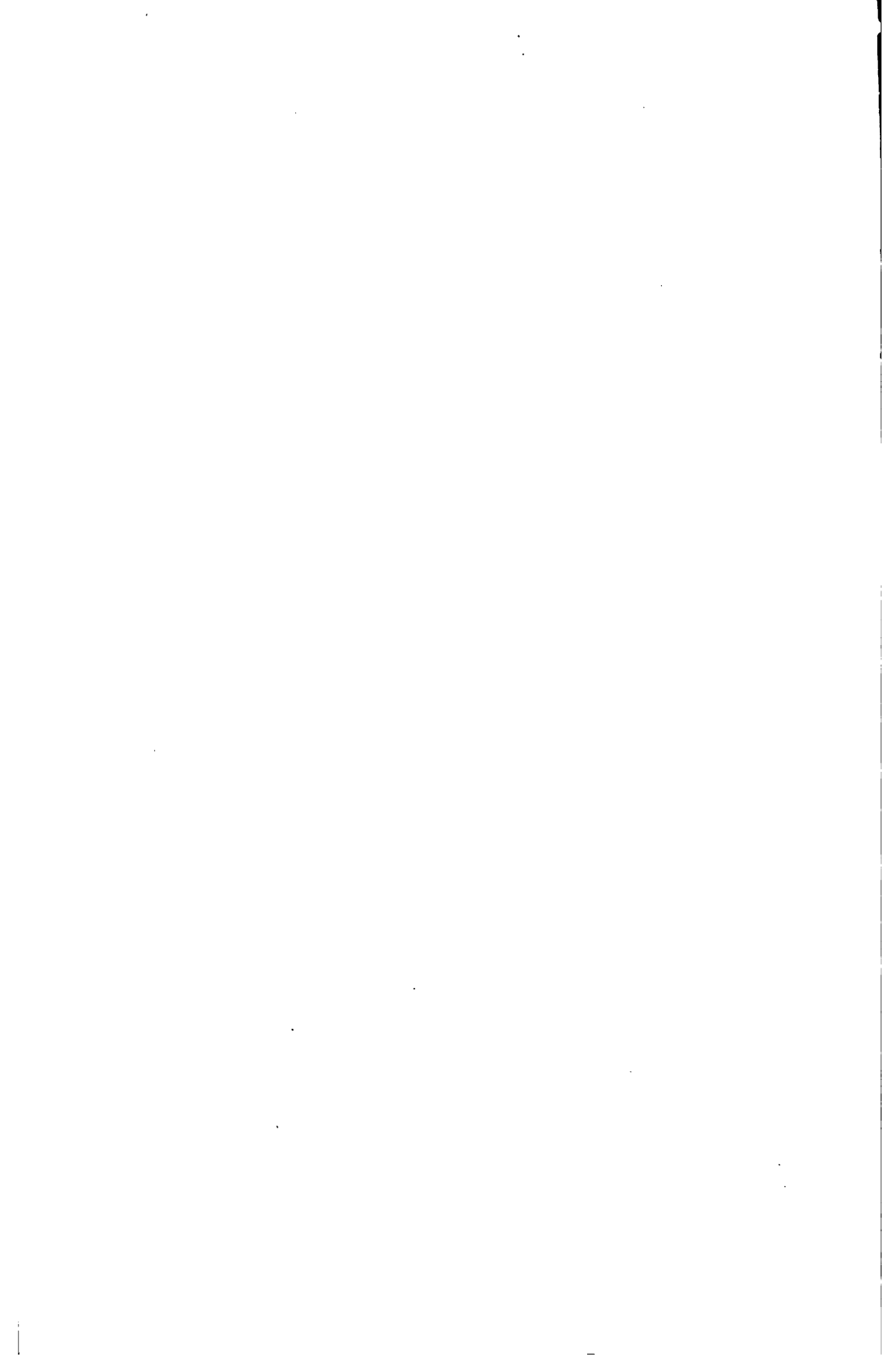


THE SCOTTISH  
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.



# THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.

EDITED BY  
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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A Purely Climbing Ideal. <i>By J. H. Bell</i>	I
The Cliffs of Corrie Arder. <i>By Harold Raeburn</i>	4
Arran. <i>By F. S. Goggs</i>	12
Ben Lui Revisited. <i>By W. Douglas</i>	95
Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour. <i>By W. Inglis Clark</i>	139
Three on the Centre Grid of the Trident Buttress. <i>By J. Inglis Clark</i>	149
The Rose Ridge on Sgoran Dubh. <i>By W. A. Morrison</i>	152
Aquatic Sport on Ben Nevis. <i>By W. R. Rickmers</i>	157
Random Musings. <i>By Stair A. Gillon</i>	187
The Cairngorms from Deeside. <i>By James MacLay</i>	192
In the North-West Highlands in February. <i>By Stair A. Gillon</i>	229
Stuchd an Lochain and the Upper Part of Glen Lyon. <i>By F. S. Goggs</i>	235
Scottish Snow. <i>By Harold Raeburn</i>	285
Only a Beautiful Day on the Hills. <i>By A. Ernest Maylard</i>	299
The Crowberry Ridge of Buchaille Etive Mor. <i>By James MacLay</i>	304
The Mystery of Crois. <i>By W. Inglis Clark</i>	309
A Bit of the Berwickshire Coast and its Birds. <i>By W. Douglas</i>	313
S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK :—	
Eastern Cairngorms	41
The Lochnagar Group	49
The Braes of Angus	124
Mount Blair	166
The Cairnwell	167
Beinn a' Ghlo	172
Ben Vrackie	173
Beinn Dearg and Carn a' Chlamain	174
An Sgarsoch and Carn an Fhidleir	176
Gaick Forest	177
Sron a Choire Ghairbh	197
Gulvain	198
The Streaps	199

	PAGE
S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK— <i>continued.</i>	
Sgor Choileam - - - - -	200
The Sgor na Ciche Group - - - - -	202
Meall Bhuide and Luinne Bheinn - - - - -	205
Ladhar Beinn - - - - -	206
Ben Sgroil - - - - -	209
The Saddle and Sgurr na Sgine - - - - -	258
Sgurr a' Mhaoraich - - - - -	260
Gleourach and Spidean Mialach - - - - -	261
Clunie Forest - - - - -	262
Sgurr Fhuaran - - - - -	266
Sgurr a' Bhealaich Dheirg - - - - -	268
The A' Chralaig Group - - - - -	270
A' Ghlas Bheinn - - - - -	273
Beinn Fhada - - - - -	273
Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan - - - - -	275
Mam Sodhail - - - - -	277
Sgurr na Lapaich - - - - -	279
Sgurr a' Choir Ghlais - - - - -	320
Maoile Lunndaich - - - - -	322
Bidean an Eoin Deirg - - - - -	323
Lurg Mhor - - - - -	324
Morusg - - - - -	325
Sgurr a' Mhuilinn - - - - -	326

## ILLUSTRATIONS :—

Corrie Arder - - - - -	<i>To face</i>	4
Brodict - - - - -	"	12
Glen Sannox - - - - -	"	16
Map of Arran - - - - -	<i>Between</i>	18, 19
Cir Mhor and Ceum na Caillich - - - - -	<i>To face</i>	30
Lochnagar - - - - -	"	50
The Cliffs of Lochnagar - - - - -	"	64
Ben Lui - - - - -	"	95
Ben Cruachan from top of Ben Lui - - - - -	"	96
Aviemore, Easter 1904 - - - - -	"	110
Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour - - - - -	"	139
The Glencoe Mountains - - - - -	"	140
N.E. Ridge of Aonach Beag - - - - -	"	142
Below the Cornices of Aonach Beag - - - - -	"	144
The Ben Nevis Group from Corpach - - - - -	"	148
The "Trident" of Carn Dearg, Ben Nevis - - - - -	"	150
Skiing—On the Practice Ground - - - - -	"	158
" How not to do it " - - - - -	"	160
A Long Spoor - - - - -	"	162
The Alpine Ski - - - - -	"	164
The Head of Loch Nevis - - - - -	"	187

ILLUSTRATIONS—*continued*.

PAGE

The Rose Ridge from Second Bothy	-	-	<i>To face</i>	196
The East End of Loch Morar	-	-	"	202
Beinn Fhada Cliffs from Meall a' Bhealaich	-	-	"	229
Loch Quoich looking West to Sgurr a' Mhaoraich	-	-	"	260
Hills North of Cluaine Inn	-	-	"	262
Cluaine Forest Hills	-	-	"	264
Sgurr Ouran and Loch Duich	-	-	"	266
A' Chrallaig from West End of Loch Affric	-	-	"	270
Mullach Fraoch Choire from Glen Affric	-	-	"	272
Ben Attow from Altbeath in Glen Affric	-	-	"	274
Glissading	-	-	"	292
Scottish Snow	-	-	"	296
Sgurr Alasdair from Sgurr Dubh	-	-	"	300
Crowberry Ridge	-	-	-	305
Narnain from Crois	-	-	<i>To face</i>	310
The Pinnacle of Crois	-	-	"	312
The Monar Hills from the East	-	-	-	321

MOUNTAINEERING NOTES:—

Arran	-	-	-	-	-	82, 87
Ben Bhuidhe and Beinn nan Aighean	-	-	-	-	-	282
Ben Chonzie on Ski	-	-	-	-	-	133
Ben Lomond	-	-	-	-	-	87
Ben Nevis	-	-	-	-	-	86, 219
"    Carn Dearg	-	-	-	-	-	179
"    N.E. Buttress	-	-	-	-	-	180
"    in August	-	-	-	-	-	220
Ben Starav	-	-	-	-	-	330
Beuchaille Etive Mor	-	-	-	-	-	87
Braeriach	-	-	-	-	-	332
Cairngorms	-	-	-	-	-	182
Cir Mhor and the Sannox Ridges	-	-	-	-	-	184
Clach Glas	-	-	-	-	-	328
Fairy Knoll, Loch Fyne	-	-	-	-	-	329
Glencoe	-	-	-	-	-	86
Glen Finnan and Loch Aylort Hills	-	-	-	-	-	134
Kingshouse Hotel, Glencoe	-	-	-	-	-	136
Meall Bhuiridh	-	-	-	-	-	283
Nails for Climbing Boots	-	-	-	-	-	283
Ordnance Survey Map of Skye	-	-	-	-	-	137
Parr, Robert Kerr	-	-	-	-	-	185
S.M.C. abroad in 1903	-	-	-	-	-	79
S.M.C. abroad in 1904	-	-	-	-	-	216
Sgurr nan Gillean	-	-	-	-	-	84
Sgurr Ruadh and Coire Lair	-	-	-	-	-	221
Skiing	-	-	-	-	-	185, 223

	PAGE
<b>MOUNTAINEERING NOTES—continued.</b>	
Sligachan Inn - - - - -	136
Sligachan Climbers' Book - - - - -	137
Sron Creise - - - - -	181
Yorkshire Ramblers' Club - - - - -	137
 <b>REVIEWS AND NOTICES :—</b>	
Stutfield and Collie's Climbs and Exploration in the Canadian Rockies - - - - -	92
Slingsby's Norway, the Northern Playground - - - - -	92
Geikie's Geology of North Arran, &c. - - - - -	92
Baker's Moors, Craggs, and Caves of the High Peak - - - - -	92
Harker's Tertiary Igneous Rocks of Skye - - - - -	224
Smith's Pentland Hills, Their Paths and Passes - - - - -	226
Kilgour's Twenty Years on Ben Nevis - - - - -	333
 <b>CORRESPONDENCE :—</b>	
Life Membership Subscription - - - - -	88, 138, 332
 <b>PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB :—</b>	
Fifteenth Annual General Meeting and Dinner - - - - -	73
S.M.C. Library and Club Room - - - - -	75, 121, 213, 255
Lantern Slide Collection - - - - -	78
New Year Meet at Fort-William, 1904 - - - - -	100
Easter Meet at Aviemore, 1904 - - - - -	110
Sixteenth Annual General Meeting and Dinner - - - - -	210
New Year Meet at Loch Awe, 1905 - - - - -	249
Easter Meet at Sligachan, 1905 - - - - -	251
Easter Meet at Kingshouse, 1905 - - - - -	252



# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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No. 43.

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## A PURELY CLIMBING IDEAL.

BY J. H. BELL.

IT is well known to all members of our Club, that we are divided into two camps and ranked under two banners—Salvationist and Ultramontane. For a time, and especially at dinner, as Dr Almond observed, it might have been thought that the Ultramontane was the predominant partner, but of late the warlike spirit of the Salvation Army has been aroused. Many and furious have been the assaults on the Ultramontane position. "Endless dissection of the unhappy points of the compass," "O.H.," and such phrases, have become part of the conversational stock-in-trade of the Club, so that now it takes some audacity to own oneself, in spirit at least, an Ultramontane, and to write in our *Journal* from the purely climbing point of view. These remarks do not introduce an account of any peculiarly hazardous or "overhanging" bit of climbing, but only an attempt to explain what, in the writer's opinion, gives the keenest of climbing pleasures.

Mummery, the leader and spokesman of all the Ultramontane clan, has repudiated the suggestion, that because a man enjoys climbing for its own sake, he must be dull to the more subtle pleasures that the mountains have to offer, and he has shown by his own eloquent words how certainly both were combined in himself. One point may be admitted, that the keenest æsthetic and climbing pleasures do

not run absolutely together in point of time. When a man needs all the mountain knowledge that he has, and all his skill and muscle to take him up the next few feet, he is not likely at that moment to pay much attention, even although the sun may be setting in a flood of red and gold over the sea within his view. If at the last hole in a game of golf a man is putting for a half, he won't at that moment think of the ever-changing sounds and sights of the sea, or of the cloud-shadow that may then be moving across the hill on the opposite side of the loch. Yet who ever heard it advanced that when he goes out on the links he should make sure of a less absorbing occupation, or his æsthetic nature will be stunted. The great charm of mountaineering is that its appeal is so various. There is an opportunity for purely athletic pleasure, and even for the enjoyment of such dull things as topography or mathematics, alongside of the highest emotional and intellectual feelings of which a man is capable. The struggle with the rocks, or the snow down below, is the best of all introductions to the half-hour by the cairn. The man who has come over the Dubh peaks and the "Gap," is at least as likely to fully enjoy a bask in that heaven of the climber, the moss-covered top of Sgurr Alasdair, as he who has injured his temper and his shins by toiling up the Stone Shoot.

Well, after all, what are the points to be sought for in our ideal climb? In my opinion, chiefly four. It should be new, it should be continuous, it should be difficult, and yet once started it should be the easiest available. Difficulty is always relative, and it matters very little what its absolute standard may be—what does matter is that it should be difficult for the climber. Some of my friends might find my favourite climb by no means difficult for them, that doesn't matter—for me, it is quite as difficult as I want. With respect to novelty, too, though the entirely new climb has its own special charm, it detracts very little that others have done a climb before, provided that one doesn't know exactly where and how they did it. The problem set in the form, "There is your mountain, climb it," is a far more fascinating one than that in the form, "There is a climb which has been done, go thou and

do likewise." Probably all will agree that our ideal climb must be continuous. By this I do not mean that it must be without break one continuous wrestle, but that once started it must be carried through or else the goal abandoned and a retreat made. If one can at any moment dodge the difficulties and walk off to the right or to the left, it may be very enjoyable and everything else may be there, but we are not really climbing, only bouldering on the mountains.

Again, our way should be the easiest that we can find. It is in finding the easiest way that the mental stimulus and interest of climbing lies, and the wider the problem the better the climb. In its highest form we should have a whole mountain before us and know of no easy way. As we all know, there is no such mountain in Scotland (except under bad weather conditions), but while this is so, there are many climbs on which if a man is once started, he may spend many hours in the attempt to find the easiest way to the top.

Many and glorious and very near the ideal are the climbs which are to be found in Scotland. I have said in what lies for me the charm of climbing considered in one of its aspects. It is, of course, only one. How much might be said of the purely physical joy of living among the mountains, of walking on the springy turf and the heather, and of feeling under one's hobnails the crackle of frozen snow or the crunch of the rocks,—or again, the glorious sensation of the cold swift-rushing wind in a glissade.

Through all, and over all, lie the higher thoughts prompted by so intimate a contact with nature, which, not being gifted with the literary faculty, I must not attempt to declare, yet once more protesting, that he who climbs for climbing's sake and is unfortunately dumb on higher matters, is not therefore insensible to the higher appeal.

## THE CLIFFS OF CORRIE ARDER.

BY HAROLD RAE BURN.

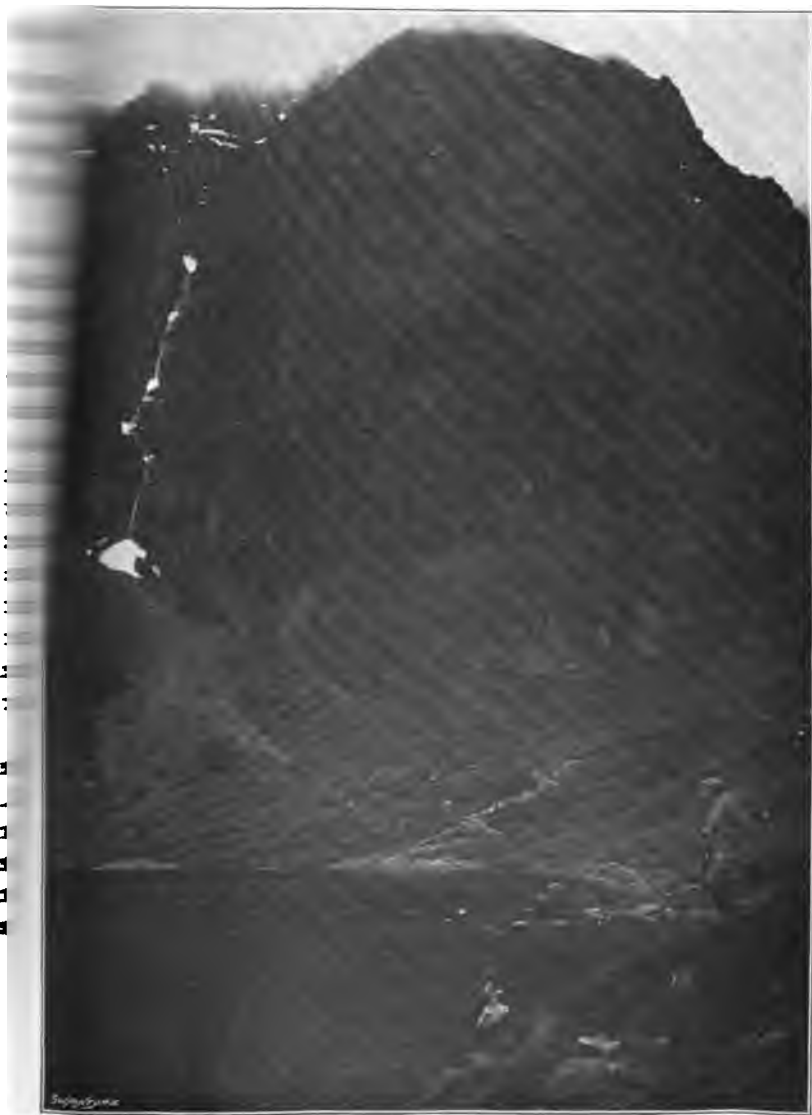
CORRIE ARDER, as every one, even in the S.M.C., possibly does not know, is the great north-east corrie of that huge mountain mass called Creag Meaghaidh, which heaves itself up along the north side of Loch Laggan, to a height of 3,700 feet.

Formless and dull as a whole, Creag Meaghaidh yet greatly exceeds Ben Nevis in bulk, although 700 feet lower. I believe our authority on tops calculates that one may take a seven-mile walk along the summit ridge without once descending below the 3,000 foot contour. Despite its bulk, Creag Meaghaidh cannot be ranked with Ben Nevis from a climbing point of view. It possesses, however, in the 1,200 feet rock of the Pinnacle of Corrie Arder, a cliff whose steepness is equalled by nothing on our highest Ben, and a face with gullies and buttresses well worthy of the climber's attention. There is, no doubt, some good scrambling to be obtained in others of the corries of this extensive range, but Corrie Arder is its outstanding feature, and it was to its exploration exclusively that the energies of the expedition whose doings are herein chronicled were directed.

The Rev. A. E. Robertson, in an article entitled "The Creag Meaghaidh Range," *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. III., p. 23, was the first of our members to draw attention to the corrie. Our Sassenach authority on Gaelic spelling and pronunciation, seized upon the name in its original form to complete a couplet in his ingenious and educative poem on the mysteries of Gaelic orthography—

" If he's long in the leagaidh,  
May tackle Creag Meagaidh ;  
Or, task that is hardhoire,  
The 'posts' of Corr 'Ard Dhoire ;"

but I do not think that he himself had ever viewed the cliffs save in poetic thought, or scanned their feet, save in metre. Over seven years ago—to be exact, in April 1896—a party of three members of the S.M.C. were defeated in



CORRIE ARDER.

*H. Raeburn.*



an attempt to ascend the central "post" of Corrie Arder. Literally pelted out of the gully by the preliminary trickle of the breaking cornices, which later developed into the rush and roar of real avalanches, weighing hundreds of tons, they contented themselves by the ascent of the Pinnacle up the easy north edge. On the apex of the Pinnacle they built the usual cairn, and retreated, perhaps not without hope of returning to conquer one of the posts or their dividing buttresses. A full account of this party's doings will be found in the article in Vol. IV., p. 141, "Corrie Arder," by Wm. Tough. Since then, no further attack on the cliffs has been recorded till now, and it is the purpose of the present account to relate how another party fared there, and how they fared in their task of attacking the cliffs of Corrie Arder.

The party consisted of three members, Harry Walker, C. W. Walker, and the writer—again all Easterlings! Loch Laggan Hotel was again selected as headquarters.

Tough's party in April had walked over the hills by the short cut from Dalwhinnie. As we should be in darkness from the start at this time of year, we resolved to bring cycles, and to take the hill road which crosses the watershed to the north of Dalwhinnie, and descends past Loch Coultree to Laggan Bridge, where it joins the main road between Spean Bridge and Kingussie.

The evening of the 30th October, as we alighted at Dalwhinnie Station, was mild and dark; fortunately, the almost constant deluge of rain, which had been falling for weeks past, had for the time ceased. It was 7 P.M. by the time we had got our various packages fixed by "diamond" or other hitch on our patient and uncomplaining, because well-oiled "beasties," and mounted for the fifteen-mile ride to Laggan Hotel.

A short push took us up to the summit, and here we found the road, somewhat to our surprise, in splendid condition, as smooth almost as asphalt.

There is a great charm in this kind of cycling, in the dark on an unknown but good road, which appeals to the exploring instinct latent in most people, but strongly developed in the mountaineer. Every sense is keenly on

the alert, sight and hearing appear to become abnormally acute. The eye ranges the contours of the hills, faintly silhouetted against the lesser darkness of the sky, in the endeavour to recognise some familiar outline. Back again to the road in front, in the attempt to pierce the darkness ahead of the small swiftly shifting patch of light formed by the rays of the lamp. The sudden cry of a plover, rising from the slopes below, shatters the outer silence of the night with almost painful loudness. The murmur of a distant fall is now heard, now lost, as we sweep round the hollows and over the shoulders of the moor. The whisper of the night breeze through the heath and sedge is scarcely audible above the soft rush of the wheels on the smooth damp sand, and the clicking "purr" of the ratchet as the leader "frees." Thus swiftly the hill outlines climbed the sky around us as we slid down to Laggan Bridge. But thereafter? If the first seven miles was the poetry of cycling, this was the ruggeddest of prose. It was a nightmare of a ride, the road was of the worst, sticky slime and huge ruts. We slid, and skidded, and squelched, and side-slipped—hundreds of these—and sweated, and swotted, and walked, and waded, and jerked, and joggled, and vibrated, and fought, and muddled, and fell—the last five times, fortunately without damage—on our way to Loch Laggan Hotel. We did eventually get there by 9.15, and found an excellent dinner awaiting us.

Next morning, 31st October, was cloudy and calm, on the hills the mist lay at about 2,000 feet. It had been raining during the night, but now a large patch of blue sky overhead, on reaching which the clouds drifting up the loch before the south-west air appeared to melt, gave promise of better weather. At 8.30 we mounted cycles and ran down by the loch side to Aberarder. Leaving our cycles at the farm at nine, we kept up along the east bank of the stream to some sheep fanks, then struck up the slopes of Carn Liath to our right by a well-marked track. This mounts pretty steeply straight up hill for several hundred feet, then turning to the left and passing through a straggling birch wood, it continues right up the glen at a gentle angle almost to the Lochan of Corrie Arder. This was gained at eleven.



The mists had been gradually rising and now merely touched the summits of the higher crags, and we had consequently a fine view of this extensive rocky face. Standing at the foot of the lochan we have the whole range in front. The most impressive piece of rock scenery is undoubtedly the "Pinnacle." The top of this appears to, from some points of view, and does in reality, overhang. The Pinnacle Cliff is bounded on the south-east by a long gully of easy angle. On the far side of this the rocks, though extensive, rapidly diminish in size. To the north of the Pinnacle Cliff opens out a wide gully, almost a small corrie high up, which serves to separate it from the main mass, in which are situated the "Posts." Near the foot of the gully lies the "Snow Bridge." A beautiful photo of this by D. Cameron Swan, taken September 1899, appeared in the *Journal*, Vol. VI., p. 22.

This year the "bridge" was a long snow tunnel through a large mass of old hard snow. In fact, all the gullies of any size held masses of old snow, testifying to the cold wet summer of 1903. North again of the Snow Bridge gully lies the main rock mass. This presents a steep but much grass-grown face to north-east for about one-third of a mile, with a height of about 1,400 feet. The rocks then bend round to north-west, and rapidly diminish in height as the floor of the little valley beneath rises to the scree and boulder-filled pass called the "Window" leading over to Glenroy. These central rocks are split into three main buttresses by three straight parallel gullies called the "Posts." The central of these Posts was the scene of the defeat of '96. To-day, the long white line of foaming water that marked the course of the gully's drainage over the lower slabs, was liked by none of our party, so we resolved to see what could be done with the Pinnacle face. As the lowest 300 feet was obviously hopeless, the rocks everywhere overhanging, we resolved to try to traverse out of the sloping gully on the south, on to one or other of the curious horizontal grassy ledges that cross the face above. Crossing the stream issuing from the lochan, we made for the foot of the cliff. The loch shore is here composed of large scree, mostly overgrown with turf and moss. Towards

the head lie some very large blocks of rock. One of these must weigh several hundred tons. It is tilted on its edge, and is accessible, if even then, by only one route. The height of this stone is about 35 feet. The great square-roofed recess in the cliff, from which it has evidently fallen within a quite recent geological time, is visible directly above.

Once in the Pinnacle south gully we made three separate efforts to ascend the face without effect. The comfortable green ledge by which we got out of the gully would invariably, after enticing us on a short distance, simply drop off in a smooth and impassable gap, resuming its tantalising course on the other side. These grass ledges were otherwise unsatisfactory, as in no case was direct upward progress possible; the rock where not actually overhanging, was composed of mossy holdless slabs.

In the end we were forced to climb the gully all the way. This, though of easy angle, held numerous small pitches which afforded the party plenty of opportunity of exercising their agility in avoiding baptism by sprinkling, or by total immersion, and necessitated the extraordinary contortions and Colossus-like attitudes beloved of the chimney climber.

At one sporting pitch, C. W. Walker, who led through-out, excited the envy of his followers on their precarious dirt slope below, by the ease and abandon of his reposeful attitude on a sloping lovely green mossy slab, to which he adhered by foot-pressure against the opposing wall. The sudden appearance of a vigorous jet of water spouting from the lowest knee of his knickers, soon convinced them however that the position was too absorbing for their taste. Eventually we gained the summit over an incipient cornice.

We reached the summit of the Pinnacle from above as in '96. We had seen an eagle sail aslant the face while in the gully, and here on the Pinnacle was his lookout and "Tower of Silence." Around were strewn the bones and remains of the victims of this "Angel of Death." In 1896 these remains were mostly those of the Ptarmigan, but now the Alpine hare had been the chief sufferer.

None of the party seemed particularly anxious to go

groping in the fog, which rolled in deep waves upon the upper plateau of Creag Meaghaidh, for the cairn, so we left for home. Skirting the edges of the cliffs to the north, and passing the head of many a steep gully already heavily corniced, we descended to the Window and to the lochan. Thence by the track to Aberarder, and a rapid spin on cycle took us to our snug headquarters just as darkness closed in.

*November 1.*—The first day of the week and of the month, and a perfect morning. As I looked from my window across the calm loch, a Heron glided down to the shore. Folding her "sails," she waded into the shallow, and there stood motionless, her shadow adding another picture to those of the hills and trees and clouds already mirrored on the surface of the water. The songs of our three chief autumn singers—the Robin, the Wren, and Hedge accentor—showed that they were rejoicing in the calm and sun of this rare November day. Our ride this morning to Corrie Arder was one to dwell in the memory for years. Fresh pictures of beauty down the loch opened up as we passed point after point, and the colouring of these pictures! the grass, the bracken, the trees, every shade of yellow and brown to dark red and flaming crimson. was painted on the withered foliage. As we rode through the birches, the long nearly level rays of the yet low sun lit up their trunks and foliage till the one seemed silver and the other gold, and both glowed with an almost metallic radiance. No season save late autumn can show a colouring half so rich and splendid.

Following the same route as yesterday, we reached the lochan a little before twelve. We had made up our minds to attack this time the central Post, and accordingly halted at twelve to rope up by the side of the mass of hard snow lying at the bottom of the face below the gully. Climbing began almost at once on clean steep rock with splendid holds.

The Posts are evidently formed by the more rapid decay of trap dykes which cleave the mica schist rocks, and low down this material weathers out into the usual convenient step-and-stairs ledges from which the rock gets

its name. Almost horizontal low down, these ledges higher up do not present such ideal climbing conditions. The ledges still exist, but they dip more and more into the gully or to the north till the angle becomes too steep to stand on without holding. For several hundred feet, however, the climbing was easy, though in places decidedly steep.

The gully at first hardly exists as such. It is merely a shallow scoop hollowed out in the face, down which rushes the water collected in the chasm above. We stuck more or less closely to this line till we arrived about half-way up at the place where the gully goes more deeply into the mountain. Here is a triple pitch above a large mass of old hard snow. High above this opens out a great pot or chasm, with overhanging walls apparently on all sides, from which fell numberless streams of water. The whole air of the place was filled with the drifting smoke of the shattered spray. It was certainly a wonderful piece of rock scenery, but—it was a fine day, all of us were still quite dry. In short, we refused to face the inevitable soaking the attempt to force a way up into the "Pot" would have involved. We therefore sought and found a way out on to the buttress wall on our left. The next part was difficult and needed care. It involved the crossing to the left of a steep, rotten, dirt slope, and round a projecting corner. Here a slanting, narrow, green ledge led to a corner of easy though steep grass. The route from here went up to right by easy grass and rock to a broad grassy ledge. Then came a remarkably steep and rotten wall, the whole 70 or 80 feet of which appeared to be on the point of falling in ruins into the corrie. Above this the angle eased off, the buttress becoming more of a ridge. We finally climbed a steep little rock tower, and found ourselves at the summit two hours and a half from the foot. The wind here had, like ourselves, "got up." It was bitterly cold, so we built the usual stone man and made off.

This afternoon we returned, by way of a change, by the ridge above Loch Laggan, a splendid scenic walk. We also saw some good examples of Brocken Spectres, whose fleeting forms C. Walker endeavoured to fix by means of

his camera lens. The evening was as fine as the morning, but heavy clouds were beginning to hurry up from the south-west, that "haunt and home" of the rain.

Next morning we cycled to Kingussie, taking Creag Dhu *en route*. This is an extensive range of cliffs above the road near Cluny. We did two climbs here. The first is up into a large overhung chimney or cavern in the face near its centre. The chimney comes to an end under the overhang, but we found our way out on our left to a mountain ash tree clinging to the face, and from there went straight up to the top. Descending again, we attacked a smaller but sporting chimney, a little way to the east of the big one. This stopped in the same way as the first, but again we got out to the left. C. Walker, who led, then took us up the face above by steep and rotten grass ledges, which, but for the ice-axe, we could not have ventured upon. The ice-axe indeed is practically indispensable even in summer, on the very steep grass ledges characteristic of these rock faces. Well driven into the turf, it forms the only hitch,—a thoroughly good one when properly worked.

On descending from the rocks from the second climb, we were just in time to rescue an unfortunate rabbit from the attack of a stoat. Though actually uninjured, poor Bunny was completely palsied by fear, its small heart beating like a sledge-hammer, and its eyes literally starting from its head. It gradually recovered, however, and by the time we had returned with our cycles repacked, was sufficiently recovered to hop away. Our weather luck still holding, we got to Kingussie in ample time for a meal before catching the south-bound train, the first rain of the trip beginning to fall as we entered Kingussie Station.

## ARRAN.

"... Majestic Arran ! dearest far  
Of all the isles, on which the setting sun  
In golden glory smiles."

LANDSBOROUGH : *Arran: A Poem*, p. 14.

"Arran, thy very name, like potent spell,  
Fills the rapt mind with recollections sweet."

*Ibid.*, p. 17.

ARRAN ! How instantaneously do the eyes of those who have ever landed on that island waken into life and interest when they catch sight of these five letters ! How vividly the memory brings back scenes of beauty and of peace, of sternness and of strife ! Once again we wander in delight o'er ridge and peak, in glen and corrie. Once again we fight our way up gully, dyke, and slab, 'mid whirling mist or driving rain. Once more there comes before us that charming view of Brodick Bay and Goatfell.

"In few places on this fair earth is there beheld so delightful a mingling of beauty and grandeur" (Landsborough, p. 229).

Once more we recall the ever-changing, ever-maturing autumn tints on Glenshant Hill ; heather, grass, bracken, tree, and rock, one day lit up with the sun's vivid rays, the next softened and subdued as mist and rain sweep down the glen. As Nicolson very rightly remarks :

"Any one who values a grand view of mountain, wood, and sea, and likes to see it from his own door at morning, noon, and evening, must decide unhesitatingly in favour of Brodick, which in this respect, is not surpassed, if equalled, by any place in Scotland—I should think, indeed, that in all the world there are not many spots more beautiful" (*Scotsman*, April 1872).

And yet nineteen out of twenty climbers who go to Arran stay at Corrie ; they know not what they miss. Words fail utterly to convey the charm and variety of the view to one who has not seen it. Observe it daily for a month : always the same, yet never the same ; let it sink into our being, let it become part of ourselves. Perhaps Professor A. C. Ramsay's description of the view is as good as any ; it runs as follows :

"As the visitor enters Brodick Bay, the scene becomes exceedingly beautiful. The lofty precipices, and gloomy shadows of the rugged



*H. Racburn.*

BRODICK.





ridge of Ben Ghnuis, which often throws a twilight hue over the deep hollow of Glen Rosa, and strongly contrasts with the open and swelling character of the hills around Glen Cloy; the cliffs of Corriegills, the white and sloping beach which rounds the bay, the embattled castle towering above its surrounding woods, the green enclosures, and beyond these, the long expanse of brown heath, from which rises the grey peak of Goatfell—all these form a scene of surpassing beauty, such as cannot be excelled by the most romantic scenery of the far-famed Firth of Clyde" ("The Geology of the Island of Arran," p. 2).

Before we leave Brodick, it will be well to note a few of the many changes that have been made in the district during the last fifty years, so that we may better understand the remarks of some of the older writers. The plantation on the east side of the main road from Brodick to Corrie, between Strabane (the factor's residence) and the Castle, has been made within the last half-century and practically covers the site of the old village of Brodick. An interesting sentence relating to the old village occurs in Grierson's "Autumnal Rambles, &c.," p. 21:

"In Brodick may be seen the old women sitting at their doors, arrayed in flannel *toys*, a species of head-gear now very little in use, and the men lounging about knitting stockings on wires."

The well and pump one sees on the east side of the road, sixty yards south of a cottage on the west side of the road, which is in turn nearly two hundred yards south of the Cnocanburn, where it goes under the road, constituted the old village water supply. The situation of the old village with a clear view out to sea and down Glen Rosa, was undoubtedly a fine one, and I can quite appreciate the fact that the villagers were not at all pleased at being forced to move to the superior cottages in Douglas Row, with a comparatively-speaking poor view. At that time the beach was considerably wider than it is now, but it has been reduced to its present dimensions by many thousand tons of sand having been taken away, mainly to Glasgow. Many writers speak in glowing terms of the old inn,

"The neat, little, old-fashioned, weather-stained, and leaf-enveloped Inn of Brodick" ("Days at the Coast," p. 156).

A full description of it is to be found in Hugh Macdonald's "Days at the Coast" (pp. 156, 157). The house

now forms part of the offices of the Castle, and lies some seventy-five yards back from and north of the main road, on the left of the route to Goatfell. The fact that it is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles distant from the present Brodick Post Office must be taken into account in comparing the times taken in the earlier ascents of Goatfell with those taken now.

#### ETYMOLOGY.

Before going up to the hills and glens, it may be interesting to a few to refer briefly to the meaning of the place-names in Arran. The reader in a number of cases can have quite a charming selection to choose from.

As the Rev. Landsborough ingenuously remarks :

"It is difficult in general to trace the origin of names, and it is amusing to see how Gaelic words can be twisted, so as to suit any theory which the writer thinks fit to adopt" (p. 96).

#### ARRAN.

*Arran.*—The derivation of Arran favoured by the reverend gentleman is :

Ar, high, and Inn, island.

"M. Martin, Gent.," in his book "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," second edition, 1716, gives us the choice of two :

Arran = Irish for bread.

Arran = Arin or Arfyn = place of the giant Fin-Mac-Coul's slaughter or execution. Aar = slaughter.

Pennant gives us :

Arr-inn = the island of mountains.

Macculloch :

Ar = a field of battle.

Fin = the hero of the Gael.

Hugh Macdonald in his "Days at the Coast" (p. 152) makes merry at the etymologists' expense and mentions the following :

Ard = high, inch = an island.

Aran = bread (Gaelic).

Arfhin = the land of Fingal.

Lord Teignmouth offers us :

"Arran—ar, land or country : rinn, sharp points ; hence Ar-rinn signifies island of sharp pinnacles, or the land of serrated tops or summits—a most appropriate name for Arran."

And lastly Dr Cameron of Brodick, a high authority, says :

"Probably from Gaelic Ara (genitive Aran), a kidney, which exactly gives Arran's shape."

#### BRODICK.

*Brodick*.—In the case of Brodick, we have not such a varied choice, but the following three seem to me mutually exclusive :

Brodick.—Brodaic in Gaelic signifies a standard or flag. The royal standard was exhibited from the Castle of Brodick for centuries. So that the Castle of Brodick signifies the Castle of the Royal Flag (Lord Teignmouth).

Broddick=hill of gentle rise (Headrick, p. 58).

Brodick, *c.* 1306 Brathwik, 1488 Bradewik ; Old Norse, Breidrvik=broad bay (Johnston's "Place-names").

#### GOATFELL.

*Goatfell*.—Johnston says :

"Very likely from Norse, god, gud=good, sacred. Fell is Icelandic, fell, a hill, or fjall, a mountain.

According to Bryce, Goatfell is an unmeaning corruption of the native name of this mountain, and the "correct" name would be Gaothbhein or Bein-gaoth=the hill of the wind.

Headrick waxes somewhat indignant over this alleged corruption, and writes :

"The Gaelic name of this mountain is Gaodh Bhein, mountain of winds ; and the name Goatfell has been imposed on it by the Sassanoch, or strangers, who have visited the island. There is a gross absurdity in calling it Goatfield ; the last syllable denoting a level plain, to which it is a complete contrast" (p. 36, note).

As a Sassanoch myself, I must really protest against this accusation of having corrupted Gaelic, and shall require stronger proof than the reverend gentleman's mere statement. If the title is a corruption, it is a fairly old one,

as on referring to Blaeu's Atlas published at Amsterdam in 1654, I find the name of the mountain printed "Keadefelt Hil," and I decline to believe that the nearest approach that Mr Timothy Pont, who was responsible for the map of Arran in that atlas, could get to Gaothbhein was Keadefelt. Moreover, Mr Pont was not a Sassanoch, but a son of the manse.

GLEN SHANT=valley of enchantment (Headrick, p. 49). Shant=a charm, *Gaelic* (Johnston).

GLEN ROSA=Ferry Point Glen (Bryce, p. 166). Rosa=Rosach rosy, red, *Gaelic* (Johnston).

CORRIE—*Gaelic* coire, a cauldron ; hence a glen, ravine (Johnston).

CIOCH NA H' OIGHE=the maiden's breast.

SANNOX, prob. = Sannaig = Sandaig = Sandy Bay (Johnston). Some think from *Gaelic* Sannoch=river trout.

GLEN HALMIDEL (O.S. Glen Chalmadale)=glen of pigeons (Headrick, p. 203).

LOCH RANZA=Old Norse Rans-ay=Isle of Ran, giant goddess, queen of the sea (Johnston, first edition).

=*Icelandic* Rans-ay=isle of the house, or isle of plunder (Johnston, second edition).

=Loch-arran-say=the loch of the isle of Arran (Lord Teignmouth and McArthur).

TORR NEAD AN EOIN=heap of birds' nests (Headrick, p. 196).

=mountain of birds' nests (Bryce, p. 140).

=the hill of ptarmigans (Landsborough, p. 228).

CATACOL=Catagill. Cata=a small ship. Gill=ravine, *Old Norse* (Johnston).

SUIDHE FHEARGHAS=Fergus' Seat. "There is a tradition in Arran, that, once on a time, when Fergus the First made a survey (not geological) of his kingdom, in the course of his wanderings he visited Arran. To obtain a view of the island and the frith, the monarch and his attendants climbed this lofty hill, where, to refresh themselves after the fatigue, they sat down to dine. Hence the name" (Ramsay, p. 25, note).

CEUM NA CAILLICH=witch's step or Carlin's leap.

CAISTEAL ABHAIL=fortress of the ptarmigan (Ramsay, p. 7).

CIR MHOR=the big comb. A Chir=the comb.

BEINN NUIS=the face mountain.

BEINN TARSUINN=the transverse mountain. This is a favourite name in Arran ; there are four hills so called.

MEALL NAN DAMH=hill of bucks (Nicolson).

BEINN BHREAC=spotted hill ; another favourite name, and given to three hills.



*W. Douglas.*

GLEN SANNOX.



BEINN BHARRAIN=barren mountain.

LOCH TANNA=shallow lake.

WHITING BAY.—Even an obvious derivation of this place is not allowed to rest in peace. Mr McArthur thinks it probable the name is of purely Scandinavian origin, from *Norse* Ting, a hill on which meetings were held.

LAMLASH (formerly simply Molas)=Lann Lais=*Gaelic* Church of St Las, commonly in the endearing form Molas or Molios (lann=*Welsh* llan) (Johnston).

Lumh-laish=Lumh-lathaich=the anchorage of mud or clay (Lord Teignmouth).

The occurrence of several old Norse words in the above list reminds us of the fact that for many centuries the western coast of Scotland was in the hands of the Norwegians. Arran was not finally ceded to Scotland till 1266, three years after the Norwegian power had been shattered at Largs. Nowadays the S.M.C. invade Norway. *Tempora mutantur!*

#### GOATFELL.

The accompanying outline sketch shows roughly the position of the higher Arran hills; it will be seen they fall naturally into three groups:

1. Glenshant Hill to Cioch na h' Oighe.
2. Beinn Nuis to Suidhe Fhearghas.
3. Beinn Bhreac and Beinn Bharrain.

Cir Mhor, though only fourth in height, is the centre and keystone of groups 1 and 2. Its magnificent trident summit dominates Glen Sannox from sea to summit, and although in Glen Rosa it has rivals, it maintains its supremacy even there.

There are a number of ways up Goatfell.

1. The easiest is from Corrie up the Corrie Burn (White Water) (no track) right bank for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to about 1,100 feet, then up the shoulder of Meall Breac joining the path from Brodick at 1975 feet, after which the north side of the ridge should be kept as far as possible, and a scramble up the last steep 350 feet lands us on the summit (*S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. III., p. 206). This was the route taken by John Fleming in 1807—see *Scots Magazine*, vol. lxx.

2. From Brodick the usual route of ascent is a very pleasant one :

"Instead of having, as is often the case, to traverse miles of rough or boggy moor before getting near the mountain, you are exhilarated at the outset by the charming walk through the Brodick Castle grounds ; then after clearing the wood, where you get some lovely peeps of the mountain over the green fir-tops, the ascent to the old mill dam is very easy, and the path well beaten. From this point, again, to the ridge that leads to the top, the ascent is even more gradual, though a little rougher as you ascend. The last 500 feet alone present any difficulty, and that not great. . . . By taking it easy and avoiding obstacles, the ascent of Goatfell may be comfortably accomplished by any one fit to walk ten miles on a level road" (Nicolson).

3. From the saddle between Glens Rosa and Sannox up the north-west ridge and along Stacach (more or less of a track the whole way).

4. Up the south ridge from the mill dam. From the mill dam to the foot of the south ridge of Goatfell is very marshy, and it is better to keep the main track till a big cairn is reached about 1,400 feet up, then turn sharply to the west to the top of the ridge and north along it.

5. From the summit a descent can easily be made direct into Coire nam Meann, leaving the main track to your left, but nothing is gained thereby. The ascent by this route is steep and very rough.

6. Along the summit of Glen Shant Hill and Coire Chatan.

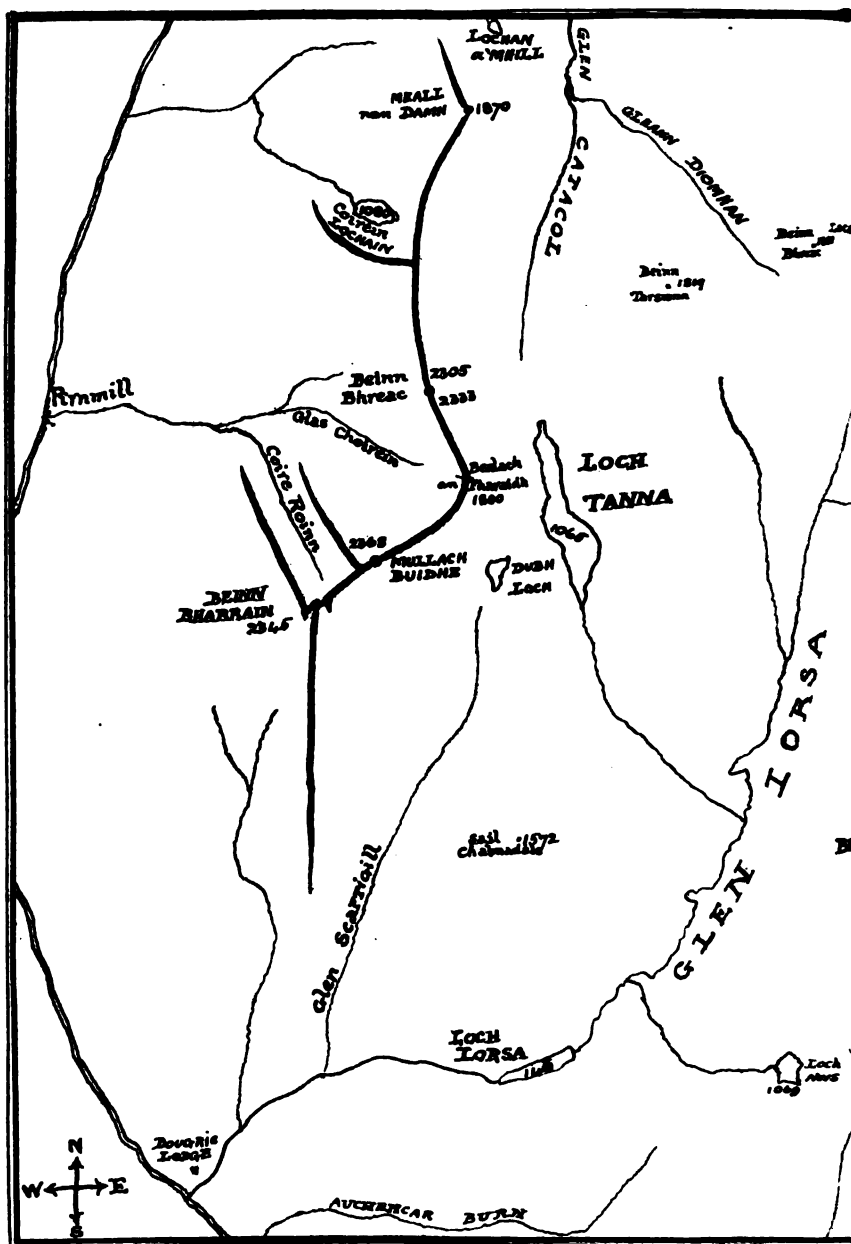
7. Up Dearg Choirein from Glen Rosa and along Stacach. In descending take care to go far enough along Stacach towards the north-west ridge before striking down, so as to avoid the slabs and rocks on the west face of Goatfell.

On the descent by this route Nicolson makes the following remarks :

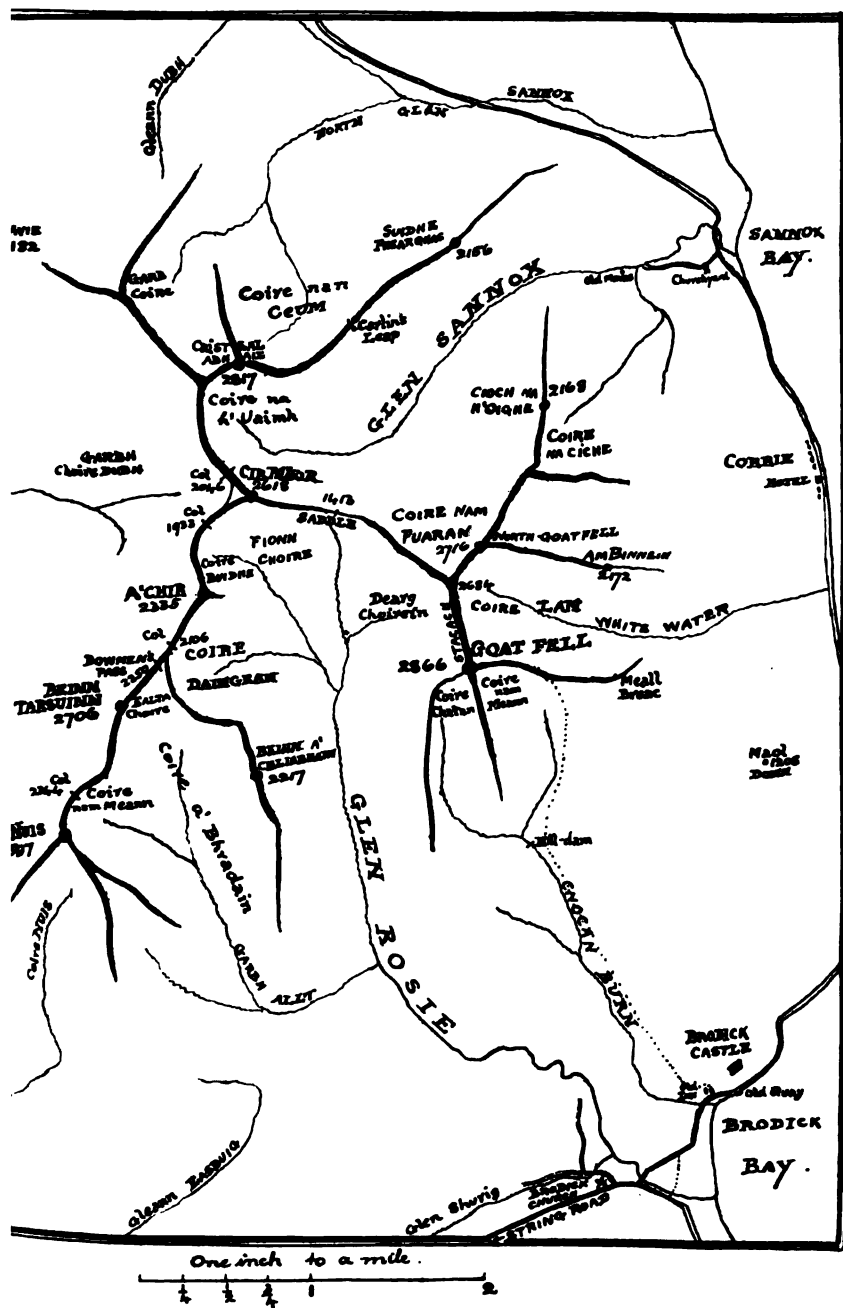
"The descent to Glen Rosa is very steep. . . . It is, however, perfectly manageable to those who know how to do it. To those who don't, it is sufficiently dangerous, as was found some years ago by a learned lexicographer, who attempted it, and stuck among some rock ledges, where he could neither descend nor retrace his steps. There stood, with his back against the rock, during all the long hours of an August night, with nothing to console him but his cigar case, the







THE HILLS OF ARRAN .





learned LL.D. to whom every student of Greek and Roman history owes so much. What his feelings must have been during those weary hours as he watched the great Orion 'sloping slowly to the west' and listened to the roar of the streams in the darkness of Glen Rosa, one can imagine. With the first blink of dawn a searching party from the Douglas Hotel came and found him, still perched in his unpleasant fastness and waving on the top of his stick a sheet of the *Times*!"

[N.B.—This happened on a Sunday, and it may well be supposed that it afforded sharp point for a moral in the Free Church pulpit that day week.]

None of these routes present the least difficulty from a climber's standpoint, but non-climbers without guides would do well to keep to the first two routes mentioned.

Climbers may like to know that an English party prospected the steep west face of Goatfell last year, and report half-a-dozen gullies, some with jammed blocks. They are of opinion that some good climbing can be had there. With the aid of an alpenstock, the writer once descended straight from the summit to Glen Rosa over slabs, and has no wish to repeat the performance, but two men and a rope would manage it comfortably enough.

The view from the summit has been often described, and it is very curious to us to find a note of "horror" running through all those published to within the last fifty years. Thus the Rev. Grierson, a stalwart pedestrian, writes of a visit of his to Arran in 1840:

"But by far the most attractive object seen from Goatfell is the mountain itself, with those by which it is immediately surrounded. In this respect Goatfell surpasses anything of the kind I ever saw, and I have climbed many of the most elevated peaks in Scotland, England, and Wales. The upper part of the mountain, as well as those adjoining, consists of naked rocks, huge masses of granite, piled up in the most grotesque and fantastic forms by nature's mighty architect. In some instances there is an appearance of regularity, Cyclopiian walls, like mason work upon a gigantic scale. In other parts the most frightful chasms appear, into which the eye cannot penetrate without a thrill of horror, while around you are seen serrated ridges, like huge devouring fangs" ("Autumnal Rambles," p. 3).

And to quote another minister:

"One of my college friends, on his return from visiting Arran, told me that when on the top of Goatfell, he had been filled with astonishment, not unmingled with fear. The cliffs were so precipitous, that it

almost made him giddy to look down into the chasms, some of which were between two and three thousand feet deep ; and that when he looked on the sharp peaks and naked pinnacles, bristling up in this scene of horror and devastation, he could scarcely help thinking that they were the claws of the old dragon ready to clutch him " (Landsborough, p. 124).

Jamieson in 1800 writes :

" Here nature exhibits to the astonished eye the most terrific and sublime scenery " (p. 17).

" To the northward we look down upon the peaked summits and deep glens in the neighbourhood of Goatfield, whose arid and reddish appearance suggests to our minds the effects of a dreadful conflagration " (pp. 33, 34).

So late as 1857 we read :

" In the immediate vicinity of Goatfell there is indeed a terrible congregation of jagged mountain ridges and fantastic peaks with tremendous yawning glens and shadowy corries. . . . One could almost imagine that the volcano and the earthquake had been here at their awful work at a comparatively recent period " (Hugh Macdonald " Days at the Coast," p. 169).

And :

" Something akin to absolute terror takes possession of our mind as we pass up its (Cir Mhor's) abrupt watercourses and crooked sheep tracks, where one false step would be instant destruction " (*Ibid.*, p. 170).

Headrick, in speaking of the view from the Castles, caps all when he writes :

" The awful corry, or cavern below, contrasted with the ragged mountains that encircled it, froze the soul with horror, and, for a time, suspended its active powers " (p. 197).

Pass from these writers to Prof. Ramsay, and in his description of the view from Goatfell we find the true ring :

" Having reached the highest point of Goatfell, the eye of the geologist suddenly rests on a scene, which, if he be a true lover of nature, cannot fail to inspire him with astonishment and delight. The jagged and spiry peaks of the surrounding mountains, the dark hollows and deep shady corries into which the rays of the sun scarce ever penetrate, the open swelling hills beyond, the winding shores of Lochfyne, and the broad Firth of Clyde studded with its peaceful and fertile islands, the rugged mountains of Argyllshire, and the gentle curves of the hills of the Western Isles, their outlines softened in the distance, form a scene of most surpassing grandeur and loveliness. In all its varying aspects, it is a scene the memory of which can be dwelt on

with pleasure—whether it be seen in the early morning, when the white mists, drawn upwards from the glens, float along the hills, and half conceal their giant peaks ; or in the gloom of an autumn evening, when the descending clouds, urged onwards by the blast, flit swiftly across the mountain sides, while ever and anon their gloomy shoulders loom largely through the rolling masses, and seem to the beholder to double their vast proportions ; or in the mellow light of a summer sunset, when the shadows of the hills fall far athwart the landscape, and the distant Atlantic gleams brightly in the slanting rays of the setting sun ; while, as he sinks below the horizon, it is difficult to distinguish the lofty summits of Jura and the Isles from the gorgeous masses of clouds among which he disappears” (“Geology of the Island of Arran,” pp. 7, 8).

The four piles of rock on the ridge between the summit of Goatfell and the north-west ridge leading to the Saddle are called on the six-inch O.S. map “Stacach.” There is quite a passable track along the ridge, avoiding all difficulties. Pennant quaintly says of Goatfell, it is “composed of immense piles of moor stone, in form of woolpacks.”\*

#### CIOCH NA H' OIGHE.

From North Goatfell along the ridge to Cioch na h' Oighe is a delightful scramble, affording fine views. At one point the ridge narrows to a knife-edge. Having reached Cioch na h' Oighe, a visit to Coire na Ciche should certainly not be omitted. The descent thereto can be made down one of the grass and heather traverses, for full particulars of which see *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. III., pp. 198-200, or go back on your footsteps a little and come down the bed of the burn at the head of the coire. The descent requires care just at the start, as the angle is steep ; but the slight difficulties vanish rapidly, and two small pitches,

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\* The position assigned to North Goatfell by Mr Douglas, Vol. III., 196, was not considered satisfactory by the writer, and a fellow-member who had independently considered the point also came to the same adverse conclusion. Mr Douglas says : “The name ‘North Goatfell,’ when used, should no doubt apply to the most prominent point on the Goatfell ridge north of the summit, and that appears to be the top that rises to 2,684 feet, half a mile north of the summit.” But in our opinion the most prominent point is that where the Am Binnein shoulder joins the main ridge. This point also happens to be higher than Mr Douglas’s North Goatfell by 32 feet, 2,716 in all.

neither exceeding ten feet, go easily. The ascent by this route can also be recommended, *i.e.* to Salvationists. After having taken one's fill of the fine cliffs, the shoulder of Mullach Buidhe is rounded and a direct descent made over the moors to Corrie, where, if you wish, you can follow the example of Mr Pennant, and "dine at the Corry; a small house, belonging to a gentleman of Airshire, who visits this place for the benefit of goat's whey" (p. 171).

#### GLENS ROSA AND SANNOX.

No visitor to Arran will omit THE glens, and few who go through them once but will try and repeat the walk. There is so much variety in the contour of the hill-tops and ridges as seen from different points, that the view might be described as "cinematographic." Then again the varying weather conditions in which the walk is taken reveal fresh and unexpected beauties. The cloud and mist effects obtained on what people seated round a fire would call a hopelessly wet day, are frequently unspeakably grand. The different hour, too, in which we see the glens, imparts a further variety of light and shade. Personally, I prefer the late afternoon and early evening, when the sun has just sunk behind A' Chir, and the western slopes of the glen are a mass of deep, dark shadow, with the ragged ridges sharply silhouetted against the gorgeous colouring of an autumn sunset. Turn your eyes east, and what a contrast! The upper half of the Goatfell ridge is brilliantly lit up with the sun's expiring rays, and every detail of gully, corrie, scaur, and rock-tower is revealed. We linger entranced: slowly the brightness dies away, slowly the shadows creep up to the summit; then suddenly we awake to the fact that the air is chilly, and homeward we must wend our way.

Jamieson seems to have explored both glens pretty thoroughly, but there is no hint in his writings that he crossed the Saddle.

To Macculloch the entrance merely to both glens probably proved sufficient: so far as regards Glen Rosa, I think the following remarks by him suffice to prove this:



"Beyond the entrance of Glen Rossie all beauty ceases ; being replaced by wildness without magnificence" (*sic*) (p. 29).

Again :

"It is not difficult from this point (*i.e.*, the summit of Goatfell) to descend into Glen Rossie or Glen Sanicks. It is equally easy when on the summit of Goatfell to cross to Ben Huish and Ben Breach, and then to visit the two small mountain lochs, Loch Jorsa and Loch Tana, terminating the day's journey at Loch Ranza" (p. 30).

No, no, Mr Macculloch ; you never did the last-mentioned trip in one day yourself, and I doubt whether anybody else has.

Glen Sannox he much more appreciated :

"Glen Sanicks . . . is the sublime of magnitude, and simplicity, and obscurity and silence" (vol. ii., p. 35, 1824).

"It is in Glen Sannox, above all, that the effects arising from magnitude of dimension, combined with breadth of forms and with simplicity of composition and colouring, are most strongly felt" (vol. ii., p. 313, 1819).

No, the credit of having first introduced the Saddle to the travelling public must apparently be given to the fair sex.

Bryce states :

"Up till the year 1822 this path was known as practicable only by shepherds, some of whom occasionally used it. But in that year two enterprising young ladies, Miss Alison and Miss Crooks, both from near Kilmarnock, but residing at Brodick, having arrived on a summer afternoon at the top of the ridge by passing up Glen Rosa, determined to try the descent into Glen Sannox, and return by the coast road. With great difficulty and loss of time they made good the descent ; but were so late on arriving at Brodick, that all the young men of the village had started off in parties, in different directions, to search for them. Their tale excited no small wonder" (p. 163).

In an interesting little booklet entitled "The Scottish Tourist's Steam-boat Pocket Guide," published in the year 1835, occurs the following recommendation (p. 114) :

"A good pedestrian should not fail to ascend Glen Sannox, cross over the ridge at its head, and descend upon Brodick by Glen Rosa."

On the 27th July 1836 the Rev. C. Lesingham Smith of Cambridge crossed the Saddle from Sannox to Rosa, accompanied by a guide (p. 165).

In 1840 Grierson apparently crossed the Saddle guideless :

"Returning by a somewhat different route, I descended" (from some point on the Cioch na h' Oighe and Goatfell ridge) "at great hazard into the upper part of Glen Sannox, passed over into Glen Rosa, close by Kier-Vohr and Castleaval, descending the said glen with unbounded admiration, but not without dread of being benighted, if not cut off in such circumstances as might exclude the probability of my ever receiving Christian burial.

"The upper part of this Glen is of the rudest and most romantic character" (p. 4).

On the 12th September 1842, Lord Cockburn in his "Circuit Journeys," notes that two of his companions

"went up the whole of Sannox and down Glenrosie—a severe but admirable walk. These two glens—which hold Goatfell in their arms—are of the same character; rough with marsh and rock, roaring with water, and gloriously hemmed in by black splintered peaks" (p. 173).

Cockburn on a previous page (169) mentions that he explored Glenrosie,

"a valley well worth passing a day in. All gushing with the clearest water tumbling over granite; deep sides, browned with chocolate-coloured autumn fern, many dark rocky peaks, and the upper end enclosed by as striking an assemblage of black and picturesque precipitous mountain-tops as is often to be seen."

In 184— Landsborough apparently walked up Glen Sannox, ascended Cir Mhor, and thence down Glen Rosa, but his exact route is not stated.

At the mouth of Glen Sannox, 250 yards along the lane on the south side, there is an old cemetery. At one time there was a chapel here, but all that now remains of it is a rudely-carved stone, representing St Michael's head, built into the cemetery wall. In this enclosure will be found the grave of Rose, who was murdered on Goatfell some fifteen years ago. The tombstone consists of a fair-sized boulder of rock on which is carved his name, &c. The memorial seems most appropriate. Six hundred yards farther on, if, instead of crossing the wooden bridge over the burn, you follow the old lane, a few yards will lead you to the site of a barytes mill, removed some forty years ago.

"It was erected here to grind the sulphate of barytes, a heavy spar, raised from veins which traverse the old red sandstone," and convert it "into a substitute for white lead, in the composition of paint."

Ramsay describes fully the process of manufacture (p. 24). (*Cf.* Grierson, p. 7.)

On the opposite side of the stream a few yards north of the track is a large circular hole some twelve feet in diameter, now filled with water, and which I understand was one of the entrances to the mine workings. It is unfenced, and would give a traveller who wandered from the track in the dark a most unpleasant and dangerous experience.

### THE SADDLE.

The guide books apparently consider that there is now a highroad between the glens, as only one I have seen hints at there being any difficulty in the passage. The ordinary tourist coming up Glen Rosa will, I think, be very disagreeably surprised when he reaches the Saddle and sees what a precipitous descent it is into Glen Sannox. A member of the Geological Survey in "The Geology of North Arran, &c.," describes the descent as "precipitous and difficult" (p. 3). The exact route down is not at all obvious to the inexperienced eye, and as it may be useful to some, a note will be found at the end of this article giving directions both for the ascent and descent, also a note for the ascent of Cir Mhor from the Saddle.

### BEINN NUIS.

The finest ridge walk in the island has been already described by Mr W. Douglas in his article "The Granite Peaks of Arran," *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. III., pp. 195-211. Beside the route to Beinn Nuis mentioned there, viz., up Glen Rosa to Garbh Allt, then up the left side of that stream, there are two others that might be named. From the summit of the String road skirting the head of Gleann Easbuig (Bishop's Glen), you can strike over the gently rising moor direct for the Ben. After rain this route is distinctly soft. The third route is up Glen Rosa to Garbh Allt, from whence strike north-east over the slope of Beinn a' Chliabhain into Coire a' Bhradain, then turn east and look out for a sheep track which circles round Coire nam Meann (a fine description of this lonely corrie will be found in Bryce, pp. 58, 59),

and the Nuis ridge can be gained by striking up the head of the coire. On the north of the coire there is a bold pinnacle or buttress of the usual woolpack type, and also, at least two fairly broad gullies affording good scrambles. Nuis always reminds me of the Plattkofel in the Dolomite Alps. For climbs on its face see Mr Oppenheimer's article in *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. VII., pp. 1-9.

#### BEINN TARSUINN.

The next summit to the north, Beinn Tarsuinn, though 109 feet higher, lacks the individuality of its southern neighbour, and is probably not often ascended direct. The most direct route from Brodick is to follow No. 3 route to Beinn Nuis into Coire a' Bhradain, and instead of turning east, keep straight up the corrie till you are about level with the highest point of Beinn a' Chliabhain on your right, where turn north-east into the Ealta Choire, and a rough steep scramble into its apex, where two walls of rock almost join, lands you at the foot of a broad trap dyke gully leading sharply up rotten ground, with here and there natural rock staircases to the ridge twenty yards north of the summit. This gully is well seen all the way up Coire a' Bhradain. In descending from the summit it will be found that the gully is the second on the east, not the first.\*

#### BOWMEN'S PASS.

The next point of interest on the ridge is the pass of the bowmen, Bealach an Fhir-Bhogha; why so called I know not. Whether the following speculation by a fellow-member will be considered satisfactory by authorities is doubtful, but I give it for what it is worth:

"In days of old, when the natives' sole means of defence were bows and arrows, it became necessary from time to time to replenish the tribal larder. A deer drive was then arranged, some of the expert marksmen were placed across the pass, and the remainder of the tribe drove the deer through. Hence comes the name Pass of the Bowmen."

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\* On the rocks between the summit of Tarsuinn and the Bowmen's Pass several climbs have been done.

It will be seen from this that the faculty of imagination has not yet deserted the Club. It is sometimes thought that the Bealach connects Glen Iorsa with Coire Daingean, but a glance at the six-inch O.S. map makes it quite clear that the Bealach connects Glen Iorsa with Ealta Choire (see Bryce, p. 61). The Bealach is not therefore the lowest point (2,106 feet) between Tarsuinn and A' Chir, but runs along the top of the cliff forming the south-east boundary of Coire Daingean, and is 2,250 feet at its summit. If the climber be coming up Coire a' Bhradain or along the Chliabhain ridge *en route* for A' Chir, there is no need to mount to the pass. A sheep track will be found traversing the precipitous north-east face of Coire Daingean just below the cliffs. The track starts from the lowest point on the Chliabhain ridge and emerges at the lowest point between Tarsuinn and A' Chir (2,106) feet. On the cliffs above this track, some thirty yards from the A' Chir end, is a deep cleft running the whole way up the cliff face and far into the rock, the site of a dyke now eroded. It is evidently this cleft which is referred to on pages 113-115 of the *Journal*, Vol. VII., as being on Chliabhain, but these cliffs are certainly more closely associated with Tarsuinn than Chliabhain.

The cleft has smooth sides of the usual cyclopean wall type with several blockstones, and climbing it involves much back and knee work. Messrs Raeburn and Ling have, I understand, accomplished it, and have also conquered another more open gully a little to the south.

Another route to the above-mentioned 2,106 feet point on the ridge, probably a quicker one in all weather conditions, but most certainly so in mist, is to follow the Glen Rosa track to where the burn from Coire Daingean joins the main stream, or if the day be clear, strike away from the Rosa Burn lower down and round the shoulder of Chliabhain into Coire Daingean, then follow the burn till a height of some 1,250 feet has been reached, when steer east and skirt the slabs of A' Chir on your right till you come to a broad trap dyke gully. Up the stairs and you are soon at the summit, a few yards north of the cleft above referred to. In descending, the guide for the start

is a sheer face forming the commencement of the A' Chir ridge, a few yards north of the lowest point on the ridge hereabouts. The dyke runs down the side of this face.

Coire Daingean, as seen from the Chliabhain ridge, is thus described by Grierson :

"Immediately beside and under me lay a huge excavation, fenced by nearly perpendicular cliffs, much resembling the crater of an extinct volcano" (p. 18).

#### A' CHIR.

From the Bowmen's Pass we have a choice of routes to Cir Mhor—(1) to follow the ridge known by at least three names, the Ceims, A' Chir, and Lord Brougham's Nose, whose "jagged and notched character," Bryce says, "makes it impossible for us to pass along;" or (2) to follow a "safe, though rough and irregular pathway," at the foot of the slabs on the Iorsa side. On the Glen Rosa side the ridge presents a "continued precipice."

Nicholson seems to have the same opinion of the ridge as Bryce, as he says emphatically that "nobody should attempt it who is not fond of getting into difficult places and quite able to get safely out of them." Quite so; but to such persons, and there are a number of them in the S.M.C., the ridge affords a delightful scramble, and from a rock climber's standpoint the route is simple. For full particulars the reader can refer to Mr Douglas' article mentioned above, *Journal*, Vol. III., pp. 201-203. At point A in the diagram on p. 202 of that article, there is an alternate route. Keep the grass-filled crack there mentioned on your left, and walk or slide yourself, as fancy dictates, down a sloping granite slab till you reach its edge; here you find a small cup-shape hollow generally filled with water, take hold of the lip of the cup with your two hands, swing yourself over, and when you are at full stretch (unless you are very short), your feet will just touch a boulder resting on a huge sloping slab leading to the col, marked B on the diagram. From B you can descend into Coire Buidhe with care; a *piton* has been fixed on the north side of the gully some 12 feet down. From D you can descend the Iorsa side; only the first 20 feet will give any trouble, and that not serious. An ascent here

is equally practicable. If any one, not being a member of the S.M.C., wants an easy route to the summit, let him take the path up Glen Rosa, clamber up the rough heather slopes of Fionn Choire till he is close to the col between Cir Mhor and A' Chir. Then turning south into Coire Buidhe, a scramble up a steep grass slope at the head of the Coire will land him close to the underhung boulder that forms the actual summit, and if he be alone, getting on to the flat top of this boulder will be by far the most difficult piece of work he has had to do. A descent by the same route is equally practicable.

#### CIR MHOR.

Having clambered over the remainder of the A' Chir ridge, the summit of Cir Mhor is soon attained. This hill is the El Dorado of the rock climber; the *Journal* contains three articles thereon, and notes many (see list at end of Article). He who wishes to explore the gullies, dykes, caves, ridges, shoots, shelves, pinnacles, and grooves of the Big Comb is referred thereto. I understand there is also "A" gully there still awaiting its victor or victims more. No one ascending the main summit should omit the ascent of the Rosa pinnacle a little to the south. It is a pleasure to find the easy route up for oneself, and a water-filled hollow on a ledge half way up comes in extremely useful for washing off a few of the traces of a too hearty attachment to the coarse granite. The descent into Glen Rosa from the Rosa pinnacle is easily made by going straight down a broad gully, keeping the pinnacle immediately on your right at first; then a steep wall of rock will be seen on your left, forming one side of a trap dyke; bear to the left, follow the dyke, and you are soon in Fionn Choire.

To descend to the Saddle from the Pinnacle one must steer due west, crossing the head of the broad gully mentioned above.

It is interesting to find that Jamieson at the end of the eighteenth century had evidently explored the upper corries to the east of Glen Rosa. He makes the following remarks thereon:

"Ben-echleven (Beinn a' Chliabhain) declines rapidly towards the N.E., forming a tremendous hollow, named Cory-dain (Coire Daingean), whose bottom is far elevated above that of Glenrosa, but is lower than the bottom of the next hollow, named the Feun-hody (Fionn Choire), which is raised far above either, presenting to the bewildered eye an amazing scene of ridged and peaked rocks of granite" (p. 42).

This description of Fionn Choire probably refers to the inner corrie beyond Fionn Choire, viz., Coire Buidhe.

In Jamieson's "Mineralogy," published in 1800, and from which the above extract is taken, is a map of Arran, facing p. 17 (vol. i.), on which "the route through the island" is marked in double lines. One route leads from Brodick up Glen Rosa, probably over the col between Cir Mhor and A' Chir; then skirting the Castles, it proceeds by Loch na Davie down Gleann Easan Biorach to Loch Ranza. This seems to have been a favourite excursion, as it is mentioned by several of the earlier writers on Arran.

#### CAISTEAL ABHAIL.

Jamieson also records an ascent of the next summit on the main ridge we are pursuing, viz., the Castles, or to give it its official title, Caisteal Abhail.\* In the older maps, the Castles are not favoured with a special appellation; but the whole ridge (except Suidhe Fhearghas) is known as Ceum na Caillich (Pont's map, 1608, Lem na Kailzie).

Jamieson's ascent was made from Gleann Easan Biorach, probably up the shoulder of the north-west ridge of the Castles from a point below Loch na Davie. He says:

"Upon ascending, we first stop at the edge of what is called the 'Garife-hodie' (Garb Choire): here a wonderful and most tremendous scene presents itself to our view. An immense hollow, many hundred

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\* Pennant (vol. ii., p. 168) mentions a hill, Grianan-Athol, which for various reasons I think must be Caisteal Abhail, but it is difficult to understand how the one name could have been corrupted into the other.

In "Scotland Delineated" (1791) "for the use of young persons" (p. 66), we read, "the summits of Goat-field and Grianan-Athol soar high above the rest"; and in "The New Picture of Scotland" (1807), a guide book (vol. ii., p. 298), "Grianan-Athol" has become further corrupted into "Grinnanathol."





*IV Douglas.*

CIR MHOR AND CEUM NA CAILLICH.



feet deep, dreadfully rugged and broken, almost entirely surrounded with mountains, whose serrated summits are covered with immense tumuli of granite, exhibits to us, in very legible characters, the vast operations of nature in the formation and decomposition of our globe" (p. 80).

Three ridges radiate from the Castles—one to the north-west, to Loch na Davie; one to the north, considerably more rocky, leading to N. Glen Sannox, once the home of a considerable population, now absolutely deserted (Ramsay, p. 40; Bryce, p. 146); and the third, north-east to Suidhe Fhearghas. Good clambering can be had along the last-named till the Carlin's Leap is passed. For the route up the north side of the Leap, see *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. III., p. 205. If any one is indisposed to tackle this, let him descend the gully (north) for some thirty feet, then with a little search a grass traverse can be found leading round on to the ridge at the foot of the final rise to the Carlin's Leap. Coming from Suidhe Fhearghas, where the final rise to the Leap comes, descend along the base of the rocks for a few feet, and the traverse is the first available route on the left.

#### BEINNS BHREAC AND BHARRAIN.

The western hills with their rounded contours do not offer much scope to the rock-climber, but they are nevertheless well worth a visit for the fine views they afford of their rougher brethren in the east.

Beinn Bhreac and Beinn Bharrain are most easily ascended from Pirnmill, but as climbing men will probably be stopping at Corrie or Brodick, the following routes from those places may be mentioned.

From Brodick up Glen Rosa, over the col between Cir Mhor and A' Chir; then descend into Garbh-choire Dubh to about the 1,250 contour, and strike north-east along the flank of the north-east ridge of the Castles, keeping about the same altitude, leave Loch na Davie a little to the north, turn south-west round Beinn Bhreac and along the southern slopes of Beinn Tarsuinn, still keeping the 1,250 contour, and in due time the north end of Loch Tanna is reached. A rough path will be found from near Loch na Davie for

nearly two miles, when it disappears, but it should be struck, if possible, as it saves much time: it is quite distinct on the col between Beinn Bhreac and Beinn Tarsuinn, a little below the summit (south-west side). From Loch Tanna, a straight steep clamber of nearly 1,300 feet over mixed rock and heather lands you on the double-cairned summit of Beinn Bhreac (2,305 and 2,333 feet respectively); follow the ridge south, and after completing a semicircle of one and a half miles, the summit of Mullach Buidhe (2,368 feet), due east from the north end of Dubh Loch, is reached. No mention of this hill is made on the one-inch O.S. map, although its summit forms the highest point on the ridge, beating Beinn Bharrain by twenty-three feet according to the six-inch map. Another half-mile, and Bharrain with its two equal tops of 2,345 feet a few yards from each other, will be attained. Some "woolpacks" will be found here, and just south of the summit the ground is broken and rocky. A descent can now be made due south to Iorsa Water, and after passing Dougrie Lodge with its antlered exterior, the main coast road is reached and the Water crossed by a bridge; a twelve-mile road walk *via* Machrie farm and the "String" brings the enthusiastic pedestrian home to Brodick. From Corrie the above route can be struck by going up Glen Sannox and Coire na h' Uaimh; or a longer route, from the highest point on the Glen Chalmadale road strike south-west and keep an elevation of about 850 feet till Gleann Easan Biorach is reached, when turn south to Loch na Davie.

