of Memory, by Arnold Lunn. Hollis & Carter, 15s., 248 pp. and 45 illus.

* *The Unknown Mountain*, by Don Munday. Hodder & Stoughton, 21s., 263 pp., 37 illus., and 2 maps.

* *Dark Companion*, by Bradley Robinson. Hodder & Stoughton, 10s. 6d., 256 pp., 3 illus., and 2 maps.

Journals.

We express our thanks to kindred clubs for the receipt of the following mountaineering periodicals. Where no dates are given the current issues are referred to: *The Alpine Journal; The Ladies' Alpine Club Year Book; The American Alpine Journal; Die Alpen* (monthly of Swiss Alpine Club); *Appalachia; Mountaineering* (organ of the British Mountaineering Council); *Mazama; Midland Association of Mountaineers Journal; Cambridge Mountaineering; New Zealand Alpine Journal; Rucksack Club Journal; Wayfarers' Journal; Scottish Ski Club Journal; Sierra Club Bulletin; Journal of Mountain Club of South Africa; Hungarian Termeszetbarat* (3 Nos.); *Wierchy* (Jubilee volume of Polish Tatra Society, 1873-1948). This is a handsome volume of 346 pp. The title means "The Peaks."

The books marked with an asterisk have been sent to us for review. We are always glad to receive review copies and to draw our members' and readers' attention to them, but regret the lack of available space. We can recommend Mr Walker's book as a thoughtful account of an enjoyable journey over our western and north-western hills, very well illustrated. He links scenery and geology, and is a good observer. Mr Smythe is a good companion on a ski tour. He has the holiday spirit and a mellow philosophy—an excellent bedside book. *The Unknown Mountain* deals with the exploration of the coast range of British Columbia, where the difficulties of approach are exceedingly formidable, although Mount Waddington, the highest peak, is no more than 175 miles from Vancouver. *Dark Companion* is the personal account of Matthew Henson, negro and right-hand man of Admiral Peary in all his north polar expeditions. It is one of the finest narratives of human courage, endurance and trust that I have read.

We have received a copy of *Open Air*, edited by B. H. Humble (Maclellan, Glasgow), 1s. 6d. It contains many articles of interest to mountaineers by Tom Weir, W. A. Ewen, D. G. Duff, J. B. Nimlin and W. H. Murray.

THE JUNIOR MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF SCOTLAND.

MEMBERSHIP over the whole Club has increased by more than 80 to a total of about 425 during the year. The training of new members has demanded and received considerable attention on the part of older members and associate members. Numbers in the Club are increasing so fast that the Sections, particularly Glasgow, urgently require every help that S.M.C. members may care to give to younger members and novices. All Sections have run social events as well as climbing meets. Glasgow, Edinburgh and Perth Sections run regular buses at week-ends. During the year 7 members attended the Alpine Club Meet at Scheidegg, and other members visited the Alps and Norway independently. Plans for the coming summer include a bus from Edinburgh to Austria in June, and a Club Meet in Switzerland in July. It is hoped that as many S.M.C. members as possible will go and help.

The Annual General Meeting, Dinner and New Year Meet were held at Crianlarich. There were 53 members and guests present at the Dinner, which was held immediately after the Annual General Meeting. The latter was well attended by most sections and several important matters were discussed. Sections present were Edinburgh, three of their members carrying on to Kingshouse by car later that evening; Lochaber, four of their members making the journey from Fort William and back by car over very icy roads—a very commendable effort; and Glasgow Section, who made the arrangements for the Meet and had the chair. London and Perth Sections were not represented.

Staying at the hotel for the Meet were 39 lucky and happy members—lucky because of the weather and happy because of the abundant supply of hot water on their return from the hills, to say nothing of the excellent catering. Snow conditions were poor for serious climbing, there being up to 4 feet of fresh snow, but there was no

lack of enjoyment. Four members had some excellent ski-ing on Grey Heights below Cruach Ardrain.

Ben More, Stobinian and Cruach Ardrain proved the most popular hills, and one could not help meeting other parties at some time during the day on these hills. Beinn Chaluim was done by two separate parties. Some very fine photography was done on Fiarach. Although this is not a Munro, the party voted it well worth the plug through soft snow. Several members moved North on Sunday and Monday, and we have reports of enjoyable climbs done from Clashgour, Bridge of Orchy and Kingshouse, and on Beinn Dorain and Beinn Achaladair.

Tuesday saw only five members left at Crianlarich, and they did An Caisteal under a blazing sun. An extremely fine fog bow was observed by this party. The honour of the first bathe of this year goes to one member who had to break the ice on the Falloch to perform his " January afternoon " act.

