

THE SCOTTISH
MOUNTAINEERING
CLUB JOURNAL



VOL. XXVII

No. 152

MAY 1961

SEVEN SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

CONTENTS

	PAGE
MODERN SCOTTISH WINTER CLIMBING	
James R. Marshall	107
SURVIVAL G. J. Ritchie	117
HJØRNESPIDS Malcolm Slesser	124
MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN SCOTLAND, 1935-60	
A. Ian L. Maitland	130
GLISSADES, VIBRAMS AND ICE-AXES	
B. H. Humble	136
SOME THOUGHTS ON MOUNTAIN PSYCHOLOGY	
Donald G. Duff	142
COIRE LAGAN D. J. Fraser	146
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	147
Glen Nevis—All or Nothing	
Une Haute Route Ecossoise	
About a Broken Ankle	
Those J.M.C.S. Bus Meets	
NEW CLIMBS	156
NOTES	170
SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS, 1960	177
IN MEMORIAM	181
PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB	186
J.M.C.S. REPORTS	193
S.M.C. AND J.M.C.S. ABROAD	194
BOOKS	200

EDITED BY G. J. DUTTON

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB, 369 HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH, 1

AGENTS

Douglas & Foulis, 9 Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2

J. B. Wylie & Co. Ltd., 406 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, C.2



THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL

VOL. XXVII.

MAY 1961.

No. 152.

MODERN SCOTTISH WINTER CLIMBING

By **James R. Marshall**

HAVING been told by the Hon. Editor to write on modern winter climbing and techniques, I feel that anything so written should be preceded by an outline of development for a young climber ; for in recent years too many have come to grief tackling climbs beyond their experience. Unlike rock climbing, where proficiency can be acquired in one season, ice climbing takes several, mainly due to an absence of good hard conditions or to a continuity of bad weather. It is important that novices should accept this fact and refrain from pushing on to the more complex modern routes with an insufficient knowledge of basic winter climbing.

Of prime importance, in winter, is fitness ; it should be put before all, and during the months before full winter, as much hill walking as possible should be done in all weathers, for it helps to develop stamina and a general mountaineering sense. This preliminary may appear tedious, but it is of considerable value, as will be appreciated when a hard climb finishes in deteriorating weather and darkness, and there's still a long way home.

Then, once the snow is packed in on the hills, every possible opportunity must be taken to climb the recognised classic snow gullies, for example, Ben Lui Couloir, the Y Gully of Cruach Ardrain, the Black Spout of Lochnagar, in fact any steep snow slope, the main purpose being to amass feet upon feet of step-cutting ; the ice-axe at this stage should be about 30 inches long and crampons should not be worn. Enough has already been written on the art of step-cutting, but one thing must be stressed and that is *speed*, which should be cultivated from the beginning. Try using one slash of the adze per step where possible ; if the snow is really hard, a maximum of three blows suffice, two blows level and together

and then a smash down from above. Avoid moving the boot once it is placed in the step ; on steep snow the weight of the body should rest mainly on the lower step, the upper being used as a brace for balance. Endeavour to have at least two steps cut ahead and wherever possible ply the axe with both hands. It is remarkable the way this technique can be developed on even the steepest slopes.

Once a few thousand feet of snow have been climbed this way, the buttresses should be tackled, where greater security of rock belays assists the ascent of more difficult pitches involving ice and iced rocks ; the Curved Ridge and North Buttress of Buachaille Etive Mòr and the Castle Ridge of Ben Nevis are all good examples of this grade of climb.

In the next season a start with one or two 'ice pitch' gullies should be followed by attempts on the big classics of Nevis, Tower Ridge and the North East Buttress ; here the time of ascent will indicate whether the step-cutting is speedy or not, 4 hours being a good time if the ridges are in reasonably hard condition. When ascents in this category have been successfully made, the scope widens, and some of the most rewarding winter climbs can be tackled with confidence : on Ben Nevis, Comb Gully, Green Gully, Glover's Chimney ; on Lochnagar, Parallel Buttress, the West Gully and Giant's Head Chimney ; and in Glencoe, Crowberry Gully, Deep Cut Chimney and Arch Gully, to mention but a few well-known names—there are many more and a number still to be found. As many of these as possible, old and new, should be tackled during the third season. And this brings us into the best ice climbs of the '30's, made by the McKenzie-Murray-McKinnon ropes from the west, of which Murray's stirring accounts did so much to stimulate interest in the immediate post-war years, an interest that has developed with gathering momentum to the present day.

One ascent of the '30's deserves special mention, the Garrick Shelf of Crowberry Ridge. Although not hard by present-day standards, it was undoubtedly a breakaway from the accepted tradition and indeed is still a classical example of the modern Scottish winter climb.

In fact, we may conveniently run this outline of development for a young climber into an outline of the development of modern Scottish winter climbing itself, and so let the potential 'tiger' know where he will have to stand when he graduates to the real climbing front.

During the '40's the new winter climbs recorded in the west showed little that was different, most of the climbing being repetitive, though new routes continued to be made, such as Twisting Gully,

Dorsal Arête, and, of worthy note, the left fork of Crowberry Gully. But it was in the Cairngorms that new life appeared; a natural phenomenon, for here the potential was immense, and winter climbing took on a healthy progressive air with such climbs as Shadow Buttress A and Giant's Head Chimney—both on Lochnagar.

The course was set, and the '50's opened well; with Patey's ascent of the Douglas-Gibson Gully (1950) the trend was on to the buttresses, using the chimneys or chimney gullies as the lines of weakness, of which Scorpion (1952: Patey, Taylor, Nicol & Grassick) on Càrn Etchachan is a grand example. The Aberdonians had it all their own way, for the field was wide open and the opportunity not wasted; on Lochnagar, Polyphemus Gully (1953: Grassick & Bates) and in the same season Eagle Ridge (Patey, Taylor & Brooker), both climbs in the *grande classe*. In the west, Raven's Gully fell to McInnes and Bonington; then little else of note turns up until 1956 when Scabbard Chimney, Stob Coire nan Lochan, was climbed by Lovat, Marshall and Hendry. The years between were by no means fruitless, a steady run of new ascents continuing, but there was nothing of outstanding note. Then in 1957, Deep Gash Gully, Aonach Dubh, by Cunningham and Noon, produced a concentrated ice climb involving full use of the modern methods. This ascent was made during a brief respite from Ben Nevis, where all the reigning 'tigers' spent their winters scratching the toes of the giant Zero and Point Five Gullies. Inevitably success came, and deservedly, to McInnes, who in company with Patey and Nicol made an elegant ascent of Zero Gully during 1957. Now the pace increased, the Sticil Face of the Shelter Stone Crag providing Grassick and Nicol that year with one of the outstanding ascents of the Cairngorms; and in the same region the pride of Lochnagar, Parallel 'B' Gully, gave in 1958 the 'foreigners' Marshall and Tiso a sustained climb of difficulty. The year 1959 produced the biggest crop of winter climbs yet, starting on Ben Nevis with a fine hard-won success, the Tower Face of the Comb, by Smith and Holt, and then with the successful though controversial five-day *blitzkrieg* of Point Five Gully when Alexander, Clough, Pipes and Shaw put the 'great last problem' out of the way. As ever, new 'bigs' appeared, and the Orion Face (Smith & Holt) indicated the new dimension to come. The Girdle traverse of Ben Nevis by Patey and Marshall, though by no means in the hard class, demonstrated this hidden potential on winter crags, and Minus Two Gully (Marshall, Stenhouse & Haston) likewise, though with greater effort. In this same year, Creag Meaghaidh released two modern climbs, in Smith's Gully (Marshall & Tiso) and the 1959 Route, 1500 feet of steep wall by

Marshall, Stenhouse and Haston. This brings us up to date, into the '60's, and already the first year has shown the trend continuing, with the ascent of Rogues Rib (Tower Ridge) by Clough and Grandison, and the second ascents of Point Five and Zero Gullies. But the real pointers to the future on Nevis are Gardyloo Buttress and a direct ascent of the Orion Face, both by Smith and Marshall. On Creag Meaghaidh, the North Post, one of the few remaining classics of the Central Highlands, gave way to Patey, Deacon, McLeod and Danelet.

This rather laboured account covers in a few words some of the most exciting adventures in Scottish mountaineering. I have only endeavoured to note them briefly in their contributory relation to the development of present-day winter climbing, and I sincerely hope that the exponents of these routes will some time in the near future relate at length in the pages of this *Journal* these exciting struggles on the icy walls!

Now a brief note to this same young climber (or to any old men peering over his shoulder . . .) on a few of the methods used in these new Scottish winter climbs we have been describing. Generally, they are not complex and differ little from those used by the pre-war pioneers. In the '30's once a daring climber committed himself to an ice pitch he either succeeded or fell off, the question of retreat on a difficult pitch without resort to mechanical aid being an extremely hazardous operation. Indeed, many a new ice climb was made because the leader *had* to go on! Nowadays, the development of running belays, nylon ropes and slings enable the leader to push on farther before exposing himself to the same danger; and in the absence of natural runners pitons will be used. This may appear decadent to some, but it should be kept in mind that any of the classics are, or should be, climbed without mechanical aid, and that the standard of a pitch must be considerably higher before pitons enter the fray.

'Vibram' boots also have brought changes by necessitating the use of crampons; these are invaluable, indeed almost essential—from the time-saving angle—on any of the long difficult ascents, but they are inclined to be awkward on the more rocky sections of buttresses, and therefore the footgear must be considered—nails or crampons being worn according to the character of the ascent. The crampons should be twelve point 'Nordwand' pattern, with spikes as short as possible. Grivel crampons have been found very suited to Scottish winter climbing.

Next and most important is the axe. The accepted practice was to carry the long axe and a short ice-pick-cum-hammer-axe, but this has proved unsatisfactory and the best answer is to shorten the

axe shaft to 18 inches in length and to make the shaft section as flat as possible. It will be found that a good axe will come back into an easy balance at this length. Then a heavy hammer, with a short point or hook, should be carried as well, to place the pitons or to use in an emergency should the axe be broken or lost. The axe should have no sling, for it is essential to be able to switch it from hand to hand ; in awkward places it can be picked into any convenient snow-ice.

The somewhat fashionable hammer-axes can be time-wasters on a vertical wall, where the adze of a normal axe can very often be used after the pick has broken the surface ice, and well-formed jug-handles in this way easily manufactured ; it is of great value to know this use of the adze.

Whilst on the subject of steep ice walls one technique used occasionally and well worth knowing is the use of two long ice-pegs and slings, the method being to hammer the peg as high above the head as possible ; this then holds the weight whilst the hands are free to cut steps. Then move up level with the first peg and repeat as required, remembering always to remove the lower peg ! There are, to be truthful, a great number of small 'tricks of the trade' which haven't been mentioned, such as the use of slings or *étriers*, or using the active rope in tension traverses . . . but these are best left to a gradual accumulation of experience. Climbs are becoming harder and it is obvious that climbers will go on to steeper buttress and wall climbs where long pitches of cold verglassed rock and ice-choked cracks will be the main difficulty, Sassenach of Ben Nevis being an obvious and typical near-future line. The footwear will have to be something in the nature of felt boots, or socks worn over light boots and axe or crampons carried for the lower and higher pitches of classic-type winter climbing. These new routes will be more aptly described as 'rock climbs under hellish conditions' rather than winter climbing as accepted at present. This is no attempt to decry any such effort. I'm sure such climbs will be tremendously absorbing and satisfying to the climbers and very much in the fine tradition of Scottish winter mountaineering. For tradition is no static thing, as every young climber must know, and much of what goes by that name is mere sleepy complacency, which must be joyfully poked out of the way.

Finally, some tales giving a glimpse or so of new Scottish winter climbs in the making : a lazy, but more enjoyable, way of suggesting the methods used and certainly a better way of conveying the atmosphere in which they are used.

THE ORION FACE

Sheets of flame reveal partner Wheech (otherwise Robin Smith) doing a dervish dance round the hut's mangled old stove ; his fat-fingered fumble provides an amusing ten minutes of cosy reflection before the soothing hiss and familiar gloom swallow the hut. But thoughts of prolonging the horizontal are rudely thrust aside as his hacked and filthy visage, that could frighten lesser men, peers over the bunk to pronounce the day ' the mostest fantabulous ' of the week.

An hour later, bellies filled with rich greasy omelettes and all goodies that happened within reach, we are toiling towards the tall white face of Orion, intent on making a superb *Diretissima* by the great ice fall which pours from the ' Basin ' to the foot of Zero Gully.

By the time we have staggered to the base of the wall, the route is dissected into his and mine sections ; so Wheech leads off, up a pleasantly fat ice slope, whilst I sort out the many slings, hammers and karabiners from the bag.

At 50 feet Wheech's tour had misled him on to a thinly iced slab, where it was obvious he would either waken up or roll back down to the hut ; his bow-legged bumbling at the foot of this great ice wall seemed as out of place as a can-can in the Swan Lake ; however, by performing an exciting traverse of crampon scarts to reach thick ice, the rapid progress is resumed and a large ledge reached 150 feet higher ; joining Wheech after being truly stung by his *mauvais pas*, we searched for a peggable crack with delayed success. The situation was magnificent : above us a great groove, rich with ice, swirled into obscurity ; rightwards, Zero Gully took on the air of an escape route, whilst the great iced slabs to the left promised future ' joyous days upon the mountainside.'

Fully whooped up and anxious to reach the key passage to the wall which we both felt was somewhere about 100 feet above, I climbed over Wheech into the groove and hacked and whooped the way up over grand bulges, howling immense jug-handles in the ice ; an ice column runner gave joy at 90 feet, then a little higher the angle eased, and a small hole under a rock roof 40 feet above promised security. Gaining this hole, I hacked away a curtain of icicles and squeezed in like a frightened ostrich, to manufacture a belay on an inverted channel piton in the rock roof ; this didn't instil a sense of security so with an incredibly awkward manoeuvre the axe was driven into the floor and a cowardly sprauchle backwards performed to stand secured by slings above the void. Feeling brave once more I took in the rope as Wheech

came on, babbling back and forth about character, quality and senility.

We were now at the question point of the route ; to the right, the difficulties were obvious and in sight, whilst above nothing could be seen but a steep icy rib and a skyline begging the question ; naturally the unknown appealed, so the bold climbing machine hacked away up and round the rib out of sight, but unhappily not of sound. A few minutes after he moved from sight, a horrible flow of oaths seared down the sterile slopes ; I thought he was in a cul-de-sac, but no, he had climbed into easy ground, with the way to the Basin clear, and the share of labour too small for a step-hacker of Wheechy's calibre. With an added sense of satisfaction, I watched the rope snake out at an increasing pace and soon the ostrich act was repeated, as I removed our comforting anchorage. The climbing above was delightful and somewhat reminiscent of the slabs of the Crowberry Gully junction, but continuing for greater lengths.

A short wall above Wheech led on to a long snow rake, where a quick cramponing crawl brought us to the snowfield of the Basin. From a rock belay on the right edge of the depression, Wheech cut up an ice slope for 100 feet, then made an icy 50-foot traverse rightwards to belay at the foot of the Second Slab Rib of the Long Climb. Standing at the belay in the Basin I couldn't help recalling the last visit, when Patey and I had made the girdle traverse of Ben Nevis ; there had still been traces of the Smith-Holt rope leading out by the 'V' Traverse to the North East Buttress, from their ascent of the Long Climb one month earlier which unfortunately, owing to lack of time, stopped short at the Basin. It was this sense of the unfinished that was partly responsible for our very presence on the face at the moment. However, Wheech was finished with the work above and I hastened to join him, where I was rather disappointed to find the rib above too thinly iced for comfort. An exploratory traverse 10 feet round the corner disclosed a well-iced wall, shining green in the evening light and perched over the now impressive drop of the wall beneath : 130 feet higher the hunt for peg cracks failed in the gathering gloom of night and a belay in powder snow brought the sharp edges of frost and fear into the struggle : Wheech came and went, swooping wet gloves for dry, trending left and up by shallow grooves, over treacherously difficult breaking snow and verglassed rocks ; night was fully launched when the rope ran out, but the moon stayed sly behind a blanket of cloud. Following up was like walking on eggs, the dark pit beneath our heels sufficient warning to take care ; a short step of ice above Wheech led on to the high snow slopes which

form beneath the terminal towers of the Orion Face. Here the expected respite failed to materialise ; knee deep and floury, they whispered evil thoughts, threatening to slide us into the black void and extinguish the winking lights of the C.I.C. Hut. Floundering up this snow, doubts plagued the mind ; our original intention to spiral up rightwards round the towers lost its appeal on the face of such threat ; perhaps a move left would bring us on to the crest of North East Buttress ? But again the snow. Great shadowy forms confused the issue, so we persisted with the straight-up as being mentally the least trying.

A yell from above lit the night ; Wheech had found a rock belay. A jumble of talk awakened vague morning memories of the face, then by right of sequence I deprived partner Wheech of his dry gloves, leaving him to fight the cold war whilst I tackled the obscurity above. A scabble up a cone of snow above the belay led to a well-iced groove ; it was necessary to feel the angle ahead with the hands, as up here everything was whitened by fog crystals and in the misty gloom distance was incalculable. Up above there appeared to be an immense cornice ; the thoughts of an enforced bivouac beneath the icy beak passed absently through the mind as I chopped away at the ice. About 40 feet up, the groove steepened to a bulge ; finding the holds with the cramponed feet was extremely awkward at times, and often moves were made hanging from the handholds whilst the crampons scarted about in search of the ' buckets ' cut below. Above, the bulge loomed more ominous, so a trouser-filling traverse was made on to the right wall, along a short ledge ; then a frightening move, leaning out on an undercut ice hold, to cut holds round a rib on to the slab wall of a parallel groove. The ice here was only about an inch thick and moving into the groove was very difficult ; the cat crawl up the thin ice remains imprinted in the memory, for at this ' moment of truth ' strains of an awful dirge came up from the Blackfoot 90 feet below, ' Ah kin hear the hammer ringin' on somebody's coffin. . . . ' Other ditties may have followed, but that particular one registered and stimulated progress across the slab to a comforting snow-filled groove, where the calf muscles could recover.

At last things were beginning to take shape ; a large cornice at my level closed the top of the first groove, and above me was a steep wall, thick with ice. This looked the way and, having no desire to freeze, a short traverse was made up the thinly iced slab to an accommodating ledge ; then the great hacking resumed. Strain on the back of the legs was becoming very trying, and I had to cut a deep step occasionally to stand on to relieve the calf muscles. I began to worry about the length of rope, feeling much more than





140 feet had passed ; the thought of having to continue without a belay gave further chill to the night ; then suddenly there was no more ice to cut, and in front a gentle slope catching the cold filtered moonlight shone in a heart-warming scene. Whoops of delight went down to thaw out Wheech, then up a couple of feet to discover the rope was out, a retreating belay from the edge as Wheech came up the snow cone enabled me to take an axe belay 10 feet back. It was grand to be able to sit down and relax. A whooping session began as Wheech came up in a series of frozen jumps, purring about quality and character. 'What a climb!' was our chorus, then his amorphous shape appeared over the edge, covered in snow, ironmongery clanking, like some armoured beast from the underworld. Gathering up the rope, we rushed up to the plateau, to arrive at the point where the North East Buttress branches from the summit plateau. Then stowing heaps of rope, slings and snow into the frozen sack we pushed off across the misty plateau making for the hut, heat and the big sweet brew, occasionally stopping to howl into the night what a 'mostest fantabulous' climb we'd had.

GARDE DE GLACE

(The Ascent of Gardyloo Buttress)

Gritty eyes open to the familiar gloom of the C.I.C. ; a hopeful glance over to the stove ; but no Wheech. Hell ! what's the weather like outside ? Jeez, another good day, back inside, I guess it's my turn cook, the giant stove pump clanks, the infuriating pricker pantomime and the explosive roar, then the welcome hiss of the burner—all's well ; reddened eyes peer from the pits. . . . An hour later, bellies full of unwelcome food, we collect the gear—what a pile !—and step into the scouring hygiene of a winter morning.

Slowly, crampons rasping, I arrive below Observatory Gully. Where has Wheech gone ? From my boulder perch Gardyloo looks great ; a sprauchle quits the hut, circles it many times ; foul oaths fill the air, eventually it moves up the slope. I trudge on with occasional whoops to beat the ghosts back, things are perfect, what a load of ice about ! Wheech arrives minus axe, we have a swearing bout, apparently he left it somewhere last night, we agree that one axe should do, and eventually gain the foot of the buttress ; things begin to look possible and we agree and disagree on the chosen line ; two great slabs rake the buttress from the lower right to the exit funnel at the top, ice is hanging all over them, and with any

luck this will be the way. I get the first run, it's great, hard snow, then plenty ice, easy to cut. I'm told to keep going to a giant belay, I keep going and after 100 feet the giant belay isn't. A piton between loose blocks, an attack of nerves, another piton, which sounds better, gradually I begin to feel at home, the stance grows bigger, and Wheech arrives. He's for the overhang, I'm for the line of least resistance, I win but he does the work, a nervous traverse left on steep ice, then a happy announcement that it's a doddle. Two hours later, hoarse with singing and groaning, I'm still watching the movement of the rope. To combat the creeping death I've tramped the equivalent of the Butlin Walk, by now my stance feels like home, the contemplation of retreat brings warmth to the mind; what joy to leave Wheech to his Hell's Wall and whoop down the gully with the blood singing through the veins to swill a big brew in the hut's steamy gloom. A shout of 'Come on!' rakes me back to fridity; it dawns on me, he's too polite, something is ugly up there besides Wheech; having lived so long for a climber and acquired a cunning commensurate with age, I point out that there is still 50 feet of rope to go; a short exchange of unpleasantries follows, and the rope continues its neurotic advance. I return to the deep freeze, singing, howling and 'Barbara Mooreing' to exist, the ice glints green in the evening light and the cold claws of night creep up the gully. A favourite karabiner and ice-peg rattle past to meet them, little prayers from above take off into the night. I later learned Wheech was playing drum majors with the only axe, but fortune and the axe remained with him. Silhouetted against a starry sky the wee bauchle comes into sight, grunts of 'I'm nearly there' go on for another prolonged spell, then a great whoop sears the night. By now the moon has cleared the arête and the crest of the Tower Ridge gleams superbly in the white light, but we remain in moonshade; this time the call from above bodes well, I come out of my shell, unspiking myself from the mountain and move on, frozen gloves rasping on immense jugs, an ungraceful fumble up the ice, feeling for the holds, round the steep rib, all's well, then the angle relents, the holds are full of snow, and hellish hard to find, a scuffling crawl up the icy roof leads to Wheech's proposed belay. It doesn't look too bad, but one peg lifts out, and the other slips from the first hammer blow; now the holds lead rightward and in the gloom I can make out a white rib, like a giant candle . . . it's plated with 9 inches of sugary snow ice so that great holds had to be hacked out to reach the good ice beneath. I'm real impressed, feeling high and deep into the holds, a thrash with the feet for the lower steps, a quick judgment of soundness, then a queer off-balance swing for the next hole—Wow! that was a false one—hands slip



J. R. Marshall

Marshall on the first run of Gardyloo Buttress, much foreshortened ;
route goes up to left (see p. 116)



J. R. Marshall

Patey executing the first steps of pitch 1, Hadrian's Wall

on the glassy ice, the footholds crunch down, I expect to come off then the searching frozen mitt slips comfortably into one of Wheech's rabbit holes, and balance is established. This is no place to linger, so the struggle continues, and at last the angle eases slightly, it's possible to stand—not hang—the holds get smaller and poorer—signs of a tired lead!—and finally I arrive beside partner Wheech, very much impressed; it was a fantabulous lead, and even though unusual, I tell him so. Then feeling like a relegated ruin, I lead up to the moonlit arête, spirits return, the magnificence of the ascent and wonderful moonlight send us screeching over the plateau by differing routes to filter down the cliffs of the Ben to the cave-like security and comfort of the C.I.C.

SURVIVAL

By G. J. Ritchie

IN Scotland winter is more Arctic than Alpine. During a clear still period in this season a visitor to our snow-clad hills may enjoy the impression of an Alpine holiday. But he should never on that account relax the precautions which are always necessary here against the dramatically sudden onslaught of a ferocious Arctic tempest, in which even to stand is a struggle and which carries with it blizzards of sleet and snow. Such driving storms, building up deep drifts, exhausting and chilling the body, confusing the senses, separating parties and destroying their morale, are perhaps the most lethal of all the hazards on Scottish hills. Apart from these by no means exceptional conditions, there are other dangerous situations arising in calmer weather, when prolonged effort at low temperatures—as on ice or in deep snow—may tax the physical resources of even the fittest to their utmost. All these possibilities apply particularly to mountain regions between 3000 and 4000 feet, to some of which new roads and chair lifts will very soon be carrying hundreds of city dwellers poorly equipped—in every sense—to cope with the difficulties should any mischance—mist, a lost ski or axe—delay their descent along a well-marked route. Their inexperience would quickly put them into a situation as serious as that facing more experienced men in worse weather and in a greater state of fatigue.

It is to all such parties facing prolonged exposure under winter conditions that the following advice is directed; for unless they act wisely and within the physical capacity of their weakest member fatal consequences can very easily ensue.

Physically, the most important things to avoid—if survival is to be ensured—are loss of body heat and over-exertion. Absorption, generation and conservation of heat and regular nourishment and rest are vital to the party's physical state. The degree of satisfaction of any one of these requirements lessens dependence on the others. For example, when food is plentiful and movement unrestricted it may be a rash waste of daylight to stop to light a fire or primus, and, whatever the conditions may be, the wooden structure of a possible shelter should not be burned for a transitory sensation of well-being. On the other hand, if time can or must be spared, a fire to take numbness from limbs and provide hot food or drink will do the party good.

Most parties, however, will not even achieve a hot drink from a flask and will be forced to generate their own heat. The chief bodily process of heat production is the oxidation occurring with muscular contraction. Strength and warmth alike therefore stem from one source—plenty of fuel for the muscles : so food is required at regular intervals. It may seem tiresome to stop, undo sacks or pockets and eat in cold weather, but it is essential. This need not involve long stops. It is possible, when necessary, to eat whilst moving slowly ; but the food carried must be plentiful, easily accessible and easily assimilated (see *Appendix*). Under adverse conditions, the question whether the party should continue, in a series of moves with short rests between for nourishment, or should settle down to a long bivouac, will often be decided by the adequacy of their commissariat. If you have little food, are tired and hungry and have far to go, then consider staying put.

Of greatest importance, even to well-nourished parties, is adequacy of clothing. Clothing is worn to retain warm insulating air around the body. A *windproof* outer shell to prevent atmospheric dispersal of this warm air is vital. Next to the skin, plenty of light woollen air-retaining fabrics serve best, not those that soak up water and become cold or heavily sodden ; complete waterproofing is impossible (and undesirable), and sleet storms are peculiarly chilling. Wet wool remains warm. Clothes should not be so tight as to restrict circulation of blood or of warm air, but exit of this warm air and entry of cold air at neck, waist, wrists and ankles must be prevented.

Against chilling by winter gales most parties are now protected by hooded anoraks and over-trousers of windproof and relatively waterproof clothing of tightly woven material. String vests, light woollen shirts and underwear, socks, scarves, woollen and windproof gloves, balaclavas, Shetland pullovers, stout waterproof boots (roomy enough to permit blood circulation and air insulation),

with elastic gaiters and, perhaps, goggles are standard wear for winter climbers. Often, however, for reasons of vanity or freedom from snagging on rock, axe or crampons, clothing is tighter in fit than is ideal for heat conservation. The ideal would be a single, loose, sealed windproof oversize garment of the cut of a flying suit. Separate garments should aim at enclosing air around the whole trunk, anorak free at the waist and sealed at the crutch, trousers equally loose and held by braces ; but, whether at crutch or waist, the anorak must be anchored somewhere and not flap loosely. The greatest heat loss is from abdomen and thigh muscles : these must be well protected. Those who expect to be exposed under exceptionally severe conditions should invest in down garments.

It is important that the amount of clothing worn during periods of effort, or earlier in the day, should not be so much as to cause sweating : apart from wasting fuel, sweating permanently reduces insulation of the inner clothes and conducts heat to the outside. Nor, except in very severe conditions, should the face, as well, be totally covered : this might cause transiently greater warmth, but such total isolation of body surface from cold is thought to mislead the body ' thermostat ' into combating tropical conditions and it may start the sweating reaction to cool things off again !—this should not readily happen if a small body surface (preferably the face) is exposed to the real ambient temperature. Alcohol completely upsets the ' thermostat ' and encourages rapid heat loss from the skin and should never be taken under severe conditions.

When food is limited and heat conservation especially urgent—as in cases of avalanche or crevasse burial—the victim must in his long-term interest desist from all activity, even the voluntary shivering normally employed in a bivouac : in a crouching position on hands and knees (having arched to clear a small air space) he must conserve everything against the chance of rescue and, provided he is not exhausted to begin with, may survive (though his extremities may not !) in a state of ' suspended animation ' for several days. He can do this because of the shelter afforded by the snow—which illustrates the next aspect of heat and energy conservation, that of shelter.

Every winter route should try to avoid exposure to wind. The hazard of gale-force head winds driving and drifting sleet or snow has already been mentioned. Its cumulative effect in weakening morale cannot be over-stressed. When such conditions are met far from the first shelter on the proposed line of advance one must immediately consider the expediency of turning back or aside, so as to go with the wind towards a known attainable place of shelter. If terrain or weather is too bad and supplies too low to guarantee

reaching normal shelter before the party becomes completely chilled, hungry and exhausted, then the proper course is to bivouac early. If the party goes on too long it will suffer rapidly accelerating loss of heat and energy and may soon be incapable of looking after itself at all. Whilst still reasonably fit and warm it should consider whether the navigational data are adequate to take it to some very near topographical feature suitable as a safe sheltered bivouac site. If they are not, the party must make the best of whatever turns up at hand, and not continue against the wind. More than ever, at this stage they must avoid separation (roping up in poor visibility) and keep out of deep snow unless to use it for shelter. A snow tunnel with a dip or turn for extra protection will involve effort but would prove more windproof than a natural cave or overhanging rock. Excavation is easier horizontally into a snow bank or cornice than vertically down into the icy snow of a level plateau; there, the best chance may be the construction of a windslab igloo, failing which a simple trench with excavated snow piled to windward may have to suffice. Powder snow may cover and insulate a party sheltering in such a lee.

With luck, a party without other shelter in an open situation may have a mountain tent into which to struggle, with or without poles. But the most practical form of emergency shelter, and one which every party on a serious winter or lengthy high-altitude expedition could easily carry, is a strongly hemmed sheet of windproof cloth, of sufficient size to cover them all. A circular shape is most effective if the number exceeds two. A strengthened ventilation hole or sleeve goes on the lee side. In a strong wind the party produces a domed shelter by squatting close together round the bundled material facing in and firmly grasping its edges. The members then raise their hands over their heads and draw the material over and behind them down to the ground, when they may gently sit down on the edges and are thereby enclosed within a low dome supported by their heads or flapping loose in the wind. Within the relatively quiet air of such a shelter or in a snow cave, or in any combination of the two, the party can don all clothing and sleeping bags and huddle close together, haunches insulated from the ground by ropes or sacks, hands hugged under armpits and knees drawn up, 'counting' fingers and toes. A thick wide Shetland scarf round the belly conserves heat in that vital spot, and dry socks replace wet ones. Frozen feet may have to be *gently* nursed back to life, if necessary under a companion's armpits. Boots must be protected against freezing when taken off, otherwise they might be impossible to get on again; this is most important. Similarly, when emerging from shelter outer garments may freeze

solid : in the first few minutes try to ensure that they set so as to afford greatest freedom and comfort. If a communal covering is not available, even individual plastic bags or capes can be used, with care not to let them tear in the wind. In severe conditions, energy and heat are conserved by making as little movement as is commensurate with comfort ; violent arm-swinging dissipates insulating body-air, lets in cold air and wastes energy as excess movement. Resort to muscle flexing or induced shivering for short periods with all clothes sealed ; and whenever that ' cold in the bowels ' feeling comes, indicating fall of the inner temperature, eat a little food and resume the shivering process. Eventually the storm will pass.