#### LOCH COIREIN LOCHAIN.

A more repaying route from the summit of Bheinn Bharrain than that above described, is to come back again to Beinn Bhreac (or omit Bharrain altogether), and proceed along the ridge north (avoid the north-east fork in the ridge to Meall Biorach). In half-an-hour from Beinn Bhreac the ridge wanderer will find himself above a loch which the one-inch O.S. map does not dignify with a name, but which in Ramsay's opinion "is by far the most

picturesque of all the lochs of Arran" (p. 49), and to which Bryce refers as "the lovely and secluded corrie and burn" p. 137). The loch

"is situated deep in a hollow called Corrie an Lachan. The place is perfectly lonely; not a tree is near; and except the brown heath on its margin, and a few stunted rushes by the brook, the surrounding hills are almost bare of vegetation. The water is dark and deep, and the stormy blasts of the mountain never reach its still and unruffled surface. From its edge, on all sides but that towards the sea, rise the naked hills" (Ramsay, p. 50).

### LOCH RANZA.

To come back to our ridge, we can (1) continue over Meall nan Damh past Lochan a' Mhill, nestling on the hill's shoulder, to the main coast road just south of the Glen Catacol stream; or we can (2) plunge down east into Glen Catacol, and crossing the burn go rapidly down to Catacol by the path on its east bank; \*  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles more, and we reach old-world Loch Ranza.

"The entrance to Loch Ranza appeared to me peculiarly delightful . . . the beautiful expanse of water embosomed in the hills, the peninsula with the old castle nodding over its own decay, the hamlets with the green fields and trees scattered around the margin, the hills at the head of the loch, raising their naked summits to the skies and encircled with the clouds, form altogether a most interesting picture" (*The Scots Magazine*, vol. 70, p. 22).

In "Pennant's Tour" is a very quaint woodcut entitled, "Loch Ranza Bay and the manner of taking the basking Shark." In the letterpress the reader is given a disquisition on sharks extending to nearly two pages, and the following extract shows that human nature was very much the same then as now:

"The Commissioners of forfeited estates were at considerable expence in encouraging this species of fishing; but the person they confided in most shamefully abused their goodness, so at present it is only attempted by private adventurers" (p. 170).

There is a comfortable inn at Loch Ranza, and if the pedestrian be wise he will, after his long day, stop there, and

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\* On the east side of Glen Catacol, just north of Gleann Diomhan, is the Eagle's Crag, on which are some probably unclimbed gullies.

not emulate the writer, who, on a dark September night which effectually and completely hid both the road and his own body, dragged himself on to Brodick (13 miles), and eventually reached his destination just before midnight, having thoroughly made up his mind *en route* that he was one of the biggest fools he had ever come across.

#### COCK OF ARRAN.

Assuming the night is spent at Loch Ranza, the Cock of Arran may be taken on the homeward journey next day.

"The Cock is not, as I expected, a headland, but merely an enormous mass of sandstone lying loose upon the shore, having a fancied resemblance to the head of the cock" (Jameson, p. 76).

"When seen in front from the sea, the block had the form of a cock, with expanded wings, in the act of crowing. The resemblance is now less striking, as the head has been broken off" (Bryce, 129).

From Loch Ranza a lane and track lead you *via* North Newton farm down to the shore again at another farmhouse from whence it is one mile to the Cock, and two miles to Cock farm. It is extremely rough walking along the shore, and to clamber along the heather cliffs is not much better, but if the walker perseveres till he reach Cock farm, he can then follow an old road west, striking the main road some two miles from Loch Ranza, or from the highest point of the old road he can strike over the moors to the summit of the main road to Corrie.

#### ARRAN, SOUTH.

To complete this rough survey of Arran, the southern portion of the island must just be mentioned.

The coast scenery is always interesting and sometimes bold—in fact, a walk round the island ( $55\frac{1}{2}$  miles according to the milestone at Brodick Castle) cannot be too highly recommended; and nature seems to have specially provided for it by having made for many miles a raised beach, along which the road is carried. I understand the correct thing is to roll off the circuit in thirteen hours.

The southern uplands of an average height of 1,000

feet give no climbing, but pleasant breezy walks can be had over them, and they afford fine land and sea scapes. With the aid of a map, the walker can easily select his own routes, and I will therefore only mention two. On the O.S. one-inch map a double-lined highway is seen to exist from Monamore Mill, to the south of the island near High Kilmory. The Monamore burn is crossed at a shallow ford, and soon after the highway ceases, and very scanty traces will be found of it till within a mile of the farm of Aucharcoch, from whence onwards there is a respectable lane. The route passes close to Urie Loch, surmounting the 1,000 foot contour. The walk is an enjoyable one, and is practically trackless.

The second tramp I would mention starts from Shedog up the north side of Clauchan Glen by a ruined church. Follow the burn to the top of the glen, about 1,500 feet; then descend into Gleann Dubh, keeping the left bank. Bruce's Castle will be noticed on the right, nearly a mile south-west from the junction of the burn coming down Glen Ormidale with that from Gleann Dubh. After the junction of these burns, Glen Cloy is entered, and the burnside should be kept as closely as possible right down to the sea: avoid the road down the centre of the glen.

"Thee much I love . . . because  
 I've oft explored thy glens and tangled brakes  
 . . . . .  
 Thee much I love, because I've often climbed  
 Thy mountains brown, and scaled their towering peaks"

(Landsborough, p. 15).

*Note.*—The editions of the books referred to in the above article are those mentioned in Appendix C.

F. S. GOGGS.

## APPENDIX A.

### *Descent into Glen Sannox from the "Saddle."*

PROCEEDING up Glen Rosa, the burn must be kept on your right till you are within a quarter of a mile (5 mins.) of the

"Saddle," or pass separating the two glens, when cross the burn and make for the lowest point on the pass. Do not attempt to make a descent direct from this point, but take a path to the left running along the crest of the pass some one hundred and fifty yards, then descend sharply to your right over loose turf and stone. After descending some fifty feet, you will see on your left a wall of rock, at the base of which runs a dyke, with the usual stair-like rock steps. Go down this dyke, and then the bed of a burn and the path intertwine and change into each other amid heather and rock, till the main burn in Glen Sannox is reached. When close to the main burn the path passes through some marshy ground, where it is almost lost, and finally crosses the burn over huge slabs, some one hundred yards past a big granite block with moss and heather on its summit, pitched on the bank of the burn, some two yards to the left of the path. After crossing the path, keep the left bank till within half a mile of the main road.

*Ascent to the Saddle from Glen Sannox.*

Coming from Sannox cross the burn by the bridge some half a mile from the main road, after which keep the stream on your left till the Castles on your right are fully in view, and the stream runs over huge flat slabs of granite stretching right across it; then take to the right bank of the burn. The path now runs parallel to the stream for some two hundred and fifty yards through some very marshy ground, then the burn bends away to the right, and the path, at times the bed of a trickling waterflow, and never quite separated from it, goes twisting up to the left corner of what looks like a huge rocky triangle when viewed from the glen. At the corner go to the right up a trap dyke with rock wall on your right; a rough scramble, and you are on the Saddle. Go straight on down Glen Rosa, or, to reach the lowest point on the Saddle, turn to the left along a track which is obvious.

The exact place where the path crosses the stream at the top of Glen Sannox is not easily found; but if the



walker, when he comes to the second slabby section of the river bed, looks on the other side of the burn (the right bank), he will see a little higher up a fair-sized boulder (say eight feet wide and rather less in height) with heather and grass growing on the top, and a grass-lined crack across the sloping face. The path runs two yards to the south of this boulder, and will be found roughly to follow a line drawn from it to the left corner of the rock triangle referred to above. The compass direction from the rock is south-west. In both Glen Rosa and Glen Sannox the path is not easy to find at places; but when in doubt, or when the path is momentarily lost, a safe rule is to keep to the side of the burn, and in a few yards the track will be doubtless hit off again.

*Ascent of Cir Mhor from the Saddle.*

Standing on the Saddle and facing Cir Mhor, three gullies will be noticed. One comes down practically on the summit of the Saddle, a more open gully (a water-course is perhaps a better term for it) is seen to the left, and a third gully to the left again. This third gully will be found the easiest and most direct route to the summit of Cir Mhor. It is, in fact, a natural staircase, one of the trap dykes so common in the district.

APPENDIX B.

*A Few Times and Distances.*

Brodict Pier to Brodict Post Office	-	-	-	$\frac{1}{2}$ mile.
" " Corrie Hotel	-	-	-	$5\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
(Taking the footbridge across the Rosie Burn, if the main road be kept, $\frac{1}{4}$ mile longer.)				
Brodict Post Office to entrance to Goatfell track at the Castle stables ( <i>via</i> footbridge)	-	-	-	$1\frac{1}{2}$ "
Corrie Hotel to where the Glen Sannox path strikes the main road	-	-	-	$1\frac{1}{2}$ "
Circuit of the island	-	-	-	$55\frac{1}{2}$ "
Main road at Brodict Castle stables to summit of Goatfell by ordinary route	1 hr. 25 mins.	to	$2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.	
Same, descent	-	-	$\frac{3}{4}$ hrs.	" $1\frac{1}{2}$ "
Brodict P.O. to Garbh Allt (approx. $3\frac{1}{4}$ mls.)	40 mins.			" 1 "
" " Beinn Nuis by Garbh Allt	2 hrs.			" $2\frac{1}{2}$ "
Same, descent	-	-	$1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.	" 2 "

Brodict P.O. to lowest point between Beinn	Tarsuinn and A' Chir	2 hrs.	to 2½ hours.
" "	lowest point between Cir		
	Mhor and A' Chir	- 2½ hrs.	" 2½ "
" "	the Saddle	- 2 hrs.	" 2½ "
	Same, descent	- 1½ hrs.	" 2 "
" "	Sannox (highroad) <i>via</i> the		
	Glens-	- 2½ hrs.	" 4½ "
The Saddle to summit of Goatfell		- 1 hr.	" 1½ "
" "	Cir Mhor	- 40 min.	" 1 "
Corrie (main road at White Water) to			
summit of Goatfell	-	- 1½ hrs.	" 1½ "
Same, descent	-	- ¾ hr.	" 1½ "
Glen Sannox (main road) to foot of Cir			
Mhor gullies	-	- 1½ hrs.	" 2 "
Beinn Nuis to summit of "String" road		- 1½ hrs.	" 1½ "
Entrance to Glen Sannox, summit of Glen			
Chalmadale road, Loch na Davie,			
Loch Tanna, Beinn Bhreac ridge,			
overlooking Loch Coirein Lochain,			
Glen Catacol to Catacol	-	- 6½ hrs.	" 7½ "
Brodict P.O., col between Cir Mhor and			
A' Chir, Loch Tanna, Beinn Bhreac,			
Beinn Bharrain, Dougrie, Machrie			
farm, String road, to Brodict P.O.	-	- 10 hrs.	" 12 "

## APPENDIX C.

*List of Books, &c., on Arran.*

"Scotland before 1700," ed. by P. Hume Brown.

John of Fordun (1380), p. 13.

Hector Boece (1527), p. 87.

Donald Monro (1549), p. 239.

Bishop Leslie (1578), p. 151.

Wm. Lithgow (1628), pp. 295, 296.

"Description of the Western Isles of Scotland," by Donald Monro, 1549. Reprint, 1884.

"Blaeu's Atlas," Amsterdam, 1654. Surveyed by Timothy Pont about 1608.

"A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," by M. Martin (Second Edition), 1716.

"A Tour through the whole Island of Great Britain," by Defoe, 4 vols., 1742; vol. iv., pp. 258, 259.

"A Tour in Scotland, 1769," by Thos. Pennant (Third Edition, 1774).

"Scotland Delineated . . . for the use of young persons" (1791).

"Mineralogy of the Scottish Isles," &c. &c., by Robert Jameson, 1800, 2 vols.

"View of the Mineralogy, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Fisheries of the Island of Arran," &c. &c., by Rev. James Headrick (1807).

"The New Picture of Scotland" (1807), 2 vols.

*The Scots Magazine—*

"Remarks made in a Tour to Arran during May and June 1807," by John Fleming, Bathgate, 16th January 1808.

Vol. 69 (1807), pp. 729-733, 821-825, 897-900; vol. 70 (1808), pp. 19-23, 95-99.

"A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland, including the Isle of Man," by John Macculloch, M.D. (1819), 3 vols. (Geological).

"The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland," by John Macculloch, M.D., 4 vols. (1824).

"The Scottish Tourist's Steam-boat Pocket Guide" (1835).

"Sketches of the Coasts and Islands of Scotland and of the Isle of Man," by Lord Teignmouth (1836), 2 vols.

"Excursions through the Highlands and Isles of Scotland in 1835 and 1836," by Rev. C. Lesingham Smith (1837).

"The Geology of the Island of Arran from Original Survey," by A. C. Ramsay (1841).

"Arran: a Poem in six Cantos and Excursions to Arran," &c., by Rev. David Landsborough (1847).

"Autumnal Rambles among the Scottish Mountains," by Rev. Thomas Grierson, A.M. (1850).

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- "A Night on A' Chir," by W. W. Naismith. Vol. II., p. 139.
- "Cir Mhor to Beinn Nuis," by Gilbert Thomson. Vol. III., p. 108.
- "The Granite Peaks of Arran," by W. Douglas. Vol. III., pp. 195-211.
- "Cir Mhor," by Gilbert Thomson. Vol. III., pp. 212-217.
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- "On Boulders," by T. Fraser S. Campbell. Vol. IV., pp. 52-56.
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- "Cir Mhor," by J. H. Bell (short note). Vol. IV., p. 247.
- "A Day on Cir Mhor," by W. Inglis Clark. Vol. V., pp. 29-36.
- "The Rosa Pinnacle of Cir Mhor," by W. Inglis Clark. Vol. V., pp. 143, 144.
- "A Wet Day on the Arran Hills," by James Maclay. Vol. VI., pp. 49-51.
- "Ben Nuis Chimney," by Lehmann J. Oppenheimer. Vol. VII., pp. 1-9.
- "Arran in September," by G. Bennett Gibbs. Vol. VII., pp. 50-52.
- "Chimney on Chleibhein, 'A' Gully, Cir Mhor," by H. Raeburn. Vol. VII., pp. 113-115.
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*Cairngorm Club Journal—*

- "Observations from fifty Scottish Mountains," July 1894. Vol. I., No. 3, p. 169.
- (Giving the bearings in degrees of hills seen from summit of Goatfell.)

*Climbers' Club Journal, June 1901—*

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# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.



## THE EASTERN CAIRNGORMS.

### (DIVISION II. GROUP V.)

Lat. 57° 5'; W. Lon. 3° 30'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 74, 75, 64, 65. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, No. 16.

	PAGE
BEINN AVON, 3,843 feet - - - - -	42
Meall na Gaineimh (The Sandy Hill), 2,989.	
Big Brae, 3,000 feet contour.	
Stuc Garbh Mhòr (The Great Rough Stack), 3,625 feet.	
Carn Eas (Cairn of the Waterfall), 3,556 feet.	
Creag na Dala (Crag of the Valleys), 3,189 feet.	
BEINN A' BHUIRD (Broad Mountain), N. Top 3,924 feet,	
S. Top 3,860 feet - - - - -	47
Cnap a' Chleirich (The Priest's Hillock), 3,811 feet.	
Stob an t' Sluichd (Peak of the Ravine), 3,621 feet.	
Beinn Bhreac (Spotted Mountain), 3,051 feet.	
CAIPLICH, 3,573 feet - - - - -	48
BEINN BYNAC, 3,296 feet - - - - -	48

#### PAPERS RELATING TO THE DISTRICT.

- "Beinn a' Bhuid, Ascent of," by Francis J. Dewar. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., p. 315.
- "Ben Avon," by Professor Heddle. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 225.
- "Eastern Cairngorms, Notes on," by C. B. Phillip. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., p. 174.
- "Ben Avon, Ascent of," by W. Tough. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 273.
- "In Ptarmigan Land," by Lionel Hinxman. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. IV., p. 214.
- "The Eastern Cairngorms," by Alex. I. M'Connochie. *Cairngorm Club Journal*, Vol. I., p. 236.
- "A Week-end in Glen Gairn," by Wm. Skea. *C.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 321.

Less well known than the Central Group, and yielding in impressiveness to the scenes of savage grandeur that surround Loch Avon and the headwaters of the Dee,

the Eastern Cairngorms yet present many points of interest, and exhibit in great perfection some of the characteristic features of granite mountain-scenery.

Beinn Avon, Beinn a' Bhuid, and Beinn a' Chaoruinn, with their subsidiary tops and dependencies, form integral portions of that part of the great Cairngorm plateau which extends eastwards from the Learg an Laoigh and Glen Derry, and are separated from one another by comparatively slight depressions of the central ridge or watershed.

Caiplich and Ben Bynac form a more isolated group, being cut off from the main mass by the deep valleys of Glen Nethy and Glen Avon.

BEINN AVON.—This mountain-mass may be defined as that part of the range which lies between the Avon on the north, the Gairn on the south and south-east, Glen Builg on the east, and Allt an Sluichd and the Quoich on the west.

Meall na Gainimh and the Big Brae, the eastern ramparts of Beinn Avon, rise steeply from Glen Builg and the shores of Loch Builg, but are on that side comparatively featureless, and covered with coarse sand due to the disintegration of the granite.

On the north-west face of the Big Brae rise the fine crags of East and West Meur Gorm, the latter forming a sharply-serrated ridge between the Meur Gorm (blue finger) burn and the deep corrie in which lies Lochan nan Gabhar (loch of the goats), a typical alpine tarn, whose clear green waters reflect the snow-streaked precipices that overhang its southern shores.

Three-quarters of a mile farther west, another range of granite crags falls from Stob Dubh Bruach na Fhuarain (black peak of the hillside of the springs) into the depths of Slochd an Araich. A peculiar vein of white quartz and greenish felspar is conspicuous amongst the red granite rocks in this corrie, and can be traced north-north-east for nearly two miles to the top of Da Dhruim Lom.

From Sron na h'Iolaire (nose of the eagle), the western arm of this corrie, a more or less continuous line of precipitous crags and scree slopes extends southwards to the

Garbh Coire, which forms the head of the Slochd Mhor (great ravine). This deep and rocky glen, which divides Beinn Avon from Stob an t' Sluichd, the northern spur of Beinn a' Bhuird, is one of the finest defiles in the Cairngorm range. The valley expands considerably towards its mouth, and its floor is covered with a mass of terraced morainic material, which has been cut and dressed by the streams into forms resembling huge railway embankments.

Stuc Garbh Mhòr, Carn Eas, and Creag na Dala, the subsidiary eminences south of the main watershed, present no particular points of interest. With tops generally smooth and rounded, and covered with alpine sedge or granite debris, they fall in long scree or sand-covered slopes to the lonely valley of the Upper Gairn. The burns which drain these southern slopes flow in parts of their course through deep rock gullies with waterfalls, and near the head of the Allt an Eas Mhoir (big burn of the waterfalls) can still be seen the pits of the old cairngorm-diggers.

The most striking feature of Beinn Avon are the "tors" or castellated rock-masses—weathered-out portions of harder granite—which rise in many places above the sandy plateau, and form the summit-peak of the mountain. No one who has climbed Beinn Avon will have failed to notice the smooth circular basins of varying depth and size upon the surfaces of many of these tors. These curious "wind pot-holes" have been produced by the whirling round of rainwater and loose grains of quartz by the furious gusts that eddy amongst the hollows of the wind-swept plateau. They are well described by Professor Heddle in his paper on Ben Avon.\*

One of the largest of these "tors" is the Clach Bun Ruadhtair (2,994), which rises on the west side of the Caol Ghleann, about half a mile west-north-west from Lochan nan Gabhar. It is formed of three immense masses of smooth slabby granite, of which the central one must be at least eighty feet in height. There is, as far as I am aware, no record of an ascent of this tor, but it will

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\* "Ben Avon," by Prof. Heddle, *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 225.

possibly go on the west side, and would afford a fine climb.

ROUTES.—Beinn Avon can be approached either from Strathspey on the north, or from Deeside on the south, with almost equal facility.

*Route 1.*—For the former routes, Tomintoul, sixteen miles from Ballindalloch on the G.N.S. Railway (daily mail-car), is the most convenient starting-point. But a few years ago a miserable collection of broken-windowed hovels, Tomintoul has rapidly developed into a favourite summer resort, with many well-built houses and a good hotel—"The Richmond Arms."

A pleasant drive of eight miles up the valley of the Avon through the hanging birch woods of Delavorar and Torbain, and along the green river haughs beneath the grey limestone cliffs of the Foal's Crag, brings one to the old-fashioned white-harled lodge of Inchrory, which stands at the entrance to Glen Avon, where the river bends suddenly to the west. Here the public driving road ends, the cart road to the left leads up to the keeper's house at Lagganauld, and the forest path follows the river up the glen, the right-of-way path through Glen Builg to Glen Gairn turning off on the left at the foot of the Builg burn a short way above the lodge.

The forest path passes the Linn of Avon and follows the south side of the river for two miles to the Glen Loin bridge, where it crosses to the north side of the stream, and continues on that side up to the Learg na Laoigh. In addition to the bridges at Inchrory and Glen Loin, there are (usually) three higher up the glen—at the Slochd Mhòr, four miles; at Poll Ghuisachan, five and three-quarter miles; and at Corrie na Clach, ten miles from Inchrory. The number of these higher bridges is, however, a variable quantity, as they are apt to disappear in the heavy winter and spring spates. In their absence, care should be taken in fording the river, as the current is very swift, and the clear green water proverbially deceptive as to depth.

To return to Beinn Avon. The most direct route to the top is by the path which turns off to the left half-way between Inchrory bridge and the Linn of Avon. The



track ascends steeply through Coire Clais na Fead, and then leads south and south-west over the sandy tops of Little and Big Meall na Gainimh to the Big Brae, passing Clach Bhan and other tors on which the "wind pot-holes" are particularly well developed.

From the Big Brae the climber, leaving the Meur Gorm Craigs on his right, steers west-south-west over Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar to the sky-line at the point marked 3,608 feet on the O.S., and following the watershed half a mile farther in a west-south-west direction, reaches the tor on which is the summit cairn (3,843) of Ben Avon.

The descent may be varied in several ways. An easy route follows the watershed eastwards to the head of the path which leads down to Loch Builg Cottage, and thence by the loch and through Glen Builg to Inchrory. For a more interesting route strike northward across the summit plateau, and down through the rocks on the west side of the Sron na h' Iolaire into the Slochd Mhor, crossing the river by the Slochd bridge to the Glen Avon forest path. This is a fine walk, but involves some scrambling.

*Route 2.*—From Ballater thirteen and a half miles of fair driving or cycling road up Glen Gairn to Loch Builg Cottage, at the south end of Loch Builg.

This loch, whose clear waters hold abundance of trout and char, is remarkable from its position across the watershed between Spey and Dee, and for the fact that it drains at both ends; its waters, when full, escaping northwards into Glen Builg and the Avon, while there is underground communication at the southern end through a chain of small lochans into the Gairn. From Loch Builg Cottage a path turns left up Glen Gairn, and then obliquely up the hillside, reaching the summit ridge near the head of the Feith an Laoigh.

*Route 3.*—From Crathie (distance just over ten miles). The Ballater-Braemar road is left seven and three-quarter miles west of Ballater, just east of Crathie Cottage. A signpost will be observed giving distances to Loch Builg, Gairn Shiel, &c. At first, the road passes beneath shady trees by the side of the Crathie Burn, and steadily rising for a mile or so the somewhat straggling clachan of Bridg-

end of Bush is passed, whence, looking back, magnificent views of Lochnagar and its corries may be obtained. Beyond the clachan the road is left, and we turn sharply to left by an indifferent moss-road, rejoining the Crathie Burn on its left bank—now a bare tarn. The burn is followed for nearly three miles to its source, and a quarter of a mile farther north the Duchrie Burn is reached, which gathers its waters in the Moss of Monaltrie and flows to join the Gairn. Here we are in the midst of a desolation of peat-haggs, but all around the view is extensive and varied—northwards, the “Brown Cow,” with Corndavon Lodge nestling on its southern slopes in a clump of pines; eastwards, Morven and its satellites; southwards, the ever-varying cone of Lochnagar; and lastly, to the west and north, Beinn a’ Bhuid and Beinn Avon stretching their extensive masses beyond the deep upper valley of the Gairn. The Duchrie Burn is then followed westwards to its springs, just east of the Aberarder-Loch Builg road, which is crossed (this road can, of course, be taken to Loch Builg Cottage, some three miles distant, and thence by Route 2), and the route is still continued west between the Culardoch (2,953 feet) and the Little Culardoch (2,250 feet) till the Allt Coire na Cloiche is reached, which is followed down to its junction with the Gairn, which is forded here, and its left bank is followed eastwards a few yards till, opposite an old sheepfold, we join its left-hand tributary, the Allt Phouple, which we follow, and from which the Loch Builg Cottage path is joined, and so the summit is gained *via* Route 2.

*Route 4.*—From Inver Inn (distance, about ten miles). Inver Inn is situated on the Ballater-Braemar road, nine and a half miles from Ballater. The route taken is by Aberarder road, passing the farm of Ratlich (two miles), and thence joining road which leads to Loch Builg, which may be left at point referred to in Route 3, or followed to Loch Builg, and so to summit, as in Route 2.

*Route 5.*—From Braemar by the driving road over the hill from Aberarder near *Inver* (inn), into Glen Gairn at Loch Builg, and to the summit as in Route 2; or the Gairn can be followed west as far as the Allt an Eas Mhor, and

the ascent of Stuc Garbh Mhor made by taking up this burn to the end of this track, and then turning to the right up the hillside.

BEINN A' BHUIRD.—For the most part a featureless and somewhat uninteresting mountain, the glory of Beinn a' Bhuid are the twin corries—Corrie nan Clach and Coire an Dubh Lochain—that scarp its eastern face. A narrow rocky spur divides the two corries, whose encircling walls of jointed granite afford the climbers many interesting problems of varying degrees of difficulty. At the foot of the precipices of the southern corrie lies the Dubh Lochan, the source of one of the headwaters of the Quoich.

The smooth sandy plateau that forms the summit, falls little more than two hundred feet in the two miles that separate the north (3,924) and south (3,860) tops; but that part of the mountain that extends northwards across the watershed into Banffshire has more character, and culminates in the bold rocky crest of Stob an t' Sluichd (3,621), that falls eastwards in the steep cliffs of Càrn nam Mult into Slochd Mhòr.

Braemar is the centre for Beinn a' Bhuid. The principal routes to the eastern corries and south top are—

(1.) Cross the Dee at the castle, and follow the path through Gleann an t' Slugain, past Ciach Lodge to the Quoich, and then left, up the ridge to the south top (seven and a half miles).

(2.) Cross the Victoria Bridge at Mar Lodge, and join the hill road behind the Lodge, leading up by the right bank of the Quoich Water, leaving the road at the point marked (2,090 feet) on the one-inch map and making a straight line for the south top. About half-way between the point where the road is left and the summit, a very fine cold well is passed, which is very welcome on a hot day as one toils up the steep southern slope of the mountain (distance from Braemar by this route about ten miles); and,

(3.) From Derry Lodge, Beinn a' Bhuid may be reached by a very interesting route, which has the advantage of being shorter than the others above referred to. From the Lodge follow the turns of Dee Road for a little over a mile,

then turn to the left, following the course of a stream which flows over the road, but which in summer is practically dry. At an altitude of 1,750 turn to the right, leaving the stream on the left, and follow up the hillside to the sky-line and descend, when very shortly a stream is met which joins the Quoich. This stream is followed, and the road of Route 2 is joined at a point about three miles from Mar Lodge, and from here Route 3 is followed to the top.

CAIPLICH and BEINN BYNAC.—There appears to be some confusion between these two names, which seem to be applied to the same mountain according as it is viewed from Speyside or from Glen Avon. On the six-inch O.S., Caiplich is the name given to the Inverness-shire or north end of the ridge, which is also the highest point (3,573); Beinn Bynac to the south or Banffshire end (3,296).

The summit ridge is in parts rough, and covered with granite blocks. A short distance down the eastern slope of Bynac rise the huge castle-like masses known as the Barns of Bynac, while the Little Barns of Bynac are the smaller tors along the southern part of the ridge. This somewhat inaccessible mountain is best approached from Nethy Bridge on Speyside (Station G.N.S. Railway Hotel, good).

A beautiful drive of seven miles through the Abernethy Forest leads to Rebhoan, whence turn left to the bridge over the Nethy, cross, and follow the path up the hill—the Learg an Laoigh—for about two and a half miles, and then take up the hillside on the right to the sky-line of Caiplich.

For another but more difficult route, instead of crossing the bridge, follow the Nethy for two and a half miles to the Allt a' Choire Deirg, a steep burn which falls from the ridge of Bynac, through a deep and rocky ravine, and the ascent of which involves a fair amount of climbing near the top. Bynac can also be reached by way of Glen Avon from Inchrory (twelve miles), or direct from Tomintoul by Delnabo, past the fine gorge of the Ailnack, and up the Water of Caiplich.

L. W. H. AND W. G.

# THE LOCHNAGAR GROUP.

## (DIVISION II., GROUP VI.)

Lat. 56° 57'; W. Lon. 3° 14'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 65. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 16.

	PAGE
I. PRELIMINARY - - - - -	50
II. THE ROUTES TO LOCHNAGAR AND THE BROAD CAIRN RANGE - - - - -	53
<i>A. Lochnagar—</i>	
1. The Glen Muick Roads - - - - -	53
2. The Alltnaguibhsaich Path - - - - -	53
3. Ascent by the Black Spout - - - - -	55
4. Ascent by the Glas Allt - - - - -	55
5. Ascent from the Dubh Loch - - - - -	56
6. Ascents from Clova <i>via</i> Glen Doll and the Capel Mounth - - - - -	56
7. Ascents from Crathie - - - - -	56
8. Ascents from Braemar - - - - -	58
<i>B. The Broad Cairn Range—</i>	
1. Ascent from the Dubh Loch - - - - -	58
2. Ascents from Clova - - - - -	58
3. Ascent from Spital of Muick - - - - -	59
III. THE TOPS - - - - -	59
<i>A. Lochnagar—</i>	
1. Cac Carn Beag (3,786 feet) - - - - -	59
2. Cac Carn Mor (3,768 feet) - - - - -	60
3. Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe (3,191 feet) - - - - -	60
4. Meikle Pap (3,210 feet) - - - - -	60
5. Cuidhe Crom (3,552 feet) - - - - -	61
6. Little Pap (c. 3,000 feet) - - - - -	61
7. Creag a' Ghlas-uillt (3,450 feet) - - - - -	61
8. Carn a' Choire Bhoidheach (3,630 feet) - - - - -	61
9. Cairn of Corbreach (3,571 feet) - - - - -	61
10. Cairn an t' Sagairt Mor (3,430 feet) - - - - -	61
11. Cairn an t' Sagairt Beag (3,424 feet) - - - - -	62
<i>B. The Broad Cairn Range—</i>	
1. Broad Cairn (3,268 feet) - - - - -	62
2. Cairn Bannoch (3,314 feet) - - - - -	62
3. Creag an Dubh Loch (3,100 feet) - - - - -	62
4. Fafernle (3,274 feet) - - - - -	63

	PAGE
5. Creag Leachdach (c. 3,000 feet) - - -	63
6. Cairn of Gowal (3,219 feet) - - -	63
7. Craig of Gowal (3,027 feet) - - -	63
8. Crow Craigies (c. 3,000 feet) - - -	63
IV. MINOR SUMMITS - - - - -	63
V. THE CLIMBS - - - - -	64
1. The Douglas Gully - - - - -	65
2. The Tough-Brown Ridge - - - - -	67
3. The Raeburn Gully - - - - -	68
4. The Black Spout Pinnacle - - - - -	68
5. The Black Spout and its side Gully - - -	69
6. West Gully Climb - - - - -	69
VI. LOCHS AND STREAMS - - - - -	70

### I. PRELIMINARY.

It will be seen from the foregoing lists of peaks, that it is proposed to include in this section not merely Lochnagar proper, with its complement of eleven separate tops, but also the adjacent, though distinct range, of which Broad Cairn, Cairn Bannoch, and Fafernle are the principal eminences. The district thus embraced, forms an almost equilateral triangle, of which one angle is at Ballater, another at Braemar, and the third is at the junction of Glen Doll and Glen Clova. One side of this triangle is the Dee, another is the Capel Mounth path and the Muick, while the third is formed partly by the Clunie and its tributary from Loch Callater, and partly by the White Water. Lochnagar is wholly in the county of Aberdeen, and the Broad Cairn range is partly in that county and partly in the county of Forfar. The cairns of five summits of the range, Broad Cairn, Cairn of Gowal, Cairn Bannoch, Fafernle, and Knaps of Fafernle, are on the county march, two of the leading tops, Craig of Gowal and Crow Craigies, are entirely in Forfarshire.

The mountain mass which is to be described in this article, has many notable characteristics. Lochnagar itself has been described by Sir Archibald Geikie,\* as "a broad undulating moorland, upwards of a mile and a half long, gently sloping southward to Loch Muick, and ending in the

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\* "The Scenery of Scotland," p. 195.



LOCHNAGAR.

*W. Lamond Howie.*





north at the edge of a range of granite precipices." Part of these precipices forms the great north-east corrie of the mountain, one of the finest climbing grounds in Scotland. About a mile to the west of the great corrie, and overhanging Lochan an Eoin, is another corrie facing the north, the cliffs of which, over five hundred feet in height, are still virgin ground to the climber, as also are the crags of the Dubh Loch, which lies deep and almost hidden between Lochnagar and Broad Cairn. The culminating peak of the whole mass is the Cac Carn Beag of Lochnagar.

Twenty of our Scottish mountains exceed Lochnagar in height, but very few of them have finer features than the lone Dubh Loch or the "steep frowning glories" of the great north-east corrie. None, it may be safely said, has a greater wealth of interesting associations. The lofty peaked outline of the Cac Carn Beag, as seen from Deeside, is one of the most familiar of Scottish mountain scenes. It forms the appropriate background of one of John Phillip's best known pictures—his fine portrait of the Prince Consort. Three etchings of the mountain are included in Fennell Robson's "Scenery of the Grampian Mountains," and that artist's opinion is that "as a picturesque object, few mountains in the Grampian range are more interesting." \* In recent days, the royal residence of Balmoral, and the frequent references to Lochnagar, in the late Queen's "Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands," have gathered fresh interests round the mountain. But it is, of course, the genius of Byron that has made "Dark Lochnagar" really famous. He has celebrated the mountain, not merely in poetry, but also in prose, as "one of the most sublime and picturesque among the 'Caledonian Alps.'" Much of the poet's boyhood was spent at Ballaterach, a farm about three miles from Ballater.

The name, Lochnagar, is a peculiar one for a mountain, and, like the name "The Cairngorm Mountains," it seems to have come into vogue as a mountain name only in comparatively modern times. The name properly belongs

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\* "Scenery of the Grampian Mountains," No. 31.

to the small loch which lies under the crags of the great corrie. In the oldest map of the district—the map of the counties of Aberdeen and Banff, by Robert Gordon of Straloch, which appears in Blaeu's Atlas (published in 1654)—this loch is named "L. Garr." An eminence near the loch is, in the same map, named "Ben Chichnes," and this appears to be the first instance of the now disused name of "The Benchinnans," a name which was strictly applicable to the range of Lochnagar which, including the Meikle Pap and the Little Pap, extends from the summit southwards towards Loch Muick.\* The meaning of the word "Lochnagar" is doubtful. It has been variously interpreted by different authorities as "The Loch of the Goat" and "The Loch of Sobbing and Wailing."† In olden times the name given to the mountain was "The White Mounth," and this still survives in the name "White Mounts" which, in the Ordnance Survey Maps, is applied to the high tableland of the mountain, which stretches between the edge of the great corrie and the Dubh Loch.

As already indicated, Lochnagar is composed of granite which is of a reddish, coarse-grained texture, not unlike the red rocks of the Cairngorms. The rock has decomposed extensively in the corries and precipices of the mountain, and, in consequence, climbers frequently encounter rotten masses. Botanically, the mountain is extremely rich.‡

Another characteristic may be mentioned. Lochnagar is wholly situated in the royal deer-forest of Balmoral, but it is, nevertheless, a mountain to which access is always open. It may be climbed at all seasons from Ballater, Braemar, or Clova. The Alltnaguibhsaich path to the summit was, indeed, originally constructed largely

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\* *The Cairngorm Club Journal*, vol. ii., p. 36.

† "Lochnagar," by A. I. M'Connochie, pp. 17, 18.

‡ For a list of the flowering plants and ferns of Lochnagar, reference may be made to the chapter on the Botany of the Mountain, by Mr John Roy, LL.D., included in Mr A. I. M'Connochie's interesting monograph "Lochnagar," a work to which the present writer has been much indebted.

for the benefit of tourists, by the orders and at the expense of Queen Victoria. Recently it has been greatly improved at the instance of King Edward.

## II. THE ROUTES TO LOCHNAGAR AND THE BROAD CAIRN RANGE.

### *A. LOCHNAGAR.*

#### *1. The Glen Muick Roads.*

As a rule the climber from a distance will find that Ballater, which is distant about fourteen miles from the summit of the mountain, is his most convenient starting-point. The route from Ballater is by way of Glen Muick, and there are fair cycling and driving roads up both sides of the glen. The road on the west side is the better and more convenient, but pedestrians will find a short cut by taking the east road for about two miles, and then crossing to the west side of the Muick at Mill of Sterin. If the west road is taken all the way, Birkhall is passed about three miles from Ballater, and shortly thereafter, Mill of Sterin, after which the road is the private property of His Majesty. The same royal courtesy, however, to which climbers are indebted for free access to the mountain, allows them also a restricted use of this road. It leads close past the beautiful Linn of Muick (about five miles from Ballater), and in other two miles the farmhouse of Inschnabobbart, on the west side of the road, is reached. Here a party of two or three climbers can always find comfortable accommodation. Little more than a mile beyond Inschnabobbart is Alltnaguibhsaich Lodge, and just short of the Lodge, on the near side of the Allt, the path to Lochnagar leaves the road. When the road on the west side is not open, conveyances may be driven up the east road as far as Inschnabobbart ford, or all the way to Spital of Muick, where there is a foot-bridge, over which a path leads to Alltnaguibhsaich Lodge.

#### *2. The Alltnaguibhsaich Path.*

This path leads first through the fir wood that surrounds the Lodge, and then, with the burn on the left all the way,

winds up the gorge of Clashrathen, and along the shoulder of Conachcraig (2,827) till, after about forty minutes' walking from the Glen Muick road, a col is reached, on the other side of which is Glen Gelder, through which the Gelder flows to the Dee. Up to this point the range of the Little Pap, the Cuidhe Crom, and the Meikle Pap is in full view, and is the most prominent object of the landscape, though in a clear day a glimpse may be got over the depression between the Meikle Pap and the Cuidhe Crom of the top of the black crags at the edge of the great corrie. At the col the path to the summit turns to the left, crossing a pony path which leads from Glasallt Shiel, *via* the Glasallt Falls, the east base of the Little Pap and Cuidhe Crom and Glen Gelder, to Balmoral. After the col, the mountain path, degenerating in quality, rounds the base of the Meikle Pap, after which the foot of the "Ladder" up the Cuidhe Crom is soon reached. Before the ascent of the "Ladder" is begun, however, a divergence should be made to the right, to the saddle between the Cuidhe Crom and the Meikle Pap. From the saddle the top of the Meikle Pap may be reached in about ten minutes. Both from the saddle and from the Pap the view, summer or winter, is superb. The dark and gloomy loch is at one's feet, and in front are "the crags that are wild and majestic"—most majestic, perhaps, in the dazzling white of their winter coat. On the right is the well-wooded valley of the Dee.

The top of the "Ladder" is soon reached, and what follows is an easy walk along the edge of the corrie. In about half an hour the cairn of the Cac Carn Mor is attained, and, in five minutes more, the natural rocky top of the Cac Carn Beag.

The walk from the top of the "Ladder" is full of interest. It will be observed in the first place, that the great corrie is really a double corrie, the westmost division being by far the finer. There is indeed little climbing in the east corrie. Its grassy sides are scored with several well-worn water runs, the most prominent of which is known as the Red Spout. All of them may be ascended with comparative ease. The west corrie, on the other hand,

it will be seen, is all rocks, and as one walks along the edge, the tops of the climbs that will be described in the fifth section of this article are passed. Midway between the Cac Carn Mor and the Cac Carn Beag is the top of the well-known Black Spout, and, a few yards from the former of these cairns, there emerges a well-known side gully of that Spout.

The descent from the Cac Carn Beag to Alltnaguibhsaich Lodge may be made with comfort in about an hour and a half.

### *3. Ascent by the Black Spout.*

This is a favourite ascent of Lochnagar. The foot of the Spout is best reached by way of the col between the Meikle Pap and the Cuidhe Crom. From this point one should work round the upper end of the loch, keeping as near as possible to the foot of the crags. The ascent of the Spout itself, under summer conditions, is perfectly simple—for the most part, a scramble over rough boulders—and it may be accomplished in less than half an hour. In winter, the ascent may present any degree of ease or difficulty. The steepest angle of the Spout is within a few yards of the top, where it is about  $50^{\circ}$ . Farther down, the angle is considerably less than  $40^{\circ}$ .

### *4. Ascent by the Glas Allt.*

To reach the Glas Allt and the Dubh Loch, the Glen Muick driving road is continued past Alltnaguibhsaich Lodge. For the most part, the road here runs close to the north-west shore of Loch Muick, at the far end of which is the Glasallt Shiel, the farthest out lodge of the Balmoral Forest. Right at the back of the lodge, high up on the hill slope, are the fine falls of the Glas Allt. The pony path to Balmoral should be taken up the side of the stream, and past the falls till the Glas Allt ford is reached, and then, keeping by the stream and its northern branch, the climber may soon join the path to the summit along the top of the precipices, which has been already described.

### 5. *Ascent from the Dubh Loch.*

Those who are bound for the Dubh Loch pass the Glasallt Shiel, from which there is a pony path all the way to the loch, by the side of a burn, the Allt an Dubh Loch, which runs from that loch to Loch Muick, and separates the Broad Cairn range from Lochnagar. The Dubh Loch lies at an altitude of 2,091 feet. The untried rocks surrounding it should give some sport, and there is a long gully from the loch up the rocky side of Cairn Bannoch, which should make a good winter climb. From the upper end of the Dubh Loch, one may hold almost due north to the Cac Carn Beag, which lies at a distance of about two miles, as the crow flies; but a more interesting way is to follow the main course of the burn which runs into the loch to its source on Carn an t' Sagairt Mor, the "Cairn Taggart" of Bartholomew's map. On the way to the summit of Cairn an t' Sagairt Mor, the Braemar path to Lochnagar is crossed, and from that summit, one may pass on to Carn an t' Sagairt Beag, thence to the top of the unclimbed precipices above Lochan an Eoin, and then, joining the Braemar path, one will soon reach the Cac Carn Mor, and then the Cac Carn Beag. From the top of Carn an t' Sagairt Mor to the Cac Carn Beag is about an hour's walk.

### 6. *Ascents from Clova via Glen Doll and the Capel Mounth.*

For the first of these ascents Glen Clova is followed to Braedownie, and then the right-of-way track up Glen Doll is taken as far as near the head of Loch Callater. A course taken due north from that point brings one, in about a mile, to the Braemar path. Those taking the rather roundabout way *via* the Capel Mounth path, follow that path all the way to Spital of Muick. The Muick is there crossed, and the Alltnaguibhsaich path taken to the summit.

### 7. *Ascents from Crathie.*

On the Crathie side, Lochnagar is best approached from Balmoral or from the Inver Inn, two miles west of

the Castle. There are, however, at certain seasons, easily understood difficulties in the way of reaching Lochnagar from either of these points. From Balmoral, the ascent is made by way of the pony path up Glen Gelder, which has been already mentioned. From Inver, the direct route is up the Glen Gelder path as far as Glen Gelder Shiel, and over Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe.

#### 8. *Ascents from Braemar.*

The regulation Braemar route is by way of Glen Clunie and Glen Callater. The Glen Clunie road (always in good order) is followed for two miles, and then, turning to the left at Auchallater, the miserable Glen Callater road must be taken. It terminates at the Lodge at the lower end of the loch, three miles from Auchallater. From the Lodge, a footpath leads upwards in an easterly direction along the southern face of Creag na Loch for about a mile. Thereafter its course is north-easterly, and in about another mile, it begins to round the west and south sides of Carn an t' Sagairt Mor at a height of slightly over 3,000 feet. From Cairn an t' Sagairt Mor, the path leads almost due west to the Cac Carn Mor.

Another good route that may be taken either from Braemar or Crathie, is through the Ballochbuie Forest past the falls of the Garbh Allt, and up the Allt Lochan an Eoin, to the Sandy Loch, the "Lochan an Eoin" of the O.S. maps. From the loch the Cac Carn Beag may be reached, either by the western or the easier eastern face of the mountain. It is interesting to note that this was practically the route taken by Lord Byron on the occasion, in 1803, when he climbed the mountain. The following somewhat *naïve* account of the visit was given, to a gentleman who is still alive, by the gillie, John Davidson, who accompanied the poet as guide: "We . . . crossed the Dee by the old bridge [at Invercauld] and then up the Glen of the Garawalt (Garbh-allt). His lordship rested often and looked at the scenery. He was very quiet and did not often speak to me. When we began to climb the crags of Loch-an-uan (Eoin) I thought he would not be

able to scramble up, for he was rather lame, and I offered to assist him, but he would not have any help from me. When we got to the top, he sat a long time on the edge of the rocks, looking about him, but seldom asked me any questions, and we returned the same way we came up." \* Byron was then about fifteen years of age.

## B. THE BROAD CAIRN RANGE.

### 1. *Ascent from the Dubh Loch.*

The whole Broad Cairn range may be conveniently reached from the Dubh Loch path. The Allt an Dubh Loch must be crossed, and the steep north side of Broad Cairn ascended; but when the summit of that mountain is attained, all the other peaks of the range are within an easy walk. There is less than a hundred feet between the heights of the three principal tops—Broad Cairn, Cairn Bannoch, and Fafernle; the depressions between them are barely perceptible, and the going is extraordinarily good.

### 2. *Ascents from Clova.*

The Glen road is taken to Braedownie, and then turning to the right, and keeping the rocky Craig Mellan on the left, the path that leads by the side of the South Esk to the ruined shooting-box of Bachnagairn will be followed. The "paradise of pines" at Bachnagairn, and the fine waterfall on the Esk, are alone well worth a visit. From Bachnagairn there is a winding pathway towards the summit of Broad Cairn, which lies eight miles north-west of Milton Clova.

Another way is to follow the right-of-way path from Braedownie up Glen Doll, and strike off to the right at the steep section of that path, short of the Tolmount, which is known as "Jock's Road." If a course due north is then taken, Knaps of Fafernle will be reached in about a mile, and another mile brings one to Fafernle and Cairn Bannoch.

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\* "The Records of Invercauld," New Spalding Club, ed. by Rev. J. G. Michie, p. 389.



### 3. *Ascent from Spital of Muick.*

Broad Cairn is frequently climbed from Spital. A foot-path is followed, which keeps close to the south side of Loch Muick as far as the point where the Black Burn joins the loch, and then, zig-zagging up the corrie of the Black Burn, the path proceeds round the top of the plateau at the upper end of the loch, till it joins the path from Bachnagairn. The view from the plateau across to the silver streak of the Glas Allt Falls, is a thing to be remembered by one who has had the good fortune to see the falls in spate.

## III. THE TOPS.

### A. LOCHNAGAR.

#### 1. *Cac Carn Beag (3,786 feet).*

This natural cairn is the peak that forms the characteristic feature in the distant view of Lochnagar from the north. From the south the appearance of the mountain is distinctly disappointing. The peaked ridge is lost, and all that is seen is the rounded mass of the uplands between the Dubh Loch and the great corrie.

The view from the Cac Carn Beag is, of course, most extensive, ranging from the Pentlands on the south to beyond the Moray Firth on the north. Far away on the west, Ben Cruachan and Ben Nevis may be distinguished. Among the lesser heights at a distance that are easily seen on a clear day, the most noticeable are, on the one hand, the Fife Lomonds, and, on the other, Bennachie. Nearer at hand are Morven, and the shapely cone of Mount Keen, the highest of the lower Deeside hills, with Kerloch and Mount Battack close beside. The valley of the Dee, near Balmoral, is also visible, but the Castle is not seen, the lesser summit of Craig Gowan intercepting the view. But the great view is that of the Cairngorms. The whole of that great range from Ben Bhrotain, Cairn Toul, and the precipices of Braeriach on the left, on past Ben Macdhuì and Cairngorm, to the corries of Beinn a' Bhuird and the "barns" of Ben Avon on the right, is spread out in pano-

ramic outline, and, summer or winter, is always the most striking feature in the prospect from Lochnagar.

The Cac Carn Beag is nearly six miles due south of Balmoral, three and a half miles due west of Alltnaguibhsaich Lodge, and three miles north-west of the Glasallt Shiel.

## 2. *Cac Carn Mor* (3,768 feet).

This is the summit which in the O.S. maps is named "Lochnagar." It is only slightly raised above the surrounding plateau, and is distinguished by an artificial cairn built over one or two large boulders. It is within a few yards of the edge of the precipice, and is distant about a third of a mile nearly due south from the Cac Carn Beag.

## 3. *Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe* (pron. *Syvie*, the hill of the corrie of the foxes' den, 3,191 feet).

In the one-inch O.S. map, this top is said to be 3,121 feet in height, but the greater height is the correct one. It is situated about three-quarters of a mile north of the Cac Carn Beag. The appropriateness of the name may be gathered from the fact that one fox-hunter is said to have killed over eleven hundred foxes in this district in a period of eleven years. Another reminiscence of these former inhabitants is to be found in the name of the Fox Cairn Well, near the foot of the Meikle Pap.\*

## 4. *Meikle Pap* (3,210 feet).

The isolated position of this summit makes it one of the most prominent of all the Lochnagar tops. It is situated at the head of Glen Gelder, right opposite the great corrie, exactly a mile due east of the Cac Carn Beag, and is best ascended from the col between it and Cuidhe Crom. An inscribed boulder and cairn on its northern slope marks the spot where Prince Albert shot his last stag.

The modern name of this top is a translation of the old Gaelic name "Ciche Mhor."†

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\* "Lochnagar," by A. I. M'Connachie, p. 80.

† "Lochnagar," by A. I. M'Connachie, p. 20.

5. *Cuidhe Crom (the bent [snow] wreath, 3,552 feet).*

Cuidhe Crom is about a mile south of the Meikle Pap, and its cairn is reached in a few minutes from the top of the Ladder. Its rounded summit falls away steeply on the east side, affording splendid glissading ground.

6. *Little Pap (c. 3,000 feet).*

This is the old "Ciche Beag," a shapely little top, about half a mile south-east of the Cuidhe Crom. The descent to it from the Cuidhe Crom is rather rough.

7. *Creag a' Ghlas-Uillt (c. 3,450 feet).*

This is an ill-defined top, without a cairn, named only on the six-inch O.S. maps, and situated between the Glas Allt and a parallel burn, the Allt an Lochan Buidhe, about a mile south of the Cac Carn Mor. Its height is not given in the O.S. maps.

8. *Carn a' Choire Bhoidheach (the cairn of the beautiful corries, c. 3,630 feet).*

The name of this top is given only on the six-inch O.S. map, and no map gives its height. It lies immediately to the south of the Braemar path, about a mile and a half south-west of the Cac Carn Mor. There is no cairn.

9. *Cairn of Corbreach (3,571 feet).*

This summit (often called Stuc Eoin) lies close to the north of the Braemar path, at the top of the crags of the huge north corrie overlooking Lochan an Eoin (the "Loch Dubh" of the O.S. maps). It has no cairn, and, viewed from the south, very little of a summit is visible. The striking appearance, however, which the rocks at this point have from the Ballater-Braemar road, makes it well worthy of being ranked as a separate top.

10. *Carn an t' Sagairt Mor (the big cairn of the priest, 3,430 feet).*

Carn an t' Sagairt Mor is two and a half miles south-

west of the Cac Carn Beag, and is half encircled by the Braemar path. Its summit is marked by a cairn. The name is to be found only on the six-inch O.S. maps.

11. *Carn an t' Sagairt Beag (the little cairn of the priest, 3,424 feet).*

This name also is to be found only on the six-inch O.S. map. The summit is about half a mile east by north of Carn an t' Sagairt Mor. There is a dip of nearly three hundred feet between the two tops.

*B. THE BROAD CAIRN RANGE.*

1. *Broad Cairn (3,268 feet).*

Broad Cairn is an apparent misnomer, for the summit of the mountain, which lies little more than half a mile due south from the lower end of the Dubh Loch, forms a rocky cone anything but broad. "Broad," however, as might be supposed, is a corruption, and is said to be derived from the same root as the first syllable of Breadalbane. The meaning of the name is said to be "the cairn of the hilly country."\* The view from the summit is good, though not particularly extensive, stretching from Mount Keen, Mount Battock, and Clochnaben, on the east, to the Glas Maol and Cairn na Glasha on the south-west and the Cairngorms on the north-west. To the south, the view extends to the Fife Lomonds, but the north view is limited to summits of Lochnagar. The Cac Carn Beag is not seen, but the Cac Carn Mor, Cuidhe Crom, and the Little Pap are prominent.

2. *Cairn Bannoch (3,314 feet).*

This summit, the highest of the range, is about a mile and a quarter north-west of Broad Cairn. There is hardly any dip in the grassy walk between the two summits.

3. *Creag an Dubh Loch (3,100 feet).*

This is the top of the crags to the south of the Dubh

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\* *The Cairngorm Club Journal*, ii., p. 65.

Loch. It lies about three-quarters of a mile north-west of Broad Cairn.

4. *Fafern timer (3,274 feet).*

Fafern timer overlooks the top of Glen Callatar on the one hand, and the sources of the Esk on the other. It is situated about two miles east-south-east of the loch, nearly two miles from Broad Cairn, and half a mile west of Cairn Bannoch. Due south runs a ridge called Shank of Fafern timer (3,059), at the extremity of which are the eminences known as the Knaps of Fafern timer (2,997-2,971). From Fafern timer, the boundary line between the counties of Aberdeen and Forfar runs on, *via* the Knaps, to the Tolmount and Carn na Glasha.

5. *Creag Leachdach (c. 3,000 feet).*

This is a rocky top at the head of Glen Callatar, nearly three-quarters of a mile south-west of Fafern timer, and about half a mile north-west of Knaps of Fafern timer.

6. *Cairn of Gowal (3,219 feet).*

This top is situated half a mile south-east of Cairn Bannoch.

7. *Craig of Gowal (3,027 feet).*

This top lies three-quarters of a mile south-west of Broad Cairn on the other side of the hollow, down which the Burn of Gowal runs to join the Esk a mile west of Bachnagairn. Loch Esk is about a mile and a half to the south-east.

8. *Crow Craigies (c. 3,000 feet).*

Crow Craigies is situated midway between Loch Esk and the Tolmount, from which well-known summit it is distant about half a mile to the east. It lies also at about the same distance south of Knaps of Fafern timer.

#### IV.—MINOR SUMMITS.

The minor summits are numerous and interesting. Along the valley of the Muick, a ridge stretches south-westwards from Birkhall, of which the principal tops are the Coyle of Muick (1,956), Craig Meggan, Meall Gorm

(1,809), and Conachcraig (2,827). The sharp but shapely grassy tops of the Coyles (*the* Coyle, and Creag Bheag, 1,700) are prominent in the foreground of the Ballater view of Lochnagar, and Conach Craig, the top of which is a mass of huge boulders, forms in itself an interesting climb, and affords a capital view of Lochnagar. Farther up the glen beyond Alltnaguibhsaich Lodge, An t' Sron (the nose) predominates over the lower end of Loch Muick, and reaches a height of 2,326 feet. To the south-west of An t' Sron lies Monelpie Moss (the jagged moss), out of which rises the Allt Dearg, a picturesque stream falling into the loch.

South of Loch Muick, and forming a continuation eastwards of the Broad Cairn range, are Little Cairn (2,802), Sandy Hillock (2,511), and Dog Hillock (2,400), all lying on the county march; but the most striking summit at this corner of the group is the rocky Craig Mellan (2,815) at the junction of Glen Doll and the valley of the Esk. The cliffs on its east face are very fine.

Along Deeside, the minor summits are nearly all crowned by huge and not very slightly pyramidal cairns—memorials of various members of the Royal Family. The principal of these are—Ripe Hill (1,678), with the Duke of Edinburgh's Cairn; Canop (1,477), with a cairn to the late Emperor and Empress Frederick ("the Princess Royal's Cairn"); and Creag an Lurachain (1,437), with a huge pyramid to the memory of Prince Albert.

The highest of all the minor tops is Creag Liath (2,826), nearly a mile due north of Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe, and a mile and a half to the north-west of Creag Liath is Carn Fiaclan (2,703).

On the Callater side the chief summits are, Carn nan Sgliat (2,260), Creag nan Leachda (2,549), and Meall an t' Sluichd (2,771), the last of which lies right above the little Loch Phàdruig.

## V. THE CLIMBS.

As has been indicated, the only rocks on Lochnagar that have received attention from climbers are those of the western division of the great corrie, and the best way of



# LOCHNAGAR.

A-B, Douglas' Gully.  
C, Highest point reached.  
D-E, Tough-Brown Ridge.

F-G, Raeburn's Gully.  
H, Black Spout Pinnacle.  
J-K, Black Spout Side Gully.

L-M, Black Spout.  
N-O, West Gully Clim.

cession of difficult pitches made up of steep water-worn rocks with rotten bits intermingled, and between four and five hundred feet from the foot the real crux of the climb has to be faced. In front is a perpendicular wall of dark rock, which is frankly and palpably impossible, and on the right hand there is no way of escape. On the left a way has been forced for some distance, by keeping close under the perpendicular wall, and then traversing backwards to the left, to the point C of the sketch, which is right above the left-hand wall of the top part of the gully. Another way of reaching the same point is by a narrow crack close to the left side of the gully some little distance below the perpendicular rock. Beyond this point no progress has been made. The farther route has been prospected from the top, and reported not to be impossible; but it seems not too much to say that it would be a distinctly difficult, not to say dangerous climb.\*

The first attempt on this gully was made on 10th March 1893, by Messrs Douglas and Gibson, who on that occasion found the gully full of hard snow. They reached the foot of the perpendicular rock in two and a half hours, and then, finding no way of escape, descended in an hour.†

Another attempt, with the snow in a similar condition, was made by Messrs Brown and Duncan, in February 1897, but this party got no higher than the pioneers of 1893.

No further trial was made till April 1901, when Messrs Raeburn, Garden, Duncan, and Crombie assayed the climb. Once again, the perpendicular rock blocked the way.‡

A summer climb was next tried on 14th July 1901, by Messrs Raeburn, Garden, and Duncan, and this time the advance to the left was made.‡

Another visit was paid to the gully in October 1902 by Messrs Raeburn, Mackay, and Goggs, when, although the glazed condition of the rocks made a climb from the foot impossible on the day it was tried, the top was prospected on another day by Raeburn, who was lowered from

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\* *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. VII., p. 186.

† *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. II., p. 246.

‡ *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. VI., p. 231.



the top of the gully to within about thirty feet of the point reached in July 1901.\*

## *2. The Tough-Brown Ridge.*

This climb, outlined from D to E on the sketch, was achieved by Messrs Tough and Brown in August 1896.† Starting not many yards from the foot of the Douglas Gully, this climb may be roughly described as a diagonal traverse of the central buttress of the corrie, till ultimately the extreme right-hand ridge of the buttress which is followed to the top is reached about a hundred feet from the top of the cliffs. The buttress is divided by two shallow and narrow gullies into three vertical sections of unequal breadth, the middle section being by far the narrowest. The westmost section has a very distinct ridge on the extreme right, which runs right up to the summit plateau, and it was Messrs Brown and Tough's first intention to follow this ridge from top to bottom. The rocks at the foot of the ridge, however, make a frontal attack impossible, and recourse was accordingly had to the gradual traverse indicated in the sketch.

For the first hundred feet or so the smoothness of the rocks, and the downward dip of the stratification, made the climbing rather difficult, and after crossing the first gully the party found it by no means easy to reach the second gully. Between the two gullies an attempt was made to climb straight up, but this was prevented by an impossible slabby rock face about twenty feet high, and ultimately the second gully was crossed about a hundred and fifty feet above the screes. From the second gully, a somewhat devious course, first up its western wall, and then over a succession of moss and grass-grown slabs and ledges, led the party to the edge of the ridge, where the nature of the climbing changed immediately for the better. The rocks, although steep, were found to be so much broken up and shattered as to form a natural staircase, and the top of the

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\* *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. VII., p. 185.

† *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. IV., p. 35; *Cairngorm Club Journal*, Vol. I., p. 395.

cliffs was reached without further difficulty. The time spent by the party on the climb was three hours.

This climb has not been repeated, and there is no record of any other climbs on this great buttress, with the exception of an unsuccessful attempt to climb the ridge from a point a few yards to the right of the line of the westmost of the two gullies.\*

### 3. *The Raeburn Gully.*

The position of this gully is best indicated by describing it as the gully of which the Tough-Brown ridge forms the eastern wall, and as will be seen from the sketch (F to G) it curves upwards in an easterly direction to the top of the corrie.

This gully was climbed on 12th November 1898, by Messrs Raeburn, Rennie, and Lawson.† The angle of the gully is not severe to begin with, and the party made easy progress till confronted by the main difficulty of the climb—a great overhanging block which chokes the whole width of the gully, and which was not surmounted without a back from the second man, and the assistance of an ice-axe, hung by the pick from the edge of the jammed block. Above this great chock stone the gully was found to be filled by a series of gigantic boulders crowned by one more gigantic than the others, which seemed at first to completely stop all progress. This obstacle was, however, avoided by crawling underneath it, where a small chimney afforded a way of escape. The top part of the gully was filled with soft snow. The climb occupied an hour and a half. It has not been repeated.

### 4. *The Black Spout Pinnacle.*

To one looking down from the edge of the cliffs to the west of the top of the Black Spout, one of the most striking objects in view to the right of the spectator is a shapely pinnacle broad based on the buttress which forms the eastern wall of the Spout. It is situated just at

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\* *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. IV., p. 35.

† *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. V., p. 176.

the junction of the Black Spout and the side gully which will be next described, and its summit, which is indicated by the letter H on the sketch, is joined to the edge of the corrie by a rocky ridge of no great length. This pinnacle was first ascended on 20th October 1902, by Messrs Raeburn, Goggs, and Mackay, who attacked it from a point on its north face just where the side gully branches off from the Spout.\* The pinnacle is very steep here with a succession of ledges, from one of which, about one hundred and fifty feet from the foot, the party tried to make for the top through a narrow chimney. The chimney was ultimately found to overhang at the top, and the party gave it up and descended to the side gully. On the same day, however, the party found an easy access to the summit of the pinnacle from the top of the corrie by means of the ridge above referred to. There can be no very easy climb of this pinnacle by any other route.

#### *5. The Black Spout and its Side Gully.*

The Black Spout (marked L M in Mr Garden's sketch) is the widest and most conspicuous of all the Lochnagar gullies; but, as already stated, it has no claims, under summer conditions, to be ranked as a climb, though it affords a pleasant variation of the stereotyped tourist routes to the Cac Carn Beag. In winter, it, and also the side gully which is indicated in the sketch by the letters J K, are often very heavily corniced, and their ascent may be a matter of very great difficulty. In summer the side gully, which is at a very considerably steeper angle than the Spout, affords a fairly easy and short climb. The first recorded ascent was made by Messrs Douglas and Gibson on 10th March 1892,† and since then it has been frequently climbed both in summer and winter.

#### *6. West Gully Climb.*

West of the Black Spout is a deep gully, the position of which is indicated by the letters N O in Mr Garden's

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\* *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. VII., p. 185.

† *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. II., p. 246.

sketch. It was climbed on 19th October 1902, by Messrs Raeburn, Goggs, and Mackay, and from their account it appears to be a climb of considerable difficulty.\* The first section of the climb is largely vegetable. Then comes a pitch of some twenty feet in height, with a boulder-roofed cave at the top, for the ascent of which a rope hitched from above is a most desirable assistance. After this difficulty is overcome, there follows a scramble for about a hundred and fifty feet, and then the last pitch, which is about twenty feet high, has to be encountered. Here a number of jammed stones forms a sort of cave in the gully, and through the jammed stones a narrow passage leads upwards. So narrow is the passage that in order to wriggle through, the party had to doff their coats! The remaining section of the gully is easy—a scramble of twenty-five feet to the top.

#### VI.—LOCHS AND STREAMS.

All the lochs and streams of Lochnagar, without exception, drain ultimately into the Dee. In the case of the Broad Cairn range, the county boundary is the watershed, and while the streams on the north side also drain into the Dee, those on the south side contribute to form the Esk. All the principal streams have their rise in, or are connected with, one or other of the lochs—hence the convenience of taking the lochs and streams together.

The largest of the Lochnagar lochs is Loch Muick, which lies at the head of Glen Muick, 1,310 feet above sea level. It is two miles in length, and about half a mile broad, and covers an area of nearly a thousand acres.

At its upper end, Loch Muick is fed by the Allt an Dubh Loch, a stream which flows through the Dubh Loch, and has its source in Carn an t' Sagairt Mor. Before reaching the loch it is joined by a tributary stream, the Allt an Da Chraobh Bheath, the head spring of which lies between Carn an t' Sagairt Beag and Carn a' Choire Bhoidheach. After issuing from the Dubh Loch, the Allt is fed by two

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\* *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. VII., p. 188.

considerable side streams, one from the north, the Allt an Loch Bhuide, which flows from the little Loch Bhuide, and is crossed by the pony track, and the other from the south, nearer Loch Muick, the Allt Coire a' Chaise.

The two leading streams which join Loch Muick on its north side, namely, the Glas Allt and the Allt Dearg, have been already mentioned. The other considerable streams draining into the Muick from Lochnagar are the Allt na Guibhsaich and the Inschnabobbart burn, the Allt a' Mhaide. The Muick itself joins the Dee near Ballater.

From the north side of Lochnagar a great many streams flow directly to the Dee. Taking them in the direction from west to east, the first one to be mentioned is the Callater burn from Loch Callater to the Clunie. Halfway down its course it is joined on the north by the Allt Coire Ghuibhais, from Loch Phàdruig, the small loch on Meall an t' Sluichd, which is seen from Carn an t' Sagairt Mor.

Loch Callater ranks next to Loch Muick in size. It is about a mile long and a furlong broad, and lies at a height of 1,627 feet. In picturesqueness, however, it is left very far behind by the larger loch, and its appearance can only be described as desolate and uninteresting. The head streams of the Allt an Loch which flow into the loch at the upper end, take their rise in the Broad Cairn range.

The next streams of importance are those running through the Ballochbuie Forest—the Glen Beg burn and the Garbh Allt. The former of these rises on Meall an t' Sluichd; the latter, the larger of the two, is the product of the Feindallacher burn from Carn an t' Sagairt Mor and the Allt Lochan an Eoin, the confluence of these two burns being just above the picturesque Garbh Allt Falls. The Allt Lochan an Eoin flows through the Sandy Loch, the lower of two larger lochs in the north corrie. The upper loch is Lochan an Eoin. Two little lochans in the west part of the corrie are named Tarmachan and Fedaige.

The next considerable burn is the Gelder, the source of the main stream of which is in Lochan Dubh, a tiny sheet of water in Coire na Ciche, half a mile north-east of the Meikle Pap. It receives, however, a great addition from the Lochnagar burn, the burn of the loch in the great

corrie—the real Loch-na-Garr, which, with its rocky background, forms the grand climax of the scenery of the mountain.

The Girnock, the last of the large streams of Lochnagar, rises on Conachcraig and falls into the Dee about two miles west of Ballater.

On the south of the Broad Cairn range, the burn of Gowal is the most important of the headwaters of the Esk. Another issues from Loch Esk, a lonely tarn with capital fishing, which lies at a height of 2,417 feet, about a mile south of Broad Cairn. The White Water of Glen Doll joins the Esk at Braedownie.

G. D.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

### GENERAL MEETING.

THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the St Enoch's Hotel, Glasgow, on the evening of Friday, 4th December 1903, with the President, Mr William C. Smith, in the chair.

The Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual General Meeting were read and approved.

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr Napier, submitted his statement for the past year, showing a balance in favour of the Club of £185. 8s. 2½d. The accounts were approved.

The Hon. Secretary, Dr Inglis Clark, reported that ten new members had been elected to the Club, viz., J. W. Burns, T. E. Goodeve, T. D. Hunter, H. P. Macmillan, J. R. N. Macphail, J. H. A. M'Intyre, W. Nelson, W. C. Newbigging, A. W. Peacock, and J. H. Wigner; that the membership of the Club was now 156. At the beginning of the year the membership of the Club had been 152, of whom two had died and four had resigned.

The Hon. Librarian reported on the Clubroom, giving details of gifts to and purchases for the Library, and mentioning that the number of volumes in the Library had risen from 50 to 300.

The Hon. Custodian of slides, Rev. A. E. Robertson, reported that some 900 slides were now in the collection, 140 being added to it during the year. He also stated that several members had taken advantage of the privilege of borrowing them, and that they had been shown several times during the year.

The Hon. Editor wished to report, but no opportunity was given to him to do so, that the *Journal* had duly appeared at its stated periods during the past year, and that he was indebted to Mr Goggs for kindly attending to the preparation of the September number while he (the Editor) was absent in Canada.

A grant of £15 was made to the Clubroom Committee for the purchase of maps and books for the Library.

A grant of £5 was made to the Rev. A. E. Robertson for the upkeep of the slide collection.

The office-bearers, with the exception of those retiring, were re-elected, and Messrs Raeburn and Garden were elected to take the places of Messrs Bell and R. A. Robertson, who retired from the Committee by rotation.

It was decided to hold the New Year Meet at Fort William, and the one at Easter at Aviemore.

The recommendation of the Committee *re* Life Membership was fully discussed and the principle affirmed, but it was ultimately decided to remit the question back to the Committee to be again brought up next year, the amendment being proposed by Sheriff Penney and seconded by the President.

Mr Macclay moved, Mr Douglas seconding, that "the election of the President shall not take effect till the day after the General Meeting at which he has been elected," and this was duly carried.

Mr Alex. Fraser moved reprinting of Vols. I. and II. of the *Journal*. This was vetoed by Mr Munro, who claimed copyright in "Munro's Tables."

#### RECEPTION.

Previous to the meeting, the Club held a Reception in the same hotel, which was well attended. A selection of the Club slides was shown by the Rev. A. E. Robertson.

#### THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL DINNER.

At the close of the General Meeting, the Annual Dinner was held in the St Enoch's Hotel, with the President, Mr William C. Smith, in the chair. The members present numbered forty-two, and the guests twenty-six. The toasts proposed at this dinner were:—

The King	.	.	.	Mr W. C. Smith.
Imperial Forces	.	.	.	Mr W. C. Smith.

*Reply*—Col. Forbes Macbean.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club	Mr W. C. Smith.
The Alpine Club	Mr George Duncan.

*Reply*—Mr Solly.

The Visitors	.	.	.	Sheriff Scott-Moncrieff Penney.
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*Reply* { Sheriff Guthrie.  
Professor Raleigh.



## LIBRARY.

THE following are the additions to the Library since the last issue of the *Journal*.

The thanks of the Club are due to the donors, more especially to Mr Adam Smail, who, though not a member of the Club, has sent us a welcome and generous contribution to our shelves.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Guide to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Geo. and Peter Anderson. (1842) - - -	Purchased.
The Alps. Prof. F. Umlauf, Ph.D. (1889) - -	Geo. Duncan.
Vacation Tourists and Notes of Travel in 1860. Ed. by F. Galton. (1861.) Containing <i>inter alia</i> "A Gossip on a Sutherland Hillside" -	J. W. Drummond.
The Geological Structure of Monzoni and Fassa. Maria M. Ogilvie Gordon. (1902-3) - - -	T. Craig-Brown.
Transactions of the Seventh International Geographical Congress held at Berlin, 1899. 2 vols. - - - - -	"
Observations on a Tour through the Highlands and part of the Western Isles of Scotland. T. Garnett, M.D. 2 vols. (1810) - - -	Purchased.
The Antiquities of Arran. John M'Arthur. 2nd Edition. (1873) - - - - -	"
The Loiterer in Argyllshire. Christina B. Stewart. (1848) - - - - -	"
Prospects and Observations on a Tour in England and Scotland. Thomas Newte. (1791) -	"
Sketch of a Tour in the Highlands of Scotland. (1819) (Larkin) - - - - -	"
A Poet's Sketch-Book: Selections from the Prose Writings of Robert Buchanan. (1883) -	"
The Hebrid Isles. Robert Buchanan. (1883) -	"
Studies of Nature on the Coast of Arran. Geo. Milner. (1894) - - - - -	"
The Tweed, and other Poems. John Veitch. (1875) -	"
The Wild Hebrides. W. C. Dendy. (1859) -	"
Journal of a Tour in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland in 1800. John Leyden. (1903) - - - - -	"

By whom presented  
(when not purchased).

- Autumnal Rambles among the Scottish Mountains.  
Rev. Thos. Grierson. 2nd Edition, greatly  
enlarged. (1851) - - - - - Purchased.
- Place-Names of Scotland. Rev. Jas. B. Johnston.  
2nd Edition. (1903) - - - - - W. Douglas.
- Memoirs of the Geological Survey—  
The Geology of North Arran, South Bute,  
and the Cumbraes, with parts of Ayr-  
shire and Kintyre. (1903) - - - - - Purchased.  
(This book contains a bibliography  
of publications on Arran.)
- The Geology of Lower Strathspey. (1902) - - - - - ”
- Summary of Progress of the Geological Survey of  
the United Kingdom for 1897-1902, 6 numbers.
- View of the Mineralogy, Agriculture, Manufac-  
tures, and Fisheries of the Island of Arran.  
Rev. Jas. Headrick. (1807) - - - - - F. S. Goggs.
- John Miller Gray: Memoir and Remains. 2 vols.  
(1895) Containing *inter alia* “Notes of  
Holidays in Arran.” - - - - - W. Rae Macdonald.
- The Recess, or Autumnal Relaxation in the High-  
lands and Lowlands. (1834.) James John-  
son, M.D. - - - - - Purchased.
- Description of the Western Isles of Scotland called  
Hybrides (1549). Sir Donald Monro. (1884)  
Pocket Picture of Edinburgh, with Map and Plan.  
(1840) - - - - - ”
- Scottish Tourists’ Steam-Boat Pocket Guide.  
(1835) - - - - - Adam Smail.
- New Picture of Scotland. 2 vols. (1807) - - - - - ”
- A Visit to the Bass Rock. (Dalkeith, no date) - - - - - ”
- Black’s Picturesque Tourist of Scotland. 2nd  
Edition. (1842) - - - - - ”
- Steam-Boat Companion betwixt Perth and Dun-  
dee. (1838) - - - - - ”
- Descriptive Atlas of Scotland, by J. P. Lawson,  
with a Scientific View of its Geology, and a  
Map, by William Rhind. (1842) - - - - - ”
- Murray’s Handbook for Norway. 7th Edition.  
(1880) - - - - - ”
- Handbook for Switzerland, Savoy, and Pied-  
mont. 4th Edition. (1851) - - - - - ”
- Nelson’s Handbook to Scotland for Tourists. (1862)  
The Pentland Hills: Their Paths and Passes, by  
W. A. S(mith). (1885) - - - - - ”

By whom presented  
(when not purchased).

Norway and its Scenery, with Road Book. (Bohn, 1853) - - - - -	Adam Smail.
Cary's New Itinerary. 2nd Edition. (1802) - - - - -	"
Scotland Delineated. (Edinburgh, 1791) - - - - -	"
Guide to Beaulieu and District, by J. R. Pollock. (1902) - - - - -	"
The Bass (Aberdeenshire), and other Sketches and Verses, by John Gray. (Huntly, no date) - - - - -	"
Reminiscences of "Auld Ayr." (1864) - - - - -	"
Sketches of East Lothian, by D. Croal. 3rd Edition. (1885) - - - - -	"
Days in Thule, with Rod, Gun, and Camera, by John Bickerdyke. (1894) - - - - -	"
The Catskill Mountains and the Regions Around, by the Rev. Charles Rockwell. (New York, 1867) - - - - -	"
The Making of Aberdeenshire, by William Alexander, LL.D. (1888) - - - - -	"
British Association Excursion Handbook: Edinburgh Meeting. August, 1892 - - - - -	"
The Grampians Desolate: A Poem, by Alexander Campbell. (1804) - - - - -	"
Rutherford's Southern Counties' Register and Directory. (Kelso, 1866) - - - - -	"
Side Lights on the "Forty-Five" and its Heroes, by Adam Smail, Edinburgh. - - - - -	The Author.
Norway, by W. C. Slingsby - - - - -	The Publisher.
Rambles in Breadalbane, by M. Ferguson. (1891) - - - - -	Purchased.
Rambles in Skye, by M. Ferguson. (1885) - - - - -	"

#### MAPS, &c.

Kirkwood & Son's Travelling Map of Scotland. (Edinburgh, 1811.) (Folded in Case) - - - - -	Adam Smail.
Ordnance Survey 6-inch Sheets, lxxii. and lxxiii. (Fannich District) - - - - -	Geo. Duncan.
New Travelling Map of Scotland. (Edinburgh, 1825.) (Folded in Case.) - - - - -	Adam Smail.
Oliver & Boyd's Travelling Map of Scotland. (Edinburgh, no date, but previous to 1831) - - - - -	"
Panorama seen from the Observatory on the Summit of Ben Nevis. (Stirling, no date) - - - - -	"

#### PHOTOGRAPHS.

Enlarged Photograph of Sgurr nan Gilleann - - - - -	J. Gall Inglis.
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## LANTERN SLIDE COLLECTION.

During the past year some 140 slides have been added to the collection, representing many new hills of which hitherto the Club possessed no slides at all: these include B. Alder; B. Laoghal; B. Hope; The Foinne Bheinn Range; the Lochinver hills, Suilven, Canisp, Quinag, Stac Polly, Cul Mor, &c.

A very fine set of views of the Coolins under Alpine conditions, taken by various members at the Easter Meet, have now been made into slides, and are at the disposal of the members.

The Club slides are in considerable demand. Twelve lectures have been given with their aid during the past year, and those who may wish to borrow slides would do well to advise the Custodian as early as possible as to the date they want them, to prevent disappointment. There is a full catalogue of the slides in the Library, and by arrangement with the Custodian this could be sent to any member at a distance wanting to know what slides were obtainable.

