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THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL

EDITED BY J. H. B. BELL



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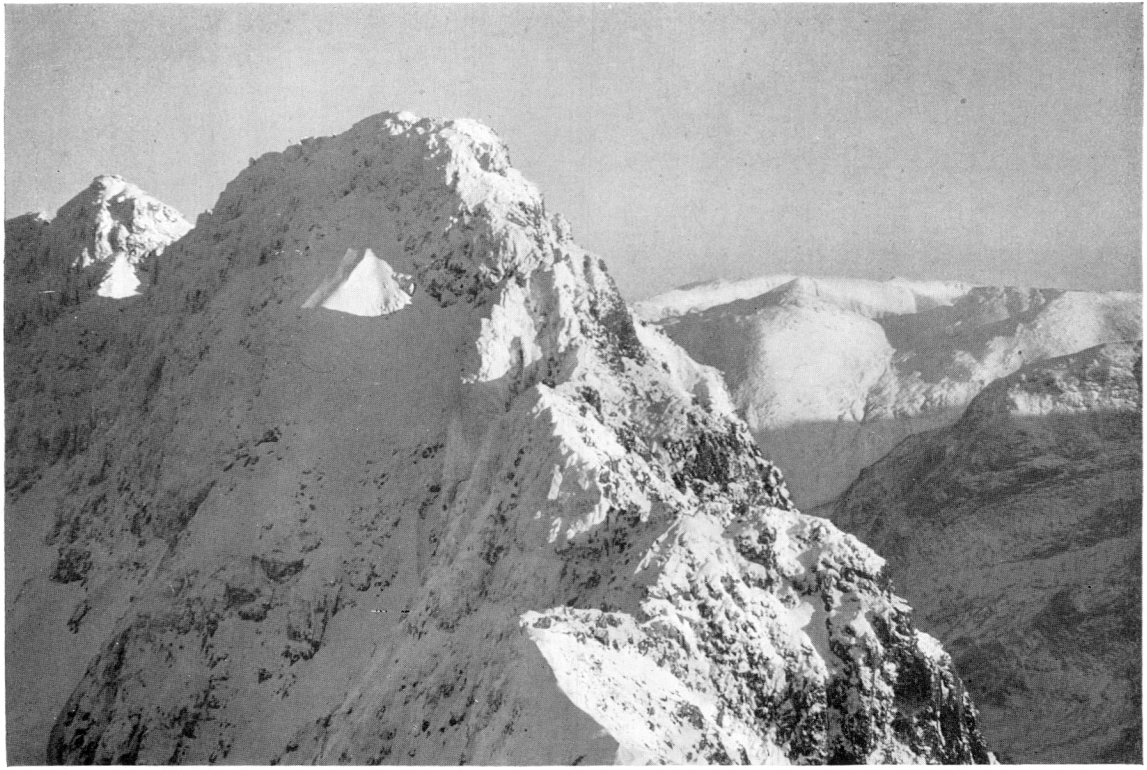
EDITORIAL NOTES.

AGAIN we are delighted to be able to turn out a full-sized and informative *Journal*; too informative in fact, and not altogether as readable as we should like, for it has a strong guide-book flavour. But we are endeavouring to overtake arrears before the end of Vol. 23, and with a view to including all available information in advance of the publication of the new series of " Guides." We might almost call this number a Glencoe Special, but Glencoe is worth it, as it is our finest and most accessible week-end climbing ground for both summer and winter.

Errata.—The Editor apologises for the careless error in the last issue regarding the caption at the foot of an excellent illustration of Roping Down technique on the Inaccessible Pinnacle of Sgùrr Dearg. He thanks correspondents (many) who have drawn his attention to this, particularly one illuminating set of verses addressed to " J. Homer Bell." Any other notifications of *Errata* discovered in Vol. 23 will be gratefully received.

Notice to Contributors.—When sending accounts of expeditions, and especially new climbs, please be accurate and brief, and have these in the same form and arrangement as they appear in the *Journal*. This saves copying. Please note that the Editor's address from now on is **3 Park Place, Clackmannan**. In any case, send the contributions as early as possible, and before 31st January 1948 at latest. We are limited for space, and have now some overmatter in hand for the next issue. Good photographs are welcome, but in the first instance send only small prints and not big enlargements. Communications about distribution and sales should go to **Mr D. Mackay, 113 Comiston Drive, Edinburgh, 10**, and not to the Editor.

The " Bulletin " is being edited by Mr A. C. D. Small, Achnamara House, Lochgilphead, Argyllshire. In addition to official reports of Club and J.M.C.S. activities there will be some space for topical notes which are of immediate interest. The next number should be issued by the early summer.



Tom Weir

AONACH EAGACH
(West to East)

THE SCOTTISH
MOUNTAINEERING
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THE SNOW AND ICE CLIMBS OF GLENCOE.

By W. M. MacKenzie.

That there is scope and opportunity in the Scottish Highlands to learn most of the peculiarities and vagaries of snow and ice and how to use the appropriate equipment goes without question. As for weather, there is ample opportunity to become inured to the most appalling conditions. For many climbers, the winter-time in Scotland is devoted to the bagging of "Munros." The few who visit Nevis nearly all make the ascent by a snow-filled gully rather than by one of the ridges. But winter ascents should rather be regarded as the means by which fresh aspects of well-known routes are revealed. The term, "ascent in winter," refers only to climbs done in true winter conditions, *i.e.*, under snow and ice when the ice-axe and crampons * come into their own.

That there are almost innumerable possibilities of winter climbs in Glencoe is evident, but the intervention of the war temporarily halted our exploration. Last winter was a poor one and very little was accomplished. Such climbs as Ravens' Gully, Lady's Gully and many others are good possibilities. The North Buttress of the Buachaille "ordinary route" can give excellent sport.

* It is not suggested that the use of crampons is necessary for Scottish winter climbs, nor yet that their habitual use is at all desirable here. To rely on crampons before one has mastered the technique of using the ice-axe on steep snow-ice or ice is a great mistake. On the longer Alpine climbs, however, crampons are almost essential as time-savers, and it is a good thing to learn how to use them properly before going to the Alps, if for no other reason than that fitting crampons and wearing them without discomfort or undue straining of little used tendons needs a certain amount of practice.

From time to time articles have appeared in the *Journal* giving accounts of climbs done in good winter conditions. In very few instances do they deal with the climb as a whole, but are rather inclined to describe incidents that give to the reader little idea of the composition of the climbs. Here I shall endeavour to describe conditions that are likely to be met with on Glencoe climbs, conditions that can be met on any mountain range that carries snow.

Some of the climbs mentioned later on in this article have been done on several occasions in winter, but each ascent can almost be taken as a new one; conditions are never identical.

A thorough knowledge of climbing in winter is not gained in a day nor in a single season. Conditions vary almost from day to day; seasons can be good, indifferent or heart-breakingly bad. All conditions should be experienced before one can become a sound judge of snow and ice and of weather conditions. It may be said here that snow in our Highlands differs in its behaviour from that of either the Alps or the Rockies. It is less prone to avalanche, possibly owing to our damper climate and also because we do not get the terrific precipitations that are experienced abroad. Avalanches are rare, although I cannot say that I haven't seen a wet snow avalanche, because I have, but it was a very small one. In snowy weather I have never seen a powder snow avalanche such as one sees falling from the north face of the Jungfrau or the east face of Mt. Edith Cavell. The chief avalanche danger here is from collapsing cornices. They are apt to bring stones down as well, but then, no one would venture into a gully in March or April when a full-scale thaw was in operation.

Therefore, to gain experience one has to begin with the comparatively easy courses. In this article I shall describe easy gullies and ridges and then go on to climbs, becoming progressively more interesting, from our point of view. Dr Bell has been kind enough to give me an account of a climb on Buachaille Etive Mor.

One final point. Beyond indicating a roughly gradu-

ated series of climbs, experts cannot be of much help; the beginner should try and discover everything for him or herself, along with two or three like companions, and not follow too much in the path of the expert. In so doing the powers of observation are quickened. On mountains like Buachaille Etive Mor it is well to become thoroughly familiar with the main features of the mountain. Indeed, time spent on reconnaissance is time seldom wasted, for climbing in winter is certain to lead to nocturnal excursions—most enjoyable, provided the party is prepared to meet the emergency. It is absolutely necessary to know how to take compass bearings and to read a map.

It is most difficult to give a list of estimated times for the more advanced climbs. A sound principle is to be prepared for twice as long as you anticipate. Proper equipment is essential. At the end will be found a list of climbs graded according to difficulty.

Stob Coire nan Lochan.

From the roadway just above the gorge on any fine morning in winter the mountaineer, speeding down the glen, has his attention arrested by the sudden appearance of a fine peak. Brakes are quickly applied, heads are screwed into uncomfortable positions to obtain the view of a beautiful line of cliff set high in the sky, buttressed and gullied, draped in snow and ice, leading to a remotely lovely peak, one of the finest in Glencoe—Stob Coire nan Lochan. My winter association with the mountain was inspired by such a view and a vow was made to explore the mountain at the earliest opportunity. That came fairly soon, but there was no view; it was sleeting, the cloud ceiling was at zero level, but there was no wind to speak of. It was early December of a very early and snowy winter.

Dunn, Wilson, Russell and myself plodded up the corrie, not seeing very much, practically feeling our way. Eventually we reached the headwaters of the burn, the small lochans, then almost completely obliterated.

Bearing slightly to our right we struck steeper ground. The snow was of a considerable depth and the steady snowfall was adding to it with each passing hour. We were now certain that our position was on the steep, broken ground to the right of the North Buttress. We decided to make for the summit ridge and then continue to the summit. The climbing was quite interesting, involving a little route-finding. The snow was steep and the new stuff practically hip-deep. We completed the ascent by climbing an arête that was completely plastered but easy. As I was leading I got there before the others, and at once noticed the presence of a large cornice overhanging the abyss on my left. I brought up the second man and then busied myself with the rope. For no apparent reason I looked up and found, to my horror, that he had wandered on to the cornice. He was entirely unaware of its existence. Just as I was about to shout, I saw a crack appear between us, but, fortunately, he too saw it and made one convulsive leap to safety, just in time. The cornice in its descent made a noise like thunder. At that moment Dunn popped his head over the edge and inquired what was the cause of the noise. The remnants of the cornice were duly pointed out to him. Wilson, earlier in the day, had taken off his glasses, put them in a hip pocket, sat down and smashed them. In the dim light it wasn't surprising that he hadn't observed the cornice. Cornices are most difficult to make out in misty conditions.

We made our way to the summit which we reached in good time. The local guide suggested Bidean nam Bian and that was agreed to. In the fullness of time we got there, whereupon the oracle declared that he knew the way off. It was all in the bag, so to speak, and gaily we followed. The glissade was a good one, and it took us below the mist and cloud, but also into entirely unfamiliar country. The oracle was confounded. Compass and map were produced. The compass informed us that our course was due south or thereabouts, and the map that we were *en route* for Dalness. Our car was at Clachaig. So was our dinner! It was now quite dark, and nothing

would induce us to clamber all the way up our gully. We made for Dalness Lodge, where we received every hospitality and gave little in return except the water we dripped on our host's carpet. We were motored back to Clachaig. Needless to say, we never again listened to the man who knows the "way off."

It was perhaps a year later when Dunn, MacAlpine and myself were back in the Stob Coire nan Lochan corrie when we climbed the gully between the Central and Northern Buttresses. The gully is quite easy, and is mostly steep snow with two or three small pitches. The gully has quite a beautiful situation.

The S. C. Gully, or the gully between South and Central Buttresses, is now very well known. It begins with a very difficult, steep initial pitch of about 70 to 80 feet. The gully is about 400 to 500 feet in length and twists and turns its way in a series of pitches to the summit ridge. The gully is full of interest. This is a climb that is best done under good conditions, and it is well worth waiting for the right moment. A good plaster of snow and ice is necessary to make the climb "go." There is an excellent account of the climb in *Journal*, 20, 284.

Bidean nam Bian

The gully between the Diamond and Church Door Buttresses is, as a rule, devoid of difficulty. It is fairly steep at the top, and if conditions are good there may be quite a lot of step-cutting to be done as the gully ends near the summit of the mountain, the highest in Argyll.

Aonach Eagach.

This is one of the best-known ridge walks in the country and for many mountaineers the scene of happy, carefree days. As a summer scramble the ridge presents few difficulties, even if one takes all the towers or "*gendarmes*" direct. In winter, however, it is not so easy. The ridge can assume an Alpine appearance and double cornices are sometimes seen. I doubt if such a sight is to be seen elsewhere in these islands, perhaps in

Skye, but I haven't observed one there as I have only once had the good fortune to see the Coolin under snow. Aonach Eagach under such conditions can give the climber all he would ask for.

At the beginning of a winter season, when the hills have had their first coating, make for Aonach Eagach. There will be just enough snow to come over the boots and maybe the rocks are thinly veneered with ice—"*verglas*." A gale may be coming out of the nor'-west accompanied by hail, or, as we once termed it, "blasts of small shot." If you are going the wrong way you'll perhaps wish you weren't, even although Clachaig Inn or the Hostel is more conveniently placed for an expedition running from east to west. In my opinion it is a much more enjoyable climb doing it from the "Study" end; it does save a few hundred feet of climbing! When the climber has had a few winter expeditions like the ones just narrated he should, if he feels inclined, tackle the ridge under hard winter conditions. I have recollections of such conditions when the leader fell through a cornice: one moment he was there, the next he wasn't, and the second man went down the opposite side. The compensating movement was promptly executed and thoroughly appreciated by a most interested third man. When the disappearing one was hauled back to *terra firma* he muttered something about having his attention diverted by the sudden unfolding of a superb view, and there are many to be seen from Aonach Eagach.

The ridge holds many pleasant moments and also pitfalls for the unwary, such as easy "ways off." There are such ways, but they are complicated and not to be looked for with darkness coming on, or trouble may be the portion of the searcher. On one occasion I was with a large party that found itself in difficulties and had to make its way back to the ridge which was reached at 9 P.M. We made our way down the Kinlochleven side, reaching the main road at midnight, not without some adventure and a ducking for one unfortunate member who was literally lugged into the middle of a burn. He had a torch, and as I was on the opposite bank I

wondered what had gone wrong with the beam, as it was flickering in a peculiar manner—it was under the water and so was its owner! The rope was still on between him and the man in front, a fact which the latter had forgotten when, on reaching the other side of the stream, he set off at a smart pace just as the man behind was poised to step on to a boulder. The resultant tightening of the rope and its consequences hardly require description.

Buachaille Etive Mor.

The Great Gully is fully described in the " Central Highlands Guide."

The Curved Ridge.—In Scotland it would be hard to find a climber who hasn't been up or mostly down the Curved Ridge. In the present era the ridge has tended to become an onlookers' gallery. However, we are dealing with winter climbing when the ridge is no longer a couch for lolling bodies. The uninitiated are inclined to scoff at the possibilities of this route in winter and are very apt, as a result, to underestimate its difficulties, forgetting for the moment the great changes that can be wrought on a climb when it is heavily plastered with snow and ice. Then, it is hardly a climb for a beginner. The ridge can give an excellent climb, and for those people who have not done it in winter it is high time they had. If the difficulties are too much for a party that isn't too strong " C " Gully is always an alternative, even although it has a pitch at the top.

Collie's Route (by J. H. B. Bell).—In real hard winter conditions, as the author of this article maintains, the easy summer routes are transformed to very difficult climbs, where one is content to reach the summit by not seeking extraneous difficulties but by using mountaineering judgment and initiative in route selection, of course within a defined area of mountain face. Ian Charleson and I enjoyed a grand day in solving such a problem on 31st December 1944, on a perfect winter day of hard frost and bright sunshine, with rock ledges considerably iced up, and new, dry, powder snow overlying everything high

up. It was an excursion from the Crianlarich New Year Meet. We were dumped at the head of the Glen Etive road at 11 A.M. and told to be back by 4 P.M.—a short allowance of five hours to try our luck. We had no halts to speak of, eating at odd intervals by the way.

Central Buttress was the primary objective, by the route first climbed by Colin Allan and myself in 1934, and starting from close to the angle between it and Collie's original route of 1894. Charleson led 30 feet up the cliff behind the little flake at the bottom. I asked him for a report and received the expected reply, "Rocks about 75 per cent. iced higher up." As the first 180 feet of this climb is of very moderate standard in summer I was certain that the really difficult part higher up would be either impossible or take many hours to climb. We gave up Central Buttress and skirted the cliff to the left, making our way to a little saddle and then as straight up as possible, using short traverses where necessary. Thus we were really on Collie's original route. It was characterised by short, steep faces with narrow heather-covered ledges between. The heather was most useful, as the dry powder-snow protected the rock underneath from icing up. We never relaxed our progress, taking no count of time, usually moving together. There were no long pitches, but several were sufficiently trying and exposed, as the face is very steep. Uncertainty as to the outcome persisted until we were above the level of the upper end of Heather Ledge (on Central Buttress, on our right). The genial sunshine made all this clearing of snow and crawling over ledges and mantel-shelves quite endurable. At length we reached a broad horizontal terrace, bounded on the left by a drop into a steep, narrow, curving, snow-filled gully—probably Lady's Gully of an early exploration by the Abrahams party about 1900, a place I had never visited, but which may also prove to be an excellent line for a winter climb.

We now kept up the broken rock ridge with the gully on our left, easy climbing which led us to the base of an upper snowfield. To the right, above us, across a snowy col was the Crowberry Tower. Above this snowfield,

separated from it by a low tier of rock, is yet another, which descends from a saddle high up on the left, underneath the summit rocks. It was close on 3 P.M. and we thought we could reach the top in about twenty minutes. But we were wrong. We had to cut steps most of the way, for there was a thick, hard crust of snow-ice. The structure varied a good deal. In places there was a polished icy crust covering dry powder snow of a few inches in depth which overlay a harder icy surface of thawed and re-frozen old snow. Where the top crust was thin we had to be careful, as this might well be a true Scottish wind-slab. We cut straight up and then to the right to the little col and over to the upper snowfield. Then we went to the left to the skyline at the top, traversing beneath some rocks until we could climb up through them at an easy place, reaching the summit at 4 P.M.

The view was clear and magnificent, except to the west where Rum and Skye were obscured by haze. Nevis, the Mamores and the Aonachs gleamed in sunshine. Lochs Rannoch, Laidon, and Ba were a wonderful translucent green. Bidean looked resplendent—a great mountain mass. On the convex summit ridge, frozen to the hardness of concrete and gleaming with icy plates, going was difficult. When we turned down towards Glen Etive the boulders were ice-glazed and the snow crust broke at every step. Still, we raced downwards and reached the road at 5 P.M. We are both sure that there is much more good sport available on this corrugated mountain face under the like conditions.

Crowberry Gully.—This gully makes a fine summer expedition and is, perhaps, one of the finest gully climbs in Scotland. Like all gullies, winter snows alter its whole complexion, not, however, making it easier to climb but much more difficult and complicated. More than one party has been forced to give it up. Time for the gully varies from 5 or 6 to 12 hours. When is the climb usually in good condition ? Normally during the months of February and March.

The amount of snow and ice on the climb varies enormously from year to year. Individual pitches vary

in difficulty from season to season, but I think it is quite impossible to have in any one year a series of easy pitches. One would think a vast accumulation of snow would ease matters. It doesn't, as I have seen the Great Cave pitch a vast curtain of almost perpendicular loose snow so that a way had to be burrowed through it, stamped down, and other manœuvres employed before we could reach good, hard ice. Anyone who knows this pitch in summer can imagine what it would be like in such conditions.

The climber, as a rule, can make rapid progress as far as the pitch under the Thin Man's Crack, where he is usually brought up by a short, steep ice pitch. The Thin Man's Crack is usually snowed up, or is, at the most, a small pitch rather awkward to get up.

The greatest difficulty in this winter climb now follows—the crossing of the slabs or the following of "Murray's Route," an alternative when the slabs won't "go." The slabs will always be difficult, as they usually carry a thin veneer of icy snow that looks most unstable and, at first glance, is nearly always vetoed, although, personally, I have great faith in the route. I think a leader will nearly always succeed in getting up. What happens to the others is of no consequence, as the anchorage 80 feet above is good. The slabs are not climbed in summer.

The Great Cave Pitch looms overhead, its upper lip jutting out into the gully and looking forbiddingly difficult. In fact, on our first ascent, we had to thank a bottle of sherry for getting us up this pitch (*Journal*, 21, 24). Those who know the cave in summer will remember that it is rarely dry, a fact which now gives them profound satisfaction, as the slabby lower walls of the cave have an inch thick veneer of black ice allowing small nicks to be cut and enabling progress to be made to a more satisfactory thickness of icy *névé* in the upper part of the pitch, which is practically vertical and requires one-handed cutting with the axe. The final pitch is a small one and leads out on to the steep final snows under the summit. Of the many climbs on the Buachaille, this one finishes nearer the summit cairn than any other.

Garrick's Shelf.—As an ordinary summer climb Garrick's Shelf is not more than difficult. My first experience of the climb dates back to the summer of 1935 when I had just returned from three weeks of cloudless days in the Sunmöre Alps of West Norway. I came back to earth and the not unusual wet conditions in Glencoe at the end of July. We climbed the Shelf for nothing better to do. The climb is loose, and very recently a rockfall has occurred at the one difficult feature on the climb; what effect that will have on the route in winter I cannot as yet tell. Garrick's Shelf, in winter, ranks as one of the finest climbs in this country. Its difficulty is sustained and the position of the climb gives most repaying views of the snow and ice-plastered cliffs of the North Buttress, superb glimpses into the Crowberry Gully, and at one's feet the far-flung carpet of Rannoch Moor.

The climb being situated on the north-west flank of the Crowberry Ridge, the accumulation of snow and ice by February, in a normal year, is considerable, and good conditions usually obtain. The approach to the climb in winter is somewhat different to that of summer, and, if snow is lying to a fairly low contour, can be quite difficult. The rope may have to be put on as low on the mountain as the small rowan tree, and the little corner there can eat up time as it is usually very icy. When the corner is passed it is better to get into the lower part of " C " Gully and use that as a quick means of access to the foot of the Crowberry. Thence, a traverse to the right brings the party to the first pitch of the Shelf route, a small cave almost overhanging the Crowberry Gully.

The route lies up the right wall of the cave, and from now on the rocks are seldom, in any winter season, free of snow and a veneer of ice. From the lodgment above the first pitch the view upwards gives a fair idea of what lies in store. The crux of the climb now assumes a most intimidating aspect. The route at that point peters out in a wall. The right-hand corner (looking up) juts out into the Crowberry Gully and the left abuts on to the Crowberry Ridge.