Even in the worst circumstances it should be remembered that heat retreats first from the extremities ; ears, feet and hands can be damaged or even lost by frostbite, but unless the main trunk temperature (the ' core ' temperature ; see *Appendix*) falls, survival is quite likely. There are many instances of men and women *who have not already exhausted themselves* lying up for many days under Arctic conditions and being successfully rescued. Few storms last with great violence for more than twenty-four hours, and after rest most parties will be able to move on at first light. If they should find themselves unable to proceed even in favourable conditions, they should make themselves as conspicuous as possible by scattering coloured cloths or dye powders in the snow, or arrange skis or groundsheets so as to attract attention from the air. The following conventional distress signs to aircraft might well be memorised by anyone frequenting the Cairngorm plateau, for instance :—

X

(We cannot continue)

I

(We require first-aid)

F

(We require food)

SIGNALS FROM VICTIMS

LL*(All found)*

++

(Nobody found)

LLL

(Search finished)

XX

*(Search abandoned
meanwhile)*

SIGNALS FROM SEARCH PARTIES

If one of the party is injured, he is likely to be shocked and is, physiologically, in a condition of extreme fatigue. Wound-binding, though necessary, is secondary to the necessity of keeping him warm. Loss of heat to the snow must be avoided, even to the extent of a companion lying under the casualty to keep him off the cold ground. Hot sweet drinks are very desirable. If the party is large enough,

it can consider whether the risks of separation justify detaching a stronger member to go for help when the storm abates. He, too, will need food and clothing, and careful thought should be given to the possibility of his reaching safety soon and sending help ; and to the certainty of his staying and taking a turn in nursing the casualty until either help comes of its own accord or conditions allow the party to bring him down. The decision largely depends on the nature of the injury and whether the party is known to be on those hills or not.

One insidious result of the otherwise excellent habit of leaving an itinerary behind on setting out, is the temptation not to bivouac but to push on at all costs and avoid the embarrassment of a rescue party. However, a party sensibly equipped and led on the lines indicated above could safely sit out any Scottish storm, getting down when the weather cleared and probably meeting the rescuers before they set out ; for they, too, would need to await the abating of the storm.

Shortly, then, for safety in winter :—

- (1) Go out only with a wholly fit party, and keep together.
- (2) Take plenty of the right food and eat well all the time.
- (3) Wear proper windproof clothing and carry some form of emergency shelter.
- (4) Watch the weather and heed its signs.
- (5) Do not be ashamed to retreat with the wind.
- (6) Give up early when fit, rather than later when cold and tired.
- (7) Find or make a windproof shelter.
- (8) Help each other and especially an injured man.
- (9) Do not despair ; survival is certain.

Appendix

Briefly and crudely, the facts so far known about human exposure to cold are as follows. Under normal conditions the inner 'core' of the body, the vital organs, remains at 36° to 37° C.; the outer 'shell,' the skin and superficial limb tissue, may often be appreciably below this. The co-ordination of chemical processes in the vital organs, especially in the brain—that most delicately organised of all—is upset by even slight changes of temperature; such changes affect less significantly the simpler processes in the peripheral tissues. Thus the important thing is to preserve this deep body heat; temporary cooling of the 'shell' may be inconvenient, stiff numb fingers and the like, but a similar slowing of the vital tissues will lead to mental derangement, unconsciousness and loss of co-ordination, bringing heart and respiratory failure and death.

Complex mechanisms ensure that when man is exposed to cold his

deep 'core' temperature is maintained at the expense of that of his 'shell.' Blood flow is restricted as far as possible through the exposed periphery, so that the 'core' blood is not cooled. There is evidence that acclimatisation can occur; workers habitually exposed to cold, or to cold and heat alternately, seem to have more efficient safeguards, more rapidly responding mechanisms to ensure that the core remains unaffected and that the periphery itself suffers less inconvenience from its cooling. (Thus inhabitants of uniformly heated environments may be at a disadvantage: their heat regulation is 'untrained'—see Mr Duff's remarks in this issue.)

Despite all, the 'core' temperature may fall. The necessity of maintaining at least some blood flow through the increasingly cooled periphery may cause this; but sudden unwise warming of this cold periphery may cause it, too, by making the warming-up superficial vessels dilate and thus send 'core' blood through the still relatively cool peripheral muscles: to precipitate a sudden, temporary, but often disastrous fall in 'core' temperature when this now cooled blood goes back to the vital organs; the unexpected deaths of raft-survivors when being wrapped in warm blankets by rescuers are due to this. (Very slow, or very rapid, re-warming is best.)

When the 'core' temperature falls by one or two degrees, violent shivering sets in, this being the most efficient form of muscular exercise for providing 'heat on the spot' (in earlier stages, mere involuntary increase of muscle tension—often felt in cold thighs by climbers—is sufficient to protect the more superficial tissues). Shivering wastes least energy as spatial movement. But an unconscious man will not shiver appreciably, and rapidly cools further. And an exhausted man will not have sufficient energy left to shiver for long; immediate eating of glucose is then vital—the glucose (unless exhaustion is complete) will be rapidly 'burnt' by the tissues to provide energy and heat. At 33° to 30° C. 'core' temperature, shivering ceases and muscles grow rigid. Heart beats are affected when 26° is reached, and death usually occurs at 24° or so, though there have been resuscitations from even lower 'core' temperatures. But it is not likely that an *exhausted* man will survive such temperatures, and it will be obvious from the above that if exposure to cold seems inevitable, exhaustion *must* be avoided at all costs. Exhaustion is a lowering of the energy reserve (which is roughly identifiable with availability of glucose in the blood) by (a) physical or emotional effort (prolonged climbing or panic-shock) and/or (b) prolonged efforts to maintain the deep 'core' temperature (exposure to cold).

The simplest way to avoid exhaustion is to maintain blood glucose, the source of our energy. And the best way to do this is to remain well fed, for all food will form glucose. More fats and carbohydrates are eaten in cold climates, but fat, like protein, is a long-term investment. Though for planned bivouacs any wholesome *filling* food (not sweets or snacks) will do, on the hill carbohydrates (as contained in bread and jam, condensed milk, sweet chocolate, etc.) are more easily assimilable. Digestion of fat and protein requires more energy and is best attempted during prolonged rest. Indeed, an exhausted man will not touch them, rightly preferring

glucose or sweet drinks. This eating of glucose itself (or of sugar), whilst vital in emergencies, is not recommended as a continued substitute for meals on the hill; it may tend to short-circuit the processes whereby bread, oatmeal, etc., are converted continually to glucose, so that these processes grow rusty and we feel out of training—only glucose will do—and food nauseates. But unless one is diabetic (when such conditions should not be invited anyway) glucose tablets should always be carried whenever stress—fatigue, shock or cold—is likely to be met. Diabetics should seek personal medical advice.

Finally, frostbite. Frozen tissues are extremely susceptible to further damage; warm them gently; do not heat or vigorously rub the hard, white, numb parts.

The author expresses his indebtedness to the Hon. Editor for contributing the more physiological aspects of this article.

HJØRNESPIDS

By Malcolm Slesser

THE usually silent Staunings were noisily shedding snow, but my voluble companion had fallen into a reverie, absorbed in the immense hulk of the Hjøernespid, which dominated the skyline to the west. And I, too, was silent, with drowsy contentment. Through months of planning, weeks of approaching and days of dreich glacier plod I had been plugging the abstract desirable goal of the Hjøernespid, 9450 feet, the second highest, and the highest unclimbed, peak in the Staunings. . . . Now other people's enthusiasm could provide some of the necessary driving force.

From our vantage point at 5700 feet we could follow the whole extent of the south-east ridge of the mountain. The first tower of over 1000 feet broke abruptly from a snow col at 6600 feet, whilst a mile to the north rose the 1000-foot trumpet stem of the summit rocks. Between the tower and these summit rocks a pinnacled ridge hung in catenary like a badly unravelled Christmas decoration, an ice-seamed face of 4000 feet falling from it in one great precipice. Any approach must either be on the far side or along the pinnacled ridge. As for the summit tower, it offered no obvious line.

Slowly the contemplative McNaught-Davis woke into animated estimates of routes and times. For this was the first day after weather which had laid a foot and a half of fresh snow on the rocks, and—since organising an expedition of thirty-eight severely strains its leader, especially when scattered groups cannot communicate—we were held to a rigid schedule. We must be in Alpefjord by 10th

August; and it was now the 4th. This gave little time for conditions to consolidate, for at such high latitudes very little melting takes place on the higher ridges after July. We planned an attempt for 7th August.

At this time we were based at Camp III on the Bersaerker Glacier, which rises placidly to 5500 feet through wonderful mountains. Here are the highest peaks, dizzy complexes of granite and gneiss, themselves the core of a greater mountain area. On their other side the Gully Glacier begins, at 6600 feet from a snow col. An ice couloir connects the two glaciers at this col. Bennet and Bryan gained the col first in 1958 by a harrowing route on the buttress north of the couloir, and named it Col Major (*S.M.C.J.*, (1959), xxvi, 59). Later that season Bryan, Rose and I descended the ice slope itself; from our camp at the top of the col we had admired the fine peak above us, and only later did we learn that it was the Hjørnespids.

This year, our plan was to establish a Camp IV on the col, and to this end McNaught-Davis (Mac), George Lowe, John Jackson and I set off with heavy loads the following afternoon, 5th August. The ski trip to the glacier head proved uneventful. We had short summer skis and were using wet snow klisters instead of skins. Lowe, the novice, cursed his skidding boards unendingly until, a mile from the ice slope, he abandoned them more in sorrow than in anger and hirkled on, breaking crust at every step. We reached the bottom of the col about midnight, and while the Himalayan experts prepared the fixed ropes for our night's work, I made a brew.

At this stage my companions were still finding it very hard to assess the scale of these mountains. Estimates of the col's height varied from 700 to 2000 feet, and the time of ascent from 1 to 4 hours. Actually 1600 feet, it took us 4½ hours. In all, we left 420 feet of fixed rope on the rocks at the edge of the couloir. The col itself was cold and raw at 5 A.M., and we sped down, soon to return, but so far not having seen any obvious way up the Hjørnespids. Lowe, now regretting having left his skis, decided to ride the boards on mine, and of course this uncontrolled schüss on breakable crust dive-bombed us both into the snow, not far from his own pair. But the 'day' ended with a glorious effortless glide down the glacier in the warm morning sun, and our reaching camp about 9 A.M.

We had just finished breakfast (or it may have been dinner: like the sun, we were never too particular on this point) when John Hunt steamed up the glacier at the head of an exhausted party, having set his usual exacting pace. He was to take the place of

Lowe, who had to go down for ciné film. We said good-bye to the likeable New Zealander and welcomed our kindly leader who, though so fond of busy days, was now forced to relax : for we had been up 27 hours, and promptly went to bed.

But the next morning, the 7th, Hunt was up early distributing his porridge before we could do anything about it except try to eat it. I should explain that John Hunt's porridge is his secret weapon for getting people up : he has only to threaten to make the stuff, and men will bound from their sacks to forestall him.

We broke camp and set off about midday, in tremendous heat, and made the col about 2 o'clock next morning, having wallowed up hideously soft snow on the lower and top sections. Because of this heavy going we had to leave some equipment at the bottom of the col, and it was now clear that, of the party, some had to return. It fell out that Mac and I were to try the climb. We camped, while the others descended ; it was a most generous gesture on their part.

We rose after all too brief a sleep at 9 A.M., breakfasted well, and packed all the food and gear we could find. It was then we discovered that we were without our rappel slings, and were short of pitons. Our skis still remained at the bottom of the col, and all these factors together dictated our approach. From Col Major there immediately rises the first tower of the south-east ridge, already described. Westwards a mile rose the very abrupt south ridge. Between the two rose the steep snow and ice that led to the 1000-foot summit tower. The south ridge looked the quickest, yet without skis we balked at the thought of ploughing to it through the fearfully soft snow, which would leave us wet and tired. The couloir approaches were too dangerous in the prevailing conditions. So we chose the long route by the south-east ridge, knowing that it would offer superb rock-climbing in itself.

'Crampons?' asked Mac. I thought of the 20 or more hours ahead of us, of the difficult rocks, and of the irritation that even a couple of pounds extra can induce. 'No.' . . . We picked up our gear and swam 30 yards through the snow to the foot of the ridge. Here, without comment, we both left our ice-axes. Looking back, this seems an inconceivably stupid thing to do. At the time it seemed the obvious thing to do.

The first 1000 feet was superb. The rock was sound, steep and excellently rough. From the start we religiously led through. The first real difficulty, a V.S. chimney, fell to Mac. The hot sun brought down melting snow, soaking the widespread black lichen which, when wet, exceeds in vileness even the Nevis varieties. We called it the Black Death. Mac ascended slowly, a sign of difficulty,

till he could get in under a black overhang. From his comments, it seemed wet there. Two pegs, a bracing outwards, and he had a hand over the top groping for holds ; then legs into space, levitation and a dervish's grin indicating success. Being short of pitons, I had to take them out, which may account for the indelible recording of this pitch in my memory.

Thereafter, pitch upon pitch followed, rarely less than V.D., always airy. To our left, a growing void ; to our right, an immense drop of over 3000 feet. The rock grew more and more gnarled, primeval, and the sun-shaded ledges carried deep drifts of unconsolidated snow. Then, after 3 hours of very fast moving, we met the first tower, at 7190 feet. Already there was little left above us, though a magnificent peak looking like the north wall of the Grandes Jorasses still towered across the Bersaerker Glacier. Ahead, the ridge looked delightful. At first, it fell like a castle rampart, a mere foot wide, then rose to a fine pinnacle which barred further view. The final cone of the main summit stood clear and . . . *elegant*. We lunched for 40 minutes.

The ridge *was* delightful. Only for brief distances could we move together ; usually it was too airy, and sufficiently difficult with the remains of the recent snows to make things tricky. Each pinnacle brought another one. At the end of the day we counted fourteen distinct towers along the ridge, the smallest at least 200 feet above the mean level. Route-finding was a constant delight. We had no time to linger, and moved as one mind, each following the other, confident in the logic of the way chosen. At one point, called on by the leader, I found the rope disappearing round an impossible-looking corner of Dolomitic exposure, but the momentum of the climb carried me into it before I realised what a fearful spot it was : there was a high hold, a hand swing round the corner, a hideous out-of-balance feeling, and then security. Possibly the sheer reaction made me use three piton runners on the next stretch.

The hours ebbed. We lost the sun behind the south ridge about 9 P.M., and then climbing instantly became a very different thing. The rough rock had worn our fingers and now, in the cold, our grip seemed far less sure.

An hour later we embarked on the final tower of the ridge. It was indeed the highest of the fourteen, and we crawled several pitches up it, looking vainly for a traverse point, until we came to within 100 feet of its summit, which now resembled a steep tent section, with the end towards us. Twenty feet up the middle came a parting of the ways : a traverse left to a hopeless-looking corner, and a traverse right to—well, what ? Mac's lead. He was hours, it seemed. The rope came in and out. A chill wind rose. Were

we to be beaten so near the end? The ching of hammer on piton, a pause, then another; the rope pulling, and mumblings through the wind. I supposed I had to climb. The rope led to the right. Mac, it seemed, was lodged somewhere in space. I traversed delicately, for at this point the north wall drops a full 4000 feet, in a determined, vertical sort of a way. I reached a re-entrant corner. Six feet away across it Mac was doing sentry duty in a little niche. It seemed to me that he had gone as far as one could climb, and there was little point in two of us crowding his box. A brief exchange of views revealed that Slesser didn't like the idea of going on this way, but that McNaught-Davis had done an irreversible move. Muttering about comradeship-of-the-rope-and-that-sort-of-thing, I crossed the corner, leaving in position the piton that made the (left to right) move possible.

'Where now?' I asked. He rolled his eyes upwards, indicating no doubt a fine crack, slightly overhanging, which lay there. 'Let it lie,' thought I. His niche was flanked by a sloping ledge that petered out 10 feet to the right. I edged my way along it, and looked down. After some minutes, when a studied rationalisation had convinced me that one might as well fall off trying to go on as fall off trying to go back, I felt better. I nailed myself on with an Ace of Spades, glowered fitfully at Mac, and dived into my sack for the rappel rope. In pulling it out I dropped an *étrier*, and we watched it fall almost the whole way down the face.

My plan was to rope down 20 feet to a slab below me, and then pendulum right for 15 feet to a broad ledge; this tapered off into the void on the right, but might offer a steep slabby exit before that undesirable point. I roped, and landed, and promptly slipped off. The slab was iced Black Death. I looked for a piton crack—anything at all. But nothing. I tried penduluming, but the angle was against me! I rolled back into the corner each time. The ground was steep, but not vertical. Try climbing? I let go the rappel rope, and tried. The holds were the minutest excrescences. Almost there—and I rolled again. Feeling now that the situation was becoming desperate, I got a sudden notion that this had to go. And it did. Never had I tried so thin a passage.

Mac was frozen, but I couldn't bring him in; there was precious little security on that bald ledge. Eventually I got a blade piton in half an inch, and went to seek an exit on the right. I had now led out 90 feet, and was not happy. A further 10 feet of traverse on threadbare holds, and I came to the conclusion that this was, as Mac would say, 'pushing the boat out too far.' But another try, a stepping up from a small snow patch, seemed hopeful, and eventually this was pressed home successfully. Another 10 feet



C. G. M. Slesser

Hjornspids and McNaugt-Davis in his reverie. The S.E. ridge, obvious, rises from the left to the summit (see p. 124)



T. Weir

Fragment of an idyll : Russians, English, young Masters Smita and Moriarty, and that old master Ritchie (see p. 173)

and I reached the ridge, with just enough rope to belay. The approach ridge was over: ahead lay the summit itself. We were both frozen to the marrow and galloped over the intervening snow and rock arête, till we came right beneath that final bastion looming so vertically.

Our plan now was to traverse across the S.S.E. face to the south ridge. First we descended a frozen snow couloir, until a line of weakness let us start climbing again. Here on a sunless face at 8500 feet in the middle of an Arctic night it was like a moonlit climb on the Ben. Snow and ice filled gullies and fissures ran obligingly to the left, and we made good time. By 1 A.M. we were almost at the south ridge. My pitch: a short steep wall and we were there. But—hopeless! A grey and chocolate nose of rock bulged out, then soared, with no holds for 50 feet. We tried various attempts to the east and west, though by now we were both feeling terribly sleepy (without being physically tired). I failed to make one dièdre of 20 feet; Mac succeeded, but it led nowhere. For some time now Mac had been pressing the merits of a route up the face centre, steep though it was. Now it remained the only chance. However, Mac wanted to sleep. I put it to him that, if we bivouacked, I should die, not being a hardy soul and unaccustomed to extremes of temperature. He put it to me that if he didn't sleep he would fall off. 'Which of us is being the more selfish?' he asked. It was a fine point, and we settled on a half-hour nap for him whilst I hung the rappel rope for a descent that would take us to the centre of the face.

It was a suitably gripping rappel, and the next pitch fell to me. It looked hard, but it went. Mac led through. Each time that it looked impossible, a slight diversion revealed the way, and in no time, it seemed, we had gained the brèche. What a situation. . . . I drank it in, as I drew up the rope. The northward sun was gleaming through scattered lenticular clouds, and bathed in that ochreous light the orange rock seemed suddenly easy.

It wasn't, and two surprising pitches came before the top, the last one falling to me. A terrace, a *vire à bicyclette* led round to a crack, Severe and 15 feet, giving on to another ledge, and from this one sprang the small summit table. Four o'clock in the morning. . . . Both fatigue and cold robbed us of the immediate pleasure. We shook hands and took a photo-panorama. Sufficient to say that the view was worthy of the peak, and extended through 4 degrees of latitude and 120 miles of longitude from the pack-ice to the ice-cap. Until now the mountain could have been any high one: now it was definably Arctic and in Greenland.

Our descent was complicated. Growing steadily sleepier, yet

acutely aware of the need for caution, we became, without knowing it, slower and slower. We promised ourselves a sleep whenever we met a ledge and some sun. It was 6 more hours before we made good that promise.

Our route was down towards the south ridge. Rappel followed rappel, and because we couldn't go vertically down, but had continually to traverse a little, the rappels were slow. Often the rock was shattered, and it took much searching before we could use a sling. We hoarded our pitons, saving them for the final 1000 feet down the end of the south ridge which we knew to be very steep. Meanwhile, we were running out of slings. Before the day was out we had employed anorak waist cords, piton hammer strings, waist loops and unravelled étriers. We knew that we were overdue, and must be worrying our companions; their tents were visible, and we gave frequent yodels (which were heard) to let them know we were intact.

Eventually, when we were taking almost an hour to each rappel, we faced facts and took some sleep, nailed to two ledges. We 'rose' at midday, and spent 4 more hours descending the remaining 1500 feet, which included some delightfully airy pitches. The final move was in itself satisfying. We reached the lowest rocks with our last piton in hand, and found a crack. From this, Mac descended steep soft snow to the edge of the rimaye, where his rope ran out. He added two slings, which gave him just enough to cross the bridge. Just then I espied Hunt and Jackson a mile off, coming up the glacier. We called them, and asked for skis. They reached us as we made the final run down the lower snow slopes. This last gesture we greatly appreciated, realising that the climb had been very much the combined effort of the four of us.

And during our gambols on the hill they had ferried yet a third load up the col and made a dump on Gully Glacier, our route for the morrow. . . . But to-day we slept.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN SCOTLAND, 1935-1960

By A. Ian L. Maitland

SEARCH and rescue work in Scotland has come a long way since the time when the only stretcher special to the purpose was the clumsy removable bunk in the C.I.C. Hut. Now at this time of change it seems desirable to record something of the doings and visions of the pioneers before they are forgotten. This subject has never produced easy problems; in the early days accidents were few, but the

equipment was unsuitable and the rescues therefore were hazardous. In the war years the lull in climbing reduced accidents and produced improved equipment and rescue technique. Since the end of the war these have been absorbed, and in the future it is hoped that the accent will be on prevention rather than on search and rescue work.

Mountain rescue started in Scotland with the formation of the First Aid Committee of the Scottish Mountaineering Club in 1936, less than a year after the First Aid Committee of Mountaineering Clubs—subsequently the Mountain Rescue Committee—was formed with Dr Graham Macphee as a founder member; and Scottish mountain rescue has, throughout, been most valuably assisted by Mr A. S. Pigott and Mr Wilson Hey, F.R.C.S., whose dedicated services to mountain rescue in England and Wales are so well known. The original members of the S.M.C. First Aid Committee were Dr Graham Macphee, Dr Myles and, after a little, Alan Horne as convener. P. J. H. Unna did not appear to be a member but gave much sound advice in the early days.

The achievements of this group were remarkable. Macphee, as one of the original members of the Mountain Rescue Committee, was responsible for the practical principles and equipment which are still employed to-day. The wide experience of Dr Myles as a medical practitioner and his tests of stretchers must have been obtained verbally at meets; for, in his own couthy phrase, 'Letters come from me like sticky burrs from hairy tweed.' The administrative ability, patience and industry which Alan Horne brought to the tasks were tremendous and he laid the foundations on which all subsequent arrangements were formed. It was, however, Unna's practical ability and great foresight which were outstanding. The former was demonstrated by his insistence that the stretcher should be made rigid and non-collapsible and have full-length ash runners with upturned ends: the latter, by his view that Scottish differed so much from English problems that a separate section of the Committee should deal with them; that a booklet on the subject should be made available and distress signals standardised. He appears to have been largely responsible for the public notice, *Warning to Hillwalkers*, published in January 1938.

At this time the S.M.C. were invited to exercise a general control over the First Aid Posts in Scotland. The first three of these were installed by the S.M.C. at the invitation of the Fell and Rock Club at Glen Brittle House, at Clachaig Hotel, Glencoe and Belford Hospital, Fort William. This invitation was issued in 1935 and also suggested Sligachan, but this site was not equipped until 1945. These three kits were installed and paid for by the S.M.C. In June 1938 the Grampian Club installed a kit in Glen Derry in

memory of Mr Chalmers, one of their members killed in Glencoe. In 1939 a second stretcher was installed in the Fort William area at the C.I.C. Hut, and the Scottish Ski Club equipped a post on Beinn Ghlas. In that year also a list of posts was proposed which included Crianlarich, Sligachan, Arran, Arrochar and Aviemore. These were not installed until 1945 and 1946. The Gristone Club presented a kit to Glen Brittle and moved the original to Sligachan. The Cairngorm Club presented the kit sited at Spittal of Muick ; and the kits at Arran, Arrochar, Crianlarich, Aviemore and Braemar were provided by the Mountain Rescue Committee from their own resources.

In those early days many trials and experiments with various stretchers were proceeding, and in 1939 Donald Duff produced his first stretcher for mountain rescue ; those installed in Scotland at that time, however, were original Thomas models with light metal runners which collapsed laterally for storage. In these early posts the stretcher alone formed the equipment, the rucksacks being added separately. At the end of the preliminary phase in 1939 there were six posts in Scotland under the general control of the S.M.C. First Aid Committee. During the 1950's four kits were provided by the Ministry of Health through the Mountain Rescue Committee, being sited at Dundee in 1952 (thence moved to Loch Morlich in 1956), at Glen Doll and at Lagangarbh in 1952 and at Garve in 1954.

In the same period the combined Ski Clubs placed a kit on Meall a' Bhùiridh in 1955 and the Lochaber group installed one at Steall. There is also a kit at Gordonstoun School, and the S.C.P.R. have equipment at Glenmore Lodge and in Jean's Hut in Coire Cas.

The distribution of these posts from Skye to the Cairngorms and over to Glencoe and Arran had by 1945 pointed the need for some wider organisation to look after them. Back in 1939 Ian Campbell made an abortive attempt to form such a group, to be called the Scottish Mountain Rescue Association ; this attempt was made under the provisions of the Physical Training and Recreation Act, but perished on the rock of finance.

In January 1946, at the instigation of Sandy Harrison, subsequently first President, the Association of Scottish Climbing Clubs held its first meeting and from the beginning gave much help and consideration to the proper siting of rescue posts, prevention of accidents and other problems to do with rescue work, including an amended version of the *Advice to Hillwalkers*. In 1949 the A.S.C.C. was asked to take over from the First Aid Committee of the S.M.C. the general direction of the First Aid Posts in Scotland,

and Ian Maitland was appointed to serve as the Mountain Rescue Committee representative of that body. Some months later, on the retiral of Alan Horne as Convener of the S.M.C. First Aid Committee, the two positions were combined, an arrangement which is still in being.

In the early days—and indeed in a number of cases recently—the rescuers were drawn from the friends of the injured and any other climbers who were locally available, but in April 1946 the first rescue panel was drawn up by the S.M.C. In 1950, under the auspices of the A.S.C.C., regional panels were established and these were brought up to date in 1959. At present there are panels in Aberdeen, Dundee, the Inverness area, Fort William and Glasgow, and the first four have provided personnel for rescue work on more than one occasion in the past 2 years. The history of search and rescue in Scotland is closely linked with that of the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Service. This fine body of men were formed some time in 1944 with G. R. Roxburgh as one of their early instructors. Much of their training is done in Scotland, and since 1950 they have undertaken an increasing, and latterly a major, part in civilian rescues on the mountains. These are regarded as live exercises and we must be most grateful to this Service, all of whose members volunteer to join it and take a very tough training—in their spare time—to become mountain rescue experts as well as fully trained airmen. In addition to these groups, in 1958 the Portree Detachment, British Red Cross Society, have equipped and trained a rescue team for use in Skye, and there are now Police Rescue Teams at Portree and Fort William; while the staff of Glenmore Lodge have performed many rescues in the Cairngorms during the past 10 years. The Lochaber rescue team, formed, trained and led by Donald Duff, F.R.C.S., is one of the most experienced in the country covering, as it does, the Nevis area and part of Glencoe as well. Two small clubs also run rescue teams and have acquired their own equipment in the recent past. They are the Kirkcaldy M.C. and the Carn Dearg M.C., who deserve praise for their public spirit.

The protection of rescue personnel from loss has occupied the M.R.C. for a long time and in 1959, after several years of negotiation, an insurance was effected which offers reasonable cover to anyone engaged in a rescue in which kit from an official M.R.C. post is used.

The information relating to these teams and posts has been recorded in the Mountain Rescue Booklet which has been available since 1947, and which, in its 1960 edition, contains a good deal of general information on Scottish climbing dangers. It should be

read by all who go on the hills. It is not the only literature of this nature; since 1948 the Inverness-shire Police Committee have circulated two bills, the first plain and the second graphic, to hotels and youth hostels and have published a booklet, *The Price Paid*, in an endeavour to reduce casualties in Skye, Lochaber and the Cairngorms, which are in their area. The S.M.C. in 1938, the A.S.C.C. in 1950 and the S.Y.H.A. have all added their quota of propaganda, and from time to time the B.B.C. (since 1947) have assisted in broadcasting warning programmes on sound and showing an excellent documentary film on television. In spite of all these warnings and both sober and sensational articles in the daily press through the years, the inexperienced, unwary and unfortunate still have accidents, many of them preventable. These must be recorded.

The recording of such happenings accurately has always been a difficult task and has been undertaken from the beginning by B. H. Humble. He has done this most thoroughly and few incidents have escaped his notice. It is very important that a factual account should be made of these happenings so that any lesson which it may provide is not lost. This record has given much useful information and in recent years has shown clearly that accidents are now occurring in areas of Scotland which previously were not affected. It has also demonstrated that education in prevention must be directed outside the mountaineering clubs and furth of Scotland as well.

The increase in accidents and their scatter over Scotland, combined with the numbers of tourists and the opening up of the North-western Cairngorms by the road into Coire Cas, made it clear that the organisation which had served well enough since 1946 was not sufficiently comprehensive. The first suggestion towards this was made by Ross Higgins, then President of the A.S.C.C., in April 1959, and in the autumn and at the Annual General Meeting of the S.M.C. a similar theme was vigorously discussed by Humble and others. In view of the fate of the S.M.R.A. in 1939 and the facts that since 1949 the responsibilities for providing equipment and replacements had been taken over by the Ministry of Health in England and the Department of Health in Scotland, and that in 1950 the Mountain Rescue Committee was established as a charitable trust, it was essential that any new arrangements should meet the need for accident prevention and give satisfaction to those parties interested in mountaineering itself. This was achieved in four months as a result of much correspondence and hard thinking by Donald Duff, B. H. Humble and Ian Maitland, with help and advice readily obtained from many sources—especially

from A. S. Pigott, Chairman of the Mountain Rescue Committee, and from Ross Higgins, President of the A.S.C.C., and Miss Betty Stark, its most efficient Secretary.

The organisation which emerged from a joint meeting of the A.S.C.C. and other bodies on 9th April 1960 consists of a Scottish Sub-Committee of the Mountain Rescue Committee, which is part of, and responsible to, the M.R.C. for Scottish affairs. Its members are Chairman and Secretary, nominated by the A.S.C.C., and one from each of the following: R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Service, Scottish Council of Physical Recreation, the Scottish Branch of the British Red Cross Society, and the Scottish Mountaineering Club. This body is primarily responsible for running the posts and rescue organisation and for guiding and assisting the larger body in accident prevention.

The other part of the organisation is the Scottish Council for Mountain Rescue, which consists of Mr Donald Duff as Chairman, the President and seven regional representatives from the A.S.C.C. and one member from the S.M.C. (representing the mountaineering clubs) and one representative from the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Service, Scottish Branch of the British Red Cross Society, Scottish Council of Physical Recreation, Scottish Ski Club, Scottish Youth Hostels Association, Nature Conservancy, Cairngorm and Speyside Development Board, Scottish Tourist Board and the Chief Constable of Inverness-shire with the Chairman and Secretary of the Mountain Rescue Committee as members *ex officio*. This council is regarded as an important branch of the A.S.C.C. and its functions are twofold—they are, on the A.S.C.C. side, to form regional rescue teams and train them, and to look after the posts: and, a wider function, to give publicity to, and education on, accident prevention.

It is felt that these two bodies should realise the aspirations of those who laid the foundations for them so soundly in the past. There is still much to be done in improving stretcher design, in assessing and adapting methods and equipment used in the Alps and New Zealand and in studying survival techniques; and it is hoped that they will, by considering these problems, improve our search and rescue facilities and at the same time reduce the need for such services.

GLISSADES, VIBRAMS AND ICE-AXES

By B. H. Humble

'GLISSADING has led to many serious accidents.' The sentence appears in the Handbook of the Mountain Rescue Committee. But is glissading, as such, the actual cause of accidents? Surely the cause is lack of knowledge of the art of glissading and (or) choice of wrong ground for glissading. Glissading is an art and, unfortunately, an art unknown to many who go to our mountains in winter nowadays. Generally speaking, novices who go rock climbing know at least something of roping up and belaying; but how many of them are ever shown how to glissade?

Our forebears were far more experienced in this subject than most climbers to-day. Never, in the early days, was glissading condemned—to the early climbers it was an essential part of the game. There are many references to glissading in the first ten volumes of our *Journal* but scarcely any thereafter. Even in Vol. I there is an account of glissading 2500 feet on Ben More. W. W. Naismith, the father of the club, details the technique fully (1) while Professor Ramsay, our first President, describes it as 'that most delightful of all luxuries' on the hills (2). Harold Raeburn, a great advocate of the standing glissade, gives a detailed description of the technique of 'the most subtle and fascinating joys of the snow climber,' mentioning that in a short Norwegian holiday he glissaded in aggregate over 10,000 feet (3). Returning to the subject he states: 'To confine our glissading to places where no danger can occur is, to take a sailing simile, never to sail an open boat in water over 4 feet in depth' (4). It is a pity his account of glissading in the first issue of our General Guide has not been reprinted, if only to retain the classic sentence 'If the snow is soft it [a sitting glissade] is very wetting; if hard, it often results in the destruction of the integrity of garments, best kept continuous'; while a later sentence is a *must* for every would-be glissader: 'Before some little experience and control over pace is acquired, a glissader should always see that the glissade terminates in an easing of the slope. . . .'