The collection is still far from complete, many hills and districts being as yet entirely unrepresented, and the Custodian has in some instances been unable to supply certain members who asked for slides of these places. This of course will be gradually remedied in time, and the funds placed at his disposal are being spent in making the collection as all-embracing as possible. For example, we have nothing of the Central Ross-shire hills:—Glen Affric, Glen Cannich, Glen Strath Farrar. The Custodian intends, however, to revisit some of his old haunts in these parts in the early summer with his camera, with a view to obtaining material for slides of these grand but little-known hills.

The thanks of the Club are due to Messrs Corner, Inglis, and Munro, who have gifted slides to the Club, and to Messrs Clark, Douglas, Howie, Inglis, Rennie, and C. Walker for lending their negatives in order that slides might be made from them.

ARCHD. E. ROBERTSON.

## EXCURSIONS.

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

### S.M.C. ABROAD.

DR and MRS INGLIS CLARK, with their son and daughter, had a successful time near Zermatt. Favoured by superb weather they ascended the Matterhorn, Monte Rosa, Rimpfischhorn, Breithorn, and Mettelhorn *en famille*. They also climbed the Plathorn and Gabelhorn from a bivouac on the Schalbett Alp, and the Schwarzhorn from a hay chalet on the Steinthaligrat.

MR DRUMMOND, with Mrs Drummond, Miss Graham, Mr KING, and Mr NAISMITH, spent three weeks at the Montanvert in July and August, and in spite of the changeable weather had an enjoyable holiday, and did some good climbs. The following hills were successfully ascended :—Aig. de l'M, Pic du Tacul, Aig. du Moine, Mont Blanc, traversed from the Tête Rousse to Montanvert *via* the Bosses, the Col du Midi, and the Géant Séracs—an interesting route ; Petit Aig. du Dru, Grandes Charmoz (traversed), Col and Aig. des Grandes Montets, Petit Charmoz, Dent du Midi. Half of the excursions were guideless.

MESSRS GARDEN and DOUGLAS spent three weeks in the Canadian Rockies, and among the peaks climbed were Mount Assiniboine, Pope's Peak, Whyte's Peak, Mount Lefroy, Fairview, Mount Aberdeen, Castle Craig, Mount Abbot, Mount Avalanche, and Mount Sir Donald. The weather was unsettled, and the days for climbing had to be snatched from a number of stormy ones.

MESSRS W. N. LING and H. RAEBURN had splendid weather in July in Norway, and got some good climbs, mostly new, in Söndmøre.

Along with H. Priestman they made a traverse—after a defeat on first attack—of all three peaks of the Saetretinder (new) near Kolaas. Moving to Rise, Ling and Raeburn ascended the three peaks, two believed to be new, of the Grötdalstinder. Shifting camp again to the Hotel Union at Oie, all three ascended Jagta (5,200), mostly by north-east arête. A combined photographic, topographic, and climbing party of Messrs Priestman, Corder, Ling, and Raeburn then went up into Habostaddal and round to Brunstadskar, and climbed the first peak of the Brekketind Ridge. The two former then crossed the

glacier to the Langesaeterdal and Urke, while the latter traversed the whole ridge of the Brekkeitind (about 5,200) and Gjeithorn (about 5,200), a thoroughly sporting climb, the connecting ridge, extraordinary pinnacles, new. Next day, 28th July, Ling and Raeburn went straight up Slogen from south-west. The peak is about 5,200 feet, and the climbing begins at 950 feet, the angle being very steep, especially the last 1,500 feet. Leaving the hotel just at the foot at 7 A.M., the summit was not reached till 8.30 P.M. Kletterschue were used by the leader on the top 2,000 ft. Both climbers consider this by far the biggest rock-climb they have ever had the luck to be on (new).

From Oie, Ling and Raeburn took boat to Bjerke, and traversed Hornindalsrokken to Kjelstadli, crossed the Jostedalsbrae from Erdal to Faaberg, and went on to Turtegro in the Horunger. Here the weather was bad, with snow and iced rocks, and not much was accomplished. Ling and Raeburn first tried Störe Riinstind by Soleiridge, but were driven back after ascending Soleitind by wind and ice. Ling and Raeburn with Herr Erik Ullén then went round into Berdal and tried Störe Riinstind from Solei-col—without success, —also failed to force the ridge facing Austabottind, but found a useful traverse across south face, avoiding descent to the glacier, to ordinary ridge which was followed to top. An abortive attempt was also made by a party consisting of Fröken Bertheau, Herr Ullén, Ling, and Raeburn to traverse the Dyrhauger from south. The same party also crossed Bandet, descended the Midt Maradal glacier, and climbed Kørringa, to attempt to complete the passage of the great gap between Kørringa and Mand. The south side had been descended a week or so before by a party consisting of Fröken Bertheau, Herr Tanberg and Ullén, with Knut Fortun and Ole Berge. Raeburn went down 200 feet on north side with rope, but considered that time and rope were too short to give chance of success. The party were out seventeen hours.

The snowfall in Norway, as in Scotland, had been very great this spring, but this did not interfere with the climbing, and gave magnificent standing glissades.

MR T. G. LONGSTAFF climbing in Suaneia with Mr L. W. Rolleston made the first ascents of Lakra (12,188 feet), Tiktingen (15,276 feet), Ullu tau Tschana (13,790 feet), Bashil tau (13,685 feet), and the west peak of Shkara (16,592). They also climbed the highest peak of the Laila and Tetnuld. The weather was exceptionally fine.

MR LOW and Mr C. W. WALKER stayed about three weeks in the Tyrol—Grödner Thal. With guides did the Grosse Ferneda Thurm, Gran Odla, Daint de Mesdi, Funffingerspitze (Schmitt Kamin); without guides, the Kleine Ferneda Thurm, Ferneda de Cisles, Plattkofel, La Pizza, and the Murfreid. They lost about a week through a heavy fall of new snow on the hills.

MR MAYLARD in company with a friend, Mr W. R. Arbuthnot, climbed in the Eitzthal group—the Wildspitze, Weisskügel, and the

Kreuzspitze ; in the Dolomites—the Marmolada, Cimone della Pala, Campanile, and the Cima de Val di Roda.

MR H. T. MUNRO, with a friend, in the early days of June last, ascended the Mulahacen (11,703 feet), the highest of the Sierra Nevadas in the south of Spain, and the highest mountain in Europe outside the Caucasus and Alps. On the north and west side, that facing towards Granada, the mountain has some steep crags enclosing some wild corries, between the Mulahacen itself and the scarcely lower summits of the Alcazaba to the east and the Picacho de Veleta to the west. One of these corries encloses a small glacier which, situated in latitude 37°, is the southernmost in Europe. The cliffs, though not inaccessible, would undoubtedly furnish some good climbs. The whole of the upper portion of the mountain reminds one of a Perthshire mountain on a large scale. On the southern side, from which the ascent was made, the slopes are perfectly easy, and except for the lateness of the season and consequent unusual depth of snow, mules might have been ridden to the summit.

The main, and indeed only difficulty, is one of commissariat ; the accommodation at Capileira, where the night was passed, being of the roughest, but a little care would overcome this, for provisions could be brought from Granada. A revolver is, however, a by no means unnecessary article of equipment.

MR and MRS C. W. NETTLETON were at Montanvert for three weeks in July and August in broken weather. Chamonix was reached from Geneva *via* Sixt and the Brevent—a charming and highly recommended training walk.

At Montanvert a start was made with the Petit Charmoz and the Aig. de l'M, followed by the Moine, Grand Charmoz (traversed), Col and Aig. des Grands Montets, the Blaitière, and the Aig. de Tacul (traversed). The Col de Géant was crossed to Courmayeur, and an ascent made to the Dome Hut for the traverse of Mont Blanc. This was found to be impossible, owing to bad weather and a gale on the Bionnassay arête ; but after a descent to the Miage Glacier, a way was groped over the Col de Miage, &c., Montanvert being eventually reached at nearly midnight, after a soaking twenty-one hours' day. Better luck attended their next attempt on Mont Blanc a few days later, the route of Messrs Drummond, Maclay, Naismith, and Wickham King being followed from the Tête Rousse over the Aig. and Dome du Gouter, and the Bosses to the summit. Here a delightful hour was spent in bright sunshine, the descent being made by the corridor route to the Grand Mulets and Pierre à l'Echelle, whence a bee line was made for Montanvert over the three glaciers and the endless moraines of the Plan des Aiguilles. "An easy day for a lady !"

MR JAMES A. PARKER spent a fortnight at Zermatt with Dr Clark's party, and took part in the ascents of Monte Rosa, the Matterhorn, and the Mettelhorn.

MESSRS W. CECIL and W. E. Slingsby, Norman Collie, and R. Northall-Laurie had a grand time in the Lofotens, climbing both peaks of Rulten—very stiff—and several other new expeditions.

MESSRS SOLLY and JAMES MACLAY, with Mr Arthur Hargreaves of Birkenhead (who was in his first season), made the following ascents: Oldenhorn from Col de Pillon by a new route (to be described in *A. J.*), with descent by the Prapioz Glacier. Aiguille du Tour from Col du Forcloz *via* Glacier de Trient, with descent *via* Col du Tour and Tour Glacier to Argentiere. Aiguille des Grand Montets from Lognan, with descent direct to Glacier de Lognan. Grand Fourche from Argentiere *via* Col du Chardonnet, with descent to Glacier du Tour. Afterwards with Messrs Naismith, King, and Drummond, and a guide, Maclay took part in an ascent of Mont Blanc *via* Tête Rousse, with descent *via* Col du Midi and Glacier du Geant.

MR J. H. WIGNER'S expeditions in the Caucasus were Shtavler (first ascent) with four companions; Hewai, Ledesht Tau, Leirag (all about 12,000-13,000 feet, first ascents), Charendá (probably second ascent), unnamed summit in the Dalla Kara Ridge, probably second ascent (first by tourists), Latpari and Laila passes, three summits of the Laila traversed, Betscho Pass, Dongusorun Pass, Kuish Pass (first crossing), and Elbruz. All ascents but Shtavler done with Dr Oscar Schuster of Dresden, and without guides. Over the new pass they took two Suanetian porters.

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#### ARRAN.

*October 1903.*

MY DEAR DOUGLAS,—It must be about two years since I had the honour to address you on the doings of Sassenachs in Arran, and I beg humbly to inform you that they have been "at it again."

As I was accompanied by my wife only, no great researches were intended. We found a relative staying at Corrie, and persuaded him to join us in an expedition along the ridge of Sannox, from the Earl's Seat to the Castles, including the Carlin's Leap. It was the finest day we had in the whole fortnight. The descent of the Step was safely accomplished, but I'm bound to say the Carlin is a rough body—"scarce weel bred"; for my wife's blouse was worn or torn through in more than one place, and our relative's garments suffered in a somewhat similar manner to mare Maggie when "claught her" by the carlin.

It was only after a week at Corrie that I heard from Naismith that our Hon. Librarian was at Brodick, and he very kindly joined us at the Bowmen's Pass, under Ben Tarsuinn, and helped us over A' Chir, Cir Mhor, and on to North Goat Fell (*your* naming).

It was on the last day of September that F. S. Goggs kindly called for me at Corrie, and we set out with the intention of climbing the Sannox face of Cir Mhor, and proceeding from thence to the Castles to investigate the ridges running northwards.

Arrived at the top of the water slide from Upper Glen Sannox,



we tackled a gully that I took to be "D" trap dyke, up which Naismith led me two years ago, but it quickly proved different to my recollection, and we soon had to put on the rope. Our difficulties throughout were generally passed by keeping to the left, and in some cases traversing into an adjacent or supplementary gully. Before long, the part of the gully we were in became too smooth and water-worn, and we attempted a kind of rib of rough sloping flat rocks on the left, with the idea of passing the pitch, but they would not go. F. S. G. then traversed more to the left and climbed on to a narrow grass ledge still on the same side. It was creepy work, perhaps a tall man could have reached a crack in the face running parallel to the ledge and used it as a banister.

The grass ledge ended in a steep vegetable gully, reaching to a cave formed by overhanging blocks.

I was the first to investigate this low architectural work, and found a suitable window for exit, but unfortunately the contractors had left the sill stone quite out of its proper position, with an aggressive corner sufficient to prevent the body passing whichever way it was tried. I thought to have shoved the stone away a few inches, but beyond getting it quite loose could do nothing.

An invitation was therefore given to my companion to vacate his cold "plant" in the gully below, where he was in danger of becoming part of the prevailing vegetation. He promptly accepted and passed me in the cave, and removed the already loosened stone, and passed through the window with ease and relief. Above this we tried to regain the main gully, but arriving at an impossible corner, came down again to the top of the cave and proceeded up a chimney leading to a collection of blocks forming a kind of embryo cave, and climbed through the largest opening therein, and arrived on the steep grassy shoulder of the mountain.

The clouds were round us, but by good luck we found *the* "great" cave and went through without difficulty, only assimilating a quantity of dirt, and from thence by more good luck and tracing fragments of black bottles and finding a walking-stick in a snug corner, we found ourselves at the bottom of Bell's Groove.

Thereafter, much puffing, a wash in the Rosa Pinnacle bath, a feed behind a sheltering rock, and a leave-taking at 5 P.M.; Mr Librarian going home to Brodick by Glen Rosa and I to Corrie by Glen Sannox.

On referring to the diagrams of Cir Mhor in the *Journal*, we are led to believe that the ascent of B 1 gully has now been made, which you will perhaps discuss with Mr Goggs, to whose hand I commit this note for delivery.

I am glad to hear of your successful trip to the Rockies—I presume the Canadian section, and in the interests of the Empire.—With very kind regards, yours faithfully,

G. BENNETT GIBBS.

SGURR NAN GILLEAN.—We have received from Mr Jackson, of Manchester, the following letter from Mr Leicester—the companion of Mr Malcolm W. Allen, who lost his life on Sgurr nan Gillean on the 27th July 1903 :—

DEAR MR JACKSON,—My friend, who was nearly two years older than myself, and I were on a cycle tour in Scotland, and arrived at Sligachan Hotel on 25th July. The following day we visited Lochs Scavaig and Coruisk, and then climbed along one of the ridges of the Cuchullins (the one dividing Loch Coruisk from Hart a Corrie), and a considerable way up the final summit of Bidein Druim-na-Ramh ; but meeting with a difficult piece, and being pressed for time, we abandoned the attempt and descended into Hart a Corrie. The mountains were fresh to us both, and we had never climbed together before. I had, however, watched my friend, and I noticed that he climbed with ease and pleasure. He was a good athlete, with a cool head and a cautious disposition.

The following morning we set out to ascend Sgurr-nan-Gillean, and landed on the pinnacles. On reaching the third pinnacle, we found a difficulty in descending in the direction of the fourth, and abandoned the attempt, descending part way down instead towards the screes on the Glen Sligachan side. I then suggested to my friend that I should like to make a *détour* and go for the summit, and asked him if he was inclined to come. As he did not consider it worth the trouble, I asked him if he minded waiting for me at the hotel for a couple of hours, which he was quite willing to do. We intended cycling some considerable distance in the evening. Our parting was of the most casual description, and the thought of his being in any danger never crossed my mind. I imagined that he would follow down to the screes and return to the hotel, by what would then be a comparatively simple route. He apparently however returned, speaking in a general way, by the same route we had come, and fell just as he was descending the lower portion of the rocks which rise from the moorland to the foot of the first pinnacle. I am informed by Mr John Mackenzie, who discovered him, and by Miss Tait of Dartford, who together thoroughly examined the spot, and saw his footmarks in the scree just above, that the fall was not more than twenty feet.

On leaving my friend I ascended the summit and descended by the pinnacle route, climbing the piece on the third pinnacle which we had hesitated to descend. Being alone I felt quite comfortable to attempt it, and of course an ascent is usually a much simpler matter than a descent.

On arriving at the hotel I found that my friend had not arrived. As it was already 5 o'clock I felt uneasy, the day being perfectly clear and the route unmistakable. At 6 o'clock I started out to search, fearing he must have sprained an ankle ; by dusk I had searched the first and second pinnacles, and as darkness came on

descended towards the hotel. At 10.30 I met a search-party, and we spent the night on the mountain, and renewed the search about 2.30 A.M. as soon as day broke. It was not, however, until about 11 o'clock of the day following, that is after an interval of over forty hours, that the body was found.

Dr Ellis Milne, of Aberdeen, was one of the search-party, and meeting me on the mountain persuaded me to descend without examining the body as it lay, so I have only seen the spot from some few hundred yards away. To my great regret I had no opportunity of examining it before leaving the island. Dr Milne states that death, which was instantaneous, was caused by compound fracture of the skull.

We cannot speak too highly of the assistance rendered during the search, not only by the guides and others residing in the district, but also by the visitors at the hotel. In organising the search-parties, I feel much indebted not only to Mr Campbell, the manager of the hotel, but also to Dr Milne of Aberdeen and Miss Tait of Dartford, who both possessed exceptional qualifications for the task.

In addition to what I have already written, I may add that neither my friend nor I are climbers in your sense of the word, and did not carry a rope or possess nails in our boots. I do not know how much climbing my friend had done, but he appeared quite at home on the mountains. I have myself been up most of the English Lake hills, a considerable number in Scotland and North Wales, besides the mountains of Kerry and Connemara in Ireland, but have never attempted anything more than the Broadstand and the Chimney on Scafell, and similar places elsewhere. I have never used nails, nor, with one slight exception, a rope, and have often climbed alone.

You will gather from the above that the accident is one which might happen to any lover of the mountains at any time.

I should not feel it right to conclude this letter without adding that, though I cannot consider that I am in any way to blame from an intellectual point of view, yet, apart from the grief which I have experienced in the loss of a very dear friend, I have suffered the most acute remorse, firstly for ever suggesting an ascent of the mountain to my friend, and secondly for leaving him to descend alone. I cannot in a letter convey the full measure of the mental torture I am continually going through as I think of the loss which his mother and family have suffered.

You will, I hope, not consider me presumptuous if I add a word of caution against leading others into dangers which one may lightly enter into oneself, but which one's companion may not be so competent to undergo, nor yet be in a position to thoroughly realise the extent of.

Trusting I have given you the required information.—Yours  
sincerely,

MARK LEICESTER, Jun.

BEN NEVIS—*The Staircase Climb, Carn Dearg.*—The Rev. A. E. Robertson and the writer ascended the C. D. buttress by this climb on 6th July. Two variations on the route, followed by the first and second parties, were made. The second of these is more properly an evasion of a difficulty, but was found grateful and comforting in the saturated condition of the rocks and the clothes of the climbers. The first begins just at the top of the "Staircase," where Naismith's suggested railing was found badly wanted. Instead of proceeding along the sloping green ledge, facing the "Castle," a turn to the left is made, and a good ledge followed leading round the edge of the wall in the direction of the waterfall. Crossing some slabs, with good holds, access is gained to a deeply cut-in chimney. This chimney is very conspicuous from below, and may possibly "go" straight from the bottom, though I believe it has been attempted several times without success. The upper half, however, goes all right, but cannot be called easy, as its walls, till a good square step on the right is gained, are remarkably smooth and holdless. Its height is about 50 feet, and at the top it opens out on to the "easy grass" of the original description. At the top of the "easy grass," instead of tackling the "12 foot wall" or the slabs below to the left, we traversed round the foot of the pinnacle and descended into the bed of the gully, ascended it till level with the pinnacle col, and traversed rather rotten stuff here unto the col. The climb was finished by the original route. It rained, sleeted, and snowed nearly all the time. Some old snow was lying, even below the pinnacle, in the waterfall gully. We got nearly 800 feet of standing glissading on our descent from No. 4 gully to the foot of the Carn Dearg Buttress, and the little tarn in Corrie na Ciste was still almost completely covered with hard snow and ice five or six feet thick.

*Observatory Ridge, First Descent.*—On 5th July Robertson and Raeburn descended the ridge; time taken, four hours. The weather was of the worst, torrents of rain falling all day. No special trouble was experienced till just above the "hand traverse," when, by keeping too much to the left (true), we got pounded on some very awkward slabs; this cost us nearly an hour, and a considerable reascent.

The summit Hotel was regained, *via* the north-east buttress, in two hours, starting from the foot of Slingby's Chimney and ascending slabs to left to first platform. This is undoubtedly the quickest and easiest way to the first platform, it was done without hurry in eighteen minutes. Above the platform the right-hand ledge was followed. Heavy cornices, and much snow in the corries. H. R.

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GLENCOE.—R. S. Low and the writer spent two days about the end of September in Glencoe, and were favoured with very fine weather. The first day Bidean nam Bian was climbed by the Church Door Buttress. Scarpetti were tried at the chimney beyond the bridge, but

were not a success on account of the quantity of wet mud about, and hobnailers had to be substituted. After the chimney the ascent was made practically straight up, not by the "15 ft. corner."

The second day the morning broke with wind and rain, and although later the weather again became fine, it spoilt the plans for the day. After walking up the glen to about the shepherd's cottage, a line was made for the narrow, well-defined buttress which runs up to a short distance south-west from the summit of Am Bodach. It was a very enjoyable climb, although not difficult: what steep pitches there were abounded in excellent holds. The north ridge was traversed on the way home.

C. W. WALKER.

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BEUCHAILLE ETIVE MOR, 13th October 1903.—Ridge immediately to the left of, and conterminous with D gully. Very easy in the lower part, but on the upper part three clean rock buttresses gave good sport under the very wet conditions, assistance having to be given to the leader at two points. Time, one and three-quarter hours. One hundred feet might be added to the climb at the foot by ascending the lean-to slabs to the left instead of stepping out of the watercourse on the beginning of the ridge proper. The curved ridge was gained from the top by a prominent mossy ledge, giving an interesting climb of rather more than half an hour's duration.

W. C. NEWBIGGING.

BEN LOMOND, May 1902.—Ascent of prominent chimney between the Pinnacle route and gully H, reaching the top about twice as far distant from the latter as the former. Climb proper begins off "Main Ledge," a short distance from its foot. Found to be steep, vegetable, rather interesting, and difficult.

W. C. NEWBIGGING.

ARRAN, June 1902.—Ascent of one hundred and twenty feet; prominent, interesting, chock-stoned chimney, towards the eastern end of the section of cliffs above Corrie Daingean, nearest to the summit of Ben a' Chliabhain. The rest of those cliffs seem hardly worth climbing, although ascended at one other part, a little to the right of first mentioned.

W. C. NEWBIGGING.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

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22 DRUMMOND PLACE.  
EDINBURGH.

### LIFE-MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—I am glad to see that, while leaving the amount to be afterwards fixed, the Club has passed a resolution to have a Life-Membership subscription ; for, to my mind, it is very desirable that the Club should be able to give to old members, who are no longer in the flower of their youth, and who for various causes have practically retired from participating actively in the joys of our beloved sport, the opportunity of continuing their membership on paying a nominal life subscription.

I can well imagine there must be many among our old members who have the feeling, every time a request to pay their annual subscription reaches them, that now is the time to resign, while yet they have a lingering desire to continue their connection with a Club which has given them so much pleasure in the early days of their membership. We too would be sorry to lose these old friends entirely from the Club, and were the opportunity given them to continue their membership on the payment of a nominal life subscription, I think some would gladly avail themselves of the privilege, and we would thus have the pleasure of having them with us for the whole term of their natural existence.

Such members would cost the Club practically nothing—the actual extra cost being the few pence annually for the postage of Club notices and the *Journal*.

I would therefore suggest that while the annual subscription remains at 15s., the life subscription should be for

Members of 10 years' standing	-	£5 5s.
" 5 "	-	10 10s.
On joining* (entry fee extra)	-	15 15s.

No doubt the actuarial members of the Club will have their say on these figures, but I hope whatever is fixed on, will be with the view of giving old members a considerable inducement to join for life.—I am,  
&c.,

W. DOUGLAS.

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DEAR MR EDITOR,—As the minds of the members will doubtless be directed to the above subject, I have taken an early opportunity of tabulating some statistics showing the period during which those who have already joined the Club have continued their connection with it. While it is quite true that a period of fifteen years is much too short for forming a definite conclusion regarding the probable years of membership of those who join, there can be no denying that the figures appended have a certain value, and will assist the members in judging as to the merits of rival proposals which may be brought before them.

TABLE OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE CLUB FROM 1888.

Date of Joining.	YEARS IN THE CLUB.															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1888	95	94	83	76	72	67	64	63	63	62	60	56	56	55	53	51
1889	...	6	5	5	4	3	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
1890	...	...	9	9	9	8	8	8	8	8	6	6	6	6	6	5
1891	...	...	...	11	9	9	8	8	8	5	5	5	5	4	4	4
1892	...	...	...	...	15	14	14	13	12	11	11	11	11	10	10	10
1893	...	...	...	...	...	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	8	8	7	7
1894	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	6
1895	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18	18	18	18	16	13	13	11	11
1896	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13	13	13	13	13	13	12	12
1897	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	8	8	8	8	8	6
1898	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10	10	10	9	9	8
1899	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	4	4	4	4
1900	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9	8	8	8
1901	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	7	7
1902	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	7
1903	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10

From the table given above the following broad conclusions may be drawn :—

1. That many of those who joined the Club in the early years 1888-1892 did so from sympathy, and to assist the young association in its start. Once fairly launched, these withdrew from it in a few years, leaving a balance of working members, many of whom still take a practical interest. Thus of 137 gentlemen who joined during these years, only 103 remained for five years and eighty-four for ten years, seventy remaining till the present day.

2. That since 1893 those who have joined for the greater part still remain in the Club, death accounting for several notable exceptions. Thus of fifty-five members who joined in the years 1893-1897, forty-two still remain ; while in the third period 1898-1902, thirty-seven have joined of whom thirty-four are still with us.

3. We may therefore assume that present-day candidates will remain for a longer period in the Club than original members have done, and the life subscription for new men must be based on this. From the table we see that the *average* duration of original members

is about sixteen years, and I suggest therefore that the subscription should be arranged to cover a period of say twenty-one years. This would probably protect the Club from loss, and at the same time be sufficiently attractive to new members who might thereby safeguard themselves from a possible rise of the annual subscription to one guinea.

What sum, then, should represent this twenty-one years' purchase? Our Treasurer based his calculations on  $3\frac{1}{2}\%$  interest, but for convenience I have taken  $3\frac{1}{4}\%$ , with the following result, allowing a trifle over in favour of the Club :—

After 10 years' subscriptions	-	-	£7	os.
After 5	"	-	9	9s.
New members (entrance fee extra)	-	-	11	11s.

Mr Douglas has shown me his letter proposing £5. 5s., £10. 10s., £15. 15s., and while his figures deal rather severely with the new member (discounting future rise of subscription), they undoubtedly offer an inducement to the older members, whom we are all anxious to retain among us.—I am, yours truly,

W. INGLIS CLARK.

47 LILYBANK GARDENS,  
GLASGOW.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—As I understand that you intend to ventilate your views on the subject of the commutation of subscriptions through the medium of the *Journal*, I think it might be as well that I should also state my views, also my objections to the proposal as submitted to the last Annual Meeting of the Club.

I think the following two points should be prominently kept before us in preparing any scheme on this subject : the first is, that we must proceed on sound financial lines, so as not to endanger the position of the Club ; and the second, that without endangering the foregoing object we should endeavour to give some advantage to the original and older members who were the pioneers of our present success, and as such deserve our gratitude.

Our Honorary Secretary has prepared a table which he is submitting to you, showing the length of time each member has been in the Club. Now, sir, every one will admit that this table, although very interesting in itself, is of practically no value to any one in considering the present question, because the Club has been in existence too short a time (only 15 years), and also because the men now joining are nearly all active mountaineers, who, even when their own activity ceases, will always take a keen interest in the doings of the Club ; whereas a goodly number of our original and older members were not active mountaineers, but joined from love of our Scottish mountains and scenery. These latter are the men we want to induce to stay on as life members.



On first going into this matter, I discovered the materials necessary to further and simplify my investigations, viz., a report by a Committee of the Faculty of Actuaries in Scotland on the subject of the commutation of their subscriptions, which was submitted to, and accepted by the members of the Society in June last. At the end of their report the Committee added a list of various other Societies who had already commuted their subscriptions, giving details of the commutations, annual subscriptions, &c., in force. It is these and the table prepared by this Committee that I took as the basis for my calculation, making an allowance, of course, for the fact that our members only require to continue their membership as long as they feel interested in the objects of the Club. I also, as far as possible checked my figures in the following manner: I took the average age of new members at entry to be about thirty, and that of the original member about fifty, and calculated the present value of our subscription at  $3\frac{1}{2}\%$  interest, the same rate as is taken by the Faculty of Actuaries, and which is certainly not too low a rate, and I found that my figures came to practically the same, but gave a distinct advantage to the older members.

The following table is the result of my investigations:—

An original member may commute for	-	-	£5	5s.
A member of 10 years' standing	„	-	7	7s.
5	„	-	10	10s.
A new member (including entry money)	-	-	14	14s.

If members will investigate these figures thoroughly they will find they are correct, and by following them will be going on sound financial lines.

I have added the five guineas for original members to the figures I put before the last annual meeting, as I feel sure that the increased number of members who would take advantage of the smaller commutation will more than counter-balance the monetary loss, and also because our Honorary Secretary has had difficulty in persuading some of these older members to continue their membership, and it appears to me that these are the men who might be induced to take advantage of our commutations provided they are reasonable.

From the foregoing remarks you will be able to understand my objections to the proposal submitted to the annual meeting, viz., that it is financially unsound and does not give any advantage to the older members. Under that scheme an original member after commuting would have contributed £15. 13s. 6d. to the funds of the Club, while a member of say five years' standing would only have contributed £11. 9s. 6d., and under my scheme an original member would have contributed £13. 11s. 6d. and a member of five years' standing £14. 12s. 6d.—I remain, yours truly,

R. GRAHAM NAPIER.

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## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

SEVERAL books of interest to us have appeared lately, some of which have been written by members, and to those of course we extend a hearty welcome.

From Messrs Stutfield and Collie come their book<sup>1</sup> on the Canadian Rockies, with graphic descriptions and photographs of their climbs and explorations in that fascinating district.

Mr Slingsby gives us his book<sup>2</sup> on Norway, telling of his many holidays spent in that happy playground. Of special interest are the maps in it prepared by Mr Priestman, as well as the beautiful pen and ink drawings by Mr Eric Greenwood which add much to the interest of the volume. All of us who go to Norway must get the book, and others who have no present intention of going there will enjoy reading this delightful account of a charming country.

The Geological Survey have just issued a monograph on Arran<sup>3</sup> which will give great pleasure to all those who love that beautiful island.

Mr E. A. Baker has just completed an elaborate volume on Moors, Crags, and Caves of the High Peak of Derbyshire,<sup>4</sup> telling of breezy walks, boulder and cliff climbing, and of the wonderful caves of this to us, a practically unknown land.

- <sup>1</sup> CLIMBS AND EXPLORATION IN THE CANADIAN ROCKIES.  
By H. E. M. Stutfield and J. Norman Collie. (Longmans, 12s. 6d. net.)

NORWAY, THE NORTHERN PLAYGROUND. Sketches of Climbing and Mountain Exploration in Norway between 1872 and 1903.  
By W. Cecil Slingsby. (Douglas, 16s. net.)

- <sup>2</sup> THE GEOLOGY OF NORTH ARRAN, SOUTH BUTE, AND THE CUMBRAES, WITH PARTS OF AYRSHIRE AND KINTYRE. By W. Gunn, Sir A. Geikie, B. N. Peach, and A. Harker. 1903. (4s. net.)

- <sup>4</sup> MOORS, CRAGS, AND CAVES OF THE HIGH PEAK AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD. By Ernest A. Baker. With forty-three Photographs and two Maps. (Heywood, 6s. net.)

## Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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### OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 1904.

- Hon. President* - - THE MARQUIS OF BREADALBANE.  
*President* - - - - W. C. SMITH.  
*Vice-Presidents* - - { GILBERT THOMSON.  
                              { JAMES MACLAY.  
*Hon. Secretary* - - W. INGLIS CLARK, 29 Lauder Road, Edinburgh.  
*Hon. Librarian* - - F. S. GOGGS, 25 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh.  
*Hon. Treasurer* - - R. G. NAPIER, 107 St Vincent Street, Glasgow.  
*Hon. Editor* - - - W. DOUGLAS, 9 Castle Street, Edinburgh.

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- |                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| J. W. DRUMMOND. | Rev. A. E. ROBERTSON. |
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| J. RENNIE.      | H. RAEBURN.           |
| W. W. NAISMITH. | W. GARDEN.            |

### *Sub-Committee for Clubroom.*

- The Hon. Secretary.  
The Hon. Editor.  
The Hon. Librarian (*Convener*).







BEN LUI.

*W. Douglas.*

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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VOL. VIII.

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No. 44.

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## BEN LUI REVISITED.

BY W. DOUGLAS.

WHAT can be said of Ben Lui that has not been said already, and well said too, in the pages of our *Journal*? Well, I admit that this glorious mountain has been fully described from every point of view and from every point of the compass, and were it not that every excursion during the winter months to almost every mountain is as different as possible from those that have gone before, I would not think of filling our *Journal* with another account of an expedition to this noble hill.

Dr and Mrs Inglis Clark and I arrived at Tyndrum on the evening previous to the 5th of March, and having "told Tyndrum that we were going to come," everything was prepared for our reception, even to the proverbial hot-water bottle.

Tyndrum is one of the most attractive spots in the Highlands for fine, wide, and inspiring views, and on the morning after our arrival the view to the east, of Ben More and Cruach Ardran, and to the north, of Ben Dorian, was as splendid as ever. The hills were covered with a spotless mantle of snow, and the clouds were sufficiently heavy to lend that mystery to the scene which is always so enchanting.

We were under weigh by nine o'clock with well-filled rucksacks containing cameras, ropes, wettermantels, and last but not least, "the preveesion"; but we had not gone far and

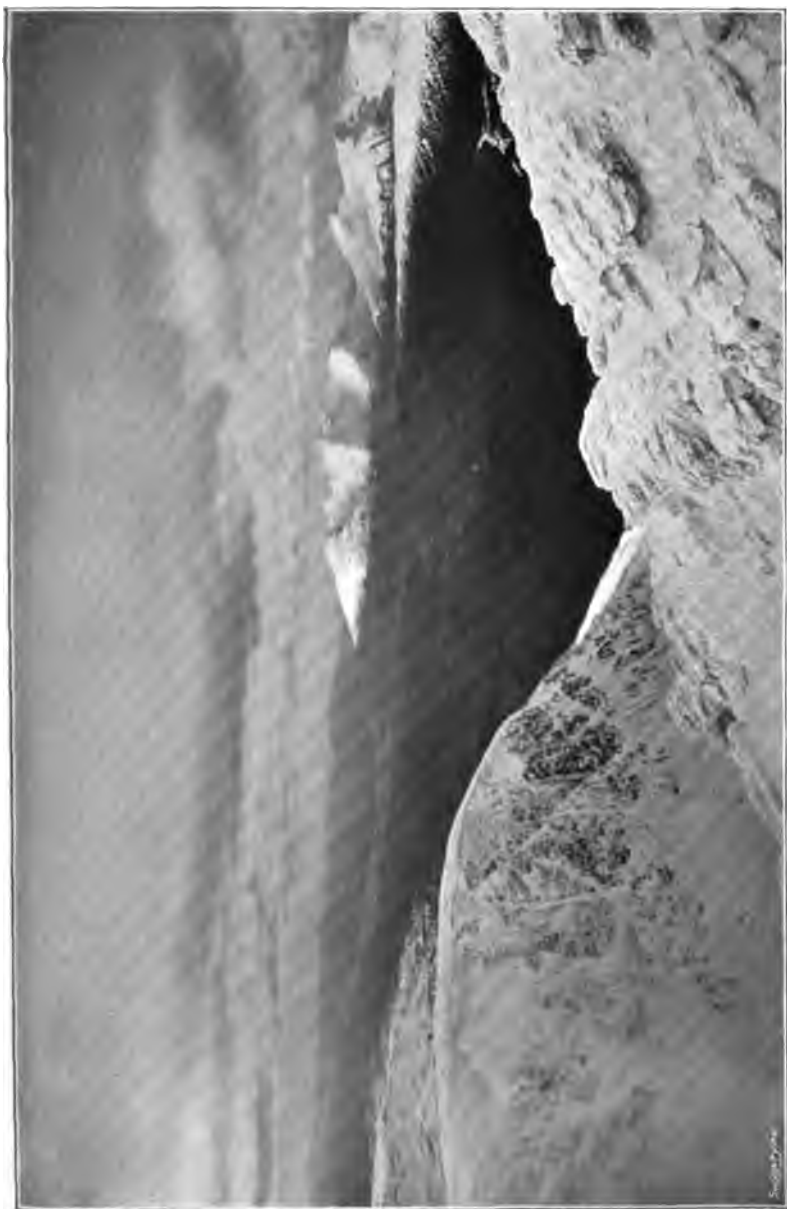
were only breasting the shoulder of the hill behind the station, before dipping down to the Coninish Valley, when we were overtaken by the younger and more energetic members of our party, Mabel and Charlie Clark and Harold Raeburn, who had, in order to join the expedition, faced the ordeal of catching that dreadful train, the 4.30 A.M. from Edinburgh.

The ground was fast bound in frost, and the snow, though somewhat thin on the low ground, was deep and solid higher up. The going was good, and the usual couple of hours passed quickly as we made for the workings of the old lead mine, having had the wonderful view of Ben Lui in front of us all the time. The cameras were busy, and the thoughts of the splendid results to follow kept us keenly alive to the best points of view. The great corrie was before us white from base to the summit, with only a few of the dark rocks of Stob Garbh, and the containing walls of the central gully, showing black amid the vast expanse of winter's snows. Soon we were well up and into the corrie, and then as we neared the foot of the gully we came to a wide field of avalanche snow that had at one time, and evidently not so very long ago, poured out of it, leaving a fan-shaped slope of rough and hummocky snow and ice of vast extent and large enough consistency to considerably slow down our rate of going.

At the top of this we donned the rope, in two parties, for the snow was very hard, in places almost icy, and a possible slip out of the steps had to be guarded against. The younger contingent went away ahead, and we followed rapidly. Near the top our leaders took us out to the left, to give us a more difficult climb over steep and fog-crystal covered rocks which led us almost to the cairn. What a glorious view we had! Snow-topped mountains rose out of dark valleys all around. The lovely photograph of Ben Cruachan here reproduced shows the picture we had to the west, and the mountains in other directions were equally picturesque.

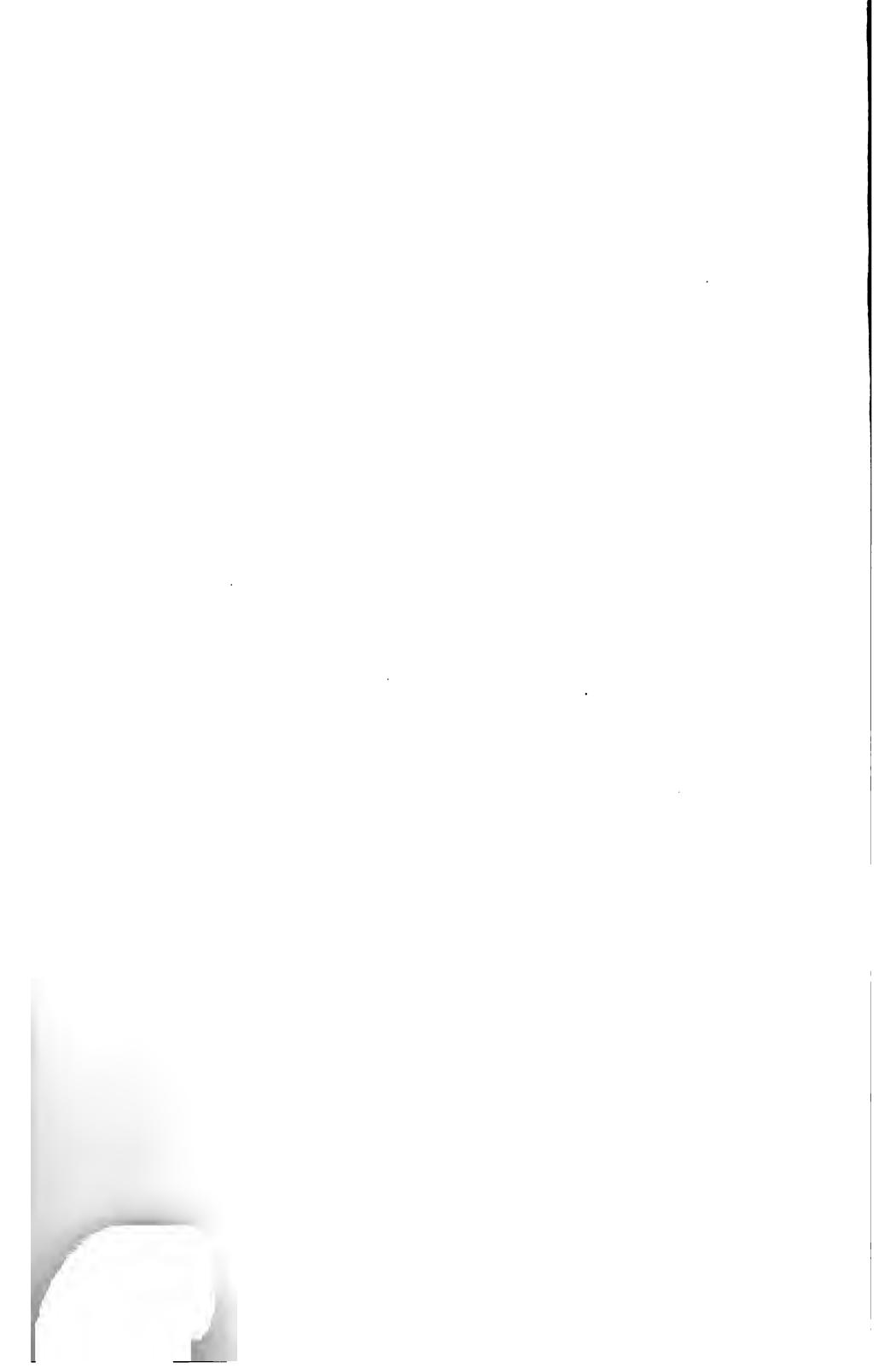
Mr Bell has spoken in a previous *Journal* of a purely ideal climb, but his ideal, fine as it is, is not exactly in unison with mine, for I must confess that "newness" and





*W. Inglis Clark.*

BEN CRUACHAN FROM THE TOP OF BEN LUI.



"rocks" do not enter so largely into my idea of what such a climb should be, for I feel that a *snow* climb appeals more strongly to my imagination than any one on rocks would ever do; but then every snow climb is to a certain extent "new," for the conditions of two climbs on different days are seldom the same, though the scenery remains unchanged.

If I were asked to formulate my idea of a purely ideal climb, I think I should say that it should embrace—

*First*, a fine frosty day, with lots of sunshine, plenty of moving clouds and blue sky, and a keen, clear, but not too strong a wind.

*Second*, a big north-east corrie, well broken up with steep snow and ice gullies, and the rocks all around heavily bedecked with frost-crystals, giving fairy pictures in all their wonderful and fantastic shapes, and ending in a stiff slope with icy chimneys, and possibly a cornice to surmount before the summit can be reached, and the whole slope requiring a not inconsiderable degree of mountaineering skill to successfully scale.

*Third*, sunshine on the top with the shelter of some great rock to enjoy the view of a vast expanse of broad Scotland, stretching away in all directions, where one can drink in a matchless and marvellous view to one's heart's content.

*Fourth*, on the homeward journey to strike a snow slope of a thousand feet or so in just the right condition for a sitting glissade; and lastly, to have that good fellowship which so many climbers are able to extend.

But to return to Ben Lui. The snow to-day was *not* in perfect condition. It was hard and icy on the top, and any glissading there was, was got under difficulties. When we left the Cairn, we plunged into a perfect frenzy of wind-driven snow. We were, however, soon out of this, and made for the gentler slopes to the north. With Stob Garbh on our right, we made an interesting descent to the old lead mines, while our young friends returned by the big corrie again, so as to catch the 5.22 train home. They had had several short glissades, and found out the strange fact that snow with an icy crust becomes quite hot when this mode of descent is adopted! We followed more leisurely, but were in time to

shout our adieus to them as we again rounded the shoulder of the hill above the railway station.

I have made many ascents of Ben Lui, my first dating as far back as 1887, and the top has seen me many times since then. I may say that every ascent is full of the pleasantest recollections, so much so that it ranks with Ben Cruachan as one of the most delightful mountains within easy reach of Edinburgh.

Well do I remember my first ascent in September of 1887, we started from Crianlarich—and of thinking, even by the line of least resistance that we then took, that we had made a splendid ascent. Then again, in April 1891, with Joseph Gibson Stott and others, doing the whole range from Dalmally to Ardlui, and having a fine snow tramp over all its four peaks, getting gorgeous views, and lots of fun. Also of the many ascents during the early Dalmally, Loch Awe, and Tyndrum Meets of the Club. On one of these, when we had only got the length of Beinn a' Chliebh, I remember Fraser Campbell composing the following rhyme as we returned down the slopes in a very drucked condition. Ramsay and Munro were not present on that occasion, but as their names rhyme better than his and mine, he, regardless of truth, insisted on using them.

“ Three jolly mountaineers are we,  
Bound for the top of Beinn a' Chliebh,  
Over the rocks and up the scree  
Into the rain and mist.  
Down to the valley again we go,  
Out of the rain and the mist and snow,  
Ramsay and Rennie and Hugh Munro,  
Out of the rain and mist.

Oh ! We are the mountaineers who rally  
Every winter at Dalmally.  
Right in the heart of the Orchy Valley,  
At the foot of Beinn a' Chliebh.

These are the joys of a climber's life,  
Always with storm and snow at strife,  
While winds blow sharp as a surgeon's knife  
On the slopes of Beinn a' Chliebh.

But back to the inn at set of sun,  
Round the fire with chaff and fun,  
We tell of the deeds that day we've done.  
What happier men than we ?

Oh ! We are the men who always rally  
Every winter at Dalmally,  
Right in the heart of the Orchy Valley,  
At the foot of Beinn a' Chliebh.

When years have sped, and we've grown old,  
And our lives are lived, and our tales are told,  
And feet are slipping, and hands won't hold  
On the rocks of Beinn a' Chliebh.  
Our thoughts will turn to the long ago,  
To the days in the mist, and the rain and snow,  
(Ramsay and Rennie and Hugh Munro),  
And the nights with the S.M.C.

Oh ! We are the men who used to rally  
Every winter at Dalmally ;  
But now we're bound for the Happy Valley,  
So farewell to Beinn a' Chliebh."

I also can recall a very sporting ascent up the central gully in a most awful blizzard which is so graphically described by Mr Naismith, Vol. IV., p. 267.

Another jolly ascent was in 1893, when a member took a surprising glissade down the "Fox's couloir," and in consequence mulcted the Accident Insurance Company of a large sum of coin. Ben Lui is not only on that account a most repaying hill, and, as one becomes fonder of it with every visit made, I can confidently recommend the expedition to any one who wants what I consider simply an ideal climb !



## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THIRTY-SECOND MEET OF THE CLUB,  
FORT-WILLIAM, NEW YEAR 1904.

BY J. H. BELL.

FORT-WILLIAM again proved a strong attraction to members of the Club, and a new record in numbers for a New-Year Meet has been put up. Probably many causes contributed to gather together the thirty men who filled the Alexandra Hotel. The last Fort-William Winter Meet was notable for the smallness of the gathering, but all who had been there conspired to spread stories of glorious days and grand climbs in crisp air, bright sunlight, and glittering moonlight, and this year the Secretary thoughtfully sent out a notice pointing out that if one didn't like walking one could drive, and that if one was benighted on Ben Nevis there was always the Observatory to take refuge in. So that whether one were cast in the heroic or the epicurean mould, the temptations were equal. The growth of our Meets may fairly be claimed as evidence of the vitality and energy of the Club. It has only one threatening aspect. It appears that soon, if we are to meet under one roof, only Fort-William, Aviemore, and one or two other centres will be able to provide an hotel palatial enough for our needs. Visions pass before our eyes of the Club meeting in the future at the Grand Hotel in Oban, and reaching the hills by means of an organised service of motor cars.

In one respect this Meet may fairly claim to be unique. Thirty men were climbing for four days, and there is no record of anybody having even got his feet wet. This was a welcome change after the snow baths we experienced at Killin. A keen frost had converted even the swamps on the direct route to the Allt a' Mhuilinn into a convenient highway. There was singularly little snow for the time of year. It was only above 3,000 feet that it lay in any quantity, and what there was, was so hard that it was only possible to glissade standing. Some of us thought







29 LAUDER ROAD,  
EDINBURGH, 14th December 1903.

## Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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### NEW YEAR MEET.

DEAR SIR,

The NEW YEAR MEET of the Club will be held at the Alexandra Hotel, FORT WILLIAM, from *Thursday, 31st December, till Monday, 4th January 1904.*

As a climbing centre, Fort William has few rivals. Although, for the short days of winter, the distance from the ridges of Ben Nevis and the Mamore Forest peaks, may seem excessive, it must be remembered that a good road leads to Poldubh, and that the presence of an Observatory on Ben Nevis reduces the risks of winter climbing somewhat. I incorporate with this Circular the Map of Ben Nevis, amended to date, but I refer Members and others who desire full information regarding the available climbs, to the exhaustive Guide Book articles on Ben Nevis and the Mamore Group, which appeared in the S. M. C. Journal for September 1902.

For the convenience of Members, I have made the following arrangements, viz. :—

Complete Board, including baths and afternoon tea	9/- per day.	
Dogcart for three and driver to foot of Ben Nevis path		} Terms on application to me.
Waggonette „ „ „ „		
Dogcart for three and driver to Poldubh		
Waggonette „ „ „		

I enclose Post Card for intimation of intention to be present, but Members will kindly engage their rooms direct from the Hotel.

If a sufficient number intimate their intention of being present, a carriage will be reserved from Edinburgh by the 2.5 train, which will be available for Glasgow Members. Tea baskets will be obtained at Crianlarich.

Yours faithfully,

W. INGLIS CLARK,

*Hon. Secy.*

with fond regret of the luxurious descents from Ben Nevis at Easter '95, when a sitting glissade of 2,000 feet brought us down in record time. Three members brought their ski with some thought of corrupting the morals of the Meet by introducing so fascinating a rival sport, but none of the ski got higher than the hotel door.

Throughout the Meet the clouds clung obstinately during the daytime to the upper thousand feet of Ben Nevis, and a strong south-east wind made itself rather too keenly felt on the upper rocks; but for most part of the time fine views were to be had from any elevation less than 3,500 feet, and in the evening, after the sun had gone down, even the top of Ben Nevis might be seen glittering under a bright full moon.

The first to arrive before the official Meet opened were Lester, Parr, and Wigner.

Parr began the rock-climbing account by a solitary ascent of the Castle Ridge, and Wigner with a friend made an unsuccessful attempt on the South Castle Gully, the big pitch of which was found to be in a half-clothed and repulsive condition. Lester strolled up to the Allt a' Mhuilinn Glen and amused himself by cutting steps across the frozen pitches of the burn.

On Thursday, 31st December, eleven men braved the discomforts of the early morning train. Two got out at Crianlarich and bagged Cruach Ardran before coming on by the evening train; seven left the train at Corrour to reach Fort-William by the grand walk through Glen Nevis, with the added attraction of ascending *en route* some peculiarly remote and insignificant "Munro." The remaining two went on to Fort-William, where they spent their time executing many shopping commissions for the seven, and then having comfortably lunched, found their way to the top of Meall-an-t-Suidhe just in time to see the sun setting over Loch Linnhe, with all the western hills even to the Cuillin spread out before them.

The evening train brought a large contingent who completed the party of thirty. We much regretted that neither the President nor the Hon. Editor were able to come, but among our number were both Vice-Presidents and the

Hon. Secretary, Treasurer, and Librarian. We had five original members and six new members among the company, who mustered, all told, Messrs Gilbert Thomson, Maclay, Inglis Clark, G. Napier, Goggs, Bell, James Burns, Gillon, Goodeve, Hill, Inglis, Lester, Meares, Munro, Morrison, MacIntyre, Macmillan, Newbigging, Parr, Raeburn, Rennie, Robertson, H. Walker, C. Walker, and Wigner—members; and John Burns, C. Clark, Macharg, Unna, and Waugh—guests.

Friday, 1st January, was the great day of the Meet, at least in respect of the numbers and variety of the climbs done. It is said that the raven, ptarmigan, and deer of Lochaber and Mamore all held separate meetings to inquire into the meaning of the sudden and simultaneous invasion of their fastnesses. Ben Nevis as usual was the chief attraction. One party found a new way up the northernmost of the Trident buttresses, while others reached the top by means of the Castle Ridge, the north face gullies, the Carn Dearg arête, the shoulder above the head of Glen Nevis, and the path.

Other members, who from various causes (it may be feared in some cases laziness) were able to resist the magnetic attraction of THE Ben, found their way instead to the top of Carn Mor Dearg, Aonach Beag, or Stob Ban, while one small and very energetic party went to the top of Aonach Beag *via* Carn Mor Dearg, and returned by Glen Nevis.

On Saturday, 2nd January, there seemed to be a general feeling that the Castle Ridge was the thing to do, no less than ten men choosing that way to the Observatory, while to the joy of all Maclay, Parr, Unna, and Macharg succeeded in forcing the Tower Ridge route, for it would have been unseemly, when thirty men were gathered at Fort-William, to have left unclimbed the grandest climb on the mainland of Scotland. Ben Nevis was also ascended by another snow gully and by the path, while one member was content with half-way up the path, and another went one better by spending the day in the excursion by rail to Mallaig and back.

Four members extended the radius of Fort-William

climbs by ascending the great ridge of Garbh-bheinn of Ardgour and returning in one day by means of a good deal of driving, steaming, and the ferry at Corran.

By Sunday, 3rd January, men were beginning to feel themselves in form, and plans were laid for the assault of the North-east Buttress and the Staircase of Carn Dearg; but the wind in the Great Corrie was found to be too severe for these exposed climbs, and the North-east Buttress party preferred the shelter of the Observatory Gully, from which they made a new variation by traversing on to the Tower Ridge above the Tower.

The "Staircase" party joined the bulk of the members, who spent the day on the lower levels; but as a sign of hope and of reproach, it should be pointed out that all the new members present were on the hills—Newbigging, Morrison, Goodeve, and James Burns climbing Ben Nevis by one of the northern face gullies; while Dr Macmillan, always keener than the youngest, led MacIntyre and Waugh to the top of Stob Ban.

Monday morning saw most of the party off by the train, but those who were left made the most of their good fortune and had good climbs on Stob Ban and Meall-an-t-Suidhe, of which notes will be found below.

On Tuesday, 5th January, Parr and Unna ascended the North Castle Gully; and on Wednesday, 6th January, Parr and Wigner made another attempt on the South Castle Gully, but the big pitch still proved too much.

On Wednesday afternoon the spell of fine weather broke, and deep new snow prevented Parr, who stayed on at Fort-William, from doing any more climbing. So ended the adventures of the big party who "went up to the mountains in the snow."

#### NOTES ON SOME OF THE CLIMBS.

1. Corroul to Fort-William by Glen Nevis.
2. Trident Buttress.
3. C. M. Dearg, Aonach Beag, and Glen Nevis.
4. Garbh-bheinn of Ardgour.
5. Tower Gully Ridge Traverse.
6. Stob Ban.
7. Meall-an-t-Suidhe Gully.

CORROUR TO FORT-WILLIAM BY GLEN NEVIS OVER  
SGOR-NA-H-EILDE.

*Thursday, 31st December.*—A party of seven—Messrs Goggs, Goodeve, Morrison, Munro, Newbigging, Thomson, and Rennie—left Corroul at 9.20, followed the line for two miles, then down to Loch Treighead and up Amhainn Reidh. They crossed the stream some  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of a cottage at the head of a glen, in which are Lochs Eilde Beag and Mor, and struck the Sgor-na-h-Eilde Ridge at an obvious wide col, thence over hard snow, a gentle rise to the summit (3,279 feet),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles as the crow flies from the track in the main glen. They went back along the ridge to the col, then slantwise down the west side of the ridge to where the Glen Nevis stream makes a right-angled turn under Tom an Aodaich, then due west past Steall—five of us taking the lower path through the gorge, and two the upper. Both parties used the rope at one point on account of ice-sheets across the path and the fast oncoming darkness. Four luxurious tramps forming the advance guard took a trap which met them half a mile from the end of the Glen Nevis road, reaching Fort-William about 6.15. The main body, consisting of one, trudged on, arriving at 6.50, and the rearguard of two marched in at 7.50.

The weather conditions were perfect for the trip—very little snow above, and that hard—the low ground frozen, and therefore no bogs. Bagging Sgor-na-h-Eilde added about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours to the length of the trip.

The scenery is good all through, and as an alternative route to the railway line it can be thoroughly recommended.

F. S. G.

## THE NORTH TRIDENT BUTTRESS OF BEN NEVIS.

*Friday, 1st January.*—A large party left for Achintee by the early coach. After proceeding more or less together as far as the lunching-stone, they there split up into smaller parties; a party of four—Maclay, Raeburn, H. and C. W. Walker—turned up into Coire na Ciste and proceeded to climb the northernmost of the three Trident Buttresses. This buttress or ridge forms the somewhat broken wall that

bounds the Carn Dearg Gully and the Moonlight Gully on the south. The rocks low down were in splendid condition, no snow lay on them, though the crevices were often full of black ice; the loose stones, rather characteristic of this ridge, were all firmly frozen into position. The climb began at ten up the line of a very conspicuous trap-dyke in the centre of the buttress, which is in places steep though not difficult. Towards the top it develops into a ridge crowned at the summit by a steep tower. This last tower was snow and fog-crystal clad, and the wind was strong and rather painful. The climb finishes within a few yards of the cairn on the top of Carn Dearg, which was reached at twelve. The party then passed round the heads of Nos. 4 and 3 Gullies, up the latter of which they watched another band of enthusiasts cutting steps in the hard snow. They then went on to the Observatory, where they found themselves the first visitors for the year, and received the usual hospitable welcome from the observer in charge, Mr the Cook, and the famous cat, and returned to the Alexandra in time for baths and afternoon tea. It was misty above 3,500 feet, and the wind was south-east, somewhat strong and cold. Down below was clear, frosty, and fine—temperature on summit about 23°. H. R.

#### CARN MOR DEARG AND AONACH BEAG.

*Friday, 1st January.*—After leaving the lunching-stone, Goggs and Goodeve followed the Allt a' Mhuilinn to about the 2,500 line, and then made straight up to the summit of Carn Mor Dearg, which was reached at 11.45 A.M. We found the snow hard, and it was necessary to cut a few steps in places, but we did not rope. We then climbed down to the col between Carn Mor Dearg and Aonach Beag, and then straight up to the ridge, which was joined at about 3,750 feet, and followed to the summit (1.30 P.M.). After leaving the summit we followed a direction almost due south, and roped for a time, as we could not see in the mist what the ridge was like. We came down with the Allt Coire Guibhais on our right to Steall (2.30 P.M.), and then followed the track to Fort-William (5.30 P.M.).

T. E. G.

## GARBH-BHEINN OF ARDGOUR.

*Saturday, 2nd January.*—Bell, G. Napier, Raeburn, and Rennie left Fort-William by the 7 A.M. boat for Corran. A trap had been ordered by wire overnight, and after about half-an-hour's delay the party continued their journey down the west side of Loch Linnhe in a strange vehicle which seemed to be a superannuated theatre omnibus. It had at least the merit of warmth, but progress was slow, and it was after ten o'clock before the party alighted at the bridge over the Corrie Iubhair Burn, about a mile beyond Inversanda Lodge, and about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Corran. The left bank of the stream was followed for about 2 miles till the Garbh-bheinn Corrie was opened. On the south side of the corrie is a top (nameless in one-inch Ordnance Map), with a steep slabby face towards the corrie, and on the north side are the range of cliffs falling from Garbh-bheinn himself. There is a col (about 2,250 feet) between the nameless peak and Garbh-bheinn, and the highest point of Garbh-bheinn is immediately above the col on the north side. The summit can be reached from the col without any climbing by a slight detour on the western slopes of the mountain. Falling directly from the cairn, on the eastern side, towards Glen Iubhair, is the ridge which is the climbing attraction of the mountain. The ridge had been once previously ascended and once descended, both climbs under summer conditions. A strong cold south-east wind, and the glitter of frost crystals on the upper rocks, made some of us wonder whether it was not better suited for a summer climb. However, during the two hours that we were climbing, either the wind lulled or we were in an eddy, for a halcyon calm reigned around us, and once on the rocks the "preposterous" holds and hitches gave us a delightful sense of security. The ridge proper starts from a grassy rake some 300 feet up the face. This rake can be reached either directly up the steep slabby and grassy rocks just on the left of the great gully, or by a backward traverse from a point higher up the corrie towards the col. We followed the second and easier route. From the summit we descended to the col, then by a short standing glissade to the corrie again. Though we



had not hurried we had gone steadily since leaving the omnibus; still it was obvious that we would miss the return steamer due at Corran at four o'clock, and as it proved we were about an hour late. By this time the wind had recovered its energy, and for a few minutes it seemed doubtful whether we would manage to pull across the ferry. It was just about as rough as was pleasant on a dark and cold night, and I for one was by no means sorry to be safely across. We warmed ourselves by the kitchen fire in the little Nether Lochaber Inn while a trap was being put in for us, and then a pair of good horses took us back to the Alexandra Hotel at 8 P.M. Now that this delightful little mountain has been shown to be within reach of a day from Fort-William, I hope that it will soon be better known to members of the Club. In the summer, with more frequent steamer service, and with the aid of bicycles, it is really quite easily accessible. The big gully looks as if it has numerous, perhaps insoluble, problems to offer to a strong party. It will need a long summer day, dry weather, and warm rocks.

J. H. B.

#### TOWER GULLY RIDGE TRAVERSE.

*Sunday, 3rd January.*—Rennie, Raeburn, and Wigner went into the Great Corrie, intending to ascend Nevis by the North-East Buttress, but the fierceness of the wind made them alter their plans to an attempt on the Observatory Gully-Tower branch. At the foot of the latter a remark by Rennie that he would not mind some rock-climbing for a change, induced a further change of plan; and the party then traversed rather steep and treacherous snow to the foot of the Tower Gap Chimney, which was climbed to the gap, and the ascent finished by the usual Tower Ridge route. The conditions were not ideal, and the climb into the gap was harder than it would be in summer. The traverse, and perhaps the lower part of the Chimney, are apparently new.

H. R.

#### STOB BAN.

*Monday, 4th January.*—Maclay and Parr with Unna ascended Stob Ban.

Leaving the hotel shortly after 6.30 A.M., they cycled to

Achriabhach Farm at the head of Glen Nevis, where they left their cycles. Leaving the farm about 7.35, they followed the path up by the Coire nam Feusgan Burn, crossing to the right side of the burn about half-way up, and following the zigzags and the subsequent sweep of the path till nearly level with the foot of the main buttress of the north-east corrie. Here they re-crossed the burn and traversed round to the foot of the buttress—not quite an easy traverse owing to the ice and snow. This route has the advantage of giving an excellent view of the whole corrie.

The foot of the buttress was reached about 9 A.M. Several routes up seemed to present themselves, the most sporting being a steep wall of black rock, forming the ridge at the lower end of the buttress. In the existing wintry conditions it was deemed advisable to leave this for the summer, when it will probably give an excellent climb, and Maclay and Parr attacked the ridge immediately to the left which ascends steeply between two gullies, and has near the foot what appeared to be a gendarme, but turned out to be part of the buttress. Unna preferred to reach the top by the south-eastern ridge.

The route lay up the supposed gendarme, above which were two or three difficult bits, the rocks being slabby and out-sloping. This section of 150 to 200 feet took about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

Once at the top of this ridge, there was no further difficulty. The next part consisted of steep hard snow, in which steps had to be cut leading to the top of the buttress, and from thence the ridge was followed to the summit, which was reached at 11.50 A.M., the time of the ascent being about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours, excluding a halt for a meal at the top of the ridge.

After a short halt on the top, Maclay took leave of the others to catch the afternoon train home. Descending by Coire Dheirg Glen, he reached the farm in a trifle over an hour, and the hotel about 1.45 P.M. The others spent a longer time on the top, and returned in a more leisurely way.

The corrie of Stob Ban merits much more attention than it has hitherto received. In addition to the

Buttress referred to, which certainly furnishes several climbs on both sides, there are several good gullies, and also two shorter buttresses to the left of the big one, and just underneath the summit. The climbing on these latter appeared to be stiff, if feasible at all ; but owing to the mist hanging about the summit and want of time, they could not be properly reconnoitred.

J. M.

GULLY ON MEALL-AN-T-SUIDHE.

*Monday, 4th January.*—Three-and-a-quarter hours were spent by Burns, Newbigging, and Raeburn in the big gully of Meall-an-t-Suidhe, the second which is passed on the way up the path. The first and third give apparently no climbing. Most of the leading was done by myself, except at one or two places which Raeburn took. Many of the pitches were iced heavily, and one pitch Raeburn preferred to turn, as several hundredweights of ice would have had to be sent down on the other two.

W. C. N.

## THIRTY-THIRD MEET OF THE CLUB,

AVIEMORE, EASTER, 1904.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

WERE one to ask in what way the S.M.C. shows a corporate life, it might be answered—In its Meets, its *Journal*, and its Dinner. Of these three I would unhesitatingly place the Meets in the front, as a means of keeping up interest and activity, and of promoting that brotherly feeling which we have always been proud to think is a special feature of our Club. The lines of our Club song focus this idea, and give the key to all our proceedings—

“Good comrades we of the S.M.C.,  
We’re a jolly band of brothers,  
Tho’ we’re sons of many mothers.”

At these Meets there is of course a larger proportion of our younger members than veterans, but no better opportunity exists for learning caution, confidence, and boldness than there, where the beginner makes ascents under the wing of some accomplished climber, and in this way gets borne in on him that caution, above all things, is essential to the safe pursuit of mountaineering. May I, however, make an appeal in this place to the decreasing ranks of our original members not to desert our gatherings under the impression that they are unwanted, and would be out of their element. Had we not with us Mackenzie, Munro, Naismith, Prof. Ramsay, Rennie, and Gilbert Thomson, all belonging to the original brigade, and setting us an example of enterprise and energy which even the latest recruit might envy. A terrible rumour has, however, lately arisen that the Hon. Secretary allows no man to take breakfast later than 7 A.M., and that the hotel may be in uproar from 5.30 A.M. onwards. There may be some scant truth in this, but I am sure that if the original members turn out in greater force, an eight or even a nine o’clock breakfast may become the more popular.

When it was decided that the Easter Meet should be held at Aviemore, two different opinions were expressed.



*W. Inglis Clark.*

AVIEMORE, EASTER 1994.



On the one hand, the distance from the climbing ground (some 8 miles), the absence of sporting rocks (saving Sgoran Dubh), and the risks of chill when driving home in conveyances were strong objections. On the other, a palatial hotel, superb scenery, and a district affording a certainty of snow work weighed more strongly in the balance. And how did the result turn out? Was it a successful Meet? The general opinion was that despite a constant gale of 50 to 100 miles per hour, and a series of blizzards unsurpassed in the Club's history, it ranked among the most enjoyable.

An anticyclone had reigned over Scotland from 28th March, and a cloudless sun beat on the ranges of the Cairngorms, superficially thawing the snow, which again froze by night into glistening sheets of ice. A. E. Robertson and Inglis Clark, bent on photography, arrived by the early train on the 31st, and had a peerless view of the whole range, glittering like polished silver in the morning sunlight. "That enthusiast Munro" had already cycled up to Loch Eunaich, and by that time was ascending the snowy slopes of Sron na Leirg. By ten o'clock, however, clouds were forming, and photography was brought to a standstill by the springing up of a hurricane from the south, which more or less continued till the termination of the Meet. Munro accomplished his climb, reported the snow in good condition, but described the blizzard on the ridge as exceeding anything in his experience. The surface of Loch an Eilein was torn into spindrift, and the photographers from a sheltered nook watched the spray blown from the castle to the other end of the loch in nine seconds, showing a velocity of perhaps 100 miles per hour.

Evening saw a large accession of members, so that on Friday morning no less than twenty-two left Aviemore by the brakes at 7 or 8 A.M. for the mountains. Cairngorm and Ben Muich Dhui were ascended by Burns, Drummond and his son, Macmillan and Rennie, who by some mischance had to walk back the whole way to the hotel. Squance and Mackenzie visited Cairngorm. Munro walked to the Larig Ghru. Raeburn, Garden, Roth, and Almond climbed a snow gully in Coire an t-Sneachda to the Cairngorm Ridge, returning to the corrie by another route.

Goodeve, Robertson, and A. Russell climbed from Coire an t-Sneachda by a gully, and descended by the Pinnacle. But the most interesting achievement of the day was reserved for the late party (8 A.M.), consisting of Campbell, Clark, Douglas, M'Intyre, Prof. Ramsay, D. Ramsay, and Solly. These, driving by Loch an Eilein to Glen Eunaich, had been forewarned by Munro that for about a year the road had been blocked by a mighty boulder, which prevented all passage by horse, and very conveniently stopped tourist driving parties from reaching the lower bothy. Forewarned is forearmed, and in addition to seven ice-axes, the party was provided with a 1-inch iron pipe 5 feet long, and two nondescript crowbars. The drive was one of surpassing beauty, gleams of sunshine occasionally lighting up the depths of Rothiemurchus Forest, and evolving the richest colouring from the luxuriant heather and budding birches. Can any one point to a more enchanting road than that from Loch an Eilein to the lower bothy? The rich green of the Scotch firs, with the velvety richness of the undergrowth, vied under the varying effects of light and distance with the savage grandeur of the snow-clad mountains and rocky ravine. But our musings were brought to a sudden stop, for there was the actual boulder blocking the way, and unless it could be moved, a long tramp was before us. The whole party advanced to the attack under the leadership of M'Intyre, and inch by inch the huge boulder, some three tons or more, was elevated till it stood on end, and an attempt to undercut it with axes from the valley side was led by Douglas. Then, with cheering cry from our veteran first President, the cream of the Club hurled itself against the obstacle, and even the Hon. Secretary, enveloped in voluminous wraps, could be seen applying some 12 stone of too solid flesh in the struggle. It moves! Again! again! and over it goes, no more to obstruct the road in our generation. It is sad to relate that Campbell (like Nero) snapshotted the operations while the rest of the party worked, and that Parker, when he heard of the twenty minutes occupied in the effort, maintained that he would have removed the obstacle in four minutes if he had been there, with two navvies. From the lower bothy,



Campbell, M'Intyre, D. Ramsay, and Solly, crossing Coire an Lochain, ascended Braeriach, while Prof. Ramsay, Clark, and Douglas enjoyed an excellent time in or near the corrie, and were rewarded by a 400 feet glissade. In the corrie the remains of a recent avalanche were crossed, the enormous blocks of ice and snow littering the ground to the edge of the frozen loch. On the same day, Goggs, Groves, Naismith, Nelson, J. A. Parker, and Thomson broke the journey north at Blair Atholl, from which they climbed the three peaks of Beinn a' Ghlo. The route adopted was by the Shinagag road as far as the point marked 1,443 feet on the Ordnance Map, and thence straight up Carn Liath, and from it *via* the middle peak to Carn nan Gabhar. The descent from the latter was made due south to the Allt Coire Lagain and back by the Shinagag road. The weather was of the worst possible description, and the expedition took eight and a half hours.

The hopes of the Club were set on Saturday, for several parties had designs on the Sgoran Dubh cliffs, but the weather was even worse, and made rock climbing arduous and difficult.

Campbell, Byrne, Munro, and D. Ramsay climbed the Fiacail a Choire Chais and reached the top above Coire Sneachda. Mackenzie and Macmillan led Ramsay and Rennie to an elevation east of Geall Charn. Goodeve, Moore, and Winterbotham crossed over to Garrachory, where they had an excellent snow climb. Howie and Rose visited Coire an Lochain. Goggs, with a large party, climbed Bynac and Choinneach. Burns, Grove, and Nelson climbed a snow gully on Sgoran Dubh, the second from the Pinnacle Buttress. Rorie, with C. and H. Walker, had a severe time on the Pinnacle Buttress; and Clark, Parker, and Robertson had a splendid climb into the steep corrie between the second and third buttresses.

Sunday was a stormy day, with frequent snow showers. Only one party went to the hills, Gibson, Goodeve, Moore, and Winterbotham reporting a walk to the Larig very heavy with deep snow. The various churches within eight miles had deputations from the Club, and Dr Macmillan examined the geology of Craigellachie with special reference to the

possibilities of foot and hand holds. Towards evening the weather improved, but morning still showed blizzards on the mountains. On Tuesday, Goggs, with Almond, Burns, and Thomson, made a forced march to Sron na Leirg, Braeriach, and Coire an Lochan, while Grove, Mackenzie, M'Intyre, and Nelson reached Braeriach. Rennie and party passed over Creag na Leacainn to Cairngorm, and Douglas and Roth climbed the same mountain from Loch Morlich. The ascent of the day was made by Moncrieff, Robertson, and Rose under the leadership of Solly, when a narrow arête north of the Married Men's Buttress was climbed to near the top, the difficulties being of a high order. Tuesday left but a small remnant with plans unsettled by the continued bad weather.

Ewen Robertson and Raeburn held a supplementary meet of the Club at Strathcarron. Leaving Aviemore at 8.30 P.M. on Saturday, they reached Achnashellach at 12.52. The weather conditions were of the worst description, and they merely made the tour round Fuar Tholl by the pass between it and Sgurr Ruadh.

Next day An Ruadh Stac was traversed; and on Monday, despite the blizzards, the ascent of Sgurr Ruadh was made by its fine east buttress from Coire Lair.

Here ends the tale of ascents, but the chronicler would fail in his duty were he to omit mention of the entertainments in the evening. An innovation was made in the bringing up of a complete limelight lantern outfit with compressed gas for three lectures. On Friday evening Douglas led off with a lecture on his exploits in the Canadian Rockies, the brilliance of many of his slides evoking much applause. Thereafter A. E. Robertson showed a selection of the Club slides, illustrating the Cairngorms and Ben Alder. On Saturday evening the Easter Meet of 1903 at Skye was brilliantly depicted, and some views of Sutherland were shown. Thereafter the Hon. Secretary showed slides taken during an ascent of Ben Lui, and finished with about seventy Swiss views embracing the chief peaks in the Pennine Alps. On Sunday evening Garden lectured on the Canadian Rockies, and some views of Ben Nevis were shown. The general feeling was one of satisfaction with

these lantern lectures. On Saturday night the smoking-room presented the unwonted spectacle of a Highland gathering. Garden, Leslie, and D. Ramsay provided the Club with Highland music, each on his own bagpipes. Later, to the stirring strains of D. Ramsay, Prof. Ramsay led an eightsome reel in which Munro, Parker, C. Walker, Rorie, Roth, Gibson, and Garden took part. Subsequently a foursome wound up the spectators to enthusiasm which culminated in the singing of the well-known Club song. The following attended the Meet :—Boyd, Burns, Campbell, Clark, Douglas, Drummond, Garden, Gibson, Goggs, Goodeve, Howie, Mackenzie, Maclay, Macmillan, M'Intyre, Meares, Moncrieff, Munro, Naismith, Nelson, Parker, Raeburn, Ramsay, Rennie, A. E. Robertson, Rose, Rorie, A. Russell, Solly, Squance, G. Thomson, C. Walker, and H. Walker—33 members ; and G. Almond, Byrne, Drummond, Grove, Leslie, Moore, J. D. Ramsay, Roth, and Winterbotham—9 guests.

#### COIRE AN T-SNEACHDA.

*Friday, 1st April.*—Goodeve, Russell, and I on reaching the corrie thought the blizzard too fierce for serious rock work. So working round the foot of a steep buttress we got into a kind of open gully which took us easily up to within about 150 feet of the ridge. A fine rock pinnacle here showed up well on our left, and the blizzard having moderated, we made towards it. When cutting across a gully just beside it Raeburn's party were seen below us coming up. It was not judged sportsman-like to pass in front of them, so traversing back to our original line, we gained the ridge. The small cornice was easily surmounted. Goodeve and I, after lunch, still hankering after that pinnacle, retraced our steps for 150 feet and climbed it.

A. E. ROBERTSON.

*Friday, 1st April.*—Almond, Garden, Raeburn, and Roth ascended up into Coire an t-Sneachda and climbed the rocks of the north face. Owing to the lower part of these rocks being too much iced, they traversed a little to the right, and gained by a steep slanting snow-covered

ledge the foot of a fine little pinnacled ridge to the east of the central gully. This was climbed to top of the corrie. They descended by steep snow farther to east and got back to Glenmore by about 3 P.M.

Raeburn carried his ski up to the snow, nearly 3,000 feet, and used them up to the foot of the buttress and down again, but conditions were very unfavourable for their use, the ground being almost bare of snow, a thin coating of ice alternating with patches of drifted snow.

On Saturday, Munro, Byrne, D. Ramsay, and Campbell proposed to visit the various tops of Cairngorm forming the bulwarks of Coire Chais, Coire an t-Sneachda, and Coire Lochain. Taking the usual luxurious method of reaching Glen More Lodge, they attacked the first top by the Allt Chais and the gentle slope between Coire Chais and Coire an t-Sneachda, and after a steady grind over various qualities of snow, reached the top of the Fiacail à Choire Chais (3,737) in a little over two hours from the Lodge. The day was dull throughout, and as the higher levels were reached, the wind gradually grew stronger until a regular hurricane was found at the top. A convenient tor formed of huge slabs of granite made a good place for lunch, but as there seemed no hope of the weather improving, very little time was spent here, and a rush was made for the top of the Fiacail Coire an t-Sneachda (3,856). This looked well as it was approached in the driving mist and snow, and on closer inspection maintained its reputation as a distinct peak when compared with the usual rounded tops of the district. The wind had now become so strong that from time to time the whole party had to anchor in such way as they could to avoid a wind glissade, and as the weather conditions were more than disagreeable, it was decided to abandon the other tops till a more convenient season.

D. S. CAMPBELL.

On the 2nd April, Clark, Robertson, and myself explored the fan-shaped corrie between the second and third buttresses of Sgoran Dubh, as far as the stormy weather would permit us.

From the upper bothy in Glen Eunaich we crossed the

stream just below the loch, and soon reached the foot of the narrow gully which leads up into the corrie. This was filled up with avalanche snow, evidently of recent date, the surface of which was broken in two places by pitches of smooth rocks which did not look at all feasible. To circumvent these, and also to keep out of the way of any possible avalanche, we crossed over to the north side of the couloir and climbed up a very steep grass gully, which was separated from it by a rib of rock. At the top of the gully we climbed out on to the rib of rock, and from its highest point traversed without much trouble into the couloir, just above the higher of the two pitches.

