

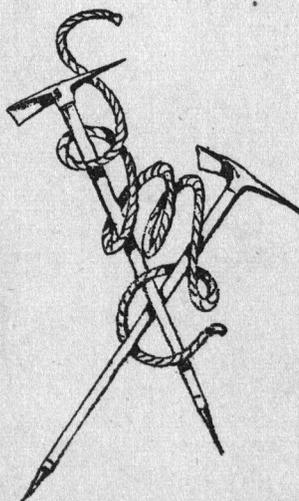
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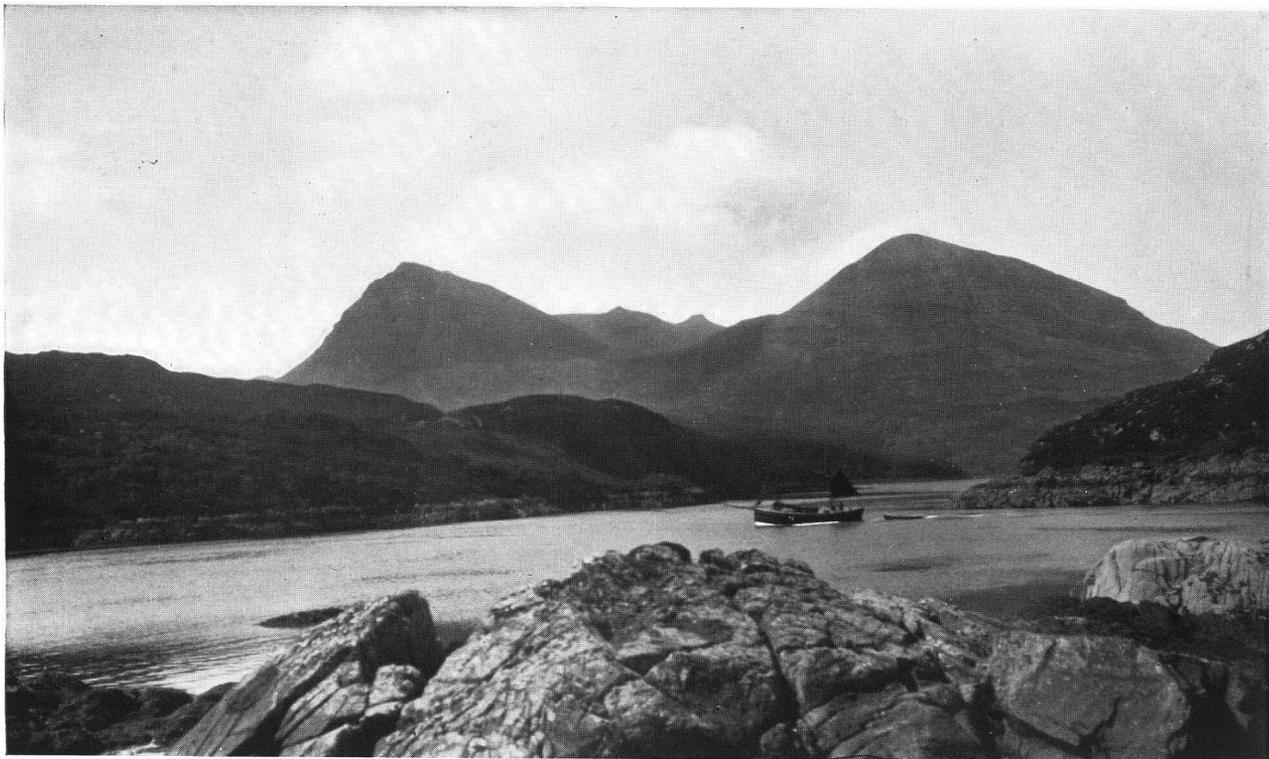
All Notices for April Number should be sent to the Hon. Editor at 51 Moss Street, Paisley, as soon as possible, and not later than 15th February 1929.

CONTENTS.

Sail Garbh	The Hon. Lord Mackay
Some Memories of Braeriach.....	A. W. Russell
The Unkenned Mountain.....	J. G. Stott
Early Summer in the Highlands.....	Rev. R. P. Dansey
The Mountains in Metaphor.....	A. N. O. N.
Proceedings of the Club—	
Easter Meet, 1928—Kinlochewe.	
Dundonnell.	
Loch Maree.	
Club Room Meetings.	
Library.	
Slide Collection.	
Reviews.	
Notes and Excursions—	
Lake District Climbs.....	J. Graham M'Phee
Climbing in Ireland.....	Rev. C. R. P. Vandeleur
S.M.C. Abroad.	
The Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland—	
Edinburgh Section—Easter Meet, 1928.	
Glasgow Section—Easter Meet, 1928.	
Kingshouse Meet.	
Arrochar Meet.	
Arran Meet.	

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Barrel Buttress, Quinag.
Quinag.
Ben Nevis from S.E. Ridge of Aonach Beag.
View of Garbh Choire from Ben Macdhuì.
From Sgurr a Mhaim—Bidean-nam-Bian and Ben Cruachan to right.
Sgurr a Mhaim from slopes of Aonach Beag.
Posts of Coire Ardair.
Easter Meet Group.



1928

BARREL BUTTRESS, QUINAG

G. Sang

THE SCOTTISH
Mountaineering Club Journal.

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No. 106.

SAIL GARBH: ITS BARREL BUTTRESS

BY THE HONOURABLE LORD MACKAY.

IN far Assynt a fine climb lies. It is as a labour of love in more than one sense that I venture to pen somewhat about it. After the passage of a number of years which would make the majority of a youth, I find in my subconscious mind, impressions, pictures, exhilarations of that climb, that in dreaming moments are as vivid as the events of yestereven. But it was the meeting over our dear friend Harold Raeburn's last farewell that caused these ancient memories to be stirred up a little, and to grow into a desire to live for others too. I found Ling of similar mood, and gradually by interchange of help, this adventure here recounted reshaped itself.

If you go from Inchnadamph over a string road northwards you will come in the end to Kylesku, and if you now turn suddenly southwards your eye will delight itself in the vision of three fine buttresses, ends of the Sail-Garbh Spidean Coinich Massif, part of the Quinag. The third to the westward on a certain Easter (of 1907) had fascinated Raeburn. No wonder!

Unless my memory-vision deceives me, when first disclosed the Buttress was a wonderful sight, in appearance unassailable, rearing up proudly to an apparently isolated and flattish summit; but in the middle regions, at every point, bulged, protuberant, disjunct, repellent, with a fair round belly that seemed to say to man,

“ Miserable fly without even a fly’s suckers to aid, you shall but drop off if you try hither.”

I know not at this time who was the inventive genius, but the name of Barrel Buttress stuck and clung, and with it went ever, among the bold spirits of an Easter Inchnadamph Meet, a flavour of the near-impossible. Yet Raeburn did it.

Here, so far as I know, is the full citation of the only printed authority—I cite *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. IV. p. 257. “ The great climb of the meet—the ascent of the Barrel Buttress of Sail Garbh on Quinag—was this day successfully accomplished by Raeburn, Ling, and Mackay. The climb will probably be fully described elsewhere, and here it will suffice to say that after an unsuccessful attempt, the party descended and reached the top by a side route. Then, descending once more, they rejoined the first line of ascent and reascending they completed the climb by the original direct route. The whole climb took between five and six hours.”

That is all. The promise of the Notes of Proceedings somehow was not fulfilled. No one knows how or why. I think no subsequent notice has yet appeared of this climb.

Before me lie Ling’s notes made at the time. They begin: “ Raeburn had been much impressed by a fine buttress and we wished to explore it.” Good! The notes end: “ A most successful day to finish up a memorable meet.” And so indeed it was.

Our climbing giants of to-day will please go and see for themselves. After eighteen years during which rock-climbing for me has been in fantasy only, no one will expect of me a categorised, scheduled, ticketted, belabelled, domesticated, schoolmaster-pointered account of our doings.

Arriving betimes, a little after 10 A.M., by way of Loch nan Eun at a point below our Buttress, we gazed up at it for longer, I think, than ardent gymnasts of the rocks will usually do.

For me, I had been trained in a school, the school of Geoffrey Winthrop Young, to whom it was a faith that no climb was impossible, yet I remember me well

wondering there and then if *this* one was to falsify all our fond theories. From below, the sense of that bulging centre, ribbed almost around with a broad belly-band of smoothed, spreading rock-girdle, was overpowering. It conveyed the feeling of creeping beneath. Only it could not have really been so. In mathematical angles, doubtless, we were gazing up over huge rock and grass steps along a line of vision tilted at not more than 60 degrees. But the constructive mind had carried one's body in imagination on and in below right to the climb-foot, and there the centre of the Buttress seemed actually to impend, while the sharp side outlines of the massif indubitably formed on either hand the bowed line that would correspond to such a shaping of the centre. Nothing so like the upward cast of a hogshead, hooped and coopered at the middle, narrowing after that to the top, could well be figured.

We parted there from photographer Campbell, roped up, and started. I think I led over the comparatively easy first piece—a steep staircase of alternate rock and grass—and then at the real test the rope had Raeburn, then Ling, and myself at the dangling end. And so to work.

Now if you, my reader, have ever been lonely, have felt as a humble midge kicking futilely in an ethereal blue universe, then you felt like me. For much of that first climb I found myself clinging to something, under an ever out-bulging canopy, with no one in sight; while pants and groans, and grunted doubts and despairs came floating out of ether, but no human connection between me and them but a disappearing length of rope, living and convulsive like a snake. When I came, I came up quickly. I knew the bit was cleared and franked for traffic. But the angle, often indeed the overhang, was such that much prime climbing in the leader was needed. I refer me now to Ling's notes. I astony myself to see that he records that before we turned we had done 150 feet. One hundred and fifty feet! Then we turned. Maybe. But my memory tells me we climbed much more than that, certainly much harder than 150 feet of rock-

work ordinarily means. And, again, Ling speaks as of a party trying to climb a crack or chimney—it was more like up a sheer round open face than trying “up a gully” or chimney as the notes have it. The Barrel was not gullied in the usual sense; it rounded, goggled, sprang out like the tracery of a vault. It is true, perhaps, one stave has slipped a bit and overlaps its neighbour most of the way up, making a perpendicular black line; the overlap being to eastward. But the first long struggle we had was, in my memory, an open-faced climb to reach the taut belly-band of the affair; and at the last the upper edge of the centre hoop when attained was thus: a promenade—we walked, all three walked, along a flat corridor, left side against a sheer wall, ledge not over $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide; below the underhang; landing ground a sward 300 feet below. Gorgeous! Exhilarating!

But I anticipate. To reach this the general climbing was ever out and out from the sprung stave, eastwards, upwards by flaky slabs half detached, excursions back, then more flakes.

Perhaps neither Ling nor Harold Raeburn knew how long they took to get up to the corridor. Perhaps to them it was like a short, sharp struggle. Ling records: “A shallow chimney—angle against us—leader could not get purchase off the heather to raise himself.” Brave heather, to cling there! “I passed up a stone which he put on the platform and just managed to pull up. A nasty place without much hitch.” Well they got up there, and—I swear it—spent about three-quarters of an hour on the easy corridor sending down over me showers of mingled groans and splinters of misguided rock.

For these two wonderful climbers could, it seems, find no way further on, though they were now come to where outfling was replaced by infling. Disappointing. But for me? Did they know that during these double operations I was (rope not allowing else) sprawled along one of Ling’s “flakes which had to be swarmed over and were none too secure.” Literally, I lay supported by one—the right—arm, jammed ever deeper and deeper, if I could force it, into the crack behind the flake, and by a jockey

grip with the knees on the neck of that stony steed. No foothold, no handhold. Below was certainly nothing even to hope to fall upon until one went out of this exhilarating world altogether. But I had not the least intention to do anything of the sort, but to will myself up into airy safety, and help them find a way. In fact, I know not even now why I might not have been taken up and made a partner in the confabulation. All perhaps I had to do was to indicate to those in authority above me a certain satiety, and go up.

When they did really begin to despair, they had me up. Profound relief to muscles and mind. But the mind sprang incontinent at the problem ahead. No route—it seemed plain—unless, by returning to the cracked stave, one swarmed the flat and opening crack. It was really not a “chimney,” but at least afforded two splayed walls by whose help to utilise the subtlest of all climber’s arts—carefully distributed counter-thrusts, all with a subsensed resultant of equipoise. I remember I urged the attack—I offered even to try it—insisted that Harold could do such a thing—beyond doubt. But my more experienced leader said no—would not push his attack with utter seriousness. Ling and he ordered retreat, so down we went. I think I may legitimately claim to have been the one to urge that no problem should defeat a party of strength and courage till it had at least prospected the enemy from each end. Without need for much suasion, up we went rollicking by the Eastern Gully-divide which separates the Barrel from Buttress II. Lunch had given fresh heart. We roped at the top, and Ling led down over the top ledge, very abrupt in my recollection—but not too difficult a rock climb—open and broken. Below us—I think 300 to 400 feet below—appeared suddenly the string corridor. It cut the line of grass and heather far below. Under it nothing. But how it flipped my acquisitive bump to active life. Down to that string we must get and—if down we were—then to myself I said, up again we are going to climb it: honestly and freely: without delay. The others doubtless communed with themselves and likewise. But each slyly kept his determination to him-

self. And climb it we did. The *mauvais pas* is really a magnificent spot. I hardly think memory exaggerates or plays me false. The crack or splay as the ascending angle dipped back towards the snout was found to have opened out to the shape of a black cleft. We came, not down that, but got in upon it from the westward by a perilous open traverse, nearly on knife edge of barrel-bulge. Within it, lo! a black belay of superlative workmanship. Nature's provision for the bold pioneer. All the rope was added on—a separate rope ring was made and used for a free run if we must after all proceed ever downwards. With this hand-hold Ling first, and then I, swarmed down. First over a blob of rock split by the crack, and then down the perpendicular splay—30 to 40 feet of it, I think. Certainly not easy—yet, once done I do not now say a climb of the highest acme of technical difficulty.