These men knew the technique of glissading. They knew the snow conditions. All the great slopes in Scotland were first glissaded by them and none of them came to grief. At one Meet, two members had 'a terrific glissade of 2100 feet on Cairn Toul' (5).

The only reference in recent *Journals* is by Graham MacPhee. 'Under good conditions magnificent glissades may be had in

Scotland—far better than any I have enjoyed in the Alps. The usual elementary precaution must, of course, be taken of making certain there are no hidden pitches where control may be lost' (6). The present-day tendency to put greater stress on rock climbing is well shown in the B.M.C. publication, *Mountaineering in Britain*, which gives eighty-eight pages to rock and but thirteen to snow. One must concede, however, that glissading is well dealt with, and that the sentence 'is best learned on lower hills in spring' is particularly apposite. On the other hand, a textbook of the Mountaineering Association (*The Technique of Mountaineering*, by J. E. B. Wright) devotes but six lines to glissading and does not suggest that practice on safe lower slopes is necessary. As far as books go, by far the best description of glissading is in our own member's *A Progress in Mountaineering*—indeed, Bell's chapter on Snow and Ice Climbing might well be published as a pamphlet. . . .

Looking back on my own early days, those halcyon days when every hill was new to us and we thought ourselves doing badly if we did not bag at least three Munros on each day's outing, I find one phrase occurring again and again in my climbing diary. When going from peak to peak—'then for the game of hunt-the-glissade.' We sought out the glissades and gloried in them. They were often the high spot of the day; when we found a specially good slope we sometimes climbed up again for another descent. Apart from ski-ing there is nothing quite like it—one moment, shivering in cold wind on the summit, the next the long, fast, blood-tingling glissade to the corrie below.

While the technique of braking and pace control and sudden stopping can be taught in several outings, a knowledge of snow conditions is not so easily gained. A slope might be glissadable one day and dangerous the next. One might almost say that only after at least three winter seasons may one become a safe glissader. Bell would seem to incline to this view: 'Scottish snow gives, on the whole, better and more extensive practice than is available on big Alpine peaks . . . experience on one mountain and during one season is valuable for one's technique but does not give all-round knowledge of possible Scottish snow conditions on other mountains or after a different kind of winter' (7).

The fully experienced glissader *can* glissade safely down a slope which would be dangerous to the absolute novice. Knowing nothing of pace control the latter may well go too fast and, as often happens, head first. I have known that result in the skin being neatly stripped off brow, nose and chin.

All of us know that there is nothing finer in this earth than the perfect winter day on the high tops in Scotland. Little wonder

that we would wish to show novices the glory of it. But is it right? Is it wise? Should not the beginner 'serve his time' at lesser height before he gains the tops?

The summit of the mountain is not the place for beginners to start—to sit down and slide and chance it is not glissading. Five who did so on the summit of Ben Nevis lost their lives (8). They broke both rules—the wrong slope and no knowledge of braking. The one safe slope for such is a short steep lower slope, where, even if they go head first, no harm is done. Two members of one of our younger clubs tell of a day on Nevis when they were present when the R.A.F. were trying out recruits for the Mountain Rescue Service. The whole day was spent on safe lower slopes, up and down, up and down, step-cutting, glissading, braking and stopping; and, afterwards, the climbers said they learned more that day than in their previous six months on the hills. How many of our clubs give such training?

This matter was brought home to me very vividly some years ago. Six youths were having their first snow outing. The first day was spent in a corrie where there was a short and very steep snow slope with a comforting blanket of deep snow at the foot. For hours they were kept at it. At first they tended to throw away the ice-axe and come down anyway but were told loss of axe was considered a penal offence. Gradually they improved till they knew something of braking and then they had to come down as fast as they could, swivel over suddenly and stop themselves. They never saw a mountain top that first day. On the second day the same party were returning down an easy ridge at the rim of a corrie when one lad slipped. From some way farther down I saw him try to brake but he had slipped over the rim before he could do so. The slope was steep, he did a complete somersault, but remembered the lesson of the previous day, kept hold of his axe, got his feet first again and, though he finished among boulders, had braked himself enough to save his life. Without the training of the previous day he would almost certainly have gone head first and probably killed himself. Accident reports show, again and again, that beginners who lose control under such conditions most usually go head first—four men who fell down that same slope out of control all suffered head, arm or shoulder injuries (9).

The same reasoning holds good with ice-axes. We say no one should go on the hills in winter without one. An ice-axe is a lethal weapon if one has no knowledge of its use. It might almost be said that those who buy ice-axes and go off to the hills without any practice would be better off with a walking stick—at least they would know how to use the latter.

' A novice on a first outing was taken along the Càrn Mòr Dearg—Nevis arête—slipped, threw away ice-axe ' (10). ' A lone climber, who seemed well equipped, joined a club party (who knew nothing of him) and descended behind them on a steep snow slope where they cut steps. Suddenly he slid past them, his ice-axe attached by a sling to his wrist ; but he did not appear to know what to do so that, in no time, he was hurtling down, his ice-axe swinging uselessly ; then started bouncing into rocks ; is said to have clutched at the snow with his hands ' (11). In the first case, death ; in the second case, serious injuries. Many similar instances are available in our accident reports.

Vibrams.—Five well-known suppliers of climbing boots were contacted in 1959 and were asked to state the proportion of sales of rubber-soled to nailed climbing boots. Undernoted are the results.

<i>Firm</i>	<i>Rubber-soled</i>	<i>Nailed</i>
	Per cent.	Per cent.
No. 1 . . .	100	Nil
No. 2 . . .	99	1
No. 3 . . .	95 to 98	2 to 5
No. 4 . . .	Almost 100	...
No. 5 . . .	80	20

Firm Nos. 1, 2 and 3 were in England, Firm No. 4 had branches throughout Britain, while Firm No. 5 was almost entirely in Scotland.

A later query to Firm No. 5 indicated that the percentage sales of rubber-soled boots is now much higher.

The inference drawn from this would seem to be that almost all climbers coming to Scotland from the south are now wearing vibrams, and while a goodly number of Scottish climbers cling to nails their number appears to be diminishing. It was stated at a meeting in 1959 that nailed climbing boots were unobtainable in Scotland. This is untrue. Nailed boots are and have always been obtainable from Scottish firms, though, with individuals having their own ideas of nailing, usually to order. It was also suggested that an approach be made to manufacturers to make larger supplies of nailed boots available. But traders are business men. If the demand is for vibrams they will supply them. If we wish to go back to nails for general use then it is for the clubs to set the example and insist on all their members wearing nailed boots. The figures given would seem to indicate that the majority of

club members now wear vibrams. It would be interesting were a census taken in our own club and it might indeed provide enlightening results. Surely we should have no right to preach to others a policy we ourselves do not carry out?

All of us know that one may slip more readily wearing vibrams than wearing nails, but with almost all climbers now wearing vibrams are we right in attributing the slip to them—might the climber not have slipped wearing nails? Vibrams have only come into general use since the war. Our accident statistics seem to give the reply here:—

Over the period 1925 to 1945 the proportion of accidents due to slips in snow (usually when descending) was 10 per cent. of the total. Over the period 1945 to 1960 the proportion was 8 per cent. In the first period nails were worn—yet they slipped. In the second period most would be wearing vibrams.

The ratio of accidents due to such slips has not changed much, though it is much more noticeable now with the much greater number of accidents. The statistics also give 5 per cent. of accidents due to loss of control when glissading in both periods. Once the slip *has* occurred it matters not at all what footwear is worn—everything then depends on the instant reaction and on the intelligent use of the ice-axe. George Band, of the successful Everest party, is particularly insistent on this point. 'How many climbers are confident of their own ability to recover from a slip in the split second before one loses control? I think the secret is, not so much in the recovery, but in always holding the ice-axe when climbing so that it can be brought immediately into the correct braking position without conscious effort. . . . Too many climbers, I feel, do not bother to think these things out or practise them in advance, and when the emergency comes there may be no second chance' (12).

There were three successive affairs on the same slope: in the first the climber was wearing tricounis, in the second vibrams, in the third crampons. All carried ice-axes. Though the footwear was varied, when a slip occurred the end was the same—death.

W. H. Murray writes to me of a climber (a member of a club) telling him of a long fall out of control down a snow slope. 'But did you not have an ice-axe?' he asked. 'Yes,' was the reply, 'but I had the presence of mind to throw it away.'

Though our Guide Books tell us that crampons are of little use in winter climbing in Scotland, an increasing number of climbers now carry them and their indiscriminate use will lead to further problems.

A roped party of two were climbing Aladdin's Couloir, Cairngorm. The leader was 'wearing crampons in wet slushy snow. . . . Crampons balled-up and he fell. Belay failed to hold in slush and both went down . . . 450 feet. Leader killed, second injured' (13).

A young climber came in to see me last Christmas Eve. He carried rope and ice-axe and wanted to know if there was much snow on the Cobbler and was there verglas on the rocks? I told him a thaw had taken almost all the snow away, that the rocks were clear of snow but very greasy and, looking at his vibrams, added that I would never go to the Cobbler in vibrams in such conditions. 'Oh,' he said, 'I've got crampons with me.'

To sum up: Well-nailed climbing boots would still seem to be the safest type of footwear for winter climbing in Scotland, though they do not guarantee that one may not slip. Yet many thousands of climbers, including almost all beginners and the greater proportion of members of all clubs, now wear vibrams. There can be no hope of any successful campaign against vibrams unless club members *en masse* set the example. But slips will occur no matter the footwear. I suggest therefore that the more immediate problem is how to ensure greater attention being given to instruction in the proper use of the ice-axe and in the art of glissading. Were all who go to our hills in winter fully competent in such matters the accident rate might well fall appreciably.

(The author wishes to thank the Mountain Rescue Committee of Great Britain for permission to quote from accident reports.)

REFERENCES

- (1) *S.M.C. Journal*, ii, 164. (2) *S.M.C. Journal*, iv, 78. (3) *S.M.C. Journal*, viii, 292. (4) *S.M.C. Journal*, x, 127. (5) *S.M.C. Journal*, xv, 226. (6) *S.M.C. Journal*, xxi, 89. (7) *A Progress in Mountaineering*, by J. H. B. Bell, pp. 103-4. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1950. (8), (9), (10), (11), (13) Mountain Rescue Committee Accident Reports. (12) *The Road to Rakaposhi*, by George Band, p. 158. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1955.

SOME THOUGHTS ON MOUNTAIN PSYCHOLOGY

By **Donald G. Duff, F.R.C.S.**

THOUGH I agree that more nonsense has been written in the name of psychology than in that of any other near-science, yet I think that something of interest may be added to mountaineering, that kind of sports, by a consideration of motives for our behaviour on the hills.

Among other inestimable benefits from hill-walking we can count the opportunities for clear thinking. Fresh breezes of clean air blow away cobwebs from thought, and well-oxygenated blood stimulates the cerebral circulation and lifts us out of those mundane ruts inevitable to a modern industrial economy. So, I am tempted to set down here some of the thinking on conduct and behaviour that comes to me on hill tops.

I'll admit a bias in favour of hill folk, and a well-fixed mental picture of the Highland hill-goer—shepherd or keeper—serene and gentlemanly in outlook, well adjusted to his life and ready, with always some strength in reserve, to meet whatever situation his environment or the elements can produce. This readiness to adjust and to be resigned to whatever turns up could be a disadvantage, and I think back to the times of the Highland Clearances. It was the women who put up a fight against eviction from their homes—as at the 'Battle of the Braes' in Skye: the men were ready to adapt to new living conditions overseas, accepting epidemics at sea and all the rigours of pioneering.

Modern industrialisation has, in a generation, completely changed the age-old habits of outdoor life. It is quite astonishing how quickly these human habits have changed. Conditioned as we are to, say, 200,000 years of open-air living, we are now suddenly trying to adjust ourselves to constantly heated and enclosed air, free from apparent circulation, so that there is no stimulation from changing temperatures and air currents. Modelling ourselves on Hollywood as usual, we will soon spend our whole lives warmly enclosed and quiescent, mechanical transportation ensuring that our muscles atrophy even as we travel. And this is in but one generation: for I myself recollect the old Macrae shoemaker in Kintail who in his youth, when he required to re-stock with leather, walked careless of roads over the hills to Inverness, returning next day with his prepared hides on his back; and a cheerful old lady of 75 there, too, who tolerated my offer to help her with the creel on her routine 1000-foot climb from her black

house to cut and carry down the peats. The Rev. Mr Alasdair MacDonal, Episcopal minister of Kilchoan, Ardnamurchan, in the eighteenth century, and father of Alexander MacDonal, the classically minded poet of Prince Charles Edward's army, was certainly notably strong. It is well attested that 'Maighistir Alasdair' walked each Sunday from his manse at Dalilea, well east on the north shore of Loch Shiel, to take his church services, returning the same Sunday evening convoyed by his parishioners through that largely roadless region.

How different the common mental attitude to walking to-day! though our innate physical capacity is not yet impaired, and can be boosted to extraordinary lengths by specialists whom we are mostly content to observe and applaud. It is interesting, by the way, from a mountaineering point of view, to consider how such outstanding athletic performances are attained. It is through a gradual development of mental as much as of physical efficiency by repeatedly pushing effort up beyond the limits of ordinary exhaustion. Burns expressed this perhaps as well as anyone in his 'Wha does the utmost that he can, Will whiles dae mair.' Provided that muscles are contracted even once daily to 50 per cent. of the maximum possible load, a training effect is demonstrable.

But most of us to-day are stimulated artificially; as a result, our glands send substances into the blood which adjust the circulation for fight or flight, but we deny ourselves the proper outlet of physical effort. No wonder, then, with toxic pollution of the air and over-eating (especially of sugar—unknown a generation or two back in the Highlands) our whole body chemistry is knocked awry.

There is some risk also that the newer generations may prove spoon-fed, expecting protection from harm by some higher authority in their comings and goings in ordinary life and in industry (though not, it seems, on the roads). So there may be the less readiness to look for trouble on the hills, and there may be a lessened willingness to keep strength in reserve. The tendency of the times is to rush things, and to crowd too much into a short holiday in the hills. Youth, I'll allow, is not always or entirely to blame. I found last July a presumed-competent master in charge of boys from a famous school, setting two of them who had very little experience in climbing techniques or rope management to climb Clachaig Gully on their own. The resulting serious fall and multiple broken bones led to dangerously unskilled and prolonged attempts at rescue.

It cannot be over-stressed that diligent and detailed devotion to the three R's of climbing is vitally necessary. Rope management,

Retardation on icy slopes and Return in time : all must be painstakingly practised. There is no easy way to safe climbing, no matter how apparently apt our inherent skills. I would say that in the winter of 1958 three good young lives were lost in the Nevis area in separate accidents simply because braking with an ice-axe had not been previously practised.

Some other points of interest arise concerning accidents. Accident proneness, so well appreciated in industry, I have recognised in two men only, and one was a psychoneurotic who chose Glen Nevis for his stage year after year and latterly was chased south by the police for pilfering in a climbing hut. Again, the sense of uplift which a survivor may experience when several of his companions—apparently equally strong—have perished, is something rescue parties should be prepared to meet. We must not expect one who has come through such an experience to be saddened and mournful. I have known an eminently humane rescuer—a ready volunteer—feel so strongly about what he thought a callous attitude towards the fate of four young companions dead from exposure on the Ben that, he told me, he felt like striking the rescued one. A similar consideration would account for the not unusual accusation made against women survivors that they had caused the deaths of their male companions ; I've known personally of such an accusation. We males are so confident that we are the stronger sex ; and these clever creatures don't disillusion us. In fact, I believe women have, from birth to old age, a more tenacious hold on life and, other things being equal, they can better resist cold exhaustion ; and a recent cross-Channel race affords me some support. They have been conditioned through the ages to shock-survival in their role of preserving and continuing the race. Men are fashioned rather for urgent action and fight.

Further concerning those 'rescued' in mountain incidents, I would say that on the whole they are not demonstrably grateful. Relatives may show a different reaction, but those involved take it as a natural right that others should put themselves out for the rescue ; and I must say I share that viewpoint. They may indeed get uplift for their *amour propre* and an inner sense of pride over the adventure, lasting long as a private memory.

Mountain accidents are unfortunately valuable grist for newspaper mills and the resulting headlines prejudice public opinion against climbing. A big national daily not long ago headlined 'The Fight Through Six Foot Snowdrifts' to get to a child, who in fact died in a tinker tent beside a well-trodden main road on a lochside where there could be no more than an inch or two of snow. When a lad strayed alone to disaster behind his party in

the Glen Moriston hills recently, fifteen reporters spent days in the glen bottom hoping for a story. I have even known news photographers attempt clandestinely to photograph the transfer of a dead climber to a hospital mortuary. Reporters justify such intensive efforts to get a headline story by virtuous explanations that full reports will 'be for the good of others.' In fact, headlines are a stimulus rather than a deterrent to the inexperienced. It was of interest to find that two press representatives from south of the Border involved in hill accidents were most anxious that their names and details of their accidents were not given to their colleagues.

After such criticism I must record the fine effort of one reporter from a Scottish daily who went, on an errand of mercy, high up the icy slopes of the Ben shod only with gum-boots. And one must admit, too, that however much we vocally deplore publicity most of us humans do get an undercover satisfaction from seeing our doings enshrined in newsprint.

Yet contrast the press reaction to other activities, other outlets of youthful energy and of that adventurous spirit no longer likely to be assuaged by war: to motor cycling, which kills more than 100 young Britons each month, accounting for 43 per cent. of deaths between the ages of 18 and 24.

Armchair critics with no interest—apart from a literary one—in mountains can get bitter about 'those fools who have accidents in the hills,' vowing that they 'would not stir a yard from the main road to help'; yet climbers themselves always turn out willingly. The explanation obviously lies in that herd instinct which makes us sympathise with those of our own way of thinking or living; there is antagonism and rejection of all outside the group.

But if a climber by his conduct seems to sin against his own group, censure can be severe. I think back to the unanimous outcry against the 'arch-villain' of the climbing world, who in 1927 boldly and skilfully shepherded three young climbers up the long and difficult chimneys of the Great Gully of Craig yr Ysfa. On the long icy trail through the night back to the hut in Nant Ffrancon two youngsters collapsed and died from exhaustion. Given's universal and bitter condemnation arose because it was thought that he should have organised the rescue, through Pen-y-Gwryd, more quickly. He was forced, despite his strong protestations, to resign from his club, and later became insane.

Perhaps it was not realised how near he—with so much greater strain—was himself to complete exhaustion and immobility. I would say—from my own experience in North Wales and Scotland—

that these deaths, so seductively easy for the victims, would have been quickly over (in 15 to 20 minutes) and that therefore no rescue party from the next valley could have done anything to aid these lads. Such a plea at that time could not have been put forward : and there is even yet an idea that exposure deaths are painfully long-drawn-out. It is, I consider, the additional factor of physical exhaustion over and above cold which kills quickly. 'Cooling' is nowadays a common surgical procedure.

Finally, a word about a phenomenon often noted by lone climbers in high hills : the strong impression that they are not alone, that there is another individual or presence with whom they can communicate and to whom they may even be tempted to speak. I would suggest—from my own experience of this feeling on occasion—that it is due not to any supernatural presence but rather to strong impressions, normally below consciousness, of early childish experience (say about the age of 2 or 3) when a much-trusted adult had led one by the hand in notable safety on parapets or some such difficult places.

Coire Lagan

THE mist has drawn a level line
That circles round the scree.
Somewhere above the rocks incline,
I know but cannot see.
O Thearlach, Sgùmain, Alasdair,
You beckon through the clouded air.

Held in its ice-smoothed gabbro cup
The lochan lies at peace ;
Into the mist the screes stretch up
And there impressions cease,
Yet vividly I am aware
Of Thearlach, Sgùmain, Alasdair.

Chilly and wet is Collie's Climb
And ditto Abraham's Route,
But doubtless he'll arrive in time
Who plods the Great Stone Shoot.
So, Thearlach, Sgùmain, Alasdair,
Just call the roll, for I'll be there.

D. J. FRASER.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Glen Nevis: All or Nothing

[At the end of the war (*S.M.C.J.* (1945), xxiii, 197) appeared an article by Peat and Harrison on the future projects of the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board; 102 were listed. Since then, the Board has mined ahead, unceasingly. Brilliant dams, self-conscious 'lochs,' varied an often drierichly expendable landscape, sometimes improved it. Electricity appeared, to enrich the lives of city enterprises and even, as promised, those of agriculturists. Critics were confounded. Stone houses, Tom Johnston and a Gaelic motto did much to appease Chelsea crofters. But available sites diminished alarmingly. Minor storms occurred; official oil was dispensed. Glen Strathfarrar—the last of our great western glens—roused some. Glen Nevis has apparently roused more. It seems that a surprising number of people are aware that the Scottish Highlands may at last go into the Subtopia of the rest of this unfortunate island; that—however well-meaning—the Board seems, from its own constitution, unable to stop; that 'amenity' seems officially to refer to concrete paths, petrol and souvenirs. And, remarkably, that the great wonders of existence are typified in the beauty and brutality of Glen Nevis, rather than in the Fun Industry or in our periodic bloodbaths. Anyway, no one has tried more to reason with a paternal Juggernaut than Tom Weir, and we are happy, in this year of the Club's protest, to print his letter.—HON. EDITOR.]

SIR,—It has been said that the trouble with Highland scenery is that there is too much of it. That may be, but there is only one Glen Nevis, which is the reason why every outdoor organisation has made a stand to try and preserve its unique features of waterfall and pine-hung ravine.

Glen Nevis has been described as 'Himalayan' rather than 'Alpine,' with the vast flanks of Nevis on one side and the grey peaks of the Mamores on the other. The waterfall of Steall, pouring from the hanging valley, is one of the finest examples in Britain of the hollow left by an Ice Age glacier. The walk up the rocky path to it must be the most thrilling mile in Scotland, its beauty all the more enhanced by finding the startling contrast of scenery from the deep gorge to gentle green meadows.

A lady who serves teas in the glen wrote a letter to *The Scotsman* purporting to speak for the inarticulate thousands who find joy in Glen Nevis. This is what she said: 'I guarantee that the people who take that stony track to Steall come back with a sense not only of adventure and achievement but with a compelling experience which remains with them all their days. It is not what they have seen and heard but something they have felt; it is a "something" which they did not expect and which gives peace to the soul. This "something" can only be found where nature can weave her undisturbed spell.'

I don't think we can improve on that statement on Glen Nevis. The

North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board propose to harness Glen Nevis in a way that will leave natural beauty undiminished and improve access to the glen. The National Trust for Scotland, who have never opposed any power scheme, have voiced their disapproval in terms that speak for all outdoor organisations when they say that Glen Nevis is an 'all or nothing' proposition. This is their statement.

'As it stands, the gorge is an incomparable example of the old, wild Highland landscape, contained within an area of about one square mile, which ramblers and mountaineers already know and the traveller by car can reach in 30 minutes from Fort William. The Board's scheme involves the construction of a dam 240 ft. high. This intrusion alone will alter the scene beyond redemption and subsidiary works will inevitably cause further damage.'

The subsidiary works—a road which would be bull-dozed out of the opposite side of the gorge to the present pathway; the disappearance of the big waterslide above the car park; the cutting of the great waterfall of Steall by half—are only a part. Another part is the tapping of the north and south flowing streams by $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of aqueducts. Given these works, a walker on the old track would look upon a wall of concrete instead of a wild defile crowned by a waterfall tumbling down from a noble peak. The alternative, of course, is to breathe someone else's petrol fumes on the proposed access road.

No, the Hydro-Electric Board cannot have it both ways. They can have a power scheme by sacrificing the 'something' that makes Glen Nevis unique. Or they can leave it as one of the few stretches of untapped water in Lochaber; for there is no other part of Scotland that has been so thoroughly exploited by hydro-electric engineers, as the pipes bristling from the flanks of Ben Nevis and the concrete dams testify. No sensible person is going to quarrel with the principle of hydro-electricity in this power-hungry age, but if there are some heads of water that should not be put inside a pipe then Glen Nevis is one of them.

In this letter I am speaking primarily about the preservation of Glen Nevis. I am not seeking to attack the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board, who have done a noble job of work in Scotland since the end of the war. They have a charter to produce electricity. We, as members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, have a duty to keep this charter within reasonable bounds for those who will come after us. Hydro-electric works may suit the majority, but we are the minority who find greater pleasure in nature undefiled than in the constructions of the Hydro-Electric Board, however beautiful. We do not agree with Lord Strathclyde that the Board have beautified the Highlands. We agree that they have done a necessary job but now we must watch that they do not overdo it.

I would advocate that a committee of the Club be set up to scrutinise each future scheme as it is published, to weigh the merits of any scheme against its destructive effects on unique portions of mountain scenery. This is all the more necessary because schemes coming up in the near future will be in and around Loch Maree area, not excluding the wild country to the north. A vigilant public is the surest way to ensure that

we get the best-designed schemes with the minimum damage to finer parts of the landscape.

The North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board have never been opposed in their works before. They are an organisation with tremendous government backing. They can do virtually what they like. We see them at their worst in Glen Quoich; in Glen Affric, at their best. Some of the worst recent features are the ugly contour drains ('aqueducts' is a kind word for them), running round the hills in concrete scars for catching the drops and thus rendering hill burns dry below. You need go no farther than Arrochar to see them, by the Cobbler, particularly.

The outcome of the Glen Nevis inquiry may establish a first principle of planning for amenity land. We need a positive scale of values for the remaining fragments of unspoiled scenery. Glen Nevis would head the list. Until that order of priority comes the S.M.C. can make a positive contribution by its vigilance, and show the authorities that some of us really care what happens to the natural landscape of Scotland.—Yours, etc.,

TOM WEIR.

Une Haute Route Ecossaïse

SIR,—You will have noticed, as we all have, the tremendous increase of skiers in recent years. For a variety of reasons (most of them good) the overwhelming majority ski together in four areas—Glenshee, Cairngorms, Meall a' Bhùiridh and Beinn Ghlas. The S.M.C. is to be congratulated in being well represented in the tiny minority who use their skis for the purpose to which they are ideally suited, to wit, getting over snow-covered country uphill and down with the least expenditure of energy and time.

I suppose it is only a question of time until the present majority (or their descendants) run out of ski-ing space and spill over on to the deserted miles of virgin snow away from the popular pistes of to-day. Surely, therefore, it is up to the members of our Club to show the way in ski exploration just as much as they have done in the past in the case of rock and snow climbing. In particular I would like to see the successful accomplishment of L'Haute Route of Scotland by one or more of our very able ski-ing members.

The project is by no means new: the great bar to its fulfilment is the timing of suitable conditions to coincide with time off work. This, for most of us, is an insuperable problem. From my own experience it seems essential to be in the happy position of being able to down tools exactly when conditions become right. It has been my pleasure to have covered parts of the ski High Traverse, and I am convinced of its practicability as a whole, but its achievement remains as far away as ever (at least as far as I am concerned).

The most likely time would be between the end of January and the end of March. By April the amount of ski-carrying becomes disproportionate, and before the end of January the days are too short and the weather generally too unreliable. Ideally one should wait for a year of snow cover like 1947 or 1951, but almost any year would give one a fair enough chance. There comes in most springs a spell of anti-cyclone lasting 10 days at

least. This most usually occurs between the middle of February and the middle of March and, given reasonable snowfalls early in the year, this period would offer the best chance of success.

For the reason of having the wind in one's back during the hoped-for anti-cyclone, I would favour an east to west traverse. Aesthetically, too, it would be fitting to finish over the top of Nevis in sight of the west coast. There are, of course, many route variants. It would be a pity if the first crossing were not made by as elegant a line as possible. By this I mean that the line should be selected with a view to combining directness with as little mechanical transport as possible. If it happened that such a route could include some of our highest hills, so much the better. Out of a number of possibilities the two that appeal most to me are:—

- (1) Eastern, and main, Cairngorms from Ballater to Glen Feshie, Ben Alder to Ossian and Treig to Fort William. Or:
- (2) Loch Muick to Glenshee, thence *via* Fealar and Bruar Lodges to Dalwhinnie, afterwards Ben Alder, and finish as above to the west coast.

Both routes involve some pretty hefty days, and I doubt if either could be done in a week—certainly not in any comfort in less than 10 days. The first possibility has the merit of taking in the highest mountains, but suffers the disadvantage of the section from Glen Feshie to Ben Alder where skis would be a mere encumbrance, even if one went out of one's way to traverse the *Monadhliaths en passant*. The second possibility has greater average altitude, better continuity, but less intrinsic interest. In the event, snow conditions would determine the choice, but given sufficient coverage my own money would be on the second route to give the best all-round value.

Descending now to banal particulars, I envisage something along the following lines (and days):—

- (1) Aberdeen, Ballater, Loch Muick, thence Lochnagar, and Broad Cairn to Braedownie.
- (2) Glen Doll, Tolmount, Càrn na Clàise, Glas Maol, Glenshec.
- (3) Glenshee, Cairnwell, Càrn a' Gheoidh, Beinn Iutharn Bheag and/or ditto Mhòr to Fealar Lodge.
- (4) A pig of a day from Fealar Lodge to An Sgarsoch, Càrn Ealar, Tarf water and Bruar Lodge (with or without Beinn Dearg).
- (5) Bruar Lodge to Gaick Lodge if enough snow to warrant this crossing; otherwise, Bruar Lodge to the main road, and to Dalnaspidal.
- (6) In either case, over Càrn na Caim to Dalwhinnie whither from the east or south.
- (7) Another pig of a day (or maybe two) over Ben Alder to Ossian.
- (8) Loch Treig, Luibeilt, Stob Bàn, Stob Choire Claurigh, and in and out of the ridges to Sgòr Chòinnich Beag and Steall.
- (9) Steall to Aonach Beag, Càrn Mòr Dearg, Nevis and Fort William.

With a little luck one would make shelter each night and could therefore get away without having to carry a tent in addition to a sleeping bag. Three days' food would be the maximum needed on any leg of the way.

That, plus primus, would certainly not add to the enjoyment of the section from Glenshee to Dalwhinnie, or over Ben Alder.

In any case, long before this is in print someone may have made the crossing. I hope so for, by any route, it will be a magnificent expedition.—
Yours, etc.,
J. D. B. WILSON.

The above letter was shown to Dr Slessor, who in his reply wrote:—

SIR,—The matter in J. D. B. Wilson's letter has long been in the minds of some of us. . . . My only quarrel with him is the time he takes. The first attempt, in any event, should be a 5-day crossing. My route would be:—

First day: Brae-downie, Tolmount, Glas Maol, Cairnwell, Fealar.
Second day: Cross the Tilt, An Sgarsoch, along whalebacks to Dalnaspidal or—in *extremis*—Gaick Lodge. *Third day:* To Pattock, Ben Alder, Ossian.
Fourth day: An 'off' day—Steall by An Amhainn Rìgh. *Fifth day:* Aonach Beag, Càrn Mòr Dearg, Nevis and Fort William.

Admittedly, it misses much fine country, especially the Cairngorms, but it does cross the country without incurring tremendous walking. The snow line must be 1200 ft. or lower; tents are unnecessary, and food need be for two days only at any point.—Yours, etc.,
C. G. M. SLESSOR.

[Why not start at Mount Keen—easternmost Munro and one of the first ski hills (*S.M.C.J.* (1909), x, 346)? I suggest (* marks a possible night halt): (A) Mount Keen, Black Hill of Mark, Broad Cairn (Lochnagar),* Càrn na Clàise, Glas Maol, Cairnwell, Beinn Iutharn Mhòr, Fealar,* Càrn Ealar, etc., as from Wilson's fourth day.

But these are all really *Basses Routes* unless we cross the Cairngorms. The unrivalled thrills (and rigours!) of the Big Plateaux render any inconvenience worth while. Suggested routes are: (B) Ben Avon, Beinn a' Bhuird, Beinn a' Chaorruinn, Beinn Mheadhoin, Ben MacDhui,* Braeriach and Cairn Toul, Leathad an Taobhain and as Wilson's fourth day. Or: (C) As above to Cairn Toul, then over to the Sgòran Dubh range and to Aviemore,* along the Monadhliaths from Càrn Dearg Mòr to Geal Chàrn, Melgarve,* Càrn Liath, Creag Meaghaidh*; then, over to the other Geal Chàrn and Ben Alder and as from Wilson's seventh day, or (D) straight to the Grey Corries as Wilson's eighth day.—HON. EDITOR.]