The way winds up in a succession of chimneys and corners, the chimneys being full of ice, involving much cutting, and the rocks much scraping, chipping and clearing. The wall, forming the crux, was as far as our party got on our first attempt in 1936 (*Journal*, 21, 237). The following 50 to 60 feet is as hard as is justifiable. By trial and error we came to the conclusion that the only feasible route on the wall was the summer one, and looks so hard that it is inevitable that every party attempting the climb will look for an alternative way. None seems to exist, unless the rockfall mentioned has opened up possibilities. It is hard to say. The final move on the wall is sensational, as one is poised on one very small foothold on which one has to change feet. There are no positive handholds, but a small sloping shelf to lean over helps to absorb one's excess weight. The position is very exposed. When the move is accomplished, good handholds round a corner, on the right, can be reached and cleared. With their assistance and that of an axe the climber can haul himself up and round the corner to an excellent stance and belay. The route is now up an ice-choked chimney, immediately followed by another. They are both difficult, but overshadowed in the knowledge that easy ground lies ahead. The crest of the Crowberry Ridge is joined at a point a few yards below the lowest rocks of the Tower. The ridge, on that occasion, was a most beautiful, translucent sickle of ice; indeed a wonderful sight.

Stob Coire nam Beith.

The north-east face of Stob Coire nam Beith presents to the climber a complicated cliff of buttresses, cracks, gullies and terraces. There aren't any ridges of clean-cut rock flying up to meet an airy summit or gullies spilling down their pitches and pouring debris on to the corrie floor. As a matter of fact the cliffs are somewhat broken up, and rock climbs are on the short side, allowing the climber to wander over the face almost at will. But in winter, when the cliff is smothered in snow and ice, two fine routes emerge—Arch and Deep-cut Gullies.

The former is fairly well known as a summer route, but the latter was unclimbed in either winter or summer until 1939 (*Journal*, 22, 152).

Arch Gully.—The "Central Highlands Guide" describes fully the route to the gully. In misty weather it may be difficult to find, and in winter landmarks are apt to disappear. The approach from the corrie is a snow walk. The lower pitches are completely buried and no difficulties are encountered until the party reaches the difficult pitches described in the "Guide."

The introduction to the difficulties is abrupt, and before it is properly realised the leader finds himself performing acrobatic feats on a vertical 30 to 40 foot pitch of hard, green ice. Foot and handholds have to be cut, the work being so strenuous that several descents will have to be made in order to rest. The first pitch finishes on a small, sloping shelf of snow where a platform can be hacked out. The next pitch is, if anything, slightly longer and A.P. At the top the ice may bulge out in a slight overhang, a rather common feature on an ice pitch in a gully. This is due to water freezing up before it reaches the bottom of the pitch. The situation here is much like looking up an elevator shaft, two smooth ice-veneered walls and an inner one of solid ice.

It is well to point out at this juncture that cutting up such steep ice requires a little careful forethought. Foot and handholds are not cut anywhere, but according to the plan that is going to fit the pitch. Cutting whilst one is on very steep ice must be done overhead, otherwise an axe cannot be effectively wielded. The exception is when one is descending steep ice.

The top pitch is very severe, and J. F. Hamilton, who has repeated the climb, upholds this view. The exit at the top is rather a hard movement, as the good, solid ice peters out and the leader finds himself confronted with a slabby, holdless, snow-covered scoop or a long stride on to very insecure ground. I think the swarm up the slabby scoop the preferable way, as good ground is reached in 5 to 6 feet.

There remain some hundreds of feet of climbing before

the summit is attained. The ground is fairly easy. When the large terrace is reached, a walk along it will lead the party to the North-west Gully. The ascent of this gully is easy, even in the dark.

Deep-cut Gully.—This gully is well seen, right of centre, in Bartholomew's photograph, facing p. 89 in the "Guide." It is the dark gash running from the lowest rocks to a point two-thirds of the way up the face.

A short history of the gully should put the reader in the picture. The first attempt made by our party was in 1936 when a miniature icy Niagara almost drowned the second man and we had to beat a retreat. No further thought was given to the climb until the end of January 1938 when the plan was put to a party breakfasting at a point in the corrie where every pitch was visible. The party viewed the gully, shuddered, gave an emphatic "no," and accused the promoter of the plan as having selected the breakfasting point with malice aforethought. It mattered little anyhow, as, shortly afterwards, they found themselves involved in the intricacies of Arch Gully.

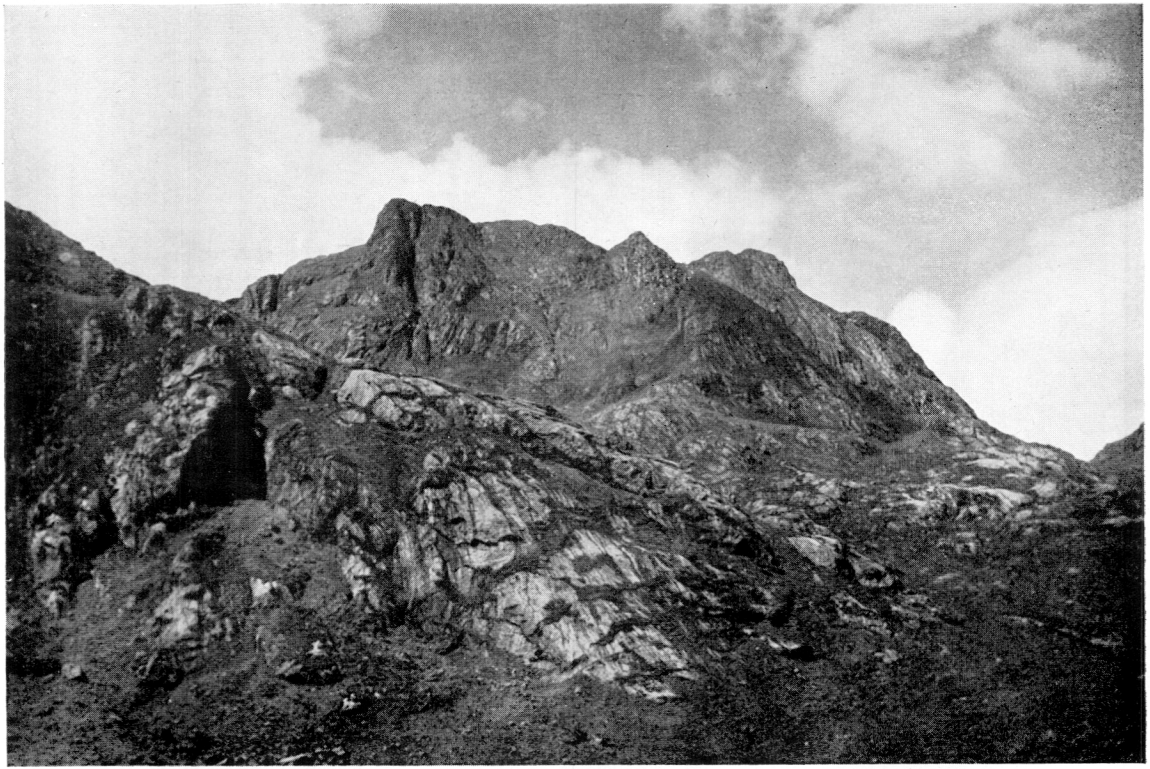
About a year later we renewed our attack on the gully and got as far as the final pitch. Steep ice led us up to within a few feet of the top where the ice petered out, leaving a smooth, snow-covered, holdless slab. As a matter of fact the snow peeled off. We retired and slid down double ropes to the bottom of the gully. Two months later we made our third attempt. The lower pitches were now familiar ground and were quickly passed. They are not easy, only apt to be overshadowed in difficulty by oft-repeated upward glances at the top pitch, as if we were expecting to see ourselves over the final problem.

The crux of the climb is a very steep pitch of about 40 feet. A thin rib of rock in the centre reaches almost to the bottom of the pitch, leaving an overhang. The way is up the left chimney and it is a pure ice pitch. Again, as on the last occasion, the ice petered out, but a very hard move was made on to the centre rib and a still harder one made up the final part of the right chimney. Once



Tom Weir

STOB COIRE NAN LOCHAN
(From Aonach Eagach)



D. McKellar

GARBH BHEINN, ARDGOUR

The Great Gully is just beneath the summit

this point is surmounted the climb is won. The upper part of the gully is easy and leads on to the terrace. A traverse can be made into the North-west Gully.

Classification.

Stob Coire nan Lochan.

C.N. Gully . Easy. S.C. Gully . Severe.

Bidean nam Bian.

Central Gully on North Face . . Easy.

Aonach Eagach Ridge.

Difficult.

Buachaille Etive Mor.

Great Gully .	Easy.	North Buttress .	Very difficult.
" C " Gully .	Easy.	Crowberry Gully	Severe (hard).
Curved Ridge	Very difficult.	Garrick's Shelf .	Very severe.

Stob Coire nam Beith.

North-west Gully . .	Easy.	Arch Gully .	Very severe.
		Deep-cut Gully	Very severe.

THE GREAT GULLY OF GARBH BHEINN.

By W. H. Murray.

On the east face of Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour a splendid buttress of gneiss falls to the Garbh Choire Mor and overlooks the upper part of Loch Linnhe. It is this rock-mass that lends so much dignity to the lift of the summit as seen from Glencoe and Ballachulish. From the summit the Great Ridge drops 1,200 feet straight down, and hard to its right as one looks up, dividing the ridge from the rest of the buttress, stands the Great Gully. The gully is 1,200 feet high and forks 150 feet from the top.

The history of the Great Gully has, in broadest outline, been similar to that of the Chasm and Clachaig Gully. It was declared impossible by a past generation of climbers. It repelled assault over a long term of years (being once again declared impossible so late as 1946), and finally,

on 9th June 1946, it was climbed without either dire risk or aid of ironmongery.

The first notable attempt on the gully was by Messrs Hastings and Haskett-Smith in 1897. Three hundred feet from the start they were defeated by an 80-foot cave-pitch, which bristled with overhangs. Subsequent parties met the same fate, and around this pitch there settled a magic halo of impregnability. During the course of ten years I felt the lure grow stronger, until on 8th June 1946 a fourfold concatenation of leisure, petrol, good weather and a strong party set me westward-bound for Ardgour.

That afternoon Douglas Scott and R. G. Donaldson camped with me in the lower part of Coire an Iubhair. Less than a quarter of a mile from the road we found flat, dry ground and plenty of firewood beside the river. Equally good camp-sites may be found two miles farther up the corrie below the summit, and these would be most useful to climbers with more than a day to spend.

The weather was perfect next morning at dawn. At 9 A.M. we walked up the corrie under locally gathering cloud. Showers and sun-shafts struck us alternately, and streamers of mist curled and swayed around the top half of our buttress. When we reached the entrance to Garbh Choire Mor at 10.30 A.M. the clouds lifted and the sky grew increasingly blue. The party now split. Donaldson wanted to reconnoitre the north buttress a mile farther up Coire an Iubhair, reckoning the collection of data for new routes there to be more profitable than our attempt on Great Gully; for Scott and I were not so audacious at this stage as to say that we were going to climb the Great Gully. We were only going to look at it. However, it is wonderful what inert rocks can reveal to contemplative minds.

At 11.30 A.M. Scott and I moved into the foot of the gully. The first 250 feet were uninteresting, and we preferred to scramble up the rocks of the north flank, until a sudden deepening of the gully warned us to traverse in. We climbed a high but easy pitch, then the gully widened and was divided by a 100-foot rib. The right-

hand branch was an exceedingly steep and vegetatious chimney; the left-hand branch was clean and broader, but started with an overhang which we both failed to surmount. Therefore I tried to climb the rib. The rock was excellent, but became so difficult that after 30 feet I was forced into the right-hand chimney.

Scott joined me on a grassy stance where there was luckily a belay, for the final 70 feet of chimney looked ugly. The walls were smooth and wet and the bed was high-angle vegetation. But the holds were there, and when they failed I was able to proceed back and foot. At the exit we arrived on a saddle depending from the central rib; the right fork here ended and we could go no farther on this line without leaving the gully. Therefore we traversed over the high arch of the rib into the left fork, which had become imposingly deep and broad.

A little scrambling brought us level with the second terrace of the Great Ridge. An easy traverse gave access to it, so that we could still be assured of a good climb if the Great Cave were too much for us. This notorious obstacle now lay before us. There was a long, level approach, allowing time for its full disconcerting effect on the mind, and allowing the gully to bite into the buttress, at last to rise up in one 80-foot step—a step not merely vertical, but starting with a 60-foot overhang. The flanking walls appeared to lean toward the centre. One would have sworn they were unclimbable.

We walked to the foot of the pitch and adopted tactics which I had once found to pay handsome dividends at the Great Cave in Clachaig Gully: we did not look at the rock again for several minutes—we had lunch. During the course of it there developed in us the awareness that the left wall was not really overhanging; it was only vertical with a bulge in the middle. I climbed to the bulge on in-cut holds. If we could reach a corner to the left of it, it would be conceivably possible to cross the top of the bulge, provided that holds, presently invisible, materialised. This would be the most direct route, but any such move would be a super-severe in rubbers. The rock was wet, therefore I came down.

There remained the right wall, the lower half of which truly did overhang. But by starting 60 feet out from the cave, where the wall was lower, it looked possible to surmount the overhang by the aid of a flake, then to traverse upward across the wall above the line of the overhang. Such a move would be very hard and exposed, and the rock was slabby. I took off my boots and started in stocking-soles.

Two strong arm-pulls on the flake took me up the first overhang. I was now faced with a second but lesser one. Again Providence supplied a jug-handle on rock that would otherwise have been hopeless. Many a party, easily capable of climbing that wall, must have turned away in the past without a trial. I now wanted to begin my leftward and upward traverse, but a series of bulges pushed me first to the right and then upward before it became possible to move parallel to the gully.

The climbing was of an unusual kind. One had to wend a way through local bulges by slab-traverses and upward grooves. When 60 feet up I became alarmed by the holdlessness of the rock and halted on a tuft of grass. The next 40 feet looked worse than anything I had yet climbed and might easily be too much for me; and already my ability to climb down was suspect. When I cast around for a spike from which to rope down I could find none. It is this uncertainty of the issue that makes a first ascent seem so much harder than any subsequent one. Henceforth I resolved to live only from one move to the next, and refused to scare myself with imaginary hazards ahead. By making good each hand and foot hold as it came to me I duly found myself emerging over the top of the pitch. I had run out 100 feet of rope and was only 2 yards from the gully-bed.

Scott climbed the pitch in boots, and on any future occasion I should lead in boots. The standard is not more than severe. We now rested in one of those splendid situations in which the Great Gully abounds. The wide rocky walls framed the hills of Lochaber, Mamore and Appin, which were mottled by sunshine and shadow, and ranged in deep-toned and delicate hues around the

broad waters of Loch Linnhe. This surely is the combination to which the Scottish hills owe all excellence—rock, water and subtlety of atmospheric colour—and not to the overrated heather of the tourist trade.

As soon as we began to climb again we encountered a very hard pitch of 40 feet, notable for the scarcity of its small holds, and thereafter easy climbing brought us to the fork of the gully. The right fork was the less direct and seemed to contain no pitch of difficulty. The left fork was the true line of the gully and ended in a 100-foot vertical chimney with an overhang at the top. We made an attempt on it. The walls were sheer and smooth, but narrow enough to allow bridging when need be. Seventy feet up I was stopped by the overhang—a projecting rectangular block. The walls here were too wide for back and foot work. Had there been one good hold on the block I could have pulled myself over it, but, alas, all efforts failed and I came down. I still think that there was a way of climbing that block and that I failed to find it. The ascent of this chimney would make a terrific climax to the gully.

Rather than take to the right fork we decided to climb the buttress between the two forks. This buttress was 150 feet high. Scott took the lead. We began near the right-hand side of the buttress by what seemed the only line of weakness. A third of the way up Scott made an exposed 30-foot traverse round an awkward corner to the left, which involved one delightful out-of-balance movement. Then 100 feet of clean, rough rock led steeply to the top of the Great Gully. Our climb had taken four hours.

At the summit we rejoined Donaldson, who had spent the last two hours enjoying one of the most splendid panoramas in Scotland. On the one hand lies a vast tract of the mainland mountains, on the other the Atlantic and Outer Hebrides. Garbh Bheinn has character, and beauty beyond measure. It offers rock-climbing of the highest order. Great cliffs of unclimbed gneiss await the mountaineer with an eye for a route. And hardly anyone ever goes there.

FORESTRY IN THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS.

By Dr G. K. Fraser.

AT the present time when so much is heard of the necessity for bringing new life to the Highlands, it is not inappropriate to review the question of the establishment of forests there and the problems which are involved in such a scheme. Among the major suggestions for the redevelopment of large areas of the Highlands it seems to the writer that well-planned and carefully fostered schemes of afforestation afford the most promising long-term line of progress. For, not only has the Forestry Commission already carried out sufficient work in this direction to enable the possibilities of success or failure to be estimated with reasonable accuracy in most districts, but in forestry, also, we are increasing our output of material wealth (timber) in the face of a falling world output. The world need for timber is fundamental, whether for almost all forms of constructional work, for the production of paper, or as basic material for many of those most modern of "substitute" materials known as plastics. And in the industrial sphere, for whatever purpose it may be used, the harvesting and initial preparation of timber necessitates the development of conversion units and ancillary factories which should provide a larger number of rural centres of population than any other form of land-utilisation applicable to Highland conditions. All this may be affirmed without drawing on those reserves of non-factual imaginings upon which so much of the general programme of Highland regeneration seems to be so largely based. For the facts are already to hand after some quarter of a century of systematic afforestation in this country. It is likely that in the stringent times which seem to lie in front of the country as a whole, the general taxpayer will not willingly continue to finance the development of the Highlands with no hope of establishing a self-supporting or at least reciprocating economy in that region. For example, hydro-electric power, financed by the country, is unlikely to be frittered away

in support of cries for modernisation of incurably bankrupt schemes of crofting and the like; the electricity must be used for something more than the replacement of the paraffin lamp in the Highlands. It must be used for production, and this necessitates either the export of electricity, or the importation or production of raw materials for power conversion. Electricity is likely to be more cheaply exported from the Highlands than most raw materials can be imported, so that a raw material such as timber, produced on the site, is the ideal matter upon which to base hopes that Highland power may be used to produce wealth in the Highlands. The spruce forests of Saxony formed the basis of the German book-making industry, once the greatest in the world, just as those of northern America have resulted in the American newspaper, the biggest in the world.

It may be useful to consider the general background of afforestation in the north. How is it that natural forests are so few and so poor in the Highland area, especially in view of the fact that in the peat deposits stumps of trees are so generally found in quantity ? The presence or absence of stumps in peat mosses is no foundation for argument as to the forestibility or otherwise of the Highlands, for it is known that thousands of years have elapsed since those forests grew and that the climate of the present time is not the same as in those earlier times. When most of the larger stumps were growing the climate was brighter and drier, and the summers were possibly warmer; and the summer is the time of tree growth. Since then much rain has fallen on the hills and the original richness has been washed out of the surface soil, the ground as a whole has been deteriorating during the last 2,000 to 4,000 years—especially in the last few hundred years, since the remnants of forest were destroyed and sheep became the chief produce of the hills. Another point that should be mentioned is that the spruce and silver fir—important trees for wet climate forests in our latitudes—never reached this country, so that our forests were probably never so dense as they might have been, and so have suffered more complete destruction

than would otherwise have happened. Speaking generally we have only small areas of surviving forest, but even these are not of the best forest type for our present climate. For the most part, our natural woodlands lie on the driest part of the hill country and on the lightest soils, that is to say, on the eastern and north-eastern granitic soils from Perth to Deeside and Speyside. This is not a chance effect, but is due to the fact that the Scots pine must have sunnier conditions and warmer soil for its best growth and regeneration than are to be found over the greater part of the Highlands, especially the north-western region.

The climate of the Highlands, like that of Britain as a whole, shows great variety, with rainfall varying from around 100 inches in many districts down to less than 30 inches on the Moray Firth round Nairn and Rosemarkie. In general the region is more suited to moist climate trees than to those of drier continental regions, as was pointed out some forty years ago by Marcel Hardi, one of the earliest forest ecologists. The temperature is on the whole equable with a low range of annual variation, *i.e.*, with cool summers and not so cold winters, yet because of the mountainous topography night frosts are common, well into the summer months. On this account trees from continental masses, where the change from winter to summer is more definite, are much subject to spring frosts. Thus Siberian larch and even central European varieties are subject to frosting of spring buds and shoots which may lead to stunting of growth or to frequent or epidemic fungus disease. As might be expected, the rate of growth of light-demanding trees (the deciduous-leaved trees especially) tends to be low and of inferior quality, because of insufficient sunshine during the warmer months. A further climatic disadvantage of which note must be taken in the establishment of forests is wind-blast. The prevailing south-west winds drive along the major valleys in which the general trend is also south-west to north-east, so that wind effects are often very marked, especially in the earlier stages of tree growth.

In spite of these pronounced characteristics of the Highland climate there is no doubt that, in this respect, the region is well suited to the growth of coniferous forest, and it is probably true that with the establishment of large blocks of forest the results of these unfavourable factors should be minimised.

It is often stated that forests have an important effect on climate—especially on rainfall. With a little consideration, however, it is apparent that climate is much too cosmic an affair to be influenced in any general way by the screen, some 100 feet high, raised up into the atmosphere by a forest. The climate of most regions depends on events originating thousands of miles away, so that all that afforestation can do is to modify the local effects of climate to some small extent. Of course, temperatures, wind velocities, and even rain-gauge measurements at ground level can be affected by the growth of trees. But a study of the available data forces one to the conclusion that these changes are neither so extensive nor so decisive as to allow conclusions to be reached regarding the effects of afforestation in the general climate of the north of Scotland. It may be said that, so far as earth-bound creatures are concerned, the chief general effect of forest on the climate of forested land is a moderation of wind effects and of those weather conditions associated with this factor, such as humidity, rate of evaporation and temperature, including local frost.

The idea that forests increase rainfall is an old one and is still very generally held, but the evidence for or against such an idea is very contradictory. In a mountainous region like the West Highlands where rainfall at a short distance from the coast approaches the 100-inches level, it is quite unlikely that forest will have any effect on the rainfall. On the other hand, it is well established that the atmospheric humidity in the forest is higher than that over adjacent bare ground, the mean day temperature tends to be lower, and the night temperature somewhat higher. Therefore it is possible that reduced losses of water from the soil through evaporation or by lowering the rate of melting of snow may

follow afforestation. It is, however, quite certain that the major effects of forest in this respect take place on or in the soil itself. The trees intercept rain as it falls —a point perhaps of lesser consequence in a cool humid region—but the rain which does fall on the forest soil is absorbed by leaf litter and is slowly liberated through root channels and the like into the natural drainage system. In contrast with this, heavy rain falling on cultivated ground may quickly puddle the surface and form run-off channels, quickly reaching the streams and rivers; and on moorland ground of the Highlands where the peaty cover is almost permanently sodden and is impervious to water, whether it be wet or dry, rainfall is run off almost as soon as it falls, and one heavy shower may transform ditches into streams and rocky streamlets into raging torrents in a few minutes.

Under forest, and especially if the original peaty surface is broken up mechanically or through the action of tree roots, the soil itself forms a temporary reservoir or safety-trap through which rain-water is more slowly and more steadily delivered to streams and rivers.