Viewed from this point the scene was extremely alpine, the avalanche snow of the couloir looking like a miniature glacier threading its way between the steep rock walls on either side, and beyond these expanding into a snow basin, from which rose the two rock buttresses which are the principal features of the corrie. Either of these would evidently give a first-class climb, but we did not care to tackle one of them in the high wind which prevailed. We looked for something shorter and more sheltered. A series of small pinnacles at the foot of the north buttress looked tempting, but on closer inspection seemed too simple. Another small-pinnacled rib higher up to the right looked better, and Clark essayed its ascent, encouraged by Robertson and myself, who assured him that it was quite easy, absurdly so in fact. After getting up about ten feet, Clark however seemed unable to make any farther progress, notwithstanding our encouragements; and, muttering something about scarcity of holds and abundance of wind, came down and ordered us to cut steps up the snow to the sky-line.

The angle of the snow slope was very steep, and at its top we climbed out on to a broad snow ridge, which was evidently the summit ridge of No. 2 Buttress. But we could see nothing owing to the blinding snow-drift in which we were enveloped the instant we left the corrie. The weather was so bad that we made no attempt to reach the north summit of Sgoran Dubh, but simply steered our way to its north shoulder, and along it to a point where we could

glissade down to the heather, just opposite the lower bothy in Glen Eunaich.

J. A. P.

On Easter Monday, Mackenzie, M'Intyre, and Nelson, with J. Grove (guest), climbed from the upper bothy in Loch Eunaich to the March Cairn (4,149 feet) of Braeriach by Corrie Dhonndail. There was a considerable amount of fresh snow lying in the hollows, but the strong winds of the preceding days had swept the new snow clear on the steeply inclined slopes leading to the col at the head of the corrie. The fringe of the ridge above the col was heavily corniced, with the exception of a small portion on the north-east, and the route up was taken in that direction. About an hour was spent in kicking and cutting steps up to the col, and the cairn was reached in about two and a half hours from the starting point.

On the descent (which was taken by same route as the ascent) an attempt was made to get down into the corrie by the rock ridge lying to the west of the col, but the rocks were glazed and the footing precarious. Ultimately the party cut down the slope by which they had gained the col on the outward journey, and got back to the lower bothy in the glen about 5 P.M.

W. N.

On 4th April, Solly, A. E. Robertson, Rose, and Moncrieff had an interesting climb on a ridge of Sgoran Dubh. The ridge forms a rib of No. 2 Buttress, and is reached after crossing the stream above the second bothy by moving down stream a long quarter of a mile. It is the first of two sharply defined ridges which lie immediately to the north of the main gully. Solly, who was leader, proposes to name it the Rose Ridge.

Soft snow led to the rocks where the party roped, say at 2,100 feet. The ridge proved narrow throughout, with steep pitches in places, but hitches were generally plentiful and holds sufficient for the first 800 feet, when a comfortable col was reached. Thereafter the climbing became much more difficult, three hours being taken to the next 200 feet. The first pitch above the col affords two routes, both difficult, involving either that a very sharp angle shall

be rounded or a jammed block surmounted. The leader rounded the angle and the others tested the block. The real difficulty of the climb was discovered immediately before the party turned. Here the ridge shoots into a pinnacle on the right, leaving on the left a narrow shelf inclined at a steep angle. Holds are very rare for 50 or 60 feet, and of hitches there are none. With the help of the rope the follower could scramble up, but if one who is not a climber may speak, it was a wonderful piece of leading.

At this point it was found to be already 4 o'clock, and as there was an easy traverse into the gully to the south, we decided to descend. The ridge, so far as visible from this point, appeared, however, to be easier than the pitch last surmounted. The gully was packed with soft snow which would not hold the steps, but globed together under pressure, and made fair going, except for the last man.

About 200 feet down the party traversed a rock rib to the south, and so into a second gully which joined the first lower down. As the angle was steep and the snow in bad condition, a traverse was then made on to the Rose Ridge, and a useful chimney discovered for the last 70 feet. The party unroped at 7 o'clock, and reached the bothy in time for a drive in darkness through the forest. The hotel was reached at 9.45.

In the opinion of the leader the ridge should be taken by a strong party of three using 120 feet of rope. Owing to the steepness of the gullies on either side, the climbing is not sensational in proportion to its difficulty.

A. M.

#### ANOTHER ACCOUNT OF THE SAME EXPEDITION.

On 4th April, owing to a misunderstanding, my intended companions did not meet me in Glen Eunaich, so I was invited to join a party consisting of the Rev. A. E. Robertson and Messrs A. Moncrieff and J. Rose. The face of Sgoran Dubh was very white with new snow, and we went to the second buttress uncertain what to attempt. The principal corrie in the buttress, just north of the Married Men's Ridge, looked unpromising, and after a little hesitation we decided

to attack a ridge just beyond a smaller gully lying north of the corrie. This ridge comes farther down into the valley than most of the others, and is distinguishable by two trees growing out of it a little way up, and by a very conspicuous wall of rock on the north side higher up. This wall is well seen from the valley. We began climbing about 11 A.M., and climbed on with very little rest until after 4 P.M. From an aneroid observation we think we were then at a height of nearly 3,200 feet; but it was too late to complete the climb, so we traversed into the gully on the south, and descended by the gully until near the bottom, when we crossed the ridge, and reached the valley by a steep chimney north of the ridge. We reached the lower bothy at 7.55 P.M., and Aviemore two hours later. The ridge is very steep, and many of the pitches are very difficult and without much hold, though possibly with less snow holds that we missed might be discovered. We stopped just below a very steep wall, with a vertical slit down the middle of it. I think this is climbable, but the rest of the ridge was hidden. Just below where we stopped was, I thought, the most difficult place. We had to get up some slanting slabs with nothing much to hold by, except that for the right arm there was a bulging-out piece of another slab a little higher. To the left was a sheer drop.

Comparing this with other climbs that I know, it lacks the interest of the scenery such as there is on some of the Ben Nevis routes, but as a gymnastic climb I know nothing in Great Britain to equal it for long and continuous interest. Any party going to complete the climb should consist of three persons only, with not less than 100 feet of rope. We used 140 feet. At least two of the party should be thoroughly experienced, and they should remember that the descent by the gully might be more difficult or even impracticable in the absence of snow. I do not think that any one would descend some of the pitches on the ridge as last man without a long hitched rope.

G. A. SOLLY.



## LIBRARY AND CLUBROOM.

MRS SHARP (now of the Golf Hotel, Montrose) on leaving Sligachan very kindly presented the Club with the Climbers' Book, in whose pages had appeared interesting accounts of various climbs in the Cuillins written by many hands. The Club Committee, bearing in mind the probable wishes of climbers in general, decided to have a type-written copy of the book made, and to lend this copy to the present manager of the hotel for the use of all mountaineers. In order to enable a stranger to the Cuillins to map out routes for himself, first a four-inch map was added, then a complete guide-book by our Editor, illustrated with photographs, and finally a number of descriptive articles which have appeared in the pages of the *S.M.C. Journal* from time to time. The new Climbers' Book will, it is hoped, be found a veritable *vade-mecum* to Salvationists and Ultramontanes alike. The following is the index of the book :—

Map of the Cuillins, 4 inches to the mile.

Guide Book.

Articles from *S.M.C. Journal* :—

Early Descriptions of Skye. Wm. Douglas.

Easter in the Cuillins (1892). J. H. Gibson.

The Coolins in 1896. W. Brown.

August at Sligachan (1898). G. Bennett Gibbs.

Notes, Geological and Topographical, on the Cuillin Hills, Skye.

Alfred Harker.

Song—Och ! The Coolin !

Photographs.

Copy of the original Climbers' Book.

Sir Arthur Mitchell has very kindly presented the Club with a copy of his extremely useful and valuable "List of Travels and Tours in Scotland, 1296-1900."

The Appalachian Mountain Club, who, though hailing from the New World, are about twice our age, have been good enough to complete our set of their Journal.

To these, and all the other contributors to our Library, the Club give their hearty thanks.

Mr Rickmers has very generously presented us with six pairs of ski, to be lent free of charge to any S.M.C. men who desire to make themselves acquainted with the art of skiing. They will be stored in the Clubroom, and applications therefor must be made to the Hon. Librarian in his capacity of Clubroom custodian.

By whom presented  
(when not purchased).

The Climbers' Book, Sligachan - - - - Mrs Sharp.

M'Phun's Scottish Land Tourist's Pocket Guide.

(1847) - - - - James Maclay.

Remarks on Dr Samuel Johnson's Journey to the  
Hebrides. Rev. Donald M'Nicol, A.M. (1852)

„

By whom presented  
(when not purchased).

- Climbs and Exploration in the Canadian Rockies.  
Hugh E. M. Stutfield and J. Norman Collie,  
F.R.S. (1903) - - - - - J. Norman Collie.
- The Gaelic Topography of Scotland. Colonel  
James A. Robertson, F.S.A. Scot. (1869) - Purchased.
- A Topographical Dictionary of Scotland, and of  
the Islands in the British Seas. Nicholas  
Carlisle. 2 vols. (1813) - - - - - "
- List of Travels and Tours in Scotland, 1296 to  
1900. Sir Arthur Mitchell, K.C.B., M.D.,  
LL.D. (1902) - - - - - Sir Arthur Mitchell.
- From Elgin to Ben Macdhui. 12mo. (Elgin,  
1893.) F. Davie. pp. 41 - - - - - J. Gall Inglis.
- Gaelic Dictionary. Neil M'Alpine. 10th Edition  
Murray's Handbook for Travellers in Scotland.  
8th Edition. (1903) - - - - - Scott-Moncrieff Penney.
- The Literature of the Highlands. Magnus Mac-  
lean, M.A. (1904) - - - - - Purchased.
- Arran, and how to see it. Rev. David Lands-  
borough. 5th Edition. (1901.) pp. 54 - "
- A Sketch of the Geology of Fife and the Lothians,  
including Detailed Descriptions of Arthur's  
Seat and Pentland Hills. Charles Maclaren.  
(1839) - - - - - "
- Do. do. do. 2nd Edition. (1866) - "
- A Topographical Dictionary of Scotland. David  
Webster. (1817) - - - - - "
- An Excursion to the Highlands of Scotland and  
the English Lakes. J. Mawman. (1805) - "
- The Sergeant in the Hielans. Andrew Lyell,  
LL.D. 3rd Edition. (1881) - - - - - "
- Travels in the Western Hebrides from 1782-1790.  
Rev. John L. Buchanan, A.M. (1793) - "
- Travels in Scotland by an Unusual Route, &c.  
Rev. James Hall, A.M. 2 vols. (1807) - "
- The Isles of Loch Awe, and other Poems. P. G.  
Hamerton. (1859) - - - - - "
- Verses by Alexander Nicolson, LL.D.; with  
Memoir by Walter C. Smith, D.D. (1893) - "
- A General View of the Agriculture of Aberdeen-  
shire. Geo. Skene Keith, D.D. (1811) - "
- (Contains an account of the ascent in 1810  
of Ben-a-bourd, Benavon, Breriach, Cairntoul,  
Lochnagar, Ben Mac Douie, Cairngorum, &c.)  
ntiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland,  
&c. Rev. Chas. Cordiner. (1780) - - - - - "

	By whom presented (when not purchased). Purchased.
<b>The Beauties of Scotland.</b> 5 vols. (1805) - - - - -	
<b>The Geology of the Island of Arran.</b> A. C. Ramsay. (1841) - - - - -	"
<b>Three Weeks with Dr Candlish: a Highland Tour.</b> (1845.) 2nd Edition. (1874) - - -	"
<b>A Sporting Tour through the Northern Parts of England and Great Part of the Highlands of Scotland,</b> 1804. Col. T. Thornton. New Edition. (1896) - - - - -	"
<b>The Topographical, Statistical, and Historical Gazetteer of Scotland.</b> A. Fullarton & Co. 2 vols. (1847) - - - - -	"
<b>The Traveller's Guide through Scotland and its Islands.</b> 7th Edition. Vol. I. (1818) - - -	"
<b>A General Description of the East Coast of Scotland from Edinburgh to Cullen.</b> Francis Douglas. (1782) - - - - -	"
<b>A Journey to the Highlands of Scotland, with Occasional Remarks on Dr Johnson's Tour.</b> By a Lady (Mary Ann Hanway). ( <i>circa</i> 1776)	"
<b>The Scottish Tourist's Portable Guide to the Great Highland Tour, &amp;c.</b> Edited by Wm. Rhind. ( <i>circa</i> 1848) - - - - -	"
<b>Travels through England, Wales, and Scotland, in the year 1816.</b> Dr S. H. Spiker. 2 vols. (1820)	"
<b>Journal of a Tour from London to Elgin, made about 1790, &amp;c.</b> R. L. W(illis). (1897) - - -	"
<b>Leaves from a Journal; or, Sketches of Rambles in North Britain and Ireland.</b> Andrew Bigelow. (1824) - - - - -	"
<b>Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain during the years 1810 and 1811.</b> By a French Traveller (L. Simond). 2 vols. (1815) - - -	"
<b>A Descriptive Tour in Scotland.</b> Rev. C. H. Townshend. (1846) - - - - -	"
<b>German and Austrian Alpine Club. Year-Book for 1903</b> - - - - -	Exchanged.
<b>Appalachia.</b> Vols. V. to IX. incl. and Vol. X. } Nos. 1 and 2 - - - - - } (Completing our set of this Journal.)	Appalachian Mountain Club.
<b>Principal Excursions of the Innerleithen Alpine Club during the years 1889-94.</b> (1897) - - -	W. Douglas.
<b>A Historical and Descriptive View of the County of Northumberland, and of the Town and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, with Berwick-upon-Tweed and other Celebrated Places on the Scottish Border.</b> Vol. II. (1811) - - -	Adam Smail.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Menzies' Tourist's Pocket Guide for Scotland. (1853)	Adam Smail.
Black's Picturesque Tourist Guide Book through England and Wales. 2nd Edition. (1850) -	"
— Picturesque Guide to the Isle of Wight. 5th Edition. (1872) - - - - -	"
Murray's Handbook for Egypt. (1847) - -	"
— Handbook for Algeria and Tunis. 2nd Edi- tion. (1878) - - - - -	"
— Handbook for Turkey in Asia and Constanti- nople. 4th Edition. (1878) - - - -	"
— Handbook for Russia, Poland, and Finland. 3rd Edition. (1875) - - - - -	"
— Handbook for Portugal. 3rd Edition. (1875)	"
— Handbook for Spain. 5th Edition. (1878) -	"
Baedeker's Southern Germany and Austria. 3rd Edition. (1873) - - - - -	"
— Switzerland. 7th Edition. (1877) - -	"
— Belgium and Holland. 5th Edition. (1878)	"
— Rhine. 8th Edition. (1882) - - -	"
— Northern Germany. 6th Edition. (1877) -	"
— Norway and Sweden. (1879) - - -	"
Shetland, Descriptive and Historical. Robert Cowie, M.A., M.D. 2nd Edition. (1874) -	"
God's Treasure-House in Scotland: a History of Times, Mines, and Lands in the Southern Highlands. Rev. J. Moir Porteous. (1876) -	"
History of the Town and Castle of Dumbarton. John Glen. (1847) - - - - -	"
A Visit to the Western Coast of Norway. W. Wit- tich. (1848) - - - - -	"
The Queen's Drive: a descriptive Poem of Arthur's Seat and surrounding District. Cessford R. S. Fairley. (1895) - - -	"
Dollar: Past and Present. John Tait. (1894) -	"
Remarks on Forest Scenery and other Woodland Views. By Wm. Gilpin, A.M. Edited by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, Bart. 2 vols. (1834)	"
The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol. XIX. (1903) - - - - -	J. Rennie.

## MAP.

Travelling Map of Scotland. (Edinburgh, pub- lished by P. Hill & Co.; no date, but about 1820) - - - - -	James Maclay.
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## PHOTOGRAPH.

Bidean nam Bian, from the north-east - - -	J. Norman Collie.
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# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

## THE BRAES OF ANGUS.

### (DIVISION II. GROUP VII.)

Lat.,  $56^{\circ} 51'$  to  $56^{\circ} 58'$  N. Long.,  $2^{\circ} 45'$  to  $3^{\circ} 24'$  W.  
Ordnance Survey Maps, one-inch scale, Sheets 65 and 66.  
Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Maps, Nos. 16 and 17.

In the following list those mountains marked with a \* are only named on the six-inch Ordnance Survey maps. Their heights also are from the six-inch map, except that of No. 8, which is from an aneroid measurement by the writer.

1. Mount Battock, 2,555 feet, is the eastern extremity of the group, 1 mile S.E. of the Forfar-Kincardine-Aberdeen march.
2. Hill of Cat, 2,435 feet, 4 miles W.N.W. of No. 1.
3. Braid Cairn, 2,907 feet, 1 mile east of No. 4.
4. Mount Keen, 3,077 feet, on the watershed between Glen Tanner and Glen Mark.
5. *Broad Cairn*, 3268 feet.
6. *Craig of Gowal*,\* 3,027 feet.
7. *Cairn of Gowal*,\* 3242 feet.†
8. *Creag an Dubh Loch*,\* 3,100 feet, approximate height.
9. *Cairn Bannoch*, 3,314 feet.
10. *Fafernie*, 3,274 feet.
11. Tolmount, 3,143 feet, head of Glen Callater.
12. *Crow Craigies*,\* 3,014 feet† (dealt with in last No. of "Journal").
13. Tom Buidhe, 3,140 feet, head of Glen Doll.
14. Mayar, 3,043 feet, head of Glen Prosen, 2 miles west of No. 15.
15. Driesh, 3,105 feet,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Milton of Clova.
16. Cairn na Glasha, 3,484 feet, head of Glenisla.
17. Druim Mòr,\* 3,144 feet, 1 mile south by west of No. 16.
18. Carn an Tuirc, 3,340 feet,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Loch Callater.
19. Glas Maol, 3,502 feet, head of Glenisla.

} These have been dealt  
with in the last No.  
of the "Journal."

† These heights do not agree with those given in the previous number.

20. Meall Odhar, 3,019 feet,  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile N.W. of No. 19.
21. Little Glas Maol,\* 3,184 feet, south of Caenlochan Glen,  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile S.E. of No. 19.
22. Creag Leacach, 3,238 feet,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles S.S.W. of No. 19.
23. Carn Aighe, 2,874 feet, 1 mile S.W. of No. 22.

The upper waters of the Dee have cut a deep valley extending far into the most elevated mass of land in Britain. That part lying to the north is now known as the Cairngorm Mountains, while the portion to the south, an only slightly inferior range, is known in its different parts as the Lochnagar Range and the Braes of Angus. The latter may be considered to commence with Mount Battock in the east, one mile south-east of the point where the counties of Forfar, Kincardine, and Aberdeen join, and, throwing off subsidiary ranges to the south-east, to extend in a generally west-south-west direction to the Cairnwell road, one and a half miles west of the meeting-point of Forfar, Perth, and Aberdeen. From Mount Battock the watershed of the Dee and North Esk takes a westerly direction through the Hill of Cat, the Braid Cairn (not to be confused with the Broad Cairn) to Mount Keen. This is the easternmost mountain in Scotland to attain an elevation of 3,000 feet, and widely isolated from anything approaching it in height, it commands a most extensive and varied panorama. It is, moreover, crossed on its western side, at less than 600 feet below its summit, by the well-defined right-of-way path up Glen Tanner and down Glen Mark and Glen Esk to Tarfside and Edzell. There is also a track from Ballater, which, however, becomes very indistinct before joining the Glen Tanner path.

Beyond Mount Keen the watershed, which becomes very featureless, turns south-west and then south for a distance of ten miles, when it again turns north-west, and a mile farther on is crossed, almost at its lowest part, by the Capel path leading from Kirriemuir to Ballater by Clova and Glen Muick. The top of the pass is about 2,250 feet above the sea, and there is a good track for the seven miles for which driving is impracticable. From here a subsidiary range, averaging just below 3,000 feet in height, branches off to the south-east and extends for some miles, forming

the divide between the waters of the North and South Esks, and enclosing to the south it will carries the little Lochs Brandy and Wharal above Clowa and to the north the larger Loch Lee. Passing the Dog Hill, 2400 feet, the watershed next rises to the broad Cairn Cairn Bannoch and Fafennie and their minor tops, which the fiat of the Editor has included in the Locomagor summits, though lying on the county margin they belong quite as much to, and are frequently reckoned among the braes of Angus. To the north, across the deep cut in which lies the Lutha Loch are the various summits of the Locomagor group. The watershed again turns south and soon rises to the Tormount between the heads of Glens Dui and Galater. Crow Craigs though having been included for some inscribable reason in the Locomagor group, is really a shoulder of the Tormount forming a comb-like ridge little elevated above the surrounding moorland.

A mile to the south-east is the round-topped Torr Buidhe. From here another subsidiary range rises in a general south-eastern direction, rising in three and a half miles to the Mavor and to the highest summits in the District. These two hills lie between the rivers South Esk and Forth, and while on their south side they may be easily crossed by streams, the wide marshy moorland stretching to their summit on the north side, may well hold large droves and Glen Dui—one of the finest glens in the East of Scotland—in which some good stags may be got. On the south-west of the District the Little Duns, four low hills, a very fertile soil. Beyond the Tormount the watershed again rises to the north, where it continues in a north-westerly direction. The next summit is Cairn na Gairne, a good high mountain, which rises on a steep rocky ridge, and is the highest of the range to the south-west of the Tormount. The next summit is the Cairn na Gairne, a good high mountain, which rises on a steep rocky ridge, and is the highest of the range to the south-west of the Tormount. The next summit is the Cairn na Gairne, a good high mountain, which rises on a steep rocky ridge, and is the highest of the range to the south-west of the Tormount.

though round-topped, is a fine hill, especially as seen from Glen Callater.

The highest point of the whole range, excepting the Lochnagar summits, is the Glas Maol, one and three quarter miles to the south-west of Cairn na Glasha. Although actually situated in Forfarshire, the point where the three counties of Forfar, Perth, and Aberdeen meet is only one-quarter mile north-west of the summit, and nineteen feet below it; while at the same distance to the east, at a height of 3,300 feet, the mountain is crossed by the right-of-way path from Glenisla to Braemar. This is by far the highest public path in the United Kingdom. Striking up a little beyond the Tulchan Lodge, it crosses Monega Hill, 2,917 feet, the Little Glas Maol, finely situated on the crags to the south of Caenlochan Glen, and the Glas Maol, and joins the driving road some two miles beyond the Cairnwell Pass, or eight miles from Braemar. Near the summit of the path, and only a little way below the top of the Glas Maol, a strong and deliciously clear and cool spring forms one of the main sources of the Isla. The mountain is so round-topped that, extensive as the view is, it can scarcely all be seen without walking round the summit. Three-quarters of a mile to the north-west a shoulder named Meall Odhar forms a distinct but entirely uninteresting top above the carriage road.

From the Glas Maol a ridge runs off to the south-west, forming the narrow and stony Creag Leacach, a fine-looking hill when viewed from the south, but of no interest to climbers. The last point of any importance is Carn Aighe—locally pronounced Cairn Etch—the ridge beyond this crosses Carn an Daimh, 2,449 feet, from which it drops to the valley at the Spital of Glenshee. Beyond the Glas Maol, across the Cairnwell road, the range is continued in Perthshire to the west, and these mountains will be noticed in the next number of the *Journal*.

With the exception of the south faces of the Mayar and Driesh, which are under grouse, the whole of these mountains are in deer forest, though, as indicated, there are several well-established right-of-way paths,

iz. :—



1. Edzell to Aboyne or Ballater by Tarfside, Lochlee, and Glen Tanner.
2. Kirriemuir to Ballater by Clova, "the Capel," and Glen Muick.
3. Kirriemuir to Braemar by Clova, Glen Doll, and Glen Callater; and
4. Glenisla to Braemar by the Tulchan and Glas Maol.

#### LOCHS AND STREAMS.

There are fewer lochs among these mountains than in almost any mountainous region in the country, and the scenery suffers accordingly.

1. Loch Lee, 900 feet, lies to the south of Mount Keen, and flows into the North Esk.
2. Loch Brandy, 2,070 feet; and
3. Loch Wharral, 2,050 feet, wild mountain tarns above Clova, flow into the South Esk.
4. Loch Esk, 2,417 feet, is a small tarn from which flows the South Esk. It is situated east of the Tolmount.
5. Loch Muick, 1,310 feet, is a fine sheet of water in Glen Muick. Above it to the north of the Broad Cairn is,
6. The Dubh Loch, 2,100 feet (approximately), sombre and wild.
7. Loch Caenn Mor, 2,196 feet (approximately), lies in a grassy cup to the east of Carn an Tuirc; and
8. Loch Callater, 1,627 feet, is in Glen Callater.

Space precludes a description of all the streams in the district. A glance at the map shows that the general trend of the rivers is north-east and south-east, and that wherever, on the south side of the range, there is any considerable south-east flowing stream it is balanced on the north side by one flowing north-east. Thus the Aven and the Feugh, which drain the north side of Mount Battock and the Hill of Cat, and join the Dee at Banchory, are balanced on the south by the Tarf, which joins the North Esk at Tarfside. The Water of Tanner on the north corresponds with the Water of Mark on the south, which between them drain Mount Keen. The Muick on the north, and the South Esk on the south, cut deep into the range at its lowest part near the Capel. The Prosen flowing from the south slopes of the Mayar and Driesh, joins the South Esk at Cortachy, and

has nothing corresponding with it to the north. The Isla flows almost due south, while its corresponding river on the north side of the range, the Callater, has a north-west course to Braemar.

#### HOTELS AND ROUTES.

Hotels are to be found on the south side of the range at Edzell (lodgings at Tarfside), Clova, Kirkton of Glensla, and Spital of Glenshee. The hotel at Inchmill in Glen Prosen is now closed. There is, however, a small hotel (beer license) at Dykehead, five miles from Kirriemuir, at the entrance to Glen Prosen, but this is not near enough to the hill to be of much use.

On the north side of the range the only hotels which will be of service to the climber are at Braemar, Ballater, and possibly Aboyne. Although the distances look considerable on the map, there is no summit in the district which is beyond the limits of a winter day's walk, and the writer has frequently ascended several in the day in mid-winter crossing from one side of the range to the other.

Mount Keen is easiest ascended from Tarfside or Ballater.

The Driesh and Mayar, from Clova or Dykehead, although with the help of a bicycle both can be easily done in a short day from Kirriemuir.

The Broad Cairn from Clova *via* Glen Esk.

Cairn Bannoch either from Clova by Glen Esk, or from Braemar by Glen Callater.

The Tolmount and Tom Buidhe, from Clova by Glen Doll, or from Braemar by Glen Callater.

Carn na Tuirc and Cairn na Glasha, from Braemar ; and

The Glas Maol, from the Spital of Glenshee.

It seems unnecessary to give further directions as to route.

#### CLIMBS.

There are none. The hills are round-topped and grass-covered, with luxuriant heather on their lower slopes, and there is not one to the top of which a pony could not be

taken. So elevated and flat is the range that a straight line of ten miles could be drawn from Creag Leacach to the Meikle Pap of Lochnagar, and, except for about half a mile on each side of the Tolmount, the elevation is everywhere above 3,000 feet, while even at these points it only falls to 2,863 feet, and a dogcart could almost be driven the whole way. Sir Archibald Geikie ("Scenery of Scotland," p. 195) says: "Allusion has already been made to the remarkable flat-topped moorlands which in the eastern Grampians reach heights of 3,000 to 4,000 feet above the sea. These lofty plateaux descend sometimes by craggy precipices, sometimes by steep declivities, into the deep glens that traverse them . . . not less striking examples are found among the schists. The mountains at the head of Glen Esk and Glen Isla, for instance, sweep upwards into a broad moor some 3,000 feet above the sea, the more prominent parts of which have received special names—Driesh, Mayar, Tom Buidhe, Tolmount, Cairn na Glasha. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that there is more level ground on the tops of these mountains than in areas of corresponding size in the valleys below."

Rock faces exist, and scrambling could be got, but except on Lochnagar I am not aware that any climbs have been recorded. For those who are ambitious to try, the following places may be recommended :—

Glen Doll, especially Craig Rennet, a bold bluff on the south-west side; the crags to the north of the Broad Cairn and Creag an Dubh Loch; the crags on the Tolmount encircling the head of Glen Callater, and the Crags of Druim Mòr in Caenlochan.

#### GEOLOGY AND BOTANY.

According to Mr Hinxman's most instructive and useful (*Journal*, Vol. V., pp. 282 *et seq.*), the Glas Maol, na Glasha, and the Tolmount consist of granite, the Driesh of schistose rocks, while the Broad Cairn, Anoch, and Mount Battock are granite.

He regrets that he can give no particulars as to the district, which, however, is probably the

richest in Scotland in rare Alpine plants—Clova, the head of Glenisla, and Glen Prosen being all favourite haunts of the botanist.

As might be inferred from the character of the country, the rainfall is less than in almost any other hilly district in Scotland.

#### REFERENCES.

Articles or Notes dealing with the district, exclusive of Lochnagar, have appeared in the *Journal* as follows :—

Vol. I., p. 20 *et seq.*

„     98 *et seq.*

„     242.

Vol. II., p. 133.

„     140.

„     142.

Vol. V., p. 145.

Vol. VIII., p. 49 *et seq.*

H. T. MUNRO.

## EXCURSIONS.

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

**BEN CHONZIE ON SKI.**—Having been disappointed in my hopes of ski-running at the Christmas Meet, I resolved to seize the opportunity of fine weather on Saturday, 12th March, and took an early train to Crieff. By 10 A.M. I was clear of the village, where to my surprise and delight the sight of a pair of ski did not gather a mob, and walking at a fair pace up towards Loch Turret reached a bridge over the stream about three-quarters of a mile below the loch at 11.20. Immediately on the other side of the stream snow was lying in patches among the heather, and was so soft that I sank into the knees, and decided, in spite of the heather patches, to put on the ski at once. In five minutes or so I was on tolerably unbroken snow, and making my way up towards the large hollow which leads to the summit ridge parallel to Loch Turret. These slopes were fairly steep and necessitated many zigzags. Near the top, following always the direction where the snow was most favourable, I followed a pretty and steep traverse at the top of the rocky slopes overlooking Loch Turret, and arrived about 1 P.M. at the first cairn on Carn Chois, 2,571 feet. Through occasional rifts in the slight fog I could just make out the second cairn a few hundred yards away, and on the farther side of this, continuing in approximately the same direction, had a magnificent shoot down to the dip between this point and Ben Chonzie. The top of the latter, if it can be said to have one, is unfortunately of such an expansive nature that it is really impossible, at any rate without map and compass, to locate the summit cairn in a fog. I plugged on my hardest up gentle and unbroken snow slopes for twenty-five minutes, but apparently arrived at 2.25 not at the summit, though from below it seemed to be so, but at a point a little to the south-west, which subsequent reference to the map has shown to be less than 100 feet below the top. Being pressed for time I had reluctantly to return. The slope down to the little col which had taken nearly half an hour's hard work in the ascent, was descended at an apparently very gentle pace in four minutes, and the route of the ascent followed in the main to the starting point at the stream, which was reached in  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours including halts. The snow throughout the day was in ideal condition, and the hills, although quite uninteresting from the climber's point of view, are perfect for ski-running. Ben Chonzie being very broad and flat-topped

has a large area above the 2,000 contour, and being situated in a district of pretty heavy rainfall, usually carries a good deal of snow till quite late in the season. A pleasant variation of this trip would be a traverse from Crieff to Comrie, or *vice versa*, or the complete circuit of the hills around Loch Turret.

J. H. WIGNER.

THE GLEN FINNAN AND LOCH AYLORT HILLS.—It is now two or three years since the West Highland Railway have opened the extension of their line from Fort-William to Mallaig, yet no paper on the district thus opened up has been contributed to the *Journal*. The reason is perhaps not so far to seek. For the rock climber these hills present very little opportunity for the exercise of his sport; for the collector of the 3,000-foot records there is but little for him to seize. But for the lover of pure wild, even if waste and rather dreary scenery, this is a grand country. Though the landscape is beautiful and wild, yet there is apt to be a depressing element in the view. It is to meet, or better help to meet, these deficiencies that the writer has ventured to take up his pen. In 1901 some excursions were made amongst the hills to the north of Loch Eil, whilst stopping at Glen Finnan Hotel.

One hot day we walked up Glen Finnan until we reached the summit of the saddle between the Streaps and Sgor Choileam, about 1,600 feet high. From thence a steep but easy ascent led to the top of the latter hill. At the top there was a magnificent view to the north over Sgor na Ciche. The great heat haze quite obscured Ben Nevis and all its snows. Although we had found much snow forming the cap of this Ben a few days previously, these hills bore very little indeed. The time of the year was Easter. From here the ridge was followed to the top of Sgor Coireachan, 3,133 feet. All along this ridge on the north side overlooking Glen Pean climbing is to be obtained, but, as viewed from above, it is doubtful if this would ever repay the trouble of getting there. There is one point about the rocks which form the summits of these hills. They contain a large number of common garnets, which we knocked out of the rocks with our ice-axes. This is the only place in Scotland where I have observed them. The descent was made and the hotel reached *via* Glen Finnan, so closing a most enjoyable and easy day. Our next expedition was from Kinloch Eil up Glen Fionnlighe. There is a most gorgeous track up the first part of this glen, but later it becomes lost. Farther up we found that the place marked on the map Stronlea existed no more. Just above this point two burns join, one coming from each side of Gulvain, whose main ridge runs nearly north and south. We followed the western burn, Allt a Choire Reidh, and then ascended the flank of Gulvain, coming out at the southern summit, 3,148 feet. The ridge joining the two summits is narrow, though it offers no impediment to walking. But it explains the very fine appearance that this hill presented early one morning in 1898, when, with Messrs Munro and Penny, I was ascending into the big northern corrie of Ben Nevis. The dip between the summits sinks to the level of about 2,850 feet, whence an easy

gradient lands one on the real top of the mountain, 3,224 feet high, the monarch of this district. This hill and the neighbouring Streaps present narrow ridges, with steep flanks of rock and grass, but none offer any climbing in the hands-and-feet sense of the word ; though, be it remembered, that the excursion amply repays the hill lover. We descended eastward from the col between the tops to the pass between Glen Fionnlighe and Glen Mallie, 800 feet. Thence ascending to the depression between Meall Onfhaidh and Meall a Phubuill, about 1,200 feet, we descended to Glen Suileag, and so to Fassifern on Loch Eil, and home to Fort-William. These were the two more noteworthy expeditions.

Round Loch Shiel the hills are of less elevation, the highest being 2,895 feet high, and the generality about 2,400. They frequently present sharp tops, and everywhere wild rugged sides. But the roughness is rather that of irregularity of outline, like that of the Braes of Balquhidder, rather than that of rock. I do not think that climbing worth the trouble of getting there will be found amongst them.

At Easter 1903 I had the opportunity of visiting Kinloch Aylort, the station beyond Glen Finnan. I had seen the sharp-pointed prominent hills to the south of it from a distance, and was correspondingly urgent to make their acquaintance. So, on the very day of arrival, we followed the track south of Loch Aylort to the point marked on the map Bealach Breac, 299 feet, from which we ascended it by a circuitous and toilsome route, much troubled by having to circumvent deep-cut lateral branches of the glen on the opposite side, and arrived at the foot of the squarely-cut rocky mass of An Stac. It did not take us long to reach the summit, whence unfortunately the mist and cold soon compelled us to retire without even having seen a single one of the mountains we had come to explore. The height of An Stac we estimated to be about 2,650 feet.

Two days later we passed the farm at the head of Loch Aylort, and found our way through the bogs by the Allt a Bhuiridh into the Choire of the same name. The day was fine, but every half-hour there was a tremendous storm of wind and hail. Fortunately this was dry, and we could shelter from it without getting cold. Slowly we wound round the base of An Stac to the col (1,800 feet) between it and Frosven, the highest of the Loch Aylort Hills. Here the mist enclosed us for the next two hours, completely prohibiting any high-level observations. The ascent from the col is up a fairly narrow easy ridge, which reaches the main east-to-west watershed of the range about half-way between Frosven on the west and Sgùrr na ba Glaise on the east. There are two summits on Frosven of nearly the same height, 2,876 feet. Having passed over these, we descended down steep snow slopes to the track along the southern side of Loch Aylort. Here the weather was warm, sunny, and everything that was delightful, a great comparison to what we had experienced on the summit of Frosven.

Other expeditions were quite as unsatisfactory for finding out the character of these hills. There are rocky faces. Sgùrr na ba Glaise

presents a small one towards the north, and in the clear moments there seemed to be a gully running up this face. It was filled with snow, except about half-way up and near the top. If any climber is at Kinloch Aylort, I would suggest his going straight up the Choire a Bhuiridh to this peak at the head of it. The height is 2,817 feet.

At the eastern end of the range is Druim Fiaclach, 2,851 feet. This I did not explore, but saw that it had sloping flanks, with a terminal crest of rocks. Also, the cartographer has inserted on the map a curious shading as though it was a case of "ware cliffs." This line does not seem to follow a ridge, but meanders about corries in an apparently irresponsible way. As to its meaning, I cannot offer any, and hope that further light may be shed upon this and similar cartographical hieroglyphics by other members of the Club.

With respect to the southern side of these hills I am absolutely ignorant, being permitted only to see the intangible greyness of the mist there. But judging from other hills in the neighbourhood, it is to be expected that their northern faces are the most craggy, therefore I should not expect much from the unseen slopes of these hills. Taken as a group, there are four outstanding hills worthy, if they had attained 3,000 feet, of being considered separate mountains. As it is, their heights are—Frosven, 2,876 feet; Druim Fiaclach, 2,851 feet; Sgùrr na ba Glaise, 2,817 feet; and An Stac, 2,650 feet. The first three are situated on a ridge running east and west, with Frosven on the west end and Druim Fiaclach on the east. The ridge of An Stac is projected out towards the north from a point midway between Frosven and Sgùrr na ba Glaise. It becomes in consequence far the most prominent feature of these hills as viewed from the railway.

It will be seen that these Aylort Hills agree with those of Glen Finnan in affording little work for the rock climber, but their shape and individuality impress themselves strongly on the hill wanderer.

EDRED M. CORNER.

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SLIGACHAN INN.—This inn is now in the hands of workmen, so that during the month of May some discomforts might be experienced by visitors. The improved conditions will be much appreciated. I have made the following arrangements with the manager:—

From 16th September to 30th June the following tariff shall apply, viz.:—Complete board, including afternoon tea and such baths as may be available, 8s. per day; from 1st July to 15th September 9s. per day.

These terms apply only to members of the S.M.C. or to friends *accompanying* them. They do not apply to climbers who are not in company with the members of the S.M.C. W. INGLIS CLARK.

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KINGSHOUSE HOTEL, GLENCOE.—I have made the following arrangements, viz.:—For complete board and afternoon tea, 5s. 6d. per day to parties staying three days. There is only one mail per week (Thursdays) from 15th September to 1st June. W. INGLIS CLARK.



2 SPENSER STREET, VICTORIA STREET,  
LONDON, S.W., 11th January 1904.

DEAR DOUGLAS,—It may interest the Club to know the alterations and additions to the Ordnance Survey Map of Skye. I enclose list of corrected heights in Skye :—

Sgurr Alasdair	-	-	-	-	-	3,309
Sgurr Dearg (pinnacle)	-	-	-	-	-	3,254
Sgurr Ghreadaidh	-	-	-	-	-	3,197
Sgurr Dubh Mor	-	-	-	-	-	3,089
Sgurr Dubh an Da Bheinn	-	-	-	-	-	3,069
Sgurr Mhic Choinnich	-	-	-	-	-	3,107
Sgurr a' Mhadaidh (W.)	-	-	-	-	-	3,014
" " (E.)	-	-	-	-	-	2,970
Bidein Druim na Ramh (S.W.)	-	-	-	-	-	2,900
" " (N.E.)	-	-	-	-	-	2,870
Loch Coir a' Ghrunnda	-	-	-	-	-	2,300
" an Lochan	-	-	-	-	-	1,900
" Lagan	-	-	-	-	-	1,845

On the mainland of Ross-shire, in the new quarter-inch map, Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair, heretofore given no height, 3,327.

The new six-inch maps of the Cairngorms are also much improved in the cliff drawing, and in giving correct names. The six-inch in Skye have inserted a good many new names and altered some others. They give Clach Glas as Glac Glas, which is rather absurd, as it means "grey ravine." The shepherd who used to herd Blaven (the new name in Ordnance Survey as against Blath Bheinn), called it An Stac, and the peak marked An Stac in Ordnance Survey he called Stac nan Eun, or bird's stack.—Yours sincerely,

COLIN B. PHILLIP.

P.S.—The shepherd mentioned, also called the Corrie on Blaven which is drained by the Allt Dunaiche, Coire nan Easgeasgain.

THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB took place in the Hotel Metropole, Leeds, on 13th February, when over seventy gentlemen were present. The S.M.C. was represented by the Hon. Sec., on whom devolved the honourable toast of "The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club." The various speakers during the evening referred to the S.M.C. in the warmest terms, and cordial greetings were entrusted to our representative.

W. INGLIS CLARK.

SLIGACHAN CLIMBERS' BOOK.—The old Climbers' Book was presented to the Club by Mrs Sharp. A type-written copy has been made, and bound up with articles from the *Journal*, photographs, and the whole Guide Book material referring to the Coolins. These together form a handsome volume, which will be placed in the custody of the manager of Sligachan Inn for the use of all climbers. Blank pages are left for further notes ; but it is hoped that such notes will be

confined to accounts of new climbs or variations, or to such information regarding old climbs as will be of use or interest to climbers at large. All climbers are requested to see that the book is returned to the manager after perusal, and is not left lying about to be defaced or destroyed.

W. INGLIS CLARK.

### LIFE MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION.

ST VINCENT PLACE,  
GLASGOW, 29th March 1904.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—As you are good enough to ask for a suggestion as to the sum which the Club should charge for commutation of the annual subscriptions, I would propose that—

- |   |      |   |           |
|---|------|---|-----------|
| (1) an original member should be allowed to commute for | - £5 | 5 | 0         |
| (2) a member of ten years' standing                     | "    | " | - 7 7 0   |
| (3) a member of five years' standing                    | "    | " | - 9 9 0   |
| (4) a new member, excluding entry money                 | "    | " | - 11 11 0 |

I have read with interest the correspondence on the subject in the *Journal* for January, and on comparing the above with the schemes proposed by the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer, I observe that my suggestion practically forms a compromise between them.

The method at which I have arrived at the commutation prices for new members is as follows :—Taking the average of new members at entry to be thirty, and assuming that they remain with the Society for 25 years, the value of the subscription calculated on a  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. basis amounts to £11. 12s.

Under the scheme I propose the original member and the member of five years' standing would both have contributed £13. 11s. 6d.—I am, yours truly,

N. B. GUNN.

RHUEMORE, MURRAYFIELD,  
28th March 1904.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—I got your post-card on Saturday evening. I think the Treasurer's proposals as to Life Membership, &c., should be adopted.

I am very sorry I will not be at Aviemore at the end of the week as I had hoped. I trust you will have a good time.—Yours very truly,

WALTER A. SMITH.





GARBH-BHEINN OF ARDGOUR.

*W. Inglis Clark.*

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## GARBH-BHEINN OF ARDGOUR AND THE NORTH-EAST RIDGE OF AONACH BEAG.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

THE termination of the Easter Meet of the Club usually ushers in a "winter of our discontent." The holiday, long looked forward to, is over, and soon thereafter our "thousand Bens" shed their snowy garments, and reveal themselves in rugged rough or grassy slopes according to their nature. But at the time when the corries of Braeriach resounded last Easter with the voices of Club men, my wife and daughter were learning skiing on Ben Nevis under the able tuition of Herr Rickmers, who has been called the "Apostle Paul of Skiing." When, therefore, Aviemore was once more deserted, strong voices called me to Fort-William, where, after a week, I gravitated. I may at once relieve the minds of members by saying that I did not ascend the Ben, and that my tale, if it may be told, does not describe more routes on that beloved mountain. I was on the loose as it were, and the adjunct of a motor seemed to open up possibilities of more distant expeditions, two of which at least may be worthy of special reference.

*Garbh-Bheinn of Ardgour.*—The name brings up before us our last Meet at Ballachulish, when this exalted peak at sunrise or sunset beckoned to us across the wide stretch of waters, positively haunting us with its graceful form. Last New Year its attractions were again pointedly brought

before me by the party who had a glorious day on the mountain, and the question was now or never. If the reader will refer to Vol. IV., p. 312, Vol. V., p. 129, and Vol. VII., p. 107, he will find that leading to the summit of Garbh-bheinn is one of the most fascinating ridge climbs in Scotland ; rocks of the roughest, angle of the steepest, and sides rising from gulfous depths the recesses of which are akin to the unknown. This then was our goal, and yet so faintly do we grasp what we have not seen, that a mere mantle of mist completely baffled us, and we had to leave the ascent of the ridge for another day. Our intentions were good, and we started early by motor, despite a south-east wind which obscured the mountains of Ardgour as we rolled southwards, and produced rain showers at intervals. Half an hour later Corran Ferry was reached, but Garbh-bheinn had disappeared from view, and the weather outlook was worse. The ferry crossed, our expedition was delayed owing to the absence of horses, and it was 9 A.M. ere we bowled along the western shore of Loch Linnhe *en route* for Inversanda, where we must strike up the valley for our mountain. Who in our Club has neither walked, cycled, nor driven these eight miles? His the greater loss. In this short space are such visions of promontories, of beaches dazzling white by the blue waters, of effects of forest and moorland and mountain, as make it a veritable harvest ground for the artist. There, in front, a long vista of water leads over to Ballachulish, beyond which the further gleam indicates Loch Leven. Above, in great solid masses, their summits glittering with snow, the Glencoe mountains present mountain forms which seem to say, "Will ye no' come back again?" in reference doubtless to a proposed Easter Meet of the Club next year. At length the bridge is reached, and driving clothes abandoned, for our course leads up the southern bank of the Allt an Iubhair. It cannot be called good going, for swampy ground alternates with bog, and though the walk up may seem short, the return journey is "unco weary." In one and a half hours we had turned the projecting corner, where an important tributary comes down from Garbh-bheinn, and beside some gaunt birches took our second breakfast. It was an unin-



*W. Inglis Clark.*

THE GLENCOE MOUNTAINS FROM GARBH-BHEINN OF ARDGOUR.





spiring scene, for nought was visible save the heathery foreground leading to snow wastes which might lead anywhere. The true climbing disciple follows the stream into the corrie, and there with halloes and echoes is guided to the foot of the great ridge ; but we, a party of sceptics, my wife, son, and self, preferred to walk by sight rather than by faith. At last a break in the clouds and a ghostly pinnacle of startling steepness presented itself, only to be withdrawn. Again, higher up, another pinnacle and steep buttresses to the right. What are these? Never mind! these must be our goal ; and so up over rocks and moss till we sat at the foot of our pinnacle. Then the clouds lifted, and across the corrie *the ridge* tempted us to come. But, faithful to our first love, we put on the rope at 1,700 feet, and essayed the ascent. On the left the wall rose sheer and I presume inaccessible. To the right the angle tapered off and access might be easy, but in front the possible routes were few and doubtful. A recess at the left-hand corner led easily up for 20 feet, and showed splendid rocks and good holds but at a high angle. A ledge with apparently solid hitch of 4 feet high led to the right, the rope being put behind for security. The hitch, however, toppled over ere the corner was reached, and retreat was deemed wise. A few feet to the right a long chimney was entered, closed above with jammed blocks. Hitches were absent, so bringing up my son to the *cul-de-sac*, after some attempts an escape was made on the right hand (true) wall, and the party was soon merrily progressing on easier ground. Keeping always on the ridge to the left, sporting work was frequent, and even dangerous situations cropped up. Later the slope eases and the pinnacle concentrates itself in a Pic Robbieson, very steep and very narrow, but with just sufficient holds to justify the ascent. Loose rocks were frequent, and the dismissal of many tons at one point reduced the available holds somewhat. The snow now became replaced by frozen turf or ice, and the afternoon wearing on, we thought to avoid the upper pinnacle rising to the left of the attenuated ridge, and hurry back ere night fell. A steep icy slope was below on the right, but our course to the cornice of the main ridge

seemed easy, and we spent some precious minutes in enjoying the superb views over to Glencoe. On now making for the summit, it was found that the way was barred by the icy holdless slabs of the upper pinnacle, and we must either descend the icy slope or include the pinnacle in our route. We had only brought a single ice-axe as the climb was intended to be a rock one, so we turned to the pinnacle itself, where only one possible route was visible, and elected to try our chances on the rocks rather than risk the steep slope below. In front a bulging cliff, and on the right a long steep slab, limited the ice and snow, and upwards in the soft snow was easy. Progress stopped, however, as one step and another revealed no bottom, and looking down a bergschrund, narrow but very deep, disclosed the snow bridge to which we must trust. Working along to the left where the bridge was still intact, careful holds were made above the crevasse, and slowly the body was wormed across and up till anchorage could be made. Above, the angle steepened greatly, and the snow merged into ice, which for the upper 6 feet reigned supreme. Below the bulging cliff a crevice existed between rock and ice, and served for safe anchorage of the party. Extensive clearing operations on the ice overlapping the rocks revealed no holds, and our hopes rested entirely on a finger grip about 5 feet above the ice. The top of the ice was cut for a toe-hold, and the ice-axe being left in the crevice as a hitch, the leader, not without difficulty, balanced on the ice, reached the finger grip, and was soon on a safe if narrow ledge. Thence ten minutes sufficed to land us on the top close to the main ridge. The hour was late, and rain threatened, so hastening to the head of the safe and easy gully to the east, we glissaded 950 feet without a break into the corrie, and were soon trudging down the boggy valley to our trap. This we reached at 7 P.M., arriving at Ardgour 8.15 P.M., and Fort-William at 9.25 P.M. To lovers of the beautiful this charming route may be recommended. Not only is the mountain itself of beautiful proportions, but the exquisite views of mountain and loch to the east tempt one to linger too long on the climb.

*The North-East Ridge of Aonach Beag* had for years



*W. Inglis Clark.*

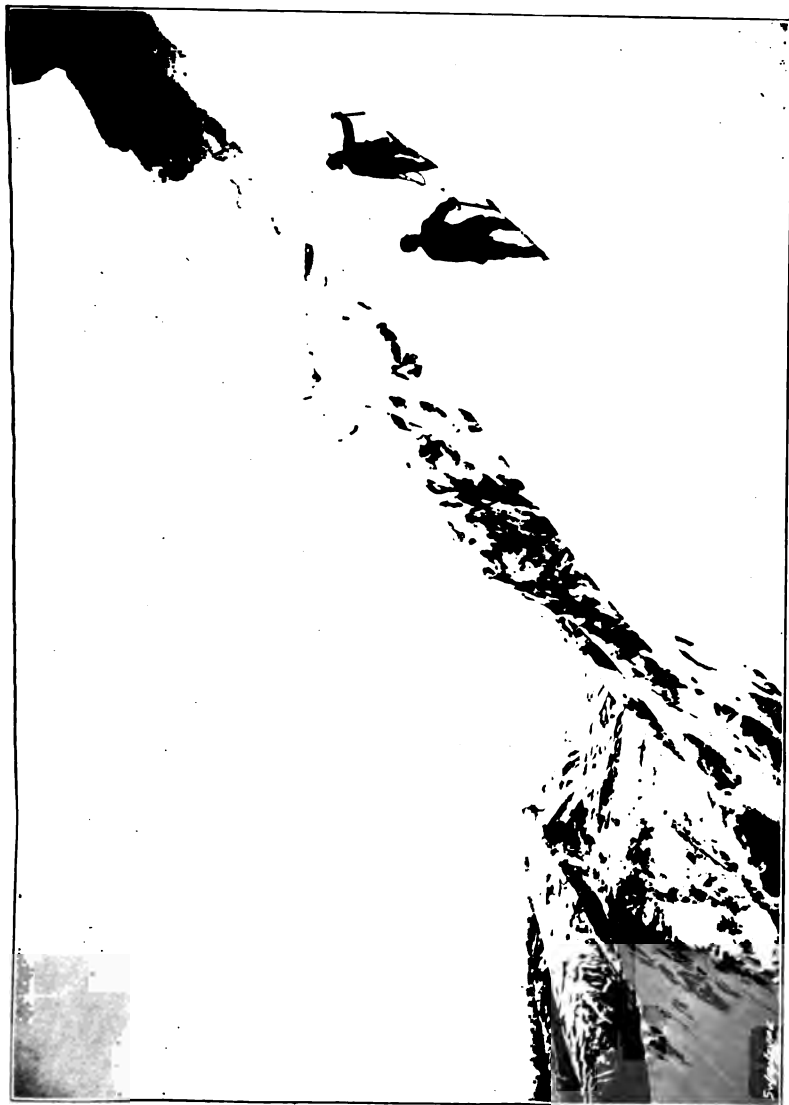
NORTH-EAST RIDGE OF AONACH BEAG.



loomed before me. It was my first Club Meet at Fort-William, 1896, and the accounts of climbers as they came back from mighty rollicking on the ridges hardly roused envy in my bosom. The difficulties encountered seemed too great for justification, and I felt content to wander over the Mamores with Colin Phillip and other kind friends, little dreaming that a few short months would inspire me with a desire for more daring climbs and start me on a second youth. The great ridge of Aonach seemed incredible, and I looked on Gilbert Thomson and his companions, who had then climbed it, with reverence and awe. Then came years when doubts were cast on the ridge, and gradually it seemed to become a myth, as one after another essayed to find it and found it not. Then Raeburn in 1902 proposed to reach it from our rendezvous on the summit of Ben Nevis, but it was reserved for 18th April 1904 to make the great ascent. The weather was propitious, and an early start no hardship, as the motor toiled up Glen Nevis and encountered the rutty road past Achriavach and up nearly to the famous gorge. I wonder how many have seen this glen under more inspiring conditions. Clouds having the form that indicates improvement hung about the summits, but as the gorge was neared these broke up suddenly, and the sun streamed through a tumultuous chaos on as grand a scene as is in all Scotland. A sturdy clump of Scotch firs filled the foreground, beyond which in the slanting sunlight glimpses of uncouth crag and weird rocky strata alternated with river rapids and the wild mountain sides. To the left, as through a window in heaven, a dazzling snowfield looked down, calm and glittering, and apparently basking in unlimited sunshine. Raeburn, who with my son made up the party, admitted that the effect might well rank with the sublimest Alpine visions. Beyond, a dazzling shoulder of Aonach or other peak rested on a dark foreground of cloud and rock, and to the right the unceasing dash of the Nevis, as it boiled through the water-worn channel, and the remnants of some Titanic convulsion filled our souls with joy that ours was the good fortune to live to-day.

Our course lay through the gorge and on to the open

pastures surrounding the cottage of Steall. Looking round, the heart of the photographer beat more quickly, for there above rose the glittering peak of Sgòr a Mhaim, the clouds of night still flitting about its corrie and sharp arête, but lifting at times sufficiently to admit the clear light of the morning sun. It is just on such an occasion that one likes to think complacently of the well-stored roll-holder and spare rolls, and to feel that no limit need be placed on photographic hunger. But alas, only six plates encumbered my rucksack, and of these one must be sacrificed on Sgòr a Mhaim. The philosopher, regarding the mountain photographer, sees in him one of the most miserable of beings. He toils on gloomy or misty days, with a battery of lenses and superfluous plates, while the wind capsizes his camera, and the focussing cloth flies out to leeward. There he is on the coldest part of the ridge, with frozen hands and rucksack half filled with drifting snow. Where are his companions? Crouching in some sheltered spot and calling on him to "Hurry up, for it is cold." Well he knows it, and recognises that they look on him as a camera fiend, a veritable Jonah. Yet again, as on this occasion, the sun shines, the snow is dazzling and beautifully moulded, the cornices flaunt their alluring banners from on high, exquisite sights never to be revisited call on him to be recorded. He cannot. Only six, five, four, one remains; and soon with camera folded up and hardened heart he sees the glorious panoramas tempt him with mocking invitations. Who can measure out the reward to the photographer? Our Hon. Librarian tauntingly said to me that he supposed one per cent. of successes would be good work. But, in all this musing, think of the grand effect on character. No big, big D—— is uttered even when some grand catastrophe occurs; and witnesses can testify that mountain photographers, although the most chastened, are amongst the meekest, most hopeful, and enthusiastic of climbers. Meanwhile relentless Raeburn calls "Time's up!" and we shoulder our packs and strike up for the sloping skyline which will lead us round the south-east shoulder of Aonach Beag to the col between that peak and Sgòr a Chòinnich Beag. It is new ground for us all, and the higher we rise the more



*W. Inglis Clark.*

BELOW THE CORNICES OF AONACH BEAG.





startling and charming are the forms of the Mamore peaks. Mantled in deep snow, the ridges with their pendent cornices seemed to sharpen wonderfully, and the graceful cone of Binnein Mor to claim an Alpine altitude. Our plans had been well laid, and with scarce a waver from our direction we rounded the shoulder and found ourselves on the same level as our col. Deep snow lay in beautiful wreaths, and rendered the going heavy, but ten minutes served to place us on an island of rock whence we got our first view of the east face of Aonach Beag. Immediately in front the south-eastern peak rose in rocky cliffs crowned with huge cornices, and showed several ridges which might give sport, but none of these in any way corresponded to the North-East Ridge of which we were in search. The sun having come out in force, we glissaded down into the level corrie, now dazzling with deep snow. Through this a vigorous stream turned and twisted, covered deep by snow bridges, but at times looking cold and forbidding as it emerged into sunlight. Some circumspection was necessary to avoid immersion, and to find a spot for second breakfast was not easy. Each pool, bared by the melting snow, swarmed with frogs and their spawn, but save for these, animal life was absent. It is at this point that the wanderer is apt to miss "the ridge," and in default to attack one of the steep buttresses that descend from the long summit plateau to the valley. A fascinating col, snow-clad and Alpine, and fortified by cornices, divides the eastern from the main peak, and far down below a huge avalanche track over which we passed made us wonder whence came this river of snow and ice. There it could be traced up and up and across to the right, where in the brilliant sunshine a perfect battery of cornices was evident. As we looked, a puff like smoke, and down thundered the masses of ice and snow, riving deep furrows in the steep slope. We rubbed our eyes again. Were we in the Alps or where? Yes, here in bonnie Scotland! in a scene full of the choicest marvels of Alpine scenery. As we toiled northwards to the great slope of Aonach Mor, it was evident that our ridge must be still farther round to the left. There at last was the castellate buttress on Aonach

Mor described by Thomson (Vol. III., p. 333), and from which he descried our ridge on the opposite side. Now for the crucial bend in the corrie, and as we turned the corner towards the col between the two Aonachs there towered up for 1,600 feet the object of our search. The snow was knee deep and in bad condition. In vain we sought the shade of overhanging cliff for firmer foothold. The sooner the ridge could be reached the better. Rounding the base a little, the rocks on the north side at the very foot did not look tempting with the holds filled now with ice and now with snow, and we elected to plough our way up a steep snow slope leading to the arête. At first the climbing was easy and safe, except where a slipping foot revealed the sheet of ice under the deep snow. Five hundred feet gone and no difficulty. Was it then after all to be merely a pleasant stroll? The answer came immediately on the now narrow ridge where several gigantic rock needles barred the way. On either hand the icy slope disappeared at a steep angle, and the effect was exactly such as one might get on a first-class Alpine ridge. One after another difficulty was vanquished by our leader, and the sensational passages yielded safe handholds to the rest of the party. At length the ridge is reduced to a steep narrow overhanging edge, and our choice is over this, or perchance on holdless slaps to the right or where? Neither of these seems justifiable, but over to the left a fine traverse leads to an icy slope, and then right up over steep rocks to the ridge again, where the keen cold wind is endeavouring to freeze the superficially thawed snow. Photographically this part abounds in sensational effects, but the sun caressed each pinnacle, and resolutely bade me retain my last two plates for above. The slope easing off, we had leisure and opportunity to enjoy the really superb scenery on either hand. A miniature cornice by which we passed was so thin that the sun's rays passed through below the lip and produced a glorious soft translucent effect. Many reflected lights were cast on the snow in shadow by the polished ice slopes in front and above, and now, nearly reached, were the great overhanging cornices which extended in more or less unbroken line for several miles. Would our ridge termi-

nate under this great wall? The track of a hare on the snow answered this in the negative, and following it we stepped on to the plateau, having expended No. 5 plate just below the summit. In former papers in this journal I have shown the mountaineer as a "Searcher after the Beautiful" (Vol. V., p. 121), as a botanist, naturalist, and what not, but not so far as I remember as a strict attender to duty. On this occasion Raeburn was the preacher, and the writer the one who practised duty. As we reached the summit of Aonach Beag our feelings were of the most conflicting. But one plate remained. The artistic temptations were sore. The eye ranged across the snowy Mamore Forest, over Aonach Eagach, and fixed on Bidean nan Bian, a veritable monarch of mountains. Covered as all the peaks were with deep snow, it was like a piling of Peleon on Ossa, all lines tending to bring the eye back to the graceful Bidean. My own fancy selected this scene for the plate. My son, however, pointed out that from here Ben Nevis stood up in a proud way over Carn Mor Dearg, with an effect absolutely unique. Picture the snowy foreground of Aonach, the delicate corniced arête leading to Carn Mor Dearg, the well-known arête beyond, and then soaring up, the Ben itself like some gigantic form rearing its hoary head for one last look around ere night fell. Raeburn endorsed the claims, but added with sweet simplicity, "This would make no doubt the finest picture, but you have a duty to the ridge, and even though the result be only topographical, the plate must record the ridge for the benefit of others." Members will see from the photograph that though the least beautiful of our views, yet it holds a very high place on its own merits. It was cold on the ridge, and after securing the peak of Aonach Mor, our chief instinct was to descend as rapidly as possible to the valley to the south, and thence home. Unfortunately the under snow was hard, and with a loose coating of soft above; but by occasionally stopping to prevent surprises, we glissaded down a steep gully, the barometer recording a descent of 1,520 feet. The going is excellent in this upper valley (parallel to Allt a Mhuilinn), and from the mouth of it a bee-line was made over broken ground to the

river Lundie, where the railway bridge gives access to the right bank. Here on the Spean Bridge road we found the motor, and as we bowled into Fort-William, the north-east buttress gleaming in the setting sun gave us farewell, and we felt that a red-letter day had been added to our mountaineering experiences.

The photograph of the "Ben Nevis Group from Corpach" is added to show how the various ridges of Ben Nevis, Carn Mor Dearg, Aonach Mor, and the Easans group themselves together to form one of the noblest mountain masses in Britain.



*M. Inglis Clark.*

THE BEN NEVIS GROUP FROM CORPACH—SUNRISE EFFECT.



### THREE ON THE CENTRE GRID OF THE TRIDENT BUTTRESS, BEN NEVIS.

BY J. INGLIS CLARK.

It was an ideal April morning for our walk up the well-known pony track. With the sky blue and clear, a gentle cool breeze, and mountains glistening snow-clad in the sunshine, we might easily imagine that we were in Switzerland. The knowledge that this was indeed our "ain countree" gave us added zest. This was no "land of mountain and flood" (as, alas! it only too often is), but a land of mountains crowned with dazzling snow and flooded with glorious sunshine. As I walked along I could not help rejoicing to find myself far removed in spirit from that not impossible wretch of whom the great Sir Walter has written—

"With heart so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
'This is my own, my native land?'"

Before saying good-bye to the Mamore peaks, as we rounded the corner leading to the Lochan, the photographer of the party strove to immortalise the scene. While packing up the paraphernalia, two vigorous parties made up on us. We knew of two other parties still farther behind. Surely the Ben was holding his *levée* to-day. The others pushed on for the summit direct, while we bent our steps towards the deer fence. Mr Rickmers had thoughtfully left ski for our use, hidden behind a friendly boulder. With these two of the party had an enjoyable time of ski practice, while the camera fiend enjoyed himself in the manner peculiar to his kind. After concealing the ski, we proceeded on our way—glissading gaily over the edge, when we reached it, down into the Allt a Mhuilinn Glen. Shortly afterwards we were enjoying our mountain mid-day meal at the Lunching Boulder. The rock scenery from this point is at all times unspeakably grand, but, seen by the writer for the first time in regal winter garb, it made

an impression never to be forgotten. Those wondrous cliffs, plastered and moulded with snow and ice, every crevice filled in with glistening white, soared upwards cornice-crowned to the sky. To such a noble and sublime scene the following words of Ruskin are especially applicable: "The feeding of the rivers and the purifying of the winds are the least of the services appointed to the hills. To fill the thirst of the human heart for the beauty of God's working—to startle its lethargy with the deep and pure agitation of astonishment—are their higher missions." I claim for this view-point a very high place in alpine scenery, and maintain that with winter's snowy mantle Ben Nevis from the centre of the Allt a Mhuilinn Glen can proudly hold his own. After lunch comes the business of the day. Our destination was the Trident Buttress with its three ridges and three summits which have given it the name. These are well seen in the accompanying photograph, which shows it in its summer aspect. The left hand (southern) ridge, the Pinnacle Arête, had been climbed in June 1902 (see Vol. VII., p. 152); the right hand or northern ridge was conquered at New Year 1904; but the central ridge, which was our goal, had not yet been ascended. We made our way up the glacier-worn slabs of Coire na Ciste till level with the little tarn, still locked in its long winter sleep under a deep covering of ice and snow. After kicking steps up the rapidly steepening snow slope above it, we arrived at the bergschrund below the steep ice and snow covered curtain of rocks forming the lower portion of the Central Trident. A short time for roping, rest, and refreshment, and our leader started up the most promising-looking "lead," a steep little couloir filled with hard snow. Sixty or seventy feet up we arrived at a "pitch," a vertical wall where the many alternations of thawing and freezing had converted the snow practically into ice. This steep portion naturally required care. Above this the angle was less for a little, but we soon arrived at another, this time much higher, ice pitch. This was absolutely impossible, so our leader, Mr Raeburn, traversed round to the left, across and along a steeply sloping ledge below overhanging ice-covered rocks. It





*W. Inglis Clark.*

"THE TRIDENT" OF CARN DEARG, BEN NEVIS.



was an awkward and dangerous traverse. Then rounding a corner, some steep ice-covered rocks were reached, after which we traversed another slippery ice ledge, this time to the right. We then gained the wide snowfield that here occupied the space between the North and South Tridents. Above us rose the final ridge. A direct attack on this proved unsuccessful in its ice-clad condition, but access was gained to a neat little pinnacle by an ice gully and steep ledges on our left. At this point Charlie Clark's hat was gently wafted off and lost to sight. It was a historical hat that had safely surmounted Monte Rosa, the Matterhorn, &c., but the Ben claimed it, and it had to obey—so it went to its fate. The climb now resolved itself into a pleasant scramble up a narrow snow-covered rock ridge which led to the summit. Fortunately for us we had no cornice at this point to contend with, and we were free to enjoy the marvellous sight that suddenly burst upon us. We had been on the shady side of the mountain all the way up. But there at the top the sun's rays were shining dazzlingly on the grand cornices of Carn Dearg which stretched away on either side of us, and below them the mighty precipices, deep in shadow, plunged down into the gloom of the valley with Gustave Doré effect. It was glorious to step up into the sunshine, and to feel that we had successfully accomplished a new climb under wintry conditions. The strong wind up here, which was a pleasant breeze down below, did not tempt us to dally. Saying farewell to the grand old Ben, we turned our faces homewards. A fair amount of glissading shortened our way, and as we neared Achintee, we saw our faithful motor and party awaiting our return.

## THE ROSE RIDGE ON SGORAN DUBH.

BY W. A. MORRISON.

IN the chronicles of the Easter Meet which appeared in the previous issue of the *Journal* there will be found described an attempted ascent of a rib on Sgoran Dubh. The party consisted of Messrs Moncrieff, A. E. Robertson, Rose, and Solly—the last-named leading. The conditions were unfavourable for rock-climbing, the rocks being plastered with soft snow, and when the climbers encountered a steep wall of rock which appeared forbidding under the circumstances, they decided to traverse into the gully on the south and descend, as the hour was now somewhat late. Enough had been seen, however, to convince the leader that the rib would afford an excellent climb under kindlier auspices, and a second attempt was resolved upon.

Accordingly, W. C. Newbigging, A. E. Robertson, and the writer left Edinburgh at the unholy hour of 4.4 A.M., or rather 4.25, on Friday, 29th April, bound for Aviemore. A gentle drizzle did its best to enhance the charms of an early start, but by the time Perth was reached the sun had broken through, and fine weather prevailed for the rest of the day. Previous experience having shown the futility of attempting to consume a mountaineering breakfast between Kingussie and Aviemore, we had brought a liberal supply of food with us, and our morning meal was washed down by numerous cups of tea of our own brewing. Thus we were ready for the fray immediately on reaching Aviemore, and merely halted at the Temperance Hotel to leave instructions to have our bags sent for from the station and to have dinner (of suitable dimensions) ready at 9 P.M. 8.45 saw the party clear of Aviemore.

It is vain to extol the beauties of the Rothiemurchus Forest, but never could they have seemed fairer than on that spring morning with the sun glinting through the trees, the all-pervading scent of the pines, the whole green life of the forest forming a perfect setting for the vista of snow-clad Cairngorms beyond.

We had decided not to drive to the Bothy, as the short road was obstructed by a tramway laid to facilitate wood-cutting operations. When we reached this tramway we found the bogie just starting, so promptly seated ourselves thereon and secured a most enjoyable lift, doing the last part at record speed, as our now horseless carriage glissaded down the dip to the cross roads where the tramway ends. Just past the private road post we found that two trees had been felled across the road, thus effectually precluding any possibility there might have been of driving, so, con-



THE BUTTRESSES OF SGORAN DUBH.

[On the cliff marked No. 2 are three ridges, namely (running from left to right), the Bachelors' Buttress, the Married Men's Buttress, and the Rose Ridge. These are close together, and lie to the left of the figure 2 in the sketch.]

gratulating ourselves on our Spartan resolve to "ply the good shoe leather," we walked on.

As we left the shelter of the forest the sun was hot, and we sat down to rest and admire the beauties of nature. This interlude was brief, however—the strenuous activity of a neighbouring ant-heap provided so stimulating an example that we hurriedly set off for the Lower Bothy, which was reached at ten minutes past eleven o'clock. Here we left part of our baggage, and, lightly laden, crossed the foot-bridge at the back of the Bothy and struck across the moor towards our goal—the rib on No. 2 Buttress. (Probably a

much better route would be to follow the road till the Upper Bothy is reached, then cross over to the hill.)

The Rose Ridge lies to the north of the Married Men's Buttress. It is marked by the conspicuous rock wall which forms the north flank of the rib and by the trees growing out of it on the same side a little lower down. There is now also at the foot of the ridge a cairn which owes its origin to the surplus energies of our party.

The climbing began at once at an altitude of 2,400 feet on the rib, which rises from the heather at a low angle, the rock being slightly rotten. After a little this narrows down to an easy arête with one or two very steep pitches up which we swarmed with a leg on each side in a somewhat ungraceful fashion, especially the last man, who, burdened with three axes, found the rope of more than moral assistance. These pitches must have been awkward under the conditions of the first ascent. Hereabouts the South Gully is slabby, the North Gully grassy.

After one or two interesting pitches we came to what was the main difficulty in the first ascent, viz., about 40 feet of slabs with holds few and mostly rotten, at the top of which was a small stance. A little sapping enlarged this so that with careful packing the second man might be brought up to help the leader up the next pitch—a wide, grass-filled crack. How the first party surmounted this pitch was rather difficult to see, as on this occasion the warm dry rock of the slabs was fully appreciated for its friction grip, while the most useful holds in the grassy crack had to be delved for pretty considerably. When this is passed, however, there is an excellent anchorage (altitude about 2,800 feet).

This anchorage proved of great assistance when the last man's turn came to swarm up those slabs. Burdened with the axes, a rucksack, and that tired feeling which is prone to assail the climber who has to tarry awhile as the leader burrows his way to success or elsewhere, he found the slabs of sufficient difficulty, and on reaching the grassy chimney said in accents doleful, "Here, give me a haul; I can't get up with all this ironmongery." The haul was given, and to a clattering accompaniment the chimney was

duly swept. We were now below the "very steep wall with a vertical slit down the middle of it," at which the first party decided to traverse into the gully. This now resolved itself into a most interesting 40-foot climb up a stretch of cracked slabs, or rather piled blocks, the first of which at least requires a determined effort to surmount. Hereabouts was another hitch. The writer, who was now the beast of burden, cleverly contrived to arrange the shafts of the axes between his legs and the rock, the result being another—less enjoyable—demonstration of the friction-removing properties of a tramway. Further complications ensued—"Pull!" "I can't, the rope's caught." "It's me that's caught; pull, man!" Above these blocks is about 20 feet of rounded slabs provided with but poor holds.

After this the climb degenerates. If the ridge be stuck to, it affords a scramble over broken-up rock with some pretty stiff pitches, but these are most easily avoided, as the south gully, which is now almost on a level with the ridge, provides an easy walk to the point where the rib joins the Bachelors' Buttress, which we marked by a cairn where the rib abuts on the mass of this buttress. This point was reached at 3.55 P.M., three hours and five minutes from the start. On a level with the cairn, in the gully to the north, a tempting spring trickling down the hollow invited the thirsty climbers to refresh themselves, but the intervening stretch of turf (sheltered from the sun) was frozen hard, and to cross this the axes were required for the first time. After this an easy walk led us through soft snow to the sky-line, five or ten minutes from the cairn of Sgoran Dubh Mor.

Unfortunately the sky clouded over and sleet began to fall when we reached the cairn, preventing us from seeing what must have been a glorious view. The shower, however, passed in time to give us a glimpse of Ben Alder and other peaks as we made our way along the ridge to the snow to the north of No. 1 Buttress, which was descended by an abortive glissade; below this a rough descent soon brought us to Loch Mhic Ghille Chaoile, which we skirted on the west side, where the going was found to be fairly good, better than on the east. Leaving the Bothy, we had

another delightful walk back to Aviemore, though under what different conditions.

In the morning, the mysterious attraction of the unknown to lure us on, in the evening the satisfaction of success ; then a long day's task before us, now a well-spent day to look back on, and rest approaching ; then the sun blazed down upon us, now the coolness of evening among the great pines fittingly closed a memorable day on the rocks of Sgoran Dubh.

The hotel was reached in two hours from the Bothy, plus a ten minutes' rest, and next morning the train sped us south again to resume once more the threads of the life which had been dropped for a bare forty-eight hours—alas!



## AQUATIC SPORT ON BEN NEVIS.

BY W. R. RICKMERS.

"SNOW is hardly water," said my friend who saw the above headline and thought he knew the subject. "Snow is hard water," I replied, and he vanished, muttering as he went, "It's illicit still; his imagination is out of bounds." No doubt he was sorry to leave me alone with my inspiration. "He meant 'out of bond,' surely," I chuckled, and from its crystal bower with loving lips I lured the Scottish muse.

The British, the greatest of all seafaring nations, were clearly predestined to be the first in taking up mountaineering as a sport. Between the Mountain and the Main the connection is not far to seek. From ice to water is but a question of temperature; from Ararat to Ben Nevis through the ten lost tribes (who were evidently not competent to go without guides) to the British Isles stretches one unbroken tradition, and from Noah to mountain dew is one absorbent theme. As a mere Continental I had not until lately quite realised how important water is to the Nation of the Seas. It is the mainspring of their greatness, their well of health, and the source of their pleasures. No wonder they worship it to an extent undreamt of in other countries. They rule the waves, they fish the stream and tread the snowy crest, they enter into water from their beds, and even mix the omnipresent liquid in their drinks. Truly, providence favours them and always provides an exceptionally liberal supply of wet for the holidays, so that these islanders may sail forth and, together with their favourite element, swamp the playgrounds of Europe. Was it mere idle fancy of the poet's mind that Venus rose from the foaming waves? I think I see the purpose of the symbol. From water, the all-pervading, material generator, is born the ideal, the all-beautifier: She, woman, the giver of life, the inspiration of our work, the companion of our sports. Though it may be the etymological speculation of one who left out of his glass the sober fluid of the pump, I revel with unsophisticated joy in the idea that "she" is the word-root as well as the

presiding unit of the triad She, Ship, and Ski. Before I saw this, I objected to the Norwegian spelling "ski" (I wanted "skee") and the Norwegian pronunciation (which is "she") being introduced into the English language. But history and providence knew better, and now I have been taught that the three best things in the world are called "she." True heirs of the chivalrous Norsemen who roamed over the briny and the snow, the British have the ships and what goes with them, and they were the first to adopt the ski before any other country outside of Scandinavia.

Reader, if you feel a moist mist gathering round your understanding, if you resent my flight of fervid fancy (alas! its wings are dripping still), remember that I, a son of the sunny South, have, before writing this, tried to absorb the local colour of your literature, and among others I perused the book of a former Astronomer-Royal for Scotland, which left on my mind that indelible impress which nothing can wash off. His speculations about the Great Pyramid have a natural attraction for mountaineers, for Cheops' tombstone is high and steep. I have studied the book carefully, and by the clear exposition of the she-symbolism I hope to prove myself as possessing the inheritance of the true spirit of him who did his oriental work in one of the driest regions of the world, who from Auld Reekie to Gizeh joined two contrasts into one fantastic revelry of the imagination, and who must have been instilled with and tried to combine what is most characteristic of the two extremes.

I am still wet with Highland moisture outside and in. That is my justification to the patriotic Scot, who, filled with grief (unless it be something better), bids me hurry to the scene of my exploits. He does not realise perhaps that I am already in it, in full swim, in fact, making headway with a will, and trying to reach the shore. Allow me to say that for eight days I have been the hygroscopic victim drenched between the infinite deluge of a diluted outer world and the concentrated and stronger flood of the limited space within. Small wonder that I was a sodden sponge which would have burst asunder but for the tender



SKIING. "ON THE PRACTICE-GROUND."



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care of friends, descendants of the hardy clans of the North, and therefore accustomed to the rough nature of Caledonia stern and wild. They rescued me and sent me to my home, which I reached safely, leaving across France a trail of brownish liquid, defined by a distinguished analyst as moorland water, and which smelt of Harris tweed. After my return the Lake of Constance rose steadily, and the fish died from an epidemic of *bacillus peatreekus*. But I am glad to say that things are now gradually subsiding into a normal condition. The lake is falling visibly, and I am squeezing over these introductory pages the remnant of my humid recollections, which I offer as a last tribute to the land of the lochs. I am beginning to feel dry, and I hope to remain so ever after. So I need hardly apologise, trusting that I have made it sufficiently clear to you that up to the time of writing this, I was quite full of my subject, and felt no need to refresh my memory, externally or artificially, by the use of either pump or flagon.