About a Broken Ankle

SIR,—I've always had an ambition to write one of yon kind of scholarly letters for the *Journal*. You know the kind. Latin tags, quotations from the obscure U-poets and the early articles (Vol. X, p. Y, etc.) by the founder-heroes. Well, I was reading Vol. vii, p. 195, the other night. 'From Sea to Summit' by Harold Raeburn, it was, all about his reflections before sauntering up the first ascent of Observatory Buttress. He was getting worried about the degenerative processes which attack mountaineers. He was quite melancholy about it. Among other things, he said this . . . 'That insidious epidemic, for instance, which goes under the name of golf,

is especially detrimental to Scottish mountaineering. *Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen*, the erstwhile wielder of the ice axe and climber of the hills of snow now merely cuts "steps" with an "iron"—not even of purpose, in the green turf, and climbs no hills, save hills of sand. His bergschrunds are shrunk to bunkers, his "big hobnailers" to shoes, with nails diminished both in number and in size, and his vaulting ambition, which once led him to place his whole desire upon the high places of the earth, is now sunk so low that only depressions, yea, holes, attained by the "easiest route" will satisfy him.

These are fine hard words and, at first, I said 'I wish he had known about ski-ing,' but he did—he once skied off the Pentlands above Edinburgh in 1905 (Vol. xxii, p. 380) and down the tramlines to Morningside Station. But he fortunately never knew the *svelte*, *suave*, *sartorial*, *Stirling Moss*, eternally downhill ruination of the thing. After all, golf! An innocent, decent, Scottish game—just a game and no pretence. Admittedly, with its religious elements and its fanaticisms and its spirituosities—but on the level, literally and figuratively. No one could confuse it with mountains. I know some people can confuse anything with anything else, but we're not talking about them: we're talking about people of our level of intelligence. I know there aren't many of us. But I mustn't be egotistical, *i.e.*, be in the majority. I would be bound to be wrong. To feel right, you must always be in the minority. That's why I'm going to say a few things about ski-ing. And I will try hard to be cool, but I *will not* be objective. There is too much objectivity these days—more objectionableness is clearly needed. I hope to work some of this in as I go along. If I don't, it will just be that my command of language proves too great for the Editor who can't stand language of any kind and who will cut it out. All this you will probably think—and rightly so—is an interesting beginning to something.

Well, to begin at this business of confusion which I got on to earlier (and which may I be preserved from). There was a fellow, a member of this Club, who actually wrote an article in one of our recent *Journals* (Vol. xxvi, look for it yourselves), mixing up mountaineering and ski-ing. I mean, the thing was patently absurd. I will only ask him one question. Has he been to Meall a' Bhùiridh? I don't want any clever stuff from him, I know he's a clever chap—except that he got made Editor—but he needn't try to pretend he doesn't know what I mean by that question. He knows fine. In any case, I can answer it. I have been to Meall a' Bhùiridh myself.

Yon was certainly a sight. It certainly was. It was the wee lassies that shook me. And the whole mountain covered with bodies, some standing, some going, some lying, some going to lie, others already lain (or laid)—waiting for stretchers, I suppose—and the cracking and snapping of bones, and the howls and the yells, and the clank, clank, clanking of the hoist, and the sandwich papers, and the disgusting bits of part-used chocolate, and the orange peel, and the blood. Disgracefully evocative, it was. And the accents. Not the thing for the bogs at all, quite out of place, too refined. Incredible.

Some of them couldn't even ski, for all their zip-fasteners and goggles. I

didn't mind that—I can't myself, and I don't mind other people imitating me—but what a waste of mountain! And then there were the holes in the snow. Everywhere, they were. It was like a kind of mountain smallpox from a distance. I could feel the whole mountain suffering—talk about the 'Round-Topped Hill of the Roaring or Bellowing' (Vol. vi, p. 5). No wonder. The ancient Gael must have had prophetic hearing. I just thought of Duncan Ban MacIntyre round there in Glen Orchy. What was it he said? Something about *Joyous was the haughty herd when they moved noisily and the hinds on the mountain green. Handsome were the speckled fawns there, the does and the red bucks, the black cocks and the red.* And he didn't foresee the half of it.

And then he went on and said: *And the Ben—it's little I thought that she would change. Since she is now under sheep, the world has deceived me.* Aye, and then I came up to the top hoist affair and I saw what he meant. There they were, all right. Queuing up. Hundreds of them, at least, and in dirty, slushy, horrible-looking snow, shuffling along holding their season tickets and waiting to be belted through the hook things by the Creag Dhu, who probably thought the quicker it was done the quicker they could get the whole contraption to themselves. 'A spectacle of superbly apparelled sordidness,' I heard a chap mutter whose opinion I naturally respect.

And a jerky, chancy business it was going up past all the rocks they hadn't cleared away yet (one of the vertical commuters lent me his season ticket). Then I was up on top among all the folk tying up things, and rubbing things on, and fiddling about everywhere, and rucksacks lying around and people swanking about in their trousers.

Then shortly after that my ankle broke itself. That's not what made me sour, don't think it was. It was being among all the wee lassies that did it—I mean, that's what made it so dreadful. It was having been brought up on Whympers's wonderful lithographs of people falling down thousands of feet roped together—proper, decent, thorough *adult* disasters. That's what put the lid on. Anyway, there I lay, among the other frozen holes, thinking that the place 'had every attribute of hell except its warmth' (Vol. ii, p. 13).

Well, there it is, I've written it. Now that I have, I notice that it's rather different from Raeburn's way of putting things—more modern, maybe. I seem to have been writing in a stuttering, inconsequential, modern style. I am glad of this. I didn't know I could. The only trouble is that some tend to think it isn't funny. Neither is ski-ing, believe me. If you can imagine such a thing as *pure* degeneration, that's ski-ing. Well, to sum up (I never thought I'd get it in) *facilis descensus est Averno*. And you can say that again.—Yours, etc.,

R. GRIEVE.

Those J.M.C.S. Bus Meets

[Anonymous letters are usually unpleasant; this is no exception, and we print it only because its author has made himself known to us, has allowed it to be cut, and has revealed some History and his own senile yearning after that tiger's prose, The New Delirium.—HON. EDITOR.]

SIR,—When they began it was long ago in times not credible, when the Old Men were men and the new men were new, when Russell carried an ice-axe and Smith a sewn-on groundsheet. Slesser, they say, organised the first one; that is likely. They were needed then for the war had just gone and the petrol not come and everyone wanted to get back to the hills and eat and sleep and whoop and fry amongst them. Day trips were no good, just picnics, and trains had their own rules; buses were the answer and soon every club had buses and they would race and glower at each other all the way north, fighting for the single chip stop. But it's the J.M.C.S. buses we must think of, for things are different now, there are birds and birdwatchers and meccano-men. In those days it was pure. There'd be a lot of people sitting on the kerb at Waterloo Place, rucksacks and axes and boots on the pavement and maybe a couple of groundsheets hung up where Cairns was changing his breeks and old *Daily Mirrors* lying about with pieces of Wally's piece in them. This Wally was a character, he even got put in the S.M.C. but didn't pay, he went to New Zealand and hitched instead, a real smasher. He had one adjective and 2 or 3 nouns and a great beaming face and spectacles and a superb stammer that got him many victims: he had a great wit and used to quote Moses in the dark. Others that turned up would be G, he'd no other name but two of everything else, 2 watches, 2 axes, clinkers and trikes just to make sure, and Russell, tightly packaged, though the other half Donaldson wouldn't get on till his own house: he lived on the Monadhliath side of Saughtonhall and never seemed to be there anyway until just before it was too late, probably because he was sideways on and not easily seen; these two had a famous tent, the Slum, Slum I, it was eaten into and out of again by various animals in hard winters but served these two until well before they stopped climbing. MacLennan was not there at first, he was not readily thought of but probably existed, they always do. About that place, too, Hewitt got on, packed with cans and kettles and knives and hatchets and bundles of twigs, travelling light being fond of tea and striking matches; he drummed up on sticks and bark, paper, straw, sheepdung and braziers, on Gargantuan variety but never on a primus. He had a favourite expression as he tripped up over the step coming in, dear and familiar to all as the white tops above Callander and as eagerly awaited.

In Callander there was a cafe, the Rex, that had a good place upstairs where they put people from buses; in Strathyre on the way back was a wonderful pub where everyone was happy and the barman roared at Hampton's jokes and they sold crisps. All gone now. And there was a good place in Perth open all night with sausages, peas, egg and chips at tables at 2 in the morning after waiting for some fool to get lost in the Gorms, but any stop was good at night, the smoke and smell and noise came different. Our own smoke, we had Grieve who burnt herbs, he burnt rosewood, wormwood, dogsgrass and shrubberies, we pitched them out of the window one time, stove and all, and there was Hampton, he had asthma, he used to smoke black Egyptians, coughing up their mummy dust and going blue; he breathed in a cat one night at Lazarus', so thick the fug, that raked his tubes a bit. Lazarus' is gone, too, in a blaze of fire,

the jewel of Kinlochleven, a Far-West doss-house crossed with a Naafi; cheap and teeming at all levels of life. Youth Hostels we never liked much; they were like trains but slower and wanted their wardens sweeping out. Ritchie's loud genealogical salute to the four-eyed one at Crianlarich who liked dancing still warms up all Old Men. This Ritchie was just the same then but stopped talking once when a ski hit him on the neck over a bump from the roofrack; he sat nearer the window next time so he could yell the polis and throw streamers. Marshall was there, a wee laddie and polite; Haig, Hood, Cole, Rodgie, Scott, Millar, Tait, Bulbous and more, sundry musicians on mouth-organs, combs, jugs and alimentary tracts, a varied horde, and when all these were emptied on to a stricken landscape together they drained into the night at once, like swill down a gutter, tentless ones trotting helpful and effusive and friendly, gloomy grubhunters like Dutton furtive behind, undeterred by stones; these parasites, clutching dogsbowls for alms, wandered from tent to tent till suitably undernourished, then crawled into dubious heaps of their own for the night. And all this time the driver was backing his 32 seats alone in the dark down a 10 ft. Highland waterway with no lights no help and 32 dead lemonade bottles clanking behind him.

The nights were good, real nature communions, earth and soup and stones and paraffin and pine needles and no pricklers; tents fuzzing in the dark, green or orange or grey or khaki number 2, and inside boots and mud and smoke and sleepingbags and outside tin plates, rind, spoons and scrapings; and those great black beasts sitting all round humped up to God's cloud and snow that all the fuss was supposed to be about. And you put on jerseys and balaclavas and extra socks and pulled the string and died in your bag and forgot the feet and the snores and the drystane dike beneath. And in the morning it was raining. And people went off and did things.

We push attack and foray, over ridge and peak and corrie.

And when they came back it was dark and raining and there was no time to cook anyway and the tents had to come down and the guys were twisted, so they must have been, but they all came down together, even Donaldson's who'd lost his milk into his rucksack, MacLennan's wrecked sarcophagus, and the immaculate villas of Ferrier and Watt who always camped tidily, dovetailed tentpegs and levelled spirits, serene beyond the bacon gobs and skewed single-enders of the immature.

All bundled into the bus and the driver'd had a bad night so we helped him reverse and the usual fools were late, sweating blood and blisters, look, so hard had they run. And we moved off somehow and squeezed our feet and tried to get warm and the songs started up. Grieve was tenor and Brown about bass and the rest filled the gaps. And the songs roared all the way from Kirriemuir to Gleann a' Chaolais, there and back, smut and slop from all tongues, great lungfuls that steamed up the air and rivered down the windows, so thick they choked out the diesel and the tyres. It was great. But it was a black distance and there were hours and hours and miles and miles and we stopped and drank and had to stop again and

the step was narrow. But it was a black distance and when we got back after all the stops there were more stops because people had to get off, they lived near here. That was all right as usual for Slesser who lived first, but what did it matter anyway, for all the rucksacks got rucked up, frames with straps with boots with tents together and all wedged down between the seats and up to the roof at no angle of rest. And the dawn got nearer.

When they were all out they jolted and rattled away under the lamps with boots and rucksack into streets of bare disbelief. And the buses went home last, with an axe or two and somebody's wallet.

And of all this lot some went abroad, some really died, some joined the S.M.C. and a few forgot. S.M.C., we had some of them but they didn't look it and before them the first S.M.C. we'd ever found it was George Elliot, and he was walking in a daft-shaped hat under the Pap of Glencoe shaped just like his hat, and there was snow on the Pap down to 1800 ft. and there was snow on George's hat down to 1800 ft.; and if you squinted you couldn't tell the difference except that the Pap stayed still and George's hat went up and down and up and down, and that was the S.M.C.—
Yours, etc., ANON ANON.

NEW CLIMBS

ARRAN

Goatfell: Rosa Slabs.—*Angels' Pavement.* 300 ft. Mild Severe. G. Kilgour & N. Macniven. 27th July 1960.

Starts at highest point of grassy rake which passes above the first slab of Evening Traverse; reached by heather slopes left of the watercourse.

(1) 70 ft. Climb the slab to rightmost of two cracks splitting overlap of upper slab; climb bulge to flake belay. (2) 60 ft. Climb to chain of pitted holds in the slab above and follow it to indefinite ledge and poor flake belay. (3) 30 ft. Traverse easily left to small belay. (4) 110 ft. Straight up slab over two small overlaps (the second being left of a grass clump) to a terrace.

Continuation directly above appears broken and grassy; Fool's Causeway may be taken instead (see below).

—*Fool's Causeway.* 300 ft. Very Severe. G. Kilgour & N. Macniven. 27th July 1960.

From finish of Angels' Pavement traverse left over broken ground to a smooth water-streaked slab, above its lowest waterslide section and at the point where two blocks form a thread belay.

(1) 80 ft. Gain foot of slab from the left; a few feet higher follow a very thin grassy crack slanting rightwards. From its end go up a few feet and take piton belay in rock pocket. (2) 120 ft. Climb up rightwards by friction to a line of pocket holds leading to a tiny groove; this develops into layback crack curving left to small overhang. Above overhang an

easier groove and slab lead to a ledge. (3) 100 ft. Finish by easier slabs leading to Second Terrace near its upper end.

Both this route and Angels' Pavement give clean enjoyable climbing on rock suited to rubbers.

Cioch na h-Oighe: The Bastion.—*Tidemark.* 360 ft. Hard Severe. A. Maxfield & J. Peacock. 9th June 1960.

This exposed climb follows an obvious gangway which runs round the upper part of The Bastion, and starts at a good spike belay just above Ledge 3, about 200 ft. from the ledge's upper end.

(1) 100 ft. From belay cross two slabs to large block. (2) 70 ft. From here the gangway can be seen at the end of a grass ledge. Cross to good belay a few feet up the gangway. (3) 90 ft. Follow gangway to its finish in an overhanging wall; belay. (4) 100 ft. Descend some 10 ft., then traverse across and up slabs to Ledge 4; block belay.

Beinn Bharrain: North Ridge.—*Route I.* 200 ft. Severe. A. Maxfield & J. Peacock. 6th June 1960.

This and the following climb lie on the craggy east side of a ridge coming from the north on to Beinn Bharrain; the map reference to this crag is 898429. Halfway across the crag is a buttress with an obvious crack running from bottom right to top left; start at the crack.

(1) 100 ft. Climb crack; belay at top. (2) 100 ft. Traverse left for 20 ft., then up wall for 10 ft. and finish easily to top of crag.

—*Route II.* About 200 ft. Mild Very Severe. A. Maxfield & J. Peacock. 6th June 1960.

About 40 ft. left of Route I, a right-angled corner with a crack in it is an obvious line of weakness.

(1) 100 ft. Follow corner till a difficult move to the left gives access to slabs above; climb these to belay. (2) 40 ft. An easy traverse, rising left until under upper part of crag. (3) Climb the middle of an undulating wall to top of crag.

SKYE

Am Bàsteir.—*West Wall.* 150 ft. Severe. T. W. Patey & C. J. S. Bonington. 18th August 1960.

The most direct route from the Tooth to Am Bàsteir.

An easy walking shelf slants leftwards up the face overlooking the Tooth. Follow this to a cairn then climb 15 ft. to a cramped ledge. Ten feet to the left an awkward initial pull-up to the foot of a prominent 30-ft. dièdre which is not hard. Some loose rock.

Bhasteir Tooth.—*King's Cave Wall.* 105 ft. Severe. T. W. Patey & C. J. S. Bonington. 18th August 1960.

An alternative to King's Cave Chimney (blocked by a fall of chockstones since the 1920's).

Start up the right wall below the first chockstones by a flaky crack. Belay at 30 ft. Then awkward for 25 ft. to a large partly detached rock. Once established on the rock the last 50 ft. yields easily. Often damp.

—*Outside Edge*. Hard Severe. C. J. S. Bonington & T. W. Patey. 18th August 1960.

Follows on from the above climb. From just above the block make an airy though easy horizontal traverse of 60 ft. rightwards to the edge of the undercut spur between King's Cave and North Chimneys. Belay. Climb the Spur direct adhering tenaciously to the extreme right edge. 70 ft. exposed, fine pitch.

Sgùrr a' Mhadaidh: Coire Tairneilear.—*Whispering Wall*. 600 ft. Very Difficult. T. W. Patey & C. J. S. Bonington. 18th August 1960.

This is the considerable crag on the right-hand side of Deep Gash Gully which faces across the gully towards Thunder Rib; it harbours an excellent climb of sustained interest.

A choice of routes exists to a slanting terrace 150 ft. up. The climb above the terrace follows initially a vertical basalt dyke, the nearest feasible line to Deep Gash Gully and just outside the gully wall. After 200 ft. the dyke swings away left; continue the line up a steep 60-ft. pitch. Above some easy ground follow a series of cracks and chimneys, turning the uppermost on the left.

—*Thunder Rib*. 1000 ft. Very Severe. G. Milnes (E.U.M.C.) & R. Smith. April 1960.

The fine rib on the left of Deep Gash Gully. Follow line of least resistance.

Sgùrr Mhic Coinnich: Coireachan Ruadha Face.—*Crack of Dawn, Direct Finish*. 250 ft. Very Severe. G. J. Ritchie, J. G. Rork (E.U.M.C.) & R. Smith. May 1960.

From below a prominent block split by an overhanging crack, go up left of block, make a short exposed left traverse and finish up line of cracks to top of buttress.

—*King Cobra*. 700 ft. Very Severe. C. J. S. Bonington & T. W. Patey. 14th August 1960.

One of the hardest and finest climbs in the Cuillin. It takes a fairly direct line up the steepest part of the Coireachan Ruadha Face, starting from the bay on the left of Crack of Dawn.

From the top of this bay a very exiguous unclimbed gully goes all the way up the cliff. Scramble up the gully bed for a few yards till it steepens and just below this point traverse easily rightwards, thus crossing above a lower tier of cliff to reach a large flake at the foot of a promising-looking dièdre of 90 ft. with good holds on the right wall. (Old tin wedged in crack.)

(1) 90 ft. Climb right wall for 50 ft. then step right. (Immediately above is rusty piton and 20 ft. higher an abseil sling left by unknown

pioneers.) Below the pítón traverse 20 ft. to right on good holds and climb 10 ft. to a precarious lodgement at the foot of a fierce holdless dièdre; minute stance and pítón belay. (2) 70 ft. The crucial dièdre. Scattered holds for 25 ft. to the start of the thin section, where a security pítón was left in place—it is poorly placed for direct aid (for which it is not intended). Very tenuous for 20 ft. above the pítón, to a rehabilitation foothold: then the dièdre relents. Pítón belay. (3) 70 ft. Easily up rib on right to gain a comfortable shelf below the big overhangs, and a view into Dawn Grooves on the right. (4) 120 ft. Continuation of the groove is smooth and overhanging. Climb wall about 15 ft. right of it, on to slab below roof. Traverse slab to right to turn overhang, and go up a ramp to a V groove leading up to the big overhangs. Climb out of left wall of groove and swing across to jammed spikes on the left, and a welcome sanctuary. Climb short crack strenuously on good holds: a fairly sustained V.S. (5) 90 ft. Traverse left across slab into chimney, then to good ledge on right. (6) 120 ft. Climb chimney and easy rock on right, to foot of a fine chimney in a narrow buttress. (7) 90 ft. Climb chimney, a basalt dyke. Pleasant airy V.D. finish. Cairn.

Sgùrr Thearlaich.—*Lower Rib.* Hard Severe. 300 ft. C. J. S. Bonington and T. W. Patey. 14th August 1960.

The leftmost and best defined of the ribs and buttresses on the Stone Shoot face of Sgùrr Thearlaich. After a promising start of 90 ft. up the conspicuous crack cutting the right-hand side (facing it) of the buttress, it degenerates into an undignified scramble.

Storr Rocks.—*The Cathedral.* 180 ft. Very Severe. C. J. S. Bonington and T. W. Patey. 19th August 1960.

This remarkable-looking spire is some 200 yd. north of the Old Man of Storr. The rock, as everywhere hereabouts, is extremely unreliable. Scrambling for 100 ft. to a belay stance on the arête opposite the Old Man; then steep climbing up the arête in three pitches of 25 ft. No abseil block on top. Descent by pulley system over top block for 25 ft., then an abseil. Great care necessary; almost unjustifiable.

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS

Beinn Eighe: Coire Mhic Fhearchair.—*The Upper Girdle.* 2500 ft. approx. Severe. T. W. Patey & C. J. S. Bonington. 11th August 1960.

The obvious Lower Girdle traverse *via* the terrace between the sandstone and quartzite is of course merely a scramble, but the Upper Girdle at the intersection of the two distinct layers of quartzite gives a first-rate expedition with minimum scrambling, at least half a dozen pitches of Severe standard and some remarkable exposure.

The route calls for no detailed description as the fault line is obvious all the way across the face and for most of the way is the only practicable one. The climb started near the foot of Far East Gully. The first segment of the

girdle across the Eastern Ramparts was the most entertaining, where for 600 ft. the traverse is continuously difficult and exposed. Then things go easily from East Buttress right along to West Central Gully apart from a single awkward pitch on the East Face of the Central Buttress. The East Face of the West Buttress is perhaps the most impressive section of the circuit and has three serious pitches on the last of which a security piton was left in place.

Finish by the variation (described next) for good measure.

—*Direct Finish to West Buttress*

Ordinary Route. 200 ft. Mild Severe. T. W. Patey & C. J. S. Bonington. 11th August 1960.

Below the final tower (which the established route skirts by a deep chimney on the right), climb a clean 30-ft. wall on good holds—strenuous. This leads up to a recess on the left of the tower whence an easy move leftwards gives access to a flake crack slanting up to the top of the tower.

An Ruadh Stac (Strathcarron).—*The North Face.* 600 ft. Very Difficult. C. J. S. Bonington & T. W. Patey. 9th August 1960.

This face has two 300-ft. tiers of excellent rock abounding in holds and offering numerous lines especially on the lower tier. The approach from Annat is least fatiguing.

The line followed seemed to be the most profitable. A prominent slabby rib just left of an obvious white scar on the lower tier gives 300 ft. of delightful climbing. Direct continuation on the upper tier by a long curving damp chimney looks unpleasant, so the climb continues about 100 ft. farther left (cairn). 150 ft. diagonally leftwards leads to a big recess and a spike belay. Leave from left side of recess, then straight up for 100 ft. to easier rocks and scrambling.

Sgùrr a' Chaorachain (Applecross).—*The Cioch Nose.* 600 ft. Difficult. T. W. Patey & C. J. S. Bonington. 12th August 1960.

Start from the Midway Terrace on A' Chioch at the first obvious break (some 60 ft. or more) to the left of the true nose of the buttress (*i.e.*, well right of Bell's route). Here for 100 ft. upwards there are several disjointed grass ledges, the topmost of which is below a considerable line of overhangs.

(1) Climb 100 ft. to terrace below the overhangs. Then traverse the terrace rightwards towards the Nose. (2) 90 ft. A conspicuous chimney is soon reached. Climb this (Hard Difficult) using a small jammed stone. From its top break out to the right and follow easy rocks to a ledge on the very Nose of the buttress; block belay and superb situation. (3) 60 ft. From 10 ft. right of the block climb the steep frontal slab on magnificent holds tending diagonally left. A remarkable pitch. (4) 100 ft. Climb up to left of overhang above and then back to the right keeping to the Nose. Small rowan sapling on large ledge. Move right to huge block. (5) Climb the true right edge in three pitches each of 100 ft. on fine rock to the top of the Cioch.

(The party agreed that this route gave the best value for Difficult they have met in Scotland. It had appeared from almost any angle to be of sustained difficulty and great exposure.)

Sgùrr a' Chaisgean Mòr (Fionn Loch): Sgùrr na Laocainn, Tòrr na h-Iolaire, Carnmore Crag.—*Gob.* 450 ft. Very Severe. D. Haston & R. Smith. April 1960.

Start from the terrace in the middle of the cliff. Traverse left along an overhung ledge to a break in the overhang; go up and right and climb a shallow corner. Traverse left below a vast roof to a stance near Dragon. Break up and right through the roof and traverse away to the right. Finish up a steep corner.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: 'Gob' is good Gaelic. ' . . . n.m. a bill or beak of a bird '—*MacAlpine.*]

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

Creag Meaghaidh: Coire Ardair.—*Eastern Corner.* (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 400 ft. 1½ hours. M. Slessor & K. Bryan. 28th January 1961.

To the east of Raeburn's Gully lie two buttresses. Eastern Corner is the almost vertical corner between these, and lies some 500 ft. above Lochan Choire Ardair. Steep snow leads to its base.

The corner provides five pitches of steep climbing, from below apparently impossibly so. There are impressive views of the rock overhangs on the right wall. This ascent was probably under exceptionally easy conditions of snow-ice; there would normally be an ice ribbon.

BEN NEVIS

Ben Nevis: North-east Buttress.—*Minus 2 Buttress, Central Route.* 400 ft. Very Severe. R. Smith & J. Hawkshaw (E.U.M.C.). May 1960.

Climb the crest of the Buttress to below a belt of overhangs. Thread these from bottom right to top left and continue to the junction of the Right and Left Hand Routes.

Sgùrr a' Mhàim: North-west Ridge, Creag Uaimh Shomhairle (Glen Nevis).—*Sunset Boulevard.* 300 ft. Severe. I. Clough, Miss J. Davis, J. Gargett, R. Matthews & D. Ducker. 22nd March 1960.

For information about this crag, see under Ben Nevis Notes. Start near centre of crag at a quartz blaze, right of an overhang and left of a tall light-coloured wall.

(1) 60 ft. Climb steeply up wall for 15 ft. on good holds to ledge. Traverse left, climb a scoop and move left again to holly tree; chockstone belay. (2) 70 ft. Up by crack and wall, past next tree to a groove. Climb this to tree belays. (3) 70 ft. Up a chimney in the corner above, then traverse almost horizontally left to grass and trees in an overhung bay. (4) 100 ft. Up right to corner; piton runner used. Step delicately round

on to nose of rib on right, and more delicately into vegetatious chimney; up this to belay. Scrambling remains.

—*Sundowner*. 220 ft. Severe. I. Clough, Miss J. Davis, J. Gargett, R. Matthews & D. Ducker. 24th March 1960.

Start on right of crag, at a tree and an arch.

(1) 30 ft. Up, trending left, to small stance and belay above overhang. (2) 60 ft. To birch tree terrace; delicate last moves. (3) 80 ft. Diagonally right, up to steep wall; climb this direct or by a turning movement on right. Either way, arrive at sapling (visible from foot of pitch). Thence traverse left along ledge and climb groove to flake belay. (4) 50 ft. Up slab on right, then straight up wall above; flake belay on left.

Winter Ascents.—The following have been reported:—

Tower Scoop. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 3 hours. I. Clough & G. Grandison (through leads). 4th January 1961.

Runs up centre of rock band left of Tower cleft. A steep 70-ft. ice pitch led into scoop, which was followed to an awkward corner and final snow funnel directly below Tower Gully.

No. 2 Gully Buttress 'Variation.' (FIRST WINTER ASCENT of summer route.) I. Clough, N. Stebbing, P. Cresswell, W. Reid, N. Bull & D. Ducker. 1st April 1960.

Instead of taking the original winter route, this party appears to have made the first winter ascent of, more or less, the summer route.

Tower Ridge, Vanishing Gully. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) R. Marshall & G. Tiso (through leads). 15th January 1961.

The climb had four ice pitches, three of them steep.

Secondary Tower Ridge, Teuchter Grooves. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 3 hours. G. Wallace & R. Shaw (G.U.M.C.), alternate leads. 21st January 1961.

A direct line was taken, starting in a hidden chimney at head of snow bay immediately left of Rogue's Rib. There were three ice pitches and one of steep snow before ridge crest was reached.

CAIRNGORMS

Ben Macdhui: Coire Sputan Dearg.—*The Swing*. 150 ft. Severe. D. Reid & D. Pyper. September 1960.

The rock rib left of April Wall in the Red Spout; cairn.

Up a slab for 50 ft. to an overhang. Climb this crux direct, and continue by good steep climbing up grooves to a hard V crack to end route. The plateau can be reached by further (Difficult) climbing.

—*Terminal Buttress*. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 4½ hours. Grade 4. D. Reid & D. Pyper. 4th February 1961.

Summer route followed throughout; crux at summer crux.

GLENCOE

Beinn Trilleachan, Glen Etive: Etive Slabs.—These slabs are on the south face of the mountain, at the foot of this fine glen and overlooking the head of Loch Etive, deep in *Tir Deardail*. Some of the routes below are old; they are collected here for convenience. We are much indebted to *Cambridge Mountaineering* for information regarding Spartan Slab and Sickle; full descriptions of these climbs and a diagram of the face appeared in that journal for 1955, and the accounts below are condensed therefrom. We hope to publish an up-to-date diagram shortly.

—*The Sickle*. 600 ft.

Very Severe. E. D. G. Langmuir, J. A. Mallinson, M. J. O'Hara & Miss J. M. Tester. 13th June 1954.

Starts at a cairn 30 ft. left of fallen blocks at base of the lowest slabs and directly underneath the left-hand end of the main slab, the Great Slab.

(1) 150 ft. Climb straight up easy slab to overhang left of turf field above; piton runner. Traverse 10 ft. left and climb overlap; then across to faint groove on right, and climb up and left to grassy rake; block belay. (2) 30 ft. Ascend rake to base of small slab beneath a rowan, then up to tree. (3) 70 ft. Climb crack behind tree, up niche, traverse left to turf ledges and continue into corner beneath steep part of white slab; tree belay. (4) 70 ft. Climb wall of cracked blocks above belay to turf; leave by crack on right and climb to niche with tree and belay (60 ft.) or continue to ledge above.

(A *Direct Start* of 270 ft. begins from base of lowest slabs under pitch (4) and joins the route at bottom of this pitch; (1) to (4) may be avoided completely by walking up the grassy rake.)

After pitch (4) the route takes the easiest line up the cliff.

—*Spartan Slab*. 575 ft.

Very Severe. E. D. G. Langmuir, M. J. O'Hara & J. A. Mallinson. 14th June 1954.

Starts 10 ft. left of the huge flat-topped block lying below the Great Slab, almost centrally beneath the bow-shaped overhang. A finer line than Sickle, continuously interesting.

(1) 120 ft. Climb turfey groove past two trees; at 80 ft. (piton runner?) step right to lower slab, then reach large turf ledge; piton belay. (2) 80 ft. Descend a little, step out right, on to steep slab; layback up thin flake until prominent overhanging flake at head of slab is gained. Move right into easy groove, up to bluebell bower with ash belay beneath bow-shaped overhang. (3) 20 ft. Step out left, up into overhung niche; climb overhang; belay from crack above. (4) 50 ft. Leave about a foot left of incipient turfey crack, stepping to right into crack at 10 ft. and gaining a rightward horizontal crack; hand traverse this for 25 ft., then up to tree on turf ledge for belay. (5) 125 ft. Step down and out on to slab on right, traverse right, descend to niche; leave by right side until a move up and

left to steep slab is possible. Climb 10 ft. up narrow crack (2 pitons); step down right and across and surmount block to reach crack. Climb this till it twins; follow cracks to piton belay and airy stance. (6) 100 ft. Climb slab above, still trending right (3 pitons); at top, traverse to easier ground. Follow 50-ft. cracked slab to jungle below overhanging wall; belay. (7) 80 ft. 20 ft. right of cairn is an overhanging corner; ascend a few feet, traverse right, to prominent nose; then by awkward move to cave; climb short chimney on left to easy ground on grass rake bounding main wall of slabs.

—*Spartan Slab, Direct*

Start. 140 ft. Very Severe. C. Vigano & E. Taylor (C.D.M.C.). 9th June 1956.

Starts at lowest point of rock, 40 ft. right of ordinary start.

(1) 100 ft. Climb slab; at 40 ft. bear rightwards over two curious rock pockets; at 80 ft. incline back to left, where a piton lies behind thin upturned flake; belay on large flakes 20 ft. above. (2) 40 ft. Move upward over bulging rock until possible to traverse left and belay on tree at foot of the overhanging crack on ordinary route.

—*Agony, 540 ft. Very*

Severe. J. Cunningham, W. Smith & M. Noon (all C.D.M.C.). 6th April 1957.