Hence the value of plantations on the upper reaches of rivers subject to floods, and on water-catchment areas where regularity of flow is an important desideratum. But exact knowledge of the effects of forest on general climatic conditions in the Highlands can be acquired only by future experience.

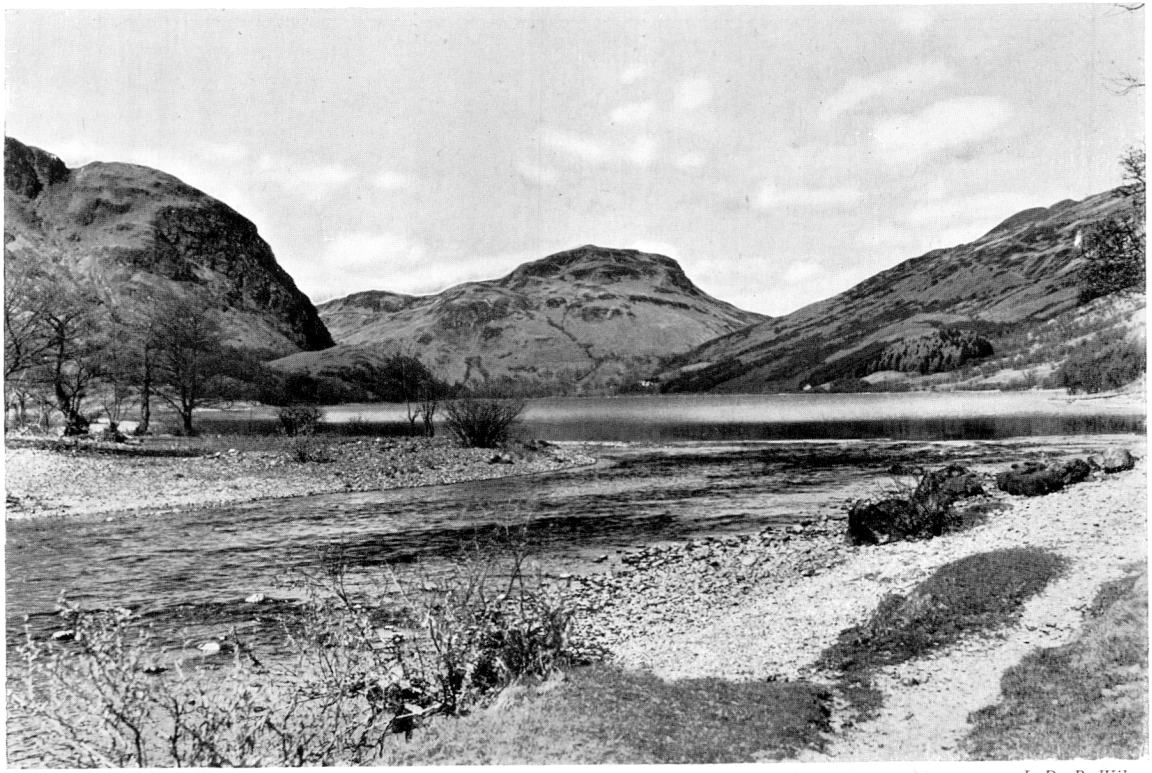
On the whole, the soils of the Highland area are not now naturally fertile. This results from two major causes. In the first place, the parent material, *i.e.*, the rocks, especially those of the west and north, are derived from sediments from which the plant nutrients were leached in former epochs and which were subsequently re-hardened into unweatherable rock. To offset this, the rocks are often overlaid by deposits of ice-carried material, so that the surface till may be of mixed origin and of considerable depth and is not devoid of decomposable, nutrient-liberating earth. To give a complete picture of the position one should refer to the numerous narrower bands of more fertile rock such as limestones and intrusive



July 1936

BIRCH IN ROTHIEMURCHUS FOREST

A. B. Wilson



May *J. D. B. Wilson*

LOCH LUBNAIG

(Looking north ; forestry plantations on eastern slopes)

igneous rock which may raise the fertility level of the surface drift.

In the second place, our position in the northern cool-temperate region with its high rainfall and cool summers means that soluble matter, including plant nutrients, tends to get washed from the upper soil. Under forest, this process may be retarded, or reversed to some degree by the action of deep-rooting trees which collect nutrients from the lower and less strongly washed subsoil. Unfortunately, however, trees, as we have seen, have been absent from most Highland ground for many years and have been replaced by plants like heather. These often have surface roots only, and so do not exploit the lower soil, while they also tend to deposit a compact organic covering of raw humus or turf which has itself a strong leaching effect on the upper soil, reducing its fertility as compared with, for example, broad-leaved trees and grassy herbage. These processes have gone on for a long time, and since the advent of man the grazier, an annual quota of irreplaceable phosphate in the form of bones has been entirely removed from the hills. Phosphate is required in good measure for the growth of trees as well as of sheep, and is not readily replaced by weathering of the ordinary types of rock, even under the best of conditions.

The types of soil which we do have in the Highlands are then what we might expect from the climate and rocks —in the main less fertile types showing signs of leaching by heavy rainfall (the so-called podzolic soils) or of waterlogging where off-run is poor; the waterlogging resulting in the growth of peat, marsh, and other types requiring special treatment like drainage before even trees can grow upon them. Nevertheless, there is evidence to show that once forests are established the soils may return a long way to their earlier fertility.

Before leaving this side of the subject it may be well to call to mind that of the surface of the Highlands more than half is mountain or rock upon which forest cannot grow, and that 10 per cent. or more of the remainder is covered with a layer of peat, low in plant nutrients,

requiring drainage and special management in order to prevent windfall at later stages of growth. Bearing this in mind it is obvious that afforestation in the Highlands is something more than "aye stickin' in a tree."

The climate and the soil form two of the raw materials of forestry—the third is the crop. Forest trees may be divided for practical purposes into two major groups, conifers or, as they are usually called, soft-woods, and broad-leaved trees, generally hardwoods. These two have somewhat different habits of wood-formation; in the conifers the open textured elements of the annual growth are formed during the greater part of the growing season from spring onwards. That is to say, the better the summer, not only is the rate of growth more rapid, but the wood formed is opener in texture and tends to be soft and less durable—the more rapid the growth the less valuable for many purposes may be the timber. On the other hand, the better classes of broad-leaved trees lay down an almost fixed proportion of open-grained wood tissue at the beginning of the season and continue to lay down close-grained tissue during the rest of the season. Hence, the more rapid the growth the better the quality of the timber for most purposes. It will be obvious, then, that, in general, the farther north a broad-leaved tree is growing the poorer the quality as well as the quantity of timber it produces, while with conifers, so long as they do grow regularly and without actual injury, the farther north the better the quality of the timber—even if the quantity is not so great. And conifers in general are more suited to colder conditions.

As regards the kinds of trees likely to be used in the main forest blocks, without doubt these must be coniferous. Some broad-leaved species like poplars might be grown for special reasons, while, as indicated in the report of the Forestry Commissioners, birch as a forest tree has not hitherto been given sufficient consideration. Among these conifers there is again no doubt that spruces and similar species are certain to predominate, except on lighter soils, especially in the eastern and east central Highlands.

It may be useful here to consider the aims of forestry, especially when undertaken at a national level, although the same principles apply to all larger forest units, and to some extent even to smaller estates. In order to avoid the disadvantages which result from irregular supplies of timber, such as fluctuating prices and employment, and their attendant ills, a forest unit must be large enough when fully established to supply a regular volume of timber each year, of regular quality and of regular sizes. This, of course, entails a similar area not only for felling and replanting, but also of woodlands of each age or age class. (One of the advantages of timber as compared with other commodities is, of course, that it can be stored (*i.e.*, held back) for some years without loss so as to take advantage of unavoidable fluctuations in demand.) It will be apparent, however, that this aim involves the formation of reasonably large blocks of uniform woods, uniform in age and in composition of species as far as can be managed, and for one forest this area must be multiplied by the number of age-classes, necessitating a large acreage in each forest. It is only under special circumstances that the policy of mixing up various ages in one block can or should be attempted, and this does not apply to present conditions where one of the prime aims of the forester must be to cover the woodland ground with trees as quickly and uniformly as is possible. It is for the same reason (to get rapid cover) that the first crop on hitherto unwooded soils tends to consist of one species, and that the heavy-foliaged trees like spruces or quick-growing dense pines are preferred.

This preference for single species is not, however, altogether good forestry, especially when we come to later stages. It is a maxim of good forestry that the productivity of the ground should be maintained. As a rule, conifers, for various reasons, are harder on the fertility of the soil than are broad-leaved trees, pure woodlands than mixed woodlands. Hence it is quite likely, if not certain, that after the first conifer crop is removed it will be found advisable, if not necessary, to mix broad-leaved trees into all conifer crops. This is a

more natural type of forest, although more difficult to manage. To attempt this on any general scale at first planting would often be dangerous, but is less dangerous on the better qualities of ground; and the better qualities of ground are often found near roadways and paths, by streams and such like places. Here broad-leaved species should be and often are planted along with conifers, and so serve a double purpose of maintaining soil fertility and improving amenity. The outer trees of a conifer block are often of less value anyhow because of their persistent branches, etc.; here, again, there is scope for the use of a mixing of hardwoods, both for amenity and for soil maintenance. One of the difficulties in this respect in Highland forestry is to obtain a broad-leaved tree which will grow well enough to be mixed with conifers.

Of the trees likely to be used the birch is probably the most important. As a natural species it grows reasonably well and it forms clean timber. Although the timber of the birch has been in the past rather despised, with modern methods of utilisation, it has great possibilities. And it has been found in Sweden that when birch is mixed with pine, a greater volume of pine timber may be obtained than is got from pure pine forest on the same ground. This is because of its soil-improving qualities.

Another tree which is often used along with spruce for the same purpose is beech. Unfortunately this is not native to the Highland area; although there is reason to believe that it will do quite well on many Highland soils its future possibilities have not been fully ascertained; where tried it is often slow to make a start. Nevertheless, on good soils as a soil-improving and amenity species it is certain to be useful. The other native species of broad-leaved trees may all have their uses along similar lines, but simply as amenity belts alongside of roads and the like. None of these trees can be regarded as of major importance in general afforestation. Reference may also be made to the possibilities of North American species of hardwoods, although, so far, these, speaking generally, have not been fully tested in Highland conditions.

Of conifers our only native forest tree is the Scots pine.

The greater part of the available ground in the Highlands is not suited for the establishment of this species. Even if it were, it would be necessary on utilitarian grounds to make use of exotic species, although the pine is perhaps the most generally useful conifer to be grown here. Of introduced species the larch has perhaps had the greatest recognition, partly on account of its early success and its durable timber, but also on æsthetic grounds. Unfortunately the earlier promise of the larch is not always fulfilled. It is a tree for the rather better quality of deep and open soils and is finicky also in its climatic demands. Wherever subject to spring frosts (as it usually is on southerly and easterly exposures) it becomes the prey of many diseases, both fungus and insect. One of the most commonly seen failures in forest plantations after their first establishment is that of larch in the young pole stage. Unless growth is fairly rapid, too, even in better exposures the tree is apt to become covered by lichens like the old man's beard, which, however picturesque they may be as individuals, are in the mass depressing and ugly, especially in winter when the needles have fallen. So that, apart from really suitable sites, the common larch is in youth often an eyesore and, especially in wet climates, in later years may prove to be a fraud through its liability to heart rot. Thus the larch is not likely to become one of the major species in Highland forestry, apart from the drier eastern hill-ranges of the Spey, Dee and Tay valleys. Its relative, the Japanese larch, is much more likely to do well in the region, at least up to pit-wood sizes, and has a much more pleasant and cheerful winter appearance because of its bright brown young branches.

Among the conifers there is no doubt that the spruces will predominate in the new Highland forests except on lighter soils and in the eastern Highlands. Of these, two species are now well known, viz., the common spruce, a European species, and the Sitka spruce, a North-west American. At present the general trend of opinion favours the Sitka spruce because of its more rapid growth. It is likely, however, that the common spruce will also be used in large quantities in the Highlands, for both of

these carry almost half as much timber again per acre as does the Scots pine, and white wood such as spruce has a special value for the preparation of paper and cellulose as compared with the more resinous conifers such as pine or larch. The importance of spruce for the development of future industries in the Highlands is therefore obvious. And there are comparatively few soils in the Highlands on which the spruces do not make a good showing, once established. On peats and peaty soils they have been found specially useful.

Other exotic conifers of more recent introduction might be detailed, but such a list would be tedious. Some of these, like the now well-known Douglas fir, which has the heavy habit of spruce, and the Corsican pine, which is a heavier-foliaged, quicker-growing species like the Scots pine, have now been well tried out and found to be valuable additions to our forest flora. Others have not yet been fully tested, but a large reservoir of exotic conifers exists from which it is likely that some of our more important future forest trees will be obtained.

It is apparent then that conifers will play a major part in the afforestation of the Highlands, and that only the Scots pine can be regarded as having any actual Highland associations. Because of their more formal outline and lack of variation from season to season the evergreen conifers are æsthetically less satisfactory and possibly psychologically more depressing in the mass than are the broad-leaved deciduous trees. As a result, the establishment of large, uniform blocks of conifers (especially of the most formal of all, the spruce) is followed by outcries about defacement of the landscape and shutting in the rural population by means of "non-Highland" exotics. With regard to the "arty" objections which are raised to all forms of Highland development, except such perpetuants of poverty as the isolated shepherd's but-and-ben and the bare croft, nothing much need be said. They are often based on ignorance of real human progress and Highland history. The larch may be accepted as part of the Highland scene, or even close young plantations of Scots pine in strips and patches.

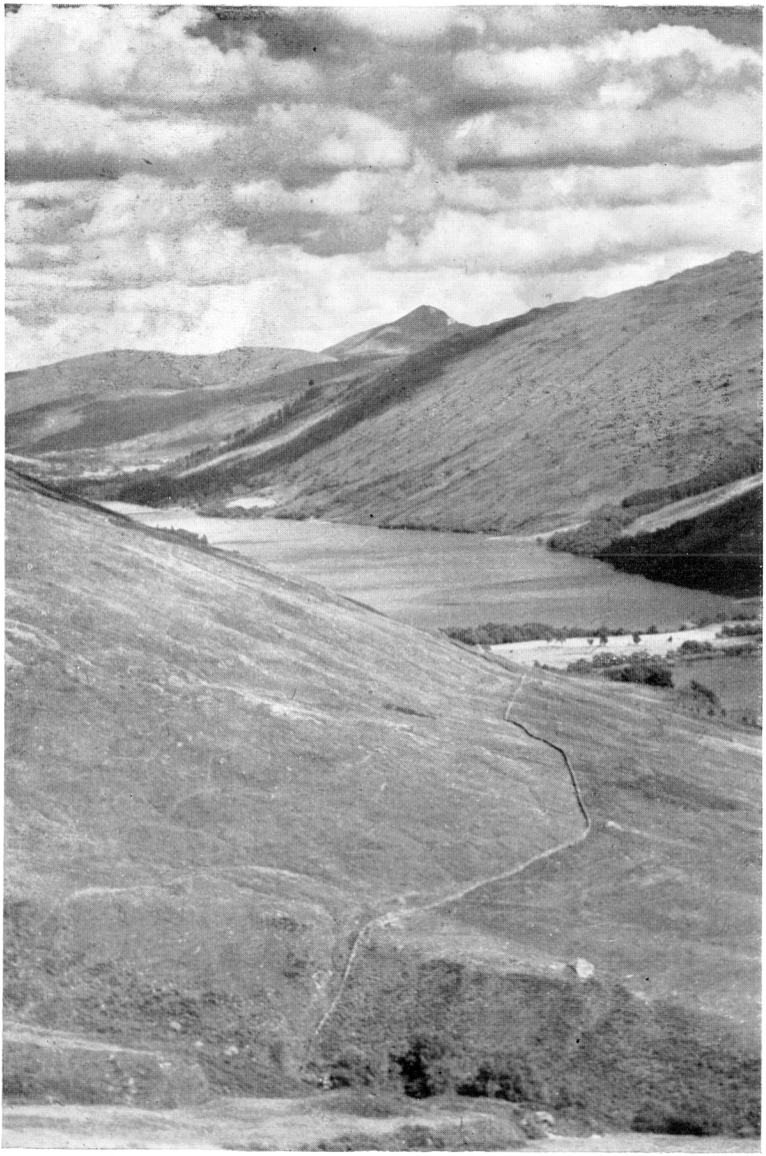
These acceptations are as artificial as are the objections in general terms to electric pylons, railways, and the like. There is an æsthetic likeness between power pylons striding across valleys and up over moorland into the unknown and the creeping retreat of birch trees up into the mist of the hills. The first is man-made, the second is sheep-induced, so one is termed artificial, the other natural! The changes produced either by hydro-electric stations or by coniferous forest are as necessary to the continuation of the Highland "way of life" as are reasonable roads. No one accepts the old drove-road as a prototype of modern Highland road-making, similarly it is impossible to base any scheme of forestry on the tailings of broad-leaved scrub now left in the valleys. The well-planted coniferous forest is not art, it is intended as new life for the hill-country, and the major objections to it arise from the growing pains of new development. The regimentation of the young-spruce plantation is a necessary and temporary evil, the gloom of the older forest will in time be looked on as warmth and shelter to the community. In time they will become an accepted and welcome form of Highland scenery. Surely, if such developments are the alternative to the absorption of the best children of the Highlands into the southern economic system, there can be no doubt as to the choice between the isolation of one man to each 1,000 acres under sheep or deer and the revival of the village community of some dozens of families centred in a forest industry in one glen. The forest gives the only hope of rebuilding at a new level the old Highland way of life. It is certain, too, that for a long time there will be plenty of room for those who are thirled to the past as well as for the new way of living.

Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that afforestation does at least re-orientate, even if it may at places depreciate, the scenic value of the land. The extent to which depreciation takes place is often exaggerated. Little difference is produced in the main outlines of major topographical features by the change from moor to forest, and the degree to which interference occurs depends to a

great extent on the vision of the forester. The oppressive character of the coniferous forest can be mitigated by the use of broad-leaved screens along roadways, and variety given to the forest by similar mixtures around appropriate places such as streams and lochs. But, at the same time, the general view is still obscured by forest, especially at lower levels.

It is quite remarkable, however, that many of the most popular parts of the Highlands are well-wooded or forest areas—Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, Upper Deeside, Glen Albyn, and even Glen Affric. Whether the forest be broad-leaved, coniferous, or mixed, there is no doubt that in these places it has played a considerable part in determining their scenic qualities. The ideal of scenic value is variety in the mass combined with sufficient screening in detail to provide that element of surprise which is an essential part of the good "view." Forests can be of great scenic value in both these respects. It is the business of the good forester, too, as far as is reasonably possible, to mould his new forests into the scenery of his district, especially as they become older, so that they enhance scenic beauty by creating those sudden viewpoints and long vistas from which arises the most intense emotional appeal of mountain scenery. An objection raised against existing Highland scenery is that there is too much of it. This is entirely due to the frequency with which the individual view is led up to for hours on end instead of being suddenly exposed. As a result of war-fellings many of the viewpoints on Deeside, for example, have been utterly ruined by exposure. One can see almost as well from dozens of near-by places which were previously under forest. For the hill-walker (and possibly also for the hill-climber) real pleasure is obtained not from continuous retrospection over a regularly expanding panorama, but from reaching quite separate viewpoints, culminating on the final thrill of the bare hill-top.

In the layout of some of the new National forest parks the Commission has obviously had such aims in view, just as has the estate forest planner, and there is no



August 1938

LOCH VOIL AND BEN VORLICH
(From slopes of Stobinian)

J. D. B. Wilson



September 1946

LAGANGARBH

D. J. Fraser

particular reason why, in the future, with further experience and vision, such aims should not be still more successfully applied wherever forests are established in the Highlands.

Note on Illustrations.

I. A screen of native broad-leaved trees may do much to relieve the monotony of large blocks of conifers. Of such the birch is one of the most useful and the most beautiful. (Birch in Rothiemurchus forest.)

II. " Little difference is produced in the main outlines of major topographical features by the change from moor to forest." (Loch Lubnaig.) The plantations on the eastern slopes, even when mature, do little to alter the view.

III. Much of the Highland view is of this type. The contour and colourings tend to be flat and dreary—even pure spruce forest could not be more so. (Loch Voil with Ben Vorlich in the distance.)

NEW ROUTES IN GLENCOE.

By W. H. Murray.

THE following twenty-one new routes have been excerpted from the " Glencoe Guide," now in course of preparation. They include not only new routes which have been done this last year, but also six older ones which have never hitherto been recorded. At the end I have made several corrections to previously recorded descriptions of other routes. The classification of climbs has been given for nails and not for rubbers, unless otherwise stated.

Buachaille Etive Mor.

The Great Gully Buttress.—220 feet. Severe in rubbers. First ascent—October 1946 by S. Smith and I. Dingwall.

The buttress forms the west wall of Great Gully. The climb lies on the wall which faces Cuneiform Buttress across the gully. Start at an obvious groove in the centre of the wall, level with the lowest rocks of Cuneiform Buttress. Cairn.

Climb groove 50 feet to a grass ledge, from the left end of which continue 20 feet up a shallow scoop, when a small sloping shelf will appear on the right. Step on to shelf and climb 60 feet straight up to a broad ledge and flake belay. Final pitch of 90 feet—climb over large pointed flake to a groove above. Traverse up to the left to a thread belay, then go straight up until a vertical rib is seen on the right. Make an awkward step round the rib and go straight up a wall to the top.

North Buttress—East Wall Routes.

The East Wall is 300 feet high. It is crossed by three broad ledges, at the foot, centre and top. The bottom one is wide and flat, and is called the Terrace. The middle one is a grass gully inclining downward to the right, and is called Green Gully. The top one crosses the whole buttress from Crowberry Gully to the Great Gully, and is called High Ledge. The following three new routes are all hard and exposed.

Bottleneck Chimney and Hangman's Crack.—280 feet. Very severe in rubbers. (The chimney is severe in nails, the crack is very severe in rubbers. The route is one of the best in Glencoe.) First ascent—summer 1941 by R. G. Donaldson and G. R. B. McCarter.

At the extreme right-hand end of the Terrace, just round the north-east corner of the face, is a dark prominent chimney, which narrows at the top like a bottle. It is 130 feet high and can be clearly seen from the moor. On reaching the foot of it one finds it to be not a true chimney, but a recess containing a crack.

Climb 70 feet to the overhang. This lower part is muscularly severe. Then traverse into the bottleneck by handholds high up under the arch, and follow easier rocks for 40 feet to the broad ledge of Green Gully.

Hangman's Crack is the clean-cut, inset and right-angled corner, 100 feet high, which starts 50 feet above and very slightly to the right. Climb 30 feet up difficult rocks to the base of the Crack. There is here a sloping ledge with a poor belay. Start straight up the corner, but

almost immediately begin to traverse upward to the right. Then go up and back to the left by a delicate mantelshelf, which is the crux. One may now regain the crack. Higher up make a hand traverse on the right wall, followed by a brief but strenuous wriggle to the top.