If in the eye of the reader I am getting into water hot and deep because my writings do not please him, let him remember that I am not a lyric poet, that mine is not the pleasant patter of the babbling brook, but that, as a product of peculiarly painful circumstances, my prose should rather partake of the erratic eddies and turbulent torrents of the irresistible spate rushing through the glen. The opened sluice-gates of my intellectual receptacle will pour forth what was poured into it. The reader of the *S.M.C. Journal* is getting impatient, and reaches for his umbrella. He is a mountaineer, and eager to know where the sport comes in promised by the title. Having found out by now that the subject is mainly  $H_2O$ , he only wishes me to resolve the doubt whether I am thinking of climbing in the water or diving in the hills. I implore him not to lose courage, for though I have sunk very deep through no fault of mine, for I was not born an amphibious animal, I am working hard to get out of the unfathomable. Be there ever so much water, it cannot drown my enthusiasm for the noble art of skiing, which will always rise to the top victoriously. Thus skiing is the tune and water the melody thereof. As to time and

locality of my tale, suffice to say that the scene is submerged in that epoch of the earth's history chronologically called Easter 1904, while the place must be imagined somewhere in the great swamp Scotland, so characteristic of the period in question. There my wife and I ventured on a journey of exploration with the object of finding out what could be done with the ski to the inhabitants of those parts. Before going I wrote for information to the natives, and in common fairness I must admit that, having a true and objective appreciation of their country's condition, and knowing that I was an innocent stranger and a child of the South, they tried at the outset to damp my fiery ardour by transferring to their letters as vivid a picture as possible of the natural conditions by which they are constantly surrounded. Advice was showered upon me, and warnings poured down in sheets of notepaper, but, alas! I was like the proverbial duck, I was sure of finding snow, wherein I proved right enough, but I neglected the most important factor of hydrostatic calculations; I forgot that the height of Easter-tide has often marked the lowest ebb of many a buoyant hope. I studied a map with the elevations, whereas I should have consulted an Admiralty chart with deep-sea soundings. Ski-runners, heed ye my timely fog-horn of advice, and do not embark upon the wild-goose chase around the storm-swept reef which towers stately but invisible, inhabited but lost, in the outer darkness of the oozing cloud.

What a ski is some Scots may not know. In my sunny home people call it "the camel of the snows," because without it you feel cut adrift. But better suited to this narrative, and nearer to your understanding it will be to emphasise its usefulness and indispensability by naming it "ship of the mountains," for it can go a long way without water. And if one is familiar with modern things, I cannot choose a more expressive or picturesque analogy than that of terrestrial submarine, because *that* it was during our stay at Fort-William, and as such it is best described in this particular record, which tells of the navigation of Ben Nevis by a volunteer fleet under my command.

Skiing is to my mind the finest variety of mountaineer-



SKIING. "HOW NOT TO DO IT" (LEANING BACK).





ing. How freely do we breathe the crisp, dry air; how the eye does revel in the scintillating jewellery which the last fall of new snow has thrown over the trees of the mountain-side; and how we delight in the view, so deep and clear, that crystal purity wherein seems to float a distant promise of eternity. Gently rising towards the glorious fields of white we watch the growing splendours of the winter morn, and looking backwards we survey with pride the many windings of the slender track, that clear-cut line of man-made beauty among the unspoilt charms of hill and dale. Then, after pleasant toil the top is gained, and basking in the sun, eating our wholesome food, we rest content, our relish the expectation of things to come. But who can describe with the ink flowing from a sluggish pen the feelings of the downward slide, the exuberant joy of the swaying motion—in short, the whole rippingness of a good run:—

“The turbulent swirl, the storm-spiced whirl, or the fall with a  
thundering bump,  
And the lightning fling, with the elegant swing of a well-made  
Telemark jump;  
The tinkling crash of a jolly good smash, that breaks the even  
flow,  
Or the sweeping slide, as whizzing we glide through the drifts of  
the seething snow.”

But, with sincere apologies to the poet for the unauthorised loan and unpretentious use of a metre so eminently suited to every kind of physical exercise, allow me to resume the halting prose, which must render the impressions of a plain, blunt man. Only so much I know, that no language possesses an adequate supply of words in the splosh, swish, shoot, and flash line to give an intelligible interpretation of what the wild wallowing waves of my memory are whispering to me, and to which I always listen with rapt attention. Thus, failing the power of written words or printed periods, I wanted to convince my Scottish friends of that something which neither book nor letter can call forth from the heart of man—the taste for a new sport. So I arranged to meet them at Fort-William, in order that I might show them those beauties of skiing which

I have tried to suggest. Mrs Inglis Clark and her brave daughter, Miss Findlay, Miss Macpherson, Messrs Clapper-ton, Fedden, and Hope responded to the call, and we found ourselves assembled in the cosy Alexandra with a view entirely flooded by that detestable liquid which, however, in the form of snow is one of the greatest blessings of mankind.

No more can I say than that the flood of my tears shed over the brilliant and sunny picture which I have painted of the skisters' joys cannot compare with the rain which mercilessly beat down upon us. But it could not wash out the spirits of the Scotch. There was enough and to spare for Southron and Teuton, and I shall always remember with intense gratitude the staunch will and the bright, brisk, unbroken temper of those whom I had promised much and for whom a sullen sky spoilt nearly all. For eight days we plodded to the mountain, stubbornly intent to frolic, but obliged to snatch from driving sleet and cutting wind a few moments of practice on the fleeting boards. Eight times we climbed, skiid on some patch or slope, ate a frugal meal on some spot where the water seemed driest, while our imagination soaring to extremes revelled in orgies of devilled dishes, hot ginger, and "extra dry." Then we went down again, and home, to map out to our patient landlady by a fluid track over hall and stairs a realistic account of the natural beauties prevailing at the time in the neighbourhood of her hospitable roof. Sometimes we enjoyed a sail in our Hon. Secretary's splendid steamboat, thus shortening the daily swim to our playground.

On Sunday we went to see the Meteorological Observatory at Fort William, and I shall never forget the enthusiasm of the venerable man who presides over this admirable institution—an institution which serves to encourage the natives. It was nice to hear him say that a thermometer registers heat, and when he showed us the rain-gauges we stood in awe before the reckless ambition of human genius which attempts to measure the immeasurable. These rain-gauges are metal funnels connected with vast subterranean vaults holding thousands of gallons. A powerful pump



SKIING. "A LONG SPOOR."



empties them when full, which is about twice a day, as I was told. Pathetic above all it was when he, with noble eloquence, expressed his unshaken faith in the existence of a sun, though it was difficult to suppress a feeling of pity and regret when he tried to advance what in childlike zeal he called a scientific proof. His sunshine-recorder, evidently supplied by the S.P.R., was a globular crystal enclosed in a semicircular arc with cabalistic signs. So crystal-gazing was the means by which he sought to produce a dream of brightness in the minds of the simple Highlanders. Poor man, he does his best and works hard. May the day come when he rests from his labours in a sunnier clime and beholds with wondering eye the glittering orb of which he reads in books.

But one thing always remains faithful to the ski-runner, and that is the snow. It may sometimes be fickle and change its mood from hour to hour, but its one great virtue is that in bad weather it is nearly always good. Last Easter the slopes from the summit of Ben Nevis to within a hundred feet or so above the lake at the col were in fine condition, affording a steep run of over two thousand feet. Such stretches of unbroken snow at stiff angles are by no means frequent, not even in the Alps. This was what I expected, for it is an axiom that the snow at the beginning of spring is the most reliable and promises the greatest chance of good sport. It has settled, does not superficially hide treacherous obstacles, and, though hard throughout, is slithery on top, thus making an ideal surface for swings and curves. So the ground and the snow on Ben Nevis were excellent, but the climate was most emphatically not for beginners, being extremely discouraging. That is the only drawback in Scotland as far as natural elements are concerned. The question of good approaches and comfortable lodging close to the snow is also there, but not insoluble.

In fine weather a two-hours' walk to the snowline is a mere nothing to the ski-runner, who is looking forward to the pleasure which he knows he will find above. I do not know how the weather is in May, but I suppose that there is less rain in that month than in many others. For me

there is not the shadow of a doubt that enough snow for good skiing lies on Ben Nevis throughout May ; and on the first of June, to judge from photographs, the runner can still find snow-slopes of at least five hundred and maybe a thousand feet in height. During winter, skiing is probably very uncertain all over Scotland. The granite blocks or the heather are too much for the soft and unset layer, whereas any patch one sees in April is a sort of solid filling to a hollow in the ground ; it is practically *nevé*. Scotland, therefore, is essentially a country for "late skiing" (April and May). Beginners can find tame runs, and experts can be suited with forty-degree inclines, gullies, and block-studded snowfields, to satisfy the most fastidious, without much danger from avalanches. Owing to its height and to its position in the West, which favours great accumulations, Ben Nevis is probably the best, because the runs will also be the longest. But I may be mistaken, and other places may equal it, though one must always consider the existence of railways and hotels. In the winter the far interior is better, but for the reasons explained above (soft snow, &c.) good skiing will not be a certainty in normal winters. The question for skisters in Scotland—their season is the spring—is not one of the ground or snow, which can be guaranteed, but rather of the sky above. Experience will show if the month of May, as I surmise, is on a better footing with the clerk of the weather than the early days of its predecessor.

He who can spare a week during the winter will do best to go to the Continent, and there I can conscientiously recommend the Black Forest, which has a far harder winter climate and more snow than the Alps. Within twenty-four hours from Charing Cross the ski-runner can sit in the warm and comfortable hotel on the Feldberg, more than four thousand feet above the sea, and surrounded by an expanse of fine ski snow which lasts from the beginning of December till the end of April.

Skiing in the British Isles is not an innovation. The more this fascinating pastime steps into public notoriety, the more one hears of localities where the swift planks have been in use for generations. In the *Alpine Journal* I



THE ALPINE SKI.





have repeated Dr Savage's personal recollections. Mr Glover writes to me that at Allenheads (Cumberland) all the village boys still have skis made out of barrel staves, and a newspaper cutting tells me that in some of the dales of Yorkshire and Durham the sport is by no means new, and that fifty years ago the Weardale miners went to their work on ski.

I appeal to the members of this and other Clubs to collect reports of this kind, and to try to obtain "genuine and authenticated old home-made British ski," which cannot be extremely rare if one knows how to look for them, but which will be priceless treasures in the ski collections of the future. They will be witnesses that nothing is new to the ever-wakeful instincts of a sporting race, just in the same way as these lines are a proof that an inclement sky cannot smother its enterprise and dash. Though my wife and I, northward bound as missionaries of the ski, have been drenched to the skin, we have basked in the warm sunshine of friendship, whose glowing essence, added to the great clear stream of Scottish hospitality, makes that true Highland blend which mortals taste with joy.

# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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## MOUNT BLAIR.

(DIVISION II. GROUP VII. (a).)

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 45'$ ; W. Lon.  $3^{\circ} 22'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 56. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 16.

MOUNT BLAIR, 2,441 feet, 3 miles north-west of the Kirkton of Glenisla. From the isolated position and conical shape of this mountain it commands a peculiarly extensive and varied view, and consequently enjoys a far greater reputation than many a mountain 1,000 feet higher. It can be ascended from Blacklunans (post office) in Glenshee or the farm of Alrick in Glenisla in less than an hour, over short dry heather—the latter is recommended.\*

The view, especially to the west, is most extensive. Ben Chonzie above Crieff, Stobinian and Ben Mor Ben Lawers, Cairn Maing, Schiehallion, Ben Chuallaich on the north side of Loch Rannoch, a glimpse of which can be seen shining in the sun, Ben Vrackie, Binnein Mor in Glen Nevis, Ben Nevis, Ben Alder, Ben Udlaman, Beinn a' Ghlo, Glas Thulachan, &c.; the Central Cairngorms, the Braes of Angus and Lochnagar, the church spire of Montrose and the sea beyond, the broad expanse of Strathmore and the Sidlaws, with one huge chimney of Dundee through the gap by Auchterhouse, the Fife Lomonds and the East Lothian hills, and to the south-west the Ochils—these form the principal features of the view.

H. T. M.

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\* Daily post cart from Alyth to Kirkton of Glenisla, and from Blairgowrie to Blacklunans and the Spital of Glenshee.

## THE CAIRNWELL AND GLAS THULACHAN GROUPS.

### (DIVISION II. GROUPS VIII. AND IX.)

The main coach road from Blairgowrie to Braemar *via* the Spital of Glenshee, the highest driving road in Scotland, attains its greatest elevation—2,200 feet—some 6 miles north of the Spital, and 9 south of Braemar. It here bisects the large tract of elevated country which lies on the southern watershed of the headwaters of the Dee. The eastern or higher portion, consisting of the Lochnagar and Braes of Angus groups, was described in the last number of the *Journal*. The Glas Maol, the culminating mountain of the latter, immediately overhangs the summit of the road, to the west of which directly opposite is the Cairnwell.

The western portion is divided by natural features into two groups. The first, consisting of the summits included in Group VIII., is enclosed by Glen Beag on its south-east, and Glen Clunie on its north-east side, with their tributary glens Thailneiche (spelt by Bartholomew *Ghailneiche*) on the south-west, and Baddoch on the north-west; while the second, comprising Group IX., is bounded on the east by the two last-named glens, on the north by the Dee from Inverey to its junction with the Geldie, on the west by the Glen Tilt path to the Falls of Tarf, and thence by the road crossing from Falar—1,750 feet, the highest lodge in Scotland—to Kirkmichael, and on the south by the little Glen Lochy to the north-west of the Spital of Glenshee.

These two ranges consist for the most part of heather and berry-covered lower slopes, with, higher up, short grass and quartzite or quartz-schist scree intermixed; of living rock or crags there are few instances; here and there are peat hags, but usually not of a troublesome description. The summits are wide and flat topped, covered with short grass good to walk on with quartzite cropping up through. Remote from railway or steamer lines, they can yet be easily reached from Braemar or the Spital of Glenshee.

Two miles to the south-west of Braemar is Mòr Sròn (the "Big Nose"), commonly called Morrone Hill, which, though 2,819 feet in height, rises only 1,700 feet above the village, and gives an excellent view of the principal summits of the group. A spare two hours at Braemar cannot be better spent than in an ascent of this hill.

#### GROUP VIII.—THE CAIRNWELL GROUP.

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 53'$ ; W. Lon.  $3^{\circ} 24'$  to  $3^{\circ} 30'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 65. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 16.

1. THE CAIRNWELL (3,059 feet), though not the highest mountain of the group, will be the most frequently ascended, for its summit is only 860 feet above the Braemar-Glenshee road at the county march, from which it lies less than half a mile to the west.

2. CÀRN AOSDA (3,003 feet) is 1 mile north of No. 1. In the depression a little west of the col between them, at a height of 2,303 feet, lies the little Loch Brothachan.

3. CARN NAN SAC (3,000 feet) is 1 mile west by south of No. 1. On the one-inch map it has only a 2,750 feet contour given; the six-inch map, however, shows its height as above. The summit, which is very flat, is marked by a single upright stone.

4. CÀRN GEOIDHE ("Goose Cairn"—3,194 feet) is  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles west by south of No. 1. This is the highest summit of the group, it is flat topped, and has a big cairn; there is little dip between it and No. 3, and not much between it and

5. CÀRN BHINNEIN (the "Cairn of the Peaks"—3,006 feet), 1 mile west by south of No. 4. It is the westernmost of Group VIII. Unlike the other summits of this district, this is a pretty little rocky top (no cairn), which, once seen, forms an easily recognised landmark from all

around. Its south-west shoulder, Creag na Dallaige, together with Creag Easgaidh opposite it to the north-west, has, with the exception of Glas Thulachan, the only crags in the district.

Although all these hills, and especially Nos. 4 and 5, are easier reached from the Spital of Glenshee than from Braemar, the Cairnwell road and the coach in summer make their ascent easy from the latter place.

#### GROUP IX.—THE GLAS THULACHAN GROUP.

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 52'$  to  $56^{\circ} 56'$ ; W. Lon.  $3^{\circ} 29'$  to  $3^{\circ} 34'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 65 and 64. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 16.

A depression of about 800 feet, formed by the Baddoch Burn and a south-west flowing tributary of the Thailneiche, separates this group from the last. With the exception of Glas Thulachan and Càrn an Rìgh, all its summits lie round the headwaters of the Ey, a burn which joins the Dee at Inverey 5 miles above Braemar.

1. GLAS THULACHAN (the "Little Grey Heap"—3,445 feet), 5 miles north-west of the Spital of Glenshee. This is the highest mountain of the district, overtopping everything between the Glasmaol and Beinn a' Ghlo. It stands well out to the south of the rest of the range, from which it is cut off by a dip of some 800 feet. Although its summit, marked by a large cairn, is round topped, it has two corries to the north-east and south-east, in which the snows linger far into the summer. The latter, which is the finer of the two, is often heavily corniced, and gives character to the group when seen from the south and east, being distinguished at a great distance. It might afford some climbing. The mountain is best ascended from the Spital *via* Glenlochry Lodge (locally called *Glenlocksy*) in about 3 hours.

A mile and a quarter to the north-east of Glas Thulachan, in the hollow between it, Màm nan Càrn, and Beinn Iutharn Bheag, at a height of some 2,600 feet, lies the little Loch nan Eun ("Lake of the Birds"), a name doubtless

given it on account of the number of gulls which build on its two small green islands. It has a considerable fishing reputation, and a small but well-constructed hut with a fireplace has been built for the use of fishers a few yards west of where the Allt Easgaidh, a mere trickle, leaves the loch. I have found the door always unlocked, and in cold weather the hut might be of great service to the climber.

2. MÀM NAN CÀRN (the "Round Hill of the Cairn"—3,224 feet), between Nos. 1 and 4. This top is only named on the six-inch map, while the above height is 150 yards S.S.W. of the point marked 3,217 feet on the one-inch map. It is a long level ridge extending east and west, with a small cairn at the 3,217 point. There is a dip to 2,600 feet between it and No. 1, and to 2,900 between it and No. 4.

3. CARN AN RIGH (the "King's Cairn"—3,377 feet),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles W.N.W. of No. 1, as seen from a distance, has a fine blunt cone-shaped appearance, and is decorated with two large cairns close together. It is the western flank of, and detached from, the rest of the group. It is the least accessible, and is best ascended from the Spital of Glenshee *via* Loch nan Eun.

4. BEINN IUTHARN MHÒR (the "Big Mountain of Hell"—3,424 feet), 2 miles north of No. 1. This mountain may either be ascended from the Spital by Loch nan Eun and over No. 2, or from Braemar *via* Inverey and Gleney. Its summit, adorned with a large white quartz cairn, is at the south-west end of a long easy shoulder. In its northern scree-strewn corrie lies the tiny Lochan Uaine ("Little Green Lake"). On old-fashioned maps "Ben Uarn" was the only mountain of the range named.

5. BEINN IUTHARN BEAG (3,011 feet),  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles east of No. 4, has a small cairn. It is an entirely uninteresting hill; ascents by the same routes as for No. 4.

6. AN SOCACH (the "Plough"), west end 3,059 feet; east end, Socach Mor (the "Big Plough"), 3,073 feet,  $1\frac{1}{2}$

and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles E.N.E. of No. 5. To reach An Socach from Beinn Iutharn Bheag involves a descent of about 700 feet. It is a long broad ridge rising slightly at its two extremities. Its name is not inapt. The 3,073 point has a large cairn, the west end has none. On the one-inch map the name "An Socach" applies to both tops; on the six-inch and Bartholomew's maps, however, "An Socach" is only the west top, while the east is correctly called "Socach Mor," which name on the one-inch map is placed  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile east of the top. It is most easily ascended from Braemar *via* Glens Clunie and Baddoch.

7. CARN BHAC (south-west summit, 3,014 feet; north-east summit, 3,098 feet),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of No. 4. This is a round grassy mountain which is easiest ascended from Braemar *via* Inverey. The lower part of Gleney is very pretty. There is a good track as far as the junction of the Cristie Mòr and Connie Burns. The latter is followed, and the ascent takes about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours from Inverey. There is a cairn with a stick on the higher north-east summit at the top of Coire Bhourneasg, and a small cairn on the lower top  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to the south-west. Another  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile farther to the south-west is a top just below the 3,000 feet, named Bhutha. The distance between this mountain and No. 4 is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and consists mainly of peat hags.

The views from all these mountains are good, though the absence of water is a serious defect. The special features are the great broad expanse of Strathmore, the fine views of the southern side of the Cairngorms, conspicuous among which is the Devil's Peak, and especially the grand view of Beinn a' Ghlo, which is nowhere seen to such good effect.

H. T. M.

BEINN A' GHLO  
(THE MOUNTAIN OF THE MIST).

DIVISION II. SECTION X.

Lat. 56° 51'; W. Lon. 3° 42'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheets 64 and 54. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 16.

To the lover of breezy walks and wide views of bracing air and fine scenery, the group of summits collectively known as Beinn a' Ghlo is not to be despised. Standing at one extremity of the great Forest of Atholl, their smooth grey and green slopes and rounded tops are always a prominent object in the landscape. These mountains compose the group, and they are called—

1. Carn Liath (3,193), pron. *Cairn Lee-a*=the hoary cairn. Lies  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-east of Blair Atholl. This is the mountain usually pointed out as "Beinn a Ghlo" from Blair Atholl.
2. Braigh Coire Chruin Bhagain (3,505), pron. *Brae Corrie Kruen Valgan*=the brae of the round bag-shaped corrie. Lies  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.N.E. of Carn Liath.
3. Carn nan Gabhar (3,671), pron. *Cairn na Gaur*=the cairn of the goat. This is the highest peak of Beinn a' Ghlo, and lies 8 miles north-east of Blair Atholl. It sends a shoulder to the S.S.W., which in one mile terminates in a top called AIRGOID BHEINN (3,490 ap.), pron. *Ar-gyud Ven*=the silver mountain.

Blair Atholl is the most suitable point from which to make the ascent, and the usual way is to follow a winding road up the side of the Fender till about 3 miles past Loch Moraig, when a stiff pull up a scree and moss-covered slope puts one on the top of Carn Liath. A better plan, however, is to ascend Glen Tilt to about 2 miles beyond Forest Lodge, and then at the junction of the Allt Fheanach with the Tilt, strike at once up the north-west shoulder of Carn nan Gabhar, and after the summit ridge is gained a pleasant walk may be had to the cairn, with the fine steep slopes of the mountain plunging down suddenly to Loch Loch on the left hand. To include Airgoid Bheinn



a slight detour has to be made, involving a rise of about 175 feet. From Airgoid a straight line almost due north can be made to the next col, and a rise of 700 feet places one on the top of Braigh Coire Chruin Bhalgain. From here a long 2 miles and a rise of 600 feet brings one to Carn Liath, where the road to Blair Atholl is seen skirting the base of the mountain, 1,600 feet below.

The views on a clear day are very extensive ; a full list of the peaks within sight is given by Mr Munro in *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. II., p. 243.

The whole of the mountain is in deer forest.

W. D.

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### BEN VRACKIE.

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 45'$ ; W. Lon.  $3^{\circ} 43'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 55. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 16.

BEN VRACKIE (the "Speckled Mountain"—2,757 feet), above the Pass of Killiecrankie,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles north by east of Pitlochry, from which place or from Killiecrankie Station it is most easily ascended. The graceful outline of this mountain above Pitlochry is familiar to all who have travelled by the Highland Railway, and its somewhat isolated position,  $4\frac{3}{4}$  miles south by east of Carn Liath, makes it a far more conspicuous object from a distance than many a higher mountain. It is a very easy two hours' walk to the top, and its proximity to a tourist centre combined with the lovely view, the main feature of which is the view up the valley of the Tummel and over the Moor of Rannoch to the Buchaille Etives, makes it one of the favourite tourist mountains in Scotland.

H. T. M.

## BEINN DEARG AND CARN A' CHLAMAIN.

## (DIVISION II. GROUP XI.)

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 53'$  and  $56^{\circ} 52'$ ; W. Lon.  $3^{\circ} 53'$  and  $3^{\circ} 47'$ .  
Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 64. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey, No. 16.

1. Beinn Dearg (3,304 feet), east of Glen Bruar,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Blair Atholl.
2. Càrn a' Chlamain (3,159 feet),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west of Forest Lodge, Glen Tilt.

From the watershed between the Tilt and the Dee a large and inaccessible tract of land stretches west for 22 miles to the Highland Railway at Drumochter. In the south-east corner of this district lie the two mountains under notice.

1. BEINN DEARG (the "Red Mountain"), a conspicuous object on the north side of the Highland Railway between Blair Atholl and Dalnaspidal, can best be reached by a rough road from Struan Station to Bruar Lodge. The pedestrian is recommended to visit the beautiful Falls of Bruar, and then strike north-west over the moor till this track is reached, and so to the Lodge—1,500 feet—a walk of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Hence a perfectly easy ascent of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles in a north-east direction, up an easy shoulder, over short heather and gravel of disintegrated granite, should place one by the large cairn on the round level top in  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours. The view, though lacking in foreground and suffering from the want of water, is one of the most extensive in Scotland. South-east just across Glen Tilt rises Carn Liath, and through the gap between it and the two main peaks of Beinn a' Ghlo is seen one of the Eastern Sidlaws. Carn a' Chlamain is backed by Beinn a' Ghlo. Then farther east is Glas Thulachan, with Carn an Righ slightly to the left in front of it, the hills around the Cairnwell behind, and Ben Iutharn Mhor a little to the left. Farther away, a little to the north of east, Lochnagar stands out. Then 35 miles off E.N.E., the pyramid of Morven above Ballater.

Then the Cairngorms, uninteresting in shape. Farthest away, and most to the right, the big flat mass of Ben a Bhuid, Ben Macdhuì next, Cairn Toul rather nearer, and showing a sharper, more cone-like peak. Next, the round summits connecting it with Braeriach, the black southern corrie of which is plainly seen. More to the left, across the depression of Loch Eunach, the rocky top of Sgoran Dubh. North-west, rising from the dull uninteresting foreground tableland, the round top of Meall na Cuaich, some 10 miles off. A little to the south of west, across Ben Udlaman and the Drumochter hills, are seen the tops of the fine corries of Ben Alder. These, with the long shoulder of Aonach Beag and Geal Charn, Carn Dearg, and the other hills between Lochs Erich and Laggan, entirely shut out Ben Nevis and the Lochaber hills. To their right, however, in the far distance, is the Saddle at the head of Loch Hourn, 60 miles away. Scour Ouran at the head of Loch Duich, Mamsoul, Carn Eige, Riabhachan, and Scour na Lapich—all from 50 to 60 miles away—are plainly seen, and all look particularly well. W.S.W. are the Buchailles and Glencoe hills; to their left, the Blackmount range, with the strangely straight-topped Ben Starav showing behind. The north face of Cruachan very distinct, with some Mull hills (probably Dun na Ghaoithe, and Sgur Dearg or Ben Talaidh) to the right. Then the Glen Lyon mountains—Ben Creachan asserting sovereignty; Ben Laoigh, Stobinian, and Ben More (curiously closely joined), and far beyond them Ben Ime and the Loch Lomond bens. Schiehallion quite near, with Ben Lawers peeping across his shoulders. And beyond Lawers, Ben Voirlich, Stuc a Chroin, Ben Chonzie, and the Ochils, not to speak of Ben Vrackie and the Western Sidlaws—Dunsinane being unmistakable.

Nearly a mile due north a shoulder of the mountain named Beinn Garbh (the "Rough Mountain"—about 3,060 feet) rises to a doubtful top, while much more distinct, 2 miles to the south-east, separated by a considerable dip, another top, Beinn a Chait ("Mountain of the Cat," 2,942 feet), is boldly situated above Gleann Diridh.

An alternative route to Beinn Dearg is from Blair

Atholl by keeping the *west* bank of the Tilt for about 4 miles, and then ascending by Gleann Diridh ("Glen of the Ascent") to its head, or over Beinn a Chait.

2. CARN A' CHLAMAIN (the "Kite's Cairn"). The one-inch Ordnance Survey Map gives no name, and only a 3,000 feet contour for this mountain. Bartholomew calls it Càrn Clabhain. On the six-inch map, however, it is called Càrn a' Chlamain, and its height, 3,159 feet, given (cairn on top). It can be easily reached from Blair Atholl in 3 to 3½ hours by following up Glen Tilt to a little beyond Marble Lodge, which is 4½ miles from Blair Atholl, and then ascending the Cruinnich (*i.e.* "Gathering") Burn. It is a quartzite mountain, and looks imposing from Glen Tilt, showing a steep front. The walk from this mountain to Beinn Dearg involves a descent of fully 1,000 feet, and will take over 2 hours.

H. T. M.

## AN SGARSOCH AND CARN AN FHIDLEIR.

### (DIVISION II. GROUP XII.)

Lat. 56° 56'; W. Lon. 3° 45' and 3° 48'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 64. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 16.

1. An Sgarsoch (3,300 feet), 4 miles west from summit of path from Blair Atholl to Braemar *via* Glen Tilt.
2. Carn an Fhidleir (the "Fiddler's Cairn"—3,276 feet), 2 miles east of An Sgarsoch.

Separated from the last group by the headwaters of the Tarf, and lying between that river and the Geldie and Feshie, these two mountains are among the most inaccessible in Scotland. Moreover, their wide-stretching, featureless uplands and wealth of peat, do not commend them to the mountaineer, especially lying between and overtopped by Beinn a' Ghlo and the Western Cairngorms. They are easiest approached from Braemar, whence there is a good driving road to the Linn of Dee—6 miles—and a fair, though rather rough, road for 6 miles farther to Bynack Lodge. From here the summit of An Sgarsoch is nearly

5 miles distant. The Bynack Burn is followed for about 3 miles, and then the eastern shoulder of the mountain attacked. This rises to a separate top—Druim Sgarsoch (3,128 feet)—both name and height being only given on the six-inch map. An Sgarsoch,  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile west, with little intermediate dip, is a large flat grassy tableland. There is a big well-built cairn on the actual top, which is otherwise unworthy of note.

Carn an Fhidleir lies 2 miles west by north, and entails a drop of over 1,000 feet between. The summit is equally flat and featureless, and the small cairn quite unworthy of the meeting point of three counties.

From Blair Atholl there is a good road to Forest Lodge (8 miles), and a fair path thence to about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles above the Falls of Tarf, some 17 miles from Blair Atholl. Here strike up the Allt a Glas Choire ("Burn of the Grey Corrie"), in a northerly direction for the summit of An Sgarsoch, which is about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles off.

A third means of approach is to ascend Glen Feshie to the point at which the river turns sharply south-west, *i.e.*, near the watershed between the Feshie and the Geldie, 1,800 feet above the sea, some 16 miles from Kincaig Station on the Highland Railway, driving being practicable for about 10 miles. Climb from here due south for about 2 miles to Carn an Fhidleir.

H. T. M.

## GAICK FOREST.

### (DIVISION II. GROUP XIII.)

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 58'$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 8'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 64. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey Map, No. 16.

Glas Mheall Mor	-	-	-	3,037 feet
Meall a' Chaoruinn	-	-	-	3,004 "
Carn na Cairn	-	-	-	3,087 "
Meall na Cuaich	-	-	-	3,120 "

This group of hills, which forms the eastern side of the Drumochter Pass, extends from Dalnaspidal to Dalwhinnie on the Highland Railway.

In general character they very much resemble the Monadhliadh Hills, consisting as they do of a high undulating plateau. Meall na Cuaich, although the lowest in height, is the only peak of the four with any individuality.

The traverse of the group offers nothing of interest to the rock-climber, but to the hill-walker it affords an ideal excursion, with fine views of the Cairngorm and Loch Erich hills, as well as beautiful glimpses into Glens Garry and Tromie.

The main ridge is easily reached either from Dalwhinnie or Dalnaspidal. The best route is from Dalnaspidal Station, following the ridge which runs in a north-easterly direction to the top of Glas Meall Mor and thence over Meall a Chaoruinn and Carn na Cairn to Meall na Cuaich; the latter is separated from the main ridge by a dip of 750 feet.

The corrie to the south of Bogha Cloiche is the sanctuary of the Gaick Deer Forest, and should be avoided during the shooting season.

A very fine cross-country walk passes to the east of this group. Starting from Edendon, 5 miles south of Dalnaspidal Station, a hill road leads to Loch an Duin, where it degenerates into a track; passing Lochs Bhradain and an t'Seilich, it joins the Glen Tromie road at Gaick Lodge, and thence by it to Kingussie; distance approximately 26 miles.

H. W.

## EXCURSIONS.

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

A NEW CLIMB ON CARN DEARG OF BEN NEVIS.—The continuous record of maximum sunshine on "The Ben" during the early days of June tempted Charles W. Walker and Harry Walker to pay a week-end visit to Fort-William, which was reached in the small hours of the morning of the 11th June *via* Ballachulish.

When climbing the Castle Ridge during the New Year Meet the possibility of a climb up the north face of Carn Dearg had suggested itself, and a route which seemed feasible was spotted.

Accordingly after an early breakfast a start was made by the usual route to the Luncheon Stone in the Allt a Mhuilinn Corrie, which was duly reached well under the scheduled time. Continuing by the ordinary route to the Castle, the large snowfield which unites the North and South Castle Gullies was soon afterwards reached. A welcome halt was now made under the shade of the great cliff which forms the north face of Carn Dearg.

On this cliff, which practically runs from the Staircase Climb to the South Castle Gully, there are two well-marked watercourses which when seen at New Year were solid ice falls. Between these lay the projected climb. Seen from below no definite route could be mapped out, but it appeared that if an outstanding pinnacle of rock could be reached, about six hundred feet up, there was a possibility of the remainder going.

After an easy scramble, the bottom of the watercourse nearest the Castle was reached, and the rope put on, C. W. Walker leading. The climb was first up easy rocks on the right of this watercourse until the top of the first pitch was reached; here some difficulty was experienced in crossing the gully so as to gain a footing on the buttress itself. In order to do so a series of wet slabs had to be crossed before the first hitch was reached right under a waterfall, and ere this point of vantage could be quitted, both climbers were pretty well soaked to the skin.

Continuing the ascent to the left, an easy ledge led up to a grassy platform now right on the buttress about half way between the two watercourses, from whence a series of steep pitches and short chimneys led up to the pinnacle previously mentioned. What appeared to be

a detached pinnacle from below now resolved itself into a huge slab of rock cut off from the main face, except where a narrow tongue of snow formed a bridge and a possible means of escape. On the point of the slab overlooking the watercourse nearest the Staircase Climb, a small cairn was erected.

Descending the snow a short distance, a narrow grass ledge was attained, which led round a most sensational corner; looking downwards nothing caught the eye until the screes were reached a good eight hundred feet below. Two possible routes now offered themselves, one going to the left and one straight up. The latter was chosen. After two hundred feet of very steep rocks, which, unless for the excellent hand and foot holds, would have been well-nigh impossible, a platform on a level with the top of the Staircase Climb was reached. One short chimney was much shattered, and had evidently been quite recently struck by lightning.

From this point it looked as if it would be quite easy to join the Staircase Climb, but the rocks straight up looked attractive, and although in no place difficult, they proved most interesting. The latter part of the climb is somewhat indefinite, owing to the number of alternative routes offering themselves, but the one followed to the point about half way between Carn Dearg proper and the top of the South Castle Gully seemed to offer the best climbing.

The climb, which, as far as is known, is a new one, was most interesting throughout, the angle of the first eight hundred to one thousand feet being exceedingly steep, but abounding in excellent hitches. It is difficult to say whether the climb would be feasible under winter conditions, as ice-covered rocks at several points would have stopped progress.

Altogether about five and a half hours were spent on the climb, but possibly an hour might be deducted from this time, as a good deal of exploring had to be done.

A visit to the Observatory and Restaurant made a fitting finish to a successful day. On the way down a visit was paid to the Tower, and the cornices at the top of the Observatory Gully were much admired. A standing glissade in the snow gully leading to the half-way hut greatly facilitated the descent.

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**THE NORTH-EAST BUTTRESS.**—On Sunday, the 12th June, the North-East Buttress was tackled. Starting from the bottom of Slingsby's Chimney, a good climb to the platform was obtained about one hundred and fifty feet to the left of the Chimney itself. The summit was reached by the usual route.

In course of the ascent a huge avalanche was seen, having its origin high up in the gully between the Observatory Ridge and the North-East Buttress; it fell into the large snowfield, and thundered down into the valley below. Many large blocks of hard snow bounded



down until the screes were reached, when they burst like huge shells, scattering the stones in all directions. Any party caught crossing to Slingsby's Chimney would have been most effectually wiped out.

H. W.

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**SRON CREISE.**—With the prospect of doing some new climbs on Sron Creise, a party of four—S. F. M. Cumming, A. E. M'Kenzie, W. M. Wilson, and F. Greig—arrived at Kingshouse on 16th April. Two of us, leaving Edinburgh with the 4.30 A.M. train to Bridge of Orchy, enjoyed the thirteen-mile walk over to Kingshouse. It was a typical April day, with occasional showers and a clear bracing air. The hills carried a good deal of snow, and promised some sport.

Stob Gabhar looked particularly tempting, the corrie being filled with snow and sparkling in the sun through the passing mist. Once at Bà Bridge, such a view met us as would please the eye of the most fastidious mountaineer. The whole of the Corrie Bà was a mass of gleaming snow from Meall a Bhuiridh on the right away round to Stob a Choire Odhair on the left. The latter was alpine in the extreme, with its snow-filled gullies and overhanging cornices showing up to the best advantage. We arrived at Kingshouse at 2 P.M., and the remainder of the party, leaving Edinburgh with the afternoon train, arrived shortly after 10 o'clock, not having enjoyed the drive over in the heavy showers. The morning of the 17th broke out fine and sunny, and we were on our way for Sron Creise at 9 A.M. Our peak looked really noble and most inviting, and we were looking forward to tackling A.P. rocks and snow slopes as they appeared from below. The whole face of buttresses and gullies seemed to tower over our heads at impossible angles, but once on them, at least on the rocks, we were undeceived. We intended taking the ridge which leads almost straight to the northern summit, as viewed from Kingshouse. We followed the Glen Etive road for about one and a half miles, and forded the river, which process we found extremely refreshing.

We were soon on the rocks, and after a not uninteresting rock scramble, gained the top, not having met with any serious difficulty.

The snow was avoided as it was in rotten condition, huge masses rushing down the centre of the gullies. About 200 feet from the summit, towards the north and across a steep snow gully which we did not care to touch, there was a short buttress leading direct to the summit, which seemed to offer a good climb. It was very steep—in fact, perpendicular at parts—but was well broken up.

The walk along the ridge to the cairn was much enjoyed amidst alpine scenery. The entire ridge without a break was heavily corniced. We were at the cairn at 3 P.M., having taken the going very easily. Enormous cornices were hanging out immediately below

the cairn, over the precipices, which looked formidable, not to say impossible.

We were anxious to include Meall a Bhuidh, and made tracks for the weakest part of the cornice which barred our way to the col. An hour and a half was spent in cutting a staircase through this, and great care had to be taken, as the slope on either side of the crest was excessive, with many jagged rocks scattered about to impede our flight if a slip had occurred. A fine glissade took us to the saddle, and we were soon on the summit of Meall a Bhuidh.

We descended towards the Black Rock cottage, which we reached at 7 P.M., and were at the inn, where the familiar mutton chop and poached egg awaited us. Bread here is a luxury and potatoes unknown. Sron Creise is well worth exploring, as we saw many bits which offered sport, and the rock is generally good—like Stob Dearg across the valley. The gullies in winter would be highly sporting.

On the 18th we visited the Buchaille Etive Mòr, leaving at 6 A.M., intending to try the Central Buttress. As we had to be back at the inn at twelve to be in time for our train home, we found the time at our disposal was too limited and had to beat a retreat. We traversed on to the foot of the Curved Ridge, a part of which we ascended to about opposite the foot of the Crowberry Ridge. We descended by the Easy Gully, and a magnificent glissade carried us rapidly to the screes below. We forded the Etive, and two of the party, finding the temptation too great, divested themselves of their clothing, and enjoyed a bathe in its clear pools. We were back at the inn at 12.30, and were sorry to turn our backs on this ideal climbing centre.

FRANCIS GREIG.

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CAMPING IN THE CAIRNGORMS.—Excepting the accounts of an occasional night or two spent under the Shelter Stone, there are few records of camping in the Cairngorms, the only way to really know these magnificent mountains. With A. B. Duncan I spent a most enjoyable week among them, our only disappointment being that our proposed fortnight's stay was curtailed by a treacherous attack of lumbago made upon one of the party, so severe that it made retreat imperative, and prevented us from trying several climbs planned during the week. Unaccomplished, however, as was our full programme, the following notes may be not without interest.

*Saturday, 16th July.*—Trained from Aberdeen; motored from Ballater; drove from Braemar to Derry Lodge, whence carried rucksacks, tents, provisions, &c., to the head of Loch Avon.

*Sunday, 17th July.*—A perfect day. Went down the Avon to about a mile above the mouth of the Allt Cumhang na Coinnich, from which point made for Beinn a' Bhuidh (3,924). View magnificent. Thence by Cnap a' Chleirich (circ. 3,750) and the Sneck to Ben Avon (3,843), returning by Beinn a' Bhuidh, Beinn a' Chaoruinn Beag (3,326), and Beinn a' Chaoruinn (3,553).

*Monday, 18th July.*—Again perfect weather. Explored the head of the Feith Buidhe, finding a splendid example of a bergschrund over 100 yards long. Climbed Cairngorm (4,084) by Choire Domhain and the edge of the fine Choire an t-Sneachda, getting from the top a glorious view, especially to the north-west. Returned by Choire Raibert and the burn flowing thence to Loch Avon.

*Tuesday, 19th July.*—Still another perfect day. Did Beinn Mheadhoin (3,883), getting good scrambles on the rocks on its north-west shoulder and on the barns. Thence went by Loch Etchachan to Derry Cairngorm (3,788), returning by the west side of the loch. In the evening took half of our luggage up to the head of the Garbh Uisge Beag (irreverently dubbed the Wee Whisky-Carrier). Returned by the gully immediately to the west of the Shelter Stone Crag, getting home after 10 P.M. The gully we named the Pinnacle Gully from a magnificent pinnacle at its head, which from its appearance we named the Forefinger Pinnacle, but which we had no time to attack.

*Wednesday, 20th July.*—A glorious morning. Carried the remainder of our impedimenta to the source of the Garbh Uisge Beag. Thence climbed Ben Muich Dhui, getting a view of a lifetime. Descended to Glen Dee by the Allt a Choire Mhoir, and pitched tent high up on the banks of the Allt Choire an t-Saighdeir, Cairntoul and the Devil's Point looming most imposingly above us. Misty and raining in the evening.

*Thursday, 21st July.*—Rain fell all night. Went down to Aviemore for letters and provisions by the Lairg (distinctly Ghruamach this morning), in mist so thick that we never saw the pool of the Dee nearest to the track! The jagged crags of Creag na Leacainn seen through the mist were quite Coolin-like. Lunched luxuriously in the hotel, and then in a drizzling mist walked up by Coylum Bridge to the upper bothy in Loch Eunach, where spent night.

*Friday, 22nd July.*—A fine morning though misty. After photographing the loch and the Sgoran Dubh, set out for our tent by Choire Dhonnadail. Care should be taken at the top, for, not consulting the compass, we went too far south and reached the head of Glen Geusachan. Thence turned north to An Garbh Choire and found a well-marked deer track (cf. *C. C. J.*, Vol. IV., p. 200). Before descending did the Angel's Peak (4,095), going far enough down the ridge which separates the An Garbh Choire from the Choire an Lochan Uaine and which we named "The Angel's Ladder," to see that it would give a splendid scramble.

*Saturday, 23rd July.*—Did Braeriach in thick mist by the ridge separating Choire Bhrochain from Choire Ruadh. In ascending, one half of our party had to yield to lumbago and retrace his steps. The other half, after lunching at the cairn, went along to Sron na Lairg (3,839), and descending its steep sides into the Lairg, climbed the still steeper sides of Creag na Leacainn. Visited its two cairns (3,365 and 3,448), then went home *via* the Pools.

*Sunday, 24th July.*—Climbed Cairntoul in mist by the well-defined south-east ridge. As on Braeriach, no view. Carried our luggage down Glen Dee to the Linn, where we encamped for the night, returning next day to Aberdeen. HUGH STEWART.

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CIR MHOR AND THE SANNOX RIDGES.—On 13th August Mr A. S. Macharg and I paid a visit to these hills. We left Corrie Hotel at 7.15 A.M., and going slowly, reached a large boulder near the top of Upper Glen Sannox about 9.40 A.M.

The weather was very unpropitious. The clouds were down nearly to the 1,500 foot line, and remained so all day, so that we were seven hours in the mist. When we reached the upper glen, rain began, and it lasted nearly two hours, so that we got soaked.

We attacked Cir Mhor by the ridge to the left of the gully marked K on the sketch in the *Journal*, Vol. V., p. 30. When we reached the ledge marked J, we proceeded along it a short distance till we found a break in the rock due to a trap dyke. We ascended this without difficulty, and then climbing the rocks directly above—which also gave no particular trouble—we reached the summit about 11.40, the climb having taken about 1½ hours. This climb is an almost direct ascent from the glen to the summit. The upper part does not seem to have been recorded in the *Journal*.

The weather conditions disinclined us for further face climbing, so we proceeded for the Castles, which we reached without difficulty. Our next objective was the Witch's Step, and this proved a trouble. I had forgotten my map, which was probably an advantage, as it places the Step on the wrong ridge. I had also forgotten the position of the ridge leading to it relatively to that leading from Cir Mhor.

We accordingly followed the main ridge from the top of the Castles, which proved surprisingly easy, whilst the Step did not appear, though one gap was at first mistaken for it in the mist. Finally we got below the mist, to find ourselves on the north side of North Glen Sannox. Just here there was a high precipitous cliff, seemingly called Creag Dubh. At the end of this was a gully leading to the glen. It had two or three pitches, and seemed likely to afford a climb, but as it was not certain we might not get into difficulties through meeting a too high pitch, we decided not to descend it.

Retracing our steps along the ridge, we found ourselves back at the nearest of the Castles without having discovered the ridge we were looking for. We accordingly descended considerably, and continued working our way round. Presently we reached a pile of rocks that suggested we were back on Cir Mhor, but it speedily proved to be on the ridge we were in search of, and after some scrambling we reached the Step. The mist was here so dense that we only once or twice saw the loom of the other side of the Step till we had nearly reached the bottom of the gap.

Having negotiated the Step, we proceeded along the unreasonably long ridge of Suidhe Feargus, and emerged from the mist when well down towards its steep northern end. The hotel was regained about 6 P.M.

This expedition showed the difficulty of hitting the Witch's Step Ridge from the Castles when in mist. Owing to its being at right angles to the main ridge of the Castles, and being reached by a steep descent, we could not find it when picking our way along the edge of the main ridge of the Castles, which was the one which led us astray.

J. MACLAY.

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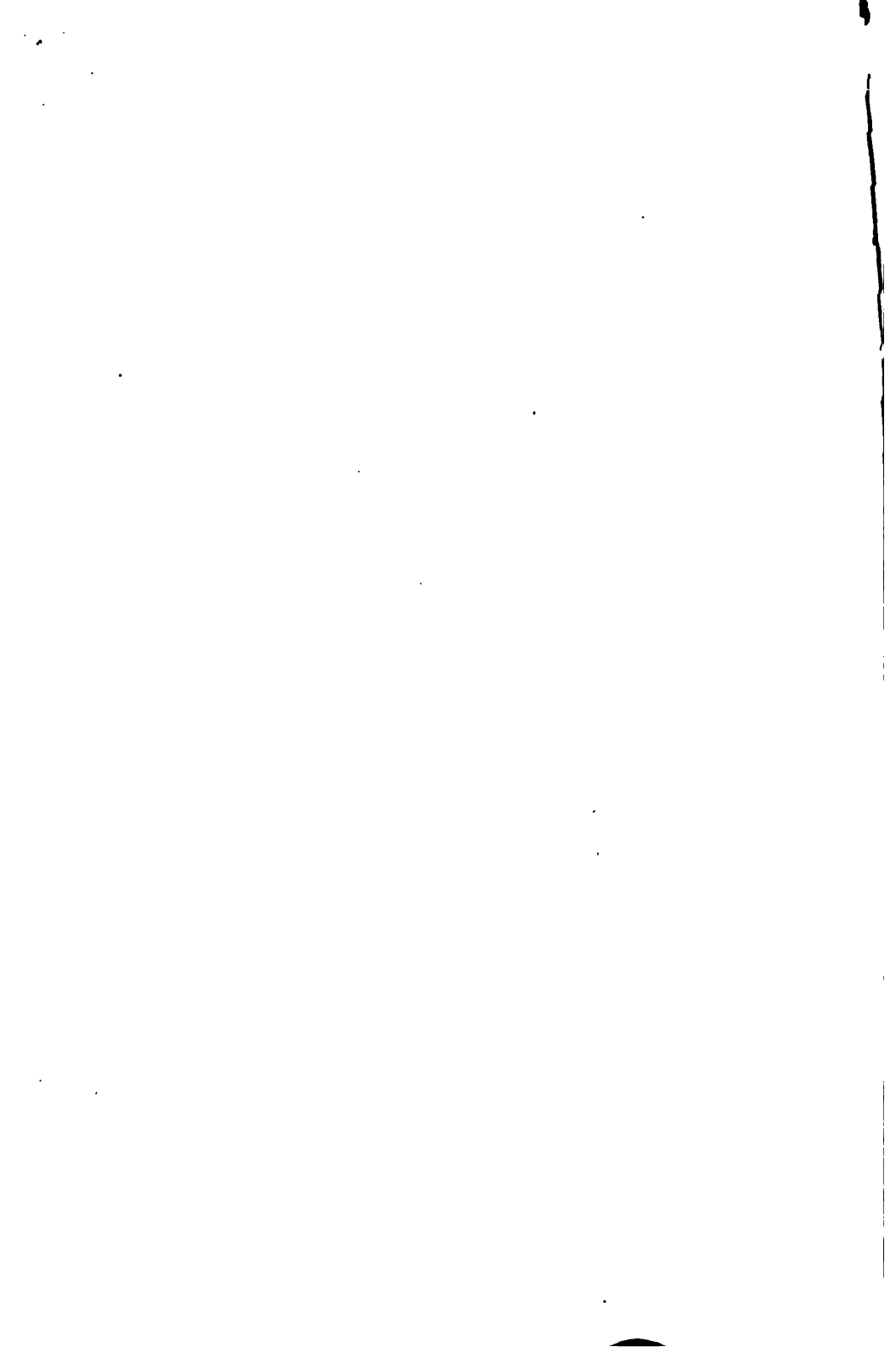
THE Honorary Secretary desires to intimate that Mr Rickmers, in addition to his former generous gift of Skis to the Club, has entrusted to him personally about eleven pairs of Skis, with the request that he would present these to any Members of the S.M.C. who might be desirous of learning the sport of Skiing, and who would take the matter up in earnest. Those Members who have opportunities for the sport will kindly apply to the Honorary Secretary, and refer to the above note.

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ROBERT KERR PARR.—The Club has lost one of its finest spirits and one of its keenest and most skilled climbers, by the sudden and untimely death of Robert Kerr Parr, on the 28th of May 1904. He only joined the Club in 1902, and was not therefore perhaps very widely known, but those who did know him saw that in him which ranked him amongst the best of men. To those who climbed with him on Ben Nevis at the New Year Meet and in April, his cheery good humour, his unselfishness, his true appreciation of all that is so beautiful in the hills we love, not to speak of his strength and skill in climbing, will ever be a memory and an inspiration; and to some of us, whose acquaintanceship with him was fast ripening into friendship, his death is loss indeed. Yet it need not be all regret. In a letter dated 6th May he writes, "May we have many more climbs together," and it were hard to think that we will not.

" . . . less of sorrow lives in me,  
For days of happy commune dead,  
Less yearning for the friendship fled,  
Than some strong bond which is to be."

A. E. R.





Ben Aden.

Sgor na Ciche.

The Mam Clach Ard Pass.



A. E. Robertson.

THE HEAD OF LOCH NEVIS.



# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## RANDOM MUSINGS.

BY STAIR A. GILLON.

SCOTLAND has limits. I do not possess a full set of the *Journal*, but I feel certain that in one of them there will be found an eloquent description of a view from a high and central Ben, which, in addition to the inevitable Arthur's Seat and Barra Head, embraced the Bell Rock, Cumberland, Ireland, and the cliffs of the Hoy, and dazzled the eyes of the—probably solitary—wanderer. One man has listed all the peaks of and above 3,000 feet high, and another has climbed them.

The Guide Book advances north and west as relentlessly as "civilisation" moves west across the continent of America, and everything illuminating of a geological, zoological, or botanical character has been, or is being, told us by experts. Well then, some one may say, tell us about a new climb, or an escape from a storm, a savage stag, or a keeper; anything new, instructive, or bizarre. Unfortunately, I am blind to the wayside pimpernel, deaf to the nightingale, never reached the fourth chapter of M'Millan's Geology, and if I have done a new climb it has been by missing one of the milestones on the North-East Buttress. I have therefore absolutely nothing instructive or interesting to say about Mountaineering.

Humbly incompetent, and frequently sleepless from a sense of fatuousness in these ill-strung reflections, I can only plead love of the Scottish mountains as the sole link in coherence, and hope that some such notions as the

following have attacked the brains of some of my Club-mates in their less guarded moments.

Has any one else, I wonder, sat brooding on a summer evening over a Johnston or Bartholomew, gazing in a queer meditative kind of way, "like Meredith's idiot," hypnotised by the plethora of good things for the morrow? Is it to be Ben Alder or the Traprain Law? When must I be home? Will the trains suit? Is it to be a 4 A.M., 6 A.M., or after breakfast start? These and countless other complicating cares make one oblivious of all, till bang goes "the iron tongue of midnight," and nothing is planned. Sleep, two pantomimes of calisthenics, and packing have to be done before the start. Ah well! we'll see the morn's morn. Now, why is it that if the weather is bad we wake up, and if fine we sleep in? For the same reason probably that when you arrange to golf for a week, it is so settled and sultry you can hardly crawl round Machrihanish, while on Ben Nevis summit it is balmy as Gilead. Possibly from this uncertainty of Scottish weather—now all the worse that the controlling hand of our friends the observers has been removed—uncertainty with the balance tilted on the "bad" side that makes a successful expedition such unalloyed exultation, such an indelible memory. For my part I frankly confess to a preference for conventionally fine weather, viz., either no rain or small showers, only clear air, and plenty sun. The hills don't need the magnifying and eery illusion of mist, rain is a nuisance, and an anticyclone often encloses one's hill top in a ring fence of heat haze, fifteen miles off on all sides. This latter is an intense disappointment, if, say, Meall na Cuaich has been climbed "between trains," when *en route* for the North, for the grand view so clearly set forth by Mr Munro, but would be just the weather for a "climb," for then the view is merely incidental. Unfortunately, as it is best to climb at least in couples, plans have to be arranged, and it so happens that in some dozen Highland "climbs," I have never escaped with a dry skin, and have frequently so rejoiced, that the bad conditions came too late for the most ticklish portion, that it has seemed out of place to grumble at sloppy boots, a hot reception on the plateau,

and the groping compass-guided descent. A grind in a real downpour, say, up Beinn Chaluim and on to Craig Mhor, coming back by the railway loop to Tyndrum has a real wild joy of its own. No improvement is expected, no hopes held out. But to start on a bicycle to ride twenty miles to the longed-for mountain's foot and find that a panting rush brings one up just an hour late, and that nothing is on show, is as saddening as frequent. Whereas, given good weather, it is an easy day to leave the links of Machrie, and return by the dusk of an April evening after visiting the summit of Beinn an Oir, from which can be descried as if laid out on a map, the ancient kingdom of the Isles, the land of the oared galley, of warriors as remote as Fingal, as authentic as Coll Kittach, and from which can be surveyed the home of Siol Diarmid, the clan that most worked the fall of the "Douglasses of the Highlands," the almost royal house of Somerled.

But, to return to the hills, what is the attraction of a view? Mr Baddeley, I think, it is who has made out quite a case for monotony and dulness as the rewards of a Highland ascent, and compares the views seen from our Bens with the more proportioned and complete pictures which are to be got by climbing the fells of the Lake District. Many have followed Horace Walpole in his opinion that a mountain looks best from the foot, and told us that the most beautiful things in nature are the limited compact beauties of a pass or a partial vista of a loch. I shall not attempt to controvert this, but assert that the mountaineer goes first in search of "a new land"—something utterly different from his everyday surroundings—and secondly in search of knowledge. As remarked before Scotland is small, and is pre-eminently a country of landmarks. The so-called Lowlands bristle with them, and the Highlands are a positive storehouse of mountain forms of distinctive and ingratiating individuality, from the "V" of Ben More and Stobinian to the knobs of Ben Loyal. And this is the abiding joy—to see old friends from a new point of view, and to show them to others. Three well-chosen peaks would reveal the prevailing common features of a Scottish top, *i.e.*, the sea of peaks, the shutting out of

glens, the stiffness of those lochs which can be seen, and finally the sea. One panorama can never be in a superficial way vastly different from another. But once each Ben gets his personality well wedged into the brain, the view is no longer a bewildering effect, but a detailed and understood picture, so stimulative to pure contemplation, that one can realise that to say, "Und meine Seele spannte weit ihre Flügel aus," is no exaggeration under such conditions.

But the whole attitude of men towards mountains is like all else, subject to change and development. To the eye of a tyro Ben Vourie from the nearest Cruachan peak looks a "horrid precipice"; the Cullins looks to the tourist, on the rare occasions when it deigns to show itself in all its superb nudity, like a forbidding and inaccessible fretsaw. To the eye of an expert every hill face is scarred and pock-marked by an imaginary dotted line, up which he can see a path where others see none, and every splinter from Garsbheinn to Sgur nan Gilleann is full of meaning. It is the advance from ignorance and awe to knowledge and appreciation. People do not collapse into bogs or at once tumble down precipices because a mist comes on. These chimeras and exaggerations on the lines of those of the English sportsman, whose estimate of Braeriach has recently delighted readers of the *Journal*, seem as far off as the eighteenth century. What one does begin to realise is there are certain risks to be run, and if a leg is broken and no one is there or comes within, shall we say, the next sixty-four days, unpleasant consequences ensue, and that two stones may be barely a safe support on a good-going glissade. It is rather like the substitution of a perfectly rational fear of footpads for a groundless dread of ghosts and evil spirits—the fear being of course relative to the likelihood of molestation and the nerves of the wanderer in the darkness.

I confess to having once had a feeling of presumption, meriting retribution, when I first took to the hills, and after bagging some top not more alarming than Carn Liath, thought of continuing my road to the greater glories of Ben a Gloe. It all looked so menacing and gigantic. But now

I'm afraid thoughts of dinner and a hot bath would have more weight as a check on a record-breaking high-level trot. And what better subject with which to conclude than the evening calm after a hard day? Unlike the hills it does not admit of descriptive detail. One eminent writer on a nameless foreign country contrives to impress one with the idea not only that he is a bold pioneer, but that in the "off" season he would usually be found in the Carlton or the Café Royal. It is hardly worth while to utter rhapsodies on ham and eggs and the local whisky, only to perhaps create an impression, probably entirely wrongly, of being an alcoholic subject and inordinately greedy. No, these very real joys are to be spoken cautiously to the true sympathiser, and not committed to the publicity of print, because a few poets have succeeded in voicing the joys of the feast.

None the less these joys are very real, and from a purely hedonistic standpoint a doubt may be expressed whether the non-smoker and drinker can get the same pleasure out of these same evening hours. M. Anatole France puts into the mind of a dog the thought that, though to eat is good, to have eaten is better. Now the self-indulgent cannot deny that one poison attacks his wind, and the other adds extraneous supplies to the fatigue products of his system. But he is not looking at life as a whole; he accepts "his lining after waiting all day long" in the appreciative spirit of the above-mentioned animal, and one can understand the following soliloquy with which I shall now close these chaotic jottings:—"This room is at this moment the most delightful place in the world to me. There are two accompaniments to a sedentary and unoccupied existence which, whatever their physiological effect, will act as they have done before, and intensify my present joys. In fact they never taste so well as when I feel like this. How do I know what to-morrow will be like? Let it look after itself. Here goes for a nip of the Auld Kirk and a fill of the pipe. There's plenty cold water, and as for the waste tissue the stae brae will soon banish it to dissolve in the circumambient ether; so here's to many more days on the hills."

## THE CAIRNGORMS FROM DEESIDE.

BY JAMES MACLAY.

DEESIDE and the Cairngorms have a literature of their own, dealing with their physical features in so complete a fashion that a mere outsider seeking to record the impressions of a single visit fears to incur the charge of presumption. Still, the writer believes that to many members of the Club the subject will not be too familiar, and the *Journal* does not teem with papers dealing with this part of the country.

To one acquainted with the West Perthshire and Argyllshire hills, the Cairngorms form a contrast which is decidedly interesting, more particularly as viewed from Deeside. A first view of the Cairngorms from Kingussie, or even from Aviemore, is apt to be a sort of disillusionment. They seem mere heavy humps, like the Ayrshire and Galloway hills. But from Deeside they are seen, as it were, in their proper setting, and they are found to possess a character and charm of their own, with their broad tops, their smooth, fir-wooded hillsides, and other features that distinguish them from their more rugged and picturesque western brothers.

To understand the Cairngorms one must begin by noting the slow and gradual fall of the Dee valley from the "White Bridge," about nine miles above Braemar, to the sea. Braemar is about 1,100 feet, Linn o' Dee over 1,200 feet, and the White Bridge 1,300 feet above sea level, and this broad upper valley is perhaps the most considerable one in Scotland at such a height above the sea. Yet there is no sudden or rapid descent anywhere. From the White Bridge to the ocean there is a slow and uniform fall.

The sources of the Dee are the highest of any large river in Scotland, and its fall is at first rapid. From the Wells of Dee it descends about 2,000 feet in little over two miles, and the fall of the stream that rises on Ben Macdhui is steeper still. A fall of 700 feet more in the next seven or eight miles brings us to the White Bridge, where the

river turns sharply to the left as it joins the Geldie Burn\* and enters a wide level valley. Even before this, the Dee is much the largest stream to be found at a similar height in Scotland. From this point it falls almost uniformly at the rate of 20 or 30 feet per mile, and follows an almost direct easterly course till it reaches the sea.

Above the White Bridge, Glen Dee forms a deep cleft between the eastern and western Cairngorms, rising to the great gap of the Larig Ghru; and this feature, with the general smooth and rounded contours of the hills, the slow but regular fall of the river bed, and the fact that the stream has cut back through such rock barriers as it meets at Linn o' Dee and Chest of Dee, seems to stamp it as of great geological age.

But our concern is with the hills rather than with the valleys. The writer's acquaintance with them from this side was made during a stay at Linn o' Dee. The road from Braemar to Linn o' Dee gives, at one point or another, a view of every important summit of the Cairngorms, except Braeriach. Near Braemar the majestic dome of Cairntoul is the feature of the view, but at Inverey he has disappeared and Ben Macdhuil takes his just pre-eminence. Beyond Inverey the nearer hills shut off the view.

From Linn o' Dee the hills may be approached in two ways. The natural way is by the Dee valley, which has been described, but the more direct and interesting route is by Glen Lui, which is certainly the route by which to see the Cairngorms from this side, and the junction of Glen Lui and Glen Derry is the strategic point from which to explore the whole range. Here the road ends at Derry Lodge, and quite near is Lui Beg, which is more accessible to the ordinary climber.

It was one afternoon towards the close of a fortnight spent at Linn o' Dee, during which he had been gradually learning the approaches, that the writer found himself at Lui Beg in search of a point of view from which to scan

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\* The Geldie Glen is the true head of the Dee valley, as a glance at the map will show. Apparently a considerable part of Upper Glen Feshie formerly drained into it, though the water now goes the opposite way owing to a change in the watershed.

the higher peaks which he was precluded from climbing. An inspection of the map seemed to designate Carn a Mhaim as the best point of view for the purpose. It is a hill of 3,328 feet high lying between the valleys of the Lui and the Dee. The path by Lui Beg to Glen Dee and the Larig Ghru skirts its southern side. The ascent is simplicity itself, and the afternoon of his arrival at Lui Beg found the writer on the summit (which is seen from Braemar, but is not visible from Lui Beg). The view proved to be almost all that had been expected. The whole south-east face of the group was well seen from Cairngorm of Derry on the right to Ben Bhrotain (Vrottan) on the left. The true Cairngorm was concealed by Ben Macdhui, and Angel Peak by Cairntoul, but all the other tops were seen. The most impressive features of the scene were the bare stony slopes of Cairngorm of Derry and Ben Macdhui, the huge bastion-like Devil's Point at the junction of the deep valleys of Glen Dee, and Glen Guisachan and the familiar gap of the Larig at the head of the former glen, whilst one heard far beneath the ceaseless brawling of the river. In the opposite direction the valley of the Dee around Braemar lay open, with "dark Lochnagar" rising beyond, whilst to the south-west Ben y Gloe was prominent, and in the far distance lay Schiehallion, Ben Lawers, and the West Perthshire hills.

The following day opened dull and unpromising, the tops being shrouded in mist, and the writer set out to explore Glen Derry without any definite aim. The lower part of the glen was a surprise. Instead of a narrow, steep-sided glen, there was a wide open level valley, sheltering one of the finest remnants of the old Caledonian forest. Presently there came a rise, and then the lower end of an old lake bed, which extended for two or three miles up the valley, was reached. Just then the granite pinnacles on the summit of Ben Mheadoin (Vain) became uncovered right ahead, with light mists playing about them and the sun shining through. The effect on the writer was somewhat like what Dante felt when from out of the savage wood he beheld the sun-tipped mountain, and he felt he must ascend it.



A reference to the map showed that the best line of attack was by Loch Etchachan, and so he followed the valley to where Corrie Etchachan opens to the left. It was rather a pull up by the old moraine to the loch, but he was rewarded by the sight of a stretch of water, nearly half a mile long, at the height of 3,100 feet above the sea—nearly as high as the summit of Ben Lomond! From the loch it was a plain grind to the top of Ben Macdhuì,\* but too far for the writer then. It was an easy walk to the top of Ben Mheadoin (3,883 feet), which proved to be the best point of view he could have found for seeing the Cairngorms from that side. The remarkable granite pinnacle that crowns the summit gave a little scrambling.

The western Cairngorms, from Cairntoul northwards, were concealed by Ben Macdhuì, but the view included the whole sweep of the eastern group; with Loch Etchachan nestling beneath the steep slopes at the margin of the upper plateau of Ben Macdhuì, and Loch Avon lying dark at the foot of Cairngorm, its upper end commanded by the huge cliffs which buttress Ben Macdhuì on the north-east. The shelter stone lying between was not visible. Far below on the east ran the public path to the Nethy valley by the Larig Lui, crossing the watershed between Glen Derry and Glen Avon, and forming the access to Loch Avon and the shelter stone, whilst Ben a Bhuird's huge mass and Ben Avon, with its rival pinnacles, rose beyond, and the unmistakable outline of Lochnagar stood up against the distant sky. Northward the view stretched away towards the Moray Firth, which, however, was not visible that day at least.

The writer's object has been to record some general impressions and indicate the approaches, and not to describe the routes to the summits. The latter are very obvious to one accustomed to the hills, and scarcely need description. There seems to be a distinct absence everywhere, except at the head of Loch Avon, of cliffs of any

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\* The regular route for Ben Macdhuì seems to be to follow the course of the Lui past Cairngorm of Derry and Carn a Mhain, and ascend the long shoulder that there comes down to the waterside.

size. An interesting note regarding these cliffs appears in the September number of the *Journal*.

The scenery of the Cairngorms is impressive rather than striking, heavy rather than rugged. They lack the picturesque grandeur of the western hills, and their summits are mostly wide-stretching plateaux covered with granite debris, which cheat one out of the sense of having reached the summit of a peak. Still they have an indefinable charm of their own with their great stretches of stony waste, their rounded hillsides, and their deep worn valleys, and they must ever attract the lover of wild nature and must impress all with a feeling of stern majestic solidity.



Buttress No. 2.

Buttress No. 2.

A. E. Robertson.

Main Gully between  
Buttress No. 2 and No. 3. Rose Ridge.

# THE ROSE RIDGE FROM THE SECOND ROTHY.

Rose Ridge, the Rose Ridge, and the Main Gully, are on the big face of rock between the Main Gully and the



# S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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## SRON A CHOIRE GHAIRBH.

(DIVISION III. GROUP I.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 0\frac{1}{2}'$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 55'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 62. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

Sron a Choire Ghairbh (3,066 feet)=the nose of the rough corrie. Lies five miles north-east of Achnacarry, on the west side of Loch Lochy.

Meall an Teanga (3,047 feet approx.)=the tongue-shaped hill. Lies  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles south of Sron a Choire Ghairbh. (This hill only appears on the O.S. Map as a 2,750 feet contour. Dr Heddle by careful measurements, aneroid and otherwise, made the height as above.)

This group lies two miles to the west of the north end of Loch Lochy on the Caledonian Canal, some four miles south-west of Invergarry Station, and five miles north-east of Achnacarry. There is no rock-climbing, properly speaking, to be had on it; but the Coire Glas, owing to its sheltered northern aspect, holds in spring great quantities of snow. The southern and western slopes of Sron a Choire Ghairbh are comprised of steep grass and screes, and access up or down may be obtained anywhere. Being the highest ground in the Glengarry deer forest, it commands one of the finest views in the district. The story is told of one of old Glengarry's stalkers, finding himself with a noble earl on the summit, and desirous of impressing his visitor with the extent of his chief's dominions, exclaimed, "All that you see"—and then unable to find the right English word, he panted out—"and all that you do not see, that's Glengarry's!"

Sron a Choire Ghairbh may be easily reached from Invergarry Station by following the road to Kilfinnan, and then striking up the steep slopes of Meall nan Dearcag gain the broad ridge, from whence an easy walk leads to

the top. Another way is from Gairloch by the road past Bunarkaig through the "Mile Dorcha," up the Gleann Cia-aig by the track on the east side of the burn to Fedden. From here a zigzag course up the steep grass slopes will take one to the summit. The track from Fedden runs north to Greenfield, from whence by boat or ford the Garry is crossed and the main road gained between Tom-down and Invergarry.

A. E. R.

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## GULVAIN.

### (DIVISION III. GROUP II.)

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 56'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 17'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 62. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

Gulvain is the highest point in the long range of hills that stretches from the sea eastward to the river Lochy, between Lochs Morar and Arkaig in the north, and Lochs Eilt and Loch Eil in the south.

It rises into two summits, 3,224 and 3,148 feet respectively. The slopes are not excessively steep in any direction.

The usual way, if the train suits, is to take it from Fort-William, and get out at Kinlocheil Station. From there a mile or so westwards along the road brings one to the entrance of Glen Fionnlighe. Up this one goes along a fair track to where the glen forks, and then a stiff pull up the steep hillside takes one to the summit.

The Rev. A. E. Robertson tells me when staying at Glen Dessarry he made the ascent on the north side, and found no difficulty in reaching the summit from Gleann Camgharaidh.

W. D.

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## THE STREAPS.\*

## (DIVISION III. GROUP III.)

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 53\frac{1}{2}'$  to  $56^{\circ} 55\frac{1}{4}'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 23'$  to  $5^{\circ} 25'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 62. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

1. Streap Comhlaidh (2,916 feet) stands at the head of Gleann Duibhlighe, and is the north-east termination of the range. It is a steep green mountain as a whole, with a couple of peaks, divided from each other by a sharp saddle. It throws out a sharp ridge to the north with steep cliffs, at the head of Gleann a' Chaoruinn, the stream of which joins the Pean River, which flows into Loch Arkaig. It is connected with 2 by an irregular ridge running due west.

2. Streap (2,988 feet) is not only the highest but the finest of the group. It descends very steeply to the west to the head of Gleann Finnan, and has a corrie on its south face, high set on the mountain—Coire a' Chuirn (the corrie of the cairn, from a great *debâcle* of stones which descends from its south end towards Gleann Duibhlighe). At the head of the *debâcle* stands a pinnacle, Caisteal a' Chuirn. The south-south-west ridge is narrow and steep on the sides, and has had a great reputation for danger, which it does not deserve. The coll between 2 and 3 is 2,646 feet.

3. Stob Coire nan Cearc (2,911 feet)=peak of the hen's corrie, a rough corrie on the ridge stretching roughly due south from No. 2, divided from 4 by Bealach Coire nan Cearc (2,442 feet).

4. Meall an Uillt Chaoil (2,769 feet)=hump of the narrow burn. Col, Bealach a' Chait=cat's pass (2,366 feet).

5. Beinn nan Tom (2,603 feet)=mountain of the hillock. The last on the ridge.

This range divides Gleann Finnan on the west from Gleann Duibhlighe on the east. It is of West Highland character, but the two Streaps are more than usually striking in appearance, and form a marked contrast to each other.

The stage house at Glenfinnan is the nearest house of call.

*Usual Route.*—Leave Fort-William road a short half-mile short of the Duibhlighe Bridge by a track leading to the old Drumasallie Mill in Gleann Duibhlighe; follow by rough

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\* "Streap" means climbing.

path the east bank of the river, passing a shepherd's house, for three miles or so to foot of No. 1 ; then climb straight up steep green slopes to first summit, a slight dip crossing a narrow saddle leads to highest point. For No. 1 turn sharp west, at first steeply descending to col, then a rough walk to No. 2, then sharp south along narrow ridge to col, with ascent to No. 3. Again descending, rather roughly cross No. 4 with a final ascent to No. 5, whence the view of Loch Shiel and Loch Eil, terminated by Ben Nevis, is very striking. A long descent leads back to the mill in the glen.

C. B. P.

## SGOR CHOILEAM.

### (DIVISION III. GROUP IV.)

Lat.  $56^{\circ} 56'$  ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 26'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 62. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

Sgor nan Coireachan (3,135 feet)=the scaur of the steep places.  
Beinn Gharbh (2,716 feet)=the rough Ben.  
Sgor Choileam (3,164 feet).

This group lies about five miles north of Glenfinnan Station on the West Highland Railway. It is bounded by Loch Morar on the west, Glen Pean on the north, by the Streaps on the east, and by Glen Finnan on the south.

The hills are steep and rugged, but the rock faces must not be expected to yield any great climbing. Lying, however, as they do, in the midst of some of the choicest scenery of that wonderful tract of country which stretches westwards from Loch Eil to Morar and Mallaig, they are a perfect paradise to the hill walker, the panorama of mountain, moor, and loch which greets his eye as he wanders from ridge to ridge being unsurpassed in the Highlands ; and they will always be interesting to those who love to trace the wanderings of Prince Charlie after Culloden, for it was on these tops that some of his most exciting adventures took place in eluding the chain of sentries which hemmed him in in July 1746.



The only place of public resort from whence one can get at them is the stage house inn at Glenfinnan Station. A good track leads up Glen Finnan to the keeper's house at Corryhully. From here, following up the burn to where it forks, a north-west course will lead one easily but steeply up the ridge to the summit of Sgor Choileam. Turning westwards, a charming ridge walk takes one over Beinn Gharbh to Sgor nan Coireachan, the long blue tapering finger of Loch Morar with the distant peaks of Eigg, Rum, and Skye shimmering in the light of the westering sun beckoning the climber onwards. From Sgor nan Coireachan one can descend easily anywhere to Corryhully, or a descent can be made into Glen Pean, where accommodation for a night can be had at the substantial farmhouse of Glen Dessarry, or possibly at Oban or Kinlochmorar at the east end of Loch Morar. From Kinlochmorar a good track runs west on the north side of the loch to Morar Station, while from Glen Dessarry one can get east by the track on the north side of Loch Arkaig, or west through that magnificent and wild pass the Mam Clach Ard to the head of Loch Nevis.

All this ground, with the exception of Glen Dessarry and Glen Pean, is now under deer.

A. E. R.

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## THE SGOR NA CICHE GROUP.

### (DIVISION III. GROUP V.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 1'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 27'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 62. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

Sgor na Ciche (3,410 feet)=the pap-shaped peak; pron. *Sgor na Kiech-eh*.

Ben Aden (2,905 feet). 2 miles north of Sgor na Ciche.

Garbh Chioch Mor (3,365 feet approx.\*)=the big rough pap; pron. *Garrau Kee-och Mör*.  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south-east of Sgor na Ciche.

Garbh Chioch Bheag (3,100 feet approx.\*)=the small rough pap; pron. *Garrau Kee-och Vik*. 1 mile east-south-east from Sgor na Ciche.

Sgor nan Coireachan (3,125 feet)=the peak of the steep places; pron. *Sgor nan Korrechan*. 3 miles east of Sgor na Ciche.

Sgor Mor (3,290 feet)=the big scaur. 2 miles south of the head of Loch Quoich.

Sgor an Fhuarain (2,961 feet)=Oran's peak; pron. *Sgor an òr-an*. 2 miles east from Sgor Mor.

Scour Garioch (3,015 feet)=Garry's peak (Garry was one of Fingal's followers); pron. *Scour Garrich*.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Loch Quoich.

This very fine group of mountains, little known because so remote, lies in the very heart of western Inverness-shire; a district which, from the inaccessibleness of its situation and the wildness of its scenery, is always known throughout the Highlands as *na garbh chrìochan* (the rough bounds).

It may be said to be bounded, broadly speaking, by Loch Nevis on the west, Loch Arkaig on the east, and Loch Quoich on the north.

Sgor na Ciche is the premier peak in the district, and its beautiful cone dominates everything. Owing to its extreme remoteness, no climbing has been recorded on it, but without doubt such could be got were the mountain within easier reach of some near and suitable basis of operations. The Coire nan Gall is a wild and rocky corrie, and the steep cliffs of Ben Aden look most attractive. The ridge which runs from Sgor nan Coireachan west, over the

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\* Professor Heddle's aneroid measurement.



*A. E. Robertson.*

THE EAST END OF LOCH MORAR.



two tops, Garbh Chioch Bheag and Garbh Chioch Mor, to Sgor na Ciche, is rough and narrow in places, but there need be no serious difficulty on it to the climber. The eastern peaks of the group—Sgor Mor, Sgor an Fhuarain, and Scour Garioch—are much smoother in outline, their green, grassy corries affording magnificent shelter and pasturage for the great herds of deer which abound in these parts.

The difficulty of obtaining a convenient place from which to climb the hills in this group will always be serious. There are three main lines of approach: (1) From Tomdown Inn in Glen Garry; (2) from Glen Dessarry; (3) from Inverie or Mallaig in the west.