Starts at base of first prominent groove sweeping up the slabs; to left of Spartan Slab.

(1) 120 ft. Climb directly up groove using pitons for direct aid (8 employed) until grassy patches reached; climb these to grassy ledge; flake belay. (2) 120 ft. Continue up groove with more pitons (16 employed); occasionally possible to climb free. At 110 ft. reach grassy ledge with small ash tree; piton belay in groove. (3) 150 ft. Continue up groove with occasional direct piton aid; reach grassy patch in corner at 80 ft. and traverse diagonally right up slab to overhang below second grassy patch; climb to top of grass and move, awkwardly, diagonally left to small rock shelf; piton belay. (4) 40 ft. Climb directly up to overhang; tension-traverse 15 ft. right to reasonable holds; stance and piton belay. (5) 80 ft. Climb directly up corner above, to small overhang. 'Mantleshelf' on this, climb slab above to overhanging wall, then traverse left across awkward slab to ash belay. (6) 30 ft. Climb overhanging wall directly behind belay; climb slab above to flake belay. Finish. (All pitons removed.)

A *Variation Start* to Agony was made by W. Smith, J. Cunningham & P. Walsh on 18th August 1956. They traversed right from foot of groove to grassy ledges; then climbed up towards crack running diagonally across to ledge at top of first pitch of Agony; then followed this crack to the ledge. (Severe.)

—*Hammer, 500 ft. Very*

Severe. M. Noon & J. Cunningham (C.D.M.C.) 7th April 1957.

Starts 30 ft. left of Agony, at corner below tree.

Climb corner, belay on tree at 50 ft. Continue on steep grass to ledge at 120 ft. Follow shallow scoop leading off obliquely to left, into a groove; continue up groove to good ledge with tree belay. Continue up groove another 80 ft. to piton; tension-traverse rightwards to small ledge. Climb crack above overhang, move right, go up short chimney and cross slab to good belay in corner. Then descend a little and move across and up slab to grass at 50 ft.

—*Claw*. 840 ft. Very Severe. M. Noon (C.D.M.C.), A. Charles (Glen More) & T. Lawrie (C.D.M.C.). 25th May 1957.

Starts 30 ft. left of Sickle and directly below dark streaks beneath tree; cairn.

(1) 150 ft. Climb slab to grass, move right, then left across slab to ledge; ascend thin crack, traverse left past dark streak and up to grass platform. Move right to rowan 40 ft. left of Hammer. (2) 100 ft. Go straight up to grass ledge. (3) 50 ft. Move across slab above small tree into groove; climb this a few feet. (3) 120 ft. Follow groove to top, traverse right past small spike runner to arête; thence to ledge. (4) 120 ft. Climb up, then right round awkward corner and on to short groove; climb this and brack above to slab and large block. (5) 120 ft. Ascend two short overhangs and slab above to top. (6) 80 ft. Climb overhanging chimney; with piton, move up to ledge (thread runner); up holdless walls, then cross to recess with tree belay. (7) 100 ft. From top of recess climb crack to right of twin cracks; finish up slabs to eyehole belay high up.

—*The Message*. 210 ft. Very Severe. M. Noon & E. Taylor (C.D.M.C.). 16th June 1957.

Starts at rowan tree on Claw (end of pitch (1)), 40 ft. left of Hammer.

Climb diagonally left to foot of groove; shaky spike belay. Then step left on to arête and climb overhang; climb centre crack and swing left on to holds (3 pitons); go left to narrow ledge and poor belay. Climb prominent crucial crack directly above. Continue for 50 ft. up crack, then move over small flake on left to tree belay above white slab in main groove of Sickle.

—*Swastika*. 685 ft. Very Severe. M. Noon & E. Taylor (C.D.M.C.). 25th June 1957.

One of the best routes on the Slabs. Artificial sections are short (except pitch 9); the crucial quartz band pitches are climbed only on poor belays, with no runners.

Starts 30 ft. past the tree to left of Spartan Slab.

(1) 120 ft. Climb slab by thin crack to ledge (2 pitons). (2) 80 ft. Move right across ledges to fixed piton belay below large block. (3) 40 ft. Climb slab to block, surmount directly and move to fixed piton belay below overhang. (4) 90 ft. Move slightly right, insert piton, tension-traverse and insert another above lip of overhang, mantleshelf on overhang and traverse left along 'The Moustache' (thin grass crack along lip of overhang)

to grass ledges. (5) 115 ft. Climb quartz band, trending slightly right to grass and ledge. (6) 20 ft. Continue up slab to ledge. (7) 80 ft. Follow quartz band to grass patch beneath second line of overhangs. (8) 60 ft. Traverse 6 ft. left by piton to overhanging corner; surmount by spike and a piton. Climb slab above to tree belay below large corner. (9) 40 ft. Seven pitons used up smaller crack, left of main corner, to ledge below clean-cut overhang. Move up and right to ledge in main corner. (10) 20 ft. Continue up corner to another ledge; finish by layback.

—*The Long Walk*. 1400 ft.

Very Severe. J. Cunningham & M. Noon (C.D.M.C.). May 1958.

Starts on extreme right edge of main slabs.

(1) and (2) 250 ft. Move diagonally left and up to stance beneath prominent corner in first overlap. (3) 70 ft. Up corner crack, using sling on spike; crack widens (2 wedges); stance on slabs above. (4) & (5) 250 ft. Diagonally left to belay on edge of next overlap. (6) 80 ft. Traverse under overlap (wedge runner) to belay shared with Long Wait. (7) 80 ft. Left to stance beneath black wall. (8) 50 ft. Up wall, using sling on spike, to slabs above; up this to tree belay. (9) 150 ft. Left along zig-zag line of next overlap to stance on Agony. (10) 500 ft. Continue the girdle across Hammer and on to Sickle, following chosen line. (All pitches now climbed free.)

—*The Long Wait*. (FIRST

COMPLETE ASCENT.) 1000 ft. Very Severe. J. Cunningham (C.D.M.C.) & R. Smith. September 1959.

Climb 150 ft. of Spartan Slab to tree belay at right end of large crevassed overlap. Go left under overlap (40 ft.), round into corner and up to belay on right (30 ft.). Pull up and move left into a corner, follow this, cross another lap and climb slab above to ledge (80 ft.). Descend diagonally leftwards, go left along a ledge just above an overlap (piton runner used), climb into a shallow scoop and break out leftwards on white marks to turf ledge (70 ft.). Climb corner above (30 ft.; one piton runner), break out on to left-hand slab and climb wrinkles to stance under greasy groove (70 ft.). Climb slab on right (60 ft.) to reach holds. Traverse right to grass column and climb to large grass stance (60 ft.) at level of The Long Walk (first climbed this far by Cunningham & Noon). Go up and left (30 ft.) into a wet corner, break through the overlap up and right across a diamond-shaped wall (20 ft.) and cross the slab above on wrinkles running up and left (60 ft.) to a small ledge (added by D. Whillans, Rock and Ice Club). Climb slab above (60 ft.; crux) to below right end of overhang and follow the corner on right (40 ft.) to a wide ledge. Traverse right through trees (60 ft.) and climb vertical corner (60 ft.) to an exit on left. Finish up short walls. Pitons required for belays.

—*Frustration*. 600 ft.

Very Severe. D. Haston & A. Wightman. April 1960.

Starts on slab to right of Agony.

(1) 100 ft. Up crack, tension-traverse (from piton at top) into parallel crack on right; up this to belay. (2) 30 ft. Traverse right until ledge peters out. (3) 70 ft. Abseil from ledge to holds on edge of lower overhang; along to right, then up slabs to belay. (4) 150 ft. Follow corner on left to stance beneath overlap. (5) 100 ft. Up overlap and slabs above to join Agony; piton runner. (6) 100 ft. Straight up through overlap to tree belay. (7) 50 ft. Go left round corner and up overlap to easy grass.

—*Dan*. 1000 ft. Very

Severe. J. Moriarty & R. Smith. May 1960.

On long belt of slabs up and right from the main slabs.

From lowest rocks find a central line to the bottom left end of the long diagonal overlap near the top of the slabs. Climb up under this to a loose chockstone, tension-traverse right, climb by cracks and grooves to a nest of roofs, break leftwards through these and climb to more broken rocks.

—*The Pause*. 670 ft.

Very Severe. J. R. Marshall, G. J. Ritchie, G. Tiso & R. Marshall. July 1960.

Start at obvious groove to left of Spartan Slab. Climb the slab on its right, move into the groove at 60 ft. (3 pitons), follow the groove for a farther 25 ft. and leave by a large spike-hold to gain a grass patch and piton belay. Climb the layback crack on lip of groove, then by easy rocks to the belay of Swastika (50 ft.). Continue as for Swastika to the small overlap, traverse by its right edge to beneath the main overlap, then, using a small tree, tension-traverse into the Crevasse (130 ft.).

Gain the slab above, move left into groove and climb to gain a ledge on the slab at 30 ft. (piton runner); traverse rightwards to the faint line of cracks, follow these to a small overlap and move right to gain a stance and piton belay (130 ft.). Continue up rightwards to the rightmost end of a higher overlap and with the aid of a piton (in place) climb the thin crack to an easy groove, which leads to a large grass patch 120 ft. (piton belay). Climb the overlaps on the left to the base of the terminal slab, traverse left to an undercut edge which is climbed to reach a higher grass ledge (100 ft.). Finish by the vertical corner on the left (50 ft.).

—*Jaywalk*. 500 ft. Very

Severe. J. R. Marshall, J. Moriarty & J. Stenhouse. (Shared leads.) September 1960.

Start 60 ft. to the right of the large vegetated corner of Sickle. Climb a two-tiered groove, using 3 pitons (one for direct aid) to gain the upper slab: piton belay, small stance (120 ft.). Move right and follow a series of grooves to piton belay (120 ft.). Follow the groove to grass patch, move left a few feet and continue by smooth slabs to large grass ledge at 140 ft.: piton belay. From the thin grass ledge above, surmount a short wall with the aid of slings on a rock spike, climb the crack and groove above using 4 pitons (2 for direct aid), move right and 'layback' into a grassy groove (120 ft.). Easier vegetated climbing leads in 100 ft. to the diagonal terrace.

A'Chioch, Glen Etive.—*Weevil's Way*. 300 ft. Hard Severe. J. Stenhouse & R. Marshall. 2nd July 1960.

The crag opposite the Dalness Chasm. Start at slabs at left end of crag.

Climb rightwards to tree belay in corner, just right of yellow overhang. Continue up right wall to large flake, then straight up to below overhang; traverse right to groove with small ash trees and climb this to tree belay. Traverse rightwards along grassy terrace for 40 ft., then climb to top of crag by grooves and ribs.

Buachaille Etive Mòr: Slime Wall.—*Lecher's Route*. 180 ft. plus 120 ft. Very Severe. D. Haston & J. R. Marshall (through leads). June 1959.

Pitches (1) and (2) are 180 ft. as for Bludger's Route. (3) 120 ft. Step right from top of Bludger's crux pitch and follow prominent crack to top; 2 pitons used.

Aonach Dubh: North Face.—*To-yo, continued*. 200 ft. Very Severe. J. Moriarty & R. Smith. May 1960.

From Pleasant Terrace go straight up by a grooved arête and a short overhanging corner, to debouch on to the top of Aonach Dubh.

East Face.—*Buttress Route*. 240 ft. Difficult. R. Birbeck & M. R. Wilson. 9th September 1960.

Level with the walk-off route from East Face of Aonach Dubh and a little way up Coire nan Lochan, the upper cliff throws down a buttress or arête to a grass terrace angled between two walls. The route follows this buttress and offers a convenient continuation up Bidean nam Bian. The grass terrace is at far right of upper cliff, whose main face is invisible from the walk-off path.

Start at small cairn at top of grass; a white patch is on the left-hand wall, and an overhung gully and a grassy gully descend from left and right respectively.

(1) 110 ft. Climb buttress, on left-hand side; avoid overhang at 20 ft. Belay at second terrace, below rowan. (2) 50 ft. Continue up arête; belay at third terrace. (3) 80 ft. Continue by easy scrambling or, better, walk a little right to end of grass terrace and climb right-hand wall of gully to top.

West Face.—*Trapeze*. 450 ft. Very Severe. J. R. Marshall & D. Leaver.

Start at lower left edge of south wall of East Buttress—the left wall of No. 4 Gully on West Face. The best approach is by the lower vegetated section of B Buttress, then along the obvious terrace running beneath upper section of the face.

(1) 50 ft. Climb by easy vegetated rakes to foot of open corner. (2) 70 ft. Climb this (strenuous) to a belay beneath an overhang; stance and piton runner at 20 ft. (3) 140 ft. Turn overhang on left and follow

corner, now easy, to slabs; follow them to mossy bay at highest point. (4) 20 ft. Traverse right to well-defined platform. (5) 130 ft. Leave on left, climb steep wall to ledge with clean corner above. Turn this corner on right, make ascending rightward traverse to groove and crack. Climb this to slab beneath overhang. Traverse right to rocky bay. (6) 40 ft. Follow groove rightwards and finish by a short crack giving access to summit of Buttress.

Geàrr Aonach: East Face.—*Rainmaker*. 200 ft. Severe. R. Marshall & J. Moriarty (through leads). 13th September 1958.

The left edge of this Face (see *S.M.C.J.* (1955), xxv, 361) is defined by a deep recessed corner.

Follow corner for 100 ft.; belay. Climb chimney and overhanging crack above to easier ground and to top.

—*Persuasion*. 200 ft. Very Severe. R. Marshall & J. Moriarty (through leads). 13th September 1958.

Starts 40 ft. left of *Rainmaker*.

Climb obvious fault to a crack, step left up a gangway and climb to ledge. Move up to large flake and overhang; climb to gain crack, and continue on good holds to finish.

—*Marshall's Wall*. 250 ft. Very Severe. G. J. Ritchie & R. Smith. May 1960.

On the best looking face to the left of the Nose (prominent from the Lost Valley); start below a little bulge 80 ft. left of a broken gully and well to the right of a high curving line of overhang.

Go up and left, then back right above the bulge, to a nest of spikes. Go right, then up, then right, to a small ledge (crux). Go up and left to ledges, and finish up an undercut corner.

Lost Valley (Coire Gabhail).—*Black Crack*. 170 ft. Severe. M. H. Crawford & J. R. Mills. 15th September 1959.

Reported in *Oxford Mountaineering*, 1960.

Lies up prominent black crack on a buttress just left of where ground begins to rise again in the Lost Valley (where original glen floor reappears).

Stob Coire nan Lochan: Central Buttress.—*Central Grooves*. 400 ft. Very Severe. K. Bryan & R. Robb (J.M.C.S.). 3rd July 1960.

Follows line of obvious dièdre cutting through steep lower section of the face, and continues directly above by prominent grooves. Starts at wall immediately right of the initial corner.

Climb 15 ft. to small ledge. Using piton, step left into the corner and follow to small ledges and poor belay at 100 ft. Continue up corner for farther 90 ft. until it opens on to mossy ledges. Follow grooves above for 200 ft., passing conspicuous overhang on right. Finish on broad terrace 100 ft. below top of buttress.

Garbheinn (Ardgour).—*The Clasp*. 200 ft. Very Severe. J. R. Marshall. April 1960.

On upper tier of South Wall to Great Ridge. Start at the rightmost end of the lower of the big overhangs.

Climb the steep wall and trend left to a belay at 40 ft. Continue up under the roof, past a detached block to a piton, traverse left 30 ft. to a shallow groove, then up to a chimney, trending left to the top of the crag.

ARROCHAR

Creag Tharsuinn.—*Arch Chimney*. 200 ft. Very Difficult. P. Mitchell & J. R. Ewing. 18th April 1960.

The chimney springs from near foot of a shallow gully and is in two sections divided by a terrace. It lies to right of lowest part of the Rake.

First section: A fine chimney with good holds; overhang at top turned on left wall (60 ft.). Then follows a boulder pitch of 15 ft., and 15 ft. to terrace. Second section: For 110 ft., a series of short pitches to a pillar leaning against left wall, with which it forms an arch leading to a final chimney.

Creag Tharsuinn: Upper Tier.—*The Chute*. 180 ft. Severe. P. Mitchell & J. Morrison (Greenock M.C.). 26th June 1960.

Follows a prominent groove to right of Solo Buttress.

From apex of grass scoop climb to overhanging rocks, which are avoided by awkward leftward traverse to outsloping ledge. Climb wall to reach groove, which is climbed to semi-detached block; avoid this on right. Ascend smooth wall above, continue up steep rocks to ledge and flake belay (left) at 120 ft. Continue up grooved wall, finishing in 60 ft. over an overhanging corner beside a rock finger.

The Cobbler.—*Sesame Groove, North Wall Traverse*, finishing by *Nimlin's Direct Route*. (FIRST WINTER ASCENT.) 2 hours. W. Skidmore & P. MacKenzie. 15th January 1961. Climbed in hard snow and ice; severe.

NOTES

Skye Notes

Cuillin Ridge Traverse.—Mr L. Kendall, Carlisle, of the Army Mountaineering Association, reports that on 27th June 1960 he traversed the main ridge in the following times: *Glen Brittle*, 12.10; *Gars-bheinn*, 14.20; *Sgìrr nan Gillean*, 18.53; *Sligachan*, 20.20; *Glen Brittle*, 23.00. He was a stranger to the Cuillin. *Sgùrr Mhic Coinnich* was climbed by a direct variation from the Collie Ledge; the *Bhàsteir Tooth* forced a descent on the Lota Corrie side; the Pinnacle Ridge was reversed in heavy mist;

otherwise, a direct line. Two pints of water were cached on Sgùrr Dearg; kletterschuhe were worn. Time on the main ridge: 4 hours 33 minutes. The trip was speeded by threatening cloud.

This feat is interesting, and most will agree that the capacity to go fast and remain alive is a desirable mountaineering skill, and that Mr Kendall, in his courteously modest communication, has demonstrated its possession. Yet some will feel that unnecessary attention to times is not altogether a good thing; perhaps a somewhat less reasonable excuse for our illogical pursuit than even that other scorn of 'tigers,' the genial brow-mopping completion of the 277. One may argue over this.

But there could be no arguing over the undesirability of a possible future development, a galloping round tops and rocks just to do them in a certain time and to click a record stopwatch to the nearest second; this would be a perversion akin to the Great Pie Eating Competition, having nothing whatever to do with mountaineering; though much to do with future accidents. One can only hope that the skill of Mr Kendall and his predecessors will not start off such a riot of tick-ridden incompetents. To aim to climb in a short time is admirable, and worth recording, as is this. But to aim for the *shortest* time surely is not.

La Cordée Patey-Bonington.—T. W. Patey had an adventurous journey with C. J. Bonington through the Northern Highlands and over the sea to Skye this last summer. The climbs are on other pages and the adventures will be in a forthcoming *Climbers' Club Journal*; but extracts from a letter by Patey will be found in this **Notes** section.

Patey regards *King Cobra*, led by Bonington and P.A.'s, as unequalled in the Cuillin for 'technical difficulty and regal splendour.' They climbed it from Coulin Cottage; there an embarrassing incident occurred. They had—by an extraordinary coincidence—both lost their wallets, and Patey had to explain to Mrs Campbell that they might not be able to pay for their accommodation until later. 'Perhaps I should mention,' he added gravely, 'that I am a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club.' 'Maybe so,' replied Mrs Campbell, 'but you have an honest face and that is a lot more important.'

Northern Highland Notes

An Ruadh Stac.—Patey records that it did not live up to expectations or the Guide Book; being sparse of rock, yet that rock sound.

Coire Mhic Fhearchair.—Here Patey and Bonington encountered earnest bathygraphic surveyors, whistling and peering; their staccato blasts punctuated, alarmingly, the new *Upper Girdle Traverse*. 'It only goes to show,' writes Patey, 'how impossible it is to escape the march of progress. Mountaineer-scientists, tiny embryonic Slessers, lurk behind every chockstone.'

Sgùrr a' Chaorachain roused their enthusiasm with its exuberant plenitude of excrescences turning a visual XS into a tactile Difficult. Thus

fortified, they survived an expensive night in a youth hostel (no time to cook before 'Lights Out'), an 'insufferable' young warden, and their morning tasks. . . . 'We left in a hurry, clutching our newly bought membership cards. A faint shout from the hostel brought us to a grinding halt. The warden appeared at the door. "Happy Hostelling!" he shouted, "and remember, chaps—Thumbs Up!"' . . . They fled.

Cairngorm Notes

Three Mountains by Three Ridges.—The Cairngorms have always lent themselves to expeditions in the *grande classe*. Here is a new one in the old giants' tradition, retailed by Derek Pyper:—

'Starting from the Gelder Shiel in Glen Gelder, we climbed Eagle Ridge and Lochnagar; then walked to Invercauld and up Glen Slugain to the Garbh Choire of Beinn a' Bhùird, climbing Mitre Ridge to the summit. From there we went across the great plateau to Coire Etchachan and on to Coire Sputan Dearg; we climbed Snake Ridge, and then went on to the summit of Ben Macdhuì. Then from the summit we descended to Derry Lodge.

'The climbing of the three classical ridges and mountains of the Cairngorms took 16½ hours and entailed a distance of 40 miles and some 1600 ft. of rock climbing. This was on the 27th of August 1960, and my companion was David Reid, also of Aberdeen.'

Ben Nevis Notes

Creag Uaimh Shomhairle.—This excellent crag, previously untouched, is in Upper Glen Nevis. It can be seen from the turning place at the end of the Glen Nevis road, across the river at the foot of the spur which descends north-west from Sgùrr a' Mhàim. Access is in about 15 minutes from the road-end by crossing the river and climbing steeply up the hillside; a temporary bridge is in position, but boulder-hopping is possible.

The crag is steep and overhanging in places, and is some 300 ft. high and 150 yd. long. There are several possibilities of new routes of extremely high standard; those two quoted under New Climbs in this issue are the easiest lines up the crag. Unfortunately, it faces north-west and so only receives sunshine in the evening; it tends to be greasy in wet weather and does not dry out quickly.

I. CLOUGH.

Vanishing Gully.—This is the name in the Guide Book, but I understand from Hendry that he climbed it in summer in 1943-44 or thereabouts and called it Trouser Leg Gully.

G. TISO.

Duplications.—In *Oxford Mountaineering*, 1960, there is an account of an *Italian Climb Variation* followed on 26th March 1960. This was not claimed as a first winter ascent, but the authors could not identify the route in the Guide Book or this *Journal*. According to J. R. Marshall, they were in fact following the true unvaried ITALIAN CLIMB.

Coire Leis Shelter.—An open shelter has been erected in Coire Leis by the Lochaber M.C., with funds raised locally. To meet the wishes of the British Aluminium Co., the S.M.C. has agreed to act as Trustee, holding the site on a 21-year lease at nominal ground rent. Those taking part in rescue work on the Ben regard the shelter as a boon. Further details are reported by the Lochaber J.M.C.S. in their *Notes* in this issue.

Glencoe Notes

Duplication.—In *Oxford Mountaineering*, 1960, is an account of *West Chimney, Direct Start*, climbed on 19th September 1959. This appears to be FINGAL'S CHIMNEY (*S.M.C.J.* (1956), xxvi, 61).

Miscellaneous Notes

The Russian Visitors.—In spring, 1960, a party of visiting Russian and English climbers was entertained by the Club. The Russians were, inevitably, shown Glencoe and Skye. But there was no bear-leading: they were happy to explore by themselves, enthusing over the mountains and the sea, but not over the weather or the slime. Feasts and lectures followed, in Edinburgh, where the projected film suffered a technical hitch. Though one wonders how much of Scotland as a country, not as a countryside, they did see, the Russians appeared to have enjoyed their stay; their hosts certainly did. The usual distortions were made by the gutter Press; but if what our propaganda tells us about what their propaganda tells them is true, they would expect that.

However, we do not print the following as a mirror of truth, either; it rejoices in its own distortion, a picture of the proceedings seen by one of the thrawnest participants. Allowances must be made here, too!

A Week in the Hills

Sunny Lagangarbh crackled under the brooding Buachaille.

Then "Hear that clutch?" said Ritchie. And higgly piggily here they were, Dr Slesser and Kenneth in the van, weaseling down the dirt-track, A.C. evergreens down from the Red Snows, overlapping meets of ladies, six climbers, from Russia, and in the rear Tommy Weir, Scotland's greatest chronicler, here to put another page to *Annals of the Mountain World*.

'Take these chaps to something tough' said spirited young Wraith Jones. Ritchie fled with Big Brother. Big Elly, James and I took Eugene, Misha, Tolly and Tommy to Great Gully Glen Coe's grimmest grotto.

Notes on Climbing in Great Gully 1894-1961:

This fine yet frightful line fell direct to N. C. *solo* (1894). 137th equal in shades of ferocity on this mountain, this line never flags, and yet essays on this line have not been repetitious, while novel lines have broken out on all sides. 1930: A. H. and J. H. B. B. scaled ponderous Cuneiform. Great balance required. 1937: J. C.-de-B. N. (and party) plucked Raven's Gully. 1946-1956: C. D. M. C. opened ways of some importance over walls on right and also pleasant ways of passing merit over walls on farthest

left too. (Black Dan, Snotter Blob and new exciting trends will be cleaned up in a later tissue.)

With then a sense of history, we crept up and down cracks on the far right and up the far left edge of Slimey Wall. Poised on the very Gully bed, Tommy composed and cool as a cooker snapped his jaws. 'Dynamically posed' said Tommy. The rest of us went to the summit, and lay in the sun, exchanging harmonious pidgin notes on capitalism dinners and England. Thence we rushed to Lagangarbh, very late for schedule for journey for dinner for Russians for furthering paths to peaces. Ritchie, Elly, James and I went up the Lost Valley, we made a great new route.

Scavaig stravaiged around the beetling Cuillin.

They have to. Still with this crew, we lent a hearty hand to heave-ho chests and firkins to the Hut. Skye! Mecca to these chaps, all in a froth for Gabbro.

Of an evening we four put an end to the Crack of Dawn to lend that route some matter and form. The Russians tight-roped the razor Ridge, they cut their feet to ribbons. "At home we haff not such feats" they said, dismayed. Jones led out the fiery English, fishing.

'Now' said Big Brother 'there will be Discussion.' With ears for hours on end we witnessed bottling of priceless notes on insemminative education of Scholars of Sport and spotty Outward Bounders.

And so we left this happy Isle, wedding of thrusting rock and sucking sea.

Last Anglo-Russo Goal was Edin Berg. Of natives, Elly and I alone hazarded this expedition. Plotting multiple courses, homaging mighty lamas, swallowing monsoons, led on by gaping snaking gorges, at the last we faced the final dinner.

Elly and I, in the lead, not in tails, swung into the George, and open arms of Dr Slesser, sheathed in smiles, Kenneth and Tommy, rows of pillars of the Club, and Sir John Hunt who was the conqueror of Everest. Dinners downed, all rose as one, and bubbled up the Mound to the Clubrooms. Crowds had gathered. The excitement was terrific. And here—peak of the week—Red Snows flashed past 200 goggled eyes, never have we seen such Cinema. "Here was a Summit made," declared the great ovation, and another brick was laid for salvation of the nations. ROBIN SMITH.

Munros.—We have received pleasant communications from Mr Martyn Berry, of Oxford, describing mountain activities at the annual meeting of the Crusaders' Union at Bonskeid House, Pitlochry. Most of the neighbouring Munros are consumed each time, and last year a highlight was an 18-hour trek by a party of 10 (aged 16-50) from Braemar to Glenmore over all the tops from Stuc Gharbh Mhòr to Cairn Gorm, *via* Beinn a' Bhùird, Beinn Mheadhoin and Ben Macdhui.

Mr P. A. Larder, of Darlington, also writes on the pursuit of Munros. He claims that 32 people have so far completed the List. Though not one of that select band himself, he has ascended 144 (different) Munros in 6½ months—knocking them off faster even than Heron, he believes.

While there is no great merit in seeking speed records as well, the collection of Munros or, better, the 3,000-ft. tops, does, as many have suggested, provide a wet-day material reason for going out, and entices the hunter to desirably remote parts of Scotland; any one of the 32 could claim will-power, a good knowledge of our weather and a formidable array of anecdotes. We suspect a larger number follow or even take part in so heroically Salvationist a pursuit than their mapless ostentation would have us believe. We therefore welcome brief communications on the subject.

The Glasgow Clubroom.—K. Bryan writes: While MacLennan's pen was still drying amid his incriminatory notes on the reconstruction and decoration of the Edinburgh clubroom, history was already repeating itself. In the West, the nimble fingers of diplomacy had proved deft at untying the knots with which the Hon. Treasurer had endeavoured to entangle the purse strings, and the Glasgow clubroom had advanced from being a mere topic of controversy to a predictable reality.

By the end of September the required premises had been found and preliminary inspections carried out by gentlemen from the S.M.C. and Martin Thom of the J.M.C.S. Thom, as will doubtless be realised, is regarded in certain Scottish climbing circles as being pre-eminent in the field of Interior Decoration and indeed he was to prove the nucleus around which all future activity was centred and by whose vicissitudes all work was ultimately governed.

Before long constructive discussions were taking place in an atmosphere of unanimity.

'I feel that the back wall should definitely be done in British Standard XYZ,' said Thom.

'Well, personally I think *persimmon* would supply the subtlety of effect required; allowing, of course, for the intensity of light reflection,' replied Dr C. G. M. Slesser, with an air which would suggest that his remark was backed by irrefutable logic.

'What about painting it red?' I suggested. Thereafter my own meagre contributions to the clubrooms were forcibly restricted to purely non-aesthetic activities.

Slesser—who is known, it is believed, in the East as well as in the West—had undertaken the unrewarding task of General Overseer but was unable to overlook Thom, who never failed to exploit his position of professional authority. He would quickly crush any perfunctory attitude shown on the part of the Glasgow proletariat and it soon became obvious that his vision of the completed work far transcended the more prosaic mental imagery of his companions.

'Thus began the drudgery of creation.' Walls were stripped of old paper, re-plastered, scrubbed, sandpapered, washed and sized. After each operation the workers would express their pleasure at being able, at last, to start the more satisfying occupations of papering and painting, only to be told by Thom that yet another task of seemingly fundamental irrelevance remained to be done.

Yet, in the fullness of time the multifarious tasks of preparation were

completed and brush was at last to be dipped into paint. But Thom's artistic sensibilities now rebelled at the idea of being assisted in the final creative effort by those whose talents in interior decoration extended, in his estimation, no further than scrubbing and sandpapering walls. However, he had also expressed his intention of withdrawing his services if he were left on his own to complete the job. . . . Two solutions to Thom's self-imposed dilemma appeared to be open to us. Firstly we could arrange for odd people to be present while Thom worked. They would not actively assist, but would merely make encouraging and appreciative comments. The alternative was to enlist professional assistance. As this absolved the workers even from the responsibility of watching Thom it not unnaturally had the greatest appeal. Slesser quickly thought up a plausible explanation to justify the move to the less well-informed, and on this basis inveigled them into making financial contributions which enabled us to delegate our responsibilities to more accomplished hands.

Thus the Glasgow clubroom is now complete, having risen Phoenix-like from the ashes of controversy (*sic*).

K. BRYAN.

Club Library.—During the year the Hon. Librarian, Frank Bennet, resigned. The gratitude of the Club is due to him for his valuable and unadvertised work during his years of office, and particularly for arranging the fitting of books from the Synod Hall to Brown's Shelves. R. G. Inglis, the present Hon. Librarian, writes:

'Thanks to his predecessor's effective segregation of books into their general sections, the Hon. Librarian's labours during the past year have been considerably lightened. The main task has been the devising of a means whereby any book can be quickly located, and especially one whereby books removed can be replaced correctly without reference to any number inside the cover. Geographical sections were therefore planned. For Scotland: according to Guide-book areas, and General (in several sub-sections); for other parts of the world: according to locality. Books in each section have been alphabetically arranged, by the *first word* (excluding only THE, A and PERSONAL PRONOUNS) in their title. All books in poor condition published before 1850 are in a Section by themselves on the top shelf. Temporary markers indicate Section Titles. A comprehensive catalogue indicating title and Section will be circulated before the A.G.M. A list of Kindred Club journals, not yet rearranged, will be included. Without James Russell's regular help and counsel and the willing assistance of Cairns and other Edinburgh members, the reorganisation could not have reached its present stage.'

Members returning books (or slides) are requested *not to register them*, as complications have already occurred through the inability of the G.P.O. to deliver registered parcels to the Clubroom.