Here again shoots out a personal gleam of great vividness. Ling, as always, seemed to be a sinuous being, climbing close to the rock corner. I, on the contrary, adopted the methods we had so often developed in the South, and climbed out. I hope climbers of to-day know and love the delights of "climbing out." You eschew holding-in; you abandon the precarious safety of body friction. Feet spread, finding far out counter-pushes, hands not used as hooks from which a heavy body hangs pendant, but balancing, distributing, controlling. In this form of rock work the arms are hardly weight-carriers at all and do not tire. Viewed so, from above, one doubtless looked like a straddled spider, dangerously out-topping the void below. Harold disliked the method. His words were, "No, no, not that way. Keep close in." But I begged (rope above relieved all fear perchance) to have my own way, and I did complete the passage perilous just in that manner, without, I am sure, once requiring the rope's aid. And afterwards I re-climbed it in similar manner.

But Harold Raeburn came down last—in his own classical method, and confessed it was not quite so impossible as a pre-luncheon eye had informed him. We



1928

QUINAG

G. Sang



June 1927

BEN NEVIS FROM S.E. RIDGE OF AONACH BEAG

Rev. R. P. Dansey

had slipped the ring, our rope was down on the ledge, our last dates were eaten. And then I broached the absolute necessity of wiping out in imagination the whole interlude, and of taking up the climb, upwards led, as if it had never been interrupted. All agreed. We roped, and Raeburn led magnificently up. Difficult as these 40 feet are, I do not think any good climber need require assistance from the rope. But there is verily not much to spare. And the aerial position (have I over-much pictured it?) is thrilling in the extreme. After the bad step conquered, Ling and I again insisted on abandoning the circuit of the upper Barrel by which we got in, and on climbing the black cleft throughout. It made a magnificent finish. The entry had to be made by Raeburn off my shoulder and head. Ling helped me, and then we got Ling persuaded to dangle free under the chock, at a word given to kick himself violently off out into the void, while we heaved and hoisted the swinging man over the chock stone before he could swing back under. *Ce n'est pas la Guerre*, perhaps, but *magnifique* it was, and it succeeded. Doubtless a stirrup rope or other more ponderous device will, when it is done again another time, bring the last man up. And so to the top by more grand open climbing. And so over Quinag, and so to great triumph at Inchnadamph.

And so, finally, is a great joy fulfilled, a memory achieved, and a dear duty done.

SOME MEMORIES OF BRAERIACH.

By A. W. RUSSELL.

BRAERIACH with its massive bulk and wonderful corries, and above all that vast gravel plateau in which the River Dee rises at a height of nearly 4,000 feet, appealed to me strongly since I first explored its fastnesses, and it has never ceased to furnish fresh delights and new interests on each succeeding visit.

My first introduction was in August 1896 when my brother, R. R. Russell, and I were spending a week at the primitive little cottage of Guislich, near the south end of Loch Pityoulish, and exploring the Cairngorms for the first time. The weather was almost continually wet, and we seldom returned to the hospitable peat fire of Guislich without being soaked through. The central of the three northern corries, Coire Ruadh as apparently giving a longer climb and leading more directly to the summit, indicated a suitable first ascent. A steady tramp up Glen Einich to the lower bothy and thence by the Bennaigh Bheag to Coire Ruadh got us to the summit cairn in mist and rain in three and a half hours. The rocks of the corrie are much broken up, and afforded nothing more than a very mild scramble. The descent was made by the ridge—really narrow for the Cairngorms—on the North of Coire Bhrochain, to the foot of the Allt a Choire Mhoir and thence back over Ben Muich Dhui and Cairngorm.

Next year, 1897, ascent and descent were varied. It was a perfect May morning when A. Fraser and I reached Aviemore Station at 3.50 A.M. from Edinburgh. After early breakfast, made in the Porter's room (in those days Aviemore could boast of neither hotel nor refreshment room, and the station was very similar to what Kinraig now is), a start was made at 4.30. Glen Einich was looking its best as we made for the lower bothy and

pushed up into Coire an Lochain the westernmost of the three northern corries. The loch was still completely frozen over and the whole face of the corrie almost pure white. A route was taken up the centre over very hard snow, necessitating a fair amount of step cutting, an overhanging cornice giving an interesting end to the climb. The summit reached at 11.15 was a smooth field of snow with no trace of rock or cairn. The view of Coire Bhrochain was particularly fine with an enormous cornice just to the south of the cairn. The return journey was made by the Angels' Peak, Cairn Toul, Ben Muich Dhui, and Cairngorm. The result of the drift or banking up of the snow over the level plateau of Braeriach was very manifest later in the day, as Ben Muich Dhui had only patches of snow, and we had a clear walk up Cairngorm where there was not a vestige of snow, an extraordinary contrast to the Alpine appearance of Braeriach. Guislich reached at 10.15 P.M. again provided a hospitable meal and fire ere we sauntered down to the station for the midnight train to carry us back to town and the ordinary office routine next morning.

Fresh routes were explored next year, 1898, the first ascent being made in June with W. Garden and T. Gibson. We made a start from Aviemore at 9.30 P.M., and after a wonderful walk through the forest in the evening light reached the summit cairn of Braeriach at 2.10 A.M., by the easy slopes immediately to the west of Coire an Lochain. The sunset glow was still strong enough to allow of reading quite small print as we halted by the loch-side about 1 A.M. for a meal, but not too strong to prevent us picking up and identifying the various lights along the Moray Firth. The return journey was again made by Cairn Toul, and thence by the Lairig Ghru to Aviemore by 11.20.

Later in the same year (September) I visited Braeriach with A. Fraser and A. R. Wilson, when a most interesting ascent was made by way of the Lairig Ghru and traverse into Coire Bhrochain where Fraser and I ascended the west gully while Wilson took the northern ridge. The lower half of our climb was over scree, but the top

half was rock, very steep and distinctly loose in places. The descent was made by the easy ridge dividing Coire Ruadh from Coire Bennaidh and thence to the lower bothy.

A visit in May 1899 gave an opportunity of further variation. Two friends tempted by my account of the glories of May 1897 agreed to accompany me, but alas, the weather was on its very worst behaviour, and we had a regular winter's day with a westerly gale, and driving rain and snow. The midnight train to Aviemore and an early start saw us at the top of the Lairig Ghru early in the forenoon. A line was then taken over the snow for the north edge of Coire Bhrochain and the ridge followed to the top of Braeriach. There was no inducement to loiter, so we hurried on following the edge of the Garbh Choire and finally got into shelter by descending into the corrie near where the Dee makes its first plunge. The Lairig Ghru was far from sheltered as we fought our way through in the teeth of driving snow, and glad we were to reach the shelter of the forest and later the peat fire and warmth of Guislich and there get partially dried ere setting out again for the station to catch that useful but most uncomfortable midnight train south.

August 1900 supplied a further very interesting variation. Starting off with a friend from Guislich, the ascent was made from the lower bothy by the face of Coire an Lochain following up the stream, which gives no real difficulty; and a return made by the March Cairn, the cliffs above Loch Einich and Sgoran Dubh a delightful walk with magnificent views of the loch and the Sgoran cliffs rising so darkly above it.

In April 1901 my route of September 1898 was more or less repeated, but this time under snow conditions and again in perfect weather with J. W. Drummond and Gibson as my companions. Once again the midnight train landed us at Aviemore in the early hours, and after breakfast at Guislich a start made at 6.15 A.M. The Lairig was found to be most Alpine—a hard slope of snow filled the whole pass so smooth that one could almost have cycled a large part of the actual pass, and the sun

shone in a cloudless sky. From near the Pools of Dee a traverse was made on steep snow round into Coire Bhrochain, whence the ascent was made by the east gully over easy snow and thence over rocks behind the Pinnacle to the summit by 1.30 P.M. The big cornice stretching over the gully to the south of the cairn by which Fraser and I had ascended in 1898 was again very fine. Descent was made to Glen Einich by the easy slopes to the west of Coire an Lochain.

A few days later a further ascent was made by the ridge between Coire an Lochain and Coire Ruadh, with descent by Sron na Lairig to the mouth of the Lairig—a heavy day of mist and snow.

The only ascent made in 1903 was in September on familiar ground by the same ridge east of Coire an Lochain and down by the easy slopes to the west of that corrie. Although it was September, winter conditions ruled; hard frozen snow everywhere above 3,500 feet.

In 1906, Braeriach provided still further variations. It was a perfect June morning when I left Aviemore at 7.10 A.M. with a friend, and ascending Cadha Mor above Loch an Eilein had a delightful ridge walk to the top of Sgoran Dubh, and then crossing the plateau past Loch nan Cnapan reached Cairn Toul at 12.45. Thence in brilliant weather we followed the edge of that wonderful Garbh Choire right round by the Angels' Peak past the March Cairn and across the plateau to the summit cairn by 2.25. On the descent we took in Sron na Lairig, and then cut across the rough hummocky ground lying to the south of Carn Elrick to the lower bothy, and thence to Aviemore by 5.15—a most interesting ten hours' tramp.

Coire Dhondail with its big buttress descending towards Loch Einich, such an outstanding feature as one ascends the glen, still remained unexplored. So in June 1907, with A. Fraser and A. R. Wilson we set forth to examine the last of these corries. So far my expeditions had been altogether on foot, but on this occasion we were staying at Boat of Garten and cycled as far as the lower bothy. The well-made track was taken

from the upper bothy, providing glorious views of Loch Einich and the Sgoran Cliffs, until the mouth of Coire Dhondail was reached, when a route was laid straight up to the Einich Cairn. Some time was taken in removing with very ineffective instruments the antlers of a dead stag which we found amongst the rocks—a victim presumably of the past winter—and which were thereafter carried in triumph home—the necessity of these same antlers affixed to a rather decaying skull being kept to the rear or windward of the party remains still a fragrant memory. From the Einich Cairn the summit was easily reached and the descent again made by Coire an Lochain to the lower bothy to recover our cycles for the run back.

In 1909 a repetition of the route was made, but on this occasion with weather at its worst, at least the rain was incessant and the wind a gale.

For the next ten years Braeriach and its glories were but a pleasant memory, and it was not until August 1920 that I was again able to renew acquaintance—this time with my eldest son, A. C. Russell, and once again Braeriach afforded variation of route and scene. We cycled over from Carrbridge one Sunday evening, staying the night in comfort at the upper bothy. Unfortunately, next day was consistently wet with the usual westerly gale. The path in Coire Dhondail was on this occasion followed the whole way, reaching the plateau by more or less of a staircase through a waterfall, whence the March Cairn was easily reached, and thence by careful compass work the summit cairn a short time later. We descended by the ridge between Coire an Lochain and Coire Ruadh, and thence cutting along just above the loch, found our only shelter for the day in a large snow or ice cave near the foot of the waterfall up which I had ascended with Fraser some twenty odd years before. A rapid descent to the bothy followed, where we surprised a ghillie who had come up early that morning to keep people off the hills in the hope of a stalk, but under the weather conditions ruling, which made sport impossible, he turned out most friendly. A fine evening and leisurely cycle back again to Carrbridge ended an enjoyable day.



May 1897

VII
VIEW OF GARBH CHOIRE FROM BEN MACDHUI

A. W. Russell

I fear I have written rather an egotistical record of ascents, but I trust that it may induce others—though perhaps necessarily of the salvationist order—to explore Braeriach with its wonderful mass, its icy wells, and its many glorious and varied corries, so full of an ever-changing and varying grandeur whether seen at midnight or midday, in sunshine or in storm. These notes, however, may help to emphasise how fickle is the weather on our higher Scottish hills, and how necessary it is to be prepared for winter conditions even in the height of summer.

THE UNKENNED MOUNTAIN.

BY J. G. STOTT.

WITH the Club nearly forty years in existence it might have been supposed that the energy of its members would have carried some of them up every mountain in Scotland. Such, however, was not quite the case. Respect for proprietary and sporting rights has always been a fundamental rule with us; and where it has been a case of enclosed ground, permission has always been sought, and almost always been freely granted, to visit it. But there was an exception.