1. *From Tomdown.*—This, although a very far cry from the western peaks of the group—fourteen miles by road, and then four to five miles by path—is perhaps the most convenient and reliable place to start from. A good road runs west from Tomdown, past Loch Quoich up to the Gairowan River, where some of the numerous shooting paths constructed by Lord Burton, may be taken, and which will lead one easily on to the hills. There is a good track also running from Glen Dessarry down Glen Kingie to Glen Garry.\*

2. *From Glen Dessarry.*—Accommodation for a night or so can probably be obtained at the farmhouse of Glen Dessarry, and once there, the tops of the range may be gained practically anywhere.

3. *From Inverie or Mallaig.*—A small steam launch now runs from Mallaig to Inverie three days a week with the mails, and by arrangement it can be taken to the head of Loch Nevis, from whence Sgor na Ciche and Ben Aden can be easily reached. From Inverie, where there is a small but very comfortable temperance inn, a good path goes up Glen Meadail to Carnach, a keeper's house, which is situated at the base of the afore-mentioned hills.

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\* There is a plank bridge over the river Garry just where it runs out from Loch Quoich, and another bigger bridge  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles further east, near the Kingie pool.



The best way to explore this region is probably to traverse it in several directions, carrying a rucksack with a few necessities, obtaining a night's shelter at some of the outlying shepherds' or keepers' houses in Glen Dessarry or Glen Kingie or by the shores of Loch Quoich or Loch Nevis. In fact this is the only way one can really see it, the distances here from hotels being too great to start from and return to them in one day. And a few days spent in this fashion will be a unique and charming experience ; for this is one of the few districts not yet corrupted by the moneyed Sassenach, and the people in the glen not being spoilt by the vulgar products of modern civilisation are kind, courteous, and hospitable.

Whatever be the route taken, the Mam Clach Ard Pass between Glen Dessarry and Loch Nevis must on no account be missed. It is one of the wildest and loneliest passes in the Highlands, unique in many ways. And if it chance that the wanderer finds himself some summer evening at the summit of the pass beside the two lochans of deep clear green water that are there, "long, green Glen Dessarry" below him on the one side, Knoydart's rough bounds before him on the other, he will be wise if he linger on the spot, for it will be hard to find a more enchanting place. To sit here, as the writer has done, watching the sun sinking into the Atlantic, the sunset in the west flushing the tops of the peaks that are around one on every side, with a quiet soft light, their lower slopes shrouded in all the hues of richest purple, while the stray clouds sailing inwards cast their shadows on the calm waters of Loch Nevis below, is an experience one can never forget. And the stillness of it all!

"No voice of man, no cry of child,  
Blent with the liveness of the wild ;  
Only the wind through the bent and ferns,  
Only the moan of the corrie-burns."

A. E. R.



**MEALL BUIDHE AND LUINNE BHEINN.****(DIVISION III. GROUP VI.)**

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 1\frac{1}{2}'$  to  $57^{\circ} 3'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 31'$  to  $5^{\circ} 37'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one inch scale, Sheet 61. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

These two mountains occupy a large portion of the space between Loch Nevis and the Bay of Barrisdale in Loch Hourn. They are wild and rugged in character. The great corrie, Corieachan Leacach (flagstone corries), dividing the two on the north side, has a marvellous display of glaciated rock, and is one of the most striking things of its kind in Scotland. They command splendid views of the Hebrides and the grand mountains around Lochs Hourn and Nevis.

1. Druim Righinn ( ), the western buttress of No. 3.
2. An t' Uiriollach (about 2,600 feet), a summit on ridge between No. 1 and No. 3.
3. Meall Buidhe (3,107 feet)=yellow heap.
4. Druim Leathad an t-Sithe (about 2,600 feet).
5. Meall Coire na Gaoithe'n Ear=heap of the corrie of the east wind. These two last are rough tops connecting No. 3 and No. 6.
6. Luinne Bheinn (3,083 feet).

There is a small temperance inn at Inverie in Loch Nevis, the last reports of which were satisfactory. It is the most convenient place to stay at, but by a little trouble the hills can be reached from the comfortable hotel at Glenelg, and there is, or used to be, a small house of call at Corran on Loch Hourn.

*Usual Route.*—From Inverie. Follow the road leading behind Inverie House to the ford over the stream issuing from the Dubh Lochan, taking care not to take the path up Gleann Dubh Lochain; beyond the ford follow the road for about a mile to another ford over the river Meadail. When a little beyond this point ascend steeply north to top of No. 1, then follow ridge crossing No. 2, and a slight dip to No. 3. The descent to the col Bealach Eala Choire from this point is rather steep at first, and the ridge narrows

in a little, but it is easy. From col an up-and-down course over rough ground, with grand views of the glen of the Carnach River, with Ben Aden (2,905 feet) and Sgor na Ciche (3,410 feet) behind it, leads over Nos. 4 and 5 to Bealach a' Choire Odhar. A steep climb of nearly 1,000 feet lands the pedestrian on top of No. 6. To descend, follow north-west ridge to a point Bachd Mhic an Tosaich (2,126 feet), and then west to Mam Barrisdale (1,476 feet). A choice of routes here—either returning by path to Inverie, or descending to Barrisdale on Loch Hourn, where a boat should be in readiness to take the party to either Corran or Glenelg. The descent to Loch Hourn is very grand.

*Climbs.*—None recorded. The hills are everywhere rocky and steep, but it is doubtful if there is any good rock climbing.

C. B. P.

## LADHAR BEINN (LARVEN).

### (DIVISION III. GROUP VII.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 4\frac{1}{2}'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 35'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 61 and 71. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

This splendid mountain is the highest peak of the district of Knoydart, and stands on the south shore of Loch Hourn to the west of Barrisdale Bay. Its leading features are the sharply ridged north-east buttresses and the grand corries they enclose. Its south slopes are more simple, but its east buttress throws out a long ridge of hill to the south-west, terminating in a fine peak over Inverie on Loch Nevis.

Larven commands splendid views in every direction, those over the sea to the Hebrides, Skye, &c., and up the vista of Loch Hourn being especially striking.

1. Stob a' Choire Odhair (Stob a' Corroun, 3,138 feet, Admiralty chart)=peak of the dun corrie. This is a sharp ridge thrown out by the mountain to the north-east, from almost immediately below its highest point. It forms the north-west enclosing wall of the profound



Coire Dhorrcail, the head of which is formed by a precipice of great height descending from

2. The summit, 3,343 feet. From this point a ridge called the Diollaid (the saddle), stretches to the north-west and to south-east, the arête forming south-west enclosing wall of Coire Dhorrcail (Corrie Gorkill). This terminates at a col, about 2,350 feet, Bealach Coire Dhorrcail. On the east side of this rises

3. Stob Dhorcail (Stob Gorkill), a sharp buttress projecting north-east, parallel to No. 1, and dividing Coire Dhorrcail from the smaller Coire na Cabaig (Coire na Cabag), the east side of which is defended by

4. Stob a' Chearcaill (Stob a' Herkill, 2,760 feet)=peak of the circles. This is a very peculiar-looking ridge, steep and narrow, the strata being pitched at a very high angle, forming very sheer looking cliffs over Coire na Cabaig. From this point, a long ridge deflects to the south-west, passing through

5. Aonach Sgoilte (Unach Sgolta=split mountain, 2,784 feet), which is divided by the col Mam Suidheig (Mam Sooiaig, 1,615 feet) from the peaks.

6. Stob an Uillt Fhearna (Stob an Ult Earno)=peak of the alder burn, and

7. Sgurr Coire na Coinnich (Scour Corry na Conich, 2,612 feet), a fine wild peak, immediately behind Inverie, on Loch Nevis. This long ridge and the main mass of Larven enclose the head of Gleann Ghuserein, Coire Torr an Asgaill.

*Centres.*—The temperance inn at Inverie—the last accounts good—is convenient for the south side. There is (or was) a very small inn at Corran on Loch Hourn. Glenelg is the best hotel within hail, though it must be confessed it is a long way from the mountain. M'Brayne's steamers call at Inverie and Glenelg, at the latter place twice weekly all the year round. It can also be reached by the Dingwall and Skye line to Strone, and from thence *via* Balmacarra and boat.

*Usual Route.*—*From Glenelg.* This is the most interesting, excepting that the grand view up Loch Hourn unfolds itself gradually, and not at once, as by the Inverie route. Take a boat to a point on Loch Hourn, at the mouth of Coire Dhorrcail. Ascend the east side of the stream, till the floor of the corrie is reached. Here a scene of great grandeur presents itself. The main mass of Larven is on the right, throwing out a rough ridge to the south-east, forming the head of the corrie, from the summit of

which descend some of the finest and highest cliffs in Scotland. This is divided by the gap of Bealach Coire Dhorrcail from Stob Dhorrcail and Stob a' Chearcaill. The usual way is to aim for this gap, and turning north-west along the rough ridge of Larven, gain the summit with ease. To vary the descent, order the boat to meet the party at Li, nearly opposite Corran, and strike north-east by the sharp ridge to No. 1. From this point skirt the head of the north branch of Gleann Ghuserein, Coir' an Eich, hitting off the gap Bealach a' Choir' Odhar at the head of the corrie, to the south of Mullach Li, and descend gradually north to Li by green slopes.

*From Inverie.*—This route is less interesting than the other till the summit is reached. Follow the road into Gleann Ghuserein for about a mile and then strike off by a track to Folach at the foot of the mountain, about three miles from Inverie. From this place the ascent is quite simple, being up the long southern slopes of the hill, direct to the top. The view of Loch Hourne and Coire Dhorrcail, with its precipices and ridges, bursts on the eye with grand effect. A good return route might be made along the ridges to Inverie, over 4, 5, 6, and 7.

*Climbs.*—The cliffs and ridges of Coire Dhorrcail must afford some grand climbs. The rock is gneiss.

Messrs Collie, Travers, and Kellas had a nice rock scramble on the cliffs on the south-east side Aonach Sgoilte, about three-quarters of a mile south-west of the summit.

The same party had some good scrambling on the south-west face of Roinne na Beinne Moire, the mass of hill west of Gleann Ghuserein.

C. B. P.

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## BEN SGROIL.

(DIVISION III. GROUP VIII.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 9'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 35'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 71. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

Ben Sgroil (3,196 feet) = Ben Frightful, lies on the north side of Loch Hourn, and is usually ascended from Glenelg. It forms a conspicuous object in the view when sailing through the narrows at Skye, with its bald and stony peak rising boldly from the grassy corrie at its base. On the south it presents to Loch Hourn a sterile and precipitous scree and crag slope descending from a long straight back nearly to the water's edge. On the north are two immense corries, almost entirely destitute of vegetation, with a big shoulder from the mountain dividing them (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., p. 203).

- Usual Routes.*—From Glenelg. (1.) Follow the Arnisdale road for five miles (as far as the loch), and when opposite the grassy corrie make straight for the top. (2.)
- Follow the Arnisdale road for one mile. Turn up Glenbeg and pass the Pictish Towers to Balvraid farm. One mile beyond this turn up the glen on the right, and this leads to the foot of the shoulder dividing the two northern corries. This offers a steep but easy route to the top.

*Climbs.*—None recorded.

*Views.*—The view from the summit is magnificent, the principal features of which are the jagged range of the Coolins a few miles off and the wild district of Knoydart with Ladhar Bheinn planted in the centre.

W. D.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

## GENERAL MEETING.

THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in Caledonian Railway Station Hotel, Edinburgh, on the evening of Friday, 2nd December 1904, with the President, Mr William C. Smith, in the chair.

The Minutes of the Fifteenth Annual General Meeting were read and approved.

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr Napier, submitted his statement for the past year, showing a balance in favour of the Club of £190. 13s. 9d. The income of the Club had been £134. 6s. 5d. and the expenditure £129. 0s. 10½d. (of which £55. 19s. 2d. went to the *Journal*; £18. 14s. 6d. to the Club-room; £21. 11s. 8½d. to Additions to the Library, Lantern Slides, and furnishings; £12. 19s. 6d. Club Reception; £3. 13s. to copying the Sligachan Climbers' book; the balance, £16. 3s., being for sundry expenses). The accounts were approved.

The Hon. Secretary, Dr Inglis Clark, reported that nine new members had been elected to the Club, viz., Geo. H. H. Almond, John Buchan, John Grove, jun., P. A. Hillhouse, R. P. Hope, J. L. Moore, A. B. Noble, W. Rickmer Rickmers, and J. J. Waugh; that the membership of the Club was now 160. At the beginning of the year the membership of the Club had been 156, of whom two had died and three had resigned.

The Hon. Librarian, Mr F. S. Goggs, reported on the Club-room, giving details of gifts to and purchases for the Library, and mentioned that the number of volumes in the Library had risen from 300 to 430.

The Hon. Custodian of Slides, Rev. A. E. Robertson, reported that some 990 slides were now in the collection, 90 being added to it during the year. He also stated that

many members had borrowed them for lecture purposes during the past year.

A grant of £15 was made to the Club-room Committee for the purchase of maps and books for the Library.

A grant of £5 was made to the Rev. A. E. Robertson for the upkeep of the slide collection.

The Office-bearers, with the exception of those retiring, were re-elected.

Mr JOHN RENNIE was elected as President in room of Mr W. C. Smith, whose term of office had expired.

Mr JAS. W. DRUMMOND was elected as Vice-President in room of Mr Gilbert Thomson, whose term of office had expired.

Messrs A. W. RUSSELL, W. N. LING, and H. T. MUNRO were elected to the Committee in place of Messrs Drummond and Squance, who retired by rotation, and Mr Rennie who was elected President.

It was decided to hold the New Year Meet at Loch Awe, and the Easter one at Sligachan and Kingshouse.

The Committee's recommendation that future subscriptions may be commuted as under was approved :—

Original Members by a single payment of	-	£5	5	0
Members of ten years' standing -	-	7	7	0
Members of five years' standing -	-	9	9	0
New Members by payment of Entrance Fee at				
£1. 1s., and single payment of	-	11	11	0

#### RECEPTION.

PREVIOUS to the Meeting the Club held a reception in the Royal Arch Hall, 75 Queen Street, which was well attended by a large number of ladies and gentlemen. Rev. A. E. Robertson gave a delightful demonstration of the Club Collection of Slides.

#### SIXTEENTH ANNUAL DINNER.

AT the close of the General Meeting the Annual Dinner was held in the same hotel, with the President, Mr W. C. Smith, in the chair. The members present were fifty-six and the guests twenty-three.

The toasts proposed at this dinner were—

The King       -       -       -       -       Mr W. C. Smith.

Imperial Forces       -       -       -       -       Mr W. C. Smith.

*Reply* { Mr Cox.  
          { Mr H. Walker.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club       -       Mr W. C. Smith.

The Alpine Club       -       -       -       Mr Gilbert Thomson.

*Reply*—Mr R. A. Robertson.

The Bens and Glens       -       -       -       Mr H. T. Munro.

*Reply*—Mr T. Fraser S. Campbell.

The Guests       -       -       -       Sir T. D. Gibson Carmichael.

*Reply*—Rev. P. Hay Hunter.

Retiring President       -       -       Mr Alex. Moncrieff.

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

IT will be noticed from the list given below that Sir Archibald Geikie has been good enough to present the Club with three volumes of his works, "The Scenery of Scotland," 3rd Ed., 1 vol., and "The Ancient Volcanoes of Great Britain," 2 vols. Members will derive both pleasure and instruction from their perusal.

The Club is proud of numbering in its ranks an Honorary Member of Sir Archibald's attainments and distinction, and returns him hearty thanks for such a tangible proof of his sympathy. The Club's thanks are equally tendered to the other contributors.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
The Independent Review. (Sept. 1904.) Contain- ing an article, "The Closing of the Highland Mountains." E. A. Baker - - - -	W. Douglas.
Rambles Round Crieff. S. Korner, Ph.D. (1858)	"
Scottish Tourist. 20th Edition. (1860) - - -	"
A Guide to the Lakes in Cumberland, Westmore- land, and Lancashire. 10th Edition. (1812) -	"
Illustrated Hand Book to the Giant's Causeway and the North of Ireland. Mr and Mrs S. C. Hall. (1853) - - - - -	"
Black's Picturesque Guide to the English Lakes. (1842) - - - - -	"
Paterson's Guide to Switzerland. (1885) - - -	"
Travels on the Continent. Mariana Starke. (1820)	"
Travels through Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Sicily. Translated from the German of Count Stolberg, by Thomas Holcroft. 2 vols. (1796)	"
Nether Lochaber. Rev. Alex. Stewart. (1883) -	Purchased.
*Twixt Ben Nevis and Glencoe. Rev. Alex. Stewart. (1885) - - - - -	"
North Wales. Rev. W. Bingley, A.M. (1814) -	"
Summary of Progress of the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom for 1903 - - - -	"
Guide for Travellers in the Plain and on the Moun- tains. Charles Boner - - - - -	Adam Smail.
A Visit to the Summer House in the Saetersdal and Southern Norway, by Alice Ogilvie. (1891) -	"

By whom presented  
(when not purchased).

Sketches of Nature in the Alps. From the German of F. von Tschudi. (1856)	- - - -	Adam Smail.
The Scottish Mountains. W. J. Millar. (1896)	-	"
A Week at Bridge of Allan. Rev. Charles Rogers. 10th Edition	- - - -	"
The Course of Creation. Rev. John Anderson. (1850). [Geology of Scotland, England, France, and Switzerland]	- - - -	"
Practical Guide to the English Lake District. (1885) H. J. Jenkinson	- - - -	"
Black's Picturesque Guide to the English Lakes. (1857)	- - - -	"
Handbook for Travellers in Westmoreland and Cumberland. J. Murray. (1866)	- - -	"
Tourist's Guide to the East and North Ridings of Yorkshire. G. P. Bevan. (1884)	- - -	"
Anderson's Tourist's Guide through Scotland. 2nd Edition. (1838)	- - - -	Purchased.
An Account of the Principal Pleasure Tours in Scotland. 9th Edition. (1834)	- - -	"
The Scenery of Scotland. Sir Archibald Geikie. 3rd Edition. (1901)	- - - -	The Author.
The Ancient Volcanoes of Great Britain. 2 Vols. Sir Archibald Geikie. (1897)	- - - -	"
Year-Book of the French Alpine Club. (1902 and 1903)	- - - -	Exchanged.
A Walk round Mont Blanc, &c. Rev. Francis Trench. (1847)	- - - -	J. G. Inglis.
Wanderings among the High Alps. Alfred Wills. (1856)	- - - -	"
Chamonix and the Range of Mont Blanc. A Guide by Ed. Whymper. (1896)	- - - -	W. W. Naismith.
Do. do. 9th Edition. (1904)	-	W. Douglas.
The Valley of Zermatt and the Matterhorn. A Guide by Ed. Whymper. 8th Edition. (1904)	-	"
Transactions and Proceedings of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science. Vol. III., Part V. (1902-1903.) Containing <i>inter alia</i> "The Horizon from Corsiehill," with Plan. John Ritchie, LL.B.	-	The Society
Vim. Magazine. Nos. 9 and 10, Vol. I., August and September 1903. Containing article "Mountaineering in Britain." W. Inglis Clark	- -	W. Inglis Clark.
The Geomorphogeny of the Upper Kern Basin. Andrew C. Lawson. 8vo, pp. 291-376. Geological Department, University of California	-	Sierra Club.



	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Clachaig Visitors' Book - - - - -	J. Gourlay.
The Mountain Club Annual. (1896, 1898-1903) - - - - -	Mountain Club: Cape Town Sec- tion. Per Wm. C. Smith, K.C.
The New Era : A Weekly Review. Cape Town. 21st September 1904. Containing article "Moun- taineering in Cape Colony," by S. Y. Ford, Editor of "The Mountain Club Annual" - - - - -	"
Memoirs of the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom. Tertiary Igneous Rocks of Skye. Alfred Harker - - - - -	Board of Education.
The First Topographical Survey of Scotland. C. G. Cash. Reprinted from the <i>Scottish Geographical Magazine</i> for August 1901 - - - - -	The Author.
Panoraina de l'Eggischhorn. (Coloured Lithograph)	J. G. Inglis.
The Traveller's Guide through Scotland and its Islands. 4th Edition. (1808) - - - - -	Purchased.
Do. do. 5th Edition. (1811) - - - - -	"
The Picture of Scotland. Robt. Chambers. 4th Edition. (1837) - - - - -	"
Sketches of Tranent in the Olden Times. J. Sands. (1881) - - - - -	Adam Smail.
Anent Old Edinburgh. A. H. Dunlop. 2nd Edition. (1890) - - - - -	"
The Annals of Fordoun. W. Cramond. (1894) - - - - -	"
North Berwick and its Vicinity. Geo. Ferrier. 10th Edition. (1881) - - - - -	"
Burgh Register and Guide to Dunbar. John McDonald. (1896) - - - - -	"
Dunblane Traditions. John Monteath. (1835.) Reprint, 1887 - - - - -	"
Black's Guide to Derbyshire. (1874) - - - - -	"
" " Devonshire. (1877) - - - - -	"
" " Wales. (1874) - - - - -	"
" " Isle of Wight. (1881) - - - - -	"
Murray's Handbook to South Wales. (1870) - - - - -	"
Ward & Lock's Guide to North Wales. (1886) - - - - -	"
The Traveller's Guide in Sweden and Norway. A. Bonnier. (1871) - - - - -	"
The Pentland Hills. W. A. Smith. 9th Edition. (1904) - - - - -	The Author.

## EXCURSIONS.

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

### S.M.C. ABROAD IN 1904.

DR COLIN CAMPBELL was out in the Tyrol this year, and made the following ascents :—The Ankogel by the Plexen (not often done) to the Osnabrück Hut, back by Klein Elend Scharte. The Schareck, Herzog Ernst, Riffelerscharte—all from Bad Gastein ; Gross Glockner (second time) by Hoffmann's Way and back by Bockkar Scharte and Hochgang to Ferleiten in one day ; Wilder Freiger, Becher, Wilder Pfaff, Zuckerhütl, from Neustift : in Switzerland Zervreiler Horn, from Vals Platz ; and several glacier expeditions.

DR and MRS INGLIS CLARK, with their son and daughter, had a successful walking and climbing holiday in the districts of the Tarentaise, Cogne, and Dauphiny. Throughout they were favoured with superb weather, which somewhat mitigated the rough accommodation afforded by the chalets (untenanted or otherwise), from which three of the ascents were made. The following expeditions, many of which were guideless, were made :—In the Tarentaise : The Grande Casse, Rochers de Plassas, Col du Palet. Near Cogne : The Grivola, Grand Nomenon, Col Herbetet, Mont Emilius, Pointe de Pousset. In Dauphiny :—Aiguille de Goleon and Col Clot des Cavales. Mrs and Miss Inglis Clark ascended the S. Aiguille d'Arves, while Mrs Inglis Clark alone made the ascent of the Meije from the Promontoire Hut.

MR DOUGLAS, with three Yorkshire friends, Messrs J. J. and W. A. Brigg and Eric Greenwood, had a fortnight's mountaineering in the Eastern Alps. Rucksacks went with them everywhere, but most of the expedition was made without guides. Starting from Pontresina, they had a shot, from the Boval Hut, at the Piz Bernina, but had to turn back after eight hours of it, when still some thousand feet below the summit. The third day (the 26th of July) was spent in driving to Maloja. The fourth in crossing into Italy by the Muretto Pass to Chiesa in the Val Malenco. The fifth in climbing to the Capanna Cecilia at the head of the Val Preda Rossa of the Val Masino. The sixth in ascending Monte della Disgrazia and in returning to Chiesa. The seventh from

Chiesa in driving down the Malenco to Sondrio, and in travelling up the Val Tellina, from there by train to Tirano, and from there in driving to Bormio. The eighth was spent in driving into Austria, over the Stelvio Pass to Trafoi, and in ascending the Drei Sprachenspitze on the way. The ninth in ascending to the Payer Hut. The tenth in climbing the Ortler, and in going down to Sulden in the Suldenthal. The eleventh in getting to the Hallescher Hut. The twelfth in crossing Monte Cevedale into Italy, and in spending the night at Forno. The thirteenth in crossing the Gavia Pass to Ponte di Legno. The fourteenth in ascending the Val d'Avio to the Rifugio Garibaldi. The fifteenth in crossing Monte Adamello to the Mandron Hut, and down the lovely though long Genova Valley to Pinzolo. The sixteenth in driving to Trient, where the railway was joined. The weather was nearly all that could be desired all the time, perfect mornings with sometimes a thunderstorm in the afternoon.

MR DRUMMOND while in Sicily, towards the end of November, had a lovely view from the summit of Etna.

MR GILLON had an easy rock climb on the Romsdalthorn. He encountered one or two awkward pitches low down where the rock lies in "boiler plates" at the wrong angle. Near the top he found it steep, but the rock splendid.

MESSRS F. S. GOGGS and C. W. NETTLETON spent a delightful three weeks in the Oberland and the Pennines in July and August.

Starting from Murren, the Petersgrat was crossed to Ried, the Tschingelhorn being taken on the way. Then over the Lötschenlücke to the Concordia Hut, whence on successive days the Finsteraarhorn was climbed, and the Aletschhorn traversed to Bel Alp. A new and safe rock route was made up the north-east face of the latter from the Grosser Aletsch Firn, entirely avoiding the usual dangers of the ordinary route on this side, unstable seracs and snow avalanches. From Bel Alp (where the party were disappointed not to find the Editor and other S.M.C. men) a move was made to Saas Fée. Here a charming week was spent, picnics being a great feature on the "off days." Traverses were made of the Portjengrat, the Weissmies, the Laquinhorn, and the Fletschhorn, all from south to north, the Mittaghorn and Eggnerhorn. Then the Alphubeljoch was crossed to Zermatt, where the Weisshorn was successfully attacked. Then the weather broke a little, and for the second time Mr Nettleton was turned back on the north to south traverse of the Matterhorn. As a consolation he, however, took the Matterhorn couloir of the Riffelhorn on the way back. Mr Goggs in the meantime took the Mettelhorn and another peak (nameless) to the south. Mrs Nettleton joined in the Alphubeljoch and Weisshorn expeditions.

MR GOODEVE spent eleven days in July at Zermatt, and made the following ascents :—With one guide, the Matterhorn couloir on the Riffelhorn, and the Theodulhorn and Furggengrat arête, descending

by the Furgg-joch. With two guides, the Zinal-Rothhorn, Obergabelhorn, Matterhorn, and Weisshorn. The weather was splendid till the last three days. The first attempt of the Weisshorn was unsuccessful owing to a storm, but at the second the ascent was made under good conditions.

MESSRS WM. LING, H. RAEBURN, and C. W. WALKER had planned a number of big traverses from the Meije to Mont Blanc. Owing to the unfortunate illness of Ling, who was unable to go, most of these had to be given up, but the other two, favoured for the most part by magnificent weather, got some good climbing in Dauphiné, the Tarentaise, and south side of Mont Blanc.

In Dauphiné they ascended the S. Aiguille d'Arves from a ruined hut on the south side, crossed the Brèche de la Meije, and next day made an attempt on the Meije from the comfortable little wooden hut on the Promontoire. Turned by bad weather at the foot of the Grand Muraille, Messrs H. R. and C. W. had an interesting experience of an electric storm, the ice axes singing "*le chanson du Piolet*," while every rocky spike on the steep narrow arête they were descending buzzed and crackled, and even Walker's rucksack had something to say for itself. Returning to La Grave, another assault was delivered, this time successful, by way of the Col de Clot des Cavales at the Promontoire; going time to summit from hut 4 hours 55 minutes. Removing to Pralognan in the Tarentaise, the Aiguille de la Glière was ascended from the Vauzise Col Refuge Felix Faure. A traverse was effected next day of the Grande Casse. The ascent was made "*par le Versant Nord*," believed to be the first amateur ascent by this route. It is a difficult climb up steep ice and very rotten rocks. Passing over to Courmayeur in Italy by the Little St Bernard, the Aiguille Noire de Pétérét was next ascended. The first night was spent in the open on a grass ledge called the "*Fauteuil des Allemands*," at a height of 8,100 feet. Starting next morning at 4.15, the summit, 12,450 feet, was gained at 12.50, and the "*Fauteuil*" regained at 8 P.M. An attempt was then made to descend by lantern light the 2,000 feet of cliff below the "*Fauteuil*," but it was given up, and the second night's camp was pitched on a broad ledge at the top, close to water. Courmayeur was regained next morning after an absence of forty-eight hours.

The following two days were occupied in the passage with a porter of the Col and Glacier du Géant to Chamonix. Owing to the long-continued fine weather the icefall of the Géant was much more intricate than in 1901. All expeditions were guideless.

MR A. E. MAYLARD was in the Oberland this year, and joined later Mr Solly's party, and did some climbs with them.

MR WALTER NELSON and Mr JOHN GROVE spent ten days, in early September, at Zermatt. The weather was somewhat broken, and they accordingly contented themselves with the ascent of the

Unter-Gabelhorn and of Monte Rosa—the latter climb in company with a mutual friend, Mr Barrie.

MR J. A. PARKER and Mr GILBERT THOMSON had a very successful fortnight in the Eastern Graians during the latter part of August, in spite of very unsettled weather. Starting from Aosta, they spent a night at the Comboe chalets, and next day ascended Mont Emilius, and made their way to Cogne by the Col d'Arbole and the Col de Laures—this being guideless. From Cogne they made the following expeditions with a local guide, Clement Gerrard :—Mont Herbetet by the north arête, the Grand Paradis by the east face from the Glacier de Tribulation, the passage of the Col de Monei to the Piantonetto Club Hut, returning by the same col, and climbing the Tour de Grand St Pierre by the north arête from the Glacier de Monei. The view point of Cogne, the Pointe du Pousset, was ascended without guides, in company with Mr C. Clark. Parker had three days after Thomson left, and utilised the time by visiting Courmayeur, and climbing first the Cramont, and then Mont Blanc by the Dome route.

MR SOLLY was in the Oberland this year, and his climbs included the Dossenhorn and the traverse of the Wetterhorn without guides ; the Eiger, Schreekhorn, and the traverse of the Little Schreekhorn, with the Rev. E. Freeman and one guide.

MR J. H. WIGNER writes :—"I did only one expedition this season, but it lasted all the time. I went to Iceland with my friend, Mr T. S. Muir, and journeyed to the north-east corner of the Vatna Jökull, taking sledges, ski, and over a month's provisions for the two of us. From here we crossed the Jökull, in a direction mainly about west-south-west, reaching the other side very near to its south-west extremity. Our journey with the sledges was about eighty miles, and practically the whole area through which we crossed was totally unexplored. We ascended four peaklets in different parts of the Jökull not far from the edges, the highest of them, Hágöngur, being some 6,500 feet high according to the latest survey. The two of us were altogether rather over a month on our own resources, and for about two-thirds of the time had very fine weather. This was the first crossing of the Jökull in the direction of its length, the only previous passage being that of Mr Watts and a party of Icelanders in 1875, who crossed it from south to north by a route about thirty miles long near its western extremity."

BEN NEVIS.—F. Greig, A. E. M'Kenzie, and another arrived in Fort-William on Saturday, 17th September 1904, and had two glorious days on Ben Nevis.

Leaving next morning at 6.55 A.M., we reached the foot of the North-East Buttress at 9.55, and after wasting three-quarters of an hour in trying a gully near the Observatory Ridge, we descended, and started up Slingsby's Chimney at 10.45. Our progress was rapid until we came to the difficult pitch above a jammed block, where the

gully opens out into a funnel. This was climbed by the direct route, and was found to be "hardly for Salvationists"; Greig, who led up it, being called upon to give the others a little more than the moral support of the rope.

We gained the first platform at 1.20 P.M., and after lunch climbed the North-East Buttress, reaching the top at 4.45. We descended by the path, after climbing on to the Tower.

The following morning we left Fort-William at 7.25 A.M., and after the usual grind up the path, we indulged in the luxury of a bathe in the Lochan. Our intentions that day were to climb the North Castle Gully, the foot of which was reached at 11.15. The lower portion of the gully presented little difficulty, and we only roped for two pitches, the first being a waterslide about 20 feet high, and the other a chimney about the same height; but about 400 feet up we were confronted with a double choke block pitch about 40 feet in height, the lower block forming a recess. As it was found impossible to surmount this, we descended a few feet, traversed on to the right wall (true left), and reached the gully above this pitch, which looked as hopeless from above as from below.

We then continued up the gully, passing two other small choke block pitches, and when we were about 100 feet from the top, we were again forced to the right (true left) by a small mossy chimney; and we finished by a climb up some sloping slabs into a chimney, and thence to the top, which was reached at 1.35 P.M. The latter chimney, which might almost be called a branch of the Castle Gully, runs parallel to the bed of the gully, and finishes a few feet to the north of it.

A. E. M'KENZIE.

BEN NEVIS IN AUGUST.—The beginning of August Messrs Burns, Morrison, Newbigging, and A. E. Robertson had a few days' good climbing in the Fort-William district. On 3rd August, taking the morning steamer to Ardgour, we cycled to Inversanda [*N.B.*—Excellent cycles can be hired in Fort-William for 3s. 6d. a day], intending to do the ridge on Garbh Bheinn. On getting into the corrie the mist and rain were so heavy that we completely failed to find the ridge. We got some very fair climbing searching for it however, but where we were goodness only knows. Eventually we gained the summit, and returned to Fort-William in torrents of rain. The next day was better, and a start was made for the Tower Ridge. "Douglas's Boulder" was climbed by a new route—right up the north-east side of the western gully, which runs to the col between the Boulder and the Tower Ridge, the gully being on our immediate right hand the whole way up. The rocks were not particularly difficult, save for the first 70 feet, and the route can be confidently recommended. Descending the Boulder by the short, steep, and difficult drop to the col, the Tower Ridge was followed to the summit, the Tower being scaled by the Recess Route. The dangerous loose rock there, referred to by Mr Bell, *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VII., p. 184, was looked for but was not found.

Next day we did the Pinnacle arête of the Trident Buttress. The lower portion which has not yet "gone" was prospected, but it looked so uncompromising that we left nearer acquaintance with it to a more convenient season ; it will be a very hard nut to crack. The steep part of the arête is most sensational, but the magnificent holds render it perfectly safe. "A regular hat rack," as Morrison joyfully sang out as he led up. Next day, Burns having left for the south, the remaining three set out for the formidable "Staircase" climb on the Carn Dearg Buttress. Morrison led up the bad pitch from the recess above the "Staircase" in magnificent style. This will always be a nasty place, and the leader must be an expert and sure of his power to go through with the business once he leaves the shoulders of the second man in the recess : 50 feet of rope is necessary between the leader and the second man, if the latter is to remain in the recess until the leader reaches the safe anchorage on the ledge. Reaching the ledge we traversed to the left, as Raeburn and I did last year (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VIII., p. 86), and up the very stiff chimney to the "Bowling Green." Bell's Chimney, above the Pinnacle, was found in a very rotten and dangerous state. Being last man I did as much clearing as I could, but it will take a lot of sweeping yet to make it safe.

Sleeping that night in the Summit Hotel, we made an early start the following morning, and descended the Observatory Ridge. This was found difficult and tedious, the right route being in many places very hard to hit off. The fact is that the rocks are so steep and difficult (especially lower down), that the right way looks just as bad, if not worse than the wrong way, so a lot of time was wasted in false starts. It is really a thing to ascend, not to descend : in ascending one can see the route much better. And it is a magnificent ridge ; for continuous difficulty and interest I think it is the best climb on Ben Nevis. The "Staircase" climb no doubt has some much stiffer bits in it, but the average standard of difficulty is much higher on the Observatory Ridge. We had hoped to return to the Summit Hotel by the Observatory Buttress, but time failed, and we contented ourselves by walking home by the Carn Mor Dearg arête.

A. E. ROBERTSON.

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SGURR RUADH AND COIRE LAIR.—On Hinxman's advice (see paper on Strath Carron as a climbing centre, *S. M. C. Journal*, Vol. III., p. 218), H. Raeburn and E. Robertson paid a short visit to this district last Easter. Owing to the extreme severity of the weather experienced, only one climb was accomplished, but enough was seen to show that the district is well worth exploration in that sense.

The first day, 2nd April, the party left Aviemore at 8.30, and reached Achnashellach, the next station to Strathcarron, at 12.52. Sending on heavy baggage to Strathcarron Hotel (small but comfortable), they ascended up into Coire Lair by the excellent stalking path on the left bank of the stream. The weather was of the worst, dense mist, a howling sleet-laden gale, and under foot eight to ten inches of slush. Nothing of course was visible of the corrie. There is a fine

series of cliffs on the east face of Fuar Tholl, and these were just discernible.

Climbing was out of the question, so a map and compass course was laid for the pass between Fuar Tholl and Sgurr Ruadh. The pass was struggled through against the gale, and descending into the Coulags Glen, the stream was followed down to Coulags Bridge, and so by road to Strathcarron. There is a track on the right bank of the river high up, but any one descending this, should cross to the left bank by the first foot bridge, as the track continues down to a ford, and the ground after this on the right bank is difficult, and broken with ravines. The river here plunges down a series of fine falls in a deep picturesque gorge, and is not easy to cross when full.

Sunday, 3rd April, was if possible worse than Saturday. A start was not made till 10.30, and the nearest hill, An Ruadh Stac (2,919 feet), was made the objective. The route was by the Coulags Glen, and the Allt nan Ceapairean to the tarn under the east face. Many deer were seen here. An extraordinary series of ice-smoothed boiler-plates sweeps up above this tarn. Though of comparatively low angle, they appear difficult to traverse. Passing round the tarn, and ascending to the Meall a Chinn Dearn (the bald hill with the red head) col above the Lochan Coire an Ruadh Stac, the mountain was traversed by the north-east ridge. In places this is a narrow arête, but affords no climbing. The descent was made by the south-west face into the valley of the Amhainn Bhuidheach, and so to Strathcarron about five.

*Monday, 4th April.*—Weather still windy and wild, but wind slightly north-west and much colder; clouds still low but showing indications of breaking up. Snowline came down last night the 500 feet melted on Sunday, and now lay at about 1,000 feet. Taking the morning train to Achnashellach, that place was left at 7.40, and the track of Saturday again followed. Instead of turning off to the left, however, the party this time butted the gale up Coire Lair and past the lochan, through a foot or so of snow, at first slushy but improving every hundred feet. Second breakfast was taken at 10, in the comparative peace of a boulder by the stream. The clouds now lifted and gave fair views of the fine north-east face of Sgurr Ruadh.

There are several distinct buttresses on this face, separated by snow gullies; the most northerly of these is the highest and finest, and is more of a definite ridge. Towards the summit a steep black portion shows up as a tower. Near the foot the buttress is split by a narrow deep chimney now carrying an almost unbroken ribbon of white far up the cliffs. This portion of the face is cut off from the two more southerly buttresses by a wide snow couloir, almost a corrie, steep towards the top, and with some snow cornices. The Rev. A. E. Robertson along with a friend ascended, on 26th May 1898, the southern buttress partly by the rocks, and partly by a couloir to right. This appears to be the only climb hitherto done in the corrie.



The present party selected the north-east buttress for attack. Looked at *en face*, the rocks seemed hopelessly steep, and the gale blew with undiminished violence against the north face, but the snow in the chimney showed that the angle was not so great as appeared, and we hoped by keeping below the crest of the ridge as much as possible to be able to avoid the wind.

We accordingly roped up at 10.30 and started. As the rocks just at the foot of the ridge were extremely steep and slabby, and were moreover iced, we took to the chimney on the left for about 80 feet, than traversed out to right by a good ledge and gained the ridge. We were here glad to find that the wind, deflected by the rock wall, flew over our heads and left us in comparative peace. The ascent of the ridge occupied one hour and twenty minutes. The climbing in places, owing to the conditions, was, not very easy, but the icy snow usually adhering to the steep grassy walls gave good hitches, and handholds could also be cut where required. Below the tower we crossed a beautiful little col with sharp snow arête. Here we were exposed to the full violence of the wind, and it was extraordinary with what force the rope between us flew out to leeward like a drawn bowstring. It put us in mind of the picture by Willink in the Badminton volume on Mountaineering. The tower proved to be merely a steeper part of the ridge, and was easily climbed. The top was gained at 11.50. This is not the summit of Sgurr Ruadh, that lies about half a mile away to north-west, on the other side of a dip of several hundred feet. We reached the cairn (3,141) feet at 12.30, after a pretty tough fight for the last 100 yards with the wind. The mist had now cleared off the near peaks, and we had some fine though fleeting and partial views. The best was to the north, where the tops of Leagach with the Fasarinen showed up fitfully as the clouds rushed past them before the north-west blast.

The descent was made by the south-west face to the pass of Fuar Tholl and home by the Coulags Glen for the second time. Rain a deluge. Our opinion confirms that of Mr Hinxman, that the district is a fine one, and some excellent climbing is to be got here. The largest mass of rock—seen from Sgurr Ruadh it appeared extremely steep—lies on the north face of Fuar Tholl above the small Coire Mainrichean on the south side of the Fuar Tholl-Sgurr Ruadh pass.

HAROLD RAE BURN.

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TO SKI-RUNNERS.—Mr W. R. Rickmers will be in Adelboden from 1st January 1905 to 1st February, and hopes that many members or their friends (also ladies) will take advantage of his offer to teach them ski-ing. Terms, none; conditions, enthusiasm and discipline.

From 10th to 29th February W. R. R. will be found at Igls, above Innsbruck, and during the latter part of April on the Feldberg, Black Forest.

Please address, W. R. Rickmers, Radolfzell, Baden, Germany.

## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

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"THE TERTIARY IGNEOUS ROCKS OF SKYE." By Alfred Harker, F.R.S. With notes by C. T. Clough. His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1904.

Many of the members of our Club who visited the Cuillin Hills in the Isle of Skye between 1895 and 1901, and who met Mr Harker during those years while he was working out in the field the difficult geological problems connected with this area, will be interested in the publication of this the most recent issued memoir of the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom. The book is replete with the necessary information, diagrams, and photographs, to enable the climber and geologist to clearly understand the Tertiary igneous rocks constituting and adjacent to the Cuillin Hills. Geologists knew that the investigation of these rocks required a broad and deep knowledge of petrology, and that Mr Harker had in a marked degree these qualifications. To the petrologist this memoir is a perfect mine of wealth. To enter, however, into petrological details would involve introducing some of the readers of this journal to part of the English language unknown to them. The only course is to give an imperfect summary, and to refer members who would acquire further information to the book itself. We gather that Mr Harker's views are as follows :—

In the earlier half of the Tertiary period the British area was in a state of strain. The crust movements and associated igneous activity sought to restore the equilibrium, first by the uprising of molten magma through north-west or north-north-west fissures communicating with the surface, then by injections of the magma along the bedding planes of the pre-existing rocks, and afterwards by faulting and tilting of the solid rock masses. The igneous activity was probably associated, as Bertrand suggests, with the movements that have depressed the Atlantic basin. Furthermore, it is well known that the movement which resulted in the formation of the Alps extended well into England, and Mr Harker's work shows it caused minor disturbances in the Inner Hebrides. The Atlantic movement was of the plateau building type, was manifested as differential movements in a vertical sense, and affected a wide region as a whole. The faulting and tilting of the rocks produced by this Atlantic movement was preceded by regional strain which was relieved by voluminous fissure eruptions, many sub-parallel north-west or north-north-west dykes, and numer-

ous and extensive sill intrusions along the bedding planes. The Alpine movement was restricted to limited centres, of which the Cuillin Hills were one, and was associated with central volcanic outbursts, with plutonic or deep-seated intrusions of the magma forming bosses and great laccolites, and with the radial dykes, &c.

The Tertiary igneous rocks are to be treated as a connected whole, having a common origin from a deep-seated reservoir of more or less fluid rock magma. They comprise ultra-basic (peridotite, &c.), basic (gabbro, &c.), and acid (granite, &c.) types, of which the basic are most prevalent. As these rocks belong to a connected series it naturally follows that rocks or rock magmas of basic and acid composition co-existed throughout a very long period in different parts of the deep-seated reservoir underlying the area, and, as the rocks are chiefly basic, the magma must have been of thoroughly basic composition. If, however, the basic and acid rocks had a common origin, the acid rocks must have been derived by process of differentiation from the basic magma. This differentiation was effected in the reservoir at a very early stage, and the processes enlarged their limits progressively during later stages. The great necessity for distinguishing between the regional and local outbursts is clearly shown, and the important point is proved "that the distinct foci at which activity was from time to time localised was also the principal centre of magmatic differentiation." Thus, while the widespread regional series are all of basic composition, those of the local series (Cuillin and Red Hills) vary from ultra basic-through basic to highly acid rocks.

The well-known three different phases of igneous activity, namely, the Volcanic outbursts, the Plutonic intrusions, and the phase of Minor intrusions are each fully described in their proper order. The earliest overt acts ushering in the Volcanic phase were local terrestrial volcanic eruptions of dust and bombs which were followed by regional extrusions of vast quantities of lava through innumerable fissures. In the succeeding Plutonic phase the regional activity was in abeyance, whilst in local centres immense quantities of ultra-basic, basic, and acid magma were intruded largely in the form of laccolites, one of which is over 3,000 feet thick, and perhaps 10 miles in diameter. These successive intrusions decreased in basicity, and increased in acidity. Mr Harker discovered amongst these plutonic rocks one which is new to petrologists, which he calls marscoite, from Marsco, on the side of which it was found. The descriptions of the rocks, of basic and acid types, representing the transition from the Plutonic to the Minor intrusions stages, greatly increase the scanty information hitherto available. The Minor intrusions represent a succession of episodes which fall into two parallel series, the local and regional. They manifest a reversion to increasing basicity, and were connected with the final efforts of the magma to rise during the decadence of the igneous activity.

We presume that the laccolites were fissures, formed at right angles to the direction of strain, into which the magma surged and there consolidated. That in shape they were much like the typical crevasse sometimes seen in the interior of a glacier, which in both length and depth commences as a minute crack, expands irregularly to a greater and greater width, and then decreases to a narrow crack. The plutonic laccolites were, as we should expect, having regard to the nature of the then movement, fissures formed approximately parallel to the bedding planes of the pre-existing rocks. But are the vertical dykes shown on the map in two directions approximately at right angles, also laccolites at right angles to horizontal directions of strain? Many chimneys in Skye expand and contract like a crevasse; for instance, the prominent cavity in the north face of the Bhastier Tooth. There does seem to be some similitude between the origin of the spaces occupied by the horizontal laccolites and the vertical dykes of Skye, and the *horizontal* crevasses and the vertical longitudinal and vertical transverse crevasses of a glacier. It is significant that Prof. J. D. Forbes, whose knowledge of glaciers was so extensive, first recognised the laccolitic nature of the Cuillin mass.

It is impracticable, within the limits of this review, to do justice to the enormous mass of information collected in the field, and so ably worked out in the laboratory by Mr Harker, much of which is new to the geological world.

The chapter on the physical features and scenery of Skye is interesting and instructive, for it deals with many points that assist the climber to reconnoitre with skill.

To roam amidst these misty hills alone, far from any human assistance, and in places where a slip might lead to disablement, is not free from danger. On the other hand they are a grand place to think out in weird solitude the problems that have been so carefully and thoroughly elucidated by the author.

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“THE PENTLAND HILLS: THEIR PATHS AND PASSES.” 9th Edition. 1904. By W. A. Smith).

We are glad to notice that a further edition of Mr Smith's delightful little book on the Pentlands has been issued. It is interesting to compare the original booklet published in 1885 with the present ninth edition. Thirty-nine pages in 1885 have expanded to sixty-four in 1904. In 1885 the tourist was not conducted west of the Cauld Stane Slap. Now we are guided from Harburn to Dolphinton and Dunsyre, and as far west as Carnwath and Auchengray. Those of us who have not hitherto visited the south-west corner of the Pentlands would do well to follow the routes so pleasantly described by the author. Dunsyre always appeals to us for its pastoral peacefulness and repose. Gray's "Elegy" might well have been written there. On our first visit

we remember receiving a distinct mental shock at finding a railway station—a kind of unhallowed spot in the midst of a sweet solitude. Fortunately dream-disturbing trains are rare. On the Dunsyre-Auchengray route, *via* Boston Cottage and a ford over the North Medwin, it is well to carry a pair of spare stockings, as we doubt whether any S.M.C. man is capable of taking the ford at a bound, and to sit in the train from Auchengray to Edinburgh with wet feet is neither comfortable nor wise. We trust many more editions will be required. Mr Smith's book has introduced the Pentlands to many readers who otherwise would have remained in ignorance of the delightful tracts of hill, moor, and glen to be had at their door, and we are proud to number him as one of the Club's original members.

F. S. G.

## Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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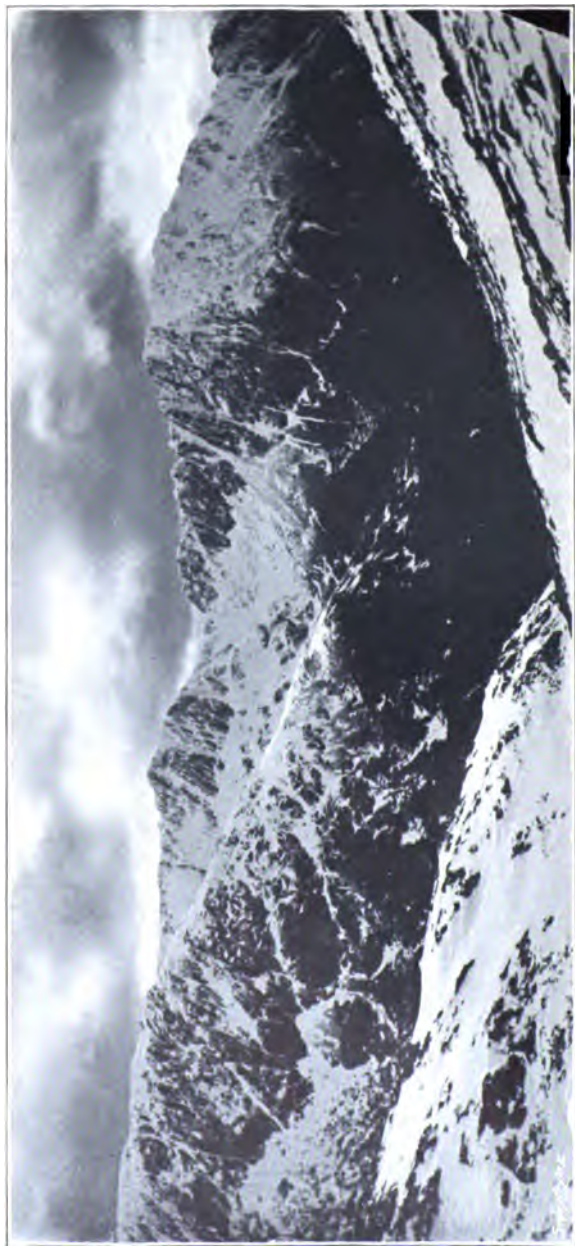
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*H. T. Munro.*

WESTERN RIDGE OF CORRIE. BETWEEN TOPS 1 AND 2 OF BEINN PHADA FROM MEALL A' BHEALAICH.



# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## IN THE NORTH-WEST HIGHLANDS IN FEBRUARY.

BY S. A. GILLON.

IT was without hope of a companion that I decided to utilise that anomalous holiday known as "February week" by exploring the mountains at the head of Loch Duich. They are both shapely and numerous, and with good weather might yield between ten and twenty scalps, if energetically attacked from Shiel Inn. It seemed hard to believe that a whole year ago Munro and I had plunged about in the plentiful and yielding snow-fields of the Eastern Cairngorms, still harder to realise that it was three years since I had had two strenuous days—also in February—from Peebles to Tibbie's by Scrape and Broad Law, and from Tibbie's to Beattock by the summit of Ettrick Pen. The lesson was obvious, and to the effect that as time was flying I had better lose no time if the impudent embryo of an idea of rivalling "A. E. R." and "H. T. M." was to ever reach maturity.

The end makes us scorn impediments; and the 4.30 A.M. train is after all not much of an infliction. It is infinitely less distracting than a visit to the dentist or a ball to a non-dancer. Far more could be "tholed" for the joy of throwing off torpor with the first glimmerings of day at Tarbet, as I did on Saturday morning, 4th February, *en route* for Mallaig. Even that well-known highway to

happiness—the West Highland Railway—merited the impassioned language of a poet, for the day was remarkable. Some mountains were shrouded in mist; others were clear from base to summit; others were swept by cloud and then suddenly laid bare again. The rivers were full of flood, broadened frequently out into lakes in the straths, or if penned up like the Spean, boiled and surged and roared down their rocky fastnesses. Sometimes there was sunshine, and sometimes great waves of rain, but except for one tremendous shower at Mallaig, it lasted only a short time. It was pleasant after landing at Glenelg and driving the flat part of Glen More, to shed extra clothing and unstiffen oneself on the hill up to Mam Ratagan, with the fine view of Ben Sgriol to look back on and the expectation of the Kintail giants when the summit was crossed.

Shiel was soon reached, and the next day breathlessly waited for. Alas, it was pouring persistently, ruthlessly, and continued to do so till noon on Monday, when I started for Sgurr Fhuaran, which must be one of the very easiest of hills to walk up in the world. A well-defined ridge leads at a steady angle to the top. It was too tempting; so directly the 500 feet level was marked by the aneroid, an acceleration of speed enabled the top to be reached exactly an hour later. There was very little snow except on the north-east face, and on parts of the ridge running north to Sgurr nan Carn, which my aneroid made out to be about 3,300 feet high. There was plenty of time for Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe, but a terrific blizzard of wet, small, eye-torturing sleety snow drove me from the col down into Glen Shiel, and so home. These are the occasions when one feels alternately wise and a poltroon according to the momentary fluctuations of the weather, and the only feeling comparable to being thus “turned” is when one has decided not to take the train to North Berwick on account of rain and wind, and the day proves subsequently to be fine and wet by turns in Edinburgh, and one can't imagine how it has been behaving itself at North Berwick or how the “other fellow” received the postponing telegram.

Tuesday was much better, and was spent on the Saddle, which was traversed from the lochan south of Sgurr Mhic

Bharraich to Sgurr na Sgine and "the Whelk." There was plenty wind, periodic mists, and not much of a distant view, but superb colouring and cloud effects. As one rises from the lochan the first familiar sight visible to the west is Dun Caan in Raasay, and soon as much of Skye as deigns to show itself follows suit.

The "Saddle" is by no means a walk, and any one keeping strictly to the ridge must frequently scramble, and in one place, just to the east of the true summit, actually climb. But the best of the rock-work seems to be on the ridge, as the faces down to the glen are slabby and short. The view must be very fine seawards, and into Knoydart and Glen Quoich. But to the north and north-east the hills lie behind one another in parallel ridges, and many are thus lost. The "Cralie" group, however, stand out splendidly; but any ambitions I had in that direction, *i.e.*, by climbing Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe, and keeping along the tops as long as strength or weather kept up, was knocked on the head by another rainstorm which followed a fine starry evening, and which cleared off all the snow on practically all the south and south-west faces. Once more it was a case of books, missing out lunch for the sake of training, and an evening constitutional down to Croe Bridge and back.

Thursday promised well, and accompanied by Mr Stoddart, one of the stalkers of Glen Cluanie, as far as the top of Creag nan Damh, I set out again alone towards Sgurr na Lochain. The wind was terrific, but the walking easy, and the day only cold when rain came on.

This unfortunately did come accompanied by mist, but as the momentum was mainly from behind and the ridge quite unmistakable, and being, moreover, adorned with a superb "Galloway" dyke and a wire fence as guides, it accelerated rather than retarded the going. It was at once easier and pleasanter to run for great stretches, especially along the almost interminable plateau called Meall Cheann Dearg. The dips seemed shallower than they looked on the map, the increasing storm had elevated the barometer to 3,400 feet in places, and it was only by a momentary glimpse of a little frozen tarn below and behind me that I

realised I was close to the end of my high-level walk and practically on the top of Creag a' Mhaim.

The ridge of Meall Ceann Dearg and Sgurr an Lochan is of much interest. On the south it slopes more or less gently down towards Loch Quoich, of which beautiful peeps are to be had. The fine masses of Sgurr a' Mhòraire and Gleourach are very insistent features of the scenery on that side. To the north the angle is much steeper; there is quite a lot of rock on the summit, which in some places is quite narrow and demands care, and fine slabs and buttresses fall away into the superbly bellied corries which face the Shiel-Cluanie road. None of it looked very good for climbing, but there must be many short and difficult routes for the intrepid acrobat, who would hunt so far afield, on the buttresses and slabby faces. The velocity of the wind may be gathered from the fact that it was disquieting to approach too near the edge in case of being wafted over like a feather or a cloth cap by an extra blast.

Once below the mist line on the bold fall of this fine hill, Creag a' Mhaim, towards the east, the road from Cluanie to Tomdown could be seen far below winding its way across the watershed, down Glen Loyne, and over the next ridge towards Glengarry.

When I struck the road at an elevation of about 1,400 feet, it was just four hours and a half since the Shiel-Cluanie road had been left rather more than four miles from Shiel Inn.

The rest of the trip has nothing more of mountaineering interest about it, so I will merely dismiss it with the remarks that a rainstorm came on in the afternoon, that much snow fell in the night, that the heat in the parlour-car to Cowlaers was stifling, and that the prospect of metropolitan civilisation generally, and Dohnanyi's recital in particular on the morrow, was as seductive as the savour of fish to a cat.

The district is undoubtedly well worthy of the enthusiastic hill-walker. From Shiel, with the aid of trap or bicycle, Sgurr nan Ceathramhan, even Mam Soul and his great twin brother, are possibilities, while Ben Attow and the Saddle and Sgurr Fhuaran and their respective continu-

ations eastwards supply a wealth of tops nearer hand. The feature of Glen Shiel and Glen Cluanie is that the hills on either side are an unbroken wall which seldom drops below the 3,000 feet level.

It is a costly business to study literature for two and a half days out of a climbing holiday of five, and it is occasionally irritating to grope about and be buffeted by the elements on the remaining two and a half; but all the same the journey north, the new lands seen, the weird roughness of the Saddle, and the wonderful atmospheric effects as seen from Sgurr Fhuaran and the whole range from Sgurr Leac nan Each to Creag a' Mhaim were well worth the expenditure of will power and coin. Still it is curious to reflect that when the uninitiated picture a visit to the Highlands in February as something a little after the nature of a Polar exploration, it is the very lack of that Arctic severity which causes the chief discomforts and hindrances. The weather was admirable (*a*) for sitting in a room with the window as much open as it would go; (*b*) for washing, dressing, and undressing where little clothing can be worn; but how welcome a ringing hard frost would have been with blue sky, clear horizon, still but life-giving air, and heaps of firm snow. Even from Sweden one hears of the "Skidlöpning" in the "Nordiska Spelen" having to take place away north in Jämtland instead of as usual in the environs of Stockholm. Apparently in the peninsulas and islands of Northern Europe the climate is becoming less continental and more maritime or insular, or whatever is the term for dampness, unseasonable mildness, and more than feminine changeableness. Only this summer a Swedish gentleman of some years informed me that the winters nowadays were poor compared with those of the good old times. One hears much of the same thing in this country, of an age when skating from Edinburgh to Linlithgow along the canal was common contrasted with a winter like the present, when the reservoirs in the Pentlands are half empty and the fields parched with lack of moisture.

But this sounds ungrateful. What I can do is to advise any, who have an opportunity, to visit Shiel, where from the head of lovely Loch Duich they have a wealth of

material for their craft, and to wish them such weather as will give them the good of their visit and show off the wonderful, almost Norwegian, beauties of the district. Shiel is a very comfortable hotel, and I have no doubt that terms could be arranged with the proprietor similar to those which the Club have with so many of the hotel proprietors in the Highlands.

STUCHD AN LOCHAIN AND THE UPPER  
PART OF GLEN LYON.

By F. S. GOGGS.

"There they stood, ranged along the hill-sides, met  
To view the last of me, a living frame  
For one more picture ! in a sheet of flame  
I saw them and I knew them all. And yet  
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,  
And blew."—*Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came.*

A SINGLE word will often set one's thoughts a-roaming, and the occurrence of several black dots against which was printed the word "Tower," in Bartholomew's Map comprising Glen Lyon, has excited my imagination for several years. First I thought of a Scottish rival to the castellated Rhine, then I imagined I might have discovered the scene of Browning's well-known poem, the last stanza of which is quoted above. The glamour of romance being thus thrown over the upper part of Glen Lyon, I eagerly accepted an invitation from Munro last New Year to accompany him in a third attempt on Stuchd an Lochain. Even apart from the fact that I wished to visit this particular portion of the country, I think every member of the S.M.C. is bound out of gratitude to the compiler of Munro's Tables to assist that enthusiast in what I believe is his intention of beating Robertson's bag of all the three-thousanders by equalling the latter in mountains and surpassing him in tops ascended. To find the main route or routes to Stuchd an Lochain, I turned to what I hoped were to prove the illuminating pages of the S.M.C. Guide Book. I conned the indices of the *Journal*, but they were innocent of any such name. I turned up Munro's Tables to make sure the hill was included in the list of the immortals. Yes, there he was right enough, No. 191. I turned afresh to the Guide Book, and diligently traced Stuchd an Lochain's neighbours: all his neighbours were duly scheduled, but not even "No information" was set against him. He has been absolutely and entirely ignored. I feel I am entitled to ask our Editor for an explanation

of this omission. Why this nepotism, this favouritism? \* Are not all the "Munros" entitled by the mere fact of their being "Munros" to at least a mention in the Guide Book? Of course I am aware that this hill boasts at its foot no Loch Awe Hotel, no Corrie Arms or other place of popular resort replete with fireplaces in the bedrooms, hot-water bottles and other luxuries for the aged and infirm; but are our Scottish Bens to be given places of consideration according to the quality of the hotels at their base? Luxury, luxury, luxury, everything is sacrificed nowadays to the goddess Luxury: she conquered the Alps long ago, and now she is devouring the S.M.C., and the Editor, I regret to think, stands not up against her, but has fallen a victim to her blandishments. Again, on the ground of antiquity Stuchd an Lochain is entitled to an honoured place. The earliest recorded ascent of Ben Cruachan, which mountain occupies several pages in the Guide Book, took place, according to our esteemed Editor, at the beginning of the last century. I have found the record of an ascent of Stuchd an Lochain in about the year 1590. It reads as follows:—

"On the brow of *Stuic-an-lochain*—a huge rock beetling over a deep circular mountain tarn—they encountered a flock of goats. Mad Colin † [Colin Campbell of Glenlyon, *d.* 1596 or 1597] and his man forced them over the precipice. When surveying their work from the top of the cliff, Colin unexpectedly came behind Finlay [his attendant], and ordered him, in a threatening voice, to jump over. He knew it was useless to resist. He said quietly, and as a matter of course: 'I will, Glenlyon; but,' looking at a grey stone behind them, 'I would just like to say my prayers at yon stone first; it is so like an altar.' Colin mused, looked at the stone, and, letting go his hold, bade him go, and be back immediately. Finlay reached the stone, knelt down, muttered whatever came uppermost, and every now and then took a sly look at his master. Colin stood yet on the edge of the cliff, and kept looking on the mangled bodies of the goats. He seemed to

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\* [The Editor of the Guide Book frankly admits he was not aware that the claims of this mountain were sufficiently great to entitle it to a place in the Guide Book. He, however, will be pleased to get a condensed report from Mr Goggs which can be printed with other additions at some future time.]

† Mad Colin built the Castle of Meggernie (five miles east of *Stuic-an-lochain*), probably about 1582.



become horrified at his own mad work. Finlay lost not his opportunity. He stealthily crept behind his master, grasped him by the shoulders, and shouted, in a thundering voice, 'Leap after the goats.' The unhappy lunatic supplicated for mercy, in vain. Finlay's grasp was like a vice; and he so held him over the precipice, that if let go he could not recover himself, but inevitably fall over. 'Let me go this once,' supplicated Colin. 'Swear, first, you shall not circumvent me again.' 'By Mary?' 'Nay, by your father's sword.' 'By my father's sword, I swear.' 'That will do; now we go home.' \*

Obedient to Munro's fiery cross, the night of 29th December 1904 found our leader, Nelson, and myself eating the crumbs which fell from the table of a Masonic banquet in an adjoining room, into which, the "tyler" having deserted his post, one of us incautiously wandered. Luckily the intruder was the only Mason in our small party, and so survived to tell the tale. At 5.30 A.M. next day we were roused. At seven we cautiously felt our way into a two-horse machine, and were soon ploughing through the darkness up Glen Lochay. It had been a wild night of storm and rain, and the west wind was still hurling its misty cloud battalions down the glen. Ever and anon there was a lull, a few stars peeped out and were reflected in the sullen stream on our left, then with apparently redoubled force came the rain-storm sweeping down the wide glen and completely enveloping it. I did my best to use the driver as a break-water, but to no purpose, and we huddled together in silence—our close companionship being only broken by the necessity of opening several gates and recovering the driver's cap which blew away. I reconciled myself to a thorough soaking, but determined that come what might, it should not be my fault if Munro did not bag his mountain at this his third attempt. At eight precisely we reached the farm of Kenknock (745 feet), and leaving the machine to await our return, we struck up Allt Truchill, and soon found an old track† which led us well up the east side

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\* "The Lairds of Glenlyon," Duncan Campbell, pp. 17, 18.

† This track is marked on the old one-inch Ordnance Survey Map, but does not appear on the revised one-inch. It is still fairly well defined, and is certainly worth the trouble of following to any one walking over to Glenlyon from Kenknock. The track starts a quarter of a mile

of the glen. The col marked by a cairn is 1,738 feet, and is half a mile beyond a small lochan which lies some distance below you to the west. Up to this point the rain had been consistently washing our faces, and we had all I think quietly resigned ourselves to what seemed our inevitable fate. Beyond the col we strained our eyes to get a view of Glen Lyon. We soon made out that there was a glen below us, and a dim wall of mountain with dull silver streaks here and there, proving the existence of burns, loomed up indefinitely on the further side. The path led to a bridge which we crossed, and soon afterwards the track withered away. The circling mists were now distinctly rolling up the hillsides, the rain abated, and hope commenced to rise from her ashes. Soon the river Lyon was clearly seen, one or two farms became visible, and the opposite hills assumed a less vague aspect. On we went with lighter hearts, making for a house we saw marked on the map named Lubroch, and a ford close to. There is always a spice of romance and adventure in making an incursion into a little known Highland glen. The houses named on your map may have been in ruins for the last century, the fords shown thereon may only be passable on one or two occasions in the year; the fact that the map shows no bridge at the point you wish to cross is by no means satisfactory evidence that there is none, or *vice versa* if a bridge is shown at a particular point, what proof have you that it was not washed away yesterday or ten years ago? We were in a most delightful state of uncertainty this morning as to fords, houses, and bridges. To my mind this uncertainty is one of the chief charms in climbing or walking in the Highlands. Most of us live in towns, and our lives are calculated to the minute. Start for business at such and such a time; keep certain appointments at fixed hours; lunch at a certain place and moment; return home by a stated route at practically a fixed time; dinner at —; bed at —. Hurrah for a day's fling in

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north of Kenknock. Strike the first burn to the west of the farm, and follow it north till it forks: the beginning of the track will be found 100 yards on, inside the fork.

the Highlands. Unfettered and free, we go where we please. Away with your Guide Book and details of routes: the unknown for me! To come back to our journey. The day was undoubtedly clearing up rapidly, patches of blue sky appeared, the sun came out, and the hillsides were rain-pearled, sparkling as if with joy. We saw a good broad river below us, and looked up and down for a bridge. Not a sign of one! A little further, and we caught sight of a cottage which was evidently that marked Lubreoch on the map. Round another knoll and there was a boat, moored our side of the river, close to the cottage. We luckily found the shepherd at home, but he was none too eager to take us over, as the boat he told us was "nae ill to coup," which being translated by Munro for my benefit, I found to mean "easily upset." The river, at the ford where the boat was, ran deep and swift, and the navigation of the crossing undoubtedly demanded care. Our ice-axes came in useful as boathooks, and in two journeys the three of us were across. From the ferry we had the first view of our hill. The sun had drawn up the mists, several waterfalls were racing down in quivering masses of snowy white, and there stood Stuchd an Lochain revealed to our eager eyes, away back over the near hills forming the north side of Glen Lyon, with a light mantle of snow covering his summit. I looked up and down the glen expecting to see picturesque towers on knolls, but none were apparent; and as Munro anticipated we had enough to do to fill in our day and knew nothing about towers, I reluctantly dismissed them from my mind for the time being. Along the road east for half a mile, then taking again to the moor, we struck the burn, coming down Allt Camslai, above Pubil Farm, and mounting rapidly, soon reached the open moor, which stretched away to the north-east, gently sloping right up to the summit of Stuchd an Lochain. The driest route is to keep the ridge to your north, but it matters little, and each choosing our own line, an eagle welcomed us at the summit cairn (3,144 feet) at twelve—four hours after leaving Kenknock. The view is not extensive, except to the north-west, over the moor of Rannoch, lonely, bleak, and black. The winter so far had been open to an extent

rarely known ; there was practically no snow up to 2,750 feet, and the country did not present its usual wintry aspect. Nearly 2,000 feet below to the north stands the solitary farmhouse of Lochs, looking like a grey alpine hospice. It is presumably called Lochs from the fact of its being situated between two lochs, Loch Dhamh and Loch Girre, but only the first-named can be seen from an Lochain—a high ridge cuts off any view of Loch Girre. Immediately below (some 750 feet) is Lochan nan Cat ; the steep faces round this lochan are broken up, mixed rock and turf. There does not seem to be any regular rock cliff or face. Munro did not try to dispose of his companions by emulating Mad Colin, and we proceeded east to bag another top. The descent of the first 173 feet is fairly steep, then you rise 34 feet and are over the 3,000 line again (3,005 to be exact), another slight drop below the 3,000 contour, up again, and the cairn at the east end of the summit ridge (3,031 feet) is soon reached, a little more than a mile from the summit itself. Striking due south by the Allt Cashlie, we dropped down on Cashlie Farm (1,000 feet) a little after one, and were hospitably entertained by Mr and Mrs M'Kerchar \* inside, whilst certain unscrupulous colliers, to make matters even, ransacked my rucksac, which I had incautiously left outside. Wishing to explore upper Glen Lyon, I proposed reaching Loch Awe Hotel, the site of the New Year Meet, by walking to Tyndrum, and taking train thence. As Munro had twice already traversed the glen, it was agreed that I should do the tramp alone, and that he and Nelson should go back to the trap at Kenknock by a nearer way. They crossed the bridge over the Lyon, a quarter of a mile east of Cashlie (this is the last bridge (west) over the Lyon), then west by Dalchiorlich, after passing which farm it is best to keep well up the shoulder of the hill on your left up the trackless Allt Rioran to the

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\* In 1800 a Macnaughton had Cashlie : his son James took part in Sir Ralph Abercromby's expedition to Egypt, and at the landing of the troops in Aboukir Bay on the 8th March 1801 was the first to reach the shore, after "a neck-and-neck race between the Highlanders and the 23rd and 40th Regiments."—"The Book of Garth and Fortingall," Duncan Campbell, pp. 240, 241.

well-defined col at its head (1,941 feet). The last 200 feet up and the first 200 feet down the other side are steep, with a number of rocks scattered about. Kenknock is then seen immediately below. My erstwhile companions duly reached their machine in under two hours. After promising to join them at Tyndrum Station about 7.30, I started west at a good pace, leaving Cashlie 1.40 P.M. Every now and then a shower came on, but this only made the glen look finer, the mist magnifying the shoulders of Meall Ghaordie which jutted out like huge cliffs and overlapped each other. The bridge at Invermeran was half broken down, but climbing up the centre buttress and then throwing dignity to the winds, I crawled across the two remaining tree stems, and so reached the further shore. Along the side of Loch Lyon the track dives again and again, and sometimes for a considerable distance, into the loch itself, and the walker is forced to take a track a little higher. Half a mile past Ardvannoch some malignant sprite lured me to leave the main track and strike off across a bridge over the stream coming down the Abhainn Ghlas, to Tomochoarn. I passed half-a-dozen men here, who stared at me in an interested kind of way, but with true Highland reserve said nothing. It was 3.50 and getting dark, so I hurried on along a rough track which in two and a half miles ended at some sheep-fanks. The glen now became very boggy and very dark, and by coming several croppers I proved both these facts simultaneously. The glens seemed to wind much more than I had anticipated, but being a non-smoker, I could not consult map, compass, or watch. However, I kept on, and after a time found I had crossed the watershed (1,366 feet). I was then forced up to the left to avoid a gorge of the burn; it was now so dark that to the malignant sprites watching, my motions must have appeared very unsteady, but I drank nothing but burn water, and fed in thought on the plum pudding and jam pieces long since hidden securely by those thieving Cashlie collies. Coming down to the stream again, I tried the other side, but after scrambling up a steep bank and finding no obvious route in the darkness, I recrossed the stream and stumbled along till a side burn in flood foaming down a deep rocky channel

brought me to a full stop. Here, thought I, I must pass the night. In front of me was a sugar-loaf peak, which I guessed must be Beinn Dorain, and the lights of a train confirmed me in this. The line was evidently not far off; so near and yet so far. I reckoned it must be about 6.30, and now the pride of office came to my rescue. The Librarian of the S.M.C. throwing up the sponge at 6.30 P.M. No! never! I *will* get to the railway line. The only reasonable course open was to follow the burn up to the sky-line, so putting my not over-willing muscles to work, another 1,000 feet was soon added to the day's play. I then crossed over the prostrate body of my enemy, and was on the open hillside. A light! Don't be fooled by a will o' the wisp. Again, a light! It does not move. It is far below. It must be a light from a cottage. Feeling my way cautiously with my ice-axe down what seemed a steep stony slope, with here and there a six-foot piece of cliff, I soon crossed the railway metals and found a surfaceman's cottage. It was only 7.30, but all chance of reaching Tyndrum Station in time to join Munro and Nelson was gone. The good lady of the house only spoke Gaelic, but her hospitality was genuine and acceptable. She quickly made some refreshing tea, and after half an hour's rest I followed the metals south for over a mile, then taking to the road I walked into the hall of Tyndrum Hotel at 9 P.M. Mr Stewart, so well-known as a type of the old-fashioned hotel-keeper, who looks on his guests with personal interest, soon made me comfortable in his private parlour. After making out a telegram to Loch Awe for sending the first thing next morning, I slept the sleep of the just. On consulting the map I found I had in sheer carelessness turned off south half a mile beyond Ardvannoch instead of keeping along the well-defined track due west. I could give half-a-dozen most excellent reasons for making such a mistake, but to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, it was a piece of gross and inexcusable carelessness, and when I next do walk abroad at the New Year I have determined to take a lantern and matches, in addition to brains chastened by experience.

The "Towers" still weighed heavily on my mind, and

2 A.M. on Saturday, the 25th February 1905, saw Gilbert Thomson and myself leaving Killin Junction Station with the aid of a lantern. At 3.15 A.M. we surrounded the Bridge of Lochay Hotel, and having captured Nelson and Grove with great stores of provisions, &c., we conducted our captives up Glen Lochay, and turning north a quarter of a mile beyond Duncroisk, 7.50 A.M. found us on the summit of Meall Ghaordie in thick mist. Taking a compass course north-west, we descended a fairly steep slope composed of grass and small rocks consolidated by ice. To ensure the respectability of our garments, we put on the rope, and cutting steps here and there, soon reached snow and a more moderate angle. A thousand feet from the top we emerged from the mist, and it seemed as if in a moment we had been transported by a magician's wand into fairyland. The same effect is produced when one comes out into a forest glade lit up with bright sunshine after an hour or two's stay in some limestone cave. Sunlight seems, then, something quite novel and unreal, and of magic power and charm. So it was now. Behind us, mist, cold, and gloom; before us, blue sky and bright sun, dark winding river and snow-draped hills. The whole of the upper part of Glen Lyon from Cashlie to the north end of the loch lay at our feet. The sun lit up a grand circle of snow-covered "Munros" to the west, and An Grianan, like a sparkling sugar-cone, stood over against us above Cashlie. Steering straight for the bridge we could see over the Lyon just to the east of Cashlie, we threaded our way down a cliff face (Sloc an Fhir Ruaidh) much broken up and gracefully festooned with ice stalactites, but affording some sport in the prevailing wintry conditions. We were told afterwards by the farmer at Cashlie that the best route from the summit of Ghaordie to the farm was to continue due west from the summit along the ridge for about a mile, and turn off north just before reaching a cairn; a straight course can then be made direct for the farm, and by this route all cliffs are avoided. At 10.30 we were sitting in the farm parlour drinking the health of our entertainers in milk. Since my last visit to Glen Lyon I had gleaned a considerable amount of information about the "Towers,"

and had learned that they had been defunct for some centuries, but that the foundations of four might still be seen at Cashlie. Nelson kindly volunteered to assist me in measuring the ruins of the four towers, the first of which lies between Cashlie and the river, and the last between the road and the river one mile west. Thomson and Grove meantime walked on towards the Bridge of Balgie, and at 12.15 Nelson and I started in chase. The views here both up and down the glen are fine, and for the first three miles we turned repeatedly to admire the rock-faces of the twin shoulders of Meall Ghaordie, Creag Laoghain (2,663 feet), and Creagan Tulabhan (2,250 feet), which, seen end on, looked like independent peaks. One narrow and straight snow gully on Creagan Tulabhan looked as if it would have given a good climb, and I should not wonder if this shoulder rewarded the search of the ultramontane. An Grianan (over 2,500 feet) also stands up very boldly to the north of Cashlie, but there is no climbing to be had on it. A stern chase is proverbially a long one, and we only caught the fugitives the other side of the Bridge of Balgie, where they had stopped for a meal. Leaving us a jar of jam in exchange for the rope, they went on up the Lochan na Lairig road, and we soon followed tramping doggedly up to the summit of the pass (1,805 feet), not a yard of downhill in the four and a half miles. The monotony of the glen is relieved by a fine view of the north side of the Tarmachans, which show from here a serrated ridge. One and a half miles from the south end of the lochan we crossed the stream, and steering a little west of due south we struck the highroad on Loch Tay side at Morenish. Now and then we came across traces of a path, but for practical purposes there is no track, notwithstanding the evidence of the Ordnance Survey Map to the contrary. Just before turning off the highroad, the Club's Honorary President passed us driving, and at 5.35 P.M. we arrived at Loch Tay Station, our memories stored with all the varied incidents and scenes of a day's trip successful from every point of view.



# THE CASHLIE FORTS.

In reference to Glen Lyon there is an old Gaelic saying, which translated reads: "The Feinne have twelve castles in the dark crooked glen of rough stones." \* The Feinne (Fionn, singular; Feinne, plural) were one of the early Celtic tribes, who made their home in the western part of Scotland. The sites of the twelve castles can still be shown. Beinn Chaisteal, the hill to the south-east of Beinn Doireann, is so-called from having had the westernmost of the twelve castles on its slopes.† At Cashlie (Castles) the remains of four castles are still visible, and the site of a fifth is pointed out near Dalchiorlich, a farm on the south bank of the Lyon, nearly opposite Cashlie.