A. J. H. MILES.

Glasgow Section.—As well as the Club Meet, the Section attended meets of their own at Fort William at New Year, Aviemore at Easter, Tulloch on the May holiday, C.I.C. Hut at Fair Holiday and Fort William at the Autumn Holiday. In addition, fourteen bus meets were run during 1948, as follows: Kinlochleven (twice), Glencoe (three times), Inverarnan (twice), Arrochar, Luib, Crianlarich, Monachyle, Dalmally, Kinlochetive and Borrowdale. Twelve evening meetings were held, including a dinner, a smoker and a photographic competition. The Secretary is Mr A. Johnson, 35 Alderman Place, Glasgow, W.3.

Edinburgh Section.—Activities during 1948 returned to the full scale, and week-end bus meets were held monthly at suitable climbing centres. Glencoe and surrounding district provided ample variety, and the Mamore Forest, the English Lake District and the Cairngorms were also visited. During the summer a number of meets were held, notably at Ratagan, Ullapool and Glen Brittle. These were arranged to suit small parties of members whose holidays coincided, providing opportunity for all to climb with Club members. Much independent climbing has also been done.

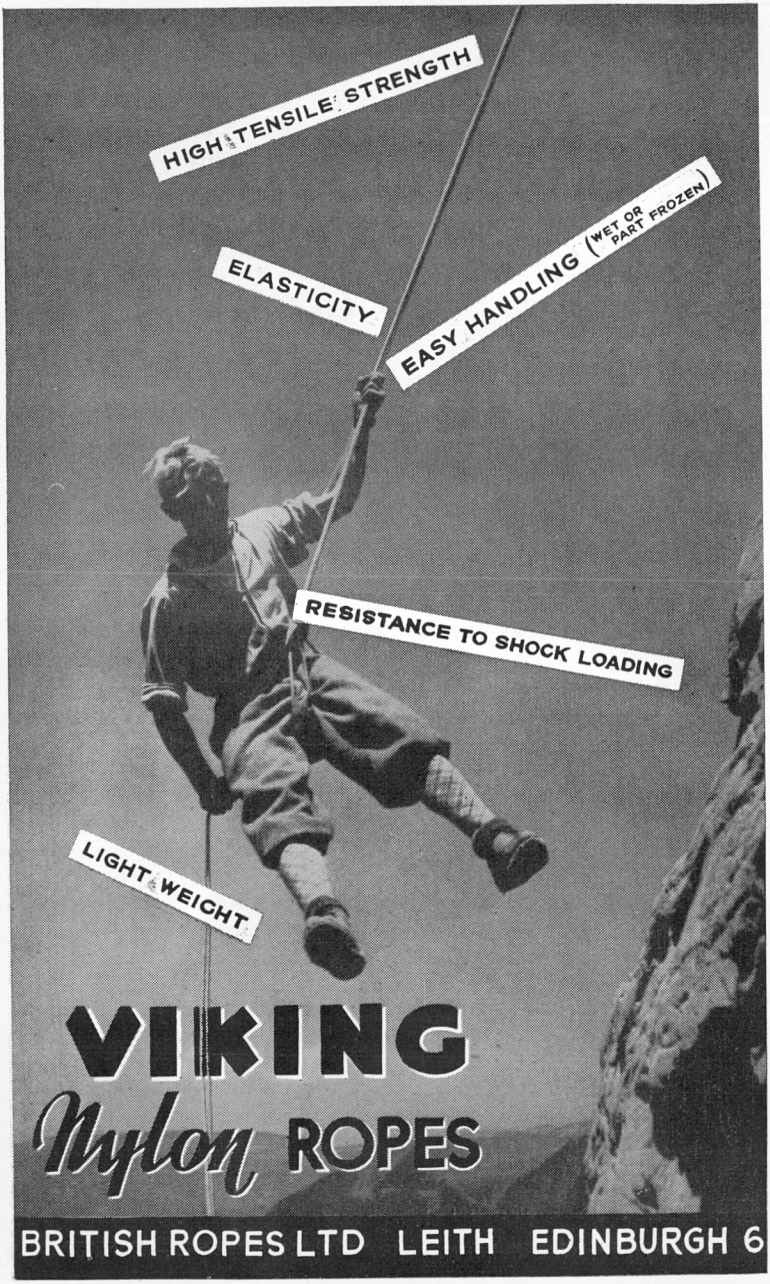
Section members have been attending S.M.C. lectures in the Synod Hall during the two winter series, and several informal J.M.C.S. meetings have been held, supplemented either by lectures or Mr H. C. Hampton's films. The Section's Annual Dinner was held in the " Wee Windaes " Restaurant on 23rd November 1948. Guests attended from the S.M.C., Glasgow Section of the J.M.C.S.

and other kindred Clubs, and an enjoyable evening resulted. The Secretary is Mr D. D. Stewart, 5 Cluny Gardens, Edinburgh, 10.