Far away up in Ross-shire is situated the deer forest of Corriewhuskey. We long knew that it enclosed a fine group of mountains, chief of which was Benyulaidhben, which means, I am told, "the Mountain upon the Mountain." Permission to visit it out of the shooting season had more than once been courteously sought. The noble landowner had no objection; but the sporting tenant—a wealthy alien—had. On the last occasion, some years ago, he replied telling the Club to betake its activities to a region much hotter than Ross-shire, and informing us that if any of our members were found on his land we should be thrown over the deer fences. Thus for many years was the seclusion of the forest preserved.

Some time ago our indefatigable Secretary learned that the lease to this gentleman had expired, and the lands had reverted to their owner, the Duke of Killiecrankie. A letter to His Grace asking permission for a small party to visit the forest at his convenience brought an exceptionally favourable reply. The Duke wrote that he fully sympathised with the aims and objects of the S.M.C.; that he was aware of our discourteous treatment by his tenant; and that nothing would give him more pleasure than that the whole Club (he apparently did not

then know that our membership is about three hundred) should visit the forest as his guests for a week—living in his lodges, and making use of his retainers; and that all that was necessary was to send him date and intended number, and leave all else to him.

A reply was sent thanking the Duke for the honour done the Club, asking him to become one of our Hon. Members, and intimating that for so special an occasion it would be arranged that half a dozen of our now dwindling band of original members would avail themselves of his hospitality and report on his mountains.

Naturally it took time to enlist such a band amongst elderly gentlemen whose share in the active energies of the Club was long over; but it was done. Ice axes that had long been relegated to the menial duties of the coal cellar were furbished up; Alpine ropes that had aforetime done service in places perilous were removed from clothes-poles, and were found still to be long enough to encircle waists of latter-day amplitude; "Hobnailers" were rescued from lumber rooms, softened with the dubbin they had once known so well, and adjusted to gouty feet. Knickerbockers had mostly descended to and been worn out by grandchildren, but substitutes were forthcoming.

One esteemed member came to the rendezvous in the regimentals of an ancestor hero of the Peninsular War, in which he had much fancied himself at Fancy Dress Balls nearly half a century before. He had lost the headpiece since then, its place being now taken by an ancient tam-o'-shanter that had braved Grampian gales langsyne, and had since, I believe, done honourable service as a kitchen tea-cosy. A second of us turned up in a faded kilt that carried half a century of history. Substantial trouserettes of red flannel formed, I doubt not, his wife's contribution to reinforce his legs against Ross-shire breezes. Well, the six of us duly arrived at Invercalloch, the nearest railway point to the Corriewhuskey Forest. There we found drawn up to meet us a gallant band of the Killiecrankie Highlanders, consisting of the Duke's piper, his standard-bearer, a dozen stalwart ghillies armed with Lochaber axes, a dozen hill ponies

and sundry vehicles. "By jove," said our military member, "this is something like the thing," and he tripped over his sword out of our third class carriage, and returned the salute with all the dignity of his Peninsular ancestor.

Then the pipes struck up, down on the ground went the axes, and back and forth whirled their owners in a wild war dance. Next there introduced himself the head stalker, Ewen Sronmhornanfeidh, who was to be our particular mentor during our stay. He was an enormous man and carried an enormous telescope. His name signified "Ewen of the nose who smells out the deer." He explained to us that the whole party would drive about a dozen miles up the glen, then mount the ponies and penetrate some distance into a group of mountains (after a picnic lunch); then, as seemed good to us, to climb to or be carried to the summits by the ghillies—hence the strong force of men and ponies. As far as clouds permitted us to see, the mountains formed a fine group, rocky and snow-streaked.

Lunch was a banquet, spread on the heather by the roadside above a small loch. Sundry cases bearing such well-known names as Fortnum & Mason, Talisker, Mumm, Sandeman, &c., made their appearance. But first the road, both above and below our halting-place, was barricaded with stout wire to ensure our privacy. We had not met much traffic on the road; but as usual it piled up fast in face of an obstruction, and soon there were a dozen motor vehicles at each end clamouring for passage. It seemed to us bold procedure thus to hold up a public road, but they have a way of their own in Ross-shire.

As the clamour increased, Ewen of the Nose sent a couple of his men down to quell it. The first thing we saw was a motor cyclist, who with his machine had been making himself specially objectionable, flying over the wall into the loch with his cycle, impelled by the strong arms of the Duke's myrmidons. The man crawled ashore; his noisy machine sunk. Then we heard the winged words of Hector of the Hairy Legs: "What the teffle

do you mean, you pock-pudden gomerils, disturbing the dinner of these chentlemen, the Duke's friends? I suppose you think that bekas you have yats and motor cars and grammy phones you can stravaig about the countryside in your stinking, roaring rattle-traps, afearing the deer on the hills and the old women at the peats, and killing the sheep and the hens on the roads; but you cannot do yon in Ross-shire. Here everything belongs to the Duke—the land, the lochs, and the people. You there! with the face of a bubbly-jock and the wame of a braxied tup, you say you are a Member of Parliament! Nonsense! I know Sir Donald, our Member; a chentleman, a good shot, and a good fisher. If the Members of Parliament were like *you*, I can believe the Duke when he says you are a lot of poor wastrels; and that wan half or maybe three-halves of you should be put out of the country. What is it you say? You will write to *Times*! We do not know *Times* in Ross-shire. No chentleman of that name comes fishing or shooting here. But take you care that you do not get a sweem in the loch like yon impident lad wi' the velocipede back there. When the gentry folks have feenished their dinner then you can aall go your ways, and be tammed to you, and we do not want you back here anymore at aall, at aall, whateffer." Whereupon big Hector of the Hairy Legs shouldered his axe and departed similarly to pacify the noisy crowd at the other end.

Meantime we guests were enjoying the fun and our lunch. Ewen of the deer-smelling proclivities (I wonder if he was equally perceptible to the deer) was ruler of the feast, and right royally did he press food and drink on us.

"Drink up, drink up, Kornel! Tak' another bottle o' the porty wine. Hoots, Meenister, dinna fash about yer buttons. Tak' another o' yon muckle pies. The Kirk Session is no here watching ye. Yon chentleman wi' the muckle wame and the kilt! Sap up yer brose, sir. Ye must be hungry after travelling all night. Try yon saumon or a pair o' yon baked hens."

"Hoots, toots, chentlemen, dinna be feared o' the

Talisker. It'll send ye loup'ing up the braes as if the red deil o' Kintail was ahint ye."

"Haud, sir, and I'll gie yer sporran strap a bit sneck wi' my sgian."

Thus by precept and example, both with bottle and trencher, did he urge us on. The capacity of the man was wonderful.

The afternoon wore on. The motor crowd had been released; and we, enjoying the Duke's cigars on the heather, certainly did not feel as wildly enthusiastic about the mountain peaks as in the morning. At length, however, we mounted the ponies, and took the stalker's path towards the Cauldron Corrie. But now a difficulty arose. Ewen, our guide-in-chief, however good he may have been at smelling out the deer, seemed unable to smell out our wished-for mountain. Again and again he lay down and peered in all directions through his enormous telescope. At last he lay so long, with the eye-piece in his mouth and the other end in a boghole, that one of the ghillies fetching him a sounding kick in the ribs discovered him to be sound asleep! The climax came when. . . .

Rap! tap! tap! on my bedroom door, and the voice of Alphonse: "Sept heures et demi, M'sieu, et votre Café au lait."



June 1927

FROM SGURR A MHAIM—BIDEAN-NAM-BIAN AND BEN CRUACHAN TO RIGHT

Rev. R. P. Dansey



June 1927

SGURR A MHAIM FROM SLOPES OF AONACH BEAG

Rev. R. P. Dansey

EARLY SUMMER IN THE HIGHLANDS.

BY Rev. R. P. DANSEY.

WITH vivid remembrances of August weather some years ago, I resolved last year to see what early summer would produce, with the result that the end of May 1927 found us at Loch Laggan, my wife and sister-in-law completing the party. Only once had I been on Creag Meaghaidh (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. XV., No. 88), and then in rain and mist with a regular hurricane of wind, so this was our first objective. Walking along the loch side we turned up into Coire Ard Dhoire, following the track on the (true) left side of the burn till we reached the Lochan. It was a perfect day with a cool northerly air. After a short halt for lunch our way led up to the Window and there up the steep slope to the left. The cairn was gained at 3.30 in five and a half hours. The summit plateau was free from continuous snow, though large beds were in evidence in all directions. Visibility was so good that with glasses the overhang of a cornice on Ben Macdhui could be discerned; unbroken snow covered the Cairngorms above 4,000 feet. The descent was made down the gentle slopes on the south side of Coire Ardair till the road was reached at Aberarder and the Laggan Hotel at 8.30. The weather continued cold, and sprinklings of snow covered some of the hills for the next three days, though it soon melted. Mountaineering and fishing go well together, and after our long day on Creag Meaghaidh it was a pleasant change to try one's skill on Loch Laggan. Scottish fishers are kind folk, and though I was well provided with English river flies I was assured that they would not tempt their lusty Scotch brothers, so these kindly men gave me of their best. Altogether about fifty trout came my way but most of them were too small to keep. It was perhaps hardly fair that on my "borrowed plumes" I should bag the heaviest fish caught during our stay, a

pounder on the Pattack River just above where it enters the lake, and in a wind so strong that the cast was always blown back parallel to the bank; truly he must have been a mad trout, as he was the only one that I got a rise from that afternoon.

Having now had two days' rest after our Meaghaidh tramp, it was time to stretch our limbs afresh. The most conspicuous hill from the hotel, carrying a long wreath of snow which persists late into the summer, is Geal Charn (3,433 feet) above Ardverikie. This then was our goal on 29th May. The boat being idle—for no Scottish fisher plies on the Sabbath the gentle art—we were enabled to cross the loch and so save some three or four miles. The walk through the magnificent woods of Ardverikie is delightful, but it was pitiable to see the havoc wrought in places by the terrific storm of January 1927, which I was assured was the worst ever known in Scotland. Passing alongside the most northerly of the two lochs which form Lochan Earba with Binnein Shios rising steeply above, in due time we gained the summit of Geal Charn, being materially helped by the deer-stalking paths which abound round Ardverikie. Visibility was again excellent from the snowy Ben Nevis group in the south-west to the equally wintry Cairngorms. Ben Alder and Aonach Beag seemed close at hand, and, though their summit plateaux had for the most part lost their wintry caps, they were nevertheless seamed in all directions by wreaths of unmelted snow.

Our last hill walk was along the ridge above the hotel, but after traversing it as far as Carn Liath (3,298 feet) heavy showers developed which soon soaked us to the skin. We had hoped to follow the ridge to the Window of Creag Meaghaidh, but had to curtail our programme and descended from Carn Liath into Coire Ard Dhoire, and thence home along the road.

There can be few places more beautiful than Loch Laggan in early summer; this is largely due to the foliage. The tender buds of the birches, the dark green of the firs of all kinds on the Ardverikie shore, the deep blue of the loch and the snow-speckled slopes of Creag Meag-

haidh culminating with the snowy Ben Nevis group in the distance, formed a picture than which none could be more fair. No need was there to climb to enjoy this glorious panorama; sitting in a boat fishing it was all unfolded even to the distant Aonachs with the Ben himself lifting his hoary head beyond them.

On 4th June we went on to Fort William, and on Whit-Monday once more revisited the Ben. We had the summit to ourselves for the one and a half hours we spent there. This shows that the weather was kind. It was clear and sunny with occasional clouds, and absolutely calm. The snow-cap was so deep—probably about 7 feet—that we could step on to the roof of the old Observatory. Visibility was again excellent. Though Aonach Beag alone, besides the Ben, retained his winter snow-cap, there seemed to be much more snow than usual above 4,000 feet, and there was a drift in the Red Burn Gully at 2,300 feet. It was pleasing to note that the bridges on the path are in excellent condition, having just been rebuilt by the landowner.

On the 8th we drove to Inverness by bus. I say we drove, but when I remember the pace maintained on the narrow road, I think the passengers would rather dissent from the responsibility implied by the plural term. Next day we took car to the head of Glen Nevis and walked through the gorge to Steall, and then up Aonach Beag by the south-east ridge. From this vantage point magnificent views were obtained of the snow-seamed precipices. On the summit a deep snow field was still in evidence, and here we had the lowest temperature we experienced, the thermometer reading freezing-point at 2.45 P.M.—the warmest time of the day—with the result that the snow was hard frozen, and icicles clung to the summit rocks. The sun came out at times and the view (as usual) was superb. Traversing the ridge of Aonach Mor we descended the slopes, reaching at last that abominable eyesore the new light railway from Fersit (Loch Treig) to Fort William. This follows the line of the tunnel which will bring Loch Treig's water to the turbines at Fort William for the huge aluminium works scheme.

No doubt this line will disappear, though it would be infinitely preferable to the proposed new town a mile or two on the Spean Bridge side of Fort William, which I was told is to be built for the five thousand employees.