MISSING BOOKS

The following *important* books are missing from the Library. Will those who have (without entry) borrowed them, please return as soon as possible—

anonymously if they wish!—to the Hon. Librarian: *Nanga Parbat Adventure* (Bechtold); *Always a Little Further* (Borthwick); *Nanga Parbat Pilgrimage* (Buhl); *Upon that Mountain* (Shipton); *Alpine Ways* (Smythe); *Swiss Mountain Climbs* (Abraham); *Doe Crags and Climbs round Coniston* (Bower); *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Hume-Brown); and over 50 others, less important.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

Samson: the Life and Writings of Menlove Edwards; *The Last Blue Mountain*; *The Red Snows*; *Where to Climb in the British Isles*; *The Mountains of Ireland*; *The Mountains of Killarney*; *Mountain World, 1958-9*; *Guide to the Massif des Ecrins* (G. H. M.) (2 vols.); *The Lotschenthal*; *Upon that Mountain*; *The White Tower*; *Kangchenjunga* (Tucker); *Climbs in the Canadian Rockies* (Smythe); *The West Face (Drus)* (Magnone); *Highlands and Islands of Scotland*. (The first four were donated by T. D. Mackinnon, the last six by R. L. Beveridge. Beveridge also gave eight other volumes, already in the main library, which will be offered to the Glasgow Clubroom.) *Alpine Journal*, 1960, 1 and 2; *Climber's Club Journal*, 1960; *Rucksack Club Journal*, 1960; *Yorkshire Ramblers Journal*, 1960; *Cairngorm Club Journal*, 1960; *Oxford Mountaineering*, 1960; *Cambridge Mountaineering*, 1960; *Irish Mountaineering*, 1960; *M.A.M. Journal*, 1960; *Edinburgh University M.C. Journal*, 1960; *American Alpine Journal*, 1960; *Ladies' Alpine Journal*, 1960; *Sheffield University M.C. Journal*, 1960; *Appalachia: New Zealand Alpine Journal*, 1960; *Jahrbuch des D.A.V.*, 1960; *Taternik*; *Iowa Climber*; *Tararua Trampers*; *Sierra Club Bulletin*; *Appalachian Bulletin*.

Scottish Mountain Accidents, 1960 (1st April-31st December)

UNLIKE previous lists, this covers only a nine-month period. The total is, however, large. Thanks are again due to our correspondent for sending us information collected from many sources.

10TH APRIL.—Barry Paine (30) left camp site at Glenmore, with wife, to climb Ben Macdhui *via* Pools of Dee; wife returned from there. Paine went to Shelter Stone; because of bad weather stayed there overnight, and returned to Glenmore next day. Search parties out, including Kinloss R.A.F.

10TH APRIL.—Nigel Milne (29), Edinburgh, and Jean McBain (20), Lossiemouth, left car at Glenmore; no indication of their route. Seen on summit of Cairngorm at noon. Alarm raised on 11th when they had not returned. Searches that afternoon, and on 12th and 13th. Kinloss and Leuchars R.A.F. out, with many civilians, and searches from both north and south sides of Cairngorms. Civilian arrangements in hands of George Mackenzie on north side and George Roberts on south side; much fine help given by warden of Loch Morlich Y.H. Hampered by gale wind and cold.

Parties out every week-end after that. Body of Jean McBain found by Caiplich Water (map. ref. 106104), about 8 miles N.E. of Glenmore on 5th June. Body of Nigel Milne found near Lairig an Laoigh path (map ref. 042084) on 19th June.

10TH APRIL.—Sidney Clarke (19) and Eva Waller (31), from England, climbing on Beinn Tarsuinn (Arran). Clarke slipped and landed on a ledge. His companion tried to climb down to him using a rope; came off, fell past him and killed. Clarke spent night on ledge and got down at first light.

16TH APRIL.—Brian Robertson (16), Edinburgh, fell when climbing Great Gully of Buchaille Etive Mòr alone. Found unconscious by search party of climbers and Leuchars R.A.F.

24TH APRIL.—George Speed (29), Dounreay, one of party on Ben Hee, Sutherland, lost in mist. Others organised a search next morning. Speed climbed back to cairn, stayed there till 6 A.M. then made his way down to Aultnaharra.

22ND MAY.—David Pearson (22), Paisley, climbed up about 15 ft. to prospect route before roping up for the Punsters Crack of The Cobbler. Slipped when descending, hit a boulder and rolled about 100 ft.—broken ankle and bruises. Stretcher party of local constable and villagers. A good effort by Constable McPhee, who had just arrived in village and done no previous climbing.

5TH JUNE.—F/O Sampson (29), R.C.A.F., J. A. Oswin (24) and H. Middleditch (50), both from Leicester. All had been in the Cuillin before and last two regular Lakeland climbers. To Loch Scavaig by boat with intention of returning *via* the Dubhs. Weather perfect and rock dry. Weather broke at 6 P.M. when they were near Sgùrr Dubh na Da Bheinn, but they decided to continue. Thearlaich Dubh gap at 8 P.M., rock slippery. Oswin attempted the chimney pitch. When above the first chockstone and putting on a runner, he fell backwards, fracturing his skull. Died about 2 hours later. Sampson tried to climb out on to the wall on the Dubh side, but when 5 ft. from top he also slipped: but was held by third man. They decided to spend night in gap and were found early next morning by a party doing the main ridge, and were helped down into Coire a' Ghrundha. There they met an advance party of Kinloss R.A.F. who had been alerted. Body brought down to Glen Brittle in 4 hours.

3RD JULY.—Richard Leslie (19), student, fell when climbing on Fuar Tholl and slithered down about 40 ft. One companion went for help while another stayed with him. Rescue party of police and forestry workers took up stretcher and brought him down—seriously injured.

3RD JULY.—Maurice Campbell (14) killed when climbing on sea cliffs, Kinlochbervie.

12TH JULY.—June Amsden (23), Essex, and Janet Gordon (24), Middlesex, with Holiday Fellowship party from Onich, travelling west on Aonach Eagach fell just west of Meall Dearg and slid 50 ft. to just above a

400 to 500-ft. drop. Companion went to Clachaig for help and party organised; took up stretcher. Mr Duff, Hamish McInnes and Constable Whillans arrived later; last two got the injured girl down dangerous ground on Glencoe side, to easier ground, while the stretcher was brought round to meet them. An all-night job, and girl got to ambulance at 7 A.M.

18TH JULY.—Youth (20) fell when scrambling on Meall an t-Suidhe, Ben Nevis—slight injuries—local stretcher party out.

24TH JULY.—Search parties called out for Dr Fisher, who was last seen leaving Linn of Dee on 12th May with intention of walking to Kingussie *via* Glen Feshie. Kinloss R.A.F. and others out; not yet found.

25TH JULY.—Alan Brownlie (24), Edinburgh, Glenmore Instructor, fell when climbing on Creag a' Chalmain; fractured skull. Rescue party from Glenmore Lodge.

28TH JULY.—Party of schoolboys from Marlborough College set off to climb Clachaig Gully while master in charge went climbing elsewhere.

Accident occurred to John Haycroft (17) above Jericho Wall. Exact cause unknown but boy later told Mr Duff his waist knot had given way. Inexperienced attempts to get him out of gully, during which stones were dislodged from above. Hamish McInnes and Dr Catherine McInnes called on at 7 P.M.; went up; McInnes extricated boy and got him down. Reached Glencoe Hospital 11.15 P.M.; multiple fractures of spinal column, arm and rib.

31ST JULY.—Dr Peter Jocelyn (40), Edinburgh, left Sligachan to walk to Coruisk, became exhausted, and stayed overnight. Taken by tourist launch to Elgol next morning. Police and local rescue team out.

31ST JULY.—John Scott (48) and companion climbing Centre Gully, Coire Tairneilear (Cuillin). Boulder fell on his leg, causing compound fracture. His companion made him safe, went to Glen Brittle for help; R.A.F., Kinloss, exercising there. Very good work: within 2 hours of accident Scott in ambulance and on his way to Broadford Hospital.

3RD AUGUST.—Robert Beech (16), England, dislodged stone, below Garsbheinn (Cuillin); minor injuries, assisted back to Glen Brittle.

10TH AUGUST.—Martin Worthington (18), Chester, climbing on Parallel Cracks route of Sròn na Ciche. Hold came away, held by second, and landed on a ledge; head injuries. Third man to glen for help. Stretcher party from Youth Hostel and Glen Brittle House.

29TH AUGUST.—David Brereton (19), student (Surrey), and Robert Lackenby (Surrey): Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis, good conditions. Had not been on Nevis before but had done some climbing. Rock came away in leader's hand and he fell from a traverse. Second had a direct belay and felt no jerk—suddenly realised rope was slack. Rope was extra heavy-weight nylon in good condition; broke about 65 ft. from second and 25 ft. from leader. Ends of rope frayed for about 18 in. with typical melting due to friction. Lackenby stayed on ridge overnight. Brought down by local rescue team next day.

30TH AUGUST.—Robert Williamson (21), Kendal. Coming off Inaccessible Pinnacle on doubled rope round rock belay: rope slipped. Multiple injuries. Brought down by Skye Rescue Team. They attribute accident to carelessness consequent on hurry.

9TH SEPTEMBER.—Warren Leech (21), England, on Little Gully, Ciòch. Went off route; was 100 ft. out from his second and at high angle. Must have fallen from rock to rock till belay and ledge held him. Multiple injuries. Brought down to Glen Brittle by Skye Rescue Team.

10TH SEPTEMBER.—Party from Glenbrittle House and from Youth Hostel did not return from day's climbing; stayed night at Coruisk Hut. One member of party diabetic, became very exhausted as no drug carried; saved by packet of sweet biscuits carried by companion. Search parties out.

15TH SEPTEMBER.—James Roberts (26), Stockport, fell and was killed on A' Chir Ridge, Arran.

16TH SEPTEMBER.—Girl fell and damaged knee—badly torn ligament; Coire na Ciste, Cairngorm. Brought down by Glenmore Lodge Instructors.

19TH SEPTEMBER.—Michael Powell (25) and Terence Brewer (20), Birmingham, climbed Archer Ridge of Aonach Dubh; descended face by the Great Gully to the left of the cave for about 700 ft., then Powell traversed out and fell about 35 ft. Brewer returned back up the gully and found an easier way down. Hamish McInnes, Constable Whillans and others started up from road but Brewer could not remember the gully. Tried all gullies on north face but could get no answer. Then sent up flare to call out the M.R. team using pre-arranged signal. Above party set off to top of hill to try gullies from top. After many abortive attempts gave up about 2.30 A.M. and bivouacked. In the morning worked the face again, joined by Brewer. Meanwhile Leuchars R.A.F. team had arrived and were working farther to the west. Found Powell about 10.30 A.M. in loose and dangerous gully. Dr Catherine McInnes gave first aid. Owing to loose rock a karabiner was used as pulley above stretcher, and main party pulled ropes from one side. Carried to road; severe head injuries.

21ST SEPTEMBER.—Search parties out in Arran for two girl hill walkers reported missing. They had spent night in boathouse at Dougerie, one with ankle injury.

5TH OCTOBER.—Commander Vernon Graves (49). Did not return after setting off to traverse An Teallach alone. Local search party saw body next day but unable to reach him. Located and brought down by Kinloss R.A.F. team.

30TH OCTOBER.—Party from Edinburgh University benighted on Buachaille Etive Mòr. All got down safely in morning. Leuchars R.A.F. unit out but gave only moral support.

12TH NOVEMBER.—Richard Scott, St Andrews University M.C., broke ankle descending from Aonach Eagach. Brought down by other members of the club.

30TH DECEMBER.—A. F. Denny (26), Birkenhead, and J. H. Weddle (22), Notts., students from Imperial College, set off to climb in Coire an t-Sneachda. Did not finish climb till after dark. Due to faulty map reading turned west instead of east, descended to Lairig Ghru and sheltered in Sinclair Hut. Returned to Glenmore Youth Hostel at 5 A.M. just in time to prevent search by Kinloss R.A.F., who had been called out.

In addition, two incidents occurred (Glencoe Y.H. in July, Coire Sugach in September) when search parties were unnecessarily called out, following discovery of apparently abandoned gear. In neither case had owners indicated their plans.

Thanks are especially due to the R.A.F. units from Kinloss and Leuchars for all their help and to Hamish McInnes, Dr Catherine McInnes and Constables Whillans and Dunn for their splendid work in Glencoe.

IN MEMORIAM

CHARLES WYNN PARRY

1900-1960

CHARLES PARRY joined the Club in 1926 after a short period in the J.M.C.S. He immediately made his mark as a fearless and enterprising climber, a grand companion on any expedition, and one who was always ready to help less able or experienced mountaineers. He edited the *Journal* from 1932 to 1935, succeeding MacRobert and completing the six numbers of Vol. xx. Thereafter he resigned because he considered that, living and working in Somerset, he was rather out of touch with Club affairs. It was my privilege to succeed him, so that I could well appreciate his work, and also his generosity in providing many illustration blocks at his own expense; for the Hon. Treasurer in those days kept a firm hand on *Journal* expenses. Up till 1935 Parry attended most of the Meets and Club functions.

His father was a well-known surgeon in Glasgow and Charles commenced his education at a school in Shandon on the Gareloch, afterwards proceeding to Rossall. He then went on to a brilliant first year at Glasgow University and later to New College, Oxford, where he got a first in Mathematical Moderations, also becoming an outstanding golfer. Curiously enough he changed over about this period, and after studying at Tours University took a diploma in French. By this time he had discovered his real vocation and went as assistant master, teaching mathematics and French in Naish House Preparatory School at Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset. There he was a most able and popular teacher, with a long series of successes for his pupils in scholarships and entries to the public schools from 1929 to 1939. Then the school was taken over.

Parry was a great success at Club Meets with quite an impish sense of humour. At the 1927 Easter Meet at Ballachulish he was beset by Ronald Burn, the first to complete all the Munros and Tops, who was transferring his ambitions to rock climbing, for which he had no natural aptitude.

Parry's party was made up, but Burn wanted to be taken up the Crowberry Ridge. Parry took the only escape route possible, sliding down a drainpipe from an upper bedroom almost into a waiting car. But next day, his last at the Meet, Charles took Burn up the Ridge: it took quite a long time.

I did not get to know him until the 1928 New Year Meet at Loch Awe, a meet of hard frost and some fresh snow. Again we had a distinguished Munroist in our party. Parry seemed to attract them. This was J. Rooke Corbett, and we made for the Black Shoot of Beinn Eunaich. The first pitch was a thin sheet of black waterfall-ice, so we went up the buttress beyond, afterwards named Beaver Buttress in honour of Corbett. (Many early Munroists, including the great Munro himself, were bearded—then rather out of fashion.) There was powder snow on the schistose-turfy frozen ledges and Parry led the hardest pitch with a shoulder from me. But the most anxious man of the party was the last, A. P. A. Robertson, a famous rugby player, who had to follow Corbett, fearfully and wonderfully swathed in loose coils of rope, scrabbling desperately on the icy schist and frozen turf, with no belay to be found anywhere!

Two other incidents of the Meet come to mind. After a day of whirling snow and blizzard on Cruachan we found Loch Awe ice-fringed in the late afternoon. Parry insisted on going in for a swim. I timed him. Out he went rapidly and strongly and then as rapidly back, just inside the minute. So Robertson and I had to strip and do likewise! In the evening at the Loch Awe Hotel we found an old billiard table in an icy basement room. There Parry astonished us with his dexterity at billiard-fives, the classical sport of the pioneers of rock climbing at Wasdale Head. More than once he scooped the ball off the table with the *back* of his hand, to the admiration and peril of the bystanders. Another grand Meet was at the opening of the C.I.C. Hut, Easter, 1929. A day or two before Frank Smythe (who afterwards became very friendly with Parry), Ernest Roberts, Parry and I occupied the Hut. From Fort William Charles and I went up Observatory Ridge and down North East Buttress. He was tall, well-balanced and moved fast. On the opening day it snowed and we descended Tower Gully, heavily corniced and with much new snow, only to reach the Hut one hour late for the ceremony.

His best climbing was, however, in the Alps. In 1928 we went to Arolla as an S.M.C. quartet, including Donald Mackay and Malcolm Matheson. It was Parry's first Alpine season and very good weather. On the three longest expeditions we were alone. Again he proved an excellent and reliable companion on the Dent Blanche, the traverse of the Matterhorn up the Zmutt ridge and down the Hörnli (which went entirely as planned) and on a traverse of Mont Blanc de Seilon and the Ruinette. This involved a direct route up a steep rib from the Seilon glacier finishing at the summit. We were lucky in the snowless conditions, as this route had not been finished directly before. There is no space available for details, but in the war years Parry wrote for the *Journal* a delightful humorous article, 'Days with Friends' (*S.M.C.J.* (1944), xxiii, 162). I also had two climbs with him from Monteners in 1929, leaving him to join Frank Smythe and Alex. Harrison when I came home.

This led to a most unfortunate accident. After bad weather they made a bivouac high up on the face of Mont Maudit above the inner bay of the Brenva glacier. Again the weather went bad and they were forced to descend the Brenva glacier all the way in dense cloud. Opposite the Mont Noir Parry came away with loose rock on a crumbling moraine and a following rock crushed his arm and leg. Harrison stayed with him while Smythe fetched assistance from Courmayeur. It took a long time to get him down, but examination appeared to show that the injury was much less serious than was anticipated. However, after a year or so he had to enter hospital for a spinal graft.

This seemed to restore him to full vigour. He was a member of the Alpine Club and resumed his Alpine climbing until 1937, sending in good lists of ascents to the *Journal*, usually going with a guide. But in 1934 he was with F. Smythe and Graham Macphee at Zermatt making another notable traverse of the Matterhorn from the Italian Hut, in weather so bad as to compel them to take refuge for two nights at the Solvay Hut. In his guided climbing he did such lengthy and difficult expeditions as the Guggi route on the Jungfrau, the Mitteleggi on the Eiger, the Mönch by the Nollen, the Schreckhorn and several others.

At the outbreak of war in 1939 his health was none too good, and he took considerable risks in his winter vigils as a member of the Observer Corps. The result was another visit to hospital and the amputation of his damaged leg so high up that he could not be given an artificial limb. He wrote me afterwards, in cheerful and courageous vein, to say that he could still play golf in good conditions and get par figures. He was then captain of his golf club and was President of the Somerset Golf Union, later remaining a Vice-President. He was also an accomplished musician and pianist.

Gradually, however, his injury gave him increasingly frequent pain. His friends in the Club were delighted to see him again at one post-war Meeting and Dinner, but he was seldom free from pain. His close friend Mr Maurice Legassick, with whom he worked at Naish House and lived to the end, told me that Parry was the most selfless man he ever met. Remembering our climbing days together, and I deeply regret that we were unable to join forces again in the thirties, I can only say that he was the ideal mountain comrade alike in sunshine and storm. Joining with others in our Club who knew him and enjoyed his friendship, and in the words of another mountaineer-poet, we may well say—

‘ Mine still the joy to know, that in the years of youth and friends,
When life was fashioned for its ends, I found him for a time.’

J. H. B. BELL.

SIR HUGH McPHERSON

SIR HUGH McPHERSON, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., died last December at his home in Edinburgh, in his 91st year.

After an active career in the Indian Civil Service Sir Hugh joined the

S.M.C., together with his son, Duncan, in 1929. They attended several Meets between then and 1932, when they moved to London, and again in 1937 when they attended the Easter Meet at Fort William. Sir Hugh always enjoyed walking over the hills, taking a special interest in mountain wild flowers, which he would bring back stuck around the band of his hat, to be identified at leisure at the end of the day. He continued to be active on the Scottish hills until he was about 75, his last big day being on Creag Meaghaidh, which he climbed about 1943.

Though he may not have climbed in the Highlands after the war, he was active on the lesser heights in and around Edinburgh up to a year or so ago, when declining eyesight restricted his range of activities.

Apart from the S.M.C., he was especially interested in the Royal Scottish Geographical Society and the National Trust for Scotland.

DUNCAN H. MCPHERSON.

DR JAMES YOUNGER MACDONALD 1902-1960

DR J. Y. MACDONALD, although born in Glasgow, spent his early years in Edinburgh where his father, Sir George Macdonald, was Secretary of the Scottish Education Department. Educated at Edinburgh Academy and Trinity College, Oxford, James was a research worker at University College, London, from 1925 to 1927. He was appointed Lecturer in Chemistry at St Andrews in 1927 and eventually became Senior Lecturer in the Faculty. In the earlier years he was primarily concerned with the development and teaching of physical chemistry, a branch in which he was sole Lecturer in St Andrews until 1947. In a school so devoted to organic chemistry it speaks volumes for Macdonald's teaching and encouragement that many students achieved success and honours in the physical branch. He was a quiet and painstaking teacher, more inclined to demonstration and example than to notebook instruction. The students who realised this were often to be found in his laboratory between classes, and in the evenings. The fact that the conversation at these times ranged from the phase rule to Skye and back to the second law of thermodynamics did nothing to lessen the assimilation of the latter.

Macdonald was always a lover of the hills. His father was a keen, though cautious, hill walker, and it was from family holidays spent amongst the better parts of Scotland that James had his early mountain training. Before he was 20 he had visited all the main Cairngorms, had climbed in Arran, and on the English Lakeland hills. During his time at Oxford and London he went to the Alps, climbing in the Dolomites on his first visit, and from Zinal and Fionnay on subsequent holidays. During this time also he proved his capabilities for things to come by walking from London to Oxford in 18½ hours.

In 1926 he joined the J.M.C.S. and was elected to the S.M.C. in 1928, serving on the Committee from 1934 to 1937. His first Club Meet was at Newtonmore, and from then on he never missed a New Year. One looked

forward with confidence to meeting him whether at Crianlarich or Dalwhinnie. Before the war part of each Easter vacation was spent with Professor H. W. Turnbull at the C.I.C. Hut—a partnership productive of useful exploration and a number of excellent winter climbs, notable amongst which are the north gully of Creag Coire na Ciste and the Secondary Tower Ridge. To the fortunate students who were privileged to be introduced to Nevis by this pair, these days are unforgettable.

It was natural that Macdonald should take an active interest in the St Andrews University Mountaineering Club from its inception in 1934. He was ever helpful to that Club in the whole range of its affairs from entertaining visiting lecturers to beguiling away a stormy afternoon on the Cuillin ridges. In 1937 he helped organise, and led, a successful University expedition to Iceland.

With his love of the hills, his faithful attendance at Meets, and family holidays spent in the Highlands, it was inevitable that a formidable list of Munros would be accumulated. He was not, however, much interested in 'peak-bagging' until a remark of one of our members (then a student) made him count his list. This revealed that, with a little careful planning and a definite objective, the 277 Munros were within his grasp. One by one the remaining tops were sought out, and in August 1958 he joined that select band of climbers who have completed the lot. The last of his list was Ben More, Mull, which he reached with his family, exactly forty years after he climbed his first. It was a double victory, and must have given him a great deal of satisfaction, for his son, Colin, completed his list at the same time.

J. D. B. WILSON.

ALAN HORNE

1910-1960

ALAN HORNE was one of the band of young men who began climbing in Scotland under the inspiration of L. St C. Bartholomew in the Edinburgh J.M.C.S., which he joined soon after its formation. In the Lake District, where he had family connections, he had the advantage of serving his rock-climbing apprenticeship under some outstanding climbers. He soon proved himself a natural leader, combining daring and determination with coolness of judgment. His first thought was always for the safety of his party, and his patience and attention to detail in safeguarding tactics were an object lesson to those who followed him on the rope.

He had one short season in the Alps, but almost all his climbing was done in Scotland and the Lake District (he was a member of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club). At that time almost every Sunday morning, when he was not farther afield, would find him on Salisbury Crags, so that he kept constantly at the top of his form. As a rock climber he was brilliant. In the thirties climbers were, on the whole, content to follow the classic routes rather than to pioneer new ones, but he has left his name in the records for the first ascent in boots of the Innominate Crack on Great Gable and for a route on Amphitheatre Wall of Sròn na Ciche which he worked out along with H. V. Hughes and which he described in an article in the

Journal of April 1933. A great deal of his climbing was combined with camping, which he had brought to a fine art.

Elected to membership in 1934, he served on the Committee from 1936 to 1939. He attended a fair number of Club Meets at intervals, particularly Easter Meets at the C.I.C. Hut. At the outbreak of war he was a Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery, but had to be invalided out on account of the gastric complaint which was to trouble him for the rest of his life. For many years he was Convener of the First Aid Committee to which he devoted a great deal of time and energy. On the hills he was an excellent companion: always thoughtful for others and revealing a true love of Nature and an individual sense of humour. Any crisis found him unruffled, for he had usually decided on the right thing to do before most of us had collected our wits. A few quiet, authoritative words from him rendered further discussion unnecessary. With his spare, agile frame he looked equally at home striding over the hills or picking his way up a rock face. For many of us the graph of our climbing abilities descends more or less rapidly after a certain age; Alan Horne experienced little of such sad decline. Although latterly he was not able to go to the hills as often as he would have wished, he retained his athletic prowess to a remarkable extent and he was rock climbing in the Lake District with his son, Dale, only a month before his death on 31st May 1960, which came as a great shock to his friends. His quiet but forceful personality, his reliability and integrity of character will be remembered by those who knew him. Some of us will also remember a lithe figure scaling the rocks with an easy grace that seemed an assertion, in a mechanised age, of the joy and poetry of life.

D. J. FRASER.

It is with great regret that we record the deaths also of the following members, for whom no detailed obituary is available as we go to Press: **R. Ernest Workman, E. M. Davidson, T. C. Donald, J. B. Home, and G. L. Bartrum.**

Our last link with the previous century ends with the loss of Workman, who joined the Club in 1899.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

Easter Meet 1960—Lochcarron

THE indefatigable and indispensable Cooke sends us notes, and hounds out others to send us notes, about this Meet held at Lochcarron. These notes arrive from two hotels, a hut and a tent or so. First of all, the Roll. At **Strathcarron Hotel**: the President, Cooke, Hartog, Gall Inglis, Macphee, D. H. McPherson, Maitland, Martin, Theo Nicholson, E. C. Thomson and Evershed Thomson. Guests were D. and W. Macphee and J. W. Blakey. At **Lochcarron Hotel**: Walton, Baxter, Cumming, Coates, Angus Smith, D. and I. M. Campbell, McPhail, Humble, Myles Morrison, Carmichael, Ledingham and the ever-youthful Dow. Somewhere

in **Lochcarron**: D. J. Bennet and A. J. Bennet. **Ling Hut**: Barclay Fraser, Goldie and two friends (Dunn and Fleming). **Camping**: Stewart, Roger and Scott Johnstone.

The Meet assembled on the second day of a great storm, but after that had good weather and splendid views. Whereas use of the road from Craig to Gленаuaig had been refused us, permission was willingly granted for that through Attadale to Bendronaig Lodge, and much use was made of this. The Macphee family climbed and fished on alternate days, providing the Meet with excellent meals. Apart from a hot water shortage at the Strathcarron, both hotels were very comfortable. Everyone seemed to enjoy the Meet, and here are some of the excursions undertaken:—

From the **Presidential Hotel**: Moruisg, Beinn Liath Mhòr, Fuar Toll, Bidein a' Choire Sheasgaich, Maol Chean-dearg, Lurg Mhòr, Sgòrr Ruadh, Sgùrr a' Chaorachain, Beinn Bhàn, Sgùrr Choinnich. From **Lochcarron Hotel**: Fuar Toll, An Ruadh-stac, Maol Chean-dearg, Sgòrr Ruadh, Beinn Liath Mhòr, Beinn Bhàn, Sgùrr Choinnich, Sgùrr a' Chaorachain, Bidein an Eòin Deirg, Lurg Mhòr, Bidein a' Choire Sheasgaich, Ben Dronaig. On the Friday, Dow did Beinn Liath Mhòr, South Top, and then, rather than wait for the rest of the car load who were doing something a little more extensive, he set out to walk back to Lochcarron. The next day he was one of ten in a Land Rover that traversed Attadale's precipitous *Route des Alpes*, when he climbed Ben Dronaig. For someone well past the three score years and ten, that is not too bad. Myles Morrison, a stripling of little over 60, elected to march to the Meet from Beaully with a full pack in harsh weather, and in the following note describes his journey:

'Left Beaully Station about noon on Monday, 11th April, with 56-lb. rucksack containing ice-axe, full camping equipment and 4 days' food, and walked up to Struy Inn following the east side of Strath Glass. Continued on Tuesday up Strath Farrar as far as Broulin Lodge, when the weather broke down. Camped in open shed and had quite a good night in spite of occasional noises due to thunder and hail on the roof.

'Made a leisurely start on Wednesday after a good breakfast. The strath had flooded overnight, and rain was driving down on a high west wind. Beyond Monar Lodge the rain turned to hail, and intermittent hailstorms continued throughout the afternoon, on a rising wind. Spent the night in a bothy at Strathmore Lodge and the evening with the shepherd and his family. Thunder and lightning continued all night from 7 p.m. to 10 a.m. on Thursday.

'The morning broke very stormy, with the west wind blowing really hard and the hill burns running like rivers. Started up the glen for the Bealach an Sgaltaidh, and met ten successive hailstorms in the course of the day, several of which enforced a temporary halt in the lee of convenient boulders. On approaching Loch an Laoigh there was clearly no chance of fording the Amhainn Bheamais, and as the weather showed little improvement the track south to Bendronaig Lodge was followed. Shelter was found in the Lodge stable, for another cold and stormy night.

'On Friday morning the weather began to improve at last, and after

an ample hot breakfast and a late start, the hill path over the bealach was followed to Achintee and Lochcarron. The hotel was reached at 6 P.M.¹

From the **Ling Hut**, Barclay Fraser did Beinn Liath Mhòr, Sgòrr Ruadh, went in Coire Mhic Fhearchair and did the horseshoe from Sàil Mhòr to Ruadh-stac Mòr; from Annat he climbed Maol Chean-dearg. Dan Goldie's exploits have been mislaid, but Fraser suggests he and his party did East Buttress of Beinn Eighe, traversed Liathach and possibly on the way home they, too, tramped across the great, wet, well-named sponge of Moruisg. **Thae campers** did Beinn Bhàn, Sgùrr a' Chaorachain, Bidein a' Choire Sheasgaich, Lurg Mhòr, Meall Mòr and Sgùrr an Fhuarail and Aonach Meadhoin of Kintail. So, in the words of *Am Bàrd Mòr na Sìla Linnirich*, there was a great eating-of-bens.

Annual General Meeting

The 72nd Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the George Hotel, Edinburgh, on Saturday, 3rd December 1960, with the President, T. D. Mackinnon, in the chair. Since detailed signed reports of office-bearers were circulated to members, we give—as last year—only a brief summary of events; we have again the sharp pen of MacLennan at our service, to delineate the atmosphere of this unique receptionless Trust-charged A.G.M.

HON. TREASURER.—The credit balance of £5. 9s. 5d. declined to £5. 8s. 9d. . . . Club Room(s) expenditure has increased; so has income from Guide Books.

HON. SECRETARY.—Club membership is now 345. Nine members, Messrs W. Wickham King, R. E. Workman, G. L. Bartrum, E. M. Davidson, T. C. Donald, Alan Horne, J. B. Home, J. Y. Macdonald and C. W. Parry, died during the year. Eleven new members were elected, and are welcomed: Messrs James R. Aitken, Charles F. Allan, Christopher R. Ford, David W. Gordon, J. G. Lillie, Donald McCalman, James W. Simpson, J. W. Stenhouse, Adam Stewart, J. R. Sturrock and Andrew Wightman.

The Club has lodged an objection to the Glen Nevis Hydro-Electric Scheme; the Hon. Secretary made it clear that the objection relates to this scheme only and is based solely on grounds of amenity and access.

HON. EDITOR.—No. 151 of the *Journal* appeared with slight alterations in format: 1000 copies were printed, at slightly less cost than No. 150; J.M.C.S. took 222 and kindred clubs 65. The Hon. Editor wished to record his gratitude for the great help received from contributors, office-bearers and printers, and especially from his distinguished predecessor.

HON. GUIDE BOOKS GENERAL EDITOR.—There has been a remarkable increase in sales, especially *Skye* and *Central Highlands* District Guides and *Arrochar Rock Climbers' Guide*. Revision and amplification of certain District Guides is now to be begun.

CONVENER, HUTS SUB-COMMITTEE.—*The Ling Hut* is much as usual. *C.I.C. Hut* similarly (533 nights), but it was re-roofed and re-stocked with fuel; minor repairs including righting damage done by youths breaking in during the year. *Lagangarbh* continues to be well used with 950 nights, 734 being paid for . . .; all 16 beds are now upstairs, the 'S.M.C. Room' becoming a living-room.

CONVENER, EAST OF SCOTLAND DISTRICT COMMITTEE.—R. Grieve reported:—

'The usual programme of lectures was held. Attendances, however, were noticeably smaller and more irregular than in the previous year. In addition, some confusion was caused by unexpected changes of date and cancellations by lecturers towards the end of the year.

'In the climbing sphere, activity is still marked, particularly that of the younger members, who also continue to show an increasing interest in club affairs. This is a welcome counterbalance to the regrettable disappearance of kent faces, as some of the former "establishment" emulate old soldiers.

'The sub-committee remains unchanged for the present (December 1960): R. Grieve (*Convener*), A. H. Hendry, G. Scott Johnstone, J. R. Marshall, J. Russell, Ian D. Haig and R. W. MacLennan (*Secretary*).'