Lochaber Section.—The Section can report a year of steady progress. The Annual General Meeting and Dinner were held in the Imperial Hotel, some twenty members attending. Principal guests were Mr T. D. MacKinnon and Dr Duff, S.M.C. After the Dinner Mr MacKinnon gave a most interesting lecture on Alpine Climbing, his excellent slides, together with the S.M.C. projector, being much appreciated by the members. Finance and membership are in a satisfactory state. Membership now stands at 30. Some 417 hut-nights were paid for at Steill hut, this being an increase of 17 over last year. Meets were held frequently throughout the year, mostly in the Ben Nevis-Mamore area. The Secretary is Mr P. MacDougall, Mamore Cottage, Bank Street, Fort William.

Perth Section.—No official report has been given of this Section's activities since its reorganisation in 1946. Starting in November 1946 with 18 members, the Section has carried out many successful meets, visiting Glencoe, Dalmally, Crianlarich, Glenshee, Glenisla, Glen Clova, Glen Lochay, Dalwhinnie, Loch Pattack and other places. The attendances at the meets have been very good. The few meets cancelled have been due to very bad road conditions. The Section now has 30 active members, and some more are expected back from the Services. The Secretary is Mr T. P. Kemp, 151 South Street, Perth.

London Section.—The year has been one of consolidation. Membership has continued to rise until it now stands at 61, and activity has been widespread. High cost of travel has limited the number of meets, although it is noteworthy that when London members visit Scotland they invariably choose the remotest spots. During the year four parties visited Skye, there was a particularly profitable visit to the Outer Hebrides and sundry visits to Nevis, the Cairngorms and Inchnadamph. If pressed, the Section will even boast of its Rum addicts. Much climbing has been done on the sandstone outcrops of the Weald, Harrison Rocks retaining first place in popularity. An attempt to organise a bus to North Wales at Easter failed through lack of support and the high cost. There have been a number of visits to less distant places such as the Gritstone outcrops of Derbyshire. The Section's almost traditional interest in caving was maintained by an expedition to the Mendips. Finances are in a healthy state, and it is not proposed to increase the annual subscription or entrance fee, which remain at 10s. and 5s. respectively. The Secretary is Mr R. V. Waterhouse, 119 Fairfax Road, Teddington, Middlesex.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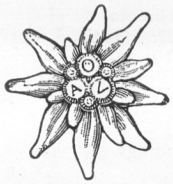

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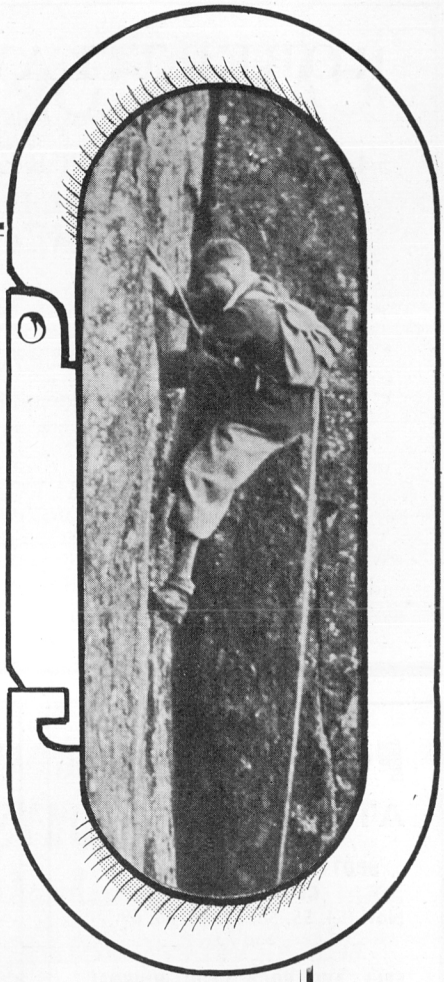