Having only once been up Sgurr a Mhaim, and that in mist, I was anxious to try again and see the Ben from this new view-point. Another marvellously clear day favoured me, this time alone, and some excellent photos were obtained of the snow-capped Ben to the north and Cruachan far away in the south. Coming back down the glen, an aeroplane passed right over the summit of Ben Nevis (which was quite clear all day) and on over the Mamores as if making for Oban.

The last few days were spent at Lawers, Loch Tay, and the Ben was twice ascended. From its summit on 12th June, the Cairngorms still appeared to have an unbroken sheet of snow on the plateaux of Braeriach and Ben Macdhuì. From Goat Fell (Arran) and the Paps of Jura the marvellous view extended to distant Wyvis, and temperature was as high as 45°. A good deal of snow still lingered above Lochan a Chait, whilst patches showed on Ben More and Stobinian, but Ben Vorlich harboured not a speck.

Two days later we determined to watch the sunset from Ben Lawers. It had been a clear, blazing day. We reached the summit rather too soon, for we had to wait from 8.30 to 10.15 before the sun at last disappeared behind the far distant hills, having thrown the shadow of the Ben on to the hills across Loch Tay, and finally into the sky above them. On that evening from Lawers' top visibility was perfect, the outline of even the most distant hills being clear against the sunset glow. Goat Fell and Jura were again distinguishable, and Wyvis in the far north, while Mam Soul and Carn Eige, and doubtless many Ross-shire peaks, were among the number. Would that I had met Ronald Burn on that lovely evening, as I had met him two weeks before tramping from Erich to Speyside, for doubtless he would have had pleasant memories of all the hills we saw, most of them unknown to me. It was noticed that the Cairngorm snow-cap had become

appreciably less and more patchy since last we saw it; but the northerly air was keen, and temperature already down to 34° and hardening the snow patches, so we beat a rapid retreat to warmer regions, gaining the hotel at 11.25 P.M.

We spent our last day fishing in Loch Tay. Here, as at Laggan, we met an angling friend; and as a screw had come out of my reel, he kindly lent me one of his complete with line and cast. My friend was coming down after lunch, the loch being so glassy that fishing was hopeless. We therefore went out by ourselves, and lazily I cast my flies. One never knows one's luck: suddenly a squall came on and almost at once I was into a good fish. Before I could let out enough line the point of the rod had gone under the water and the fish under the boat. I deserved to lose him, but luck was my way, and in some ten minutes I had netted a 1 lb. 2 oz. trout. Then away died the breeze, and fishing after lunch with my friend, it was 4 o'clock before we caught another. Once more my fish was the heaviest caught while at Lawers, and again with a kindly friend's tackle.

Our angling friend at Lawers being anxious to show us what he considered the most beautiful drive in Scotland, he took us to Fortingal, and thence up Glen Lyon, and over the hill road past Lochan na Lairige, the circuit of the Ben Lawers' group. We agreed with his description, for Glen Lyon in an early summer evening, with its magnificent beeches and lovely river, is a scene of which any country might be proud.

Our holiday was now drawing to an end. We had not had one wet day between 24th May and 15th June; so dry was it that they were watering the gardens, and the rivers were so low that the salmon lay still in the deep pools. On 16th June we left for Glasgow, *en route* for England, and that day the flood gates burst in a long and copious deluge. We had had a glorious three weeks, and our own holiday over, we were unselfish enough to feel that the salmon fishers must have their turn.

THE MOUNTAINS IN METAPHOR.

"In His hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is His also."—PSALM xcv. 4.

FROM the time of the Psalmist, poets, authors, and orators have sought inspiration and aid from the mountains; but while the ancient Greek and Roman poets showed in their writings a very real appreciation of the natural beauty of the hills, it was probably not until the late eighteenth century that these came to occupy a similar place in the hearts of our English poets. The Anglo-Saxon in contrast to the Celtic strain, had no special affection for the hills, and when they appear in the writings of our older poets, it is as a rule in imitation of classical custom rather than in direct response to their power of inspiration.

In the matter of personal achievement it may be noted that Swinburne claims in one of his letters some skill as a cragsman, and Keats apparently climbed Ben Nevis, probably in July or August 1818, but most have been satisfied with what Tennyson called:—

"A distant dearness in the hill."

For all that, they have done much by imagery and metaphor to mingle the spirit of the high places with the soul of the nation.

In the various stages and phases of human life, the mountains, according to the sacred Muse, are something more than inanimate spectators. At birth and death alike they stand by impassive but inspiring, silent yet full of resonant history, a monument to the past, undefiled by the present, pregnant with eternity.

"The mountains are our sponsors and the rills,
Fashion and win their nurslings with their smiles."

and when the final call comes:—

"Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down;

And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my grave."

or as the late Hugh Barrie puts it in his sadly prophetic lines:—

“ Find me a wind-swept boulder for a bier,
And on it lay me down.”

In lyrical description of nature we find the mountains the joyous herald of the new day and the purple couch where the dying sun sinks slowly to a radiant rest.

The rhythmic lines of Keats come readily to mind :—

“ Now Morning from her orient chamber came,
And her first footsteps touch'd a verdant hill ;
Crowning its lawny crest with amber flame,
Silv'ring the untainted gushes of its rill.”

or the dramatic splendour of Shelley :—

“ And far on high the keen sky-cleaving Mountains
From icy spires of sunlike radiance fling the dawn.”

and the autumnal touch of the early morning sun in :—

“ But look, the morn in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.”

and again the more familiar, not to say hackneyed :—

“ Nights, candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountains' tops.”

As we repeat these lines how clear becomes the memory of many an early start at such an hour, when the pale moon reluctantly yields place to the glimmerings of dawn. “Jocund” was perhaps not our mood, but that always came later.

And for the close of day, as we watch the sun setting behind Skye or Arran, we recall the lines :—

“ Blood-red the sky, each rugged peak on fire,
Blazed the glory of a dying day ;
Great God on high : this is no mortal pyre.
A soul has passed ; the flame-lit mountains pray.”

So, too, the quiet peace of evening is reflected in :—

“ The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.”

The changing light and shade of cloud effect on a summer's day is brought vividly to the eye by the pastoral metaphor employed by Shelley :—

“ And multitudes of dense white fleecy clouds
Were wandering in thick flocks along the mountains,
Shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind.”

This passage is from "Prometheus Unbound," where the whole setting is redolent of the mountain tops:—

" Those jagged mountains
That gnaw against the hard blue Afghan sky."

and Prometheus himself powerfully portrayed as:—

" A writhing shade
'Mid whirlwind peopled mountains."

The spirit of the mountains was in the very soul of Byron; that undefined and indefinable aura of the mountains that once captured is never lost, but ever seeks renewal:—

" And to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture."

A thoroughly Byronic last line, and rather unfair to the cities which gave him a full share of the joys of life. Again, in "The Dream," he writes:—

" And made him friends of mountains; with the stars
And the quick spirit of the universe
He held his dialogues, and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries."

Something of the same ennobling effect of the mountains was no doubt in the mind of Keats when he wrote:—

" Should I rather kneel
Upon some mountain top until I feel
A glowing splendour round about me hung."

and where in another passage he acclaims the mountains as the source of his highest poetic muse:—

" Muse of my native land ! Loftiest Muse!
O first born on the mountains by the dews
Of heaven on the spiritual air begot."

Keats describes Endymion as "The Mountaineer," but the tone of the poem is rather luscious, and lacks the bracing atmosphere one associates with the hills, while Endymion himself appears to have climbed by the aid of immortal wings, and to have found his real joy in quiet groves so that the designation is hardly warranted.

Standing on the top of Ben Nevis, Keats finds the view both down and up blinded by mist and cloud, and gives us an ode comparing this physical obscurity to the impenetrable veil which limits man's mental vision:—

“ Read me a lesson, Muse, and speak it loud
Upon the top of Nevis blind in mist.
I look into the chasms, and a shroud
Vaporous doth hide them; just so much I wist
Mankind do know of Hell.”

As symbols of various qualities or virtues we find the mountains in constant use. The Scottish hills were ever the last resort of those who fought for freedom, and each is identified with the other in song and story:—

“ Two voices are there; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains; each a mighty voice
In both from age to age thou did'st rejoice
They were thy chosen Muse, Liberty.”

And Wordsworth writing of Burns:—

“ Thou wearest on thy forehead clear
The freedom of a mountaineer.”

And Milton:—

“ The Mountain Nymph, sweet Liberty.”

Milton also identifies the hills with truthfulness, and some will see support for this in the records of our achievements as compared with those of our fishing friends:—

“ And with those, few are eminently seen
That labour up the hill of heavenly truth.”

The poet Thomson finds in them a snow-clad symbol of purity:—

“ Unstained and pure
As is the lily or the mountain snow.”

In religion the hills are a common metaphor; often as in Bunyan where there is something hard to be attained. Christian climbed the Hill of Difficulty with credit, and among the Delectable Mountains found respite for a time from the constant trials of his memorable journey. For his encouragement he is taken up the hill called Clear,

and there is no finer passage in Bunyan's great work:—"So they walked together towards the end of the mountains. Then said the Shepherds one to another: 'Let us here show to the pilgrims the gate of the Celestial City.' . . . So they had them to the top of a high hill called Clear, and gave them the glass to look. . . . They could not look steadily through the glass: yet they thought they saw something like the gate, and also some of the glory of the place."

Approaching the hill called Difficulty, they were a party of three—Christian, Formalist, and Hypocrisy. There were three paths; one up the steep face of the hill, and the other two round the sides. Christian tackled the face at a speed which showed enthusiasm but not much hill sense. "I looked then after Christian to see him go up the hill, where I perceived he fell from running to going, and from going to clambering upon his hands and knees because of the steepness of the place." The result was, he overtired himself and fell asleep. Rising in haste he reached the top only to find he had left his map at his last halting place. The situation on the top being complicated by the presence of two lions of uncertain temperament, he decided he must go back for it. "Thus, therefore, he went back, carefully looking on this side and on that, all the way as he went, if happily he might find his roll that had been his comfort so many times in his journey." The other two, "Form." and "Hyp.," who chose the easy paths, were heard of no more, but Christian in good heart from finding his roll passed triumphantly over the hill.

Later, when his wife's party, led by Mr Greatheart, made the ascent of the Hill Difficulty:—"Christiana began to pant, and said, 'I dare say this is a breathing hill; no marvel, if they that love their ease more than their souls, choose to themselves a smoother way.'" Mercy and the boys also called out for a halt, but Greatheart, in the traditional manner, exhorted his tired party, "Come, come, sit not down here; for a little above is the Prince's Arbour." Now it seems that this was the very place where Christian had halted and left his roll behind,

and—whether from similar causes or just from that uncanny tendency of misfortunes to repeat themselves, is not quite clear—Christiana did much the same as her husband. “So they got up to go, and the little boys went before, but Christiana forgot to take her bottle of spirits with her, so she sent her little boy back to fetch it.” “Then,” said Mercy, “I think this is a losing place; here Christian lost his roll and here Christiana left her bottle behind her.”

Thomas Hood assigns to the mountains a place in the great church of nature:—

“Each cloud-capped mountain is a holy altar;
An organ breathes in every grove.”

and something of the same idea is found in Shelley’s fine lines:—

“The smokeless altars of the mountain snows
Flamed above the crimson clouds, and at the birth
Of light the oceans orison arose.”

While it cannot be claimed for these few examples of how the hills appeal to literary imagination that they are all entitled to rank among the high places, yet all have a flavour of the mountain top that will appeal to climbers, and some would certainly be found in “Munro’s Tables” compiled by the aid of a literary aneroid.

Editor’s Note.—Subject to any protests that may be made by the Authors, or others sensitive to the special character to be preserved by the *Journal*, the Editor proposes to accept the following articles on similar lines: “The Mountains in Music,” by D. A. C. and J. S. M. J.; “The Mountains in Fiction,” by G. S.; “The Mountains in Shakespeare,” by A. M. H.; “The Mountains in Art,” by P. D.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

EASTER MEET, 1928—KINLOCHEWE.

AT the Kinlochewe Meet the following members and guests were present :—

Members.—F. S. Goggs (President), L. St C. Bartholomew, J. H. B. Bell, J. F. A. Burt, J. R. Corbett, G. T. Glover, A. G. Hutchison, J. Gall Inglis, G. Murray Lawson, W. N. Ling, G. G. Macphee, H. MacRobert, R. W. Martin, M. Matheson, D. H. Menzies, I. B. Mowat, A. E. Robertson, R. N. Rutherford, G. Sang, Alan G. Smith, and G. A. Solly.

Guests.—J. H. Baxter and Victor A. Coates.

A total of twenty-three.

There were considerable areas of snow on the higher hills, but it was thawing gradually, and there was much less at the end than at the beginning of the Meet. The weather was good on Friday and Saturday, worse on Sunday, bad on Monday, and better again from Tuesday onward.

On Thursday, 5th April, Ling and Smith walked to Kinlochewe from Achnashellach; and Burt, Coates, Corbett, Macphee, and Solly arrived at Kinlochewe by other means.

On Friday, 6th April, all seven set out for Slioch. After the party had crossed Gleann Bianasdail, Solly, who was unnecessarily anxious not to hold them back, fell out, and made a solitary ascent of Meall Each. The others completed the round of Sgurr an Tuill Bhain and Slioch.