Each of the four castles or forts now consists simply of a number of stones lying, roughly speaking, in a circle. Three of the castles are built on a slope, and preparatory to erecting the walls a level foundation seems to have been prepared by raising a mound of earth against the sloping hillside. The interior of the castles is fairly clear of stones. The foundations of the walls, which were about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick, can be traced fairly well, though many stones lie scattered immediately inside and outside the walls, and many others have fallen down the sloping mound or even beyond.

At the present time there are no two stones standing one on the top of the other. According to the "Statistical Account of Scotland," ‡ published in 1792, the height of the walls was then "inconsiderable, not above 5 feet; but a good many of the stones have fallen."

In the "New Statistical Account," § published fifty years later, we read: "The original height of the walls cannot now with accuracy be traced or ascertained; . . . but the presumption is that it was not less than 12 feet." In the "Lairds of Glenlyon," || Mr Duncan Campbell says: "Glenlyon tradition strongly points to these round forts having been all lofty and roofed edifices, but the diameter of the Cashlie forts is too great for any beam to cover it."

With the exception of one huge boulder in the wall of Caisteal an Duibhne, the stones now to be seen are of an ordinary size, 3 feet by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by 1 being the average dimensions. The huge boulder referred to probably fell from An Grianan, the hill just above, and the builders of the fort used it *in situ* as a portion of their wall. There are, in the neighbourhood, a number of similar huge boulders, which have evidently had the same origin.

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\* "The Lairds of Glenlyon," Duncan Campbell, p. 3. "The Gaelic Kingdom in Scotland," Chas. Stewart, p. 70. "Sketches of the Highlanders of Scotland," Major-General David Stewart, p. 22.

† "The Book of Garth and Fortingall," Duncan Campbell, pp. 42, 43.

‡ Vol. II. p. 456. } These extracts refer generally to the forts in  
§ Vol. X. p. 550. } Glen Lyon, not specially to those at Cashlie.

|| Page 317.

The cause of the disappearance of the walls of the castles is "the constant dilapidation carried on by people from the neighbouring villages,"\* or rather farm-houses, who make use of the stones for building enclosure walls, sheep-fanks, &c.

There is no trace of any cement or mortar having been employed.\* There are no traces of any openings in the walls, nor of any dividing walls in the interior of the forts.

For what purpose were these castles used?

The "New Statistical Account"\* says: "It does not clearly appear that they were watch-towers, as has been conceived by some, as they are but *seldom* in view of each other, and are as often in low as in high situations."

Campbell states† that "there can be little doubt these towers were used both for protection and watch-towers."

Stewart's opinion is,‡ that "these castles formed refuges to which all the inhabitants fled in times of danger, but they may also have at other times been to some extent used for residence. It is undoubted that the more immediate retainers of the chieftain would form a small colony whose houses surrounded the fort; but whether he himself lived within, or had a dwelling-house adjoining, it is impossible to say."

From the fact that there were five forts at Cashlie in a distance of one mile, I should not think that the Cashlie forts were built as watch-towers, though of course one of them might have been built for that purpose.

**Castle No. 1.**—To come to details with regard to the forts. Arriving from the east, the first Cashlie fort is immediately below Cashlie farm-house, just to the south of the road. It is called "Caisteal McNiall" on the six-inch Ordnance Survey Map. Campbell calls it "Caisteal Mhic-Reill,"§ and thinks that the castle is so designated from the name of its last inhabitant. In "the fourteenth century" the castles were probably allowed to fall into ruins, and for the convenience of hunting parties "pubuls" or sylvan lodges were built.|| The next farm west from Cashlie is called Pubul. The ground slopes away to the south, on which side is a semicircular enclosure, abutting on the castle, diameter 24 feet, radius  $10\frac{1}{2}$  (inside measurements); its diameter runs east and west, and the stones forming this side are built close in to the mound of the castle with no space between.

**Castle No. 2** is situated half a mile west of No. 1, immediately to the south of the road, and is named Caisteal Con a Bhacain or castle of the dog's keeper. It is so-called from a remarkable stone shaped

\* "New Statistical Account," Vol. X. p. 550.

† "The Laids of Glenlyon," p. 3.

‡ "Gaelic Kingdom in Scotland," p. 71.

§ "The Book of Garth and Fortingall," p. 37.

|| "The Book of Garth and Fortingall," p. 38.

exactly like a dog's head and neck, rising straight out of the ground, some 60 yards east of the Caisteal.

Bacan nan Con, as the stone is called, that is, the dog's keeper or tether stake, "to which the Fingalians tied their stag-hounds, . . . is a thin stone, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet in height, resembling the letter *q*, with the small end set into the ground." \*

Mr Campbell also remarks on this stone, and says : " This stone, in form like a huge (!) figure 7, is now so deeply buried in the ground, that little more than the head and a few inches of the shaft of it can be seen.† . . . It bears no marks of chisel or hammer on the part of it above ground ; but if it was not shaped for a tether stake by man, Nature had strangely done that work for him. The *bacan* is supposed to have mysterious influence on those who pass under it." ‡ A very quaint superstition in regard to this influence is mentioned by Anderson in his " Guide to the Highlands." §

The measurements of the stone are as follows :—

From the tip of the nose to the back of the head is 24 inches, and the line is parallel to the ground.

From the top of the head to the base of the neck where it enters the ground is a straight line of 32 inches.

From the top of the head to the junction of the lower jaw with the neck is 18 inches.

The stone is some 3 inches thick, and is surrounded by a circle of small stones measuring 20 feet on its outer circumference.

As will be seen from the measurements given below, Caisteal Con a Bhacain is much the largest of the four. The walls have been built on a mound of earth which is 12 feet high on the south, merging into the hillside on the north.

**Castle No. 3** is a quarter of a mile west of No. 2, just north of the road, and is called Caisteal an Duibhne, the castle of the black man, supposed by Mr Campbell to be King Duf (died 967). || The stones of this castle are considerably scattered. One huge boulder (19 feet long, 10 feet broad, and 10 feet in height above the ground) is built into the north wall. This castle also is built on an earth mound, the ground sloping away to the south : the mound is not so high as in Castle No. 2.

**Castle No. 4** is a quarter of a mile west of No. 3, 100 yards south of the road, close to the river, and is known as Caisteal an Deirg, the castle of the red man. It is situated on flat ground, and has consequently no mound : its stones are very much scattered and the foundations of the walls are ill-defined.

\* " New Statistical Account," Vol. X. p. 550.

† " The Book of Garth and Fortingall," p. 38.

‡ " The Book of Garth and Fortingall," p. 39.

§ 4th Ed. 1863, pp. 387-8.

|| " The Book of Garth and Fortingall," p. 35.

The following measurements of the four castles are approximate, and were made by stepping out the distances :—

		CIRCUMFERENCE.		INSIDE DIAMETER.	
		Outside. Feet.	Inside. Feet.	N. to S. Feet.	E. to W. Feet.
Castle No. 1	.	190	90	26½	30
" " 2	.	317	155	32½	55
" " 3	.	250	117	35	37½
" " 4	.	232	117	36	36

The measurements of the outside were taken round the outer circle of stones, so that in the case of Castles 3 and 4, which are practically the same size, No. 3 has a larger outside measurement, because being built on a slope it has a mound which is included in the measurement, whereas No. 4 being on the flat has no mound.

F. S. GOGGS.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THIRTY-FOURTH MEET OF THE CLUB, NEW YEAR, 1905.

LOCH AWE.

THE New Year's Meet of the Club was held at Loch Awe Hotel from Friday, 30th December, to Tuesday, 2nd January, and was attended by a large number of members and friends. The members present were, viz. :—

John Rennie (*President*), J. H. Bell, J. W. Burns, Fraser Campbell, W. Inglis Clark, W. Douglas, J. W. Drummond, S. A. Gillon, F. S. Goggs, T. E. Goodeve, Howard Hill, P. A. Hillhouse, W. P. Ker, W. R. Lester, J. H. A. M'Intyre, J. Maclay, T. Meares, A. Moncrieff, W. A. Morrison, H. T. Munro, W. Nelson, H. Raeburn, A. E. Robertson, E. B. Robertson, A. W. Russell, George Sang, C. W. Walker, H. Walker—28 in all.

Unfortunately we have again to record that the weather was not all that could be desired. On Saturday the atmospheric conditions were more akin to October than to mid-winter. There was no frost in the air, the sky was hidden by dull grey clouds, and the hillsides were entirely bare of snow. Only those peaks above 3,000 feet carried any signs of winter, and this showed in the boulders being thinly covered with verglass and hoar frost.

On Saturday no rain actually fell, but the day was sunless and dreary, and the views not extensive.

Many expeditions were carried out, one party scaling the north face of Stob Dearg of Cruachan from Glen Noe. The Black Shoot of Beinn Eunaich was climbed by another, and some fine climbing was done on the cliff of Stob Garbh from Coire Creachainn. Ben Bhuidhe was also visited as well as Beinn Eunaich and Beinn a' Chochuill, and the highest peak of Cruachan, in the ordinary way, by others.

On Sunday it rained most of the day, and the soft sleet which fell at higher levels made the going there very treacherous. The snow, balling freely on the hobnailers, gave no hold on the grass-covered slopes, and many spills

were recorded, but notwithstanding the unpleasant conditions a number of expeditions were successfully carried out.

On Monday the weather was, in the forenoon at least, a little better ; but shortly after mid-day the rain began again, and there were more clothes to dry in the evening. However, many hills were bagged, including Beinn nan Aighean on the other side of Glen Kinglass.

If the conditions outside were the reverse of festive, the same did not hold good for the evening hours spent indoors, where the fun and jollity waxed fast and furious, and the games of fives and curling on the billiard table went on without ceasing.

The lantern shows were also much enjoyed. The Rev. A. E. Robertson showed a number of beautiful pictures of Ben Cruachan and of the neighbouring mountains, and Messrs Clark, Douglas, and Raeburn told of their respective summer holidays in the Alps.

## THIRTY-FIFTH MEET OF THE CLUB, EASTER 1905.

## SLIGACHAN.

The Easter Meet of the Club was divided, being held at Sligachan and Kingshouse, from Thursday, 20th April, to Tuesday, 25th April. The members present at Sligachan were:—J. Rennie (President), D. S. Campbell, W. Inglis Clark, W. Douglas, T. E. Goodeve, W. Lamond Howie, W. N. Ling, R. Macdonald, J. H. A. M'Intyre, D. Mackenzie, A. E. Maylard, T. Meares, H. T. Munro, J. A. Parker, H. Raeburn, W. C. Slingsby, G. A. Solly, F. C. Squance, Harry Walker. Guests:—J. J. Brigg, W. A. Brigg, Eric Greenwood, Erik Ullen, and C. Clark.

We have great pleasure in being able to record a distinct improvement in the weather conditions as compared with our previous visit to the Isle of Sunshine and Mist; for although there was plenty of mist there was plenty of sunshine as well, and the wind, though keen and cold, did not blow on both sides of the hills at once, and permitted many difficult expeditions to be carried out with pleasure and comfort. On the northern sides of the hills the rocks were covered with fog crystals, and the corries carried a considerable quantity of snow, while on the southern faces the rocks were black, dry, and easy to climb. The journey to Skye was made under ideal weather conditions, and the Hon. Secretary's other arrangements for our comfort were worthy of the weather.

On Friday the President led a party over the western ridge of Sgùrr nan Gilleann; Mr Raeburn led a party up the east face of the Castles; Mr Parker made a traverse of Clach Glas and Blaven; while another party went over Bruach na Frithe.

On Saturday most of these expeditions were repeated, and Mr Raeburn traversed Garsbheinn, Sgùrr nan Eag, Sgùrr Dubh na Dabheinn, Alaisdair-Dubh Gap, Tearlach, Alaisdair, Sgumain, on his way from Camasunary to Glen Brittle.

On Sunday the best expeditions were over Banachdich and Ghreadaidh by one party, while another made an ascent of Blaven by a new ridge.

On Monday most of the climbs were done in the Sgùrr nan Gilleann group.

#### KINGSHOUSE.

Weather cold but practically dry, wind keen but moderate in force, and clear views with occasional clouds, formed a good foundation for a successful Meet. A gathering of fifteen, packed tightly into an unpretentious but most comfortable inn, and a general family-party air, suggested rather the early Meets of the Club than the big gatherings of recent years, not altogether to the disadvantage of the small party.

The following were present :—Burns, Grove, Gall Inglis, Maclay, Moore, Naismith, Morrison, Nelson, Newbigging, Rohde, and Gilbert Thomson—members; and J. K. H. Inglis, W. G. Macalister, A. S. Macharg, and James A. Mackenzie—guests. The first detachment, consisting of all except the Glasgow men, travelled with the Sligachan party on Thursday morning as far as Bridge of Orchy, then drove along the Kingshouse road till they could conveniently strike up over Meall a Bhuidh and Clachlet. The bulk of the Glasgow men came up by the afternoon train, and while some shared the driving accommodation with the luggage, the others walked. Macalister and Mackenzie did not arrive till the following evening.

On Friday, Buchaille Etive was climbed by four parties. Maclay, Rohde, and Macharg went up the Crowberry Ridge, turning the sensational traverse by going into the gully on the right. It was only on their return that they discovered that they had been on the ledge from which this traverse starts. Burns, Morrison, and Newbigging ascended the northern buttress, starting from the Crowberry Gully at a conspicuous snow patch (shown in the illustration facing p. 313, Vol. VII. of the *Journal*), then up a shallow depression above a well-marked rectangular recess



and on to the arête of the narrow gully, which they followed till they reached the broad ledge which traverses the face. Naismith and Thomson ascended the same buttress, nearer the Great Gully. This buttress admits of many variations, holds and hitches being plentiful, although the rocks are steep. The Great Gully was ascended by Grove, Moore, and Nelson, who found some difficulties in the condition of the pitches, and at places a close adherence to the rocks on the left was desirable. Three of the parties met on the top, and at the instigation of Naismith and Thomson, who wished to complete a climb begun fifteen years before, a number walked right on to the south end of the ridge.

On Saturday, Burns, Grove, Macalister, Mackenzie, Moore, Morrison, Nelson, and Newbigging drove to within half-a-mile of Clachaig, climbed the west end of Aonach Eagach to Sgòr nam Fiannaidh, and returned along the ridge. It was a scramble of about four miles, the rope being used for about three-quarters of the distance. On the summit of Meall Dearg, the card recording the ascent by which Robertson completed his bag of Munros, was found in a corked champagne bottle—otherwise empty. Maclay and Rohde, accompanied this time by Naismith and Thomson (Macharg having had to leave), repeated their ascent of the Crowberry Ridge, but a fall of snow put an end to all thought of the traverse. The climb in any case is considerably stiffer than the north buttress, the rocks being exceedingly steep. The party descended by a mixed route, and had some fairly stiff scrambling on a ridge east of the curved one.

On Sunday, a party of eight walked over to Dalness, in response to a very kind invitation to lunch with Mrs Stuart. The number would have been larger, but it was as large as Mrs Stuart had been led to expect, and the others had a natural (though as it turned out quite unnecessary) hesitation about adding to it. The extreme heartiness of the welcome, and the numerous pictures, heirlooms, and relics which the visitors saw, made this one of the most interesting events of the Meet. On the same day a further climb was made on the north buttress by Burns, Macalister, Morrison, and Newbigging, who kept on this occasion as

much as possible to the left. They reported an interesting chimney marked by a huge balanced block, leading up from the prominent ledge above referred to.

Rohde left on Sunday afternoon, and on Monday the rest left for the afternoon train—eight over the peaks and five by road. These last had to travel on the “ride and run” system, a dogcart being the only driving accommodation after the luggage had been provided for. Maclay led a party of six up the conspicuous clean-cut snow gully facing Kingshouse, and running up to Stob Glas Choire.

## LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

THERE are not many gifts from members to record, and the contributions from Mr Adam Smail and Mr D. Sime are therefore the more welcome. The Club are fortunate in having outside its ranks such well-wishers for its success in a literary direction, and desire to return Messrs Smail and Sime their heartiest thanks.

By whom presented  
(when not purchased).

The Statistical Account of Scotland, drawn up from the Communications of the Ministers of the different Parishes by Sir John Sinclair. 21 vols. A most valuable publication, in which Sir John records that he had united "the labours of above nine hundred individuals in one work" - - -	Purchased.
The New Statistical Account of Scotland by the Ministers of the respective Parishes, under the Superintendence of a Committee. 15 vols. (1834-45) - - - - -	"
The Misty Isle of Skye. J. A. Macculloch. (1905)	"
An Economical History of the Hebrides and Highlands of Scotland. John Walker, D.D. 2 vols. (1808) - - - - -	"
Observations made in a Journey through the Western Counties of Scotland in the Autumn of 1792. Robert Heron. 2 vols. (1793) - - -	"
Memoirs of the Geological Survey. The Geology of West Central Skye with Soay. C. T. Clough and A. Harker - - - - -	Board of Education.
The Scottish Tourist. 9th Edition. (1845) - -	Adam Smail.
History of West Calder, by a Native. (1885) -	"
A Nook in the Apennines. Leader Scott. (1881) -	"
The Alpine Guide. Part 2. The Central Alps. John Ball. (1876) - - - - -	"
The Alpine Guide. Part 3. The Eastern Alps. John Ball. (1879) - - - - -	"
Murray's Handbook for N. Wales. (1861) - -	"
8 Murray's Handbooks and 2 Bædeker's Guides of various European Countries - - - - -	"
Ascent to the Summit of Mont Blanc, 16-18 September 1834. Martin Barry, M.D. - - -	Wm. Douglas.
Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland. Ed. by Francis H. Groome. 6 vols. (1891 Census) - -	Purchased.

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Art Rambles in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. John T. Reid. (1878) - - - -	Purchased.
Rucksack Club. 2nd Annual Report. (Nov. 1904)	Rucksack Club.
Place-Names of Ross and Cromarty. W. J. Watson. (1904) - - - -	Purchased.
[Barrow, John.] Expeditions on the Glaciers : including an Ascent of Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, Col du Geant, and Mont Buét. pp. 122. (London, 1864) - - - -	D. Sime, per Adam Smail.
Robertson, James. An Alpine Pilgrimage in 1875. <i>For Private Circulation.</i> (Kilmarnock, 1876) -	"
Talfourd, T. N. Recollections of a First Visit to the Alps. <i>For Private Circulation.</i> (London, 1841) -	"
Wherry, Geo. Alpine Notes and the Climbing Foot. Cr. 8vo. (Cambridge, 1896) - - - -	"
Vingt-quatre Heures au Mont St Michel. pp. 106. 12mo. (N.D.) - - - -	"
Hugo, Victor. The Rhine, to which is added a Guide for Tourists. (London, 1853) - - - -	"
Ellis, Mrs. Summer and Winter in the Pyrenees. Post 8vo. (London, 1841) - - - -	"
Massie, J. W. A Summer Ramble in Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland. Post 8vo. (London, 1845) - - - -	"
Hall, Fanny W. Rambles in Europe. 2 vols. Cr. 8vo. (New York, 1838) - - - -	"
Ruffini, G. A Quiet Nook in the Jura. Cr. 8vo. (Ed. 1867) - - - -	"
Jennings, Louis J. Rambles among the Hills in the Peak of Derbyshire. Post 8vo. (London, 1880) -	"
Perry, Alex. W. Welsh Mountaineering : a Practical Guide to the Mountains in Wales. Fcap 8vo. (London, 1896) - - - -	"
Howell, James. Instructions for Forreine Travell, 1642. <i>Arber's English Reprints.</i> pp. 88. (London, 1869) - - - -	"
Davy, Sir Humphry. Consolations in Travel. 5th Edition. Fcap 8vo. (London, 1851) - -	"
Old Roads and New Roads. <i>Reading for Travellers.</i> Fcap 8vo, pp. 112. (London, 1852) - - - -	"
Loudon, Mrs. Facts from the World of Nature. Fcap 8vo. (London, 1848) - - - -	"
Marr, John E. The Scientific Study of Scenery. Cr. 8vo. (London, 1900) - - - -	"

	By whom presented (when not purchased).
Scott, Robert H. Weather Charts and Storm Warnings. Cr. 8vo. (London, 1876) - - -	D. Sime, per Adam Smail.
Lytteil, Wm. Landmarks of Scottish Life and Language. Post 8vo. (Edin., 1877) - - - (One half of this book is devoted to Arran.)	"
"Christopher North": a Memoir of John Wilson, by his Daughter. Post 8vo. (Edin., 1879) -	"
Ben Nevis Meteorological Observatory: an Account of its Foundation and Work. 8vo. pp. 40. (Edin., 1885) - - - - -	"
Nicol, Prof. James. The Geology and Scenery of the North of Scotland. Fcap 8vo. pp. 96. (Edin., 1866) - - - - -	"
Cuthbert Bede (Rev. E. Bradley). Glencreggan, or a Highland Home in Cantire. 2 vols. Post 8vo. (London, 1861) - - - - -	"
Ferguson, Malcolm. A Tour through the Highlands of Perthshire. Cr. 8vo. (Glasgow, 1870) -	"
Our Western Hills, by a <i>Glasgow Pedestrian</i> [Rev. Mr Brown of Kirkintilloch]. 12mo. (Glasgow, 1892) - - - - -	"
Macdonald, Hugh. Rambles Round Glasgow. Fcap 8vo. (Glasgow, 1854) - - - - -	"
Hutchison, Wm. Flying Shots. Fcap 8vo. (Edin., 1852) - - - - -	"
Giles, Arthur. Across Western Waves and Home in a Royal Capital. 12mo. (London, 1898) -	"
Gilbert, Wm., <i>ed.</i> Edinburgh in the Nineteenth Century. Cr. 8vo. (Edin., 1901) - - -	"
Geikie, Prof. Arch. The Geology of Edinburgh and its Neighbourhood (an Address). 8vo. pp. 29. (Edin., 1879) - - - - -	"
White, Mary S. L. Beauties and Antiquities of Aberdour and Neighbourhood. Fcap 8vo. pp. 88. (Edin., 1869) - - - - -	"
Fyfe, W. W. Summer Life on Land and Water at South Queensferry. Fcap 8vo. (Edin., 1852) -	"
Henderson, John A. Annals of Lower Deeside. 35 vols. Cr. 8vo. (Aberdeen, 1892) - - -	"

## S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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### THE SADDLE AND SGURR NA SGINE.

(DIVISION III. GROUP IX.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 8'$  to  $57^{\circ} 10'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 25'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

The Saddle [Gaelic, An Diollaid] (3,317 feet). Lies  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Shiel Inn, head of Loch Duich.

The Saddle, west top (3,196 feet). Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west by south of main peak.

Sgurr na Creige (3,082 feet)=the peak of the rock. Lies  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile west by south of main peak. Locally known as Bidean an Dhuuill Bhreac.

Sgurr Leac nan Each (3,013 feet)=the peak of the flat rock of horses. Lies  $1\frac{1}{4}$  mile west of main peak.

Sgurr na Forcan (3,100 feet ap.)=the little forked peak. Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east of main peak.

Top,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of Saddle (3,000 cont.)—locally known as Sgurr nid na Iolaire (peak of the eagle's nest).

Fraochag (3,000 cont.)=the little heather one. Lies 1 mile north-east of Sgurr na Sgine.

Sgurr na Sgine (3,098 feet)=the knife peak, so-called from its sharpness; pron. *Scoor na Skeen-eh*.

The Saddle is distinctly the most sporting hill in the Loch Duich district, and its fine wedge-shaped peak as seen from any of the surrounding mountains at once attracts the eye and compels admiration.

As is the case with most of our Highland hills, its southern sides are for the most part smooth in outline and easily accessible from any point; but its two main northern corries—the Coire Uaine and the Coire Caol—are steep and rough, especially the former, and both rock and snow climbs could undoubtedly be found there.

The most direct way of scaling the Saddle from Shiel Inn is to take the track by the Allt Undalain till the burn forks, go straight up the steep spur facing you, enclosed by the Allt a' Choir Uaine on the west and the Allt a' Choir Chaoil on the east; after about 1,200 feet of pretty steep work the slope will be found to ease off; higher up the ridge becomes well-defined and in places even narrow, but the climbing is nowhere really difficult, and a final pull up of about 100 feet over easy rock, lands one on the peaked and rocky summit.

The view is most varied and extensive. Westwards there is the Atlantic with all that glorious combination of hill and sea and loch, which is ever the characteristic feature of any view from the summit of a high hill on the west coast; while on the landward side the eye travels over a sea of mountain and moor steeped in purple wonder away to the Cairngorms in the east and to Ben Cruachan in the south.

In descending there are a choice of routes. One may go in a westerly direction over Sgurr na Creige and Sgurr Leac nan Each, and then down the ridge over Sgurr a' Gharg Gharaidh and so back to Shiel Inn; or one may travel in an easterly direction by Sgurr na Forcan to the Bealach Coire Mhàlagain, from which Sgurr na Sgine can be easily reached, descending to Shiel Inn either by the Bealach Duibh Leac or by the Allt a' Choire Chaoil.

Shiel Inn is of course the best place to stay at when exploring these parts. It may be reached by steamer from Oban or Glasgow to Glenelg, thence walk or hire or cycle over the Mam Ratagain Pass, or the mail-cart which runs daily from Strone Ferry may be utilised. Shiel Inn can also be approached from Glen Moriston or Tomdown, but the road distances on this side are longer.

A. E. R.

# SGURR A' MHAORAICH (SGURR A' MHORAIRE).

(DIVISION III. GROUP X.)

Lat. 57° 6'; W. Lon. 5° 20'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

Sgurr a' Mhaoraich (3,365 feet), pron. *Scoor-a-Voo-rich*=the peak of the shell-fish; so-called because of the fossil shells which are said to be found on it. [*N.B.*—This mountain appears on all the old O.S. maps as Sgurr a' Mhoraire, but in the new six-inch O.S. map and on the new 4 miles to the inch map it is written as above.]

Sgurr a' Mhaoraich Beag (3,101 feet),  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west by north of main peak.

Am Bathaiche (3,000 cont.); pron. *Baa-iche*=the sanctuary,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N.N.E. of the main peak.

This fine hill stands at the extreme east end of Loch Hourn; its south-east sides sloping into Loch Quoich. It forms a striking object as one sails up into the upper reaches of Loch Hourn, its great bulky mass crowned by a fine peak seeming to block up the whole eastern horizon.

It can be most easily ascended from Quoich Bridge, ten miles west by road from Tomdown Inn, a good shooting path from that point running up to Bac nan Ceannaichean (2,111 feet)=the ridge of the pedlars, so-called because two pedlars are buried near here who had been murdered in a bothy hard by. From this point a fine ridge walk leads over Sgurr Coire nan Eiricheallach to the summit of Sgurr a' Mhaoraich. The view westwards which bursts upon the sight as one steps on to the summit, with the long narrow ragged trench of Loch Hourn, 3,300 feet below, gleaming like silver in the afternoon sun, will never be forgotten by any one who has the good fortune to see it.

An easy ridge from the main top runs northwards to Am Bathaiche, a top overlooking Glen Quoich; further to the north-west the ridge ends at A' Ghurr Thionail (the sheep-gathering point), from which an easy descent can be made to the Bealach Duibh Leac, and so to Shiel Inn. Sgurr a' Mhaoraich lies remote from any place of public





*A. E. Robertson.*

LOCH QUICH, LOOKING WEST TO SGURR A' NHAORAICH.



resort, and probably the best way therefore is to tackle it *en route* from one point to another ; *e.g.*, starting from Tomdown Inn, drive or cycle to Quoich Bridge, climb Sgurr a' Mhaoraich, descending on Kinloch Hourn (where accommodation may sometimes be had in the non-shooting season), or walk northwards and descend on Glen Shiel by the Bealach Duibh Leac, or *vice versa*.

No climbs have been described on it.

Mr Rennie's "Diary of a Week's Ridge Walking," *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 291, will be found most interesting and useful to those exploring this region. A. E. R.

## GLEOURACH AND SPIDEAN MIALACH.

### (DIVISION III. GROUP XI.)

Lat. 57° 6'; W. Lon. 5° 14'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.

Gleourach (3,395 feet), pron. *Glow-rach*, from the Gaelic Gleadhraich, a noisy or rattling place.

Gleourach, east top (3,291 feet),  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile east of Gleourach.

Spidean Mialach (3,268 feet), 2 miles east by south of Gleourach.

Gleourach and Spidean Mialach lie on the north side of Loch Quoich in the heart of the Glen Quoich deer forest. They are not characterised by anything remarkable either in shape or form, and there are no rock faces of any magnitude on them, their green grassy corries affording splendid shelter and pasturage for the deer, and they do not on that account for more than one reason hold out any special attractions to the climber ; but the view on a fine day from their tops of the wild and desolate country all around will always reward the hill-walker for his toil.

They can be easily ascended from almost any point. Tomdown Inn in Glengarry is the nearest hotel, past which a good road runs from Invergarry to Loch Hourn.

A. E. R.

## CLUNIE FOREST.

### (DIVISION III. GROUP XII.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 8'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 9'$  to  $5^{\circ} 21'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Survey, Sheet 15.

1. Creag a' Mhàim, pron. *Creag a' Vaim*=the breast rock (3,102 feet), the easternmost of the group,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-south-east of Clunie Inn. It has a cairn with a stick.
2. Druim Sionnach, pron. *Dru-im Shunnach*=the foxes' ridge (3,222 feet), 1 mile north-west of No. 1. Small cairn. *Both name and height are from the six-inch Ordnance Map, the one-inch map giving no name, and only a 3,000 feet contour.*
3. Aonach air Chrith, pron. *Unach air Chree*=the steep of trembling, i.e. the shaking precipice (3,342 feet),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles west by north of No. 1. Cairn with stick.
4. Maol Cheann-dearg, pron. *Mel chen djerak* (accent on the Cheann)=the bald red head (3,214 feet),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles west by north of No. 3. Very small cairn. *The name on the Ordnance Map is applied, possibly correctly, to this peak and No. 3 jointly, but as the latter has a separate name, Maol Cheann-dearg may well be applied to this.*
5. Sgùrr Coire na Feinne, pron. *Scoor Coire na Fāy-neh*=the peak of the corrie of the Fingalians (2,938 feet),\*  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west of No. 4. No cairn.
6. Sgùrr an Doire Leathain, pron. *Scoor an dorra Lēh-an*=the peak of the broad thicket (3,272 feet),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west of No. 4. Cairn and stick. *Both name and height from six-inch map. 3,000 contour only on one-inch map.*
7. Sgùrr an Lochain=the peak of the loch (3,282 feet),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles east-south-east of No. 9. No cairn.
8. Sgùrr Beag=the small peak (2,295 feet),\* 1 mile east of No. 9. No cairn.
9. Creag nan Damh, pron. *Creag nan Daff*=the stag rock (3,102 feet).  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-south-west of site of Battle in Glen Shiel. No cairn.

The watershed of Scotland is at the summit of the road between Glen Shiel and Glen Clunie, as the upper portion of Glen Moriston above Loch Clunie is called. To the south, and parallel to these glens, the group under notice

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\* These heights are by Dr Heddle, see Vol. V. p. 105.

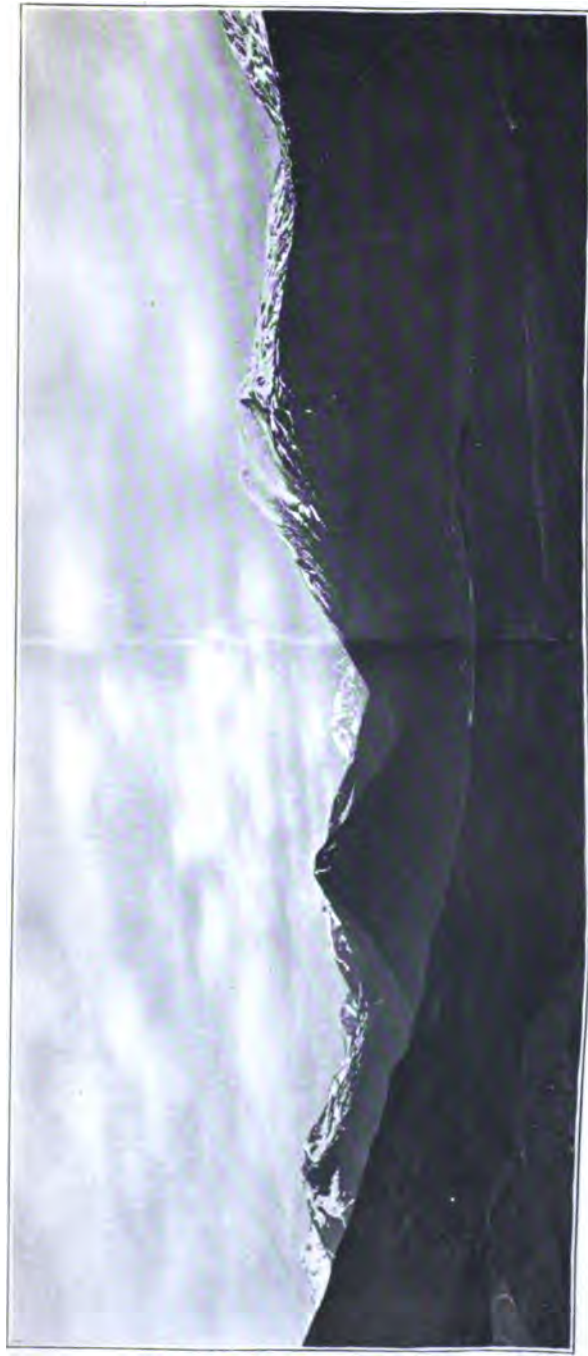
Carn Fuaralach.

Ciste Dhubh.

Sgurr nan Ceathraunhan.

A' Chraolag.

Sgurr nan Conbhairean.



HILLS NORTH OF CLUANIE INN.

*A. E. Robertson.*



extends from Creag a' Mhàim, its eastern summit, in a west-north-west direction to Creag nan Damh, its western, a distance of nearly eight miles in a straight line. In all, it numbers nine summits, seven of them exceeding 3,000 feet in altitude, and these seven are so distinct and well-defined that they may fairly be considered separate mountains. The two easternmost are situated wholly in the tongue of Ross-shire, which here extends into Inverness-shire. The remainder of the group are on the march between the two counties. The small burns flowing north from the four westmost fall into the river Shiel and so into Loch Duich, while from the remainder they find their way to Loch Clunie and the river Moriston. The south-flowing burns from the two eastern summits flow through Loch Loyne to the Moriston; those from the rest of the group drain in to Glen Quoich and through Loch Quoich into the Garry.

The eastern summits can be approached from the excellent inn at Tomdown by a rough and hilly but drivable road, and the western can be easily reached from Shiel Inn on Loch Duich. Far the best centre from which to attack this range, however, as well as those of Sgùrr nan Conbhairean (Conavern), and Tigh Mor, A' Chralaig\* (Cralec), and Mullach Fraoch Choire,† Ciste Dubh, Sgùrr a' Bhealaich Dheirg, and possibly also Beinn Fhada (Attow), and the mountains to the north of West Glen Affric, is Clunie Inn.‡ This inn, though much improved of late years, and quite comfortable, has only three guests' bedrooms, and in spring-time is often occupied by anglers. By road it is twenty-one miles from Invergarry Hotel, but the so-called Invergarry Station is at the southern end of Loch Oich, and about four miles from the hotel, or twenty-five from Clunie. Moreover, the last ten and a half miles

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\* This mountain on the old O.S. maps is called Garbh-Leac, but on the new revised O.S. maps it appears correctly as above.

† This mountain on the old O.S. is called Sgùrr nan Ceathramhan, which was a clerical error, this name being confused with Sgùrr nan Ceathreamhnan at the head of Glen Affric just north of Altbeath. Mullach Fraoch Choire, however, is its correct and original name.

‡ The new issue of the Ordnance maps spell this name Cluanie.

from Tomdown Inn are very rough, and involve an ascent of 900 feet and a descent of 700. The distance from Invermoriston Pier on Loch Ness is about the same, nearly twenty-five miles, and the road is fair, with a very gradual rise all the way. From Clunie to Shiel Inn is under twelve miles, an easy rise of 150 feet to the watershed in two miles, and then a steep descent of nearly 900 feet. A post goes twice a week from Shielhouse, Glenshiel, on Loch Duich, to Clunie on Mondays and Thursdays.

The inn, situated two and a half miles west of Loch Clunie, and 728 feet above sea level, is over-towered by an array of Alpine peaks which, in the opinion of the writer, gives it a position unsurpassed, if not unequalled, for grandeur by any other hotel in Scotland. Whilst the situation of Aviemore may be compared with that of Berne, Banavie with Interlaken, and Sligachan with Zermatt, Clunie will represent La Grave in Dauphiné. In front of its windows, which unfortunately face north, the extremely graceful rocky peak of Ciste Dubh (3,218 feet) is seen at the head of a narrow glen; to the left, and so close that it appears to overshadow the inn, is the rough shoulder of Carn Fuaralach (3,241 feet); to the right, its big cairn showing scarcely two miles away, the whole of the massive south-west face of A' Chralaig\* (3,673 feet) is seen from base to summit. But it is to the Maol Cheann-dearg range on the south side of the valley that the palm must be given, and a more graceful panorama of mountain tops, rocky faces, and wild corries it would be difficult to conceive. Facing north, they hold large snow-fields far into the summer; indeed, when seen by the writer towards the end of May, with an almost tropical sun scorching down into the valley, it required a very small stretch of imagination to believe that the mountains were 10,000 feet high, and the snow-fields glaciers—an illusion which was assisted by several genuine, though small, bergschrunds which were distinctly seen from the valley.

Though the distance looks formidable on the map, or indeed from Clunie or the mountains on the north side of

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\* This mountain on the old O.S. maps is called Garbh-Leac, but on the new revised O.S. maps it appears correctly as above.





*A. E. Robertson.*

CLUANIE FOREST HILLS.



the glen, the whole range can be easily negotiated in a moderate day, especially with a little artificial aid. The best plan is to drive to the site of the battle of 1719 in Glen Shiel,  $5\frac{1}{4}$  miles from Clunie, at the point 399 feet above sea level, where the road crosses from the north to the south side of the river. From here strike up through grassy knolls for Creag nan Damh (3,012 feet). The ascent should not take more than an hour and a half. About five hours, exclusive of halts, will be required for the walk from here along the summit ridge to Creag a' Mhàim, involving as it does some 3,400 feet of ascent, and it should be remembered that no water will be met with. The whole range has generally a gentle slope to the south, but to the north are many fine cliffs and corries which would no doubt furnish any amount of rock and snow climbing. Probably the best will be got on the fine rocks of the northern corrie between Maol Cheann-dearg and Aonach air Chrith. As far as is known none has yet been attempted. Creag nan Damh is a well-isolated peak; the Bealach Duibh Leac (2,400 feet) to the west is a used pass from Glen Shiel to Glen Quoich, while the col to the east is only 2,250 feet (about). Sgùrr Beag (2,925 feet) is the next summit. Col, 2,650 feet (about). Then Sgùrr an Lochain (3,282 feet). This is from all points of view a beautiful cone-shaped hill, one of the finest hills of the range, the north-east corrie enclosing the little lochan from which the mountain is named being very grand. The next col is about 2,900 feet. The summit of Sgùrr an Doire Leathain (3,272 feet), which is flat, lies somewhat north of the main ridge. The col beyond is about 2,720 feet. On the next top, Sgùrr Coire na Feinne (2,938 feet), the sheep fence which runs along the summit ridge all the way from Creag nan Damh, and would be useful in misty weather, comes to an end. From here there is only a drop of some 80 feet, and then a steady rise to Maol Cheann-dearg (3,214 feet). The next portion of the ridge between this and Aonach air Chrith is the narrowest of the whole range, but it nowhere presents the least difficulty, though, as previously stated, it has some very fine cliffs to the north of it. After a little intermediate top of about 3,000 feet it drops at the col to 2,775 feet

(about). Aonach air Chrith (3,342 feet) is the highest of the range. From it there is a fine ridge extending north-north-east, which rises to a pretty little top. This might afford some scrambling, but probably of no great difficulty. The next col is about 2,900 feet, then a small nameless top of about 3,060 feet, another drop of 120 feet, and a rise to Drum Sionnach (3,222 feet), a flat round-topped hill. There is not much dip between this and Creag a' Mhàim (3,102 feet), the last and easternmost of the range, which, however, is a full mile away. From here Clunie will easily be reached in one and a half hours *via* the Tomdown road.

The most striking feature of the view is the magnificent appearance of the Saddle immediately to the west, without doubt one of the finest mountains on the mainland of Scotland.

The range is composed of schists, and fine specimens of black mica (Hangtonite) are to be found in its central portions.

H. T. M.

## SGURR FHUARAN.

(SGURR OURAN.)

(DIVISION III. GROUP XIII.).

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 10\frac{1}{2}'$  to  $57^{\circ} 13\frac{1}{2}'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 19'$  to  $5^{\circ} 24'$ .  
Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

1. Sgurr an t-Scarraich (*Scoor an t-yerrick*)=foals' peak (1,887 feet), a rugged little peak at the entrance of Glen Shiel.
2. Sgurr na Moraich (*Scoor na Morrach*)=peak of the saltings (2,870 feet), a bold conical peak at head of Loch Duich connected with next peak by col (2,428 feet).
3. Sgurr nan Saighead (*Scoor na Sa'it*)=peak of arrows (2,987 feet), a triple-headed and rather narrow ridge with deep precipitous carries on the north-east. Col, 2,713 feet.
4. Sgurr Fhuaran (*Scoor Ooran*)=peak of springs (3,505 feet), culminating peak of the group, with a steep cliff on the north-east and a rather sharp arete on the west, well seen from Shielhouse Inn. Col, 2,856 feet.



*To face p. 266.*

*W. Douglas.*

SGURR OURAN AND LOCH DUICH.



5. Sgurr na Carnach (*Scoor na Carnach*)=peak of cairns (3,270 feet), a rocky cone. Col, 2,783 feet.
6. Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe (*Scoor na Kisty Dovi*)=peak of the black chest, a fine rough peak with craggy faces on the north side, at head of Choire Dhomhain (*Corre Doin*)=deep corrie, facing Glen Lichd. It is followed by a rugged and rather narrow ridge on which are
7. Sgurr na Spainteach (*Scoor na Spanteach*)=Spaniards' peak (3,129 feet), called after a pass in the ridge over which the Spaniards marched to join the Highland forces before the battle of Glen Shiel, 1719.
8. Sgurr an Fuar-tholl (*Scoor an Oorill*)=peak of the cold hole (2,937 feet). The range terminates at the Bealach an Lapan (2,371 feet).

The name given to the range of mountains, of which Sgurr Fhuaran is chief, is Beinn Mhor (big mountain), in contrast to Beinn Fhada, Ben Attow (long mountain). The mountains stand at the head of Loch Duich, and extend along the north side of Glen Shiel and the south side of Glen Lichd for about six miles, though they might really be said to stretch as far as Clunie at the head of Glen Moriston ; but for the purposes of the Guide-Book, they will be taken as terminating about one mile beyond the falls in Glen Shiel. These peaks are grand objects in the different views of Loch Duich, their principal fault being that they are perhaps too stiff and symmetrical in outline. But there is a stateliness and grandeur which, added to the fact that they show their full height above the sea, amply makes amends for any faults in the direction of stiffness of form. Sgurr Fhuaran itself commands grand views in all directions of the Cuillins and other Skye ranges, Applecross, Torridon, Loch Carron, Monar, Glen Affric, Knoydart mountains and Ben Nevis. There are some fine corries on the north-east side of the range—notably Coire na h-Uaighe (*Corrie na hooagh*), on the Glen Lichd side of Sgurr na Saighead, and a grand slabby face of the same peak facing east. There is also a vast steep slope on Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe (*Scoor na Kisty Dovi*) over Glen Shiel below the falls—the Ciste Duibhe in fact, that gives its name to the peak.

*Centres.*—Shielhouse Inn is by far the best centre. Glenelg Hotel, Balmacarra Hotel, and Clunie Inn at head of Glen Moriston may also be used. Best route by steamer

from Oban to Glenelg, then walk or hire ten miles to Shiel—over Mam Ratagan—grand view. Train route to Strome Ferry, thence by daily mail cart to Shielhouse.

*Usual Route.*—Nos. 1, 2, 3 omitted. Cross bridge near Shiel Hotel, and follow the north bank of the river past Loch Shiel for about one and a quarter miles. Very wet and rough in places. Strike straight up west arete of No. 4. First part is steepest. At top there is usually a small pool of water, hence the name. There is a choice of return routes. Either is interesting. Shortest, turn north-west and cross Nos. 3 and 2, reaching the shore of Loch Duich about one and a quarter miles from the inn. Another, turn north-west till col (2,713 feet) between Nos. 4 and 3 is reached, then strike down steep slopes into Glen Lichd; follow the burn descending from the corrie at back of No. 4. About half-way down is a very curious and interesting spot called Ciste Duich-Nachchest, one of three of the same name in the district, and not to be confounded with the crags in Glen Shiel. It is a very narrow, dark ravine, the stream turning at right angles with its course for a short distance, and is best visited from below. The sides are quite sheer and smooth and over 100 feet high. Glen Lichd is struck about two and a half miles from head of Loch Duich. Another route is to follow the ridge over Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, and make a long steep descent into Glen Shiel above the falls. This is most interesting, and offers no difficulty beyond being rough in places, and of course, a good deal of up and down.

*N.B.*—A bridge crosses the Shiel at Achnagart at the foot of No. 5.

*Climbs.*—None recorded.

C. B. P.

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## SGURR A' BHEALAICH DHEIRG.

(DIVISION III. GROUP XIV.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 10'$  to  $57^{\circ} 11'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 14'$  to  $5^{\circ} 17'$ .  
Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 15.



Sgurr a' Bhealaich Dheirg (3,378 feet), pron. *Scoor a Veallich yerrick*=the peak of the red pass. Lies on the north side of the top of Glen Shiel, 3 miles north-west from Cluanie Inn.

Saileag (3,124 feet)=the little heel. Lies 1 mile west from Sgurr a Bhealaich Dheirg.

Aonach Meadhoin (3,284 feet), pron. *Unach mee-an*=the middle lump. Lies 1 mile east from Sgurr a' Bhealaich Dheirg.

Carn Fuaralach (3,241 feet)=the cairn of the cold place. Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north-east from Aonach Meadhoin.

Ciste Dhubh (3,218 feet)=the black chest. Lies  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles north by west of Cluanie Inn.

This group of hills lie on the north side of the upper east end of Glen Shiel, having the Sgurr Fhuaran group on the west and A' Chralaig and his big neighbours on the east. Their southern sides are smooth and grassy, and can be easily ascended anywhere, but their northern corries are rougher and more rocky. The highest peak—Sgurr a' Bhealaich Dheirg—has a very picturesque and finely situated summit. Like the Drochaid Ghlas on Ben Cruachan, the summit is set back about fifty yards off the main ridge on the narrow saddle which juts out in a north-east direction, so that in mist one might easily go wrong unless this is taken into account. This summit overlooks the Glas Coire, which is a very steep and rough corrie, and which would probably be found to yield some climbs were it only a little more accessible.

Carn Fuaralach commands a fine view of Glen Shiel and Glen Moriston.

The Ciste Dhubh is a shapely little peak, with a very steep eastern face, the rocks on which, though not very high—about 200 feet—yet are steep, and might quite readily yield some sport.

These hills are best climbed from Cluanie Inn (Gaelic *chuan*, a meadow), which is close beside them; it has but limited accommodation, and is very plain, but is quite comfortable.

A. E. R.

## THE A' CHRALAIG GROUP.

### (DIVISION III. GROUP XV.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 11'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 9'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheets 15 and 20.

A' Chralaig (3,673 feet), pron. *A' Chraa-lik*=the circular place. [*N.B.*—This mountain on the old O.S. maps is called Garbh-Leac, but on the new revised O.S. maps it appears correctly as above.] Lies  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-east of Cluanie Inn.

Coire Odhar (3,295 feet), pron. *Coir-our*=the dun-coloured corry. Lies 1 mile north of A' Chralaig.

Mullach Fraoch Choire (3,614 feet)=the top of the heather corry. Lies  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of A' Chralaig. [*N.B.*—This mountain on the old O.S. maps is called Sgurr nan Ceathramhan, which was a clerical error, this name being confused with the Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnán at the head of Glen Affric, just north of Altbeath. Mullach Fraoch Choire, however, is its correct and original name.]

A' Chioch (3,000 cont.) = the pap. Lies  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-east of A' Chralaig.

Sgurr nan Conbhairean (3,634 feet), pron. *Scoor nan Con-i-ver-an*=the peak of the dog men, *i.e.* attendants of hunters. Lies  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Loch Clunie.

Tigh Mor (3,285 feet), pron. *Tie Mor*=the big house. Lies 1 mile north of Sgurr nan Conbhairean.

Tigh Mor, second top (3,222 feet, 3,276 feet on six-inch map). Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of first top.

Tigh Mor, third top (3,045 feet). Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north-north-east of second top.

Sail Chaoriunn (3,000 cont.), pron. *Sal. Choorin*=the heel of the rowans. Lies 1 mile south-west of Tigh Mor.

Drochaid an Tuill Esaich (3,250 cont.), pron. *Droch-itch an tool Ee-as-ich*=the bridge of the hollow abounding in waterfalls. Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south-west of Sgurr nan Conbhairean.

Creag a Chaoriunn (3,260 feet)=the peak of the rowans. Lies  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south-east of Sgurr nan Conbhairean.

Carn Ghluasaid (3,140 feet), pron. *Carn Glou-as-itch*=the carn of moving from its screes. Lies 2 miles south-east of Sgurr nan Conbhairean.

This very imposing group of hills lies on the north side of Loch Clunie at the upper west end of Glen Moriston. They include some very high tops, three of them being over



*A. E. Robertson.*

A' CHRALAIG FROM WEST END OF LOCH AFFRIC.



3,600 feet. Generally speaking they may be described as high rolling uplands, rising here and there into graceful domes or peaks. Their western and southern slopes are smooth and rounded, their east and north sides are steeper; but even there, there are no rock faces of any magnitude. Owing, however, to their height and central position, they carry a lot of snow, and they may accordingly be counted on to yield splendid high-level snow walks and climbs.

In height and in general appearance they are to this district what the Cairngorms are to Speyside, and they form together with the Mam Sodhail group on the other side of Glen Affric what may be termed the Ross-shire Cairngorms.

No one who has travelled by road from Tomdown up that long weary five-mile brae can forget the sight that these hills present when he reaches the Bealach before descending to Clunie. Despite the fact that the road has been ascending for miles, reaching a height at the summit of the pass of 1,424 feet, these giants seem to tower up into the sky on the other side of the glen, giving an impression of massive and isolated grandeur and height that is quite unique.

And the views from their summits are most extensive. Lying as they are on the outskirts of south-eastern Ross-shire, there is no higher ground between them and the Cairngorms in the east and the Ben Nevis range in the south. Thus the eye ranges over a vast tract of country to the east and south. I have distinctly made out on more than one occasion, Ben Lawers, Ben Lui, Cruachan, Bidean nan Bian, from the summits of A' Chralaig and Sgurr nan Conbhairean.

The highest peak of the range, A' Chralaig (Garbh Leac) is easily ascended from Cluanie Inn. From the summit a fine ridge runs north over Coire Odhair (3,295 feet) to Mullach Fraoch Choire (3,614 feet)—designated on the old O.S. maps, Sgurr nan Ceathramhan. This ridge at one part is broken up into several sharp pinnacles which may be made to afford some sport. They can be turned on the west side if necessary. Mullach Fraoch Choire has a fairly good east face, and at Easter time steep snow slopes broken

up by rough ribs of rock stretch down from its summit ridge to the Uisge na Garbh-lice.

From the summit of A' Chralaig the ground slopes away gently to the Bealach Coir a' Chait (2,300 feet), a pass and right-of-way from Loch Clunie to Loch Affric; it then rises easily, yet withal roughly, but not steeply, over the Drochaid an Tuill Easaich to Sgurr nan Conbhairean (3,634 feet); from here a fine high-level walk north leads over Tigh Mor into Glen Affric, or by taking a south-east course over Carn Ghluasaid an easy descent can be effected anywhere into Glen Moriston.

It may be remarked that these hills have some very interesting associations with Prince Charlie, and that he made what is probably the first recorded ascent of either A' Chralaig or Sgurr nan Conbhairean! The two caves of the famous "Glen Moriston Men," the eight faithful caterans who fed and sheltered the Prince after Culloden for over a week, are situated in the eastern corries of Tigh Mor and Sgurr nan Conbhairean. One of them is still pointed out in Coire Doe; the other, the site of which is now lost, was in Coire Mheadhoin. On 23rd July 1746, the Prince, with one or two of his followers, arrived "at a hillside above Strath Clunie, there they spent the day covering the Prince with heather to keep off the midges. Starting in the afternoon they travelled about a mile further on, and then steered their course northward, and mounting up a high hill, betwixt the braes of Glen Moriston and Strathglass, came late at night to the very top of it, and being very dark, they were obliged to lodge there all night. Being wet to the skin, and having no fuel to make a fire, the only method he had of warming himself was smoking a pipe. Next day they joined the Glen Moriston men in Coire Doe, where the Prince was lodged in a cave with the finest purling stream that could be, running by his bedside within the cave, as comfortably lodged as if he had been in a royal palace." \*

It may be mentioned in conclusion that the whole range is now cleared of sheep, and under deer. A. E. R.

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\* *Vide* "The Lyon in Mourning"; also W. B. Blaikie's "Itinerary," Scottish Historical Society Publications, No. 23.



*A. E. Robertson*

MULLACH FRAOCH CHOIRE FROM GLEN AFFRIC.





## A' GHLAS BHEINN.

(DIVISION III. GROUP XVI.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 15\frac{1}{2}'$ ; Lon.  $5^{\circ} 18'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

A' Ghlas Bheinn (3,006 feet)=grey mountain.

This hill stands at the head of the strath formed by the waters flowing into the head of Loch Duich at its north-east corner. It forms an agreeable variation on the walk to the Falls of Glomach, either going or returning from Shiel Inn.

Shiel Inn (comfortable) is the best place to stay at.

*Usual Route.*—Follow the road to Dorusduain Lodge. When the lodge is reached, cross the stream, descending from the Bealach na Sroine, and ascend the steep green slopes behind the lodge. These are deeply cut into by ravines. When at about 2,500 feet, a small plateau is crossed, and a final climb leads to top, which commands fine views of Beinn Fhada, Loch Duich, &c. To descend to the Falls of Glomach, bear along the ridge, north-east and then north till the top of the Bealach na Sroine is reached and path to Glomach struck.

*Climbs.*—None recorded.

C. B. P.

## BEINN FHADA.

(BEN ATTOW.)

(DIVISION III. GROUP XVII.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 13\frac{1}{2}'$ ; Lon.  $5^{\circ} 16'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, 20.

Beinn Fhada (3,383 feet)=long mountain.

This well-known hill, usually called Ben Attow, which rises east of Loch Duich and at the west end of Glen Affric, well deserves its name of "Long Mountain," it being

nearly seven miles from end to end. It has strongly marked character, the west end being very rugged and divided by deep precipitous corries into narrow ridges, while the centre mass and highest point is a large almost flat plateau, which towards the east again narrows somewhat.

1. Sgurr a' Choire Gharbh (about 2,800 feet)=peak of the rough corrie. This is the rough peak seen from Loch Duich, which is divided by the deep semicircular nick of Bealach an t-Sealgair ("the hunter's pass") from
2. Ceum na h-Aon Choise (3,000 feet contour)=step for one foot. A sharp ridge leading to
3. Plaide Mhor (3,383 feet)=big flat. The highest summit. This sends a buttress northwards called
4. Meall a' Bhealaich=heap of the pass. It rises steeply over the Bealach an Sgairne, which is the usual route from Kintail to Beaully *via* Glen Affric.
5. Sgurr a' Dubh Dhoire (3,000 feet contour)=peak of the black wood. A peak at the west end over Glen Affric.

Shiel Hotel (comfortable) is the best place to stay at for Beinn Fhada, but the vigorous pedestrian can take it *en route* from Invercannich, or walkers stopping at Glenelg or Balmacarra may reach it by hiring.

*Usual Route.*—From Shiel Inn follow the road to Dourisdhuain Lodge at the head of the north-east arm of Loch Duich. When two miles or so from the inn, and just before reaching Morvich, turn off the road and pass that house; then cross the river Croe (difficult or impossible after rain), and pass Innis a' Chro; then strike up slopes of Beinn Bhuidhe (yellow mountain), as this end of Beinn Fhada is called. Having reached the height of about 1,250 feet, bear somewhat south of east, avoiding the rough ridge of Faradh Nighean Fhearchair (ladder of Farquhar's daughters), and after a rough walk, reach top of No. 1. From this point a rugged ridge leads across Bealach an t-Sealgair to No. 2. Here the ridge is sharp for some distance, and the views of Gleann Lichd below on the south, backed by the peaks of Sgurr Fhuaran, &c., magnificent when the ridge terminates. A walk over the plateau leads to No. 3. By descending from this point north-west, the path to the Bealach na Sgairne may be reached at a point



*A. E. Robertson.*

BEN ATTOW FROM ALTREATH IN GLEN AFFRIC.



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at the head of Gleann Choinneachain, and Loch Duich regained at Dorusduain.

*Climbs.*—None recorded.

The corries on the north-east side of the peaks 1 and 2 are grandly precipitous, and ought to be good climbing.

C. B. P.

[Early this month—April 1905—I climbed Beinn Fhada. From Meall a' Bhealaich the very fine ridge extending north, and forming the western wall of the corrie mentioned in the last paragraph of Mr Phillip's article, is well seen. A magnificent chimney, very narrow and apparently almost perpendicular, runs right up to the actual summit of the northmost top of the ridge, *i.e.*, the top seen to the right of the accompanying photograph. This should probably yield a splendid climb. A careful aneroid measurement gave the height of Ceum na h-Aon Choise, which has only a 3,000 contour on the map, as approximately 3,160 feet. H. T. MUNRO.]

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## SGURR NAN CEATHREAMHNAN.

### (DIVISION III. GROUP XVIII.)

Lat. 57° 15'; Lon. 5° 14'. Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, 20.

Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan (3,771 feet)=peak of the quarters (pron. *Kyer-anan*).

This is a large block of mountain, standing at the head of Glens Affric and Cannich, and east of the Glomach water. Owing to its height and position, it commands grand views in all directions, Mam Sodhail and Sgurr na Lapaich being its only superiors in height, north of the Caledonian Canal.

1. Creag Ghlas (2,750 feet)=grey rock. A conical hill standing east of Falls of Glomach.
2. Stuc Beag (3,250 feet)=little peak ; and
3. Stuc Mhor (about 3,400 feet)=big peak. Summits on the north ridge of the mountain.
4. Creag nan Clachan Geala (3,282 feet)=rock of the white stones. The north-western buttress.
5. Sgurr Gaorsaic (about 2,600 feet) On the east side Loch a' Bhealaich, the head of the Glomach waters.
6. West peak (3,736 feet).
7. Highest point (3,771 feet).
8. Creag a' Choir Aird=rock of the high corrie. This long ridge projects to the north-east of the highest point. Its height is doubtful, but 3,188 feet is the greatest height given on the Ordnance Survey six-inch.
9. An Socach (3,017 feet)=the snout. This summit connects Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan with the Mam Sodhail group.

Shiel Hotel or Balmacarra Hotel are the nearest houses of call, but are both some distance off. They are both comfortable.

*Usual Route.*—From Shiel Hotel, follow the road to Dorusduain Lodge, then branch up Gleann Choinneachain and through the Bealach na Sgairne to Loch a' Bhealaich. This is the ordinary route to Invercannich *via* Glen Affric. Pass the head of the loch, and strike up No. 5. There is a sharp dip of about 500 feet. Then ascend slopes in a nearly easterly direction for three-quarter mile, and finally nearly north to No. 6, the top, seen from the road on the west side of Loch Duich. A dip of 100 feet leads to the sharp top No. 7. In descending, follow ridge south-east for half a mile, then continue south into Glen Affric, striking the junction of the rivers Greanain and Fionn, about one mile above Alltbeath. It makes a pleasant change of route on the return to follow up Gleann Fionn, and cross the watershed into Gleann Lichd, passing the magnificent scenery of the Allt Granda, and striking the Dorusduain road at Morvich, about two and a half miles from Shiel.

*Climbs.*—None recorded.

This mountain is of the same character as most of the hills in this part of Scotland, having deep corries, more or less precipitous, but the cliffs are not massive enough to prove very effective rock climbs.

C. B. P.

## MAM SODHAIL.

(DIVISION III. GROUP XIX.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 17'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 7'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 72. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

Top of Coire Coulavie (3,508), 1 mile south-west of Mam Sodhail.

Ciste Dhubh (3,606),  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south-west of Mam Sodhail.

Mam Sodhail (*Mam Soul*, 3,862),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west of Loch Affric = the barn-shaped hill.

Saoiter Mor (3,500 cont.), 1 mile south-east of Mam Sodhail.

Carn Eige (3,877),  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of Mam Sodhail.

Top between Mam Sodhail and Sgurr nan Lapaich (3,262).

Sgurr na Lapaich (3,401),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles E.S.E. of Mam Sodhail.

Top of Coire Lochan (3,006).

Beinn Fhionnlaidh (3,294), pron. *Ben Ula* = Findlay's peak,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north by west of Carn Eige.

Creag na h-Eige (3,753),  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N.N.E. of Carn Eige.

Sron Garbh (3,500) = the rough nose,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles east of Carn Eige.

An Leth-Chreag (3,443),  $\frac{2}{3}$  mile W.S.W. of Tom a' Choinich.

Tom a' Choinich Beag (3,450).

Tom a' Choinich (3,646),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles E.N.E. of Carn Eige.

Top north of the Allt Toll Easa (3,149),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles W.S.W. of Tuill Creagach.

Tuill Creagach (3,452),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Loch Mullardoch.

Carn Eige and Mam Sodhail, on the borders of central Inverness-shire and Ross-shire, are the two highest hills north of the Caledonian Canal. They lie in a very inaccessible situation. By this it is not meant that there is any difficulty in their actual ascent. In point of fact, on their heathery slopes and moss-covered uplands one could almost ride a pony to their highest points. Their inaccessibility consists in their distance from any place of public resort. When it is stated that they are some 18 miles from Shiel Inn on the west side, and the same from Glen Affric Hotel on the east, the truth of this will be easily seen.

Perhaps the most comprehensive way of doing this range, as well as the best way of viewing it in its most characteristic aspects, is to begin work at the eastern spur,

Tuill Creagach (3,452 feet), walking from thence in a westerly direction to Tom a' Choinich (3,646 feet), then along a very fine but quite easy ridge to Carn Eige. This ridge never descends below 3,100 feet, and presents no difficulty. It is a mere walk, though in some places the going is somewhat rough and stony. It is flanked on either side by great corries, but there are no rock faces of any moment among them. Carn Eige (3,877 feet) is the highest hill in Ross-shire and thirteenth in order of altitude in Scotland in Munro's Tables. It is a great stony mound with a steep broken-up face to the north down to the Coire Lochan.

An easy descent southwards of some 600 feet over moss and stones leads to the broad saddle-shaped bealach, and a steep pull up lands one on the summit of Mam Sodhail (3,862 feet). The cairn on the summit is no mean thing, being one of the largest the writer has ever seen on a Scotch hill. It has in its centre a large cup-shaped depression into which one can get, and, sheltered from the wind, take an all-round view in comfort. And, as may well be imagined, the view from Mam Sodhail on a clear day is, owing to its height and central situation, very wide and extensive. The Cairngorms, the Ben a' Ghlos, Ben Alder, Ben Lawers, Beinn Creachan, the Mamore Hills, Ben Nevis, Bidean nam Bian, the Ardgour Hills, Knoydart and Kintail, the Coolins, South Uist, the Teallachs, Suilven, and the other Sutherlandshire giants may be mentioned as showing the range and distance of the panorama from this point on a clear day.

Another way of doing the range is to start from Glen Affric at Affric Lodge. A good path takes one well up on to Sgurr na Lapaich (3,401 feet). From this top a fine ridge walk leads to the summit of Mam Sodhail. There is also a very good path right up Coire Leachavie almost to the summit, which can be utilised either in ascending or descending. Another well-made track—a right-of-way—runs between Glen Affric and Glen Cannich up the Coire Ghaidheil and down the Gleann a Choilich, which may also be found useful in exploring this region.

The Glen Affric (Temperance) Hotel is most comfort-



able. An excellent driving road goes to Affric Lodge. The road stops here, but a well-made path runs right west along the north side of Loch Affric to Altbeath and Comban. There is also a fair driving road up Glen Cannich as far as Ben Ula Lodge at the west end of Loch Mullardoch. From here a track runs west to Glen Elchaig in Kintail; but just about the bealach the track is very faint and cannot be greatly counted on. From the lodge a path has been made southwards up to the bealach between Tom a' Choinich and Tuill Creagach, which makes these hills quite easy of access from the lodge.

The whole ground is under deer.

A. E. R.

[On Tuesdays a cart capable of taking a bicycle and luggage, but not passengers, is sent up from the Glen Affric Hotel, Cannich (no licence), to Beinn Fhionnlaidh Lodge, close to Luib nan damh, at the west end of Loch Mullardoch in Glen Cannich. The same cart on Thursdays goes up to Glen Affric Lodge.

H. T. MUNRO.]

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## SGURR NA LAPAICH.

### (DIVISION III. GROUP XX.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 21'$  to  $57^{\circ} 22\frac{1}{2}'$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 59'$  to  $5^{\circ} 10'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 82. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

Sgurr na Lapaich, 3,773 feet, and An Riabhachan, 3,696 feet.

Sgurr na Lapaich is the highest peak of the long range of mountains, dividing Glens Strathfarrar and Cannich, and terminating at the head of Glen Elchaig on the west. An Riabhachan adjoins it, and is the highest mountain entirely in Ross-shire. The range has all the usual characteristics of the mountains rising in the centre of the country, deep corries, with tarns lying in them, and are everywhere more or less rugged; but though higher as a rule, they are surpassed by the peaks of the west coast in rugged grandeur. The summits command fine views in all directions of the

Torrison, Loch Carron, Monar, Glen Affric, and Kintail hills.

1. Creag Dhubh (3,102 feet)=black rock.
2. Carn nan Gobhar (3,251 feet)=goats' hill. West of No. 1.
3. Rudha na Spreidhe (about 3,320 feet). A small sharp peak on the side of
4. Sgurr na Lapaich (3,773 feet). A fine peak, especially when seen from the east and south. It throws out a ridge to the south on which are
5. Sgurr nan Clachan Geala (about 3,450 feet)=peak of the white stones.
6. Creag a' Chaoruinn (about 3,000 feet)=rock of the rowans.
7. Braigh a' Choire Bhig (3,303 feet)=brae of the little corrie. Two deep corries with tarns are on the east slope of these last three peaks. No. 4 is divided by a deep corrie and bealach on the west—Toll an Lochan and Bealach Toll an Lochan—from
8. An Riabhachan (3,696 feet)=the brindled hill. A long range with several tops, the furthest west being 3,406 feet. It is divided from
9. An Socach (3,503 feet)=the snout, by a col (2,828 feet).

There is a very comfortable Temperance Hotel at Cannich—the Glen Affric Hotel; and there has recently been opened a small hotel (licensed) at Struy Bridge.

*Usual Route* (Nos. 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7 omitted).—From Beauly, hire twenty-six miles to Broulin Lodge in Glen Strathfarrar, a good quarter mile beyond which a bridge crosses the river to the keeper's house at Inchvuilt; hence follow path up Gleann Innis for one and a half miles, then cross stream to north bank, continue up glen for three miles beyond this point, then recross stream, and turning due south, attack slopes of No. 4. No. 3 is first reached, and after a slight dip a final climb to peak; leaving No. 4 descend sharply south-west to col (about 2,650), and ascend by a narrowish ridge to summit of No. 8. It is in most cases a long enough day if No. 9 is omitted. Descend from cairn north-west to boggy col dividing No. 8 from An Cruachan to Beinn Bheag, cross bealach dividing last-named hills, and descend to the moorland at the head of Loch Tachdaidh, the stream from which flows into Loch Monar; cross very high wire fence and climb in about three-quarters of a mile to path to Dronag Lodge passing Loch Calavie.

A good path has just recently been constructed from Pait Lodge to Glen Elchaig, which may be utilised when exploring this district. From lodge there is a short cut over the hills in seven miles to Strath Carron Station, or in twelve miles by driving road, very steep and rough. Grand views of Applecross and Torridon Mountains from top of road, especially if seen in evening light.

C. B. P.

## EXCURSIONS.

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

### BEN BHUIDHE AND BEINN NAN AIGHEAN.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—May I take the liberty of giving you a very brief account of two expeditions which I carried out from Loch Awe during the last New Year Meet. The two hills I have named excited no interest in any one else, and so I had to go alone. In both an ice axe was useless, except as a rather dangerous dumb-bell. To get to the first hill on Saturday I left for Dalmally by 6.54 A.M. train, and after twelve minutes or so east along the railway to get clear of enclosures, struck out S.S.E., reached the frozen mosses west of Beinn Bhalgairan in such good time that when I plunged into Glen Shira from the top of Ben Bhreac, it was just 9.15 at the crossing of the burn, there 1,100 feet in altitude. The way up was unmistakable, and at 10.15 I reached the cairn. The last 700 feet were hard frozen, and owing to cold wind it was impossible to stay for more than fifteen minutes to enjoy a splendid view, which showed up Ben More and Stobinian, Ben Cruachan, peeps of the Lowlands, fine panoramic effect of Brander Pass, Mull, and towards invisible Jura, and a complete explanation of the Glenfalloch and Arrochar groups. A leisurely stroll *via* "Sron Mor" and Duncan Ban's monument brought me home at about 3 P.M. From Loch Awe Hotel Ben Bhuidhe is best reached by boat, thence *via* the Monument and the farm of Blarchaorainn. Monday's expedition caused one continually to wonder, "Why did I wander forth without my cloak." As everybody knows, it was a terrific day of wind and rain, and noticeably worse north of Glen Kinglass. There is quite a good path from Glen Strae, given by the Ordnance Survey, between Ben Lurachan (right) and Meall Copagach (left). The col is slightly over 2,000 feet high. From there the way is plain. I left the hotel 8.15, reached the col a few minutes before 10, forded the Kinglass 10.30, touched the cairn 11.45. There appeared no reason for staying there, and about twenty valid reasons for leaving at once. I did so, and was battered home by the elements by 2.50.

STAIR A. GILLON.

**MEALL BHUIRIDH.**—On Monday, 2nd January, Morrison, A. E. Robertson, and Goodeve started off at 7.30 A.M. to do a climb on the cliffs of Ben Vourie. The route at starting was along the old quarry track as far as the footbridge. At that point the stream to the left was followed for about half a mile or so. A big bluff of rock stands out well on the hillside, and to the left of it a short length of cliff. Starting in order from the bluff, there are three gullies, one deep one next the bluff, the other two being smaller. Calling them 1, 2, and 3 in rotation from the bluff, a start was made with No. 3, but as it was found to be quite easy, it was decided to go on to No. 2.

The first pitch was wet and looked bad, especially near the top, as the angle was very steep. While Morrison, who was the leader, was negotiating the lower part, the others kept on a small ledge to the right to keep out of the way of falling stones. A little more than half-way up the first pitch is a small caldron in the centre of the water-course, in which there is just room for two to stand. This proved most useful, as the leader got a rest, and the second man could come up to that point where he had to give the leader a couple of footholds with an ice axe. The first pitch took fifty-five minutes to negotiate, then came an easy bit of grass to the foot of the second pitch, which is a good deal harder. The route starts up a narrow chimney, which is delightfully easy for about fifteen feet or so. After that point comes a somewhat sensational traverse to the right, with an awkward bit of rock to get round at the top. Here Morrison found it necessary to do a good deal of gardening to find holds in the rock, the second man remaining at the top of the chimney. This pitch took one and a quarter hours. Then came a short easy grassy bit, and another short pitch at the top where the leader stood on the second man's shoulders. This is believed to be a new climb, and the way Morrison led up was worthy of admiration, as it is by no means easy. After a cairn was built at the summit, the party descended to the hotel, well satisfied with their day's work.

T. E. G.

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**BOOT NAILS.**—Messrs H. T. Sims & Co., 14 Market Street, Leeds, send samples of nails for climbing boots, and they look quite as good as those made in Switzerland. They say:—

“We are sending you a small sample of the Alpine clinkers and hobbs, which are already selling to a number of well-known mountaineers and makers of Alpine foot-wear.

“They are made from best charcoal iron, and have an advantage (I am informed by a gentleman who has tested both) over the continental makes in being softer and less likely to get smooth and slippery. But some of your friends may already have used the same make of goods, and would no doubt corroborate the facts in favour of their use. Messrs Lugton & Son, Bespoke Bootmakers, of 95 Princes Street,

Edinburgh, are using these clinkers and hobbs in the boots they make for Alpine wear, and we can give the names of other makers in London and other places who would be able to supply them. We also send them direct to any address on receipt of remittance. Hoping you will be able to recommend these goods to your friends.—Yours faithfully,

“H. T. SIMS & Co.”

# THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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## SCOTTISH SNOW.

BY HAROLD RAEBURN.

AMONG the epoch-marking papers which have been written for this journal, the admirable article by Mr Naismith on "Snowcraft in Scotland" occupies an important place. This paper was published in the number for January 1893.

Since that date twelve years have elapsed, the number is now long out of print, and possibly some new members have not had an opportunity of reading it. In any case sufficient time has passed to render it interesting and useful to sum up the results obtained from the lessons and maxims therein contained, and at the same time to summarise the twelve years' extended experience of the members of the Club, of snow work and snowy conditions to be found scattered throughout the articles and notes published in the *Journal*.

The present writer must first acknowledge his great indebtedness to the paper referred to. It was, along with Dr Claude Wilson's capital little book, "Mountaineering," All England Series, his first introduction to the fascinating cult of the ice-axe and its use among the snowy alps of our "ain countree." Mr Naismith in his paper did not adopt the apologetic tone visible in the Badminton volume on Mountaineering, and even in that of Dr Claude Wilson with regard to this country as a possible school for real Alpine climbing. He boldly claimed for British winter

climbing that it approached in many respects to good summer work in the Alps. The present writer goes further, and considers that winter mountaineering in Scotland is in many respects a better training and a more strenuous sport than most of the ordinary Swiss work, where one plods behind a guide up a well-known route by what is often a plainly marked track. Here we can still find unknown ground and new routes, and exercise our exploring faculties—by far the most important part of mountaineering—for ourselves.

It is true that here we have no glaciers, and the fascinating ploy of threading the mazes of the icefall and crevasses, and dodging the tottering pinnacles of the threatening seracs is here wholly unknown, but the ever-varying condition of the snow on slopes, on rocks, and in the gullies, provides plenty of exercise for study and skill in overcoming the difficulties and avoiding the dangers otherwise involved in the ascent or descent.

After the publication of Naismith's paper, several letters on points raised therein appeared in the pages of the *Journal*. One of these was the origin of the great spike *v.* pick controversy that raged for some time after. With the views expressed by Naismith the present writer is in entire sympathy, possibly from his conviction that *balance* is the fundamental secret of good, *i.e.*, *safe* climbing, whether on ice or rocks.

Naismith maintains that in crossing a piece of "unmitigated ice, where it is preferable to prevent a slip than hope to check it after it has occurred, it is better to hold the axe as if in glissading, and dig the spike firmly into the ice about the level of the thigh." Here it is quite obvious that the lesson intended to be conveyed to the novice on ice—and on rocks the same holds good though to a less extent—is the necessity for safety of *balancing out*.

It is somewhat the same principle as applies to the outside edge in skating. It is quite obvious that if a crouching-in attitude is assumed—and this is undoubtedly to be encouraged by the use of the pick—then the pressure on the feet will not only be lessened, but that pressure will tend to take an outward direction. The danger of a slip



is thus greatly increased. This is a by-the-way, however, and deals with conditions rarely if ever met with in Scotland, or for that matter on average climbs in the Alps.

Before going on to give a summary of S.M.C. experience of Scottish snow under the various headings of Angles, Arêtes, Avalanches, &c., I should like to say a few words about the dangers of snow conditions on steep ground, and the way to avoid them.

I may state at once that this is not written for the expert, nor do I desire for a moment to pose as a dogmatic authority on the subject, but there are now a considerable number of young climbers who "go to the mountains in the snow," and who often do not know what can and what cannot be attempted with safety on the snow-clad face, or in the snowy and icy gully. Some of these climbers, as Owen Jones remarked, "had no nerves," and made him "shudder." The occasion was when a novice friend calmly proposed that Jones and he should proceed to glissade down a steep-angled gully (Cust's, Great End), clad with icy snow, in the Lakes.

The terrible "accident" of Easter 1903, by which a glissader of such a gully lost his life in the same district, shows the necessity of caution in dealing with such places. Though there are no records of fatal accidents through the breaking away of cornices in this country, still we have heard rumours of narrow escapes due to this cause. To attempt the ascent of an avalanche-grooved gully, known to be overhung by huge cornices, on a warm, muggy mid-day in late spring is not an advisable proceeding, and in fact is directly contrary to the canons of good mountaineering.

It may often happen, in winter, that the gully we are ascending becomes the gathering and stream-bed, as it were, for a perfect cataract of hail or snow, blown into it from the cliffs or plateaux above, but this is quite different from the case mentioned, and though perhaps unpleasant is not at all dangerous, though it may render step-making or cutting excessively laborious.

There is one condition, not very common maybe, that renders almost any steep Scottish mountain difficult and

even dangerous to an inexperienced or ice-axeless party, and it was probably this condition that caused the fatal accident to an ice-axeless tourist on Ben More ten or a dozen years ago. It is brought about thus. After a spell of wet weather comes a sharp frost, rendering the turf and earth as hard almost as rock; then comes a slight fall of snow, a partial thaw immediately after, followed by hard frost again, with a final powdering of loose snow. Even the ascent of an easy angle becomes under these circumstances difficult, and if the angle is steep the climb becomes well-nigh impossible. This brings us naturally to the main object of this paper, the collection of the combined experience of the whole Club, and we shall first see how it answers the question of what we mean by a steep angle.