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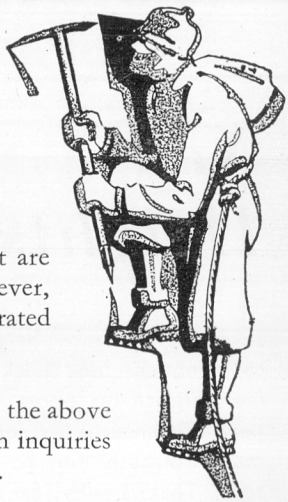

Supplies of equipment are still limited but are being replaced gradually. It has as yet, however, been impossible to publish an illustrated catalogue.
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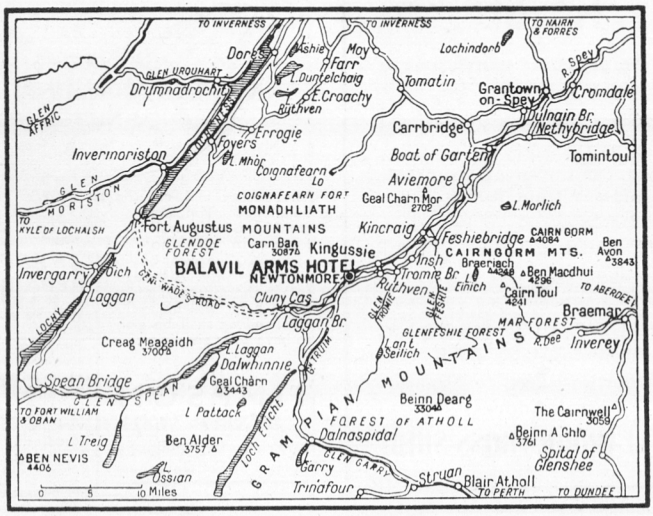

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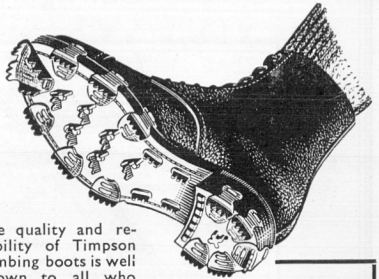

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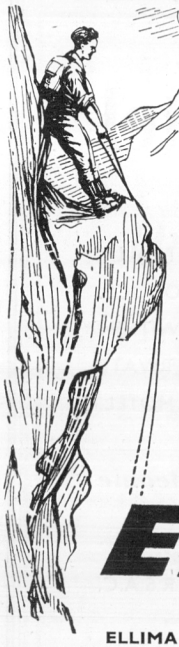

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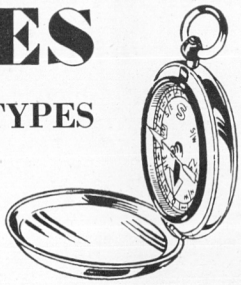

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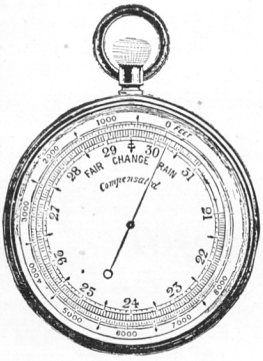