Crow's Nest Crack.—280 feet. Severe in rubbers. First ascent—June 1946 by John Cunningham and P. McGonigle.

The general line of the route is by a long narrow crack, which springs from a small overhung recess, 12 yards to the left of Bottleneck Chimney, and round the corner from it on the east face. The route should not be confused with Shackle Route, which is the much more prominent crack starting 6 yards farther left. Start 3 yards left of the overhung recess.

First tier—120 feet to Green Gully. Climb a V-shaped cavity for 10 feet, then go slightly right for 25 feet. Awkward corner. Traverse right into crack. Twenty feet up make a delicate move to a slab on the left. The next 15 feet is the crux. One regains the crack where it is divided by an overhanging nose. Follow the left-hand crack to Green Gully.

Second tier—160 feet to High Ledge. At the lower right-hand end of Green Gully there are two black, water-marked grooves on either side of a tall pinnacle-flake, which is set in a corner 7 yards to the left of Hangman's Crack. The Crow's Nest continues from a cairn under the right-hand black groove. Climb 60 feet. Make a right traverse to a crack close to Hangman's Crack. Follow this crack for 100 feet to High Ledge.

Shattered Crack.—120 feet. Very severe in rubbers. First ascent—June 1946 by John Cunningham and P. McGonigle.

The line of the route is by a long narrow crack 15 yards to the left of Bottleneck Chimney and a few feet to the left of the Crow's Nest Crack, but using the same start.

Start up V-shaped cavity, then instead of trending right to the Crow's Nest route, go 80 feet straight up the shattered crack on good small holds. Awkward stance. Belay. Beyond is a square-block overhang split by a

crack, and 15 feet of delicate work over a bulge. The crack then widens and easier climbing ends in Green Gully.

The Crowberry Ridge.

Fracture Route.—A description of this route following its investigation on a rope from above has appeared in a previous issue of the *Journal*. The first ascent has now been made by K. Copland and W. Smith, in October 1946. The standard is hard severe. The climb is one of the three best routes on the Crowberry and the rock is beyond praise.

The Grooved Arête.—220 feet. Very difficult. First ascent—October 1946 by John Cunningham and W. Smith.

At the extreme right-hand edge of Rannoch Wall. Start at a groove immediately to the right of the cairn for Agag's Groove. Finish at the Slab pitch of the Crowberry Ridge route.

Climb straight up the groove 45 feet to an overhang. Step left into two parallel grooves. Climb these 30 feet, make an awkward 10-foot traverse to the right, back into the groove. Climb straight up 45 feet to a shelf. Stance. No belay. Go straight up to the crest of the ridge.

Rannoch Wall. Curving Groove.—210 feet. Very severe in rubbers. First ascent—October 1946 by John Cunningham and W. Smith.

Start 40 feet to the left of Agag's Cairn, and to the right of a small pinnacle. Finish at the Haven.

Climb the groove to an overhang at 30 feet. Traverse left into a parallel groove, climb up a few feet, then make another very awkward left traverse on to a slab broken by vertical cracks. Climb slab 40 feet, traverse right into grassy groove, and go straight up into Agag's Groove. Climb curving groove in slab immediately above (arrow scratched in rock) for 50 feet. Make a short left traverse, then go straight up a groove to finish in the Haven.

Rannoch Wall. Juniper Groove.—150 feet. Severe. First ascent—October 1946 by K. Copland and C. Lyon.

Start at a cairn below a groove 20 feet to the right of January Jigsaw. Finish at the crux of Agag's Groove.

Climb the groove for 60 feet. Traverse upward and leftward to a small ledge with a juniper bush. Flake belay 10 feet above. Step right round awkward corner and make an ascending traverse rightward and so back into crack to reach a small spike belay at 45 feet. Now go straight up groove to finish at a belay below the crux of Agag's Groove.

Rannoch Wall. Autumn Slab (a new start to the Overhanging Crack which in turn is an alternative start to Route 1).—80 feet. Very severe in rubbers. First Ascent —October 1946 by John Cunningham and W. Smith.

To the left of Route 1 there is a broad expanse of brown slab, on which there are two dark, parallel and vertical streaks. The Overhanging Crack starts between these streaks. The new variation (named Autumn Slab by the " Guide Book " Editor) starts on the left-hand streak. It joins Overhanging Crack route at the belay under the overhang.

Climb straight up for 35 feet on good holds, traverse to the right on smaller holds for nearly 10 feet, go straight up on small holds over a rectangular bulge, then go up to the right to land on the left of a very smooth slab. The next move is the crux. Cross the slab horizontally to a ledge. An easy 15 feet then leads to Overhanging Crack route.

Central Buttress.

North-East Crack (a variation of the North Face route). —100 feet. Severe in rubbers. First ascent—Summer 1942 by R. G. Donaldson, P. E. Burt and J. E. Spence.

The North-East Crack cuts out the right-hand traverse from Heather Ledge by means of a long crack on the left side of the corner pillar. It rejoins the North Face route above the white scar. This crack is exceedingly steep.

Start 30 feet from the right-hand end of Heather Ledge. Climb 15 feet up a wall, then make a severe right traverse on minute holds into the crack, the lowest part of which is thus avoided. Follow the crack until easy but loose rocks lead to a well-defined ledge by which one regains the normal route at the grass ledge above the chimney.

The Gangway.—120 feet. Severe. First ascent—Summer 1946 by J. Poole and F. R. Brooke.

The route starts from the Heather Ledge and is a very good variation connecting the lower part of Bell and Allan's Central Chimney with the top part of the North Face route. Over 200 feet of climbing is obtained to the top of Central Buttress.

Between the central ridge and the north-east edge are two prominent inset corners. The left-hand corner, which is 70 feet high, is Baird's variation of Central Chimney route. The right-hand one, which is 60 feet high, is the start of the Gangway.

Climb a difficult crack in the corner, then go leftward along a grass ledge to the thread-belay corner below the central chimney. Climb 15 feet to another ledge. A large sloping rock shelf will then be seen above, leading to the right. This is The Gangway, and the problem is to get on to it. Climb the wall above and make a technically excellent descending traverse on to the shelf. Tread the shelf to its far end, where a big spike is found. From there, either go up 12 feet of steep and exposed rock, or else continue to traverse northward at a lower level; both routes lead on to the final slabs of the North Face.

Waterslide Wall.—200 feet. Very severe. First ascent—October 1946 by W. H. Murray, R. V. Waterhouse and Hector Cameron.

Start at the south end of Heather Ledge. Go 100 feet up broad tier of easy rocks to a second ledge. The following wall of 60 feet is the crux. The route starts at the middle of a slab at the centre of the ledge, goes obliquely left to the edge of the waterslide, then gradually back to the right, finishing by moderate rocks to the top of the buttress. The rock overlooking the waterslide is very steep, severe and exposed.

Lady's Gully.—900 feet. Mild severe. First ascent—October 1900 by Mr and Mrs G. D. Abraham. First ascent of the true right fork—November 1946 by W. M. Mackenzie and J. K. W. Dunn.

Lady's Gully bounds the left flank of Collie's Climb. There are sixteen pitches, excluding short moderate ones.

About 500 feet up, the gully forks, and the principal difficulties lie below that point.

Climb up the watercourse for 100 feet, when the gully steepens into a deep chimney. Take to the south wall and climb it by two very difficult pitches of 90 and 60 feet. Continue to a point 30 feet below a high shallow cave, and again take to the south wall by a moderate groove of 70 feet. Follow watercourse until a 150-foot wall cuts across the gully. The watercourse comes down toward the north end of this wall. One may now escape either to the left by an easy shelf or to the right by very steep heather leading to the crest of Collie's route. The 150-foot wall is climbed direct in four pitches, the last three being very difficult. Start 20 feet north of the watercourse. Climb 70 feet by two successive chimneys. Traverse left and go 30 feet up exposed rock in the watercourse to a ledge under a waterfall. Cross to left end of ledge and finish by a 30-foot chimney. On regaining the gully one is faced with the eighth pitch, a holdless waterslide of 30 feet, which is climbed by an 80-foot rib and corner pitch on the south wall. Three more pitches lead to the fork of the gully. The right fork is the direct line. Its first three pitches are avoidable and have not yet been climbed. Then follows 200 feet of moderate climbing. The fork ends in a cave, level with the top of Central Buttress, to which one may traverse over easy ground. The left fork starts with easy scree leading to a large cave formed by huge blocks. The cave has not been explored. There is no climbing in the gully above it, unless one counts the South Tower (see *Journal*, 21, 343).

Stob Coire nam Beith.

No. 5 Buttress.—450 feet. Difficult. First ascent—November 1946 by W. H. Murray and R. Smith.

On the right-hand (west) side of North-West Gully there are two buttresses set one above the other. The upper buttress, which is the steepest on the mountain, is No. 5 Buttress. Approach from the foot of North-West Gully.

On the north face, about half-way up, there is a long black cave. Start below and slightly to the left of this cave by a shattered wall. Climb to a small basin under the cave. Traverse rightward to a platform under the perpendicular upper rocks. It is then obvious that the only way of breaking through the vertical section is by means of a chimney, which starts 60 feet above. Climb to the chimney. Enter a recess to its right. A pinnacle-flake on its right edge is the solution. Grasp its top edge and swing into space. Beyond, 250 feet of the best quality rock on the mountain lead to the top.

No. 6 *Buttress.*—300 feet. Difficult. There is no record of the first ascent. (The rocks were nail-marked when the route was climbed by W. H. Murray and R. Smith in 1946.)

On the west side of North-West Gully are two buttresses, set one above the other. The lower one, which is markedly wedge-like, is No. 6 Buttress. A prominent cone of turf points to the lowest rocks above the foot of North-West Gully. Follow the North Ridge to the top. The climbing is mostly moderate, on excellent rough rock.

There is an awkward mantelshelf 140 feet up. Still higher there is an airy wall, near the left edge of the ridge, where it is necessary to use a doubtful-looking flake. This flake was thoroughly tested by the writer in 1946 and proved to be sound—but his weight is only 10 stone 6 lb.

Stob Coire nan Lochan.

Twisting Gully.—450 feet. Severe in winter condition. First ascent—December 1946 by W. H. Murray, Douglas Scott and J. Cortlandt-Simpson.

The gully lies on the left flank of the South Buttress. In summer it is not likely to be difficult. In winter it is not likely to be less than a severe—it appears to be a natural ice-trap like South Central Gully on the opposite side of the buttress. The gully is a shallow one, almost a deep groove. The first 100 feet twists up to a small crag, which divides the gully. The right fork is a high, steep

ice pitch. The left fork was, in 1946, an ice-glazed chimney. To avoid these the first party traversed an overhanging wall to the outside left edge of the south wall. The situation was here exposed. A movement had to be made like the direct start to Holly Tree Wall.* Sixty feet higher the angle eased, but one or two short pitches were climbed on good snow-ice before the upper section fanned out below the cornice, which was climbed without difficulty. A big cornice may form here later in the season. The climb occupied four hours.

Bidean nam Bian.

Coire an Gabhail (the Lost Valley of Bidean nam Bian).

Lost Valley Buttress.—400 feet. Severe in rubbers. First ascent—Summer 1942 by R. G. Donaldson and J. E. Spence.

The buttress is situated at the very head of the Lost Valley and just under the summit ridge midway between Bidean nam Bian and Stob Coire Sgreamhach. The buttress is divided vertically into two distinct portions—a left hand and more sloping one, and a very steep right-hand one, which starts from a higher level, and which is still unclimbed. The route lies on the eastern or left-hand portion.

Start under its sharply demarcated right-hand edge. Climb 40 feet on grass to a conspicuous patch of bright green moss. Scramble out to the left, then go up and very slightly left on a steep and delicate slab for nearly 40 feet to a small ledge on the crest of the buttress. Then follows the crux—a small, smooth bulge. Climb it with patience and breath-holding. Good rock and easier climbing lead to the top.

Upper Gorge of the Allt Coire Gabhail.—Very difficult. Exit is severe. First ascent—July 1942 by J. B. Nimlin and R. Gowers.

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* Above Idwal Slabs, North Wales.

At 1,200 feet there is a long flat meadow, beyond the farthest end of which the gorge begins. Advance is soon stopped by an impassable-looking waterfall. Avoid on the right-hand wall. Above, the stream follows an open course, but higher up again becomes a gorge. The walls steepen, enclosing pitches of increasing height, where water-worn porphyry gives difficult climbing. The gorge ends at a wall. The waterfall that plunges over it is a conspicuous feature of the view from the lower glen. The walls rise 150 feet. Make exit by the right-hand wall, which is extremely friable rock. The only belay is a rowan tree overhanging the lip of the gorge 160 feet above stream.

Echo Crag.—200 feet. Very difficult. First ascent—September 1945 by Mr and Mrs J. B. Nimlin, D. Easson and J. Stevenson.

The climb is on the first sizable crag on the west flank of the Fhada Ridge as one ascends from Glencoe. The face is directly above the great boulder in the throat of the glen where the birch-groves meet the boulder-field. The rock is steep and clean and finishes almost on top of the ridge. Approach by a shallow gully from the great boulder.

Start near the left-hand corner of the crag and climb directly up the face. At 150 feet make a right traverse into a triangular recess. Good belay. Make another right traverse and climb a 20-foot crack to easy rocks and the crest of the ridge. The crag is named from the double echo obtained from Gearr Aonach and Aonach Eagach.

Sgor nam Fiannaidh.

West Gully, Clachaig.—Very difficult if climbed direct. First ascent—Summer 1946 by J. F. Hamilton and D. Paterson.

The first gully to the left of Clachaig Gully. The walls of the gully are low and open; an escape can be made almost anywhere. There are several pitches, and if these are not avoided a difficult rock-climb can be had.

Aonach Dubh.

The following and hitherto unrecorded climb has been discovered by Malcolm Slesser and party. The rock was nail-marked and he does not claim a first ascent.

" *B* " *Buttress, North Wall.*—An alternative start to Bell's Route, 150 feet, severe. Approach by line of No. 2 Gully. Start 30 feet above bed at a very obvious weakness in lower half of wall. Climb 20 feet, traverse right. Then go up grand, steep rock with narrow ledges and sufficient belays to large grass platform, which is top of bottom tier. Continue by Bell's Route.

Notes on Previously Recorded Routes.

Buachaille Etive Mor—Central Buttress.—The route ascribed to Baird and Traquair on p. 63 of " Central Highlands Guide " is, in fact, only a one-pitch variation of Allan's central chimney, to which it makes an alternative start by a 70-foot corner. Standard—Difficult.

" **Crowberry Arête.**"—In a recent B.M.C. Circular a description of a new climb was published with this title. The start, however, has previously been done, the main part lies up Garrick's Shelf, and the climb cannot be admitted to the new " Guide " as a new route.

East Face of Crowberry Tower.—A recent B.M.C. Circular published a description of two allegedly new routes on this face. The whole of this face, although steep and exposed, can be climbed at will anywhere, and countless climbers have already done so, including the writer. It is therefore not possible to admit new named routes on it.

Crack and Groove—North Buttress.—The first ascent of this route was published in a previous number of the *Journal*. The true first ascent had been made four years before by Sydney Cross and called Shackle Route, and a description under that name appeared in the *Journal* of April 1939 (22, 73). The earlier name will be used in the " Guide."

Crowberry Gully.—In the 1942 issue of the *Journal* (23, 1) there is an article describing a winter ascent of the gully. An accompanying photograph describes the route as following the right fork as seen in the photo. But that right fork is in fact an optical illusion. The true right fork is what appears to be the left fork, and the true left fork is invisible behind the Crowberry Tower.

Garrick's Shelf.—There have been persistent rumours circulating among both Scottish and English climbers that this route was done by A. S. Pigott before Garrick. Pigott confirms that this was done in September 1920 (see *R.C.J.*, iv, p. 190).

A RECORD OF BEN NEVIS CLIMBS.

By B. P. Kellett.

(Continuation from 1946 *Journal*, p. 340.)

20.8.44. COUSINS' BUTTRESS DIRECT.

A direct ascent of the north face of the buttress, avoiding the gully altogether.

There are two big grass ledges on this face. The first is easily reached from below and could also be walked on to from the right or left. The start of the way up to the second ledge is obvious, but about 40 feet up, a steep section with very doubtful rock is reached ; this was avoided by making a delicate traverse left along the smooth slab which lies under the wall, and going round the corner to the foot of a short crack. This is quite hard if the two small chockstones are treated with the care that they need ; the upper of these was originally quite loose, but efforts to pull it down wedged it more firmly. From the top of the crack face, easy climbing leads up to the second ledge. The way from here goes up very steep rock to the left to a small flake (or is it a detached block ?) visible from the ledge. Just before reaching the flake a slight overhang is climbed by stepping on to a large foothold from which a perfect handhold on top of a rather insecure-looking block can be reached ; a short man might find this bit very strenuous. After traversing left along the top of the flake a little 5-foot wall leads to easy ground below the top of the pinnacle. Standard : Severe. The rock requires careful treatment throughout.

18.6.44. A DIRECT START TO ROUTE B ON NORTH WALL, CARN DEARG. (B. P. Kellett, Mrs C. M. Plackett.)

Started up Flake Chimney, from the top of which a short, easy staircase led to the foot of a long conspicuous

crack. The start is easy, but about 20 feet or so up there is a short, strenuous section, perhaps just Severe, above which a further short easy section leads on to Flake Terrace some 20 feet left of the start of Route B. Under drier conditions and with holds cleaner, Route B was not considered to be very severe.

From Diagonal Terrace a continuation of the original Route B was made to Green Terrace—quite easy—but no route could be seen up the top tier of rock, so a traverse was made to the finish of Route A (start of the final section).

22.6.44. (B. P. Kellett, C. M. Plackett, R. L. Plackett.)

The chimney to the right of that used as the start of Evening Wall ; it is the chimney into which Raeburn's Variation of the Staircase Climb traverses higher up (Photo G.26, 2·05, 1·3).

The first section of 30 to 40 feet is narrow and severe (strenuous) ; the remaining 90 feet was fairly easy. The first two, who were climbing in shorts, considered Bloody Chimney an apt name, but finally the equally appropriate title of STRAIGHT CHIMNEY was chosen.

The conspicuous deep chimney to the right of Bell's Chimney (see " Guide," 40. Photo G.26, 2·4, 2·3). Climbed by back-and-foot, facing left throughout, in two pitches of 70 feet and 60 feet. Excellent holds on left wall. Standard : Difficult. Suggested name : DEEP CHIMNEY.

21.6.44. (B. P. Kellett, R. L. Plackett, C. M. Plackett.)

An unsuccessful attempt to make a direct route up the Great Buttress of Carn Dearg by using the long conspicuous chimney near the right-hand edge of the buttress (Photo G.26, 1·0, 1·3). The broken-up north face of a little subsidiary buttress was climbed to a platform (·55, 1·0) level with the left-hand end of a long gangway, leading right up to the foot of the chimney.

From this platform it looked as if the gangway would probably go, but we were prevented from getting on to it by a steep, smooth mantelshelf section of about 10 feet; this might be possible, but it would certainly be very critical. An attempt was then made to traverse right at a higher level by climbing the chimney starting to the right of the platform, which was followed for 30 or 40 feet to a spike belay with an old rope sling on it. Further progress upward was not inviting, nor was the projected traverse right across a very smooth slab, so we had to come down.

On the right of No. 5 Gully and about half-way up is a big buttress which has so far received no attention and for which we suggest the name of NUMBER 5 GULLY BUTTRESS (Photo G.40, 6·5, 4·0).

Owing to the thick mist we were unable to examine it properly but made a route up an easy chimney with straight parallel walls, facing the little pinnacle at the top of the Ledge Route (Photo G.40, 7·2, 4·1). Cairns at top and bottom; length about 100 feet. Standard: Moderate to Difficult. Suggested name: EASY CHIMNEY.

There is a very interesting-looking crack just to the right of the start of this chimney.

NUMBER 5 GULLY, THE PITCH.

No mention of this pitch is made in the "Guide," but there is a reference to it in "British Mountain Climbs," p. 298. "At certain seasons this remarkable chasm possesses a great pitch in its lower portion." This pitch is reached by going up the gully until it is divided by a rock rib and then taking the right branch (the two branches reunite above the rib). A short, easy pitch has to be climbed before the great pitch is reached. This is formed by a big chockstone with possible-looking routes on either side, both wet, mossy, and formidable looking. However, a through route was excavated on the right and this led without difficulty to the top. Standard: Moderate.

30.7.44. BOTTOM TIER OF SOUTH TRIDENT BUTTRESS, 1944 ROUTE.

The start is at a cairn at the foot of a steep wall about 100 feet right of the first pitch of the 1934 Route. Steep rock with good holds leads to the big ledge half-way up the buttress. The right-hand of the four big conspicuous grooves was the next objective. (The left-hand of these contains the "fearsome crack" avoided in the 1934 Route, the second is used in the 1943 Route, and the third would be climbable but leads nowhere in particular.) It had been intended to climb straight up to the foot of this groove from the right-hand end of the ledge, but the steep, mossy rock was still damp, so the 1943 Route was followed to the foot of the second groove and a traverse right was then made to the broken ground below the third and fourth grooves. The right-hand groove was mossy and still wet; it was in two sections—a short overhanging section led up to a stance, and from here the crack in the steep, smooth slab on the right of the groove was chiefly used. This led to a long ledge leading right, at first exposed, narrow and sloping outwards, but later broad and easy—from here there was a fine view of the starting cairn almost vertically below. From the right-hand end of this ledge an overhanging corner is climbed to the top, which is only about 30 feet from the start of the original route up the second tier. The climb is very steep and rather wet; the holds tend to be incut but loose. Climbed in rubbers, parts in socks. Standard: probably Very Severe.

MIDDLE TIER, THE SLAB CLIMB.

Goes up the conspicuous smooth slab between the original route and the Groove Climb. The right-hand of two cracks is climbed to an overhang and then a traverse left is made into the other crack. The route continues straight up to a conspicuous little chimney with straight walls (this is strenuous), and the easier

continuation of this is followed to the top of the tier. The chimney can be avoided on the left. Standard: Very Difficult. Severe if the chimney is climbed. Rather exposed but with no real technical difficulty; the holds are good throughout.

SOUTH GULLY, CREAG COIRE NA CISTE.

This gully, which was previously climbed in winter conditions (*J.* 21, 203), was descended. Moderate. Like most of the routes in Coire na Ciste, these all give very poor climbing on loose, dirty rock.

23.9.41. ASCENT OF PROBABLE NEW ROUTE ON NUMBER 3 GULLY BUTTRESS. (S. and P. B. Thompson.)

Starts at the foot of buttress a few yards to the right of the overhang. Ascend obvious groove, then continue up the left wall when the groove peters out on the right. (From here an attempt was made to climb the face of the buttress on the left by traversing to the foot of a square corner on the left. The rocks after the traverse proved too steep but would probably go.) The climb was therefore continued up the shallow gully on the right, taking the left-hand branch at the bifurcation. This finally became a groove—rather mossy at the top—giving on to the platform which is mentioned in H. Raeburn's climb on p. 53 of the "Guide." Instead of climbing the left-hand 40-foot chimney, a shallow groove slanting up to the right was climbed to some detached blocks at the foot of a mossy, square corner. After ascending this corner, some sloping slabs were followed to the summit. Standard: Very Difficult.