The arrivals on Friday included Goggs, Baxter, and Rutherford, who walked over Fionn Bheinn from Achnashen and down by Strathcromble and the heights of Kinlochewe, and were rewarded on the way with pleasing



May 1927

POSTS OF COIRE ARDAIRE

Rev. R. P. Dansey



April 1928

GROUP AT KINLOCHEWE "INN"

G. Sang

views of An Teallach, Slioch, Loch Fannich, and the Fannich Forest Hills.

Being "Good Friday," this was naturally the best day of the Meet in the matter of weather; but Saturday was nearly as good, a little misty in the morning but fine and clear in the afternoon.

Sang, who had also arrived on Friday, appointed himself chief official chauffeur to the party, and was afterwards heard to complain eloquently of the stingy set of fares he found. His tips amounted to two oranges and a black-bull (which at first glance he mistook for a White Horse). Some of the other chauffeurs seemed to have a much sounder idea of the proper relations between driver and passengers. Murray Lawson, for example, when he departed for home, left a large supply of fruit as a legacy to one of his passengers whose holiday was not yet over.

Sang's party on Saturday included the President, Ling, and Glover. They motored to the bridge at the foot of Coire Dubh and walked round into Coire na Caime at the back of Liathach. There the foot of a snow gully leading up into the mists tempted them to scuffle up some quite interesting snow and ice pitches, and they eventually emerged on to the northern pinnacle ridge about 30 feet below the summit. Goggs kept more to the left, up a simple (or to put it more tactfully, a purely) snow gully leading to the summit ridge east of the cairn. They all descended by the long subsidence ridge towards Torridon Mains, and back by road to the car.

An easier and more artistic way of doing the Liathach ridge was that invented by Macphee. It required a fairly large party, including two motorists who drove the same kind of car. The two cars set out together; one, driven by Macphee, with Baxter and Corbett as passengers, stopped at Coire Dubh, and the other, driven by Alan Smith, with Coates, Mowat, and Rutherford as passengers, went on to Torridon and was parked in the yard at the stalker's house. The two parties both traversed the ridge from end to end, meeting among the Fasarinen pinnacles, and each returned in the car left by the other. Rutherford was dropped at Glen Coulin,

where he met Hutchison, who had brought a tent up from Achnashellach, and they camped by the stone bridge a mile beyond the keeper's cottage.

Bell, Burt, Lawson, Matheson, and Menzies motored to Loch Maree, borrowed a boat, and rowed over to Letterewe, and thence crossed over by a 1,300 feet pass underneath the slopes of Beinn Auidh Charr to near the shore of Fionn Loch. They lunched under the crags on the north face of that mountain, and then the party split up. Lawson and Menzies attempted the face towards the west, but it did not go, so they desisted and returned without bagging the peak.

Bell, Burt, and Matheson tackled the prominent curved north buttress of the peak to the left (east) of that on which Ling and Glover climbed some twenty years ago. They started climbing not far above the luncheon spot level. It was easy at first, but afterwards they found some good tricky work on slabs which continued pleasantly to the top of the first buttress. This point was attainable by easy gullies on either side. Across a level col the buttress continued, giving easy climbing except near the top of this section, and above this the buttress widened out and faded away into the easy upper slopes of the mountain. They did not follow it further, but descended slightly and climbed the main cliff to the right, up a rib of excellent clean rock with quite a sensational finish just at the top of the north cliff of the mountain. From here it was an easy walk with perhaps 200 feet of rise to the summit. The climb took three hours and involved about 1,500 feet of climbing.

A. E. Robertson and Solly motored to Torridon and explored the policies of Ben Damph Lodge and Torridon House, and then to Coulin Lodge, where they obtained photographs of Beinn Eighe, revelling in the incomparable foregrounds of fir, birch, and heather round Loch Coulin.

Bartholomew and Martin arrived on Saturday. They had left the morning train on Friday at Garve, and travelled by mail cars to a point on the road, about 6 miles short of Dundonnell. The road journey was pleasant but not very rapid, as a stop was made at every house on the

road-side to deliver a newspaper or a letter. The views obtainable were much restricted by carcasses, mail bags, side curtains, and passengers, with the result that our members' necks were somewhat stiff when they first took to their feet. On leaving the road they struck across the moor to Larachantivore. The walk proved to be a very easy afternoon undertaking, and they had no difficulty in fording the Allt na Sheallag. After spending a comfortable night at Larachantivore they walked on to Kinlochewe, taking Sgurr Ban, Mullach, Coire Mhic Fhearchair, and Slioch on the way. They were in mist on the first two, but had a fine view from Slioch.

H. MacRobert also arrived on Saturday in time to ascend Creag Dubh and leave his autograph in the snow on the top.

On Sunday the mountain tops were again in mist, which this time remained all day. There was a general move in the direction of Beinn Eighe.

Sang first drove Ling and MacRobert to the Coire Dubh bridge. The two latter crossed the Beinn Eighe ridge to Ruadh-stac Mor in two hours forty minutes from the car, and then descended to the lochan and Grudie bridge. Sang then drove the veterans, Goggs, Glover, Robertson, and Solly to Bridge of Grudie. After strolling some way up the glen, and having lunch, they saw Ling and MacRobert coming down from Ruadh-stac Mor, and immediately turned tail for the car, being anxious lest they should be done out of their seats in the waiting vehicle, and be forced to face the labour of a walk all the way back to the hotel. Glover had turned back before lunch, as his knee was giving him some pain and he felt disinclined to try it further on the unevenness of the hill-side. The mob all reached the car about the same time (except Glover, who had passed it half an hour before, leaving a note that he was walking on), and by dint of using a shoe-horn were discommoded with "seats." When the car left its watery nest it contained the President, two ex-Presidents, and two Vice-Presidents. It was piloted by the Hon. Secretary, and passengers were warned not to engage him in conversation at the corners.

It was felt that should the bus load be decanted into Loch Maree, the S.M.C. might have the opportunity of being remodelled on more modern lines.

There were several other parties on Beinn Eighe, but only one succeeded in reaching all the tops. This party consisted of Baxter, Macphee, and Smith. They motored to Bridge of Grudie with Coates, who drove the car back to the hotel. They then walked up to Coire Mhic Fhearchair and ascended Sail Mhor by a 1,000 feet snow gully, mostly soft snow, and, after doing all the tops and all the Black Men, glissaded down on the hotel side. One man's time was seventeen seconds for 320 feet vertical at an angle of $30^\circ = 640$ feet of slope, a speed of 25 miles per hour.

Hutchison and Rutherford walked down the glen from their camp to Beinn Eighe, and reached the ridge by way of Coire Laoigh to Spidean Coire nan Clach, following it to Creag Dubh and Kinlochewe, and returning to their camp by a hill track across the moor to the west of Glen Coulin.

Bartholomew, Martin, and Mowat took the path round the north of Beinn Eighe to Coire Mhic Fhearchair, ascended Ruadh-stac Mor, and followed the ridge eastward to Sgurr an Fhir Duibhe, thus doing all the tops except Sail Mhor and Creag Dubh.

Bell, Burt, Corbett, Lawson, Matheson, and Menzies ascended Creag Dubh by the snow on the east side and followed the ridge westward as far as the point where it broadens out to stretch its arms round Coire Mhic Fhearchair. Here every member of the party was much impressed by the confident way in which the others went forward through the mist, without troubling to consult map or compass, on to Ruadh-stac Mor and back on to the ridge which leads to Sail Mhor. Their mutual admiration was, however, considerably modified when they suddenly discovered that they were walking back eastwards towards Spidean Coire nan Clach. Corbett and Lawson now came down, but the four others went on over Sail Mhor and found that the top which had been taken for Ruadh-stac Mor was really A'Choinneach Mhor.

They descended the snow gully and returned to Kinlochewe by the Torridon road.

On Monday Sang again took charge of the President, Glover, and Ling, and, after leaving Glover and the baggage at Achnasheen, drove merrily down to Craig at the fortieth milestone. From here a wonderful motoring road leads up to the Pollan Buidhe behind Moruisg. A convenient road-metal dump at 1,000 feet gave the car standing room, and they left it there and set out to walk towards Gленуиг Lodge. They cut across the shoulder of Sron na Frianich and up An Crom burn, and directly on to Bidean an Eoin Deirg (3,430), quite nice and steep at the top with a lot of hard icy snow and a wind that would have flattened the whiskers of a tom cat. Thence they traversed westwards over Sgurr a Chaorachain (3,452). They had never seen a hill less worthy of being called Sgurr.

Then on to Sgurr Choinnich, much more sgurry, quite a tidy little peak with some nice steep gullies on its northern face. They found a delightful run off the northern spur; in fact they might have glissaded from the top had they known the going to be as good as it was. They were back at the car in an hour. It rained all day and the wind made going the reverse of pleasant. They had no view and got well soaked. The thrill of the expedition was an abortive attempt to persuade the President to try a cocktail. He suspected it of being intoxicating and said he did not like it. The road is worth doing for its Alpine gradients and boldness of scheme. After tea and a change, they drove on to Inverness and so home.

Macphee drove MacRobert, Martin, and Smith to Torridon Lodge, from whence they climbed Beinn Alligin by the conspicuous gash in its east face, an easy scramble, almost a walk except for its steepness. This is an unusually straight slope at a high angle some 2,100 feet in height. They touched both tops of the mountain and returned in time for the evening train.

Robertson drove Baxter and Coates to Torridon, and the two latter also did Beinn Alligin.

Hutchison and Rutherford struck camp by 11.15 and carried their gear up to the bealach below the south-east end of Beinn Liath Mhor. They visited the three tops of this mountain, and returned to the bealach by the glen below the fine cliffs of Sgorr Ruadh. Picking up their luggage they followed the track to Achnashellach in time for the evening train.

Bartholomew, Bell, Burt, and Matheson motored to the bridge at Coire Dubh and walked round to Coire na Caime, where they lunched in sight of a magnificent rock pinnacle projecting in a northerly direction into the corrie from the Fasarinen ridge. This appeared to be climbable from the corrie on its right side, and would make a splendid climb, but as the weather was bad they left it and made for Spidean a Choire Leith. Burt and Matheson ascended the snow gully which reaches the main ridge just west of that summit and bagged the peak. Bartholomew and Bell climbed the slabby sandstone buttress on the west side of the gully and found it interesting, with at least one good pitch, where great care was needed. All four descended together towards the Torridon road in time for Bell to catch the evening train.

Lawson drove Corbett, Menzies, and Solly to the Coire Dubh bridge, and they ascended Sail Mhor by the snow gully, and came straight back to the car.

Tuesday found the party greatly reduced in number. J. Gall Inglis, who had arrived on Monday, drove Solly up the Coulin road, from whence they ascended Beinn Liath Mhor.

Lawson drove the other survivors, Corbett, Matheson, and Menzies, to Torridon. They did the round of Beinn Alligin, and three of them spent an interesting afternoon climbing the boulders, of which there is a remarkable collection in the south-eastern corrie. Corbett, who likes a siesta when he can get it, "superintended."

On Wednesday everybody left except Corbett and Inglis. The latter spent the day photographing in the Coulin valley and doctoring his car, while the former cycled to Coire Dubh and ascended the Meall Dearg top of Liathach by the snow of Coire na Caime.

On Thursday they drove to the Heights, and ascended Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair. From near the top they noticed that Beinn Tarsuinn appeared to be higher than either A Mhaighdean or Sgurr an Tuill Bhain, and should therefore be a "Munro." They checked this by taking their aneroids to the top of Beinn Tarsuinn, but unfortunately Beinn Eighe was under mist, so that they could not get the further check of seeing the Beinn Eighe ridge over Sgurr an Tuill Bhain.

Inglis departed on Friday, but Corbett stayed three days more, and did Beinn Dearg from Torridon, Sgorr Ruadh from Coire Dubh, and Beinn an Eoin and Baosbheinn from Bridge of Grudie.

DUNDONNELL.

Barlow's Party (in which he was the moving, and indeed the only spirit) reached Dundonnell Hotel from Garve on the afternoon of the 4th, without taking anything on the way except the mail motor.

The following day, Glas Mheall Mor was ascended from the south-east in three hours from the hotel, and the peaks of the main ridge of An Teallach traversed as far as the fourth (south) tower of Corrag Bhuidhe. The direct descent of the steep little ridge on the south was abandoned, as fresh snow was plastered on all the ledges. Bearing in mind King and Munro's remark (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. III., p. 14*), that "an easier way could have been found on the western face," a descent by shallow snow-filled gullies on that side was made for about 500 feet. The snow was here in a very unstable condition, and no safe way of returning to the south ridge was found. With regret at having to give up the traverse of the whole range, a retreat was made by returning to the summit of Corrag Bhuidhe, and retraversing the peaks of the morning. There was the consolation that the weather

* In the Guide Book section, *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IX., p. 94, this steep pitch and the turning on west face are, by an obvious error, located on the Corrag Bhuidhe *buttress*.

had now cleared. From the summit of Bidean a' Ghlas Thuill, splendid views were obtained of the mountain ranges near Kinlochewe.