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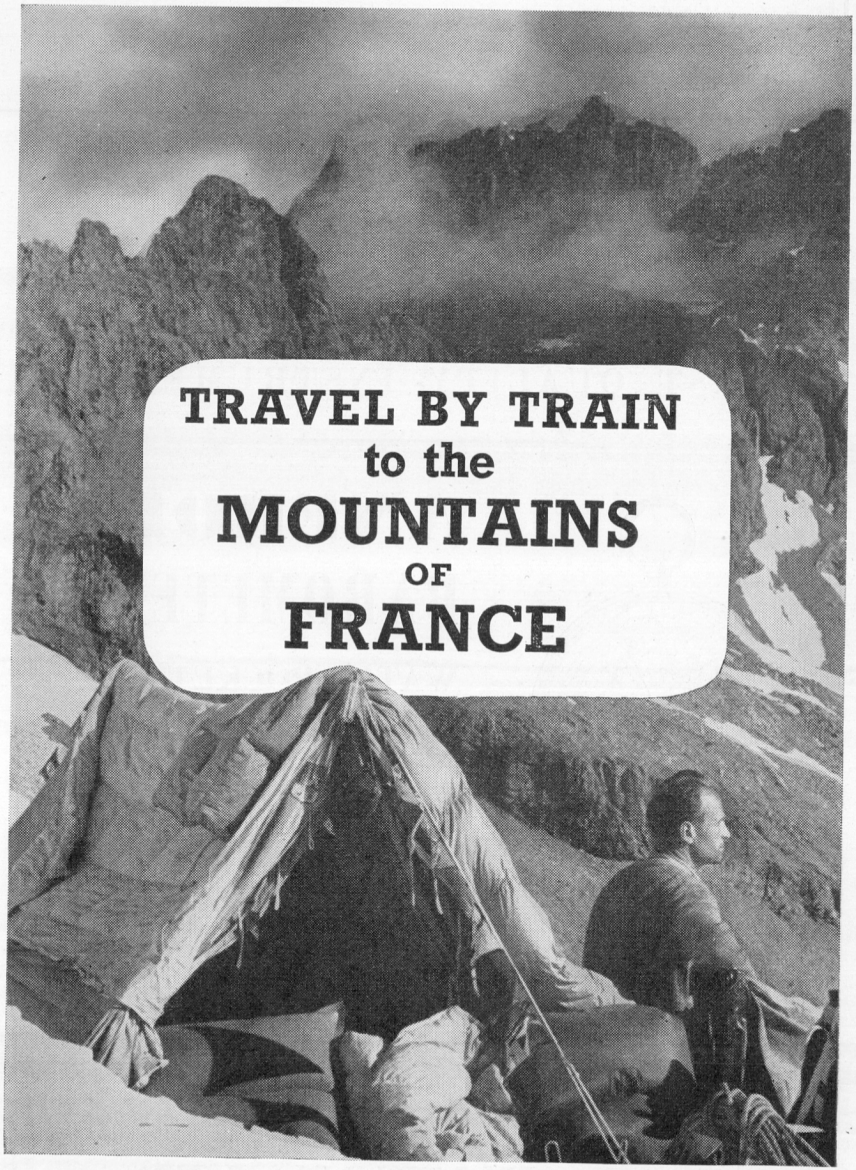

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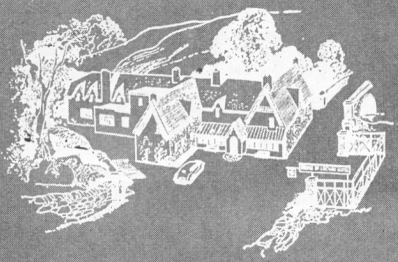

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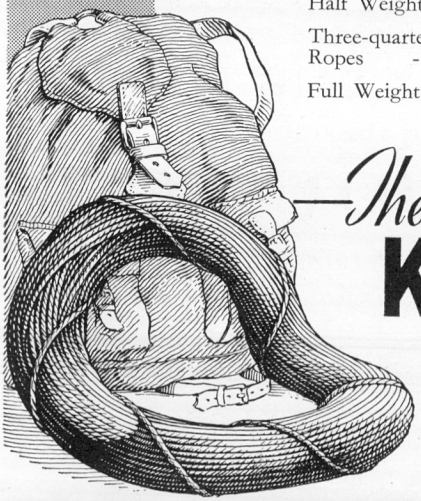

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Rock Climbers' Guide. Pocket size, waterproof cloth.
To be published, May 1949. Price **7s. 6d.** Postage, 4d.

Southern Highlands

To be published, Summer 1949. Price not yet fixed.

The republication of the Guide Books is in hand, but under present conditions it will be some time before all are again on the market.

The following is the complete list of those that will be available in due course :—

CAIRNGORMS. To be published in 1950.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS.

LOCHABER.

BEN NEVIS. Rock Climbers' Guide.

ARROCHAR. Rock Climbers' Guide.

ARRAN. Rock Climbers' Guide.

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All the above publications are well illustrated, and those in print may be had from :

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NOTICE OF RECEPTION, MEETING AND DINNER, 1949

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

SIXTY-FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CLUB, TO BE HELD IN THE CENTRAL HOTEL, GLASGOW, ON *Friday, 2nd December* 1949, *at* 5.30 *p.m.*

AGENDA FOR ANNUAL MEETING

1. Minutes of Sixtieth Annual General Meeting.
2. Report and Financial Statement (*see over*) by the Hon. Treasurer—W. B. SPEIRS.
3. Report by Hon. Secretary—IAN G. CHARLESON.
4. Report by Hon. Editor—Dr J. H. B. BELL.
5. Report by Guide Books General Editor—R. M. GALL INGLIS.
6. Report by Hon. Custodian of C.I.C. Hut—J. RUSSELL MARSHALL.
7. Report by Hon. Custodian of Lagangarbh Hut—G. S. ROGER.
8. Report by Hon. Librarian on Library, Slides and East of Scotland Sub-Committee—G. C. WILLIAMS.
9. Report by Hon. Convener West of Scotland Sub-Committee—T. D. MACKINNON.
10. MEETS :

    New Year, 1950.—This Meet has been fixed for ARRAN and LAGANGARBH.
    Easter, 1950.—This Meet has been fixed for GLEN AFFRIC and C.I.C. HUT.