29.7.44. THE LOWER HALF OF GREEN GULLY.

All pitch, but at a fairly easy angle; rock loose, slabby, mossy. About half-way up there was a very rotten pitch, the rock being similar to hard mud; after

pulling out loose rock for about a quarter of an hour, without finding any firm rock below, the pitch was abandoned and the crest of the Comb gained by the same way as that used by Bell and Roberts (G.54). Descended Hesperides Ledge.

THE UPPER HALF OF NUMBER 2 GULLY BUTTRESS.

This is the buttress between Comb Gully and No. 2 Gully; it is narrow at the bottom but becomes very broad at the top. It was reached at the easy-angled section half-way up; this can easily be reached from below by starting from near the foot of No. 2 Gully. The upper part of the buttress would not be feasible as a face climb as the steep rock is both smooth and loose. However, it contains several cracks and chimneys and the easiest looking of these was followed to the top. Cairns at top and bottom. Difficult.

18.7.44. DOUGLAS BOULDER, NORTH-WEST FACE, RIGHT-HAND CHIMNEY.

The right-hand of the three chimneys facing the Hut on the north-west face of the Douglas Boulder, mentioned in the *Journal* (*J.* 21, 203), was climbed in the evening. The chimney is steep, and the bed contains rather rotten rock, wet and mossy. The overhang at the top of the chimney proper was not hard and led to a shallow recess with another overhang above. This second overhang proved to be the crux of the climb; the rock was so unreliable that it was necessary to avoid putting much weight on any handhold; above it there was an awkward landing on a small grass stance. From here a short face climb, first right and then straight up, led to easy ground. Climbed in socks. Standard: quite a hard Severe, the difficulties being due in part to rotten rock, wetness, and profusion of vegetation. At two places there were loose blocks which could not be passed safely, but which proved very awkward to send down.

21.6.44. DOUGLAS BOULDER, NORTH-WEST FACE, LEFT-HAND CHIMNEY.

In evening went up the left-hand of the three chimneys. It was difficult to see which was the previously unclimbed pitch, as it was fairly easy throughout ; perhaps the dry conditions had something to do with it. A poor climb. Standard : Difficult, just.

1.7.44. VANISHING GULLY, SECONDARY TOWER RIDGE, 1944 ROUTE.

Vanishing Gully is the conspicuous gully which drains the lower part of the Secondary Tower Ridge (Photo G.61, 1·8, 1·0) ; the top part is quite deep and wide, but lower down it narrows to a crack and finally disappears altogether. The lower shallow part of the gully is quite easy, but rather over half-way up there is a very formidable-looking pitch of 60 to 70 feet, nearly vertical and containing two shallow caves. Under the wet conditions prevailing on 1.7.44 no attempt was made to climb this pitch ; instead, the gully was descended for 30 feet or so and a traverse right was made to a rather indefinite shallow chimney between Vanishing Gully and the upper part of the 1931 Route (Photo G.61, 1·9, 1·0), and this chimney was followed on to the Secondary Tower Ridge. The route as climbed was rather unsatisfactory and would be capable of considerable variation ; the standard was probably Difficult.

An examination was then made of the upper part of Vanishing Gully. The rocks on the left of the final pitch were descended to the top of the Great Pitch ; from here it could be seen that there is only a small sloping stance on the roof of the upper cave and above this a nasty-looking 10-foot wall would have to be climbed to reach the top of the pitch. The pitch looked as though it would be very hard even under dry conditions.

GOLDEN EAGLES IN ARRAN.

By G. C. Curtis and G. H. Townend.

(A curious title. Sometimes climbing accounts are side-tracked into dealing with eagles, etc. Now we know that neither eagles nor humans with similar habits are extinct in Arran.)

FOUR years ago our climbing party in Arran started. It started, as many others must have done, with a traverse of the Central Ridge. We made our first acquaintance with the old man of Glen Rosa. Arran made its first impression of battlemented ridges and mighty walls, lonely corries and clear streams. But we little guessed how much more it had to divulge or how often we were to return.

An account in a small notebook indeed told us of a climb, but not of the great bastion of yellow-white granite that is South Ridge. It could not predict Sunday after Sunday spent on this holdless yet rough, uncompromising yet friendly rock. Since then the notebook has been soaked in Arran rain and squeezed in narrow chimneys: it now holds writing with heather roots where pencil lacked. Yet in retrospect its short stereotyped notes bring alive past days; finding the propitious tunnel on Caliban's Creep; threading the labyrinth of East Wall; crossing the great open sweep of the western slabs of Rosa Pinnacle; climbing the vertical nose on Cioch na-h-Oighe where the granite pardoned our impudence with plentiful holds.

But the notebook tells only a fraction. There is nothing of the wind which inverted our sandwich box before whirling it away, so dumping the contents on our narrow lunching ledge; nothing of the wariness needed to outwit the Rosa bog; nothing of that crafty siren Ben Nuis, whose smiling face lures one on to holdless slabs and perilous grass.

Our season is over: the party scatters. The old man is dead. The gnarled old shape that watched our comings and goings lies broken at the foot of the trunk; only the roots remain.

But enough of sentimental reminiscence. During the

last year we have climbed mainly on an old favourite, the Rosa Pinnacle, and a crag new to us, Caisteal Abhail. Of the former the " Islands Guide " (p. 44) says: " On all sides but this (the short north side) the Pinnacle seems quite inaccessible. . . . " As all sides have now been climbed, the last face to be done has been christened Fourth Wall.

During this summer the hills have been far more populated than of late, and it will also be noticed that two good climbs are reported elsewhere in this *Journal*. The change is, no doubt, partly due to the end of the war, but we hope that it also means that Arran is coming into its own as a climbing centre: one day there may even be an unobtrusive granite hut in Fionn Coire.

Cir Mhor, South Face.

Fourth Wall.—A pleasant climb: it ascends a slanting line of weakness in the slabs flanking South Ridge on the west side until this fault gives out at the foot of the last pitch. The standard in rubbers is " very difficult ": in boots " severe." It was climbed on 5th August 1945 by G. H. T. and H. K. Moneypenny after protracted gardening earlier in the year. The start is in Green Gully opposite the foot of the great wall on Caliban's Creep. The first three pitches are common with Souwester Slabs.

1. 40 feet. A grassy groove trending left, avoidable by a " short cut."

2. 50 feet. Continue up the groove.

3. 40 feet. The groove above or rocks on the left.

4. 40 feet. The direct continuation is grassy. It is better to gain a large platform by a detour on the left.

5, 6, 7. 120 feet. Continue up the fault by cracks and grooves to a large block leaning against the slabs with a narrowing chimney above.

8. 60 feet. Leave the chimney 6 feet up by a small ledge on the right. Ascend 6 feet, then follow a descending traverse until the slab above can be climbed. A step right leads into an easy groove.

9. 20 feet. Easy rocks lead to the terrace.

Alternative finish:

8A. 60 feet. Climb the narrowing chimney. The move out at the narrow section is severe and the chockstone is not to be trusted.

Green Gully.—This gully lies immediately to the left of the main South Ridge of Rosa Pinnacle. The diagram of the face (*Journal* 136, p. 242) gives the impression that it consists of easy grass. In fact the lower section is rock covered with green slime. It leads to an amphitheatre with a sloping grass floor. From the amphitheatre a branch gully rises on the left, a steep chimney continues the main gully, and a grassy slope on the right wall leads to the terrace.

From the foot of the green slime one can climb up and to the right on indifferent rock to the top of the 4th pitch of Fourth Wall, or preferably reach the same point by the latter route. From here a level traverse leads to the amphitheatre. These variants are of V.D. standard.

There are two exits from the amphitheatre of moderate standard. The left branch gully can be climbed by a series of through routes and leads to the upper scrambling of Caliban's Creep. It appears to have been descended in September 1897 by H. Raeburn and W. I. Clark as far as the top of the green slime. Clark descended and reascended the latter on a rope. Alternatively, the steep grassy slope on the right may be ascended: it has a short pitch near the top. This grassy slope may also be reached by traversing left from the top of the 6th pitch of Fourth Wall.

Caisteal Abhail.

A group of buttresses (2 to 6) fringe the summit of Caisteal Abhail on the side facing Cir Mhor. The climbs lie on these, and on a lower group of rocks which extend on the west almost as far as the saddle leading to Cir Mhor.

Lower Rocks, Buttress 1, *Portcullis Buttress*.—For the most part the lower rocks lie almost flush with the hillside, but on the left they end in a well-defined buttress. This was climbed on 17th June by E. J. W. Morrison, H. K. Moneypenny and G. C. C., and is of "very difficult" standard.

Ascend a boulder-strewn slope from the nearly level

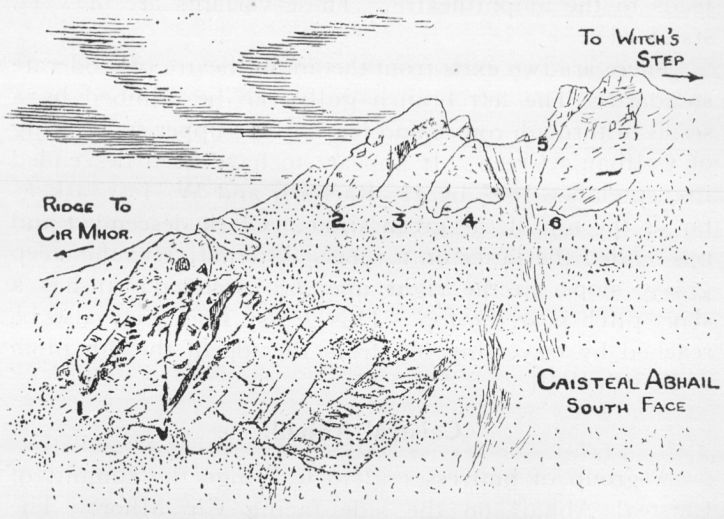
floor of Coire na h-Uaimh until the overhanging foot of the buttress is reached. Avoid this by going up a stony gully on the left for about 50 feet.

1. 70 feet. Climb a steep 10-foot crack (not as grassy as it looks) and traverse a slab to the right to a stance on a grass slope.

2. 80 feet. Cross the grass to the right, climb a steep 8-foot crack above a slab, and walk right on to the crest of the buttress at a collection of flakes below a steep section.

3. 60 feet. Turn this corner to the right: 6 feet beyond (not in the far corner) climb a thin crack, finishing right. A few feet higher are some blocks beneath a small overhang.

4. 15 feet. Climb the overhang (or walk round on the left). Easy going follows, and the buttress becomes a well-defined ridge before losing itself in the slope below buttress 2.



Key to Line Drawing.

1, Portcullis Buttress; V is V-Gully; 2, Rift Buttress; 3, Cupboard and Stairs Buttress; 4, Unclimbed Buttress; 5, Summit Tower; 6, Rampart Buttress.

Avalanche Gully.—A poor climb which, however, affords a hope of an improved start to Portcullis Buttress. The route described was followed by G. C. C. and Miss G. M. Johnson on 9th September 1945, and is of "very difficult" standard.

Start under the overhang at the foot of Portcullis Buttress and follow a grass shelf up to the right. After

passing a corner, climb directly upwards for about 30 feet. A few feet higher is a belay from which some steep chimneys leading to the buttress might be tackled. Instead, the route followed traversed right, into a gully at a platform covered with debris from a stonefall. The gully was climbed until a deep narrow chimney on the right could be entered. From the top of the chimney a traverse back into the gully and a through route led to easy ground.

V-Gully.—To the right of the last climb the lower crags are marked by a " V " which is a conspicuous feature of the face. The short left branch is a steep mossy chimney. The right branch is cleaner than most Arran gullies and was climbed by G. H. T., H. K. Moneypenny, Misses F. M. King and M. M. Carty, and G. C. C., on 16th August 1945.

The first 200 feet is moderate and ends on a grass shelf, with an escape on the right. The direct finish up the gully is of difficult standard.

Upper Rocks.—These upper towers are the " Castles " proper. There are five main ones (2 to 6), of which Nos. 2 and 6 are much the biggest: they frame a very wide gully which contains the remainder. No. 2 lies almost above Portcullis Buttress, while 3 and 4 start farther right and slightly lower. Buttress 5 starts high up and forms the summit of the mountain, connected to the top of No. 6 by a grassy neck.

Buttress 2 *and The Rift.*—This buttress is probably too broken to afford a good route in itself, although the steep east face may be vulnerable in places. It is, however, split from top to bottom by a cleft, climbed by the Portcullis Buttress party. The standard is moderate.

About 200 feet of easy but rather loose climbing leads to a break in the buttress. After a short pitch the right fork is taken: this narrows and finishes with a through route.

Buttress 3, *Cupboard and Stairs Buttress.*—This short but enjoyable climb is a mild " very difficult " in rubbers, but would be harder in boots. It was ascended by G. C. C. and Miss G. M. Johnson on 9th September

1945. The start is about 40 feet left of the steep nose of the buttress, close to a low sloping boulder in 2 to 3 gully.

1. 70 feet. Ascend a shelf to its left end, or pull up direct from the gully. Step on to the slab above, and traverse right just beneath the overhang, passing a queer cubby-hole and finishing on the crest of the buttress.

2. 50 feet. Climb the big stairs to a 15-foot wall. (Escape here.)

3. 40 feet. Pull up and swing left, finishing left or straight up. The summit is detached.

4. 10 feet. Descend into the gap.

Buttress 6, *The Rampart.*—This route is the longest on the Castles and is one of the few " difficults " in Arran. It was followed by the V-Gully party. (The top section had previously been climbed as part of Hellfire Crack.) The start is slightly to the left of the toe of the buttress.

1. 60 feet. (Very difficult, but avoidable.) Climb a short wall and slab to a recess, and pull out.

2. 40 feet. Climb a short chimney followed by slabs.

3. 40 feet. Climb two short rises (the first hold is over the bulge). Slabs lead to a broad terrace.

4. 40 feet. Cross the terrace and climb a chimney on the left of the buttress.

5. 30 feet. Climb on the left to a cleft at the top of a pitted slab. Junction with Hellfire Crack.

6, 7. 100 feet. Moderate but pleasant climbing, starting on the left of the buttress.

Hellfire Crack.—This variant of Rampart Buttress was climbed on 22nd April 1945 by H. K. Moneypenny and G. C. C., with E. J. W. Morrison and M. H. J. Hawkins on a second rope. It is " very difficult " and strenuous.

Start one-third of the way up the right side of the buttress by climbing a short wall into an easy chimney, which leads to the terrace mentioned in the buttress climb. Bear right, up this until it becomes a gully. A few feet up the gully, climb a steep and strenuous V-chimney on the left. (One climber caught fire here.) A rather delicate scoop on the left of the stance leads to the right end of the pitted slab, where the preceding route is joined.

Appendix on Recent Climbs.

Ben Nuis, Anvil Gully.—To the left of Gully 1 is a huge wall. Below this a grass rake slants up to the left. Below and parallel to the rake is a gully which seems to end in a cave. This was entered by grass on the right, though a direct start might be better. A little chimney work leads through the cave. A walk up the gully bed ends in another cave, with a fine view through the tiny east window. There are several narrow exits. Though including very little climbing this "moderate," subterranean route is suitable for stormy weather. It was followed by G. C. C., E. J. W. Morrison and M. H. J. Hawkins in April 1946.

Cir Mhor, Rosa Pinnacle, Keyhole Crack.—This obvious 90-foot crack near the centre of the north face of Rosa Pinnacle was climbed on 12th May 1946 by E. Banner-Mendus and G. P. Pinder, during an Arran Meet of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club. A stance is taken on a boulder 50 feet up, and the finish is by a through route. Standard is very difficult.

The north-east corner of the Pinnacle was climbed by E. Banner-Mendus and Maud Hargreaves up a 60-foot slab on the left of the easy way. Standard is very severe in boots.

Ceum na Caillich.—Broomstick Ridge (*Journal*, 23, 243 and 352) was ascended by P. Alexander, G. P. Pinder and Miss Lyna Kellett. They enjoyed good climbing, particularly the first ascent of a crack at the extreme left-hand edge, about half-way up.

Goatfell, Rosa Slabs.—An attractive slab route up the steep wall of Upper Glen Rosa below Goatfell can be traced out from any resting place on the climbs up Rosa Pinnacle. On 25th May 1945 Messrs J. H. B. Bell, G. A. Collie and C. C. Gorrie put the matter to the test and enjoyed a grand climb of nearly 600 feet. Naturally, a great deal of latitude is possible, especially in the lower section. We are by no means satisfied that we chose the best climbing route here. We used rubbers on dry rocks. We were too far to the left to begin with, and had to traverse to the right at mid-height to get the best of the upper section. Sound, steep, rough slabs rose to a rocky nose above. There was a short knife-edge of ridge above the nose. Farther up was a slab, enclosed by huge, vertical rocks, climbed like an open chimney corner. Another steep section led to a poised block, where the rock was badly weathered, about the end of the climb. We took over two hours, the height being estimated by sighting across the glen to features on Rosa Pinnacle. A short section of easy scrambling to the crest of a rocky ridge led easily and quickly to the summit of Goatfell. No part was more than very difficult when using rubbers on dry rocks. A direct start up the lower section would probably involve much more severe climbing. Apparently Mr John Jenkins revisited these slabs in early 1946, but it is not easy to distinguish or identify our respective routes. J. H. B. B.

THE BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL AND THE ASSOCIATION OF SCOTTISH CLIMBING CLUBS.

By J. K. W. Dunn.

(Mr Dunn is Hon. Secretary of the A.S.C.C. and the B.M.C. Scottish Committee.)

As is generally known, the B.M.C. was formed on the initiative of the Alpine Club, and its objects are to facilitate consultation between British mountaineering clubs and to take appropriate action to further their interests. With one or two exceptions all Scottish mountaineering clubs are now members.

Provision is made in the B.M.C. Constitution for a Scottish Committee consisting of the representative on the B.M.C. of the Scottish Clubs, and this Scottish Committee has to be consulted on any matter affecting Scotland or involving a proposal to change any laws peculiar to Scotland. It was this provision in the B.M.C. Constitution which called into being the Association of Scottish Climbing Clubs. It may be asked why the Scottish body was not simply called the B.M.C. Scottish Committee; there are a variety of reasons, the chief of which is that the A.S.C.C. includes clubs which are not members of the B.M.C. and is therefore more truly representative of Scottish climbing than the body envisaged by the B.M.C. Constitution: there are also other minor differences between it and the body projected in the B.M.C. Constitution. It must be emphasised, however, that the A.S.C.C. is the B.M.C. Scottish Committee, and that the B.M.C. is glad that it should function in this way.

The first meeting of what has now become the A.S.C.C. took place on the initiative of the S.M.C. in the S.M.C. Club Room in Edinburgh on 12th January 1946. Ten clubs were represented of which five were at the time members of the B.M.C. The discussions were chiefly exploratory in character, but one important appointment was made which Scottish member clubs of the B.M.C. were required to do under its Constitution, that of J. M. Wordie as Vice-President, a position to which he has

been re-elected for 1947. It would be true to say that at this time the importance of the B.M.C. and the potentialities of its Scottish Committee were not generally appreciated.

The next meeting took place in Glasgow on 12th March 1946. Seven clubs were represented of which four were members of the B.M.C., one B.M.C. member having resigned in the meantime. Some important subjects came up for discussion at this meeting. The first was a proposal by the B.M.C. Committee that the body meeting in Scotland and composed of member clubs of the B.M.C. should be the Scottish Committee, and that, in accordance with the Constitution, a deputy for each representative on the Scottish Committee should be appointed, this deputy to reside if possible in or near London and to be a member of a duplicate Scottish Committee in London. Theoretically excellent, this proposal failed, since only the S.M.C. and J.M.C.S. had members suitably situated to function as deputies in London; both the S.M.C. and J.M.C.S., however, took the opportunity of appointing London representatives. The next subject discussed was a proposal, put forward by the Fell and Rock Climbing Club and sent on by the B.M.C., to establish a central fund for financing the establishment of climbers' huts in districts at present ill-served. As most of the climbing districts in Scotland are devoid of huts, the idea appealed to the meeting, and two Sub-Committees, for East and West Scotland respectively, were appointed to investigate and report. The other topic discussed at this meeting was the desirability of organising these meetings on a more formal basis, and a further Sub-Committee was appointed to draw up a Constitution.

It will be seen that real progress was now being made, and that the A.S.C.C., although still without a name and very informally organised, was getting to grips with practical problems. The next meeting, held at Dundee on 1st June 1946, was therefore somewhat disappointing from this point of view, as it was decided not to adopt the draft constitution, although it was agreed that voting, where necessary, would be on the basis of one vote per

club. Reports were presented, however, by the two Sub-Committees on Huts, recommending the most suitable areas and defining the types of huts proposed. No decision was taken on whether to support the establishment of a central fund administered by the B.M.C. This meeting was attended by representatives from ten clubs, of which six were members of the B.M.C., two more having joined since the last meeting.

The most recent meeting took place in Aberdeen on 2nd November 1946 at which eight clubs were represented, seven being members of the B.M.C.; two other B.M.C. member clubs were unable to send representatives. It was at this meeting that steps were taken to place the Scottish body on a more secure and permanent basis. Further rules were adopted giving the body its name and providing for a Chairman and Hon. Secretary to be elected annually, and regulating the conduct of business and finance. Apart from subjects already discussed, two further topics of general interest were raised, namely, National Parks in Scotland and Professional Guides. There was little that could be done in connection with National Parks beyond recommending clubs to join the Advisory Council, so as to ensure that the mountaineering point of view is adequately represented on that body. On Professional Guides, on the other hand, a good deal has been and is being done. The B.M.C. have adopted regulations governing the issue to guides of certificates covering the whole of Britain. The A.S.C.C. appointed a Sub-Committee to examine these regulations, and the Report of that Sub-Committee will be presented to the A.S.C.C. at the next meeting in February. Until after that meeting nothing more can be said. There are, as far as is known, no professional guides practising at present in Scotland, but the A.S.C.C. seems the ideal body to set the standard by which guides should be judged. It is not perhaps as unlikely as it appears at first sight that professional guiding should come to Scotland.

To conclude, the true scope of such national organisations as the B.M.C. and A.S.C.C. is in dealing with questions of a national character such as National Parks,

the provision of finance for hut development, and the like. They are in a position as large organisations to make their influence felt (and have already done so) in a society which is tending more and more to mass organisation, and as they are in effect one organisation their influence is the greater. They are run by members of climbing clubs for the benefit of mountaineering, and as long as they remain on that basis there is no danger of them usurping purely club functions. Let us, therefore, give them our full support and encouragement.