The following three days, fine except for Sunday afternoon, were spent near the hotel nursing a blistered foot (Barlow being of course both nurse and patient). On the Monday a visit was made to Loch Toll an Lochain, but a sudden change of weather brought down clouds almost to sea level, so nothing was seen of the corrie.

On the Tuesday morning the car conveying Barlow to Garve gave out mysteriously only a mile from the station. The situation was saved by a hurried transfer to the car of a passing motorist, who turned out to be Macphee returning from Kinlochewe. This happy encounter appears to be the only "Meet" of members of the S.M.C. which took place in the district. On the other hand there is, so far as known, no definition of the quorum required to constitute a Meet. There is an old saying that it takes two to make a quarrel and three to make a crowd, but both of these being distinctly alien to the composition of a Scottish Mountaineering Club Meet, the term may without difficulty be applied to the meeting of the mountaineer and the mountain *solus cum solo* as it were.

LOCH MAREE.

Saturday, 7th April 1928.

Douglas and Sellar motored to the bridge over the Coire Mhic Nobuil burn to ascend Ben Alligin. Following this stream by the Diabaig path they crossed it at its junction with the Coir na Laoigh. The first top, 2,904 feet, was soon reached by following the Coir na Laoigh burn. From this point a most enjoyable walk was made over Tom na Gruagaich and Sgurr Mhor, the highest point of the mountain, descending into Tall a Mhadaich. Good views were obtained of the west coast and Skye.

Sunday, 8th April.

Douglas and Sellar ascended Slioch, crossing Loch Maree by boat to Letterewe. From there a good path was followed by Loch Garbhaig. They then skirted the south side of the loch, gradually increasing the altitude until they were facing the north side of the mountain from which the ascent was made. Reaching the ridge about midway between the eastern and western summits, the latter attracted their first attention, being the highest point of the mountain. A very brief stay was made on top owing to the very bad weather conditions. They returned over Sgurr an Tuill Bhain, and thence back by Loch Garbhaig to Letterewe.

Monday, 9th April.

This being a wet day they decided not to climb, and had a most enjoyable day motoring up the west coast, through Gairloch and Poolewe as far as Gruinard Bay.

CLUB ROOM.

On 20th March 1928 the Hon. Secretary showed slides of the Dolomites.

LIBRARY.

Since the last number of the *Journal* was issued the Librarian has received the following books:—

- “ Pitlochry, Past and Present,” by Mr John H. Dixon.
Presented by the publisher, Mr L. Mackay, Pitlochry.
- “ Mountaineering Ventures.” Mr Claude E. Benson.
Presented by the publishers, Messrs T. C. & E. C. Jack Ltd.
- “ La Chaîne du Mont Blanc ” and “ Guide Ledormeur. Les Pyrénées Centrale.” Presented by Mr Denis F. Pilkington.

The above books have been duly acknowledged, but the Club take this further opportunity of expressing its appreciation.

The following publications have been received since the last issue :—

- Alpine Journal. Vol. XL., No. 236.
Ladies' Alpine Club. 1928.
Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club. 20th Annual Record.
Rucksack Club Journal. Vol. VI., 1928, No. 22.
The Climbers' Club Journal. Vol. III., No. 2, 1928.
The Wayfarers' Journal. 1928, No. 1.
Les Alpes. Vol. IV., Nos. 3 to 9.
La Montagne. March to September 1928.
Italian Alpine Club. January to July 1928.
Bulletin Pyrénéen. April to September 1928.
Sierra Club Bulletin. Vol. XIII., No. 1.
Sangaku (Japanese Alpine Club Journal). Vol. XXII.,
1928, Nos. 2 and 3.
Den Norske Turistforeningens Årbok. 1928.
Svensk Turist Kalender. 1928.
Svenska Turistforeningens Årsskrift. 1928.
Zeitschrift des Deutschen und Österreichischen Alpen-
Vereins. 1927.
The Outer Hebrides, Skye and the Small Isles—Royal
Commission of Ancient Monuments, &c. 1928.
La Vie Alpine. February to September 1928.
Bulletin of the Appalachian Mountain Club. June 1928.
The Japan Walking Club Journal.
Scottish Geographical Magazine. Vol. XLIV., No. 5.

SLIDE COLLECTION.

The collection has been enriched by the addition of twenty-six slides made from negatives kindly lent by Messrs R. R. Elton, G. R. Speirs, E. C. Thomson, R. R. Gibb, George Sang, and J. G. MacLaren.

REVIEWS.

“**Pitlochry—Past and Present.**” L. Mackay, Pitlochry.

The visitor to Pitlochry may be congratulated on being provided with such an excellent guide book as has been compiled by Mr John H. Dixon, F.S.A. The letterpress is good—although there is a rather tiresome change of type in many of the chapters—and it is provided with a very full “Contents” as well as an index. The grouping of the illustrations, nearly 100 in number, at the end with separate index provides a readily accessible pictorial record of the district. While the book deals mainly with Pitlochry and a radius of some 5 miles around—being based upon an earlier work written for Boy Scouts—there are interesting chapters upon all the main roads of a much more extended area, as well as chapters upon various historic occurrences and matters of local interest. Another chapter deals with “Mountain Ascents,” though Ben-y-Vrackie is the only mountain that can be included in the environs of Pitlochry. Another valuable chapter gives the detailed list of all rights-of-way (with explanatory notes) as compiled by the Parish Council, an example that might well be followed by all Parish Councils. The book can be safely recommended as a valuable companion to anyone spending a holiday in the Pitlochry district, or indeed in a more widely extended area.

A. W. R.

Rucksack Club Journal, 1928.

This is, as usual, a well-produced volume of some 120 pages, illustrated by 21 photographs and 1 photogravure. “Martigny to Zermatt,” by H. Coates, and “Trials of a Manager,” by J. F. Burton, are two pleasantly written articles, both of which recall vividly the charms and troubles of the average Alpine holiday. A very amusing mock review of a book called “With Beard and Bicycle in the Grampians,” by J. Hooke Torbitt, will specially appeal to S.M.C. readers. It is apparently by H. E. Scott, well known at our Annual Dinners! The description of the Club Hut should be studied by our own Special Hut Committees and by all those who hope to use the Inglis-Clark Hut on Ben Nevis. Those of us who have “a brain and cerebellum too” will be interested to learn how important it is to carry the latter on all rock-climbing expeditions, and if the former is not rendered too dizzy, this instruction may be obtained from “Psychology of Climbing,” by R. H. Thouless. The illustrations are, on the whole, very good, especially those of the Langkofel and the very fine frontispiece, “Gendarme on the Südlenspitze.”

And now some gentle criticism to finish with! There is no list of illustrations. The personal references throughout are, for a magazine of this standing, too intimate; the non-member is rather bewildered in presence of the "Llama," the "Professor," "Monsieur," and "William."

H. M.

Alpine Journal, Vol. XL., No. 236, May 1928.

This number, which is edited by Lieut.-Col. Strutt, D.S.O., and is published by Longmans, Green, & Company, price 10s. 6d., is without doubt "a Record of Mountain Adventure." It is somewhat curious to notice that there recurs in this, the premier fount of all Alpine literature, more than one reference to the little known Aiguilles d'Arves. These peaks seem to have sprung into notoriety, possibly due to the distressing accident of 1927. Both the *Ladies' A.C. Year-Book* and the *Climbers' Club Journal* deal with the Aiguilles, and now in the *Alpine Journal* we find not only an article of supreme interest upon them from the reawakened pen of our fellow-member, Dr Claude Wilson, but also an exceedingly interesting letter about them by the late Gertrude Bell, which was not included in the series recently published. It is illuminating to compare in these various publications the treatment of the sinister "Mauvais Pas" by the various authors. The interest of the book is, however, by no means confined to the Alps, for we have a description of the Ralam and Traill's Passes in the Kumaon Himalaya, an article contributed by Miss Shiela Macdonald, describing the ascent of Kilimanjaro by herself and Mr W. C. West in 1927, a description of journeys through the Mountains of Iceland by Mr Athole Murray. A considerable portion of the number, and that by no means the least interesting, is devoted to accounts of exceptionally arduous expeditions in the Mt. Blanc district by F. S. Smythe and his companions. It is amusing to read these and remember that the instigator of the expeditions had been invalided out of the Air Force and warned not to climb stairs!

G. S.

Ladies' Alpine Club. Year-Book 1928.

We have to thank the Club for the presentation of this Year-Book which is printed by the Women's Printing Society of London. We are uncertain who is the member responsible for the production of this interesting volume, but we should like to convey to her our congratulations as well as our thanks. The Year-Book is outstanding from the fact that it contains a most interesting, though all too brief, account of Miss Miriam O'Brien's attempts and final conquest of L'Aiguille de Roc du Grepon, a wonderful feat of rock climbing of the most sensational class. In addition to this there is an interesting

account by Dr Cairney of the first winter ascent of the Ober Gabelhorn from Mountet. It is curious to think that twenty years ago this would have been considered a most foolhardy expedition. One cannot even contend, with this example before one, that the advance in skiing has made such wonderful ascents possible, for the author admits freely that she was happier on her feet than on her skis, if indeed one can call it being "on" skis in her case.

G. S.

Climbers' Club Journal. New Series, Vol. III., No. 2.

Copies procurable from Henry Young & Sons, 12 South Castle Street, Liverpool. Price 5s.

This number comes out under the able direction of Mr Malcolm Pearson, and is full of interesting and amusing matter. There is a paper well worth reading by M. W. Guinness, which deals with some of the theories of introduction of the novice to the sport of climbing. Dr Claude Wilson gives another view on the subject and C. F. Holland yet another. Henry Candler has an article which will be of interest to those who choose the Kandersteg district of Switzerland as a mountaineering playground, describing, as it does, his experiences in the crossing of the little used Oeschinenjoch. But the article which appealed most to the reviewer was the delightful description by J. L. Longland of his experiences of the Aiguilles d'Arves, which is full of colour and transports one to the district until one can smell the interior of the cheese chalet.

G. S.

Hills and Highways. By Mrs Chorley. Published by Dent & Company. Price 6s.

This eminently readable little volume is not strictly a mountaineering book, although it is evidently written through mountaineering spectacles. The style is delicious throughout, and rather reminds us of the works of Lawrence Stern or I. Zangwill. It deals with the charm of the hills and their effect upon the psychology of the individual. It is a book to be thoroughly recommended to those who find pleasure in titillating their memory at the winter fireside by recollections shared in common with the versatile authoress.

G. S.

The Wayfarers' Journal. 1928.

Although the Wayfarers' Club has been in existence for twenty-two years, this is its first journal, and a very good journal, too. An article by E. R. Gibson on "Climbing in the Rockies" describes

ascents made by him with members of the Alpine Club of Canada in August 1927. Mts. Bastion, Barbican, and Postern were ascended, the latter being a first ascent. Other articles of interest are "The Pictorial Aspect of Swiss Mountain Photography," by C. Thurstan Holland; "Le Dauphiné," by Douglas B. Side; "The Silvretta and the Bregaglia," by Marco A. Pallis; "Wayfaring in the Pyrenees," by G. A. Dawson; and "The Central Alps," by A. M. Carr-Saunders. The illustrations throughout are excellent.

G. M. L.

Mountaineering Ventures. By Claude E. Benson. T. C. & E. C. Jack Ltd. Price 6s.

In his prefatory note the author states that "Mountaineering Ventures" is written primarily, not for the man of the peaks, but for the man of the level pavement. The book deals with the outstanding incidents in mountaineering history from the days of Balmat and Paccard down to the latest Everest Expedition. The ground covered is necessarily wide, and we congratulate the author on the successful manner in which he has accomplished his task. Within 224 pages he describes climbing incidents in the European Alps, Corsica, the Caucasus, Norway, and the New Zealand Alps, the last chapter being given to the Everest Expeditions.

The book is amply illustrated with excellent photographs, and will form a welcome addition to the library.

G. M. L.

NOTES AND EXCURSIONS.

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



THE CHARLES INGLIS CLARK MEMORIAL HUT.

THE Hut is now completed and ready for occupation. The furnishings, with the exception of the stove, beds, and blankets, are not yet installed, and the Hon. Treasurer will be glad to receive contributions towards a fund for providing what is necessary. A proposal to alter the Easter Meet from Aviemore to Fort William will be submitted to the Annual General Meeting, in order that the formal opening of the Hut may take place at that time.

Members wishing to make immediate use of the Hut are requested to communicate with Mr R. R. Elton, 15 Dunearn Street, Glasgow, who has the custody of the key.



G. GRAHAM MACPHEE writes:—

“ At Whitsuntide I spent a few days at Wasdalehead and, with A. B. Reynolds as leader, did the following climbs—

“ 25th May, *Pillaroc*. Grooved Wall (second ascent). Route II. (second ascent). New West (descent). Route I. (third ascent). Old West (descent).

“ 26th May, *Scafell*. Central Buttress (A), Broad Stand (D).