    The Committee make the following recommendations :—

    New Year, 1951.—LOCH AWE, DALMALLY or CRIANLARICH in that order of preference with LAGANGARBH in addition in each case.
    Easter, 1951.—STRATHCARRON as per J. N. LEDINGHAM'S Proposal on page 37 of the January 1949 Bulletin with C.I.C. HUT as an alternative.

11. Recommendations for Office-Bearers for ensuing year made by Committee :—

    VICE-PRESIDENT—J. G. OSBORNE in place of W. B. SPEIRS who retires.
    COMMITTEE—J. K. W. DUNN, R. R. S. HIGGINS and B. H. HUMBLE in place of A. DIXON, K. K. HUNTER and J. E. MACEWEN who retire.

The other Office-Bearers, except the President (who holds office for another year) and Members of Committee offer themselves for re-election, conform to Rule 26.

The General Committee has approved the following changes and appointments :—

ADVERTISING MANAGER—J. D. B. WILSON in place of J. E. MACEWEN who resigns.
DISTRIBUTION MANAGER—P. E. MACFARLANE in place of J. E. MACEWEN who resigns.
HON. AUDITOR—ALEX. HARRISON.
WEST OF SCOTLAND SUB-COMMITTEE—R. ANDERSON and J. N. LEDINGHAM in place of D. HENDERSON and B. H. HUMBLE who retire.
FIRST-AID SUB-COMMITTEE—A. IAN L. MAITLAND, F.R.C.S., in place of ALAN HORNE who has resigned.
HUTS SUB-COMMITTEE—Add R. BROWN and DAVID EASSON.

Rule 8—

12. COMMUTATION FUND.—The Committee recommends that the right of a Member to commute his subscription be suspended for another year.

RECEPTION

The Club Reception will be held in the Central Hotel, at 3.30 p.m. After tea has been served Mr J. F. Hamilton will show a selection of Colour Slides. To facilitate the catering arrangements, will members wishing to attend please complete and forward the enclosed application form to Campbell R. Steven, 28 Partickhill Road, Glasgow, W.1, from whom tickets price 3s. each for themselves and their guests may be obtained.

ANNUAL DINNER

The Sixty-First Annual Dinner will be served in the Central Hotel, at 7 for 7.30 p.m. The price of the tickets is 17s. 6d. each (exclusive of wine but including waiters' tip). Any member may introduce guests at his own expense. Will members who intend to be present kindly complete the enclosed form of application and send it with remittance of 17s. 6d. per head to Campbell R. Steven, 28 Partickhill Road, Glasgow, W.1, as early as possible but not later than 26th November 1949. Dress—Lounge suits.

Slide Collection.—In view of the poor response to the last request, the Hon. Custodian of Slides wishes to make a further appeal for negatives of modern rock and snow routes and particularly of action photographs. All negatives, which should be sent to Robert Grieve, 1 Craigleith Hill Green, Edinburgh, 4, will be dealt with promptly and returned immediately after reproduction.

S.M.C. Abroad.—Will members who were abroad this summer please send a report of their expeditions to the Hon. Editor.

New Year Meet, Arran.—Members will be interested to know that Mr W. N. Ling hopes to attend his 100th Meet.

Monthly Lunch in Edinburgh.—Members meet for lunch at Mackie's Restaurant, Princes Street, Edinburgh, on the first Thursday of every month at one o'clock. Those wishing to attend should intimate their intention to E. C. Thomson, c/o The New Zealand and Australian Land Co., Ltd., 69a George Street, Edinburgh, 2 (Phone Edinburgh 26371), by 11 o'clock on the day of the lunch so that accommodation can be arranged.

Weekly Lunch in Glasgow.—Members meet for lunch at Cranstons, 28 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, every Thursday at about one o'clock.

New Members.—At the Committee Meeting held on 28th October last, the following were elected Members of the Club :—A. E. Anton, D. Campbell, J. C. Henderson, W. T. Hendry, D. McArthur, J. Marjoribanks, A. J. H. Miles, E. W. Smith and D. G. Turnbull.