Professional Guides.—The B.M.C. proposal under consideration by the A.S.C.C. Sub-Committee proposed two grades of guides: (*a*) Rock-climbing Guide (the more highly qualified), and (*b*) Mountain Guide (less qualified). The A.S.C.C. Report on this was considered by the S.M.C. Committee Meeting at Newtonmore on 1st January 1947. It was felt that due allowance had not been made for the special difficulties inherent in Scottish winter climbing and that three years' experience of climbing in Scotland was a necessary minimum. It was agreed that there was scope for three grades of guide as follows: (1) Mountaineering Guide (highest all-round qualification), (2) Rock-climbing Guide, (3) Hill-walking Guide. This was in general agreement with the Report of the A.S.C.C. Sub-Committee, and was substantially endorsed by the Meeting of the A.S.C.C. and B.M.C. Scottish Committee at Inverarnan in February 1947.

First Aid and Rescue Organisation.—As reported in the *Journal* for 1946, p. 353, the first meeting of representatives of Scottish Climbing Clubs at Edinburgh, on 12th January 1946, as its first business of immediate practical importance, dealt with the extension of First Aid and Rescue Organisation in Scotland, on the basis of co-operation of the Clubs represented and in association with the Joint First Aid Committee of (British) Mountaineering Clubs. This latter body, which was instituted long before the war, and to which the S.M.C. and most important British Climbing Clubs are affiliated, helps in Scotland by providing first aid and rescue equipment, although its utilisation and the organisation of Rescue Services are left entirely to the Scottish Clubs. A full report on this development appears in the *S.M.C. Bulletin* for January 1947, on p. 8.

Member Clubs.—The following Clubs are members of the A.S.C.C. All are also members of the B.M.C. except those marked with an asterisk: S.M.C.; J.M.C.S.; Cairngorm Club; Grampian Club; Etchachan Club; Dundee Rambling Club *; Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club *; Lomond Mountaineering Club; Creag Dhu Club; Edinburgh University M.C.; Moray Mountaineering Club.*

EDITOR.

NEW CLIMBS.

The Gargoyle Direct, West Buttress, Lochnagar.

THIS long climb is rather difficult to follow from the original account and, in parts at least, subsequent parties are likely to follow different routes. It was climbed by Messrs D. W. Haworth and G. J. Ritchie of the Edinburgh University M.C. on 19th May 1946. Fresh snow made things awkward and probably concealed useful handholds. A fuller account will be inserted in the " Cairngorms Guide " when it appears.

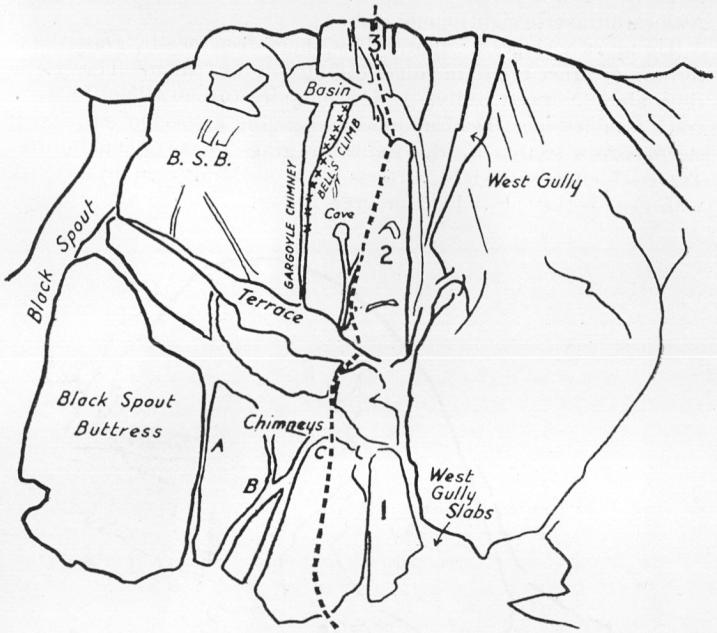
This route starts at the lowest point of the rocks, about midway between the third chimney (C) giving access to the Terrace and the foot of the West Gully. It goes up to the grass patch at the top of third chimney (end of lower terrace, see " Guide," photo, p. 224). The line runs through Symmers' first W. and passes to left of second W. It then follows buttress on left of West Gully (but on Gargoyle side of it) to the level of the *Basin* above Gargoyle Chimney. Final section is the huge, square face of Bell's route (*Journal*, 23, 32), but Haworth was more to the right. (Summary supplied by W. A. Ewen.) Standard probably hard severe.

The following are brief particulars of this climb.

Lowest Section.—Start in shallow cave at foot of conspicuous fissure in slabs. Turn overhang on left and follow chimney to slab with overhang. Crack climb up left wall and proceed on slab to prominent flake. Traverse right, along crack in flake, and go up to right of grass. From grass platform climb wall to square recess. Crack behind roof leads to left to long, steep slope to Terrace.

Middle Section.—Start over lowest rocks, right of Gargoyle Chimney, up groove to grassy terrace (by face to right of small gully). Attain sloping rock terrace which leads up to left and ends over subsidiary gully (either direct or by crack). From left of terrace move into gully and up to cave. Turn overhang by right wall and go 45 feet up gully: exit by crack in right wall, with sentry-box and chockstone, and emerge on neck between two gullies. Climb slab on left and go right, up overhung chimney. Emerge at flake, which climb to window behind, and reach exposed knife-edge of flake. Step across gap to opposite wall to platform below four great rock steps, which climb to amphitheatre below Gargoyle. Cross left to foot of final cliff.

Upper Section.—Follow ledges and fissures of rock to right, up to sentry-box. Right and up after this, turning corner on to ledges over West Gully to grass below crack. Climb this, and then up grassy rock to slab below Gargoyle. Cross broad mouth of fissure and up rock rib to grass tuft. Traverse left to window above Gargoyle.



GARGOYLE DIRECT; LOCHNAGAR.

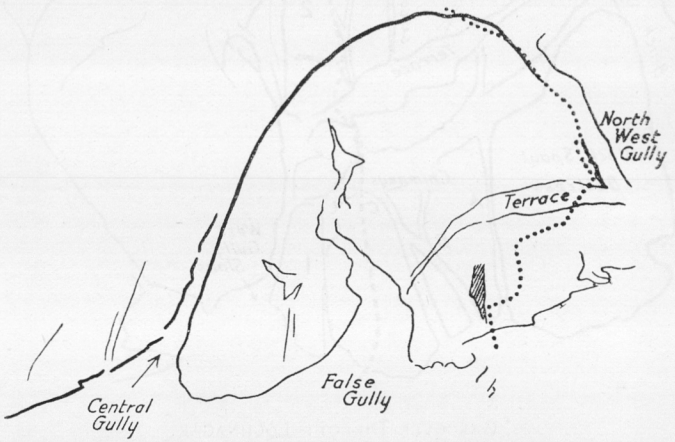
North-west Buttress, Creag an Dubh Loch.

A fine new route has been made on 18th May 1946 up the granite face of Creag an Dubh Loch, a southern subsidiary of Lochnagar. It was done by Messrs D. W. Haworth and G. J. Ritchie, and the standard was found to be very severe. The cliff is about 700 feet high. As the diagram shows, the cliff face has been tackled towards the right end of the imposing buttress between Central and Norwest Gullies. The left face of this cliff, overlooking Central Gully, appears to be very close-jointed and

almost impregnable to assault. The following brief summary is from an account by G. J. Ritchie.

Attain ledge above by narrow crack in recessed face of lowest rocks. Go 30 feet up shallow gully to crack leading out to right. Turn corner from edge of flake and climb slabs by left traverse to shelf. Leave recess with flake by chimney to crown of slabs. Awkward traverse right, under slab.

Go up easy slopes to right, follow short steep face by grass slope, turning a corner to attain ridge leading to grass patch. Traverse to ridge above Norwest Gully. Ledges on gully wall useful until narrow crack troublesome. Delicate move to hanging groove on left. Next steep, narrow section of ridge spoiled by grass. Easy ground follows. Traverse left across slab to recess with overhung cleft by a crack with two chockstones. Easy progress to top.



NORTH-WEST BUTTRESS, CREAG AN DUBH LOCH.

(The dotted line shows Haworth-Ritchie Route)

Ben Eunaich—A Winter Climb.

The route lies in the north-east corrie. It starts from about the lowest point and to the right (north) of the main upper cliffs of the mountain. We started in a gully to the south of a very prominent ridge with a striking little pinnacle about 200 feet up; here the ridge narrows to a sharp snow arête which swings back at an easier angle and merges into the upper snowfield.

About 150 feet of hard snow, developing into snow-ice in the gully, led to a pitch divided by a narrow, holdless rib. We took the left-hand branch, a short, shallow chimney, where the snow-ice gave way to a thin covering lying on turfy rock at a high angle. This was climbed by small holds cut into the underlying frozen turf; then an awkward and delicate left traverse across and up to the right of the rib. Firm snow-ice made it possible to reach the easier angle of the gully above and get an axe belay, 50 feet from foot of rib. Pitch about 30 feet. The crest of the arête was reached about 50 feet higher, then an exhilarating 100 feet led to a small cornice about 15 yards north of the summit cairn.

The whole upper part of the mountain was encased in snow, with a layer of snow-covered fog crystals on the rocks. The gully was in sun in the early morning, and the pinnacle ridge till midday. Magnificent views out to Ben Lui, and later over the arête to Glencoe and the north. The party, Messrs D. Scott and R. Anderson, took two hours to complete the climb. D. SCOTT.

The Crack—Carn Dearg, Ben Nevis.

This is the most striking feature of the slender pinnacle of the upper part of Raeburn's Buttress. It runs straight up the centre of the vertical face. It is about 300 feet in height, ending where the angle eases off and the buttress becomes a ridge. The climb starts on the other side of the face from South Castle Gully, and can be identified from the photograph opposite p. 33 of the "Ben Nevis Guide." It is a strenuous climb on good holds, with 1st and 3rd pitches graded as very severe. A short scramble up grassy ledges leads to about 50 feet below the start of the crack. It was first climbed on 16th June 1946 by H. A. Carston (C.C.) and T. M'Guiness (L.M.C.).

1. 50 feet. Start on broken rock, follow series of short overhangs, diagonally to the right, to stance and belay, 15 feet below crack.

2. 50 feet. Up to overhang and over it to belay on right of platform.

3. 70 feet. Narrow and overhung crack climbed 15 feet to sloping ledge. Climb by pressure in crack and above slab on left. Then climbing becomes easier, reaching recess on left of crack.

4. 30 feet. Follow crack 15 feet to overhang. Avoid by traverse to edge of buttress. Pull up on good holds to belay.

5. 80 feet. Crack widens, but is steep for 40 feet. Easy climbing to large platform, where Raeburn's route joins in from gully on left. A final 200 feet of scrambling leads to top of Raeburn's Buttress.

(Adapted from *Journal of Lomond Mountaineering Club*, August 1946.)

MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS IN SCOTLAND FROM 1st MARCH 1945 TO 1st MARCH 1947.

8th March 1945.—Cyril Levison (23) (novice), member of an Ensa party visiting Fort William. Climbing Ben Nevis with other members, separated from others on slopes of Meall an t' Suidhe, slipped, fell, and was killed.

June 1945.—Glen Brittle stretcher out to bring down girl resident in hostel who had sprained ankle in Coire Lagan.

1*st July* 1945.—D. G. Martin (19), Edinburgh University Mountaineering Club, with party scrambling towards Sgùrr Dearg from top of Window Buttress. On a 10-foot wall a huge mass of rock came away at his touch. He was severely crushed, and died when being carried down to Glen Brittle.

15*th July* 1945.—Polish soldier, member of a party of two climbing unroped on ridge of Sgùrr Thearlaich. Leader dislodged a stone which knocked the second off his balance so that he fell down out of sight on Coruisk face. Body located on upper screes of Coire an Lochain same evening, had fallen 600 to 800 feet. Stretcher party brought it back to Glen Brittle the following day via Bealach Coire an Lochain and Coire a Ghrunnda.

16*th August* 1945.—Adam Collier (28), slipped, fell,

and was killed when descending Beinn Arcuill (Sutherland).

22*nd November* 1945.—Trevor Crain (19), novice, alone, missing after leaving Kinlochleven Hotel; very large search parties out for several days. Body found on Aonach Eagach, north side of ridge at top of Gleann na Caolais.

14*th January* 1946.—Mr and Mrs Bradford, young Service couple, both novices, spending leave at Glencoe Youth Hostel, climbed Aonach Dubh, got into difficulties when descending—benighted—brought down in morning by rescue party from Fort William.

27*th February* 1946.—H. W. Tilman (A.C.) and Courtland Simpson (J.M.C.S.) on Ben Nevis. Dense mist. Seeking Carn Mor Dearg arête for descent, the party stepped off cornice on arête side of top of N.E. Buttress and fell some distance. H. W. Tilman sustained injuries, but both reached C.I.C. Hut. After a week or so Tilman had to be carried down to Fort William.

8*th July* 1946.—Capt. A. G. Maryon (26), an English tourist, set out from Sligachan Hotel for a walk in the Cuillins—left no indication of where he was going—whole island organised as search parties in very bad weather. Search continued for three weeks; body not yet found.

July 1946.—Lord Malcolm Douglas Hamilton (A.C.). Cairngorms; leg injuries; stretcher party out.

25*th August* 1946.—William Stephen (18), novice, member of a party climbing Douglas Gully, Lochnagar, without ropes, stranded on a narrow ledge 200 feet from top, to which he clung for eight hours while his companions went off to Ballater, returned with ropes, and hauled him up.

3*rd September* 1946.—Mr and Mrs Pitman set off from Glen Brittle for Coruisk via Coire Lagan. Mrs Pitman fell and was killed on slopes of Sgùrr Dearg. Stretcher party out from Glen Brittle.

30*th December* 1946.—Irene Gross (20), novice, with

party from Glencoe Youth Hostel, climbed Bidean nam Bian. When descending, slipped on snow and fell down 200 feet; had no ice-axe. Fractured leg and other injuries. Stretcher party out from Fort William.

28*th January* 1947.—James Shields (28), soldier on leave—alone—climbed Stob Coire nam Beith; got into difficulty when descending and was benighted. Search party from Fort William out overnight, located following day and brought down.

2*nd February* 1947.—D. Hastie lost control when glissading on Bidean nam Bian, Glencoe, lost axe, struck rock, died when being carried down. Had some experience but was not a member of any club. Stretcher party manned by Lomond M.C.

The last affair got only a few lines in the press and some papers did not mention it at all. The previous two affairs were very widely publicised and photos appeared in all Scottish national dailies.

The following accident, omitted from last list, is now included:—

5*th October* 1942.—James Mitchell, young student, fell when leading climb on Shelter Stone Crag, Cairngorms. Dead when found. Rope was not broken. Stretcher party out from Aviemore.

In Memoriam.

JAMES ALEXANDER PARKER, M.Inst.C.E.

1864-1946.

THE Club has sustained a very great loss by the death of J. A. Parker, which took place at his home on 28th September 1946.

Parker was born in Glasgow on 21st September 1864. He was a B.Sc. of that University, and a First Prizeman in the Engineering Classes.



JAMES ALEXANDER PARKER
1864-1946



Easter 1892

S.M.C. ON BEN NEVIS

(*Left to right :* W. R. Lester ; ———? ; J. H. Gibson ; H. T. Munro)

It was my privilege to meet him for the first time in Skye in 1896, when we joined in several climbs. At that time he was employed with the South-eastern and Chatham Railway, when he carried through the onerous job of putting a new roof on Charing Cross Station. When a vacancy occurred in 1906 for the post of Engineer for the Great North of Scotland Railway Co. at Aberdeen he applied for and got the job, with the result that our casual meeting in 1896 developed into a very real and lasting friendship.

Parker joined the Club in 1893, and it will be generally admitted that no member has spent more time and care in furthering its best interests in every way. He was a man of quite exceptional accuracy. Any statement he made as regards distance, height, or time might at once be assumed as correct. His skill in route finding in bad weather conditions was ever reliable, and several instances of wonderful dead reckoning could be given. Amongst his outstanding labours may be cited the dreary drudgery of the preparation of the Index to the first ten volumes of the *Journal*. On his retiral from the Railway Company, he devoted much of his spare time towards the enrichment of the leaves of the *Journal* by very instructive articles, and special reference may here be made to his excellent "Guide Book to the Western Highlands." Parker's knowledge of the Scottish hills was unrivalled. He was one of the famous few who had completed the ascent of all the "Munros." His many friends rejoiced to see him occupying the Presidential Chair in 1925 and 1926. He was also President of the Cairngorm Club during 1928-30, and, upon the death of Professor Norman Collie, he was made Hon. President, which position he held till the time of his death. He was a member of the Alpine Club, and, in addition to many ascents both in the Alps and Pyrenees, he made several ascents in the Japanese Alps and Canadian Rockies when on his world tour.

Parker was a man who took some knowing. Some may have thought him somewhat brusque and severe, but behind that outer crust there was a wealth of no ordinary

sincerity which made his friendship, when obtained, well worth while. WILLIAM GARDEN.

WILLIAM RICHARD LESTER, M.A.

1858-1946.

W. R. LESTER was one of the now fast-dwindling band of original members of the Club. He climbed a good deal with J. H. Gibson and others in the early years of the Club, but there seems to be no record of his attendance at a Meet since 1905. However, his memories and his interest in the Club remained, and he sent us a congratulatory letter for the Jubilee number of the *Journal* in 1939.

Lester lived at Horsted Keynes, Sussex. In the 1906 General Election he stood as Liberal candidate for Biggleswick, Bedfordshire, as he was a great advocate of land reform and the taxation of land values. He was a talented painter in water-colours.

He contributed one article to the *Journal*, " The Black Shoot of Stob Maol " (2, 117). The first complete ascent of this gully on Beinn Eunaich was effected by Naismith, Lester, Gibson and Douglas in May 1892, the upper section being hazardous owing to loose stones, and also excessively wet. Another notable climb, with Douglas, Gibson and Macindoe, was the north ridge of the Taynuilt peak of Cruachan in March 1892, which exacted eight hours of continuous step-cutting. He was concerned in what was probably a first ascent under winter conditions of the north face of Cruach Ardrain, at Easter 1890.

On New Year's Day, 1891, along with others, he spent some time in a determined but fruitless attempt to scale a prominent rocky knob on the ridge between Beinn Each and Stuc' a Chroin. It was proposed to christen this unknown peak " Stob Lester," but posterity has forgotten both peak and name. In September 1892, whilst climbing with T. Fraser Campbell on the Whangie, an accident occurred, due to loose rock, causing severe bruises to both men and a fractured wrist to Lester.

Lester attended Meets fairly regularly until 1895 and was also a member of many informal climbing parties. He was a tall man of fine build, and he appears in the group photograph in the Jubilee (April 1939) issue of the *Journal*. J. H. B. BELL.

NORMAN L. HIRD.

1886-1946.

NORMAN HIRD, who died on 2nd March 1946, joined the Club in 1933 and served on the Committee from 1939 up to the time of his death. Although he had done some easy scrambling he never took to serious rock-climbing; his real pleasure was to be amongst the hills he loved and which he appreciated so well. He was a keen ski-runner and had practised that sport in this country and at many of the well-known Swiss resorts. He was also a good photographer, and he regularly attended our Meets and dinners.

In business he was the General Manager of the Union Bank of Scotland, a position he attained at the exceptionally early age of 34. As a banker he was outstanding: his co-operation in solving the difficulties that arose during the financial crisis of 1931 and the services that he rendered at that time deeply impressed financial authorities in London. He had a remarkably quick and clear mind and a very retentive memory. He grasped the essentials of a problem at once and approached it with common sense, in a practical way. He was a man of strong and forceful character, with a ready sense of humour, and he was always willing to stop his work and take any amount of trouble to help those who needed his help. His death leaves a blank in his large circle of friends, and his public service in many spheres will not soon be forgotten.

ROBERT JEFFREY.

ROBERT GRAHAM NAPIER.

WE regret to announce the death, on 24th December 1946, of Mr R. Graham Napier, C.A., one of the older members of the Club.

Napier joined the Club in 1896, was Treasurer from 1901 to 1906, and thereafter was Auditor for many years.

A skilful rock-climber, he was a very active member during his earlier years in the Club. On the exploration of the Ben Nevis, Skye and Arran climbs he led many first ascents, and was in Raeburn's party on the first ascent of the Church Door Buttress.

Though for many years he had not been seen much by members, he still retained a keen interest in Club affairs.

He is survived by his wife, one son, and a daughter. His younger son was killed in action in Malaya in 1942.

J. L. AIKMAN.

GEORGE D. VALENTINE.
1877-1946.

ALTHOUGH several years have elapsed since Sheriff Valentine attended any of the Meets of the Club, there must be a number of members like myself who remember his enthusiasm for climbing on the Cuillin at the occasional June Meets at Sligachan. One of my earliest climbs there was the traverse of the Bhasteir and the Tooth in the company of Ling, Alexander and Valentine in 1923. As Sheriff at Portree, Valentine made good use of his leisure for climbing, fishing and acquiring that extensive knowledge of all the Western Isles, the ways of the people, birds and animals, part of which he has since presented to us in the *Journal* in his recent delightful articles on Eagles and on the climbing history of Sligachan and the Cuillin.

Valentine was born at Girvan. He had a brilliant academic career at Glasgow University, taking his M.A. with first class honours in Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. Obtaining a scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, he graduated B.A. and was 9th Wrangler. He then graduated LL.B. at Glasgow and was called to the Scottish Bar in 1903. His mind was judicial rather than dialectic, so, ten years later he became Interim Sheriff-Substitute at Ayr, followed by similar appoint-

ments at Elgin and Airdrie. In 1920 he went as Sheriff-Substitute to Portree, and for the last twenty years of his life he held the like office at Perth, retiring only at the beginning of 1946. As a judge he proved a sound lawyer; his judgments were profound and well expressed. He won the respect both of the legal profession and the public by the worthy discharge of his responsible duties. He was the author of several legal works.

He was an enthusiastic traveller, interested in many things, such as old china and paintings. He was the author of several volumes of poetry—"The Heart of Bruce," in 1912, under the pseudonym of George Henderland; "Dawn," a collection of short poems framed after the spirit, but not translations of the works of the lesser-known Greek lyric poets (one of these, "Night up There," appeared in our *Journal* (22, 352)); "Saul," a dramatic poem; and also "Olaf's Son" (both over his own name), a considerable epic poem of the ancient days when the Vikings possessed the Isle of Skye. In spite of its measured restraint his verse strikes the imagination, and is imbued with full vitality and delight in all natural things and in the free activities of simple men. Is it the result of the fusion of classical and mathematical culture within the frame of a naturally vigorous personality which has found an outlet in hard, legal thought as well as in poetry for the graces of life, and yet again in mountaineering for abundance of energy? His verse was printed for private circulation only, but deserves a much wider recognition than it has received.