“ 28th May, *Pillaroc*. Walker's Gully (A), South-west (A), Old West (D), Appian Way (A), West Wall (D), O.W. (A), Slab and Notch (D).

“ 27th and 29th May were unsuitable for climbing, so we did some fell-walking, the Lake District equivalent of “Munroing” in Scotland. Reynolds had to leave on the 29th, so on the 30th I led a party up Central Buttress and down Moss Ghyll Grooves (first descent) on *Scafell*. With H. G. Knight as leader we climbed Central Route, Deep Ghyll Slabs (second ascent), and came down Herford's Direct Finish and Woodhead's Climb.”



I spent the first half of June in the West of Ireland with a friend, Mr W. H. Hinde, of Greystones, Co. Wicklow, and thoroughly recommend the district to all mountain-lovers. Our headquarters

were at Leenane Hotel on Killary Bay, the long narrow inlet which divides Galway from Mayo.

From a mountaineer's point of view, the greatest attraction of the district is the Mweelrea group, which rises majestically on the north side of the mouth of Killary Bay, in the extreme south-west corner of Mayo. It consists of three principal summits—Mweelrea (2,688 feet), Benbury (2,610 feet), and Benluggmore (2,618 feet). Mweelrea, the highest mountain in Connaught, stands at the mouth of the Killary. The other two, which scarcely deserve to be considered separate mountains, fall abruptly on their north-east side to the valley which contains Dhu Lough. The round of these three summits is a grand walk. It is best to begin with Mweelrea. The orthodox way is to go for some miles by boat down the Killary, landing at the foot of the mountain, but, having a motor at our disposal, we drove round the head of the Killary to a point just short of the south end of Fin Lough, a little lake in the mouth of the Pass of Delphi, and from there struck across two or three miles of bog to the eastern foot of our mountain. This was the last day of a long, dry spell, and the bog provided delightful "going"; after prolonged rain it would be well-nigh impossible. The upper part of the east (or rather, south-east) side of Mweelrea is precipitous, the total height of the cliffs being 1,300 or 1,400 feet. At the foot lie two little lakes, Lugaloughan and Bellawaun. Good rock-climbing could no doubt be obtained here. The ordinary route keeps to the left of the precipice. The last part is a most enjoyable grassy ridge, with fascinating glimpses into the depths on the right, a glorious prospect over the Atlantic on the left, and the stately Twelve Bens of Connemara behind. Still grander, however, than the cliffs of Mweelrea itself are those on the north side of Benluggmore. This name means "the mountain of the big hollow," and the said "big hollow" is a most magnificent corrie, probably the finest in all Ireland. I called it "The Hall of the Mountain King."

East of the Mweelrea group, and separated from it by the narrow and beautiful Pass of Delphi, rises the group of Bengorm and Bencreggan, which also possesses fine cliffs. Some miles further east again, between the Killary and Lough Mask, the massive Maumtrasna-Benwee group has a number of striking corries, but the top of the mountain is a featureless tableland. Ten miles north from the head of the Killary the steep quartzite cone of Croagh Patrick (2,510 feet), the most celebrated "Holy mountain" of Ireland, rises from the south shore of Clew Bay. It has not much to attract the mountaineer except its view, and the ordinary ascent by the pilgrims' path is a wearisome grind up sharp, loose stones, which play havoc with the nails of one's boots.

South of the Killary lies the famous district of Connemara, and here the group of the Twelve Bens or "Pins" is the great attraction. In beauty of outline and colour the "Pins" surpass all the other mountains in this part of Ireland. Benbaun (2,395 feet) is the highest

of them, Bencorr (2,336 feet) the most beautiful, Muckanaght (2,153 feet) the richest in mountain plants, while probably Bencollaghduff (2,290 feet) has the most respectable precipices; those above Glen Inagh must be a full thousand feet.

Note.—With reference to Mr E. C. Thomson's notes on the Kerry mountains in the *Journal* for November 1927, may I point out that there is a special and very excellent contoured tourist's map of the Killarney District, including the whole of Macgillycuddy's Reeks (scale 1 inch to a mile). It is, or was, obtainable from Messrs Hodges & Figgis, Grafton Street, Dublin.

REV. C. R. P. VANDELEUR.

S.M.C. ABROAD.

Mr J. A. PARKER has just returned home from a ten and a half months' tour round the world, and reports that in course of it he made the following ascents:—

New York.—Woolworth Building, with a non-stop run to 54th flat in 70 seconds.

Madeira.—Terreiro da Lucta (3,285 feet). Rail up and sled down.

Naples.—Vesuvius per T. Cook & Sons.

Palestine.—Descent to the Dead Sea.

Cairo.—The Great Pyramid (451 feet). An easy rock scramble.

Ceylon.—Pidurutalagala (8,292 feet), the highest mountain in Ceylon. By trail through the jungle from Nuwara Eliya.

Hong Kong.—The Peak (1,830 feet), and, at the east end of the island, Mount Parker (1,733 feet).

Peking.—A point on the Great Wall of China, about 3,800 feet above sea level, near the Nankow Pass.

Japan.—From Miyanoshita in the Hakone Mountains, Otome-Toge (3,276 feet), and Kamiyama (4,761 feet). The latter is the highest mountain in the group, and commanded a magnificent view of Fuji, the ascent of which was impossible so early in the season.

Hawaii.—Kilauea Volcano (c. 4,000 feet by auto).

San Francisco.—Mount Tamalpais (2,604 feet) and, above Oakland, Bald Peak (1,930 feet).

Olympic Mountains.—Mount Storm King (c. 4,500 feet, from Lake Crescent).

Vancouver Island.—Mount Arrowsmith (5,925 feet), from Cameron Lake.

Alaska.—Mount AB (c. 4,500 feet from Skagway).

Canadian Rockies.—Mount Mumm to about 9,500 feet (bad weather prevented complete ascent), near Mount Robson; Sulphur Mountain (8,030 feet) at Banff; and Mount St Piran (8,691 feet) at Lake Louise.

Vancouver, B.C.—Mount Baker (10,827 feet) with the Vancouver Section of the Alpine Club of Canada.

Purcell Mountains.—Spent a most enjoyable eleven days with the A.C.C. in their summer camp at the head of Horsethief Creek, and climbed The Dome (c. 10,060 feet) and Mount Thompson (c. 10,500 feet).

Yellowstone Park.—Mount Washburn (10,345 feet by trail from Grand Canyon).

Montreal.—Mount St Hilaire (1,437 feet), and from Morin Heights in the Laurentian Mountains, Mount Stapleton (c. 1,750 feet).

Mr and Mrs W. W. Naismith visited the Holy Land last spring and ascended Jebel Jermak, 4,006 feet, the highest mountain in Palestine (Mount Hermon, 9,050 feet, being in Syria), and Jebel Osha, 3,595 feet, in Transjordan. When passing through Egypt they climbed the Great Pyramid and the Step Pyramid of Sakhara.

ROBERT JEFFREY reports: My wife and I were at Montanvert from 2nd to 18th July and, thanks to a spell of perfect weather, had a very successful holiday. The following is a list of our climbs:—

Aig de l'M.—Guideless.

Traverse of Aig des Petits Charmoz and

Aig de l'M from Col de l'Etala

Pointe Albert by N.W. face

Traverse of Aig du Tacul

Traverse of Aig des Grands Charmoz

„ Aig d'Argentière

„ Aig du Plan

„ Dent du Requin

„ Aig du Grépon

„ Grand and Petit Drus

} With Ulysse Simond.

} With Ulysse and Albert Simond.

J. H. B. BELL describes his visit to the Alps this summer as follows:—The party, consisting of Mackay, Matheson, Parry, and myself, foregathered at Victoria Station on Saturday, 14th July; by Sunday evening, 15th, we had reached Arolla. An off day on the Arolla boulders followed. On Tuesday, 17th, we went for the Aiguilles Rouges D'Arolla, taking the north peak first. Mackay gave a very fine lead up the central peak, but we encountered an electric storm on this summit. Our axes all sang merrily, and the air was dark around. We prudently retreated without attempting the south peak. On Wednesday, 18th, we all moved up to the Jenkins Hut, from which, next day, we traversed the Pigue d'Arolla. I was rather unfortunate on the following off day, and cut my heel

badly. As a result, I was unable to accompany the others when, on Saturday, 21st, they traversed the Mont Collon, ascending via the Jenkins Hut and the West Ridge, and descending by the South Ridge and the Arolla Glacier.

Sunday, 22nd, saw me somewhat restored, so I left with Parry for the Bertol Hut. The hut was noisy up to an advanced hour with the songs of a party of fifteen ladies. Yet Parry and I managed to turn out next day and climb the Dent Blanche by the Wandfluh. In the evening we found Matheson and Mackay in the hut. On Tuesday the others ascended the Aiguille de la Za from behind, whilst I slept. On their return we all fed and descended to Arolla. The party split up again on Thursday, 26th. Matheson and Mackay traversed the Petite Dent de Veisioi and found the weather very hot. Parry and I crossed the Pas de Chevres, and climbed the Mont Blanc de Seilon by the 3,000 feet rock rib, which descends due north from the summit to the Seilon Glacier. I believe this has only twice been climbed before, but in the exceptional conditions of this year it went very quickly—three hours from glacier to summit. Parry gave a very good lead, on the upper impending rocks, just deviating ever so little to the right of the crest, where former parties had to make a considerable traverse to the left. From Mont Blanc de Seilon we continued over the ridge, and bagged the Ruinette. This is a very fine bepinnaled ridge, reminding one of Skye. The weather was ideal.

Friday, 27th, was the end of our stay at Arolla. We all went down to Sion, and Mackay left for home. We others proceeded to Zermatt, and encountered the first bad weather of the holiday. On Saturday, Parry and I set out for the Zermatt Ridge of the Matterhorn. We were driven by storm to the Schonbühl Hut, and the weather only cleared on Sunday afternoon. Monday, 30th July, was fine, with a strong, cold wind on the peak. Parry and I climbed the Matterhorn by the Zermatt Ridge, and descended to Zermatt by the Hörnli Ridge. We encountered a fair amount of ice on the Tiefenwatten Slabs, and a fair amount of new snow on the summit cap of the peak, but generally things went very well. Matheson and I left Zermatt on Tuesday, and Parry left shortly afterwards. A note of Matheson's further climbs appears elsewhere.

DENIS F. PILKINGTON writes:—I was out in the Alps for August with J. O. Walker (non-member); my mother also came with us. I had Gottfried Bohren of Grindelwald again as guide.

We started at Courmayeur and only had our cameras tied and sealed on the little St Bernard.

Being doubtful of the weather holding up much longer, we went straight for the Grandes Jorasses after only a very small training walk. I found it very difficult to know if I was going to arrive at the hut, and then found there was a climb up the last 200 feet. The hut only holds eight. We had no view over France from the summit.

After an off day we went up to the Torino and climbed the Aiguille du Géant; although despised by some because it is roped, it is still a very fine climb.

After this we moved to Brig, and next day went up to the Bietschhorn Hut, lurching at Kippel on the way, the latter I can thoroughly recommend.

We traversed the Bietschhorn by the north and west arêtes, all loose stones both up and down, no snow after crossing the glacier. On our return, at Brig Station, I saw J. Harrison and Matheson just going home.

We then moved on to Saas-im-Grund, going up to the Weissmies Hut and traversing the Weissmies down to Almagell and back to Saas.

After stopping a second night at Saas Fee, we went up to the Mischabelhutte on a very doubtful day, in mist. The next day was perfect, with a wonderful sunrise, and we had a lovely ridge walk, traversing the Ulrichshorn, Balfrin, and Gross Bigerhorn, and so down to St Niklaus, via the fine new Pierre Bordier Hut and train to Zermatt.

At Zermatt, apart from minor expeditions, we climbed the Weisshorn from the Weisshorn Hut. This we also had as a rock climb, as, owing to the dryness of the season, the snow had retreated, leaving about a yard of rocks to go up on and no cornice.

After this we all moved to Gries Alp, where we went up to the Gspaltenhorn Hut and, on a very doubtful day, which turned out perfect later, ascended the Gspaltenhorn and traversed the Butlassen, which was very interesting.

The following day we went up to the Blumlisalp Hut for the Blumlisalphorn, but unfortunately got turned back by a storm on the saddle.

After two days of continuous rain, we finished with the delightful walk over the Sefinenfurge to Murren, with the snow down to 7,500 feet.

W. N. Ling had an excellent month's holiday in Austrian Tyrol, with J. W. Brown and P. J. H. Unna, fellow-members.

Starting from Innsbruck, they first visited the Stubai Thal and climbed the Zuckerhütl Wilder Pfaff and Wilder Freiger.

Returning to Innsbruck, they then moved on to Mayrhofen in the Zillertal and climbed the Riffler and Olperer. From the Berliner Hut they had a good climb to the summit ridge of the Gross Greiner, having to turn before reaching the summit owing to the indisposition of one of the party. From Zell am See, with its beautiful lake, they went on to Krimml and had a good climb on the Reichenspitz, made more interesting by new snow. Crossing the Pfandlseharte they climbed the Klein and Gross Glockner from the Fruaz Josef Hans in fine weather with a splendid view from the summit.