IAN G. CHARLESON
Hon. Secretary

15 N.W. Circus Place, Edinburgh, 3
10*th November* 1949

Members will oblige by intimating any change of address

ACCOUNT of RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE by the HONORARY TREASURER of S.M.C. 1949

REVENUE ACCOUNT

1948	RECEIPTS			1948	EXPENDITURE		
£10 10 0	Entry Money		£14 14 0	£16 17 0	Debit at close of last year		£6 18 2
165 18 0	Annual Subscription from 168 Members at £1, 1s.	£176 8 0		243 3 5	Cost of Journal and Bulletins	£246 2 6	
2 2 0	Annual Subscription for 1948	1 1 0		24 2 6	Cost of Index to Volume 24	...	
3 3 0	Annual Subscription for 1950	1 1 0				£246 2 6	
70 10 0	Commutation Fund—Subscription from 139 Members	69 10 0			*Less:* Sales, Advertisements,		
			248 0 0	181 8 1	etc.	158 14 5	
	Interest from Investments, *less*						87 8 1
39 18 8	Tax	£27 11 0		119 6 9	Printing, Postages, Stationery and A.G.M.		74 1 6
	Less Transferred to Commutation Fund	22 17 7		34 11 0	Club-room Expenses		35 18 11
23 11 7				4 11 10	Books, Maps and Slides		16 7 6
			4 13 5		Western District Committee—		
0 5 3	Club Buttons sold		1 7 6	35 8 5	Expenses	£26 7 1	.....
50 3 9	Books and Furniture sold		2 10 6	70 17 3	Projector	...	
6 18 2	Debit Balance at close of year		...	44 9 3	*Less* Legacy Suspense	...	
				21 18 9	*Less* Projector Fund	8 1 9	
							18 5 4
				5 2 11	Eastern District Committee Expenses		1 15 11
					Subscriptions—		
				2 2 0	Association for the Preservation of Rural Scotland	£2 2 0	
				1 10 0	Scottish Council for National Parks	1 0 0	
				12 10 0	British Mountaineering Council	12 10 0	
							15 12 0
				3 10 3	Corporation Duty		3 14 2
				...	Credit Balance at close of year being gain of £18. 12s. on the year		11 3 10
£325 17 3			£271 5 5	£325 17 3			£271 5 5

COMMUTATION FUND

1948	RECEIPTS		1948	EXPENDITURE	
£1023 18 6	Balance at close of last year	£1040 0 1		Transferred to Ordinary Revenue from 139	
63 0 0	Subscriptions	...	£70 10 0	Members	£69 10 0
23 11 7	Interest at 4% per annum, *less* Tax	22 17 7	1040 0 1		993 7 8
£1110 10 1		£1062 17 8	£1110 10 1		£1062 17 8

THE CHARLES INGLIS CLARK MEMORIAL HUT ACCOUNT

1948	RECEIPTS		1948	EXPENDITURE	
£371 16 0	Balance from last year	£194 15 1	£12 10 8	Occupation Expenses	£4 16 8
46 17 0	Received for 606 hut nights	86 19 5	211 7 3	Repairs—paid to date	123 8 4
			194 15 1	Balance on hand	153 9 6
£418 13 0		£281 14 6	£418 13 0		£281 14 6

LAGANGARBH HUT ACCOUNT

1948	RECEIPTS		1948	EXPENDITURE	
...	Balance from last year	£17 0 5	£36 17 2	Balance from last year	...
£95 19 6	Received for 797 hut nights	119 16 6	14 5 2	Equipment	£10 10 11
0 9 0	Sundry Receipts	...	...	Repairs	79 16 1
			17 14 8	Fuel	21 13 9
			10 11 1	Caretaking, etc.	10 4 4
			17 0 5	Balance on hand	14 11 10
£96 8 6		£136 16 11	£96 8 6		£136 16 11

GUIDE BOOK ACCOUNT

1948	RECEIPTS			1948	EXPENDITURE		
£1173 1 8	Balance from last year		£1046 15 11	£508 10 6	"Western"	...	
	Sales during year			4 0 6	"Skye"	£666 14 4	
6 19 0	Old Copies	...		...	Coolin Map	35 9 0	
428 10 10	240 "Western"	£86 4 11		...	"Glencoe"	42 17 1	
...	1503 "Skye"	669 13 0		48 2 1	"Southern"	7 17 0	
...	522 Coolin Map	35 4 4		1 2 6	Insurance and Postages	3 11 5	
...	873 "Glencoe"	222 7 6					£756 8 10
...	79 "Southern"	49 7 6		1046 15 11	Balance on hand		1353 4 4
			1062 17 3				
£1608 11 6			£2109 13 2	£1608 11 6			£2109 13 2