Valentine was, in other respects as well, a very reserved man. I cannot claim to have known him intimately. He forbore to talk of his climbing achievements. Whilst an undergraduate in Glasgow he became interested in the Scottish hills. When at Cambridge he started the habit of visiting the Alps. These expeditions took him to many districts, from the lower Alps of the Maderaner Thal, with at least one excursion to the Dolomites when he ascended the Kleine Zinne, to the districts of the major Alpine peaks. He was particularly fond of the Bernese

Oberland. As late as 1930 he climbed many peaks there, including the Jungfrau and the Finsteraarhorn in a five-day trip. In 1938 he visited the Maderaner Thal with his brother, recalling some climbs he had done there thirty years previously.

He took a great interest in, and was Honorary President of, the Perth Section of the J.M.C.S. In his last years he was still very fond of the Highlands, but contented himself with fishing on Loch Tay. Now he is gone, and it seems appropriate to close this short appreciation with a few lines from " Olaf's Son," at the funeral of Oswald on the top of a peak of Western Skye :—

> " . . . They issued on far-gazing Heleval.
> Beneath them lay th'illimitable seas,
> Their islands beyond number, great and small,
> The azure legion of the Hebrides.
> The winter evening was well-nigh done,
> Sharp on the summit sang the evening breeze,
> And sparsely stars to glister had begun,
> While broad'ning as it sank in the clear west,
> Close over Hecla hung the blood-red sun."

J. H. B. BELL.

WALTER NELSON.

MR NELSON, one of the older members of the Club, elected in 1903, died at Glasgow on 28th February 1946 at the age of 83. He was Honorary Treasurer of the Club from 1907 until 1913 and Acting Treasurer from 1914 to 1919.

He was an Accountant by profession, senior Partner of Nelson, Gilmour, Scott & Company, C.A., Glasgow, and played a big part in the public work of his City and, in particular, in the Town Council, on the Courts of various Incorporations and in other charitable and educational associations. He was active in fostering friendship with France, and was one of the original members of the Franco-Scottish Society. For his services he was given

the honour of " Officier d'Academie " by the French Government. He was Treasurer of the Fighting France Co-ordinating Committee during the recent war.

Until accumulating years took their toll, he was a keen and active mountaineer. He was a member of the Alpine Club, and his usual holiday was a climbing one in Switzerland. He retained his affection for Scottish hills and was proud of the fact that when over 60 he, in one day, did the double climb of Ben More and Stobinian along with his old friend and fellow-member John Grove.

He would have been happy to know that his many volumes of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* and the *Alpine Journal*, together with other mountaineering books and pictures and his ice-axes have now found a home in the Club Hut at Lagangarbh.

Mr Nelson lost his only son in the R.F.C. during the first World War. He is survived by his widow and one daughter, who had been his companion on the Swiss peaks, including the Matterhorn.

J. NEIL ORR.

WE greatly regret to announce the recent death of **Matthew V. Hunter** after a prolonged illness. Although but recently come within our ranks his engaging personality and enthusiasm for the hills made a lasting impression on those who climbed with him during our Meets. He was latterly the Managing Director of Messrs. Raimes Clark & Co., Manufacturing Chemists, Edinburgh. He was a Ph.C. and a Ph.D. He had many interests. For fifteen years he had been a reader of our *Journal* and keenly interested in mountaineering.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

ANNUAL MEETING, RECEPTION, AND DINNER, 6th December 1946.

THE Report of the Annual General Meeting has already been issued to members in the *Bulletin*, the first number of which appeared in February 1947.

The Reception, Meeting, and Dinner were held in the Roman Eagle Masonic Hall, Edinburgh. The Reception, in the afternoon, was most successful, 120 members and guests being present. A beautiful selection of Scottish mountain views in natural colour was shown by Mr James F. Hamilton and greatly appreciated.

The Dinner took place after the Meeting, and was enjoyed by 64 members and 17 guests, Mr Alex. Harrison, the President, being in the chair. Our Vice-President, Mr J. S. M. Jack, contributed two additional verses to the Club Song.

Dr N. E. Odell of the Alpine Club gave a Himalayan Commentary. "The Guests and Kindred Clubs" was proposed by W. Ross M'Lean, and the toast was replied to by Mr H. D. Welsh, President of the Cairngorm Club. Mr Robert Jeffrey proposed the health of the Rev. A. E. Robertson, former General "Guide Book" Editor, and of Mr J. Logan Aikman, retiring Hon. Secretary.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1947—DALWHINNIE.

THE President being at Dalwhinnie, and the majority of the worthies of the Club (including three ex-Presidents and a few minor officials of standing), although the majority of the members were at Newtonmore, it must be conceded that this was the senior section of the Meet. Only two members were at the Loch Ericht Hotel, the rest being most comfortably entertained at the Grampian. A warm lounge made for pleasant evenings. The weather was kind on the whole and offered good climbing days,

some ski-ing, and culminated on New Year's Day in such a fierce, cold wind with driving spindrift and cloud as to make the ascent of Ben Alder and Lancet Edge respectively impossible for two strong parties, one of which included a distinguished guest, Mr Bryan Donkin, the Secretary of the Alpine Club. This day ended in an evening of torrential rain, sheeting down before a sou'-westerly gale, whilst a car-load of officials and members of Committee went to join their brethren in Newtonmore for a three-hour discussion on the weighty problems of Club policy. On 2nd January came one of those perfect winter days, just as an interlude, and immediately followed by the worst of thaw weather which ended all climbing for the rest of the week. It was a cheerful Meet, with many discussions and stories in the evenings, largely kept alive by the activities of a gentleman who, on that account, was playfully nicknamed "An Torc." It was not recorded that he climbed his own hill. A considerable acquaintance with Gaelic and phonetics is needed to appreciate the subtlety of this pleasantry.

The Dalwhinnie Section was attended at one time or another by the President, 12 members, and 2 guests, the names being as follows: The President, Mr A. Harrison, and Messrs J. H. B. Bell, P. A. Fletcher, E. W. Hodge, B. Horsburgh (Loch Ericht Hotel), J. S. M. Jack, R. Jeffrey, G. Murray Lawson, W. N. Ling, Harry MacRobert, J. G. Osborne, P. J. H. Unna, G. C. Williams (Loch Ericht Hotel) (members); and Bryan Donkin, Ian Murray Lawson (guests). Everyone was on the hills at one time or another between 28th December and 2nd January. Jeffrey, MacRobert, and Hodge did some ski-ing, for which the snow was not very good and lay rather high, also Williams and Horsburgh. A brief list of the expeditions is as follows:—

28*th December*.—Fletcher and Donkin—The Fara.

29*th December*.—W. N. Ling—Geal Charn (Udlamain); Fletcher and Donkin—Ben Alder via two ridges.

30*th December*.—W. N. Ling—Carn na Caim; Fletcher and Donkin—Marcaonach, Geal Charn, and Creagan Mor; Unna—Creagan Mor.

31*st December*.—Ling to Ben Alder Lodge; Hodge and Jeffrey—The Fara on ski; Fletcher and Donkin—The Fara.

1*st January* 1947.—Bell and Osborne—The Fara and its western top; Jeffrey and MacRobert ski-ing on Geal Charn; Ling and Jack on Marcaonach; Hodge not quite to the top of Udlamain; Fletcher, Harrison and Donkin retreated on Lancet Edge; Williams and Horsburgh visited the Doire Mhor ravine behind The Fara.

2*nd January* 1947.—The Lawsons on Chaoruinn, Am Buidh Aonach and Carn na Caim; Jack and Unna separately on Carn na Caim; Hodge on Meall Cuaich; MacRobert and Jeffrey skied on very hard snow on Carn na Caim; Harrison and Osborne were on Meall Cuaich and Uirceanach; Bell did three Ben-y-Gloes; Williams and Horsburgh did Carn na Caim and some ski-ing.

NEWTONMORE.

THE larger Newtonmore Section enjoyed itself on many hills between Ben Alder, Creag Meaghaidh, and Cairngorm. They were very comfortable at the Balavil Arms. There, too, the Meet started on 28th December and ended in vile weather on 3rd January. Nineteen members and 6 guests were present at one time or another, including Messrs T. Aitken, J. F. Anton, G. Arthur, J. W. Baxter, I. G. Charleson, W. E. Forde, A. H. Hendry, K. K. Hunter, R. G. Inglis, J. Y. MacDonald, J. E. MacEwen, R. W. Martin, G. Peat, Alan Smith, J. M'K. Stewart, E. C. Thomson, T. E. Thomson, H. W. Turnbull, R. D. Walton (members); and E. R. Hunter, R. G. L. Miller, W. A. Nicol, A. Read, D. G. Turnbull and T. M. Wedderburn (guests).

A brief list of expeditions runs as follows:—

28*th December*.—MacDonald and Read—Creag an Loin (1,788 feet).

29*th December*.—MacDonald and Miller—Ben Alder; MacEwen, Arthur, Read and Turnbull, Jun., did A'Chailleach and Carn Sgulain, Professor Turnbull only did Chailleach; Martin, E. C. Thomson and T. E. Thomson were on Geal Charn.

30*th December*.—MacDonald, Turnbulls, Read and Miller—Creag Meaghaidh; Baxter on A'Chailleach and Sgulain; MacEwen, Martin, T. E. Thomson and Alan Smith on Ben Alder; E. C. Thomson and Arthur on Geal Charn by Glen Markie.

31st *December*.—MacEwen, E. C. Thomson and Arthur on Creag Pitridh; Martin, T. E. Thomson, two Hunters, Anton, Inglis,



E. C. Thomson

BEINN FHADA
The N.E. Cliffs of Sgurr a' Choire Ghairbh

Walton, Nicol, Baxter, and Smith on Carn Dearg, Carn Ban and Carn Ballach; MacDonald, the Turnbulls, Read and Miller on Marcaonach.

1*st January* 1947.—MacDonald, the Turnbulls, Read and Miller on Creag Pitridh; E. C. Thomson and Arthur on Carns Dearg and Ban; Alan Smith, Anton, Walton, Nicol, Baxter, E. R. Hunter, Inglis, T. E. Thomson and Wedderburn on Carn Ban Mor and Sgoran Dubh (K. K. Hunter was lame and went only to the foot of the hill); Charleson, Stewart and Forde attained only 3,000 feet on Ben Alder owing to storm.

2*nd January* 1947.—H. W. Turnbull, Read and Charleson on Ben Alder; Anton and Forde on Carn Sgulain and A'Chailleach; Walton and Nicol on Marcaonach, Udlamain and Sgairneach Mhor; Stewart, Hendry and Peat—Cairngorm by the Fiacaill Ridge.

3*rd January* 1947.—Anton and Aitken retreated from Creag Pitridh; Hendry and Peat from Geal Charn (foul weather).

EASTER MEET, 1946—KINTAIL.

AN adequate record of the Meet is not easy, spread out as it was in time and place—Kintail Lodge Hotel and annexe, the Hostel at Rattachan, and a contingent at the C.I.C. Hut on Ben Nevis, although the Fort William Section was still-born. The weather was excellent on the whole, interspersed with heavy showers, but the views were good and sometimes magnificent. There was practically no snow on the tops, though the weather was cold. The hotel was excellent, and Mr and Mrs Chisholm with their staff spared no effort for our comfort. The proceedings were enlivened by a burglary. A cyclist, after lunching at the Hotel on Sunday, went off with a camera of Unna's and some articles of Hodge's. Unna promptly got the assistance of Mr Chisholm and a constable, pursued and overtook the cyclist, recovered the articles, and arrested him.

The preliminary to the Meet was the arrival of Unna on 13th April, and he planned to end up the proceedings on the 27th. Dow, Andrews and Mackay arrived on the 13th, the Frasers on the 15th, but it would be more appropriate to date the Meet from the arrival of the President and the others on the 17th. The atmosphere

of the Meet is best described in the lyrics of the official scribe as follows :—

When Spring in all her freshness calls,
What city sirens can prevail ?
We haste where loch and hill enthralls
To far Kintail.

The galaxy of mountain peaks,
The glories that can never fail,
You'll find them there where Nature speaks
In far Kintail.

Members present were : The President, Alex. Harrison, and Messrs J. L. Aikman, F. D. Campbell Allen, C. G. Andrews, J. W. Baxter, W. Blackwood, J. Dow, R. Elton, P. A. Fletcher, B. S. Fraser, D. J. Fraser, R. L. Gwilt, E. W. Hodge, J. S. M. Jack, R. Jeffrey, J. N. Ledingham, W. N. Ling, D. Mackay, G. G. MacPhee, A. G. Murray, E. C. Thomson, T. E. Thomson, P. J. H. Unna, and R. D. Walton ; and Messrs D. Campbell Allen, J. Gwilt, —. O'Grady, and A. V. Small (guests).

The expeditions were approximately as follows :—

14*th April*.—Unna—a ridge on The Sisters ; Dow, Andrews, Mackay—Ben Attow ; O'Grady—Ben Sgriol from Glenelg.

15*th April*.—Dow, Andrews, Mackay—The Saddle ; the Frasers—Ghlas Bheinn.

16*th April*.—Unna—Ben Attow ; Dow, Andrews, Mackay—Ben Attow ; the Frasers—Mam Soul and Carn Eighe by Glen Lichd.

17*th April*.—Andrews, Mackay and Frasers—The Five Sisters.

18*th April*.—O'Grady, Thomsons and Blackwood—Sgùrr na Sgine ; Harrison, Small, Fletcher, Mackay and Elton—The Saddle ; Unna—two of the Sisters.

19*th April*.—Ling and Unna—Sgùrr a' Gharg Gharaidh and Sgùrr Lead nan Each ; MacPhee, Murray and the Frasers—The Saddle ; Mackay and O'Grady—Rattachan ; the Campbell Allens—The Saddle ; Harrison, Jeffrey, Small, Gwilts, Aikman, Baxter and Jack—Ben Attow ; O'Grady—Attow ; the Thomsons and Blackwood—Maol Chinn Dearg.

20*th April*.—Ling, Unna, Harrison, Small, Jeffrey, Gwilt, Fletcher, Elton and Jack to the Falls of Glomach, while Aikman and Baxter also did this and returned over Ghlas Bheinn ; Ledingham, Walton, Allen—Creag nan Damh, Sgùrr na Sgine, and Faochag ; the Frasers reversed these peaks ; MacPhee, Murray—Ben Attow ; O'Grady—The Saddle and Sgùrr na Creige.

21*st April*.—Ling, Allen, Walton—Ben Attow ; the Thomsons,

Blackwood, O'Grady—Ghlas Bheinn; Aikman, Baxter, Ledingham—Ben Sgriol by its north ridge; Harrison, Jeffrey, Elton, MacPhee, Murray, the Gwilts and Small—Sgriol from Arnisdale.

The following members and guests were present at Rattachan Youth Hostel:—

Members.—J. F. Hamilton, Douglas Scott, D. McKellar, T. D. McKinnon, J. R. Wood, D. Aitken, J. R. Marshall, Drummond Henderson, D. J. Fraser, B. S. Fraser, W. H. Murray.

Guests.—J. K. W. Dunn and R. V. Waterhouse, both J.M.C.S.

The following mountains were climbed: Sgùrr nan Ceathreamhnan, Beinn Fhada, The Five Sisters, The Saddle, Sgùrr a' Bhealaich Dheirg, Maol Chinn Dearg, Faochag, Sgùrr na Sgine, Creag nan Damh, Sron a Choire Ghairbh, Creag a Mhaim, Druim Shionnach, Sgùrr Leac nan Each, Sgùrr na Creige.

GLENCOE MEET—CLACHAIG SECTION—June 1946.

Joint Meet of the Club and the Alpine Club.

2*nd June.*—Booth, Donkin, and Pointon-Taylor on one rope, Dadson, MacPhee and Campbell Allen on the second—Buachaille Etive Mor, Crowberry Ridge. MacPhee and Campbell Allen did all the tops.

3*rd June.*—MacPhee, Wood, Pointon-Taylor and Campbell Allen—Buachaille Etive Beag.

5*th June.*—MacPhee, Wood, Coningsby and Campbell Allen—Beinn Fhionnlaidh. MacPhee did Sgòr na h-Ulaidh as well.

6*th June.*—Finzi and Campbell Allen—Meall a Bhuiridh; MacPhee, Dadson and Pointon-Taylor—Meall a Bhuiridh and Clach Leathad.

7*th June.*—Campbell Allen—Ben Starav, Meall Cruidh, Glas Bheinn Mhor, Stob Coir' an Albannaich.

8*th June.*—Pointon-Taylor and Campbell Allen—Aonach Eagach from Am Bodach to Stob Coire Leith.

9*th June.*—Campbell Allen—Bidean Nam Bian; all tops except Stob Coire nan Lochan.

There was also a Kingshouse Section of which the Editor has received no report. The above record is from F. D. Campbell Allen. —Ed.

J. LOGAN AIKMAN.

J. LOGAN AIKMAN became Assistant Secretary in 1931 and Secretary in 1935. He has continued as Secretary until the Annual Meeting in 1946. Secretarial duties in general show a tendency to increase in our times, and the Scottish Mountaineering Club is no exception. The average member of the Club probably has little conception of the amount of work performed by the Club's Honorary Secretary, and Logan Aikman performed it meticulously and efficiently. During the war he continued to carry on the work in spite of the pressure of his own professional work and Home Guard duties, and it was only after he had seen the Club safely through the war period that he handed on his mantle to Ian Charleson. The Club is deeply indebted to him.

Logan Aikman has been a very active climber from a period several years before he joined the Club, and those strenuous days are not likely to be forgotten by his companions in them. There must be few indeed of our own mountains that he does not know, and he knows others in distant parts of the world. It was no surprise when he took the secretaryship in his stride also. The extent of the duties which he thus quietly shouldered would in many men have somewhat quenched their ardour for the hills, but it has not been so with Aikman, as the records of the Club Meets testify. Now that he is free again, we look forward to continued comradeship with him and a redoubled vigour.

A. HARRISON and J. W. BAXTER.

THE CLUB AND THE WAR.

Foreword by the President.

IT has fallen to me to write a short note to accompany the List of our Members who served in the war. The problem is who should be included and who excluded.

I looked through the returns which have been completed by our members (but not by any means all), and I marvelled at the wonderful service given by our members both military and civilian.

I pondered as to whose names should appear, and then I turned to the list compiled after the 1914-1918 war. The compiler had difficulty then, and that war was not so " total " as this last one. In that war at least, most civilians were in little danger, which is more than could be said of the last one.

After consideration it seemed to me that we should follow the same rule; that is, to confine the list to the names of all those who joined the Forces in a full-time capacity and who were members of the Club at the end of the war. In the last war the Club lost thirteen members. Happily, in this war the numbers were less. We shall miss on the hills the magnetic personality of Sandy Wedderburn who in the war, as in civil life, gave of his very best without stint, and William Lawson who, although a recent member of our Club, was one of the founders of the Etchachan Club and an enthusiastic climber and ski-er.

At the last Club Dinner our Vice-President, Stuart Jack, expressed our feelings in verses which he added to the Club Song:

You are welcome home to-day
Who those years have been away.
You have done what men can dare
On the sea, on land, in air;
Swamp and jungle, ice and sand
You have faced to save this land
When you go up to the mountains in the snow.

You have faced the bullets' hail,
And mine, and bomb, and gale.
They have dropped you from the skies
That peace might again arise.
Now you're back to take the lead,
With your youth and strength and speed,
When we go up to the mountains in the snow.

Member's Name.	Rank.	Unit and Service.	
Malcolm Aitken	Captain	H.L.I.	1939-1944.
Thomas Aitken	Major	H.L.I.	1939-1945.
James E. Bothwell	Trooper	1st Lothians and Border Yeomanry (R.A.C.)	1941-1945.
Ian M. Campbell	Major	H.Q. Special Air Service.	1939-1945.
Maurice H. Cooke, M.C.	Major	Royal Scots (8th Batt.)	1939-1945.
A. D. M. Cox	Major	R.A.	1940-1945.
Alastair L. Cram, M.C.	Major	R.A. Commandos; 2nd Special Air Service, Intelligence Corps; P.o.W. several times.	1939-
J. Campbell Davies, M.C. (T.D.)	Major	H.L.I.	1939-1945.
Arthur Dixon	Captain	R.E. (General Staff)	1940-1945.
Thomas C. Donald	Lieut.-Com.	R.N.V.R.	1940-1945.
Ronald Gibson	Major	R.A.	1939-1945.
John W. Glen	Flying Officer	R.A.F.V.R.	1939-
A. Leslie Hay	Flying Officer	R.A.F.	1942-1945.
Alan Horne	2nd Lieut.	R.A.	1939-1940.
D. R. A. Hotchkis	Captain	2nd Cameronians	1940-1946.
D. W. Howe	Major	Black Watch (att. Lovat Scouts)	1940-1945.
Kenneth K. Hunter	Flying Officer	R.A.F. (Met. Service)	1944-1945.
R. M. Gall Inglis	Sergeant	Intelligence Corps.	1943-1946.
G. Gordon Jackson	Major	R.A.S.C.	1939-1945.
Kenneth G. Jackson	Major	R.A.	1939-1945.
William Lawson	...	R.A.F. Missing, killed 7th Nov. 1944. *See* Obituary in *Journal*.	1939-1945.
William F. M'Allum	Flight-Lieut.	R.A.F.	1939-1945.
J. E. MacEwen	Captain	A. and S.H.	1939-1945.
J. E. McIntyre	Com. (S.)	R.N.V.R.	1939-1945.
James S. Maclean	Captain	R.A.	1939-1945.
Kenneth Graeme M'Lean C.B., Legion of Merit (U.S.), Officer of Legion of Honour and Croix de Guerre (French)	Major-Gen.	Service in Staff (late R.E.)	1939-
W. Ross M'Lean, V.D.	Commander	R.N.V.R. (Comb. Oper.)	1939-1945.

Member's Name.	Rank.	Unit and Service.	
J. D. M'Lennan, M.B.E.	Major	R.A.O.C.	1939-1945.
James H. C. MacLeod	Major	Searchlight Regt. (A.A. Regt.)	1939-1942.
James B. Miller	Lieutenant	Searchlight Regt.	1939-1945
Ronald W. B. Morris	Lieutenant.	R.N.V.R.	1940-1944.
J. William R. Murray	Squad. Ldr.	R.A.F.	1939-1945.
Iain H. Ogilvie	Major	R.E.	1939-1945.
J. P. Pattullo	Major	Royal Scots	1939-1944.
J. A. Ramsay	Major	R.A.	1939-1945.
Jock M. S. Roberts	Flight-Lieut.	R.A.F.	1940-1945.
D. W. Robinson, T.D.	Major	H.L.I.	1939-1945.
T. G. Robinson, O.B.E.	Lieut.-Col.	Glasgow Highlanders	1939-1945.
George S. Roger	Flight-Lieut.	R.A.F.V.R.	1941-1946.
George R. Roxburgh	Major	R.A.	1939-1945.
R. N. Rutherfurd	Captain	R.A.M.C.	1942-
Norman Sandeman	Major	R.A.	1939-1945.
Douglas Scott	Signalman	Royal Signals	1939-1945.
Rev. Alan G. Smith	C.F.	R.A.Ch.D.	1939-1945.
George R. Speirs, V.D.	Commander	R.N.V.R.	1939-1946.
W. B. Speirs, V.D.	Com. (S.)	R.N.V.R.	1939-1945.
Campbell R. Steven	Captain	Intelligence Corps, Commandos	1939-1945.
Colin M. Steven	Captain	R.A.M.C.	1940-1942.
Gavin D. Stewart, D.S.C.	Lieut.-Com.	R.N.V.R.	1941-1946.
Wilfred A. Stewart	Ty/Major	Black Watch	1940-
T. Evershed Thomson	Flight-Lieut.	R.A.F.	1943-1946.
T. Harry Tilly	Flying Officer	R.A.F.	1941-1946.
George F. Todd	Com. (S.B.)	R.C.N.V.R.	1939-1945.
Ramsay N. Traquair	Major	R.A.M.C.	1942-1946.
William Waddell	Captain	R.A.C.	1939-1945.
E. A. M. Wedderburn	Lieut.-Col.	Lovat Scouts *See* Obituary, *Journal*, 1945.	1939-1944.
J. D. B. Wilson	Flying Officer	R.A.F.	1941-1946.
W. M'E. Younger, D.S.O.	Lieut.-Col.	Royal Scots.	1939-1945.