CONVENER, WEST OF SCOTLAND DISTRICT COMMITTEE.—C. G. M. Slesser reported:—

'The 1959-60 lecture season will be remembered for its never-ending last-minute changes. Local lecturers with stories to tell were slow to come forward. Our Secretary, Johnstone, is much to be congratulated on his vigour in closing the gaps. Only one evening, a J.M.C.S. one, had to be cancelled.

'Two symposia were held, giving the inexperienced in trumpet blowing a chance to sound their chords. Two evenings of films were held, but it was clear that slides are still firm favourites. Weir entertained us with his recent ornithological material and other good evenings were had on topics such as Climbing in America by John Cullen.

'A small core of members still adhere to the J.M.C.S. meets, but active climbing also takes place outside this sphere.

'As from August 1960 small premises were leased at 132 West Nile Street, in the city centre, at a total annual outlay of under £100.

'During the year D. Goldie resigned from the District Committee and his place was taken by George Baillie; Alan Dick retired and Ken Bryan took his place. The Committee now consists of C. G. M. Slesser (*Convener*), G. Baillie, K. Bryan, K. Graham, W. McKenzie, W. Young and J. M. Johnstone (*Secretary*).'

CONVENER, FIRST-AID SUB-COMMITTEE.—The Sligachan kit has been withdrawn and is now at Dundee, to serve Angus and East Perthshire as a mobile unit. Two new Mountain Rescue bodies have emerged (see Mr Maitland's article in this issue). Again, we thank the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue teams, and the post wardens, whose selfless work is so often forgotten.

HON. CUSTODIAN OF SLIDES.—Mr Grieve announced that he was resigning—this time, finally; and begged that a successor be found for this important and responsible position.

B.M.C. REPRESENTATIVE.—Rose reported that response to the Glen Brittle Memorial Hut Appeal has been most encouraging, but owing to surprisingly (?) high costs of building on *an t-Eilean a' Cheo* more money is required. Among other items, it was emphasised how the lively B.M.C. was becoming recognised in official circles as the voice of the mountaineering community.

A.S.C.C. REPRESENTATIVE.—Stewart intimated that, apart from the new Mountain Rescue bodies and Club contributions to insurance for official M.R.C. rescue parties, the problems of litter and camping restrictions (two other consequences of growing *tourisme*) were discussed.

THE TRUST DISCUSSION.—MacLennan writes of this:—

'The 72nd Annual General Meeting of the Club for which the decks had been so ruthlessly cleared did not look like a momentous occasion, being in fact rather sparsely attended. The atmosphere was sombre and obviously charged with the disapproval of absent wives and fiancées. Lacking the stimulus of reception and preliminary lecture the body of the meeting seemed inhibited and the foothills of the agenda were surmounted at an unusually brisk pace.

'The main debate—the momentous Trust decision which was to be settled once and for all this time—was telescoped with that immediately preceding it, a variegated and occasionally rancorous questioning of the accounts which at times developed into a really blood-sporting example of Treasurer-baiting. [A hazard to which the gallant bearers of this thankless office are everywhere exposed.—HON. ED.]

'It began when Dr Slessor arose (as expected) and asked if he might at this point put a question regarding the Trust, on the answer to which would depend whether he would later put forward a further question. This was advanced with the air of innocent diffidence employed by the West of Scotland Convener on such occasions and as a result few failed to suspect here a well-rehearsed version of the process known as "the old one-two." The first question was whether the Trust could make a gift of money to the Club. The answer did not particularly advance the discussion, apparently, because shortly afterwards the meeting found itself listening to Dr Bell skilfully dismantling and re-erecting the accounts for another purpose. His aim was to bring the bulk of the deficit on the *Journal* against Publications by charging only the requisite sale price per member in the General Income and Expenditure Account. This would convert the deficiency on the latter account into a surplus, thus avoiding any need for an increased subscription and reducing the liability to tax on Publications. The idea had an agreeable enough reception, but Dr Bell showed further ingenuity by adding in the same breath that his proposal should of course be given effect to in the current accounts by a retrospective alteration. This was heresy to the Treasurer, who demurred in the broken tones he

keeps for really scandalous proposals. Dr Bell was not so easily deterred. Like a not dissimilar character who once showed like persistence, he held him with his glittering eye and pressed the matter to a successful vote. This was extremely close, but after several parallel sprints the scrutineers eventually found their arithmetic synchronised.

‘Thereafter Dr Slesser resumed. He alleged flint-hearted tactics regarding the payment of accounts for the new Glasgow clubroom and contended that a manifestly trustworthy character like himself might well be advanced a float of about £20 to meet small disbursements. None thought fit to oppose this—not even the Treasurer, although no tears of remorse were to be observed.

‘At this point just as those appreciative of our annual performers were regretting the absence of Lovat’s bludgeon in support of Slesser’s rapier, the West of Scotland Secretary, Mr J. M. Johnstone, made his appearance in the fray. Mr Johnstone favours that method of questioning which, while professedly humble, delicately hints at something rotten in the background. He asks “Is it not the case . . . ?” or “Are we to understand . . . ?” and instead of being satisfied by an answer his supplementaries begin “Would it not be more proper . . . ?” or “Surely it’s more usual . . . ?” Moreover, he appears to be in no hurry to sit down.

‘Consequently there took place some dark sparring about such abstruse matters as D. R. Interest and Income Due But Not Received. The Treasurer proposed to defend himself with his customary suavity, but against two opponents of this calibre it became an unattainable ideal. The debate was somewhat reminiscent of the familiar street repair scene where two navvies drive in a stake by alternate hammer blows. Neck deep in allegations even a Treasurer will turn, and a pleasing exchange of near-discourtesies took place among which the following gem should certainly not go unrecorded.

‘Mr Ritchie, with a forgiving smile, in which the canines were perhaps a little too prominent, suggested that certain of the criticisms might almost be construed as a slander on the Treasurer.

‘“Of course,” agreed Mr Johnstone happily, “but that, however, was just incidental.”

‘And so to the question hanging like an avalanche over the meeting—the Trust. The preliminary skirmishes were perhaps lacking a little in spirit. The known protagonists were in position and in no need to add anything further to their views. The uncommitted sat directing their attention to each side alternately like the spectators at a tennis match—fearing the worst but waiting for a lead.

‘In due course the big guns unmasked themselves—and there began to spread an air of quiet consternation. They were opening up on the wrong side. In succession R. R. Elton, E. C. Thomson and J. G. Osborne spoke. They were brief, to the point, in complete agreement and left no dubiety. It would be unwise to quote from this trio, who did so much in so short a time to recreate the image of a club prepared to pay the piper and look the fiscal world in the face. But the humbler creation listening for any

ray of hope were obviously vastly influenced, by Elton in particular. Firstly, for demonstrating with such clarity just how much was at stake and what it was that could or could not be afforded: secondly, for dusting off the verbiage of Article One and noting that it was not really correct. The *actual* purpose of the Trust, he pointed out with devastating candour, was to avoid liability for tax.

‘It grew apparent that the meeting was not only ready but eager to vote on a straight “For” or “Against” basis. The question was therefore put, and at 49 to 10 the vote was not so much a decision as a rout. The lonely ten were perhaps not so much discomfited as incredulous. Of the *dileas gu bas* trustics visible, one observed Kenneth Dunn, draped disconsolate over a chair, philosophically savouring the irony of it all, Ross Higgins and Willie Spiers trying out a Christians-in-the-Colosseum look, and unaltered, of course, though without a saving gambit this time—the indestructible Ritchie.’

DINNER

‘Thereafter, the Dinner took place.

‘The Principal Guest, J. C. Stormonth Darling, of the National Trust, preached pleasantly to the converted. Both he and Scott Johnstone, who proposed “The Guests,” had an engaging habit of introducing their more colourful passages by gazing blandly over the heads of impassive waitresses and remarking “Since there are no ladies present . . .”

‘Tom McKinnon, in his retiring speech, showed a pleasingly light touch when, after reporting with satisfaction on the Club’s climbing record, he referred with lofty clinical interest to the addiction of some of our younger members to the “Devil’s book of pictures.” Which remarks were received with perfect decorum at a nearby table, inhabited exclusively by what the doubtlessly senile writer unkindly thinks of as the Juvenile Delinquent wing of the S.M.C.

‘Stuart Jack, not content with impressing the Club Song with his own vintage personality, had a valedictory Doric ode to Big Tam which he effectively delivered at the appropriate point. And the inexhaustible Patey, on being put once more through the mangle, produced yet another contemporary ballad. In this, a masterpiece of fantasy, he achieved to the lugubrious strains of the *Red Flag* an extraordinary marriage of minds between the Victoriana of the S.M.C. tradition and the ironclad aspirations of climbing commissars.’

New Year Meet, 1960—Crianlarich

The first member to arrive, Baxter, came from the north and left his car at Fort William, but the hard weather soon turned to rain and mist and this continued until most of the Meet had left on Monday, 2nd January. Those few who stayed on had a lovely day on the Tuesday and enjoyed themselves ski-ing. The hotel, as usual, made us most comfortable and the staff, who, happily, never seem to change, did all they could for our creature comfort. The Meet, as a result of the weather, perhaps, was not very active,

but everyone got wet below the snow line and plunged about in deep, wet snow above it. Thanks to Earl McEwen, we were provided with an excellent show of slides on Sunday evening, when we were visited by George Roger, Donald Bennet, Slessor, Proom, Bryan and Smart. It was pleasant to see Ogilvie again at a Meet after his long exile abroad, and another member whom we have not seen recently and whom we welcomed back was Morris. Present at the Meet were the President, Ian Charleson, and J. K. Annand, J. W. Baxter, W. C. Carmichael, W. L. Coates, M. H. Cooke, R. R. Elton, A. H. Hendry, R. R. S. Higgins, R. M. G. Inglis, J. N. Ledingham, J. E. McEwen, R. W. B. Morris, I. H. Ogilvie, J. Peat, J. S. Ritchie, T. E. Thomson and F. R. Wylie. M. H. COOKE.

There was also a party at **Lagangarbh**, including Slessor and Smart, but details have not been forthcoming. Much snow was lying.

J.M.C.S. REPORTS

Lochaber Section (Lochaber Mountaineering Club).—In the autumn of 1959 Mr Duff ran a very successful course in Mountain Rescue, lasting over two full week-ends. The course consisted of talks, films, practical rock climbing and rescue work, the climax being the lowering of a stretcher complete with victim over Polldubh Crags; it was well attended and could be usefully repeated. In January and March 1960, working parties repaired and improved Steall Cottage.

Climbing meets were held, and the following climbs and projects were carried out: snow climbs on Ben Nevis, rock climbs in Glen Nevis, Corbett hunting, working parties for the Shelter Hut in Coire Leis and members' own individual mountaineering ploys. Apart from the October meet the weather was excellent on all the days meets were held.

July and August were busy months, when the Shelter Hut was transported to Coire Leis and erected there under the direction of Mr Mackinnon. In this, the Club was helped by many non members whom Mr Mackinnon invited to assist. The Dudley Boys' Club, of Worcestershire, donated £122 towards the purchase and erection of the Coire Leis Hut; the cheque was presented to the Club by Provost Grant, and the Hut was officially opened by the Mayoress of Dudley, who very gamely walked all the way up to Coire Leis to perform the ceremony. The Shelter Huts have now been equipped with benches, first-aid kit and emergency food supplies; the Committee of the Lochaber Mountaineering Club, with Mr Mackinnon as Convener, will be responsible for the maintenance and stocking of the Shelter Huts.

With regard to Mountain Rescue, members of the Club were involved in search parties in Coire Ghlas, in looking for a baled-out airman, and in assisting the rescue teams in the accidents on the Ben over New Year, 1960. In August a boy was rescued from Tower Ridge, and his companion found dead in Tower Gully.

There was one General Meeting of the Club and four Committee Meetings held this year, with the A.G.M. in November.

The Club membership stands at 40, with 29 residents of Lochaber and 11 non-residents.

Office-bearers.—*Hon. President*, J. F. Hamilton; *Hon. Vice-President*, P. L. J. Heron; *Hon. Member*, J. Ness; *President*, Dr J. S. Berkeley; *Vice-President*, W. S. Thomson; *Treasurer and Hut Custodian*, J. A. Sutherland; *Secretary*, G. H. Thomas, 11 Glen Nevis Place, Fort William.

Edinburgh Section.—During the year ending 31st October 1960, 14 new members were admitted; with 23 having resigned, the present membership stands at 61, with 7 associates. Resignations were confined to inactive members, probably attributable to the subscription increase from 10s. to 15s.

Early in the year attendance at monthly bus meets averaged 24, but since a joint meet programme was arranged with the Edinburgh Mountaineering Club it rose to 40. Places visited included Glencoe, Kinlochleven, Dalmally, Lochnagar, Arrochar and Aviemore. During the summer, evening meets were held at Traprain Law in East Lothian; indoor meets were in the S.M.C. rooms. Members have also climbed widely in Skye, the North-west, the English Lakes and Wales. Only one party visited the Alps—perhaps just as well, in view of the very bad season.

The year has been most successful, with a keen nucleus of climbers and a recent influx of new members—which places a heavy responsibility on the older members, particularly during the winter. It is hoped that recent graduates to the S.M.C. will continue to offer their support at the meets. The financial position is also most satisfactory, the heavy loss of 1959 being removed by increased subscriptions, profit on bus meets and more economical running of the Club.

Honorary officials are: R. MacLennan (*President*) and D. Leaver (*Vice-President*); the President is C. Hepburn and the Secretary I. Douglas, 64 East Claremont Street, Edinburgh.

S.M.C. AND J.M.C.S. ABROAD

North America

THEO NICHOLSON, whilst in British Columbia on business affairs, did the Vancouver West Lion (5403 ft.) with Bruce MacKedie of the Alpine Club of Canada. This peak is the higher of a pair, rising steeply from sea level and clearly seen about 8 miles north of West Vancouver. Although it was 13th June, well-consolidated snow lay above 3500 ft., and in the forest at around 4000 ft. it was about 5 ft. deep. The last 500 ft. is a moderate rock climb, easier than it looks but requiring care on smooth slabby rocks; fortunately they were all clear of snow.

Later, on 28th June, from Lake O'Hara at 6674 ft. (near Lake Louise) in the Rockies, he climbed Mount Schaffer (8834 ft.) and the ridge rising

beyond it to about 9400 ft. A very late spring resulted in the mountains still being deep in snow; much of it had fallen in the last five weeks and it lay deep and unconsolidated, a constant avalanche danger. Lacking a friend, he was able to employ an Austrian from the 'Rocky Mountain Guides Ltd.' of Banff. He was a fine climber and an excellent companion, but Mount Schaffer was as unknown to him as to Theo Nicholson. . . . However, it was a safe ridge climb, mostly free from the snow which was continually sliding off its flanks. A most enjoyable 12-hour day made him wish for more business trips of this sort!

Greenland

I, H. M. SMART writes: 'Last summer I had the good fortune to accompany Sir John Hunt's expedition to Scoresby Land, in the position of Assistant Bird Watcher. Two other members of the S.M.C. took part: Dr Malcolm Slessor, a well-known Glaswegian, was Deputy Leader and Tom Weir was the expedition's Head Bird Watcher. A fourth member from Scotland was Roderick Cameron, who acted as a sort of Boatman to the expedition. Tom Weir and I spent the great part of the time camping on a small islet in Kong Oscar's Fiord, where we carried out an intensive investigation into the breeding activities of a colony of terns. The islet was conveniently situated across the expedition's supply route and from time to time, as the boat passed by, we were able to supplement the homely fare of the explorer with a little whisky, a tin or two of chicken, crumbs of Dundee cake and an occasional box of cigars. At these times, too, we heard news of the mountaineers of the party who, in spite of very inclement weather, were steadfastly carrying loads up and down the glacier systems of the High Staunings. Even we bird watchers almost made an ascent. Weir and I, with two boys, attempted a 4000-footer which towered above the iceberg-peppered waters of the fiord. If it hadn't been for the difficulties in the way we would very likely have reached the top. As it was, we arrived at what was probably the third highest part of the mountain. "It looks distinctly 'ropey' after this," said Weir. This was a pun as we had no rope and only the boys had ice-axes (Weir had brought a broom handle); so we descended disappointed, but game enough to try another day.

Our ornithological work was interrupted at one point to help the rest of the expedition. Weir had to go round to Alpe Fiord, the main climbing base, where for reasons never yet satisfactorily explained the mountaineers were refusing to make any further ascents without the presence of a Bird Watcher. My task was to cross a small mountain range with a party to meet Sir John Hunt, who was making the second crossing of the Stauning range, and supply his party with food. Having done this, I elected to accompany a sub-division of Sir John's party to Syd Kap on Hall Fiord to the south. Unfortunately I got separated from this sub-division and eventually lost them completely. I managed to keep my head, and after reaching Hall Fiord returned the 100 miles or so alone. The journey lay up a broad valley tinted red and gold by autumn and floored with fields of

waving cotton grass set with small lochans of deepest azure; an optically reversed archipelago, in fact. I had a good opportunity at this stage to inspect the local fauna. Parties of musk oxen grazed around and glared sullenly from under their thick, black woolly wigs at the solitary trespasser in their remote domain; since another of the journalists of the expedition had written on "the biological impact of the Arctic," I was apprehensive lest that phrase be realised literally. Pink-footed geese rose from the lochans looking for all the world like Peter Scott paintings as they winged their way across the sky in ragged V's or straggling echelons. Arctic wheatears (larger and more rufous-breasted than the ones we see) would perch on nearby boulders, bob their tails and "queep" cheekily. Most disconcerting of all was a shiny blue-black raven which circled me for several miles, croaking derisively.

'Reaching Kong Oscar's Fiord again, I returned to the tern islet for a final intensive bird watch, bivouacking the while under my upturned kayak, until rescued by the Head Bird Watcher. He arrived in the main boat with the dregs of the Alpe Fiord party, whom he had found apparently deserted, their Deputy Leader having broken out towards regions of more plentiful provisioning. Our task of shepherding mountaineers back to safety being completed, Weir and I had a final burst of bird watching. We were able to establish that at latitude 72° N. the incubation time of the egg of the Arctic Tern (or Sea Swallow, as it is often known) is 21 days 9 hours \pm 3 hours.

"Yes, Iain," Weir remarked on our last day as he opened a second bottle of whisky, "one good tern deserves another." I caught the devious *double entendre* after some thought, and managed to reply in the same puckish vein as I raised the mug to my lips, saying "And one swallow doesn't make a summer." We laughed merrily together and, having finished the bottle, paddled silently southwards into the gathering autumn twilight. . . .'

(Copyright I.H.M.S. Reproduction in whole or part forbidden.)

Norway

T. W. PATEY was in Norway again in March 1960. Along with Sam Bemrose, Vyvyan Stevenson and Henry Berg, he attempted a first winter ascent of the Trolltinder Wall, by the Fiva Route, 5000 ft. in height. After 2000 ft. of relatively easy but exposed interlocking snowfields followed by mixed rock-ice-snow climbing, they reached the final 2000-ft. gully. The summer route here on the buttress was impossible. After climbing the gully through much soft snow they found their way blocked by a spur 600 ft. from the top. Here a wrong choice of route (confirmed afterwards by inspection from above) wasted the short time remaining and a descent had to be made, an ice-cave bivouac 2000 ft. above the valley being necessary. Berg had mild frostbite as a result. They were out on the face for 29 hours, 22 of which were spent climbing.

Patey, Bemrose and Stevenson had two other climbs in Romsdal: a traverse of Bispen and Kongen, and the first winter ascent of the East Ridge

of Bispen. The last was gloriously exposed, on rock excellent as any Chamonix aiguille, with 1000 ft. of climbing, Severe under the prevailing conditions; probably only Very Difficult in summer, it must then be one of the steepest climbs of its grade to be found anywhere.

The rest of their ambitious programme was severely curtailed by a bad dose of food poisoning. On the day previous to this disaster they met a party of the leading local 'tigers,' who presented them with a packet of meat sandwiches. This may have been mere coincidence. . . .

R. D. B. STEWART (J.M.C.S.) was with a Leicester University Expedition to the Okstindan Ice Field, in Arctic Norway. Due to weather and scientific preoccupations, he made only three climbs. One was the first recorded ascent of the N. Face of the Oksholten (1915 m.), with J. Bray (Leicester University M.C.), involving some 1500 ft. of climbing up to Very Difficult standard. With B. Woods (L.U.M.C.) he climbed the 1775-m. col between Okshornet and Oksholten from the east, another new climb; the third climb was the second ascent of the N.E. Ridge of the 1591-m. peak of the Central Ice Field. He considers that there are few first ascents left for climbers of 'moderate standard,' though many severe routes on E. and N. faces await future visitors.

The Alps

G. G. FREEMAN spent from 11th April to 6th May touring on ski in the Tyrol and northern Italy. During the first two weeks he traversed the Ötztal from Obergurgl to Hochsölden with some friends and the guide Friedrich Huter of Fulpmes. They climbed seven peaks, including the Wildspitze. Freeman continued independently from the Nino Corsi Hut in the Ortler group, where Monte Cevedale, Civa Marmotta and the Hintere Schöntauf Spitze were climbed. The holiday ended with a brief visit to the Dolomites, where the Marmolata was climbed twice on successive days despite attempts to use a hazardous mechanical device near the summit.

He returned to the Alps in the summer, in a party which included GEORGE ROGER. Here is the account of their doings, in the words of the last-mentioned worthy:—

'SPEIRS, FLEMING (J.M.C.S.), Freeman, PROOM and I attended the combined A.C.-S.M.C.-C.C. Meet at Saas Fee in August, the Scottish party making up about half the meet. Four of us arrived on 13th August, and Proom on the 17th.

'We met Tom Peacocke, the organiser, and the English party and then went up to the Weissmies Hut in rather poor weather. We were well rewarded by a magnificent day's traverse of the Fletschhorn and Laquinhorn. Unfortunately, Freeman then strained a leg muscle and had to rest for several days. The hut was somewhat crowded and our four dosed in the living-room on wooden benches. We moved to the wood shed the following night and shared the lower berth of a double-tiered bunk: in the inevitable *melée* one thought longingly of the comfort and space of the wooden benches! Those still able to move next morning had a good

day on the Weissmies, meeting Peacocke and Williams (C.C.) on the summit.

'The party, now eight strong, went to the hut at Almageleralp, where our ex-President was granted the honour of the one available bed by a unanimous vote. Bad weather delayed the start the next morning, but the day improved steadily and we had a most enjoyable traverse of the Sonnighorn by the Sonnigrat in perfect conditions. We returned to Saas Fee in darkness, arriving just in time for a very fine dinner at midnight. On the 21st, Speirs, Proom and I had a grand day traversing the Alphubel and Allalinhorn after a crowded but convivial night at the Langefuh Hut.

'We were very glad to meet Mike Banks at Saas Fee on our return. Several of the English party then left for home and on the 22nd the rest of us moved to Zermatt, Speirs departing a day or two later. On the 24th we climbed the Zinal-Rothorn from the Rothorn Hut: Banks and Proom by the Rotgrat, and Fleming, Freeman and I by the ordinary route. We all had a very lengthy descent in the soft snow, but it was a most excellent day and a grand finish to a very enjoyable meet. Some of us also visited the Monte Moro and Théodule passes on off days. We were most fortunate to have very reasonable weather throughout.'

G. J. RITCHIE and A. HENDRY, who are said to deserve each other, were in the Alps as usual; but, as usual, a thick fog envelops their doings. In a like mist they lost each other one morning; ultimate reunion could not, however, be staved off. Then the clouds come down again.

J. W. SIMPSON spent the second half of July in the Zermatt area with Roger Robb (J.M.C.S.). Weather was excellent but there was a great amount of snow, and this confined their climbing to the easier routes. The first week, when the snow was in poor condition, they were successful on the Wellenkuppe (from the Rothorn Hut) and the Rimpfischhorn (from the Täsch Hut). In the second week the snow improved and they climbed Monte Rosa from the Monte Rosa Hut. They then traversed Castor, Pollux and the Breithorn plateau to the Testa Grigia with members of the Gritstone Club. Their final climb, the tourist route on the Matterhorn (from the Hornli Hut) was done in perfect weather but was spoiled by the dangerous behaviour of some of the local guides.

In 1959 Robin Smith shared the first Scottish (and British) ascent of the Walker Spur; in 1960, members of the S.M.C. were sniffing at the next Munro. DOUGAL HASTON writes about it:—

'After spending three snow-bound weeks in the Dolomites with only one big route to our credit—the Via Cassin on the North Face of the Cima Ovest—MORIARTY and I decided to follow the snow; so we went to Grindelwald.

'There we met four Englishmen with similar ideas, so forgetting rivalry we joined forces and the next day went for a wander up the first 1500 ft. of the North Wall of the Eiger with Geoff Oliver. The rain started at the

top of the Shattered Pillar so we ran back down the scree which is the bottom half of the Eiger and reached ground level just as the usual midday storm broke.

'Two days and four storms later the sun shone, so we set off in the late afternoon, heading for the bivouac cave at the foot of the difficult crack: we were two ropes of two, Geoff Oliver and Denis English and Moriarty and myself.

'After fighting through hordes of autograph hunters, obituary writers and admiring "birds" (no resistance to latter) we shambled up to the bivouac, slower this time because of enormous packs. But just as we started to cook, the weather turned "manky" and it began to snow and then Oliver got hit by a stone, so we sat muttering all night and came down in a howling storm in the early morning. The face was absolutely out of condition for weeks, so we went to Chamonix.

'At the end of August I returned with ROBIN SMITH, to be met with a week of fabulous weather; but there was too much powder snow on the Wall and it wouldn't freeze at night, so we stomped around in a rage for a week spitting insults at the tourists and climbing railway wa's until "re-sits" drove us home.

'The Wall was not climbed this summer, as it never seemed to be in condition.'

ROBIN SMITH writes: 'I enjoyed some six weeks in the Alps, at first touring amicably with A. WIGHTMAN and seven students, latterly with HASTON. Many pack-hauls to huts and bivouacs below North Walls and retreats through storms to the valleys kept all the teams in trim. I did achieve one climb, with B. Wakefield (E.U.M.C.), the Nordpfeiler of the Fiescherwand in the Oberland. This was an excellent line, not dangerous, very wintry at the time, involving step-cutting for 3000 ft. and unpremeditated bivouacs before, during and after.'

DEREK PYPER, with David Reid and Sandy Kane (Etchachan Club) were in Chamonix for a fortnight in July 1960, to be met by terrible weather. In between storms they managed to climb the N.N.E. Arête of the Aiguille de l'M and the Rocher de la Corde of the Aiguille de Blaitière. After that, everything seemed hopeless and they beat a rapid retreat back to Skye.

K. BRYAN writes: 'During the second fortnight of August I found myself alone in Chamonix. The weather was as bad as it had been three years previously—when I left in disgust. The first week was spent visiting deserted huts and tapping barometers, the only diversion being supplied by a 13-hour débacle on the snow-plastered east face of the Réquin with two Englishmen. In the second week the weather improved, but snow was still very bad. I was able, however, to make the following excursions: Traverse of the Aiguille du Tour, the Forbes Arête of the Chardonnet, Aiguille de l'M and Petits Charmoz, and the Aiguille de Blaitière by the Rocher de la Corde and the Bergeaute ridge.'

An Edinburgh J.M.C.S. party—J. CLARKSON, G. LEE, R. McDONALD and K. MURRAY—visited the Dauphiné and Chamonix for three weeks in July and August. In the Dauphiné they were out of step with the weather (which was very unsettled) and only accomplished the two peaks of the Grande Ruine and the crossing of the Col de la Casse Déserte. At Chamonix they did the following climbs: Aiguille de l'M (N.N.E. Arête); Aiguille du Moine (S.W. Arête); la Nonne (traverse); Petits Charmoz (traverse); the Plan-Midi traverse; Dent du Réquin (Chapeau a Cornes Arête); and the Tour Ronde. Not a good season; poor weather put the bigger peaks right out of reach.

BOOKS

Where to Climb in the British Isles. By Edward C. Pyatt. (Faber. 287 pp., with 17 pp. half-tone illustrations. 20s.)

In this book 78 pages go to Scotland, 23 pages to Ireland and 162 pages to England and Wales. In the Concise Oxford Dictionary climbing means 'ascend, mount, go up—especially with the help of hands.' In this book, except for a few casual mentions of possible snow climbing and the exclusion of caving or pot-holing, the survey is almost entirely devoted to rock climbing. It was not written as a substitute for already published guide books, and these are referred to for detailed information. It is therefore a kind of gazetteer and a very useful reference book for the roving climber who finds himself in an unfamiliar district.

The grouping is based, approximately, on county boundaries—more suitable in England than in Scotland. There is an excellent, readable Introduction of 13 pages which explains the object and method of the book, and points out that *mountain* rock climbing is far more important than outcrop or sea-cliff climbing. None the less, one gets the impression that outcrop climbing occupies far more space than it merits—perhaps because the references in the literature are widely scattered and may not find their way into the established guide books. This may partly account for the smaller proportion of the book which is allocated to Scotland. It may be found advisable in a later edition to attempt a separation between mountain rock and the minor types of rock climbing. It might also be possible to include a section on the recognised classic snow and ice climbs.

J. H. B. B.

The Löttschental. By The Rev. Prior J. Siegen; translated by Ida M. Whitworth. (1960: Titus Wilson, Kendal. 74 pp., many illustrations.)

A most tastefully produced 'Guide for Tourists,' dealing with the topography, history and culture of the valley. The admirable Foreword to this edition, by Katherine Chorley, urges that the book be used as an introduction to the Löttschental way of life; not as a quaint escape from the business of living but as an introduction to another, and probably more sensible, approach to the business of living. By now the seasonal ski flood

has sapped the valleys further, but this gentle book remains to tell of those who, for a time and by one faith, came to terms with their particular block of existence. One thinks grimly on its Scottish counterpart.

G. J. D.

Samson: The Life and Writings of J. Menlove Edwards. Edited by G. J. Sutton and Wilfred Noyce.

The editors quote the pertinent question of a friend who asked why they bothered to write a book about it.

Those who admire the achievements of Edwards will find nothing new here; and the prose writings have practically all appeared already. Collected and flanked by unpublished scraps and unfinished seams, they confirm him a writer the mountaineering world particularly deserves but rarely gets. A style spare, agile and enterprising, imagery apt, individual, sometimes as alien as we might expect from so capable a customer; humour enough but in restraint; sentiment generally absent. These are sober, interesting pages. Many should be compulsory reading for those in danger of acquiring a mystique of climbing.

The poetry, being 'modern,' avoids convenient yardsticks. It is also rather fenced about by the effusive reverence of the editors. For its meaningful obscurities, they supply keys and guiding threads that uncomfortably remind one of the American professor who founded a brilliant interpretation on a printer's error. Being highly subjective it is, however, a mine in which each may find something of value to himself.

It is undoubtedly the "Life" that answers the friend's question—and most adequately. The editors must be commended for having chosen courage and candour in presenting the whole man. Menlove Edwards was homosexual, pacifist and suicide as determinedly as he was everything else. He canoed from the Isle of Man to Cumberland: crossed the Minch in a borrowed rowing boat: swam the Linn of Dee, leaving a characteristic account without fear or boast. Life was not easy and the last blow was when he, a psychiatrist himself, began to suffer mental derangement. The biographical sketch follows unflinchingly the increasing irrationality of his pilgrimage to an end bleak as a Greek tragedy. In it you may see him undiminished by praise or blame—a man and a life worthy of remembrance. There have always been more than enough heterosexual, half-hearted conformists like the rest of us.

But there is little gloom. The final impression is of an unusual degree of sincerity and a factual value almost scientific. There are still few insights into that not too rare yet enigmatic phenomenon, the mind of the 'tiger'—a mental climate different altogether from that of its many imitators and perplexingly removed from the generality who operate for discernible reasons. Menlove Edwards climbed because 'they were there.' Much of what lies behind that historic disclaimer awaits in these pages some gleaner understanding enough to wed the writings to the actions of a man who in both spheres was unusually lucid and almost violently intent on self-expression.

R. W. MACL.

The Mountains of Ireland. By D. D. C. Pochin Mould. (1955: Batsford. 156 pp., many illustrations. 21s.)

Having left Scotland to its latter-day saints, Dr Mould is determined to feel happier in Ireland. In this splendidly typical Batsford guineasworth we have her own gently perceptive interpretation of those strange hills and valleys. For, as in Wales, the valleys are happily still lived in, and Irish mountains are not a playground abandoned to toughs and tycoons; and, so far, they are safe from peaceful war bases. Why this is, one may gather, haltingly, from her book. No Scott-Moncrieff, she grinds the Roman axe without a spark, and becomes bad-tempered about Ulster. There is one terrifying picture of vertical hiking, just before The Fall; but otherwise the book goes the right way towards Irish mountaineering.