STRETCHER FUND ACCOUNT

1948	RECEIPTS		1948	EXPENDITURE	
£51 7 10	Balance from last year	£44 12 10	£5 5 0	Donation—Mountain Rescue Committee	...
			1 10 0	Postage	...
			44 12 10	Balance on hand	£44 12 10
£51 7 10		£44 12 10	£51 7 10		£44 12 10

FUNDS AS AT 8th OCTOBER 1949

1948	FUNDS		1948	INVESTMENTS		
...	Revenue Account	£11 3 10		Defence Bonds, 3%, Repayable 1951		
£1040 0 1	Commutation Fund	993 7 8	£100 0 0	Sold 3/2/49	...	
194 15 1	Charles Inglis Clark Hut Account	153 9 6		Defence Bonds 3%, Repayable 1952		
17 0 5	Lagangarbh Hut Account	14 11 10	600 0 0	Sold 3/2/49	...	
1046 15 11	Guide Book Account	1353 4 4	300 0 0	Defence Bonds 3%, Repayable 1956	£300 0 0	
44 12 10	Stretcher Fund Account	44 12 10	200 0 0	Savings Bonds, 3%, ,, 1955-65	200 0 0	
500 0 0	General Reserve	500 0 0	250 0 0	,, ,, 3%, ,, 1960-70	250 0 0	
62 19 6	Investment Profit Account	66 5 6	400 0 0	National War Bonds, 2½% ,, 1952-54	400 0 0	
			550 0 0	Savings Bonds, 3%, ,, 1965-75	550 0 0	
£2906 3 10			499 5 8	Cash in Bank	1433 17 10	
6 18 2	*Less* Debit Balance on Revenue	...	...	Cash in Hand	2 17 8	
£2899 5 8		£3136 15 6	£2899 5 8		£3136 15 6	

EDINBURGH, *25th October* 1949.—Examined, compared with vouchers and found correct.

ALEX. HARRISON, C.A., *Honorary Auditor*

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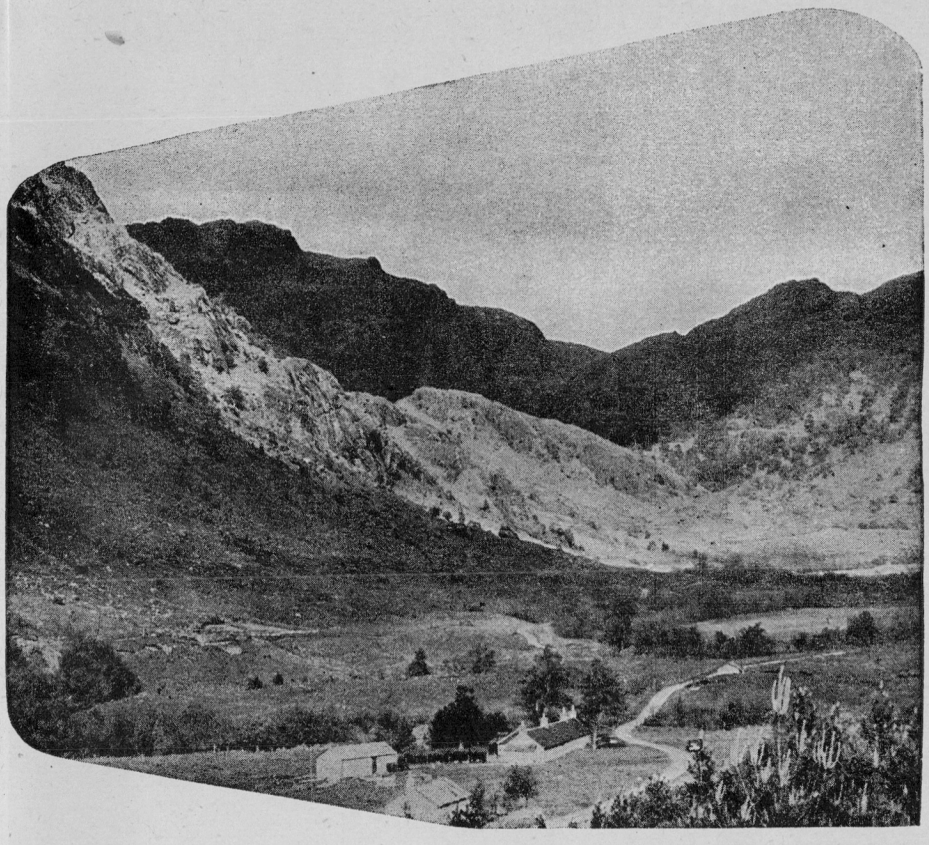

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