The tour was brought to an end with the crossing of the Riffitor to the Kaprunethal. The valleys were most beautiful.

THE JUNIOR MOUNTAINERRING CLUB OF
SCOTLAND.

EDINBURGH SECTION.

EASTER MEET, 1928.

OWING possibly to the presence of an unusual number of the S.M.C., the Junior Club (Edinburgh Section) put up several spirited performances at Arrochar over the week-end, 13th-15th April, not the least of which was Ainslie's successful effort to catch the 4.30 A.M. train from Waverley and Cameron's utter inability to do likewise, although the train was twenty minutes late in starting. Bartholomew, Thomson, Williams, Brown, Greig, Campbell, Cox, Reid, Addenbrooke, and Geddes arrived on Friday night, but the Hon. President being in a subdued mood, the evening passed off quietly, although it was reported that several bedroom doors were locked as a precaution. Thomson, unfortunately, arrived a casualty. In his excitement at selling a gramophone share, he had fallen down the steps of the Exchange and sprained his ankle. No one witnessed the arrival of Ainslie next morning. He was found before breakfast anxiously gazing up at the Cobbler and consulting a timetable as to the next train for Balerno. It transpired he had confused the Cobbler with the Carter. Owing to the breathless condition of many of the members, a little preliminary training was indicated, so Bartholomew's car was requisitioned. After several false starts and the arrival of Cameron, nine mountaineers boarded it, and, with Campbell doing the Black Bottom on the running board, left for an unknown destination. The car appeared to be in excellent fettle, and the suggestion was made that it be bought for the J.M.C.S. As only £4. 2s. 9½d. could be raised, the owner refused to part.

He was anxious to do a deal, but had apparently hoped for a bigger profit on the resale. The car was eventually abandoned on Loch Lomondside and was towed home by Thomson and Campbell. Thereafter the party indulged in a little gentle exercise under the watchful eye of the Hon. President, who herded his six sheep over Ben Vane and Ben Ime, though only two were left to bleat after him upon the slopes of A Chrois.

The evening meeting proved to be thoroughly enjoyable. The programme was varied and the talent "by-ordinar'." Remembering the fiasco at Lochearnhead, the Secretary had provided a pianist and M.O. combined. This acquisition to the Club enabled Geddes to tune in on his Strad., and the fun became general. Cox, emboldened by two large ciders, broke into song and related how, in his youth, he had been seduced by a dugong and had all but suffered the fate of the noble Ritter von Schwillingsaufenstein. A reel (hobnailers barred) concluded the evening, and Geddes was made Hon. Life Musical Director (unpaid) to the J.M.C.S. and crowned with a garland of Bass corks.

Sunday saw a general trek Cobblerwards. The day was fine, but bitterly cold, with the rocks ice-covered and the going none too good. Two ropes conveyed Thomson, Greig, Geddes, Campbell, Ainslie, and Brown up Jean, on whose bonnet they duly photographed themselves and each other to commemorate the achievement. All the other tops were visited in turn. The only casualty was Ainslie, who received two nasty stabs in the most succulent part of his calf from a tacket which the Cobbler had carelessly let fall from his last.

The evening was again musical, the members being determined to get the value out of the Bass corks. Some would have preferred Jazz, but the Musical Director kept their noses firmly at the grindstone of the classics. Mackay was happy, although the quality of the Gaelic did not meet with his approval, and the Scion of Breadalbane decided he must take up with the language of his ancestors.

Monday morning brought Knox and Ross, who

indignantly repudiated the suggestion that they had come in a Government tender, and insisted that they had caught the 4.30 A.M. from Waverley. The Hon. Secretary kindly led them out into the Wilderness, while most of the others had a quiet and uneventful day on Ben Voirlich, where some good fun was had on the snow slopes. The hotel management being satisfied that all the bills had been paid, the party dispersed in cars and trains after what was certainly one of the most enjoyable week-ends the Club had ever had.

GLASGOW SECTION.

EASTER MEET 1928—BEN LAWERS HOTEL.

FOUR members were ready to start work on the Saturday morning: D. Steven (collected from Crianlarich at an early hour), Lillie, Hamilton, and Robinson.

Lawers being near at hand was decided on as an immediate objective, with some vague talk of "walking along the ridge" once the top was bagged. Mist was encountered low down and the snow was deep and soft.

After some groping about, the party having failed to find the cairn, agreed to take the aneroid reading of 4,600 feet as correct and descended to the hotel at about 4 P.M. Refreshing modesty was shown by all four members of this party when afterwards questioned about their record-breaking climb.

Records were cheap at this Meet for Aikman, who had arrived early in the afternoon, had set out and bagged Meall Greigh in about one and three-quarter hours. He explained this quick work with stories of hair-raising glissades, but apart from the smell of roasting meat, evidence was lacking.

Williams, Dinsmore, M'Laren, and T. Aitken having arrived, a meeting was held that evening, being also

attended by J. A. Steven and D. H. Steven, who, with Bowie and S. Stephen, were camping in Glen Lyon.

The lack of a pianist precluded any musical endeavour, and most of the party retired early to bed in anticipation of a strenuous Sunday.

In the morning two parties set out, Williams and Dinsmore for Lawers, and M'Laren, T. Aitken, Aikman, and Robinson for Schiehallion. Both groups accomplished their object, the former including Meall Garbh and the latter Carn Maing.

The brothers Steven, Bowie, and S. Stephen from Glen Lyon spent the day on the subsidiaries of Carn Maing.

Weather conditions were similar to the previous day, low-lying mist with rain and sleet.

On the Monday, Aikman, Williams, Lillie, Dinsmore, and Hamilton ascended Beinn Ghlas, Meall Corranaich, and Tarmachan, which latter, with Meall Greigh, was also climbed by M'Laren and T. Aitken. The two expeditions met rather unexpectedly through the former party having inadvertently descended the wrong side of Meall Corranaich. It was generally admitted and agreed that the map must have been wrong, any error in the reading of the same being quite unthinkable since a well-known expert was with the party.

KINGSHOUSE—14th to 16th July.

Dinsmore and Lillie broke their return journey from Skye on Friday evening. They got off the train at Bridge of Orchy, intending to walk to Kingshouse, but apparently finding the road too rough-going after the Cuillin, decided to go by car. A pitiable aspect was immediately assumed, and was so successful that the Secretary of the S.M.C. stopped and kindly took them the remainder of the way. Aikman, Jackson, and Munro, R. R. Elton and G. Speirs attended.

About midday on Saturday the Secretary and Hon. Vice-President were found by the rest of the party having

“lunch” in their car. Their statement that they had already been up the Crowberry Ridge was not believed, and it was further deemed strange to eat porridge and bacon and eggs to lunch. The rain had been coming down solid all morning, but a journey to Kingshouse was made where D. Ross was found to have arrived.

On Sunday the Curved Ridge was climbed in three parties, two of which also bagged the Crowberry Tower at the finish. After investigating the contents of a rucksack, the peak-baggers then took things in hand to lead the party to the other end of Buachille-Etive.

On Monday morning Munro and Lillie were in no hurry, preferring to go to Bridge of Orchy by the road than the Clachlet. About midday, seeing every one again out of cover, the weather again broke down and remained broken all day. This did not deter the peak-baggers from finishing off all the tops of the Clachlet, while Elton and Speirs, not wishing to be behind them, went down Glen Etive and walked up a little-known mountain called Sgor na h'Ulaidh.

ARROCHAR—24th August.

Present.—President, Secretary, Aikman, Dinsmore, Forsyth, Lillie, Macfarlane, T. G. Robinson, Stevens, Wilson, and also W. Speirs, Elton, and Hutchison.

The notice specifying the Sugach Corrie as the locus of this Meet was apparently misread by the first comers, who met by the Narnain boulder in the Cobbler Corrie, a lodestone which has an undoubted fascination for Glasgow Members of the Club. The first to appear was T. G. Robinson, followed by Hutchison. These two were beguiled by the witchery of the mist effects on the Cobbler North Peak to climb the Right Angle Gully and visit the Cobbler. On returning to the boulder they found the President and Elton, who had also apparently taken the wrong corrie by mistake. The latter spent the evening making new routes up the boulder, and thereafter spent the night in the Speirs's Annexe. On Sunday the Spear Head

and its adjoining buttress occupied the President, Elton, Robinson, Hutchison, Aikman, and Lillie for an hour or two. Dinsmore and Stevens spent the morning trotting along the ridges and dips between Crois and the Cobbler. When the attractions of the Spear Head had palled the President, and Elton went back to the Cobbler Corrie for their baggage, Robinson and Hutchison descended into the Sugach Corrie, and Aikman and Lillie walked along the ridge towards Crois. Robinson and Hutchison spent some time on the rocks of Garrich's climb (T.C.B.) buttress. While they were thus engaged the two Speirs and Macfarlane came up the corrie and began climbing in a gully to the left of M'Laren's chimney. This they found to be good sport though somewhat watery. Robinson and Hutchison walked down to Sugach Cottage. The President and Elton came down by the Cobbler Corrie. The Speirs party vanquished their gully and walked round to Crois before descending. When the other three returned is not known. The feature of this Meet was the kilt as worn for rock climbing. There is a hardy type of animal in the Glasgow Section whose knees are not sensitive to the abrasive qualities of the rocks. Most of the members at this Meet were either wearing shorts or the aforementioned kilt. (Most patriotic ; but we wonder if it is practical.)

ARRAN MEET—*September* 1928.

A Meet of the Glasgow Section was held in Arran over the Autumn Holiday week-end. The weather was dry and fine the whole time, though frosty at nights. There was a very small attendance, consisting only of Williams, Aikman, Baxter, and Ross. The three first-named arriving down on the Friday night, spent Saturday in climbing Chir Mhor by a gully leading up to and then through an earthy tunnel known as the Corridor. Then they proceeded along the A'Chir Ridge, making several variations from the "Tourist" Route. Many people were met with on the tops and in the Glen, making

the purists of the party quite grieved with the overcrowded state of Arran. On the Sunday the whole party did Suidhe Fergus and the Witches Step *alias* Ceum na Cailleach, descending from the sloping summit boulder by the fine chimney to the Caisteal Abhail Ridge. The array of rocks by the way proved too attractive for the Castles to be bagged. On Monday a late rising made a hill expedition impossible, but the Cat Boulder and a neighbouring tree were thoroughly climbed. A most enjoyable week-end.

Apart from the Meets above described, the activity and enterprise shown by the members of the Junior Section is revealed by reports of climbing expeditions throughout the summer undertaken by Dixon and M'Laren (including Beinn Eighe, Ross-shire, six tops; Liathach, six tops; and the Cuillins); Dinsmore and Lillie (Cuillins and Buachaille Etive); Baxter and Aikman (Twenty Munros from Cluanie); and Williams who, with Reynolds of the Fell and Rock Club and Graham M'Phee (see "Notes and Excursions"), spent a fortnight in the Lake District.

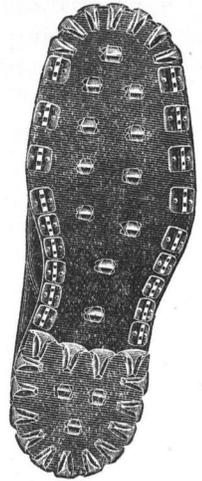
The Editor regrets that these expeditions cannot be reported more fully in this issue.

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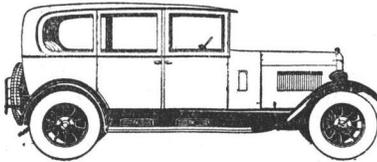
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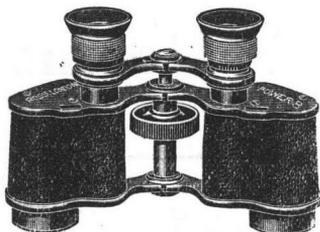
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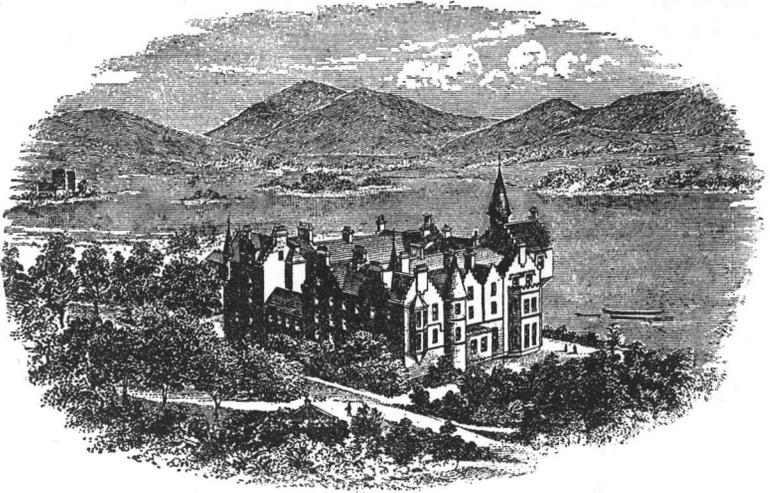
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