List of those whose names have appeared in former lists published in the *Journal*, but who have not submitted any final particulars:—

Member's Name.	Rank.	Unit and Service.
W. J. C. Ainslie	Colonel	King's African Rifles, 1940-1945. Administrator, Tripolitania, 1945.
J. F. Anton	Lieutenant	R.N.R.

Member's Name.	Rank.	Unit and Service.
George Arthur	Major	R.E.
P. D. Baird	Major	Royal Canadian Artillery.
L. St C. Bartholomew	Major	Pioneers.
Edwin M. Davidson	No particulars	R.N.
J. Dawson	Major	R.A.M.C.
Edward Elton	No particulars	Prisoner of war, 1944.
J. M. L. Gavin	Major	R.E.
C. C. Gorrie	Major	R.E.
R. J. Hedderwick	No particulars	
J. L. Innes	No particulars	R.N.V.R.
D. M. Isles	No particulars.	
I. G. Jack	2nd Lieut.	R.A. (S/L).
D. P. Levack	Lieut.-Col.	R.A.M.C. T.A. Prisoner of war.
J. W. Levack	Major	R.A.M.C.
I. W. M'Innes	Lieutenant	Fife and Forfar Yeomanry (R.A.C.).
R. M. M'Intyre	Gunner	R.A.
W. M. MacKenzie	Captain	Commandos.
Ralph S. Peill	Flight-Lieut.	R.A.F.
J. Gordon Robinson	Paymaster Lt.	R.N.V.R.
D. G. Romanis	Major	R.A.
A. C. Russell	Captain	Gold Coast Local Forces.
J. Allan Steven	Trooper	North Bengal Mounted Rifles.

NOTES.

The Castles, Face Climb, Skye (Direct Route).

Messrs E. L. Wigham and C. E. Willes Johnson, on 30th May 1946, made a direct start to Shadbolt and MacLaren's route on the southerly buttress of An Caisteal from Harta Corrie. Instead of climbing up the line *b—b*, of "Skye Guide," p. 67, and traversing downward below the overhanging gully pitch to the square platform of the pioneers' original description in the "Sligachan Climbs Book," they climbed direct from the bottom of the gully to the platform, ascending a short vertical wall on left of gully, where a large rock splinter projects from the wall. This avoids an uninteresting and unpleasant detour.

The Waterpipe Gully—Skye.

Mr Donald B. McIntyre reports a climb by Group Capt. Lord Malcolm Douglas-Hamilton and himself up the Waterpipe Gully on 19th May 1946, after three weeks of drought, in three and a quarter hours, afterwards following main ridge to Sgurr Dearg, traversing the Inaccessible and returning to Glen Brittle. Total time Sligachan

to Brittle was ten hours. The upper section of the 80-foot pitch was found to be loose and almost unjustifiable. The hardest pitch was a short one, just before the bend of the gully.

(In a recent circular of the Mountaineering Section of the Camping Club there is a highly detailed, pitch by pitch, account of the Water-pipe Gully, as it was considered that the " Skye Guide " did not give adequate detail. Some of us might consider that a little might well be left to the initiative of subsequent parties, especially where one cannot miss the gully!)

Coire Daimh—Glen Orchy.

(From *Lomond Mountaineering Club Journal*, Aug. 1946, p. 5.)

Mr A. Slack records a series of short, interesting climbs, partly in January and February and partly in July and October 1943. Altogether eight routes are described, from difficult to very difficult in standard, and their location is described on a sketch map on p. 8 of the *Lomond Mountaineering Club Journal*. All are located on either side of the S-shaped summit ridge of Ben Udlaidh (2,752 feet). Several gullies are very attractive in winter snow conditions, including one 300 feet long. Others, much shorter, make good rock climbs of the character of chimneys, walls, slabs (and notably a Coolin Ridge) with scrambles up to 80 feet in height.

Raeburn's Gully, Lochnagar.

The chief interest in Raeburn's Gully was, formerly, concentrated in the middle section (150 feet or thereby) and culminated at the double-cave pitch (70 feet), which Raeburn may have climbed in 1898 by way of his ice-axe hung from the upper edge. In later years ordinary tactics were sufficient, but the pitch lent such character to the climb as to make it possibly the most popular course on Lochnagar. The keystone of the pitch was a large overhanging mass, which projected from the right wall almost across the gully; above and below various jammed boulders went to the making of the two caves. The whole structure has now been swept away, as has the pitch below it, probably by a large rock-fall from above, leaving a number of smaller boulder pitches and a new difficulty in the shape of a wall climb of 15 feet a little above the original first pitch, which is intact. The wall is steep, wet and difficult, but may become easier as the bed of the gully fills up with debris from above. Apart from the wall, the gully now contains little of more than moderate difficulty. It has been climbed since the rock-fall by Dr W. T. Hendry (Cairngorm Club) and G. Ross on 14th September 1946. W. A. EWEN.

Cross Country: Loch Broom to Bonar Bridge.

Captains Bryan-Brown and Ashworth of Oxford report a west to east coast continuous walk, from the head of Loch Broom

(10 A.M., 19th April) to Bonar Bridge (5.15 A.M., 20th April), via summit of Ben Dearg (2.30 P.M.), Glenbeg (5.45 P.M.), Deanich Lodge (arr. 7.30 P.M., dep. 8.30 P.M.), Alladale (11 P.M.) and Amat Lodge (3 A.M.). After a fair forenoon, heavy sleet and rain, fortunately with a helping south-west wind, were experienced from about 2.30 to 8 P.M., improving to a mainly clear night with occasional light showers. Tracks gave good going as far as the saddle below Ben Dearg, and beyond Deanich Lodge, but intermittent high peat hags from Loch Prille almost to the lodge made progress slow and tiring. No bridge now exists just east of Deanich, but fording was possible at a shingly stretch about a quarter of a mile above the lodge. The walkers would be interested to know details of any other coast to coast walks.

The Six Cairngorms in a Day.

Messrs J. V. G. Durnin and J. B. Robertson of the Cairngorm Club climbed the six highest Cairngorms on a fine day on 22nd June 1946, taking twenty-two hours fifteen minutes from Loch Builg to Corrour Bothy. They did not hurry. Departure was at 11 P.M. on 21st June and times as follows: Ben Avon, 1.45 A.M.; Ben a Bhuird, 5.30; Cairn Gorm, 11.45; Ben Macdhui, 2.5 P.M.; Braeriach, 6; Cairn Toul, 7.45 and Corrour, 9.15 P.M.

Crowberry Tower, East Face.

Mr J. G. Robinson refers to the note on p. 349 of the 1946 issue of the *Journal*, and points out that the climb there reprinted from the Journal of the Lomond Mountaineering Club was originally described in our own *Journal* (19, 139), having been first climbed by Mr G. F. Todd and himself.

Scottish Climbing Clubs.

The Editor, as a result of the article on Scottish Climbing Clubs which appeared in the last issue of the *Journal*, has received welcome evidence of the continued and renewed activities of the clubs belonging to the Universities of Edinburgh and St Andrews. The former has been very active and has produced an interesting journal. Our own New Climbs Section bears witness to its activities. The St Andrews Club held Meets up to 1943, its then President, W. A. W. Russell, doing many good climbs. We are informed that the Club is now again active, Russell being expected back this year and reported to have done some climbing in the Kashmir Himalaya whilst on Army Service.

THE S.M.C. ABROAD.

MR T. H. TILLY has supplied an account of an excellent climb to the Himalayan Club, from which the following is an abstract:

An expedition to the Lhonak valley was planned for twenty-eight days' leave from Delhi, allowing twenty-one days from and back to Gangtok. The party consisted of Flight-Lieutenants G. Whittle and G. Crosby and Flying Officer T. H. Tilly, with Angtharkay and sixteen Sherpa porters. They left Gangtok on 13th July, reaching Thanggu (12,800 feet) on 17th. It was arranged to attempt Chomo Yumo (22,430 feet). Donkung (15,700 feet), a Tibetan village in Sikkim, was reached on 19th. Tilly had caught a chill, thus losing a day. Whittle suffered from mountain sickness and had to return on 22nd. Crosby climbed a peak of 18,250 feet. Tilly, with the porters, established a base camp at 17,700 feet, below the north-east Chanicmo glacier. On 23rd, glacier, steep rock and scree were ascended to pitch Camp I at 19,500 feet. On the 24th the north-east ridge was followed, with one diversion to avoid a steep buttress, to the topmost rocks where Camp II was pitched on scree at 21,000 feet. This camp suffered a severe squall of hail and snow for two hours.

Crosby felt weak on the 25th, so Tilly, Angtharkay and Sawa Thendup left at 8.15, ascended a long snow slope in cloud to the summit ridge, traversing it westwards over several subsidiary tops in poor visibility to the true summit at 12.30. Camp II was regained at 1.40 and then Camp I, the base camp being reached the following day.

Mr A. L. Cram writes: The war years did not afford much climbing apart from scrambles in Zululand, the Red Sea hills and wadis in the Western Desert. During escapes as a prisoner of war and intelligence work in Occupied Europe, the hills were always a sought-out refuge, and I passed many weeks among them, in Sicily, North, South and Central Italy, the Dolomites of the Brenner Pass area, the foothills of Bavaria and Austria and Jugoslavia, the wooded hills and forests of the Sudetenland, Moravia and Bohemia, and finally the Harz Mountains in Germany. Three or four times a knowledge of rock-climbing proved useful, particularly in descending some limestone precipices in Sicily. Some of these long and lonely journeys, sometimes of two or three weeks, and usually without map or compass, covering hundreds of miles of rough strange country, could not have been undertaken without the background of experience on the Scottish hills, where I learned to put my feet down and hold direction, and to poaching forays when I was a boy.

BOOKS AND JOURNALS.

NOW that the war is over the flood of mountaineering books and periodicals is back to its old volume and, in fact, making up for the long slack tide of recent years. We cannot review them all. We are mainly concerned with our own Scottish mountains, but we also owe some space to those authors and publishers who are kind enough to send us their books for review. For the best part we shall endeavour to list such other books as are likely to interest our members.

Books on Scottish Mountains.

1. " On Scottish Hills." By B. H. Humble. Chapman & Hall, 18s. 127 pp., 75 illus.
2. " Pictures and Memories." By Jane Inglis Clark.
3. " Tramping Scottish Hills." By W. Kersley Holmes. Eneas Mackay (Stirling), 8s. 6d.
4. " Unto the Hills." By Brenda G. Macrow. Illustrated by R. M. Adam. Oliver & Boyd, 15s.
5. " Climbing in Britain." By J. E. Q. Barford. Penguin Books.
6. (To be published in May) " Mountaineering in Scotland." By W. H. Murray. Dent's, 18s.
7. Mr Tom Weir will shortly have a book of Scottish mountain photographs published.

Those interested in the older pioneering days will delight in Mrs Clark's selection of the photographs of the late Dr W. Inglis Clark, past President and Secretary of the Club and pioneer of both Scottish climbing and Scottish mountain photography. The book has been out for some time, but may be difficult to obtain. There is a copy in the Club Library. Mr Humble has often contributed articles and illustrations to the *Journal*. In this book the text and illustrations are in perfect harmony and the whole production has the care-free spirit of the true mountaineer and wanderer. Where there are figures in the photographs we feel that they are really mountaineers and a part of the landscape: in other cases the Scottish Bens in winter are given a truly majestic and almost Himalayan aspect. Humble loves the hills, especially those of Arrochar and Glencoe. This book is essentially a photographic record, but it breaks fresh ground. It is a selection of the best from many years' experience of both climbing and mountain photography. That is why a few lines of text are sufficient to make the scene live for us as well as for the author. " Unto the Hills " is a short book of essays and verse beautifully illustrated, as we should expect, by Mr Adam. " Tramping Scottish Hills " is a racy narrative of personal reminiscence. " Climbing in Britain " is edited for the British Mountaineering Council by Mr Barford. It is a most useful book on climbing technique, compact

and cheap. Climbing is used in the English sense of the word, so that the emphasis is on rock-climbing technique, although there is also a chapter on snow and ice work. The chapter on First Aid and Rescue is useful, but the Scottish part of " Where to Climb " would be better if some indication were given of the places to go to for different types of climbing, winter or summer, without troubling to list individual mountains.

We are sure that Mr Murray's " Mountaineering in Scotland " will be worth reading and worth buying, and that it will be competently produced. As *Journal* readers know, Mr Murray will be describing the best and most difficult expeditions on Scottish mountains, both in summer and winter—especially the latter—and he tells his story in such a way that we go with him up the tenuous ladder of ice pitches with the issue still in doubt until we emerge upon the moonlit summit. Mr Weir, as illustrations in this number prove, is a first-class photographer, and knows the Scottish mountains very well.

Other Books.

1. " Mountain Holidays." By Janet Adam Smith. Dent's, 15s. 186 pp., 32 illus.
2. " In the Rain and the Sun." By L. S. Amery. Hutchinson, 21s. 251 pp., 34 illus.
3. " Mountain Prospect." By R. Scott Russell. Chatto & Windus, 18s.
4. " When Men and Mountains Meet." By H. W. Tilman. Cambridge University Press, 15s.
5. " The Delectable Mountains." By Douglas Busk. Hodder & Stoughton, 21s.
6. " Mountain Photography." By C. D. Milner. Focal Press, 19s. 6d.

Of the eight chapters in " Mountain Holidays " only two deal with Scottish hills, all the rest being taken up with Alpine climbing, mainly in the Graian Alps, where the authoress also went ski-ing in winter. The 32 illustrations at the end include five Scottish ones, including Suilven and Cir Mhor. On the whole I like the Scottish chapters best. There is more consecutive action and atmosphere and not so much irrelevant detail, and none of the crowding of references to many expeditions which often tends to obscure the Alpine narrative. One asks why the authoress so seldom exercised her climbing ability on the harder problems, both summer and winter, of her own native hills.

Mr L. S. Amery has distinction both as statesman and mountaineer. So one is kept interested throughout the 250 pages of this book, and perhaps most of all by his climb on Mount Amery of the Canadian Rockies (10,940 feet). The thirty-four plates are good. A great deal of the record is Alpine, but the book is so brightly written and dis-

cursive that it is difficult to review. Those who enjoyed " Days of Fresh Air " will enjoy this book also.

Mr Milner's book on Mountain Photography is well written and beautifully illustrated, both with half-tones and with diagrams. His range of subjects is immense, and the fruit of many years of mountaineering and photographic experience. It should be very helpful to our photographers. " Mountain Prospect " is a well-written book of climbing experience, mostly in New Zealand and the Karakoram.

Journals.

Of these we have received many. Of the Scottish ones we find *Open Air in Scotland* (summer and winter 1946, McLellan, Glasgow, 2s.) very readable, a general review of open-air activities, with several good articles on the mountains and others on the S.Y.H.A., camping, boating, yachting, etc. *New Scot* is more concerned with all-round Scottish planning problems, with a nationalist flavour. We are pleased to acknowledge the interesting cyclostyled periodicals of the *Lomond Mountaineering Club* (a regular issue) and the appearance of a similar one from the *Edinburgh University Mountaineering Club*. The L.S.C.C. Record shows the activities of the Ladies very concisely as usual.

The following other British Journals have been received for the Library: *Alpine Journal* (May and Nov. 1946); *Rucksack Club Journal* (1946); *Climbers' Club Journal* (1946); *British Ski Year Book* (1946); *Oxford Mountaineering* (1947). Special note may be made of *Journal of Glaciology*, as it is interested in the problems of British snow and ice, which really mean those of Scottish mountains. The Glaciological Society is interested in collecting any useful information about the distribution of Scottish snow and ice. We have also received one or two copies of " Weather," issued under the auspices of the Meteorological Society.

The following other Journals have also been received: *Appalachia* (Dec. 1946); *Sierra Club Bulletins*; *Harvard Mountaineering Club Bulletin* (1947); *Mazama* (Dec. 1946); *Canadian Alpine Club Journal* (1946); *American Alpine Club Journal* (1946); *Tararua* (New Zealand). All these we gratefully acknowledge.

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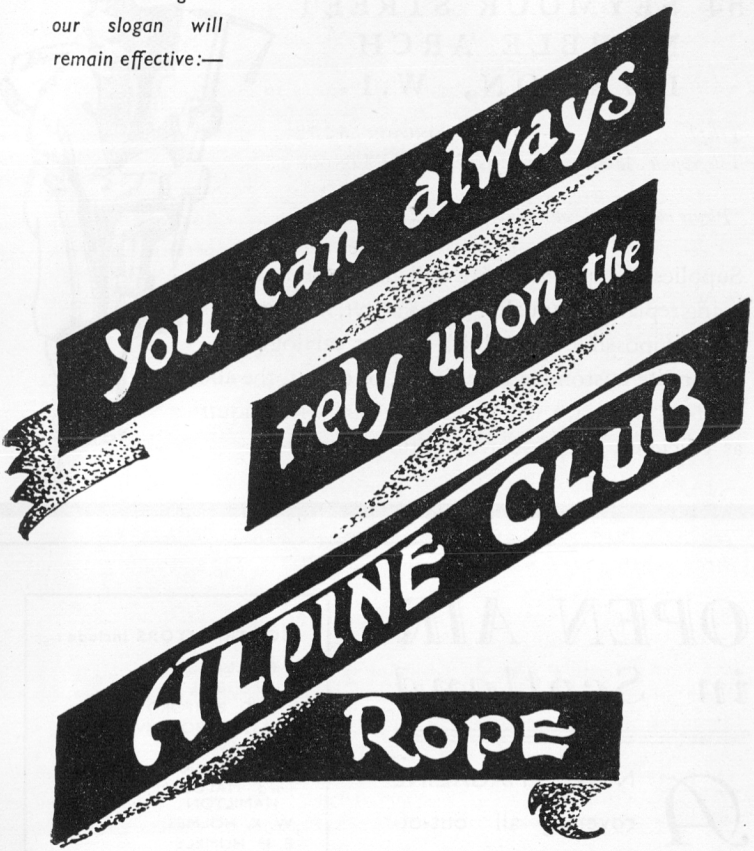

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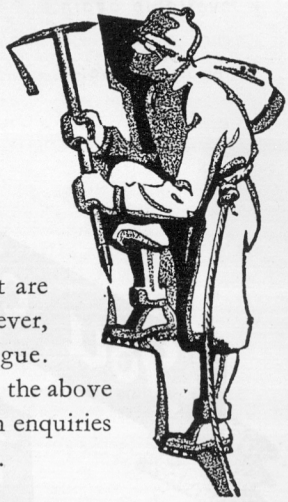

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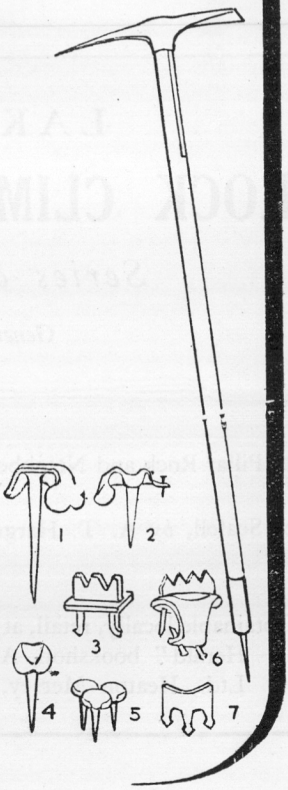

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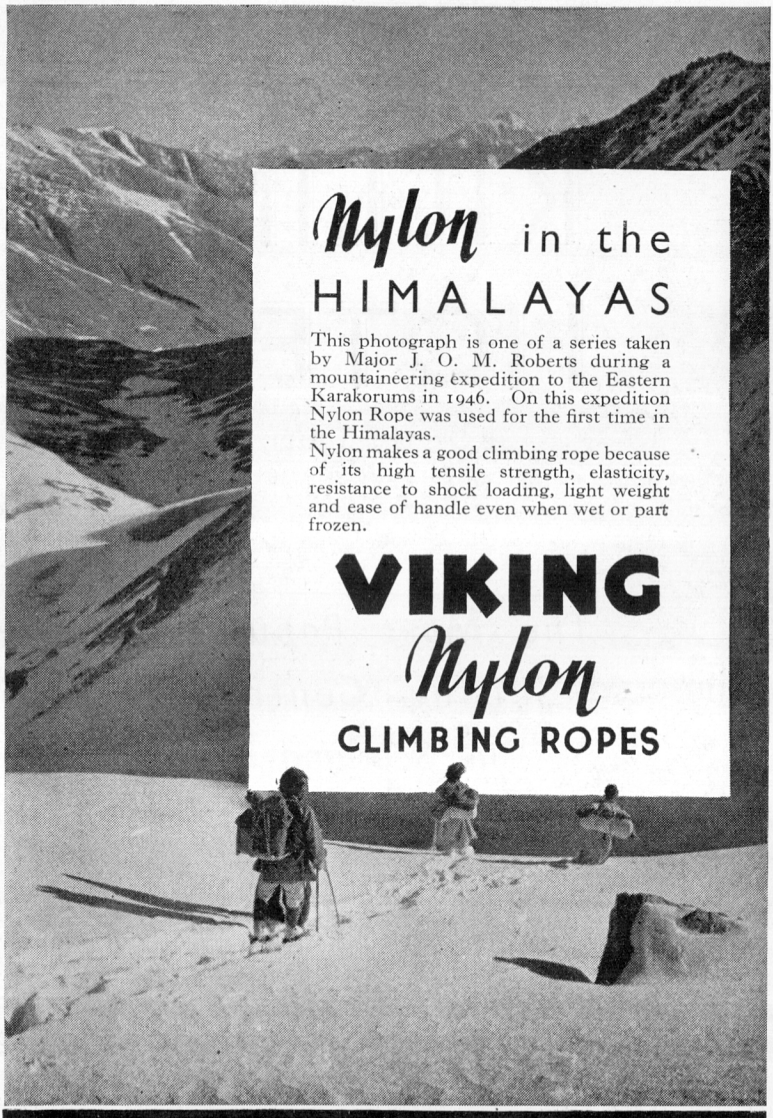
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