G. J. D.

The Mountains of Killarney. By J. C. Coleman. (1948: Dundalgan Press, Dundalk. 60 pp., illustrated.)

Apparently all Irishmen can write. This is a remarkably entertaining little booklet for hill walking, and contrasts agreeably in print and personality with some opposites across the water, sailing nimbly between their gush and their statistics.

G. J. D.

The White Mountain Guide. (The Appalachian Mountain Club. 16th ed.)

The White Mountains are part of the Appalachians lying east of the Connecticut River and abutting on the Canadian border to the north, the hills being mainly in New Hampshire. Like other Appalachian districts, the area is wooded and the best access from centres of transport is not always obvious, being often by artificially engineered 'trails.' This Guide describes the trails to be followed and details pitfalls for the unwary to be found along them. Ski-trails and ski-grounds are also described, as is the location of huts, camping grounds, 'parking lots' and so forth.

It is difficult to assess the adequacy of such a Guide unless one personally knows its area and its public. (In this case, the Guide is expressly for a special type of 'hill walker,' rock climbing being catered for by the A.M.C.'s *Appalachia*.) The need for such a Guide is, however, obvious, and as it is concise and to the point the publication appears very adequate. It contains both inset and extractable medium-scale contoured maps; they are clear, though the contour lining is rather too light. The volume is small but thick, designed for pocketability, but the binding has not allowed for the thickness of the inserted maps. As these are numerous, the book bulges, boding ill for the durability of the cover and ensuring excessive wear on the maps—whose ends often protrude beyond the text pages. But new editions appear to be produced at short intervals, so this lack of durability may be no great reason for criticism.

One interesting point is that winter trails on Mt. Washington are described as being for snowshoe (or ski), together with *either* crampons or crampons and ice-axe. One would have thought that on snow hard enough

to require the use of crampons, an ice-axe would also be needed to arrest any slip, even on a gentle slope. As the A.M.C. is, of course, the best judge of its own terrain, the point merely serves to illustrate the differences between the types of mountaineering catered for by *The White Mountain Guide* and by our own District Guides.

G. S. J.

The Last Blue Mountain. By Ralph Barker. (1959: Chatto & Windus. 210 pp., illustrated. 21s.)

Some reviewers have said that a third, lay, person should not have written this book; that Streater or Emory should have done so. We disagree. Impersonal narration (and Barker, though professional, contrives usually to remain impersonal) silhouettes the action, strips off thrills and fright and raises tragedy to its classical serenity. All of which Hunt implies, and puts better, in his excellently written Foreword. More than chang and snipped toes here.

G. J. D.

The Mountain World, 1958/9. English Edition by Malcolm Barnes. (1958: Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research. 208 pp., many illustrations. 25s.)

This is the issue where Buhl stepped just too far, and where Director Gurtner shakes his head and Colonel Strutt over the Eiger exhibitionists (they probably played cards as well); and where Dittert talks sense about the Mt. Blanc affair. The usual superb photographs.

G. J. D.

Mont Blanc and the Seven Valleys. By R. Frison-Roche. (Nicholas Kaye Ltd., London. 45s. Quarto, 267 pp., of which 169 pp. are Heliogravure illustrations.)

This volume is the latest addition to the famous series of travel books *Les Beaux Pays*. It has an interesting short geographical account of the seven valleys of Mont Blanc and surrounding country, but is mainly a pictorial book. The photographs are without exception of a particularly high standard and are of interest to all climbers, whether or not they have climbed in that area.

S. J. C.

Journals of Kindred Clubs. Again, we pick at random among the year's enjoyable crop. *The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal*, 1960; The Y.R.C. has a long history of pot-holing and much space is devoted to both new and familiar descents. Such bowel-groping apart, there are other aspects of mountains treated, Alpine and Pyrenean and Korean; and a solo track through Swedish Lapland, an interesting account of that fascinating country, though the author faltered towards civilisation, whetted to weakness by occasional meetings with Lapps, reindeer and those deservedly famous Swedish-blondes-who-bathe-naked. The late E. E. Roberts has his usual good things to say and, like a true north-country

Englishman, chastises Scottish students who carry no Gaelic dictionary. *The Journal of the Midland Association of Mountaineers*, 1960, is a pleasant issue with a family air, recording doings from the Rockies to Lebanon, Glan Dena to Deo Tibba. *The Alpine Journal*, May 1960, in discreetly expensive binding, is all in a minor key. It treats of disasters on Ama Dablam and elsewhere; Oscar Eckenstein, of the Claw, is described at last; so is Russell (not one of ours) and his love affair with the Vignemale; and Noyce again sniffs at Danger, the cheese in the trap. *The American Alpine Journal*, 1960, has much superbly illustrated news from South America; details of Becky's remarkable pitoneering; a pleasantly cruel account from a Teton guide; and a description of an ice screw. *The Climbers' Club Journal*, 1960, is as sleekly produced as ever. Two accidents are described. Bonington writes excellently on the complex 40-karabiner artificials on the Diretta of the N. Wall of the Cima Grande di Lavaredo, and on the relief when free uncomplicated climbing was reached again. Among other good articles, Lauder and Pyatt unwind some more shoreline, Elfyn Hughes muses over nails and the marks of them on those reticent Ffestiniog hills, and Tom Patey cooks up a Jimmy Marshall especially for English consumption. *Irish Mountaineering*, 1960, lively still, is self-consciously starting to embrace historical trends; but, as yet, not sure enough to interpret the curious quality of Irish mountains. *The Rucksack Club Journal*, 1960, has an account of a Fell Race (common enough here for those without private transport) and some interesting Scottish notes, especially on that superb unknown, Ladhar Bheinn. *The Journal of the Mountain Club of S. Africa*, 1959, treats of sunbaked rock climbs and kloof-wanderings, of a little topography and of the superb new Clubhouse. Rock-routes are remorselessly dissected and labelled, their grading explained. Pitons certainly ring through these pages and Africa is not all jungle gropings or uneasy queuing at the waterhole. *The Grampian Club Bulletin*, No. 7, 1960, details Munro acquisition and Eric Maxwell lists 'all those who, to the best of the author's knowledge, have climbed every Munro and, also, which of them have climbed the other mountains and tops in Munro's and/or Maxwell's tables.' With permission, and 3 inclusions, we summarise it here; after name comes completion date of (a) Munros (b) Tops (c) similar hills in rest of British Isles. The list goes to 1958: emendations, and additions since that date, we hope to mention next issue. (1) A. E. Robertson, 1901; (2) A. R. G. Burn, 1923, 1923; (3) J. A. Parker, 1927, —, 1929; (4) J. R. Corbett, 1930, 1930; (5) J. Dow, 1933, 1947, 1956; (6) G. G. Elliot, 1938; (7) J. Robertson, 1938; (8) A. L. Cram, 1939, 1939; (9) J. Hirst, 1947, 1947; (10) Mrs Hirst, 1947, 1947; (11) E. W. Hodge, 1947; (12) B. Horsburgh, 1947; (13) W. M. Docharty, 1948, 1948, before 1956; (14) W. D. McKinlay, 1948; (15) J. Campbell, 1949; (16) C. V. Dodgson, 1951, 1951; (17) H. Hampton, 1952; (18) G. S. Ritchie, 1953; (19) J. S. Anderson, 1953, 1953; (20) G. G. MacPhee, 1954, 1955; (21) P. L. J. Heron, 1954; (22) J. F. Hamilton, 1954, —, 1956; (23) M. Hutchinson, 1955, 1955; (24) E. I. Lawson, 1955, 1955; (25) W. T. Allan, 1956; (26) E. Maxwell, 1957, 1957, 1958; (27) J. Y. Macdonald, 1958; (28) C. G. Macdonald, 1958.

OFFICE-BEARERS 1960-61

Hon. President: J. S. M. JACK.

President: I. G. CHARLESON.

Vice-Presidents: ROSS S. HIGGINS, A. H. HENDRY.

Hon. Secretary: J. STANLEY STEWART,
121 Bath Street, Glasgow, C.2.

Hon. Treasurer: G. J. RITCHIE,
13A Pentland Terrace, Edinburgh, 10.

Hon. Editor: Dr G. J. F. DUTTON,
Department of Biochemistry, Queen's College, Dundee.

Guide Books General Editor: G. SCOTT JOHNSTONE,
38 Moira Terrace, Edinburgh, 7.

Hon. Librarian: R. G. INGLIS,
19 Dalrymple Crescent, Edinburgh, 9.

Hon. Slide Custodian: R. GRIEVE,
14 Braid Hills Road, Edinburgh, 10.

Hon. Meets Secretary: M. H. COOKE,
Edinburgh Academy, Edinburgh, 3.

Huts Convener: G. S. ROGER.

Hon. Hut Custodians: *C.I.C.*, Dr J. S. BERKELEY, Onich House, Cameron Road, Fort William. *Lagangarbh*, D. J. BENNET, 4 Morven Road, Bearsden, by Glasgow. *Ling*, GEORGE PEAT, Faseny, Conon Bridge, Ross-shire.

Committee: The President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor, Guide-Books Editor, Huts Convener—all as above; and J. C. DONALDSON (Hon. Assistant Secretary), C. L. DONALDSON, A. E. ANTON, LESLIE DUFF, MILES HUTCHINSON, GILBERT LITTLE, ROBIN C. SMITH, K. BRYAN and R. L. MITCHELL.

Communications.—Distribution of *Journal*, P. E. MacFarlane, 217 Crofthill Road, Glasgow, S.4. Advertisements, S. J. Cairns, 23 Drum Brae South, Corstorphine, Edinburgh, 12. All MS. to Hon. Editor, as soon as possible, with all proper and place names in BLOCK CAPITALS where first mentioned.

"GIMMER"

Regd.

CLIMBING BOOTS

A NEW MODEL

THE GIMMER "SUMMIT"

Made by skilled Scottish Craftsmen

Uppers are in

MARTIN'S ZUG, LEATHER LINED

and the Soles have

GENUINE OAK BARK TANNED LEATHER

which is hand-sewn

Price - £7 10s. 6d.

OTHER MODELS

THE GIMMER "MICKLEDORE" £5 17s. 9d.

"DAUPHINE" - - - £5 17s. 9d.

"EDELWEISS" - - - £6 7s. 6d.

"Dauphine" was worn on the Sherborne Kuli Spiti Expedition to the Himalayas in 1958 and gave complete satisfaction

JOHN STABLES . Shoecraft House

AMBLESIDE

SHOEMAKERS SINCE 1830

Telephone : 3176



VIKING

NYLON Climbing Ropes

(MADE TO B.S. 3104)

The qualities which commend 'Viking' nylon rope to climbers are its light weight, high tensile strength, durability, resistance to abrasion and elasticity.

Nylon rope dries quickly, does not freeze and is immune to deterioration through rot and mildew. It is extremely flexible and easy to coil even when wet.



Order from your Sports Outfitter and insist on
'VIKING' NYLON CLIMBING ROPES

Castle Commando

DONALD GILCHRIST

The story of Achnacarry House, home of the chief of Clan Cameron, during the Second World War, and of the Commandos who trained there. This book tells of the men, the instructors and the staff at Achnacarry, and of the way in which they transformed ordinary troops into a fearsome fighting force. 12s 6d net

The Drove Roads and Bridle Paths around Braemar

JAMES GRAY KYD

The object of this little book by the Senior Member of the Cairngorm Club is to introduce visitors to the wonder and beauty of the glens and drove roads in and around Braemar ; this is done by detailing sixteen walks of various length. 3s net

Cross-Country Walks in the West Highlands

ELIZABETH ORR BOYD

The author suggests routes for walks in three areas ; part of Wester Ross, the peninsulas extending from Loch Eil and Loch Eilt to Ardnamurchan, and the country within easy reach of Fort William. 10s 6d net



OLIVER & BOYD

Tweeddale Court, 14 High Street, Edinburgh, 1

TIMPSONS

—the boots you can trust

BOOTS. All kinds. For climbing, rambling, ski-ing. In tough-as-they-come leathers. Water-resistant. With Commando soles and heels, or nailed. Designed by climbers. Made by experts. For men. For women. Timpson Boots. Wonderful value.

From 49/11 to 130/-

Proved on the Himalayas

Timpson boots have been worn on many famous mountaineering expeditions. For example — the successful British Indian Nepalese Services Himalayan Expedition to Annapurna 1960.

REPAIRS AND NAILING

Timpsons specialise in every kind of boot repair. Just hand yours in to any Timpson shop.

*A p.c. to Wm. Timpson Ltd.,
Great Ducie Street, Manchester, 3,
will bring you a fully
illustrated catalogue.*



Abseiling on Shepherd's Crag, Borrowdale.

TIMPSON SHOE SHOPS

PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH · UNION STREET, GLASGOW
and throughout Scotland



**"King
George
IV"**

OLD SCOTCH WHISKY



THE DISTILLERS AGENCY LTD · EDINBURGH · SCOTLAND

for all Book-lovers the famous

Douglas & Foulis Library

offers unsurpassed facilities with a variety of

“ON DEMAND” and “STANDARD” SUBSCRIPTIONS

AND

SPECIAL “D & F” SERVICES

INCLUDING

Delivery service to town and country subscribers

Overlap service for country subscribers

Special arrangements for Club Libraries

full details available from the Librarian

DOUGLAS & FOULIS

9 Castle Street

CALEDONIAN 4414

Edinburgh, 2

CAIRNGORM HOTEL

AVIEMORE STRATHSPEY

INVERNESS-SHIRE

Running hot and cold water in all bedrooms.
Sited in its own grounds of two acres.
Adjacent to the main North Road to Inverness.
Facing the Cairngorms: Ideal mountaineering
and motoring centre. Magnificent scenery—
pine forests, moors, glens, rivers, lochs. Ski-ing.

Open throughout the year

Apply HUGH ROSS, Manager

Telephone: AVIEMORE 233

Telegrams: CAIRNGORM HOTEL, AVIEMORE

NETHY BRIDGE · INVERNESS-SHIRE

**THE
NETHY BRIDGE HOTEL**

Offers you all the comforts of a well-appointed Country House. Central Heating, Hot and Cold Water in every Bedroom.

Exceptionally well-equipped with Bathrooms. Accessible to the Cairngorms, which afford excellent ski-ing during the Spring months.

Special Terms quoted for Ski-ing Parties

Apply **HUGH ROSS, Manager**

Telephone : Nethy Bridge 203

Telegrams : Hotel, Nethy Bridge

BACK NUMBERS

OF THE

S.M.C. JOURNAL

ARE STILL OBTAINABLE

Indexes also Available

Enquiries to—

Mr P. E. MACFARLANE

217 Crofthill Road, Glasgow, S. 4

THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

WHETHER YOU INTEND
CLIMBING IN BRITAIN, THE ALPS
OR EVEN THE HIMALAYA, WE CAN SUPPLY ALL
YOUR REQUIREMENTS

FRANK DAVIES "THE CLIMBERS' SHOP" AMBLESIDE WESTMORLAND

SPECIALISING in catering for the needs of the modern climber by providing the best British and Continental equipment at the most reasonable prices

Suppliers of Equipment to :

Anglo-American Karakoram Expedition, 1960

Joint Services Himalayan Expedition, 1960
(Annapurna II)

Nuptse Himalayan Expedition, 1961

**Please write for our new Catalogue
"Modern Climbing Equipment"**

PROMPT POSTAL SERVICE



By Appointment
To H.M. The Queen Tent and Flagmaker

BENJAMIN EDGINGTON

(Silver and Edginton Ltd.)

144 SHAFTESBURY AVENUE

CAMBRIDGE CIRCUS

LONDON, W.C.2

(Phone: Covent Garden 0541)

Makers of the World's finest Tents and Sleeping Bags

Specialists in

Mountaineering, Camping and Expeditionary Equipment

SEND FOR FULLY ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE (POST FREE)

ALSO AT

2a EASTCHEAP
LONDON, E.C.3

Phone :
MANsion House 0814

18 ARNWENACK ST.,
FALMOUTH

Phone :
Falmouth 1134

18 LLOYD STREET
ALBERT SQUARE
MANCHESTER

Phone :
Deansgate 4540

Now under new Management

CLACHAIG HOTEL GLENCOE

**Drying Facilities for Resident
Climbers and Skiers**

**Dining Room open all day for
Non-Residents**

**FULLY
LICENSED**

Telephone :
Ballachulish 252



FRENCH TENTS

FRENCH Tents became popular last year because of the amazing quality offered at such low prices. The tents are subsidised by the French Government and included in the one price is a sewn-in groundsheet, down-to-earth flysheet with bell-end. Three-way zipped doors.

Lamont and Jamet are equally as good.

“JAMET” TENTS

P.C.A. 10. Height: 39 ins. × 4 ft. × 6 ft. plus bell end 15 ins.; walls 10 ins. high; Gold C.B. cotton; ground sheet with Vinyl on underside; the door has three Vitex Zippers completely closing it; wall at front of tent; fly sheet held down to the ground by rubber guys; steel poles and pegs; packed complete in one bag with erection instructions and guarantee. Weight: 9·8 lbs. **£10/0/0**

P.C.A. 12. Height 4ft. × 5 ft. × 6 ft. 6 ins. plus bell end 2 ft.; walls 13 ins. high; made in Gold IMPERVAL; ISOLSOL groundsheet; steel poles and pegs; three Vitex Zippers completely closing front door; wall at front of tent; flysheet held down to the ground by rubber guys; packed complete in one bag with erection instructions and guarantee. Weight: 13 lbs. **£15/10/0**

P.C.A. 15. Height 5 ft. × 6 ft. × 6 ft. 6 ins. plus bell end 2 ft. 6 ins.; walls 13 ins. high; made in IMPERVAL; ISOLSOL groundsheet; steel poles and pegs; mosquito netting window; three Vitex Zippers completely closing front door; wall at front of tent; flysheet held down to the ground by rubber guys; packed complete in one bag with erection instructions and guarantee. Weight: 19 lbs. **£19/19/0**

“LAMONT” CANADIAN TENTS

STANDARD MODEL. “Solisot” groundsheet sewn in—reinforced at foot of poles and gusseted in the corners. Bell-end tent in “Solitex” cloth—strong zip door opening—mosquito net window. Bell-end flysheet in blue “Super Solitex” cloth. Steel poles and pegs. Tent complete in carrying bag. **With Flysheet.**

Ref.	Length ridge base	Wide	Ht.	Walls	Wt. lbs.	Price complete	
						Std.	Luxe
ROUTIERE 210	6 ft. 7 ins./7 ft. 10 ins.	3 ft. 11 ins.	3 ft. 3 ins.	10 ins.	10½	9/19/6	—
BANDOL 310	6 ft. 7 ins./8 ft. 2 ins.	4 ft. 11 ins.	3 ft. 11 ins.	10 ins.	12½	13/12/6	—
JUAN 510	5 ft. 11 ins./8 ft. 2 ins.	6 ft. 7 ins.	4 ft. 11 ins.	12 ins.	16½	17/4/6	—
DOWN-TO-EARTH FLYSHEET (with Rubber Guys)							
MIAMI 610	5 ft. 11 ins./8 ft. 2 ins.	6 ft. 7 ins.	5 ft. 7 ins.	14 ins.	20	19/19/6	—
	610L 5 ft. 11 ins./8 ft. 2 ins.	6 ft. 7 ins.	5 ft. 7 ins.	14 ins.	20	—	21/19/6
GRAND LARGE 710	6 ft. 7 ins./9 ft. 10 ins.	7 ft. 10 ins.	5 ft. 11 ins.	16 ins.	24	25/0/0	—
	710L 6 ft. 7 ins./9 ft. 10 ins.	7 ft. 10 ins.	5 ft. 11 ins.	16 ins.	24	—	26/19/6
CONGES 810	6 ft. 7 ins./9 ft. 4 ins.	6 ft. 7 ins.	5 ft. 7 ins.	16 ins.	21½	21/14/0	—
	810L 6 ft. 7 ins./9 ft. 4 ins.	6 ft. 7 ins.	5 ft. 7 ins.	16 ins.	21½	—	23/19/6

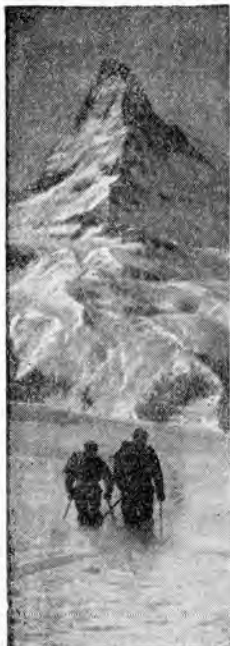
Obtainable post free from

F. ELLIS BRIGHAM

14 CATHEDRAL STREET · MANCHESTER, 4

Telephone: **Blackfriars 0161** Behind Manchester Cathedral

PLEASE SEND FOR 1961 “MOUNTAINEERS’ GADGETEER” FREE



"Protecting the face against scorching on the snows was a problem in the days before 'Glacier Cream.'"

—THE TIMES

GLACIER CREAM

A protective cream for mountaineers, skiers and those exposed to strong ultra-violet rays either direct from the sun or reflected off snow and ice.

NORMAL (Green Label), for altitudes up to 6,000 feet, can be applied as a foundation cream under powder or lipstick without loss of protective powers. Price 2s. 10d. a tube.

HIGH ALTITUDE (Red Label), for use over 6,000 feet, and also in severe conditions. As used on Mount Everest and Antarctic Expeditions. Price 3s. 8½d. a tube.

From all Chemists or direct (post free) from:

SAVORY & MOORE LTD.

143 New Bond St., London, W.1

By Appointment to H.M. The Queen, Chemists



GLENBRITTLE and the Isle of Skye

WILLIE SUTHERLAND

COACH OPERATOR AND MOTOR HIRER

GLENBRITTLE

GLENBRITTLE — SLIGACHAN — PORTREE BUS SERVICE
Camping, Climbing and School Parties specially catered for
*Parties (large or small) conveyed, complete with all gear, from steamer or
ferry direct to hotels, hostels and camp sites throughout the Island*

Camp Sites Provisioned — Stores

SUTHERLANDS MOUNTAIN HUT—particulars on request

Club Secretaries, Party Organisers and Visitors desiring accommodation, transport or information on the Island should write or telephone Carbst 223

For those who

AIM HIGH

Black's equipment for safety on the climb, Black's clothing for protection against the weather, Black's tents and sleeping bags for comfort in camp, so essential for preserving an alert mind in the mountains



THE MOUNTAIN TENT

Proved by service wherever there are mountains to be climbed, this tent is Black's proudest contribution to high altitude camping.



**ROPES · BOOTS
ICE AXES
KARABINERS
PITONS
STOVES
GRAMPONS**

SLEEPING BAGS

Bags of every type for every altitude, bags for year-round comfort. Black's have the biggest selection of sleeping bags in Britain.



FREE!

Write now for your free copy of Black's 'Good Companions' Catalogue. 84 fully illustrated pages show the complete range of Black's Camping and Mountaineering Equipment



**BLACK'S
GREENOCK**

THOS. BLACK & SONS (GREENOCK) LTD.

Industrial Estate, Port Glasgow
Telephone: Port Glasgow 41315

Showrooms:

22-24 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1
Telephone: HOLborn 5494

132 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2
Telephone: CENTral 4007

LOCH ERICHT HOTEL

DALWHINNIE

Open all year



Fully Licensed

Winter visitors welcome

Ideal centre for Climbing

Ski-ing—Shooting—Fishing—Touring

Farm produce



Personal attention

Proprietors : Mr and Mrs H. C. Matheson

ROBERT LAWRIE LTD.

Alpine and Polar Equipment Specialists

**54 SEYMOUR STREET, MARBLE ARCH,
LONDON, W.1**

Telephone :
PADDINGTON 5252

Telegraphic Address :
"Alpinist," Wesdo, London

CLIMBING & SKI-ING BOOTS

from stock or made to measure. Many different patterns of Italian hand-sewn boots available with Vibram soles and heels—stock sizes only, from **£6. 6s.**

CLIMBING CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT

Crampons, Ice-axes, Sleeping Bags, Rucksacks, Duvets, Jackets, Socks, Rescue Equipment, etc.

REPAIRS & RE-NAILINGS TO BOOTS

Genuine Vibram rubber soles and heels available.

HAND-SEWN REPAIRS

to our own supply of boots only.

Orders executed by post.

Ask for self-measurement Form : boots will be sent to try for fit.

Illustrated Catalogue on application.

BUSINESS HOURS : Mon., Tues., Wed. and Fri., 9 a.m.—5.30 p.m.
Late Closing : Thurs., 9 a.m.—7 p.m. Early Closing : Sat., 9 a.m.—12 noon



Loch Laggan Inn

KINLOCH LAGGAN
nr. NEWTONMORE

Adjacent to
CREAG MEAGAI DH

Climbing
Tobogganing Ski-ing

Tel.: KINLOCH LAGGAN 204

MEMBERS

*are asked to support
the Advertisers in the
Journal and to mention
the Journal in any
communications with*

ADVERTISERS

THE
DARIEN
PRESS
LTD.



BRISTO PLACE
EDINBURGH 1

Telegrams:
"Printing, Edinburgh"
Phone: CALedonian 7104

Perfect Printing

MAGAZINES, CATALOGUES,
PRICE LISTS, REPORTS OF
CHURCHES, SOCIETIES, ETC.,
PRODUCED IN A TASTEFUL
FORM AND AT REASONABLE
PRICES.

CENTRE FOR
MOUNTAINEERING

*

CRANLARICH HOTEL
PERTHSHIRE

Trout Fishing on
Lochs Dochart and Nubhair
also on River Fillan

*

Telephone : Telegrams :
Crianlarich 202 Hotel, Crianlarich

P · Y · G

**PEN-Y-GWRYD
HOTEL**

NANTGWYNANT · SNOWDONIA

THE HOME OF BRITISH
MOUNTAINEERING,
CATERING
PARTICULARLY FOR
CLIMBERS

Llanberis 211, R.A.C., A.A.
(Guests) 368.
Station Fully
Bettws-y-Coed. Licensed.

P · Y · G

**OUTSTANDING
BOOKS**

**MONT BLANC
AND THE SEVEN
VALLEYS**

Roger Frison-Roche is a name well known to mountaineers. The eminent French writer's detailed study of the Mont Blanc massif is written after years of intimate association with this highest peak in Europe. He describes all aspects of the area, the snows, glaciers and forests, the people, the mountaineers and skiers. 168 magnificent heliogravure plates.

45s.

**THE
TECHNIQUE OF
Mountaineering**

Written with the needs of the average climber in mind, this practical and concise manual by J. E. B. Wright now appears in a second edition. "A mine of information for the beginner, and indeed the old stager . . . the line drawings are numerous and comprehensive . . . excellent photographs."—*Sport and Recreation*.

16s.

**ROCK
CLIMBING IN
BRITAIN**

Also by J. E. B. Wright. Everyone who wants to learn about Britain's best climbs will find excellent professional advice between these covers. All the famous groups of hills in Scotland, Wales and the Lake District are described, each having many approaches. 145 smaller rock outcrops in 13 English counties are also listed. Plates and diagrams, 16s.

from

NICHOLAS KAYE LTD.
194-200 Bishopsgate, London, E.C.2.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB GUIDE BOOKS

DISTRICT GUIDES

Descriptive guide books comprising topographical detail for the hill-walker and a selection of routes on the crags for the rock-climber. They contain much information of general interest to all those who frequent the Scottish Highlands.

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS	Price 15s. Postage, 1s. 6d.
WESTERN HIGHLANDS	Revised edition in preparation.
CENTRAL HIGHLANDS	Price 15s. Postage, 1s. 6d.
THE CAIRNGORMS (including Lochnagar, etc.)	Price 18s. Postage, 1s. 9d.
SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS (also includes the Campsies, Ochils and Lomonds)	Price 15s. Postage, 1s. 6d.
ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND (excluding Skye)	Price 15s. Postage, 1s. 6d.
ISLAND OF SKYE	Price 15s. Postage, 1s. 6d.

CLIMBERS' GUIDES

Pocket-sized guide books for the rock-climber.

THE CUILLIN OF SKYE	Price 9s. 6d. Postage, 9d.
BEN NEVIS	Price 7s. 6d. Postage, 9d.
GLENCOE AND ARDGOUR Vol. I. Buachaille Etive Mor (now available)	Price 7s. 6d. Postage, 9d.
Vol. II. Glencoe and Garbh Bheinn	In preparation.
CAIRNGORMS AREA	To be published in 1961.
Vol. I. (Northern District) The Cairngorms	
Vol. II. (Southern District) Lochnagar, Broad Cairn, Clova	
ARRAN	Price 4s. Postage, 6d.
ARROCHAR (Cobbler, Narnain, Brack, etc.)	Price 3s. 6d. Postage, 4½d.

Other Climbers' guides in course of preparation.

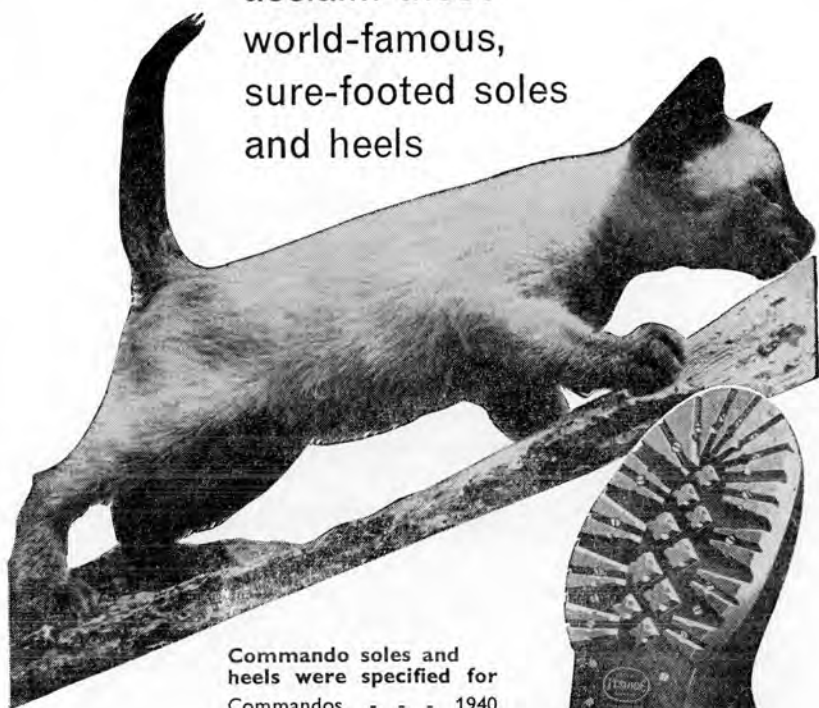
OTHER PUBLICATIONS

MUNRO'S TABLES of the 3,000-ft. mountains of Scotland, together with CORBETT'S list of 2,500-ft. mountains, and DONALD'S TABLES of the 2,000-ft. tops of the Lowlands.	Price 7s. 6d. Postage, 10½d.
OUTLINE MAP OF THE CUILLIN HILLS (Paper) (3 in. to 1 mile. A useful supplement to the Cuillin guide.)	Price 2s. 6d. Postage, 3d.

All the above publications may be had from any Bookseller or from:

Messrs DOUGLAS & FOULIS, 9 Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2
J. B. WYLIE & CO. LTD., 406 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, C.2

Climbers and mountaineers everywhere acclaim these world-famous, sure-footed soles and heels



Commando soles and heels were specified for

- Commandos - - - 1940
- Antarctic Expedition 1950
- Greenland Expedition 1951
- Korean Boot - - - 1951
- Mount Everest - - 1951
- Himalayan Expedition 1952
- Greenland Expedition 1952
- Korean Boot - - - 1953
- Transantarctic Expedition 1956/57



TRANS-AMERICAN WALK 1960

always
specify

COMMANDO SOLES & HEELS

for rigorous service in sport and industry

I.T.S. RUBBER LTD., PETERSFIELD, HANTS, ENGLAND

I.P.I.

2 5 6 12 16

No, this is not a secret code ! These numbers are the scales in miles to the inch of Bartholomew's contour-coloured maps and atlases of Scotland.

HALF-INCH MAPS

Scotland is covered by twenty-four sheets. They give a wealth of detail and are most valuable for hill walking.

Cloth 5s., Paper 3s.

ROAD ATLAS OF GREAT BRITAIN

Five miles to the inch. A very popular and detailed motoring atlas. Index. 104 pages.

12s. 6d.

SIXTH-INCH MAPS

Three sheets cover Scotland. Folded for practical use in a car.

Per Sheet 3s.

TOURING MAP OF SCOTLAND

Twelve miles to the inch. With road classification, it is ideal for planning a journey.

Cloth 6s., Paper 4s.

BRITISH ISLES ROAD MAP

Sixteen miles to the inch. A new edition of this impressive map is just published.

Cloth 7s. 6d., Paper 5s.

These maps are on sale at booksellers. A detailed catalogue will be sent on request.

JOHN BARTHOLOMEW & SON LTD.

12 Duncan Street, Edinburgh, 9