*Angle.*—In collecting information on this and other points, I have carefully examined and read every article and note published in the pages of the *Journal* since its commencement. Averaging all the recorded angles of snow slopes, on faces and in gullies, after rejecting several obviously exaggerated, brings out the figure of  $47^{\circ}$ . This, I think, we can therefore look upon as the average angle of a steep snow slope. This angle would probably be estimated by an inexperienced party, without a clinometer, at  $57^{\circ}$  or  $60^{\circ}$ . I do not think snow will stay long on any extent of slope at an angle exceeding  $55^{\circ}$ . Under a cornice, or in a narrow chimney, the case is different, and any angle up to  $90^{\circ}$  may be found, but only for a few feet.\*

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\* In an interesting article in the *Annuaire* of the French Alpine Club for 1901, "L'Arête Nord-Ouest de la Grande Casse," by M. Henri Mettrier, this question of snow—and ice—angles is discussed at some length. Comparing the great 800-metre ice-slope on the north face of the Grande Casse with the much shorter but, as he considers, steeper slope above the bergschrund on the Ecrins, M. Mettrier gives  $52^{\circ}$ —estimated—for the former as against  $62^{\circ}$ —also estimated—for the latter. Whymper's estimate for the latter, however, is merely "more than  $50^{\circ}$ ."† My estimate for the former is about  $47^{\circ}$  to  $50^{\circ}$ ; this I consider is one of the longest continuously steep ice-slopes I have seen

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† Since the article was printed I have had an opportunity of measuring, with the clinometer, the angle of the Ecrins slope above the bergschrund. It was found to rise from  $50^{\circ}$  to an extreme of  $54^{\circ}$ , showing the accuracy of Whymper's estimate.

*Arête*.—At the date of Naismith's paper rock arêtes were not usually climbed in winter, which accounts for his statement: "The writer has never succeeded in finding a satisfactory specimen (snow arête) in Scotland." He certainly encountered them later (Vol. III., p. 336), as beautifully sharp snow arêtes are a common feature on all the great rock ridges, such as on Aonach Beag, Ben Nevis, Carn Mor Dearg, Aonach Eagach, and notably Skye, the Easters of 1903 and 1905. Usually these are soft, but are sometimes hard, as on Stob Gabhar (Vol. VI., p. 66). They do not usually present any difficulty except when a violent wind is blowing (Vol. VIII., p. 223), when the use of the rope is advisable.

*Avalanche*.—There is frequent mention of avalanches in the various numbers of the *S.M.C.J.* Naturally not very many members of the Club have actually seen these in the act of falling, but there are nevertheless accounts by several climbing parties of falls seen. That large and dangerous avalanches do often fall is patent to any one who visits the great north-east corries of our higher mountains in late spring. In the upper corrie of Nevis, the avalanche debris at the beginning of June cannot be much less than 100 feet in depth. I well recollect on the occasion of my first ascent—in mist—of the Tower Ridge, at Easter 1896, hearing the roar of several very large falls off the Observatory cliffs, and a couple of weeks later the gullies of Creag Meaghaidh were quite unapproachable, constantly swept by large falls of snow, ice, and rocks.

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in the Alps. Whymper doubts if snow will remain in large masses at an angle of over 45°, and no one will deny that his is good authority. M. Mettrier remarks: "Il n'est pas excessivement rare de voir relatées des inclinaisons de 60° et de 65° sur des pentes de neige, mais elles ont presque toujours *la caractère d'estimations hasardées*." He quotes some estimations and measurements which are instructive. On Mont Blanc Count Tilly gives Petites Montées, 65°; Grandes Montées, 70°; and sees a vertical wall at the Rochers Rouges. De Saussure found the angle in reality, at the first of these, 39°. Vallot gives for steepest part of Arête of Bosses, 45°. Agassiz found the east face of Strahlegg nearly 40°, and the last slope of the Jungfrau 45° to 47°. We must agree with M. Mettrier in his closing remark: "Assurement la question est de celles qui méritent d'être traitées à fond et définitivement élucidées."

On the Ross-shire Ben Dearg (Vol. VI., p. 159), "a great fall, with a width of over 100 yards," was seen by one party; Carn Dearg (Nevis), "a huge avalanche fell 1,000 feet off the buttress" (Vol. V., p. 289). A formidable fall was seen by another party on 12th June 1904 (Vol. VIII., p. 180), to fall "from gully between Observatory Ridge and North-east Buttress of Ben Nevis. Many large falls observed on Aonach Beag, April 1904. These large and dangerous avalanches are, of course, usually caused by the breaking away of the cornices, but sometimes a surface layer of the snow will suddenly peel off a face. One such instance is given in Naismith's personal experience. Another was that of a party of three, of which the writer formed one, at New Year 1904. Ascending the Observatory Gully on Nevis, the snow was found to be very hard. Higher a layer of powdery snow, with a slight surface crust, lay on the hard. Shortly after adopting the precaution of cutting right through this upper snow, and making steps in the solid underneath, and when at a good height above an unpleasant iced wall, the whole upper surface suddenly cracked right across the gully, here about 40 yards wide, just above us. It did not at that time move farther, but the precaution of cutting into the under layer was a very necessary one, and should invariably be adopted in like circumstances, even though it involve considerably more labour.

*Bergschrund.*—There are of course no ice bergschrunds in Scotland, but very colourable imitations, in snow little less hard than ice, may be met with in May and June in the Nevis corries and elsewhere. They exist in just such places as we find them in the Alps, and are due to a similar cause—where the snowfield, or glacier, slopes against the rocks, the melting of the snow, or ice, in immediate contact with the heated rocks. The writer has seen one (Vol. VI., p. 229) at least 40 feet deep, by 8 to 10 feet wide, in Nevis Upper Corrie in June, between the snowfield and the foot of the Observatory Buttress.\*

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\* In *Symon's Meteorological Magazine* for March 1905, a paper by the Rev. R. P. Dansey draws attention to the permanent snow in the Upper Corrie of Nevis. This is quoted by the *Royal Scottish Geographical Magazine* under the heading of "A British 'Glacier.'"

*Cornice.*—These, of great size and exquisite beauty, may exist on any Scottish mountain possessing a steep rock face. The size of these will vary according to the height and aspect of the mountain and character of the snowfall during the winter and spring.

An analysis of the occasions when figures are given in the *Journal* regarding size, of course estimates only, gives 20 feet in height and 10 feet overhang as about the maximum. It is possible that these figures may be found to be exceeded on special occasions. A cornice of the above dimensions may, however, be considered as rendering an ascent impossible. We have the record of two Alpine pioneers who, on the occasion of the first ascent of the Tower Gully on Nevis, actually burrowed through the great cornice at the top, taking two days to the task—the intervening night being spent at Fort-William—but such a feat is too heroic for most.

One of the observers at Ben Nevis Observatory, however, informed the writer that he had measured a cornice at the head of the Observatory Gully which was 40 feet in height.

*Crevasse.*—This is frequently mentioned as met with. It is sometimes, of course, rather difficult to draw a distinction between crevasse and bergschrund. The latter, as its name implies, should mean the large crevasse nearest the rocks (*Randkluft*). References may be found to crevasses (Vol. III., pp. 79, 102, 104; Vol. V., p. 289; Vol. VI., p. 227; Vol. VII., p. 207).

*Glissade.*—Within the letters of this word are contained some of the most subtle and fascinating joys of the snow-climber. Why the apparently simple and childish pastime of sliding down snow should possess such fascinations is difficult to explain to the unelect. Let one of those, however, be but persuaded to try it, and explanation is no

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After mentioning a number of topographical facts familiar to S.M.C. members, the paper proceeds to describe the "glacier," really *névé*, in the month of August 1904. "The surface was hard and ribbed like the *névé* of the Alps, while between the rocks and the snow at the side it was possible to look down into the Bergschrund to a depth of 50 feet in many places."

longer asked for. He straightway joins the inner circle and requires none. It is the same with regard to tobogganing, and with the highest development of the glissade—skiing.

Glissades are of two kinds, sitting and standing. Of the former variety, the attitude may vary from bolt-upright to lying at full length, according to the angle and condition of the snow.

The standing glissade requires more skill and balance than the sitting. It is more comfortable as regards after conditions of person and garments, but requires special conditions of snow and a considerably steeper angle to make it "go" well.

Personally speaking, I have seldom obtained any very long standing glissades in Scotland. Perhaps the longest was about 700 feet in Coire na Ciste of Nevis in July 1903.

In that late and snowy year, however, during a short Norwegian holiday I glissaded standing an aggregate of over 10,000 feet. One does not get glissades like these in the Alps in the ordinary climbing season. A common error of the novice in standing glissades is to lean too heavily on his ice-axe, which is extended behind like a third leg. This is excessively fatiguing to the arms. More reliance should be placed on balance and on rising on the heels to check and regulate the pace. Given favourable angle and snow, it is quite possible to glissade standing for long distances without touching the snow with the ice-axe at all. The writer has covered hundreds of feet at a stretch in Norway in this manner, and has seen young Norwegian ladies gliding down a steep snow slope on their feet, with ease and grace, with nothing at all in their hands. This, of course, is the result of long practice on ski.

The beginner at glissading ought to select easy places at first. An easy place may be defined as a steep slope of fairly soft snow on a face, or in a wide open gully, which is seen, or known, to take off to an easy angle before coming to an end. It should be remembered that the snow in a narrow gully is in late spring usually hollowed out in the centre by the stream below, and even if open pitches or bergschrunds do not exist, the place where the snow roof



GLISSADING.

*Gilbert Thomson.*





will be weakest will be just at the top of a steep pitch or concealed waterfall.

In glissading down an unknown gully, if glissading is permissible at all, it should be done only in rope lengths. The first man drives in his ice-axe, using it as a hitch, while the other or others slide past him, keeping good control of course on pace. The last man, who is now first, drives in his axe in turn, and the process is repeated. Even gullies so steep as those on the great east face of Buchaille Etive Mor may be safely glissaded in this manner, if the snow is in good order and deep.

Many and varied are the methods of braking adopted by the sitting glissader. There is no doubt that as in standing glissades, the main control should be by the feet, but this has often the unpleasant effect, if the pace is good, of driving a perfect stream of snow into one's face. In using the ice-axe as a brake, different methods are adopted. The best, in the writer's opinion, is to grasp the shaft near the head with one hand, the palm of this upper hand turned up; the other hand is placed on the shaft with the palm down.

Putting the ice-axe now behind one, with the spike dragging through the snow, immense brake power may be obtained by widening the space between the hands, and raising the body on the lower arm. A very bad method, but one often adopted by beginners, is to take the ice-axe by its lower end, and brake with the pick, or even the blade. This acts all right as long as braking is only a little, or not really necessary at all. Whenever a real emergency occurs, and it is desirable to stop suddenly, this method fails, as the ice-axe is invariably wrenched out of the slider's hands, and he is left helpless. If in glissading down a steep slope or gully one finds that, owing to the avalanchy condition of the snow, we are beginning to ride upon the top of a large pile of snow, it is advisable to get off promptly sideways, before the pile becomes too thick to be penetrable by the ice-axe, and all control lost.

With regard to the length of glissades to be obtained in Scotland, these are often better and longer than can be obtained in the Alps in summer. The longest recorded is

in Vol. VI., p. 198, when a party "estimated that they glissaded 2,500 feet on the descent of Ben More." Other records are—Easter, 1895, on Nevis, 2,000 feet; Vol. III., p. 80, Ben Doran, 1,000 feet; Vol. II., p. 83, Ledi, 700 feet; Vol. VIII., p. 147, Aonach Mor, 1,500 feet; and numerous instances of from 500 to 800 feet.

*Ice.*—Though we do not have vast accumulations of ice in the form of glaciers, yet ice we meet with in many and varied forms, and its presence, or absence, may often mean the impossibility or otherwise of the climb. Ice in gullies is usually termed an icefall, but of course that term has a quite different meaning to what is understood by it in the Alps. Here the gully icefall is really a frozen waterfall. This is capable of giving grand practice and experience in ice work, but should be attacked with discretion, and all precautions taken to guard against a slip. Practically our first paper showing what splendid sport could be got in the icy gully was that by Dr Collie (Vol. III., pp. 5, 6) on winter climbing on the "Screes" near Wastdale Head. Other references are—Vol. III., p. 61, Snowdon; Vol. IV., p. 97, Ben Achalader; Vol. VI., p. 251, Ben Nevis, &c.

*Iced Rocks.*—Ice on rocks is termed *verglas* in the Alps. This is, however, a somewhat elastic term, and is sometimes applied to mere hoar-frost. In its worst form, clear hard ice, it renders rock-climbing impossible. The writer has a vivid recollection how on one occasion when in Coire na Ciste of Nevis in November 1897, in company with Messrs Duncan and Brown of Aberdeen, the party were utterly unable to do the smallest climb owing to all the rocks being covered with this thin transparent film of hard ice. Ice on rocks may also take the form of fog crystals. These sometimes grow to an extraordinary size, and may prove a great difficulty in the ascent.

Very frequent references to ice on rocks occur throughout the *Journal*. A few may be noted here:—Vol. II., p. 85, Cruachan; Vol. III., p. 14, An Teallach; Vol. III., p. 19, Stuc a Chroin; Vol. III., p. 276, Cobbler; Vol. V., p. 74, Tarmachans; Vol. VII., p. 115, Arran, &c.; notably at Easter, 1903, in the Coolins, Vol. VII., p. 280; and even more marked in the Coolins, Easter, 1905.

*Ski*.—No mention of Scottish snow-sport would nowadays be complete without inclusion of this. For a thorough exposition of the art I must refer S.M.C. members to a recent article (Vol. VIII., p. 157) by its most enthusiastic devotee, Herr W. R. Rickmers. Historically, as far as the *Journal* is concerned, we have very few mentions of skiing having been tried in this country. Naismith, though he does not refer to it in his paper, was already our pioneer in this, as in so many other ways. In Vol. II., p. 89, he relates his experience of the long snow skates on 12th March 1892 on the Campsie Fells. Since then we have no mention of ski till Herr Rickmers took his party to Nevis at Easter, 1904.

Mr J. H. Wigner has also a note of an ascent of Ben Chonzie, 12th March 1904 (Vol. VIII., p. 133). My experience in Scotland dates back to February 1892. In that year I brought a pair with me from Norway and ascended several of the Pentlands, as well as the Braids, Blackfords, &c., and crossed several of the Pentland passes. Some of our North of England members have also used ski in Crossfell district during the last five or six years.

As far as my own opinion is concerned, however, in spite of what I wrote in an article at the time, I consider ski will but seldom be used in Scotland with advantage and enjoyment. The condition and amount of snow even on our hills is not often likely to be suitable. On the low ground, at any rate in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh and Glasgow, we have many winters practically no snow. On the hills it is usually, if not soft and sticky, hard and icy. Seldom do we find the compact dry white powder characteristic of the Norwegian winter snow. In exceptional frosts in exceptional seasons, such as occur at intervals of ten years or so, we may have opportunities of safe practice, but to become adepts, and to enjoy this most interesting and fascinating sport to perfection, we must visit countries less under the influence of Atlantic mildness and moisture than is our native land.

*Step Cutting*.—In this country step cutting is generally a much easier and simpler work than in the Alps. Here, although our slopes may be hard and steep, still they are

only snow after all, and step cutting in snow is a comparatively quick and easy matter. To begin with, if provided with good nails hard snow, even at considerable angles, can be walked up. When that becomes risky, a few large steps at the rope's length apart, will usually be quite safe, the leader only cutting mere toe scratches between. At his rope's limit he cuts sufficient steps for the whole of the party to stand in; then driving in his axe, brings them up secured by the hitched rope. The last man now drives in his axe, and the process is repeated. This method is not possible in the Alps, as severe slopes are usually ice. Every step must therefore be equally well cut, and dependence placed on balance alone.

In driving an ice-axe into hard snow, or turf, there is a right and a wrong way of doing. The aim of the mountaineer must always be, inasmuch as he never knows when his stock of reserve strength may be required, to do everything whether on snow or rocks, with the minimum expenditure of force. He must utilise his own weight wherever possible, and he must distribute exertion over as many muscles at a time as he is able. The wrong way to drive in an ice-axe on a steep hard snow slope, is to stand below the ice-axe, grasp it by the middle of the shaft, and jab the snow with it. Yet this is often done. The right way is to get above the ice-axe, place both hands together on the head, close to the line of the shaft, and get the weight of the body behind the straightened arms into the shove, slightly twisting the shaft as the spike sinks in. The reason for the twist is twofold, it both assists the penetration and renders the withdrawal of the axe easier when that becomes necessary.

#### SNOW GENERAL.

While not going so far as the hero in the well-known poem by a famous climber who complains of—

“The rocks that roughly handle us,  
The peaks that will not go,  
The uniformly scandalous  
Condition of the snow,”

it must be acknowledged that this last in Scotland, as in



SCOTTISH SNOW.

*H. Rathburn.*



the Alps, is not always ideal. What a climber wants is snow fairly hard for the upward journey, fairly soft for the downward. This we do not always get, but the very variety and uncertainty are a large part of the charm of winter mountaineering. The same climb is never the same twice running. Its standard of difficulty may alter with astonishing celerity. The time taken on one occasion may be double that on another, but times, as all mountaineers get to know, are of no value in estimating the climbing abilities of a party unless conditions are also equal.

We have seen from the foregoing what a wide field our Scottish fells present for the education of the snow climber. For six months in the year he may there find practically Alpine conditions. Indeed, if attempting some of our highest north-east gullies, the ice-axe will be found indispensable at any season of the year. If after an experience gained here, he goes to the Alps, he will find that his expeditions on his native hills will stand him in good stead. His ice-axe is a familiar and trusted friend, not an uncouth weapon, dangerous to himself and others. He will have learned, if at all observant, a good deal about snow conditions on steep slopes, only he must remember the hotter sun and slighter adhesion of snow in the Alps. Above all he should have learned, if he is capable of learning, the great lesson of balance, to stand up straight and to plant the feet firmly in the steps. He must also remember, however, that though his conquest of the snowy gully, with its 10 or 20 foot ice pitches, is probably a more difficult and risky bit of climbing than almost anything usually done in the Alps, still there everything is on a much greater scale, and endurance of long-continued exertion is much more valuable than any other climbing qualities, except balance and caution. Balance is the most valuable quality because it in reality doubles at least a climber's endurance. All three qualities spell safety on long and difficult expeditions, and safe is the highest qualifying adjective we can bestow upon the mountaineer.

The cultivation of cocoanut-like biceps by any of the modern methods of muscle growing may possibly be of some use to climbers. But man after all is not a monkey,

and if an army may be said to travel upon its stomach, the mountaineer travels, even though the angle approach  $80^{\circ}$ , mainly by means of his feet. It is to the education of the feet therefore, and incidentally of course to the education of hand and eye and brain, that mountaineers should devote their attention. There is no better field for this education, apart altogether from the æsthetic joys to be obtained, than our Scottish Bens in their wintry garb of snow.



## ONLY A BEAUTIFUL DAY ON THE HILLS.

BY A. ERNEST MAYLARD.

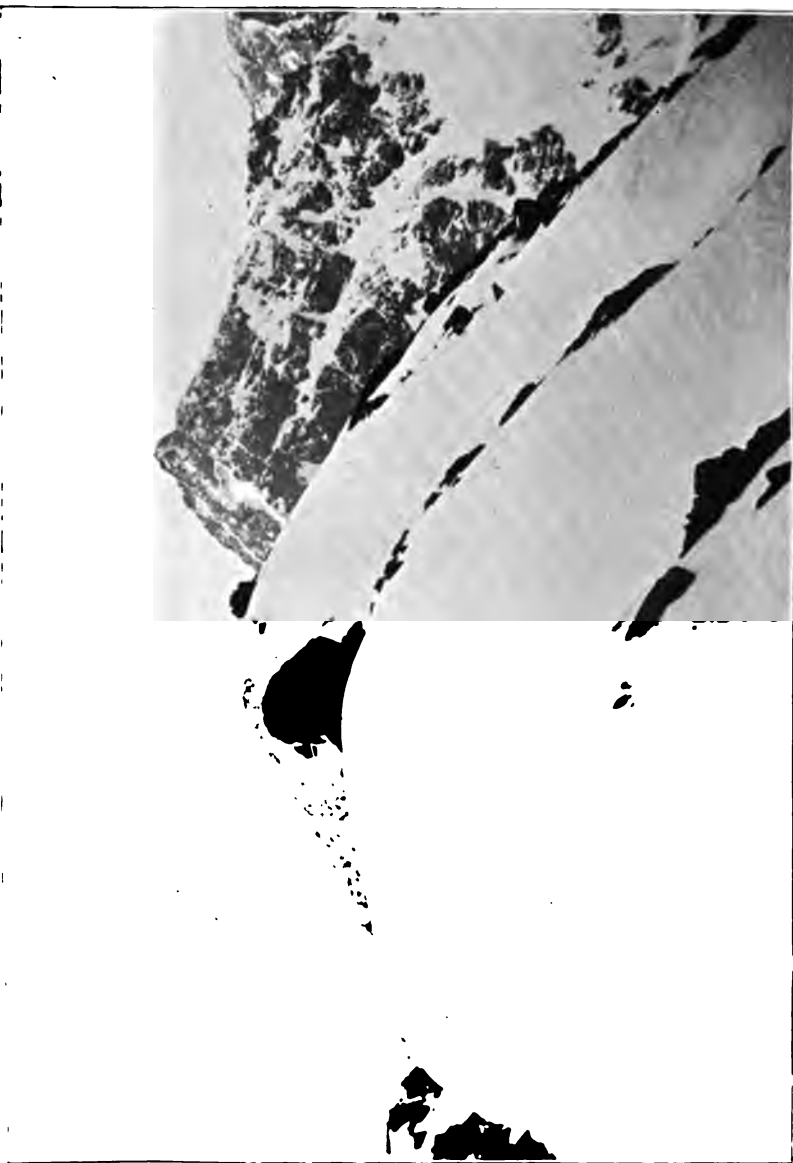
SOME few years ago I should have had little hesitation in venturing upon the simple narrative of a ramble on the hills. But now! Dare I intrude with no more thrilling description of a day's outing than the mere existence on the tops of the mountains will afford, when earth and heaven seemed at peace with each other, and all Nature smiled beneath the benignant influences of a heaven-born joy? No daring prehensile feats to excite the climber's admiration; no difficulties that occupied hours of anxious thought and action. The bold and intrepid cragsman may therefore pause and spare his time; for such a day as that with which this simple narrative deals, appeals only to the soul of man, and awakens sensations that tend rather to subdue than stimulate the physical side of his nature.

The sun was shining from out an almost cloudless sky; the mighty billows that so often dashed with relentless vigour upon the rock-bound coast were hushed to sleep; and the sea seemed to smile with joy as the sun's rays danced gaily on its rippled surface. The outlying isles, too, sought to lend their charm to the distant vista; for faintly outlined in the seascape, and enshrouded in a purplish haze, they added to the sense of peace and repose in which all Nature seemed to revel on that ever-memorable April morn. It was under these soothing, yet exhilarating conditions that two mountaineers—if indeed they could be considered such on the present occasion—sauntered forth from the keeper's lodge at Glen Brittle, just two days after the official meet of the Club at Sligachan had been brought to a conclusion.

On Tuesday, the day preceding that about which I write, Solly and I left Sligachan for Glen Brittle. The rocks were too deeply coated with snow to tempt us to traverse Sgurr a Ghreadaidh, our original intention; we therefore simply passed over the bealach between Sgurr Thuilm and Sgurr a Mhadaidh, and leisurely skirted the western spurs

of An Dìallaid and Sgurr nan Gobhar till we reached our destination. It was a beautiful evening, and there seemed every prospect of a good day in store for us. We slept—or perhaps I should more truthfully say tried to sleep—at the keeper's lodge. The good housewife did her best for us, and it was no fault of hers that Solly's bed was a foot too short for him, and my mattress somewhat like the tops of the Coolins. But the discomforts of the night were soon forgotten, when a glance out of the window revealed the sun shining brilliantly, and hardly a breath of wind to disturb the young leaves of the spring-clad trees.

By 9.20 we were on the tramp, with no further objective than to enjoy ourselves, and with just that charming sense of inertia that is felt when nothing special has to be accomplished. What we might ascend or might not hardly seemed to concern us, at least at this initial stage of our expedition. However, we made for a "shoulder," which it did not take long to discern would lead us to the summit of Sgurr Sgumain. No objective did I say? How delightful! just to linger and look on the beauties of Nature as every few hundred feet of ascent revealed some new scene, another peak peering above a ridge casting its jagged outline against the sky. At last the summit was reached. Was it record time? It took three and a half hours, and surely none could take longer. What a panorama unfolded itself before our eyes! Could it really be the Coolins we were on, and the Coolins we were looking at? No mists, no rain, no boisterous south-westerly blasts from the ocean, and no cutting and biting winds from the north, just a clump of white cumulus here and there sluggishly moving in a heaven of blue. As the eye swept the horizon every peak from Sgurr nan Gillean to Gars-bheinn was as easily distinguishable—perhaps more so (with apologies to the Editor!)—as on the excellent map we consulted for our enlightenment. Our sojourn, however, was not long, for our ambitions became fired and we now wanted to go higher and see more if we could. Sgurr Alasdair lay not far from us, looking as tempting as he well could on such a day. Down, therefore, we descended to the bealach, which connects Sgumain with Alasdair, and then commenced the



*A. E. Maynard.*

SGURR ALASDAIR FROM SGURR DUBH.



ascent of the latter. At last came an obstacle somewhat more formidable than any we had previously encountered. Solly recognised the place and believed it to be known as the "Mauvais Pas" of this particular ridge. He had negotiated it once before, and although the conditions on the present occasion were not altogether favourable, for the hot sun was melting the snow above and making the rocks most needed for hand and foot holds wet and slippery, he still hungered to surmount the difficulty. Doubtless he would have done so, if my hunger had not been so overbearing and overwhelmingly absorbing on physiological more than on physical grounds. We therefore sat down to lunch with our backs to the buttress and with Loch Coir a Ghrunnda below us placidly nestling in the amphitheatre formed by the surrounding mountains. How beautiful it was, with the dazzling whiteness of the snow in the clear sunlight, recalling more a day in the Alps than one on the Scottish hills. The snow which had fallen somewhat abundantly on preceding days had formed large fields, and what in the summer are long and rugged slopes of scree and broken rock, were now evenly coated with snow. It was easy to linger here and lazily scan the many beauties of the surrounding scenery, ever changing in sunlight and shadow. It was easy, too, in the silence that seemed to pervade all things to let one's thoughts ramble restfully on memories that such scenes are wont to awaken. But why, oh, why, will Solly keep looking round at that ten feet of vertical rock that bars our progress upward? "It overhangs," say I. "It's sloping in the wrong direction," again I venture. "If I give you a shoulder you'll poke me into eternity or at any rate into Corrie Ghrunnda." At last I tried another tack, and suggested a seductive-looking glissade with the ascent of Sgurr nan Eag; and in order to add force to my proposal and create diversion by my absence, I started off sliding down rapidly about 300 feet, and then commencing an easy traverse towards the bealach between Alasdair and Sgurr Dubh na Dabheinn. There was no sign of Solly. Should I after all see him victorious on the top of Alasdair? Soon, however, I heard shouts behind, and looking towards our resting-place, found he had

torn himself away from the "Mauvais Pas" and was quickly following in my track. When we did join, it was no small source of satisfaction to me to learn, that instead of receiving his imprecations for throwing up the sponge, he owned that, considering the conditions, it was wise not to have attempted to force a passage. As Sgurr Dubh looked more attractive than Sgurr nan Eag, we made for it, and soon were on the summit. So easily and so rapidly was this peak gained that we at once decided to tackle Sgurr Dubh Mhor. Here again we encountered nothing that could be called difficult. Difficulties there may be and probably are in summer, but on this propitious day snow had graciously filled up for us many an ugly gap, and what otherwise might have taken minutes to negotiate, was now passed over in a few seconds.

Here we were basking in the sun on the summit of Sgurr Dubh. We had both wanted to do the Dubhs, but our most sanguine expectation would never have led us to anticipate such an easy and delightful accomplishment. We had been told that it meant a long day, and doubtless under other conditions than those which favoured us, it would be so. As it was, we had only taken a comparatively short time to pass from Sgumain to the tops of two out of the three Dubhs. What a view point was that summit of Sgurr Dubh Mhor! Look north, east, south, or west, and up there crops at each point of the compass a series of rugged pinnacles—the summits of known peaks or the jagged projections of unnamed ridges. Had we been bent on making a record bag of peaks in one day, we could easily have accomplished it. Sgurr nan Eag, Sgurr a Coire Bheag, and Gars-Bheinn would very quickly have succumbed to our attacks. Life, however, seemed almost more enjoyable on its passive than on its active side. To loiter and look and get indelibly impressed on the mind the lights and shades, the dazzling whiteness of the sun-smitten snow, the many-shaped peaks and pinnacles that broke the skyline both far and near—these it seemed to my then sentimentally disposed nervous system dearer and more to be enjoyed than the hours we might have spent in attempting to negotiate that pseudo-inaccessible

obstruction on Sgurr Alasdair. What were the thoughts which occupied Solly's mind, I knew not. That the strings of his heart did not altogether vibrate to the same tender strains as mine I had some reason to believe; not that I wish to imply he felt no soul-stirring emotions in the sight or contemplation of the beauties around, but occasionally the silence was broken by some such interjection as the following:—"The finger-tips of the right hand ought to have got a grip on the left-hand ledge of the upper projecting slab, while the toes of the left foot got a hold in a notch of the greenish bit of rock that stuck out from the overhanging blocks to the left of the ridge." "Exactly," said I, "but look at those wandering shadows chasing each other across the corrie below us. See, yonder lies Rum, Eigg, and Canna, and there, too, are the outer Hebrides."

We at last talked of going home to tea, and the thought, alas, fired our energies to consider the easiest and quickest way to accomplish that end. A long snow traverse around the north side of Coir a Ghrunnda brought us to the bealach between Sgurr Sgumain and Sgurr Alasdair. Here we descended into Coire Labain, and soon had all the poetry shaken out of our sentiments by the broken rugged masses of rock over which we had to scramble. But our joys were yet once again to be awakened by the sight of little purple patches of *Saxafraga oppositifolia* in full bloom. It was a pleasing contrast, this bit of brilliant colouring set in amidst the cold grey of the surrounding scree, and again carried our thoughts for the moment back to the Alps. It was not long ere we reached the moor and found ourselves rapidly approaching our destination and our tea! Nine and a half hours saw us again at the keeper's cottage, and what a time it had been. Nothing exciting to relate, no tons of rocks slipping between our legs, no hairbreadth escapes, nothing to gasp at or tremble over, but only the simple record of a heavenly day on the hills.

## THE CROWBERRY RIDGE OF BUCHAILLE ETIVE MOR.

BY JAMES MACLAY.

IF he who makes two ears of corn grow where one grew before is to be accounted a benefactor of humanity, in like manner he who finds a route possible for twenty parties, where before only one of them could go, may perhaps claim to be held in esteem among climbers. The object of this paper is, however, a humbler one than this. It is not to describe a new route, but merely to indicate how the grand climb which the Crowberry Ridge affords may be enjoyed by any party of competent climbing capacity, instead of being reserved for an occasional one of exceptional skill and boldness.

The Crowberry Ridge is undoubtedly the finest ridge on Buchaille Etive Mor. Its precipitous south-west face makes it a most imposing spectacle from below, and its length and steepness make it a fascinating climb. The Tower which forms its upper extremity was ascended by Dr Collie's party in their well-known pioneer climb. The Ridge itself was first attacked by Naismith and Douglas, who, however, skirted the lower part of it on the north or right by ascending the gully alongside, and got upon the face of the Ridge about half way up. Then came the first climb right up the face by Mr G. D. Abraham's party. After careful prospecting and discovery of the route to be described in this paper, Mr Abraham eventually succeeded in forcing a direct route up the face by a traverse followed by a difficult and sensational climb up smooth rocks beyond. This passage is described by Mr Raeburn, the leader of the only party who have repeated this part of the climb, as one of the most difficult climbs yet done in Scotland. It involves certain disaster to the leader should he slip, and is, in the opinion of the writer, at least on the verge of the unjustifiable even for the very best climber. It is certainly out of the question for the great majority of parties. It is the writer's desire in this paper to show that





the climb can be fully enjoyed whilst this difficulty is avoided, albeit it is done by going off the face of the ridge for a short distance.

The foot of the Crowberry Ridge may be reached in various ways. The climb over the lower rocks of the curved ridge is perhaps the pleasantest, as it avoids the snow or scree of the lower part of the gully between it and the central buttress.

By whatever way it may be reached, the point to be aimed at is to get to the lowest rocks of the ridge, which are just below the level of the foot of the adjoining northern buttress.

From these it is possible to scramble in two or three ways up to a broad shelf or platform, which we shall call A. There the climb begins opposite a small cairn erected by Mr Abraham's party. After ascending about a dozen feet in a slanting direction, there is a traverse to the right with a rather awkward corner to be got round without any very good hold. From this corner a comfortable platform, which we shall call B, is easily reached. From this a direct and very steep, but not difficult, ascent of about fifteen feet leads to the smaller but still capacious platform, which we shall call C, from the left-hand corner of which Mr Abraham's traverse begins. To follow the route to be described it is not necessary to ascend to this last platform, as an easy traverse to the right, from platform B, leads round the corner towards the gully, and some grassy ledges lead up to a conspicuous ledge sloping upwards to the left and requiring a little care, which leads back to the face at another platform, which we shall call D, and which is above Mr Abraham's traverse.

To return to platform C, it is right to mention that the grass ledges just mentioned can be reached by dropping down at its right-hand corner, also that it is possible to ascend at the same end to an awkward corner eight or ten feet above, once round which an awkward ledge is reached, which seems at first sight to afford a direct route to the lower end of the ledge leading to platform D. Unfortunately, however, there is a bulge about half-way along, which it would at least be extremely difficult to pass.

There is no hold that the writer could find by which it could be got round, and this conclusion was confirmed by another climber who had tried the ledge.

Coming back to platform D, a short upward traverse to the left brings us back to Mr Abraham's route, and two or three steps up lead to a somewhat high reach. It is got over by getting hold of a very good handhold just at the top of the rock, and using a narrow sloping foothold for both feet to swing on to a large sloping foothold higher up on the left. Here a perpendicular knob of rock about six inches in diameter, standing a little off the main rock, is used in a gingerly fashion to assist the climber to get up, still to the left, on to a square-topped rock by means of flat handholds, and without any further difficulty a comparatively flat part of the ridge is reached where a halt can be comfortably made. This, which may be called platform E, ends the steep part of the climb.

Resuming the ascent the rocks become decidedly less steep, though still affording excellent climbing, and they form a sort of rough awkward staircase till another resting-place is reached. The angle here rather eases off again, and another scramble leads to a sort of lower tower where a comfortable pause can be made, and for the first time it is possible to get off the ridge to the left. From this point a short horizontal knife edge leads to the foot of a long curved rock ridge, which leads to the top of the Crowberry Tower without any particular difficulty. On the far side of the Tower is a dip of twenty to twenty-five feet, which may be descended at either the right or the left corner of the Tower to a narrow col, with a steep descent to the right and an easier one to the left. Across the col the rocks are easy, and we soon reach a snow or scree slope, at the top of which is a narrow band of rock just below the summit, which is reached without further difficulty.

The possibly undue particularity of the foregoing description is perhaps justified by the importance of the Ridge, which must, the writer thinks, always remain one of the outstanding climbs on the Buchaille Etive. The two most difficult points as it appeared to him, apart from the sensational difficulty above described, were the awkward

corner between platforms A and B, and the steep bit between platforms D and E. Everything else was comparatively plain sailing. On the second occasion when the writer ascended the ridge by this route, the party of four on an eighty-foot rope were able to climb without unroping at any point; but there was rather too little rope for comfort at some points. With three on the rope on the previous occasion no inconvenience was experienced.

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In connection with the above climb, the following approximate heights (aneroid) have been given us by the Rev. A. E. Robertson.

	Approximate Height in Feet.
Foot of rocks of Crowberry Ridge, straight below A	2,425
(The Rev. A. E. Robertson says that this pitch, from the foot to A, gives excellent climbing, and should on no account be omitted.)	
Platform A - - - - -	2,505
"    C - - - - -	2,550
"    E (cairn) - - - - -	2,670
Foot of Tower - - - - -	3,000
Summit of Tower - - - - -	3,150
Tower Col - - - - -	3,110
Summit of Buchaille Etive Mor - - - - -	3,345

## THE MYSTERY OF CROIS.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

PERHAPS the very name Crois is mysterious to some of the brotherhood. Even those well acquainted with Arrochar might for a moment hesitate to locate it. For Crois is a mountain, and a shapely one to boot; but, in a district of peaks easily accessible, its relative inaccessibility shuts it off from the ordinary climber. To reach it from Arrochar you must pass a triple temptation. First, the Cobbler, so alluring as he looks down and displays a serrated ridge rising over the shapely corrie. Then comes Narnain, with its Dolomitic Spear-head Arête and assortment of difficult chimneys. Farther, the wide expanse of Sugach Corrie, with its Knife Edge Arête, and a dozen other good climbs, endeavour to divert one from the unpromising Crois, the eastern end of the ridge extending from Narnain to near Inveruglas. From Inveruglas again, three temptations must be passed. Right at hand Ben Vorlich, with its northern corries full of snow, and its buttresses affording splendid view points for Ben Lomond. Then the convenient foot-path leading to Loch Sloy affords easy access to Ben Vane and Ben Ime. But to reach Crois the stream must be crossed, and many ups and downs encountered ere the Mystery of Crois is seen. From Inveruglas, Crois, especially in spring time, presents a magnificent appearance. Rising boldly from the valley, its numerous slabby bosses give it an appearance of great inaccessibility, although the intervening grassy couloirs present no difficulty. What then is the "Mystery of Crois"? In *S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. VI., p. 190, we read, "The north face of the Crois (looking to Loch Lomond) presents a range of cliffs that merits study. A gully at the low right-hand corner gave a good climb at Easter, part of it being iced."

Since that time many have been the plans and attempts to reach the corrie of Crois. At New Year Meet, 1902, a party of us driving from Inveruglas, made our way to the summit in blinding blizzard and piercing cold, but were

fain to descend by the shortest route into Sugach Corrie. Later, Gall Inglis and the writer (Vol. VII., p. 70) were decoyed from their purpose by the alluring charms of the Knife Edge of Sugach, so that it was left to this year, April 1905, before we pierced the mystery that hung round the corrie of Crois. Motoring to Inveruglas with my family, we chose the southern side of Inveruglas Water, and following the footpath *underneath* the railway close by the road, emerged on the boggy ground. It was dry going, as the cold night had locked up the waters in the reservoirs, but subsequent descents and detours confirmed the opinion that it is much better to take the Loch Sloy footpath from Inveruglas Farm, subsequently crossing the river when near Crois. The corrie of Crois is a very narrow one, and lies high up near the summit. It is somewhat nearer Arrochar than Inveruglas, and up to the last minute preserves its secrecy well. But, at last, rounding the last knob we were face to face with the mystery. It can hardly be called a corrie, although the crescentic stretch of cliffs lends colour to the name. The cliffs, 400 to 500 feet high, much resemble those of the Cobbler, and in one place from below show a projecting beak or pinnacle curiously like the north peak of that mountain. The cliffs may conveniently be divided into three sections. Nearest Inveruglas, and least in height, the Pinnacle Buttress. A steep chimney, with at least two pitches, separates this from the Central Buttress, a mass of slabs with possible cracks and ledges, first climbed on 23rd May 1905. To the west a deep cut couloir, and beyond this the largest buttress rising nearly to the summit. A subsidiary ridge rises from the bottom of the couloir, and may afford a sporting route to the summit. Reserving the Pinnacle Buttress, our first intention was to climb the sporting ridge, and with Mrs Inglis Clark leading, we made some progress, but as I was due in Edinburgh that evening, we traversed a snowy ledge into the couloir, and under the leadership of the ladies, reached the summit without difficulty.

The view from Crois is unique, and in some respects finer than from the neighbouring mountains. On this account alone fellow-members are urged to make its



NARNAIN FROM CROIS.

*W. Ingeis Clark.*





acquaintance. The chief feature is the marvellous outlook down Loch Lomond, which, with its numerous islands, merges in blue distance into the Campsie Fells. To the south, Loch Long stretches without interruption to the Firth of Clyde, Holy Island projecting far out from the Arran hills into the middle distance. The peaks of Arran are well seen, and then round to the right are Narnain, Ime, Vane, and Vorlich. From Crois the ridge of Sugach is like some broad highway leading to Narnain, which from here presents a noble appearance (see illustration). Ben Ime also shows at its best. As snow was plentiful we glissaded towards Sugach, and avoiding the boggy ground in the corrie, visited Narnain caves, and so home. A week later the arrival of H. and C. W. Walker from Dundee, in their six H.P. De Dion motor, gave us a further opportunity to explore the corrie. Approaching it this time from Arrochar, the appearance of the cliffs was so different that at first we were in doubts as to their identity, and in determining this, C. Walker, with Mrs Clark, came on a fine ridge right below the Pinnacle Buttress, which afforded an interesting, and in parts, difficult climb.

Meanwhile the rest of the party had reached the foot of the rocks, which were now heavily fringed with huge icicles. The original idea to climb the sporting ridge or the southern buttress was negatived by the constant bombardment of the rocks by masses of ice falling from above. For the same reason the snow gullies were risky, and we had to shelter below a projecting rock to avoid the masses of ice which were constantly bounding over the grassy slopes of the corrie. One of the blocks of ice was not less than nine or ten inches in diameter, a sufficiently dangerous missile. On reuniting our forces, the Pinnacle Buttress, which was now in shadow, seemed the most feasible, and promised good sport. Our party of six on 140 feet of rope were nicely spaced, and under C. Walker's leadership, the first pitch of the gully to the left was carried. Here an ice avalanche proved a serious danger, but all escaped except the writer, who was second on the rope. Fortunately the mass struck fair on the chest, and inflicted no injury. From the pitch the ascent of the Pinnacle was

made direct, our rope just giving sufficient space to obtain good positions or hitches. An interesting little traverse with a long stretch gave occasion for pause, and near the top a steep wall with few holds proved trying, but under our able leader difficulties vanished, and we ended exactly on the top of the sensational Pinnacle (see illustration). A narrow knife edge, best traversed stride-legs, leads in about ten feet to the overhanging point, where a small cairn was raised. No one assuredly will ever ascend from the outside and traverse the Pinnacle. Most superb cloud effects rejoiced us all the way, and some 600 feet of excellent glissading rewarded us on our return journey. Our glowing accounts fired Messrs Goggs and Raeburn to further explorations, and on the 23rd May 1905, they proceeded to the Corrie of Crois. At the writer's suggestion they attacked the Central Buttress, which they ascended to the top. Mr Raeburn writes thus regarding it: "It is a steep and interesting little climb. A grass-covered chimney, near the foot, was found to be the most difficult portion. A good deal of time was spent in trying to force the 'Absolute Arête' near the top, but eventually an escape was found to the left by a narrow overhung grass ledge. A small cairn was built above this." The description of the corrie as looking to Loch Lomond is incorrect. It does not look to Inveruglas, the nearest point of the loch, but it rather looks down to the foot of the loch. (See photograph from the Pinnacle.)



THE PINNACLE OF CROIS

*C. Inglis Clark.*



## A BIT OF THE BERWICKSHIRE COAST AND ITS BIRDS.

BY W. DOUGLAS.

THE fringe of coast-line that runs west from Coldingham Shore to Pease Dean, embracing the promontory of St Abbs, depicts one of the most picturesque, and at the same time rugged and grand scenes, with massive cliffs and rocky stacks alive with bird life, that is to be found on all the great seaboard of Eastern Scotland. Whether viewed from the scenic, the geological, or the ornithological points of view, few places can offer better or even equal attractions.

Starting from the village of Coldingham Shore early one morning in the beginning of last May, Mr Harold Raeburn (whose extensive and accurate knowledge of birds and their habits was to add so much to the interest of the day) and I saw the cliffs at their best. The rising sun shone full on their faces, lightening up their wondrous colours of red, yellow, and white, with startling effect, and the great flights of sea-birds, ever wheeling round in countless numbers, filling the air with their incessant cries, added the life to the scene which completed a perfect picture.

We began our examination of the cliffs at Whiteheugh. This strange promontory widens out as it reaches seawards, and appears to be guarded at its narrow neck by the ruins of an ancient castle, but on coming closer we found them to be weathered fragments of natural rock which had taken this unusual form. In the recesses of this fastness we observed a Jackdaw sitting on its nest, which on being disturbed revealed two eggs. On the ledges of the south face of this promontory nest three large colonies of Guillemots.\* Each individual bird standing as usual, erect like a

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\* Mr Muirhead says of the Guillemot that besides those breeding on Whiteheugh, "a small breeding station of this species is seen on the cliffs immediately to the east of the Lighthouse, and after rounding the Head considerable colonies are found on the Cleaver Rock, Foul Carr, the precipices at the Ramparts, Skelly, and Flot Carr. There is also a nesting place on the face of the steep cliff which looks towards

man in full evening dress, with its white front and swallow-tailed coat, had already paired for the season and looked quite secure under its overhanging ledge of rock. Besides these Guillemots, on the whole face of this great cliff, wherever the smallest resting place offered room for a nest, were scattered the ever present Herring Gull, leaving only a small part clear for the minute colony of the graceful Kittiwake,\* which had taken its quarters on small rock ledges nearer the sea. It was pleasant to think in looking at the sites which these birds had chosen, that the most of them were absolutely safe from molestation, for nearly all of them, on this cliff at any rate, were in quite inaccessible positions.†

On the other side of Heugh my friend found in a pigeon's nest a young bird with a plentiful supply of feathers already on its back, and it would not be long before it was away on the wing. Evidently its parents had nested early in the year. We saw many pigeons and Jackdaws during the day, and they must breed in great numbers all along the cliffs.

In the absence of a local guide we were sometimes at a

the west between West Hurker and Petticowick Harbour. When we reach Broadhaven Bay a small colony is seen on the rocks there, and another at the Raven's Heugh; further on at Trummie Carr we find another occupying the most westerly breeding place of the Guillemot on the coast of Berwickshire" (*"Birds of Berwickshire,"* vol. ii., p. 298). We verified all these sites with the exception of the last three. There is also another considerable colony on the cliffs to the east of and facing Fowl Carr.

\* Mr Muirhead says (1895) that the Kittiwake "does not now nest on any part of the Berwickshire coast" (vol. ii., p. 288). This site was re-discovered prior to 1897 by Mr Oswin Lee. He records in his book, *"Among British Birds in their Nesting Haunts,"* "that he was lowered on a rope to photograph two birds on their nest at St Abb's Head" (vol. i., p. 54). From our own observation there are now four small colonies, viz., on Whiteheugh, Fowl Carr, the cliff east of Fowl Carr, and the Ramparts.

† Mr Muirhead records (ii., p. 282), that the eggs used to be eagerly sought after by the local fishermen, but that now they do not go so frequently on eggging expeditions. He also tells how some forty years ago the fishermen of Burnmouth went twice a week in "gull time" to get eggs and usually secured from 80 to 90 in a morning. We could have lifted about 140 had we been so minded.

loss to give the correct names to the various cliffs, headlands, and stacks on our way along the coast, but after our return, with the help of the illustrations in Mr Muirhead's book on the "Birds of Berwickshire," and the 6-inch Ordnance Survey map, we have been able to make up a list of them and to identify them all, and this list is printed at the end of this paper.

In our round of Whiteheugh, where we kept as near the edge of the cliffs as was prudent, we discovered a nest with one egg in it of *the* one foolish Herring Gull which had built its house within reach of human hands. My friend remarked that one usually finds this in all such stations. It must either have not yet acquired the faculty of knowing when it was safe or had been crowded out of all the better positions.

These cliffs must look well from the sea, and I understand that boats can easily be hired at Coldingham Shore for this purpose. To do this pleasantly, however, one is very much dependent upon the weather, for the surf rolls in heavily whenever the winds do blow.

After leaving Whiteheugh we circled round northwards, and got down to the shore at a pretty little cove called Horsecastle Bay, where on our right was a curious detached land stack called Batty's Stone. My friend climbed up behind this and discovered another pigeon's nest containing two eggs.

From here we made our way across the low ground that divides St Abb's Head from the mainland and ascended to the top of the cliffs. These, at this point, are at their grandest, and plunge down for the most part vertically into the sea.

We swept the ledges of the cliffs below the lighthouse with binocular, and counted numbers of Guillemots and Herring Gulls on their nests, or, in the case of the Guillemot, on what stands with them in place of a nest. Then we worked our way round the seaward side of the lighthouse enclosures, looking down on the Cleaver Rock which stands up boldly below and carries many nests of the Herring Gull. Just before reaching the site of St Abb's Nunnery we managed again to reach the shore, climbing down a steep

grassy slope. Here great blocks of stone cover the beach, and in front rise the two rock towers of the Stack and Fowl Carr, with the Crooked Carr at their base. An adventurous ascent of the Stack was made by Raeburn, and the breeding haunts of the Herring Gull invaded. This species held this entire rock in possession, while on the Fowl Carr opposite, a large colony of the Guillemot and a smaller one of the kittiwake, as well as the herring gull, were observed. No doubt the Razorbill was there among the Guillemots, but we did not pick it out. The Lesser Black-Backed Gull is also said to breed here, but we did not discover it. Mr Muirhead has a note in his book (vol. ii., p. 300), that a fisherman had told him that above forty years ago he had taken as many as 180 Guillemots' eggs off Fowl Carr in one day. This fisherman must have been a very expert climber, for to us the rock looked quite inaccessible, but possibly from the seaward side it may be more easily climbed.

On return to the heights again we looked down the cliffs of the Ramparts and over the heads of the near stacks of Flott Carr and Skelly, and on and away eastwards past Earnsheugh and Fast Castle—a rich view full of colour and life. With this on our right we wended our way round the cliffs, passing the Steeple Rock, till we descended to the quaint little bay of Petticowick. About here we had a talk with a native, who told us he had seen a few Puffins nesting on the cliffs, but we could see none of them; indeed, Mr Muirhead says, “that it does not appear to breed at St Abbs now” (vol. ii., p. 307).

The view from Petticowick, showing clearly the contorted and tilted strata of rocks, is very impressive. The bold cliffs of Earnsheugh, the ancient home of the White-tailed Eagle, and Heathery Carr, rising to a height of 500 feet, stretch westwards to the conspicuous waterfall of the Moorburn, which tumbles over the cliffs a mile away. At the end of the farthest out promontory on the horizon, the tower of the Souter Rock appears, and this is often mistaken for Fast Castle.

With regard to the geology we have it on the authority of Sir Archibald Geikie, that “nowhere are the foldings of



the Silurian strata more magnificently laid bare " than on the five miles of cliffs that stretch westwards from St Abb's Head. He also refers to the " gigantic arches and troughs wherein the massive beds of greywacke are folded like piles of carpets," and to the dark volcanic rock that projects beyond the rest of the coast-line and bears the lighthouse.\*

After leaving Petticowick we were unable to get to the shore again till just beyond the waterfall of the Moorburn, where a difficult little climb lets one down to a gravelly beach. We did not observe the Guillemots here nor at the Raven's Heugh, but as we had forgotten that Muirhead mentions those places as breeding sites we omitted to look particularly for them. As we circled round the head of the cliffs we occasionally got side views of them, and there, as before, were the Herring Gulls, Jackdaws, and pigeons. Passing Coldingham Loch on our left we continued our way over Outlaw Hills and descended once more at the Brander. This is a long low promontory, stretching seawards in a series of rocky peaks rising from a narrow rock arête and offers quite a nice little climb. On the east side of this ridge nest five pairs of the Green Cormorant or Shag, the only ones we saw to-day, and over the whole rock countless numbers of the Herring Gull.

From here we had a steep climb up again, only to descend steeply into the deep ravine of the Dowlaw Dean, and re-ascend on the other side. We then reached out to the Souter Rocks, where there is another climb to be got, but the Souter himself is quite inaccessible. A few minutes more and we were up and down again to Fast Castle—the " Wolf's Crag " of the " Bride of Lammermoor "—keeping a bright look-out as we passed along the top of the Hawk's Heugh for the Peregrine Falcon, but failed to see it. Here ended our examination of the cliffs for the day, and then began the long seven miles' tramp to Cockburnspath amid the songs of Skylarks and Pipets, and the cries of Wheatears and Peeseweeps, till we reached the hedgerows, and the songs were changed to those of the Greenfinch, Yellow-Hammer, Chaffinch, and other little

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\* "Scenery of Scotland," 3rd ed., p. 451.

birds. We reached the train in good time after eleven hours' hard going, and soon were whirled home.

The names of the different birds recorded as identified by my friend during the day, were Herring Gull, Kittiwake, Guillemot, Jackdaw, Rock-Dove, Razorbill, Shag, Oyster Catcher, Lesser Black Backed Gull (?), Starling, Sparrow, Swift, Martin, Greenfinch, Yellow-Hammer, Skylark, Stonechat, Lapwing, Cuckoo, Corncrake, Swallow, Blackbird, Missel Thrush, Song Thrush, Rock-Pipit, Meadow-Pipit, Rook, Wheatear, Pied-Wagtail, Robin, Chaffinch, and Blue-Tit.

In such an excursion as I have endeavoured to record one feels the full joy of nature in her wildest form. The coast-line is far removed from train and road, and there are few habitations in view. True it is that cultivated farm fields come here and there close to the edge of the cliffs, but one's eyes are always turned seawards, and one forgets in the keen sea breezes and in the sight of these undisturbed sea birds, that the hand of man lies heavily on the land.

#### LIST OF CLIFFS AND STACKS ON THE BERWICKSHIRE COAST FROM COLDINGHAM SHORE OR ST ABB'S VILLAGE, TO FAST CASTLE.

White Heugh.—This is the great rock headland that lies directly north of the village of St Abb's or Coldingham Shore. (See "Muirhead," vol. ii., p. 298, for illustration.)

Hardencarrs Heugh and Harden Carrs.

Wuddy Heugh, with the Rough Carrs, Wuddy Rocks, and Redshanks Rock lying off.

Burnmouth Harbour, with Little Black Carrs off the mouth of the Bay. Horsecastle, with to the north Horsecastle Bay, with Batty's Stone on the south shore of it (illustrated in "Muirhead," vol. ii., p. 94), and Horsecastle Rocks and the Big Black Carrs lying off. The Bay lies at the south-east end of the low ground that lies between St Abb's Head and the mainland. Usually some fishing boats are drawn up here.

East Hurker.

Kirk Hill (250 feet) with Deil's Elbow and Waimie Carr below.

"St Abb's Kirk" and Batty's Heugh with Tod Rock lying off.

Black Gable with, to the north-west, Harelaw Cove, and to the south Cauldron Cove.

Lighthouse with Signal Station (310 feet), with to the N.N.W. Cleaver Rock and Goose Croves ; to the north Craig Rock, and to the east Eelicar Rock and Claffert's or Crawford's Rock lying off.

Ramparts and St Abb's Nunnery, with to the east three isolated stacks, The Stack, Fowl Carr, and Crooked Carr (illustrated in "Muirhead," vol. ii., 284 and 308), and Headland Cove to the west.

Hope's Heugh with outlying rocks of Wheat Stack, Auld Man o' Wick, Staple Rock, Floatcar Rock and Skelly, West Hurker and the Big and Little Channeler, and nearer to Petticowick, Steeple Rock.

Petticowick Harbour.

Broadhaven Heugh (150 feet) with Broadhaven Bay and Broadhaven Beach.

West in Thirle Heugh, Bay and Rocks.

Raven's Heugh (300 feet), faces east above West in Thirle Bay.

Thrummiecarr Heugh (350 feet), faces west, with Thrummie Carr and Cove below.

Biter's Heugh (with the high ground behind running up to 528 feet), and north of this is Biter's Beach, and lying off Green Skeers and Alice's Strand Gaut.

Uilystrand Heugh (409 feet), with Uilystrand Brae below.

Snuffhole Heugh (450 feet), with below Snuffhole Stells and Little Pits.

Whitestone Brae (500 feet), with Whitestone Heugh below.

Earn's Heugh (491 feet), with a little rock, Black Rock, lying off.

Heathery Carr, and Heathery Carr Beach below, to the east of the waterfall of the Moorburn ; Heathery Carr lying off to the west, with still farther to the north and west, Pikie's Cove and Rock, Moorburn Point, and Pikie's Stell.

Oatlee Hill (Outlaw Hill, 532 feet), with Moorburn Beach and Oatlee Cove and Cave below.

Mawcarr Stells and Shilments, with Shilment Beach between and the Mahound Rock lying off.

Step Heugh (350 feet), with the Barleyhole Rocks between which and the Lumsdaine Shore stretch the Broad Sands with the Hollow Craig and Naked Man.

Rough Heugh, with Williegits and Hurker lying off.

Brander Heugh (472 feet), with below the Brander and to the east and south of it Brander Cove and Brander Cliffs ; to the west of the Brander are the Mussel Craigs.

Dowlaw Dean and Waterfall.

Souter Brae (134 feet). The Souter and Souter Tails.

Byrips Cove, with Little and Big Byrips, and Meg Watson's Craig lying off.

Hawk's Heugh (350 feet), rising behind to Telegraph Hill (572 feet).

Fast Castle (153 feet), with Wheat Stack lying off.

## S.M.C. GUIDE BOOK.

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### SGÙRR A' CHOIR GHLAIS AND THE GLEN STRATH FARRAR HILLS.

(DIVISION III. GROUP XXI.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 26' 40''$ ; W. Lon.  $4^{\circ} 54'$ . One-inch O.S., Sheets 82, 83. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

Sgùrr a' Choir Ghlais is the culminating point of the range of hills which runs east and west along the north side of Glen Strath Farrar, and separates that beautiful and richly wooded valley from the wild and desolate region of Glen Orrin.

These hills are composed of different varieties of metamorphic rock—gneiss, mica-schist, and quartzite. A band of granitoid and hornblendic gneiss, similar to the Lewisian gneiss of the North-west Highlands, forms the lower part of Sgùrr na Muice in the Broulin Forest.

*Beinn a Bha'ach Ard* (*Vaichart*, 2,826 feet), the eastern extremity of the range, forms a fine cone-shaped peak, conspicuous in the view from Inverness and the shores of the Beaully Firth. The northern slopes above Glen Orrin are smooth and peat-covered, but on the south side a bare rocky shoulder falls into Glen Strath Farrar above the woods of Culligran.

*Route.*—From Struy Bridge 1 mile up Glen Strath Farrar to Culligran, whence a path to the right leads north-east up the slopes to the ridge east of Carn nam Pollan, and thence south-west for a mile along the sky-line to the summit. The ridge can now be followed westward, or the descent made to the road by the rocky spur mentioned above. Another path leaves the road a short distance east of the bridge over the Neaty Burn, and follows the valley





*A. F. Robertson.*

THE MONAR HILLS FROM THE EAST.

of that stream to the col between *Meallan Buidhe* (2,505 feet) and Beinn Vaichart.

For the next 4 or 5 miles the ridge is smooth, grassy, and uninteresting, though splendid going. The top of *Sgurr Ruadh* (3,254 feet) is of the same character, but is separated, a mile to the south, by a steep dip of over 800 feet from the rocky summit of *Garbh Charn* (2,801 feet), whose southern slopes fall steeply to the head of Loch Bunacharan, with fine rock faces on the east and south-east.

The next summit, 1 mile to the north-east, is *Carn nan Gobhar* (3,242 feet), with a top covered with loose stones, and steep grassy slopes to north. A grassy ridge with a drop of 400 feet to the col, followed by a rise of 700 feet, leads in 1 mile to the summit cairn of *Sgùrr à Choir Ghlais* (3,554 feet).

This is a graceful coniform peak, stony on the summit, and with a few small crags on the northern side. On the south, smooth grassy slopes lead down to Ardchuilk, at the head of Loch Mhuilinn,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles. A path also leads from Mulie for some distance up the valley of Allt a Mhuilinn, on the east side of the stream.

The succeeding summits on the ridge—*Creag Ghorm a' Bhealaich* (3,378 feet), 1 mile W.N.W.; *Sgùrr Fhuar-thuill* (3,459 feet),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles W.N.W. of *Sgùrr Choir Ghlais*; and *Sgùrr na Festig*, half mile west of *Sgùrr Fhuar-thuill*—are all much of the same character, with craggy faces overlooking the deep corries on the northern side of the ridge, but possess no outstanding structural features.

From *Sgùrr na Festig* a spur runs south at right angles, whose eastern side is far wilder and more rocky than any part of the main range. *Sgùrr na Muice* (2,919 feet) rises in an almost unbroken precipitous face above the deep corrie of Loch Toll a Mhuic; and *Beinn na Muice*, at the farther end of the spur, presents bare rocky slopes to the east and south.

As a whole, the Glen Strath Farrar hills are of more interest to the hill-walker than to the Ultramontane. They lie amongst some of the finest scenery of the Central Highlands, and afford a magnificent series of views of the

mountains of Central and Western Inverness and Ross, but with the exception of the eastern face of Sgùrr na Muice, afford little or no real rock-climbing.

The district lies entirely within the deer forests of Struy, Broulin, and Strathconon; is strictly guarded during July, August, and September; and is at all times somewhat inaccessible. The nearest inn (small but comfortable) is at Struy, 10 miles from Beauly, daily mail-car. The road from Struy up Glen Strath Farrar to the foot of Loch Monar is fairly good for cycling, but loose and sandy in places. Accommodation can sometimes be got with the keeper at Ardchuik, at the foot of Sgùrr à Choir Ghlais, 7 miles above Struy.

L. W. H.

#### LITERATURE.

"A Traverse of Ross-shire from Beauly to Strathcarron," by Colin B. Phillip. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. III., p. 121.

"The Freevater and Glen Strath Farrar Mountains," by H. T. Munro. *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VI., p. 46.

### MAOILE LUNNDAIDH.

#### (DIVISION III. GROUP XXII.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 28'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 6'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 82. Bartholomew's Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

Maoile Lunndaidh (3,294 feet)=the hill of the boggy place. 3 miles north of Loch Monar.

Creag Toll a' Choin (3,295 feet).  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of Maoile Lunndaidh.

Càrn nam Fiacan (3,253 feet)=cairn of the teeth.  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile west by south of Maoile Lunndaidh.

Creag Dhubh Mhor (2,796 feet). 1 mile north of Maoile Lunndaidh.

Maoile Lunndaidh is a large massive mountain, bounded by Glen Fhiodhaig on the north and Loch Monar on the south. The various summits mentioned above are separated from each other by very slight dips, and some of them can scarcely be considered even separate tops, notably Creag Toll a' Choin and Maoile Lunndaidh itself. Being situated



a long way from the sea on either side, it carries a good deal of snow in its corries far into the summer. There are deep corries on all sides, the finest being the Fuar-tholl Mor on the N.N.W. side. It contains three small tarns, one above the other. There are also lochans in Coire Lochan a' Chlaidheimh and Coire Loch na Dearcag. There are rather large cliffs in Fuar-tholl Mor, but they do not look at a hurried glance very promising for climbing. Information on this point is wanted. It commands grand views of the Ross-shire mountains—Torridon, Loch Carron, &c., to the north-west and north; an Fannich, the Monar tops, Bidean Eoin Deirg, &c., looking very fine, seen close to. It is rather an inaccessible mountain, the nearest hotels being Achnasheen and Strathcarron. From the former, follow the railway track westwards for two miles, then strike up track to Scardroy at the head of Loch Beannachan. Then follow the Meig Water to the foot of Gleann an Allt an Amise, which joins it from the south-west. There is a track up this valley for about two miles, and then over the moss to Loch a' Chlaidheimh, situated in the corrie of that name, thence up the south-east arête to the summit. No climbing recorded.

C. B. P.

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## BIDEAN AN EOIN DEIRG.

### (DIVISION III. GROUP XXIII.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 26'$  to  $57^{\circ} 27'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 10'$  to  $5^{\circ} 15'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 82. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

Bidean an Eoin Deirg (3,430 feet)=the peak of the red birds.

Sgurr a Chaoruinn (3,452 feet)=the rowan peak.

Sgurr Choinnich (3,260 feet).

Beinn Tharsuinn (2,807 feet).

This is an interesting group of mountains, lying in that very remote region to the north of Loch Monar.

The finest hill in the group is undoubtedly Bidean an Eoin Deirg, locally known as "The Spidean." It rises into a sharp peak, and has a very imposing-looking north-east

face, where there are some good rocks on which climbing could probably be got.

The other three peaks are easy undulating summits, with grassy corries all around. These corries usually contain a big quantity of snow in spring and early summer. This group may be easily reached from either Glencarron Station, or Achnashellach Station on the Dingwall and Kyle of Lochalsh Railway.

A good driving track runs up the Allt a' Chonais to Coire-beithe in Glen Evaig. This track may be taken for three or four miles, when one or other of the shooting paths which exist here will afford an easy approach to the hills.

*N.B.*—The scenery in the Allt a' Chonais is very fine.

To get at this group of hills from the Monar side is much more difficult, as the distances from public resorts are great.

A new small inn a mile from Struy Bridge has recently been opened, and from it Glen Strath Farrar may be explored, but west Monar is a "far cry" from Struy, and were one approaching the hills from that side, he would need to find accommodation in some of the keepers' houses about Loch Monar.

The ground is all under deer.

A. E. R

## LURG MHOR (3,234 feet).

### (DIVISION III. GROUP XXIV.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 24\frac{1}{2}'$ ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 13'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 82. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

Bidean Choire Sheasgaich (3,102 feet); pron. *Bidean Coire Hes-gich* = the peak of the barren corrie.

Lurg Mhòr (3,234 feet) = the big ridge.

Meall Mòr (3,100 feet) = the big lump.

This is a very inaccessible group of hills lying to the

west of Loch Monar ; their western slopes drain into the headwaters of the Ling in Kintail.

They can be got at from Strathcarron Hotel by traversing a series of tracks over some very rough and broken ground to the Loch an Laoigh. From here the track continues through the Bealach an Sgoltaidh (a right-of-way) to Loch Monar.

Bidean Choire Sheasgaich may be easily climbed from the Bealach an Sgoltaidh. There is no cairn on the summit. A fine walk leads in a south-westerly direction to Lurg Mor (3,234 feet)—cairn here.

Lurg Mor is a great long flat-topped ridge, with easy slopes descending to the south. It is very steep and precipitous on its north side, but there is no good climbing rock on the hill.

A good road runs up Glen Strath Farrar to Monar Lodge. There is nothing but a rough track along the north side of Loch Monar to Strathmore Lodge, communication being usually made by boat. From the west end of Monar Loch a rough track runs through the Bealach an Sgoltaidh to Attadale as above mentioned. A good path has been recently constructed from Glen Elchaig to Pait Lodge, which might be utilised in getting to or from this remote region.

The ground is all under deer.

A. E. R.

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## MORUISG.

(DIVISION III. GROUP XXV.)

Lat.  $57^{\circ} 30'$  ; W. Lon.  $5^{\circ} 10'$ . Ordnance Survey Map, one-inch scale, Sheet 82. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

Moruisg (3,026 feet).

This is a somewhat featureless hill, lying on the east side of the Dingwall and Kyle of Lochalsh Railway at Glencarron Station. There is no climbing on it whatever,

the hill being mostly made up of grass and screes. It may easily be ascended from Glencarron Station between trains. It is well to note that there is no public accommodation near Glencarron Station, Craig Inn being now shut up.

The ground is under deer.

A. E. R.

## SGÙRR A' MHUILINN

(*The Peak of the Mill*).

(DIVISION III. GROUP XXVI.)

Lat. 57° 33' 40"; W. Lon. 4° 55'. One-inch O.S., Sheet 82. Bartholomew's Reduced Ordnance Map, Sheet 20.

This mountain *massif*, generally known as Sgùrr a' Mhuilinn—the name of one only of its several summits—occupies a central and outstanding position between the head of Strath Conon and Strath Bran, and, whether viewed from the low ground of Easter Ross, or from Achnasheen and the heights of Kinlochewe in the west, rises as a most conspicuous feature in the landscape.

Composed of different varieties of metamorphic rock, the mountain forms an oblong mass of elevated ground, four by three miles in extent, and divided into two unequal portions by the deep valley of Gleann Meinich.

On the north side of this glen the summits rise in the following order from south-east to north-west:—*Creag Ruadh* (2,388 feet); 1 mile west by north, *Meallan nan Ban* (2,750 cont.); 1 mile north by west, beyond a dip of nearly 600 feet, *Sgùrr a' Mhuilinn* (2,845 feet); and, 1½ miles west by north, *Sgùrr a' Ghlas Leathaid* (2,778 feet); a graceful cone-shaped peak, and the culminating point of the mountain. The most striking feature of Sgùrr Mhuilinn is, however, the peak—nameless on the one-inch O.S., but known locally as *Creag Ghlas*—which rises on the north side of Gleann Mhuilinn rather less than 1 mile south of Sgùrr a' Ghlas Leathaid, and plunges down in a magnificent precipice of bare, grey, slabby rock to the deep grassy valley below.

At either end of the lower ridge on the south side of Gleann Meinich are *Meall na Faochaig* (2,231 feet) and the top wrongly named on the O.S. Map, Creag Ghlas, and locally known as *Cnap na Feola* (1,895 feet).

Sgurr Mhuilinn may be approached from the east by Strath Conon (daily mail-car from Muir of Ord Station to Strathconon village), a beautiful drive of 16 miles up the valley of the Conon and Meig rivers. The ascent can be made from Strathanmore, 1 mile west of the village, by following the Allt a' Mhuilinn. A more interesting way is by Gleann Meinich, and up the first tributary stream on the north side of that glen, descending from Sgurr Ghlas Leathaid to the head of the valley.

An alternative route from the west is from Achanalt (Hotel), on the Dingwall and Skye Railway, whence a walk of 4 miles over somewhat dreary moorland leads to the north foot of Sgurr a' Ghlas Leathaid. Inns at Muir of Ord, Achilty, Achanalt, and some (rough) accommodation in Strathconon village.

L. W. H.

## EXCURSIONS.

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

CLACH GLAS, A NEW CLIMB ON.—Sunday, 23rd April 1905, Inglis Clark, H. Walker, and Goodeve slept the night at Camasunary Lodge after doing a climb on Blaven. The morning did not look very promising, as there had been a good deal of rain in the night, and the tops of the hills had a fair sprinkling of fresh snow. There were heavy clouds about, and the mist was low down on the hills. Getting up about 5.30 A.M., a start was made from the Lodge by 7 A.M. By that time the sky had cleared, and the general weather conditions appeared more favourable. The track was followed from the Lodge as far as the Lonely Corrie, and the corrie ascended to the foot of the central buttress of Clach Glas. The north face of Blaven looked exceptionally grand with the mist eddying and swirling round the pinnacles of rock near the summit, and several photographs were taken at different points *en route*.

A consultation was then held at the foot of the buttress, as there appeared to be a choice of three routes, namely, the main gully, the buttress to the right, or the buttress to the left of this gully, either buttress offering a choice of routes at the bottom. The left-hand buttress is continuous to the summit, and was, the writer believes, climbed by Naismith and Parker. It was eventually decided to try the gully. The first two pitches were very wet and cold owing to the snow and ice on the rocks, and the stream of water running over them, and though not very difficult some care had to be used. After the first two pitches the gully did not appear as though it would offer much difficulty higher up, so a traverse was made out of the gully on to the right-hand buttress.

This traverse landed the party on to some big boiler-plate slabs, which were in bad condition owing to fresh snow, and the holds were very small and all filled with snow, so that a good deal of time was taken up in finding and cleaning them out. There were very few hitches, and those only small ones, and not particularly safe. With the exception of two short snow-storms while on the buttress, the weather was favourable, and the views looking back across the valley,

were most varied in colour and effect. When near the top the buttress opened out on to some scree lying at the foot of the main tower of Clach Glas. From the scree a narrow and well-defined chimney leads up direct to the summit on the north-west side of Clach Glas. This was carefully examined at the foot, but appeared to be almost impossible under the existing conditions of snow and glazed rock, and it was decided not to spend any time in seeing what could be done. [This chimney may perhaps be climbed at some future date in the summer when the rocks are dry, but as seen later on by the party from the summit, the last two pitches looked quite impossible.]

By traversing over the scree to the right the ridge connecting Clach Glas with Blaven was reached, and the usual route was followed to the summit of the former. The wind being high and the weather cold, a long stay was not made, the ridge being followed down to the col separating Clach Glas from Garven. The descent took some time, great care having to be used owing to the slippery state of the rocks and fresh snow. From the col an easy descent over the scree landed the party once more in the Lonely Corrie, whence the track to Sligachan was followed, the inn being reached at 7.15 P.M. after a most delightful day on the hills notwithstanding the snow, storms, and other adverse weather conditions experienced. T. E. GOODEVE.

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THE FAIRY KNOLL, LOCHFYNE.—Persons sailing to or from Inveraray can scarcely fail to notice an oddly-shaped top which projects from the nearly horizontal line of hills bordering the east side of Lochfyne.

The hill referred to appears on the O.S. maps as *Sith an t' Sluain*, and it is 1,428 feet in height, and 3 miles S.S.W. of Strachur.

On 12th May I left Strachur Pier at 6.30 A.M., and after walking along the water-side for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles, slanted up the hill, first through copsewood and primroses, and then across the open moor.

An hour and a quarter brought me to the foot of the Fairy Knoll. Even from the loch side any one could see that its geological character differed from that of the neighbouring hills, and now, sure enough, it showed itself to be of igneous origin—the plug evidently of an old crater. The top is of oval shape, and is guarded all round by cliffs lying at an angle of about  $45^\circ$ , except the end farthest from Lochfyne, where the tourist route may be supposed to be. The cliffs on the end next the loch are 300 feet high, and give a fairly good scramble, although the rock is crumbling and unreliable.

During the ascent I kept a sharp look-out “lest bogles catch me unawares,” but I saw nothing uncanny, unless indeed the fairy inhabitants had assumed the form of rabbits and blue hares.

The morning was still and hazy. In clear weather I am told that vessels riding at the Tail of the Bank at Greenock can be easily made

out from here. The hill, moreover, enjoys a fine panorama, not only of Lochfyne on one side and the quiet Glendaruel on the other, but also of many of the Highland Bens, and even of some of the Hebrides. It was somewhere hereabouts, among these Cowall hills, that the last wild boar was shot in Scotland.

On that peaceful morning, with no sound but the occasional call of a plover or a cuckoo, varied by the cry of a grouse pleading with the intruder to "go back, go back," it struck me that the fairies had selected a most charming spot to hold their revels.

While resting on the top, there suddenly came the rumble of an avalanche. No! it was only a fall of rocks at the Furness granite quarries on the opposite side of the loch, and then silence again reigned.

If we may judge from a passage in "The Lost Pibroch," the hill seems to have been more frequented in the eighteenth century than now.

"There was a man—blessings with him! for he's here no more—who would always be going up on Sithean Sluaidhe to have troke with the wee people on that fine knowe. He would bring them tastings of honey and butter to put them in a good key, and there they would dance by the hour for his diversion to the piping of a piper who played on drones of grass with reeds made of the midge's thrapple.

"Still, in all my time I know but one body who could find the way to the den of the fairies, and she was a lass whose folks were in Ceanmore at the time the French traffickers were coming here to swap casks of claret wine for the finest herrings in the wide world."

W. W. N.

BEN STARAV.—The Victoria Day holiday is always one which I look forward to as being one of the best single-day holidays in the year, as at that time the days are long, the weather is usually settled, and often there is a large quantity of snow on the hills. On the occasion of this year's Victoria Day, A. E. M'Kenzie and I, not satisfied with the charms of the 4.30 A.M., went one better by taking the 9.45 P.M. on Monday night to Dalmally. We had hoped to get some sleep on the way, but owing to a talkative factor on his way home, and two Castlebay fishermen, a lively conversation was kept up, principally on the subject of eviction, Crofters' Commission, and the question of deer forest or sheep farm superiority; sleep was therefore out of the question.

Being due at Dalmally at 3.29 we considered ourselves rather ill-used when we left the train at that station at 4.20, but congratulated ourselves on being there at all.

We soon covered the two miles to the entrance of Glen Strae, and started for the 2,000 feet col between Ben Lurachan and Meall



Copagach. We had expected to find a good path up this, in view of Mr Gillon's note in the last number of the *Journal*, but all we could find was a track, which only occasionally deigned to show itself. As we proceeded up, the clouds, which had at first simply been hovering on the higher summits, began to descend, and soon we were enveloped in a wet mist and rain, which, together with the heat, made walking distinctly uncomfortable, but as it was still early we hoped for better things later on.

On arriving at the top, however, at about 6.30, the view was depressing. Ben nan Aighean was visible to about 2,000 feet, and did not look inviting. From that distance it appeared to be a case of steep grass and slabby rocks. However, a nearer view from the glen looked cheerier. We breakfasted at 7.30 at the point where the Allt Hallater joins the river Kinglass, and after a twenty minutes' stay started off. We kept a deep gully which runs up the hill to our left, and had a most enjoyable climb up steep heather and easy rocks, reaching the cairn at ten o'clock.

As in the case of Mr Gillon at New Year, there was no attraction there, and after taking our bearings for the col we started down going north by west. After getting some distance down we found we had kept too much to the west, and accordingly had to work along and down the hillside towards the saddle at the head of Glen Kinglass. About this time the mist began to rise a little and let us see where the different hills were situated, but not enough to see the tops. We reached the saddle about 10.40, and spent half an hour at lunch. We then struck up the Corrie of Ben Starav for a considerable distance, and at a height of about 3,000 feet joined the east ridge, which at that point was very narrow, with steep snow-covered slopes on the north. We kept on this ridge till we reached the summit plateau, and then over some snowfields to the cairn, which we struck at 12.20.

The scenery along the ridge and on the top was magnificent, though, owing to the thick mist, distinctly limited. The whole north face was covered with snow at a very steep angle with nasty-looking rocks jutting out here and there, and the remains of a large cornice still surmounted the whole. The distant view was of course distinguished by its entire absence.

As we laid our offerings on the cairn, M'Kenzie began rummaging therein and pulled forth a bottle. It contained several pieces of paper none of which we could extract, but one of them had been folded so that he who climbed might read. The inscription was "J. Rennie, W. Douglas, S.M. Club, from Inveroran Hotel, 16th April 1892, 3.55 P.M." We hastened to put in a note of our names also, and replaced the bottle.

We came down in much the same way as we had gone up, except that we stayed longer on the ridge before striking across to the saddle, from which we went down to Glen Kinglass, where we ploughed through heather and bogs till we reached the path which runs through

the glen to the Kingshouse road. We tramped along this path as hard as we could go, as we had to reach Bridge of Orchy at 5.5 to catch the train to Tyndrum. The afternoon had now cleared up considerably, and most of the Black Mount hills were clear of mist, but Starav remained obstinately covered up. It was with great regret that we could not delay and admire the view, but our haste was all required, as we arrived at the station as the train passed the distant signal. We were put down by it at Tyndrum, where we changed stations, and after waiting some twenty minutes our train came in, and we finally reached Edinburgh at 10.30, fully an hour late.

W. M. WILSON.

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A NORTHERN ARÊTE OF BRAERIACH.—In the Guide Book to the Western Cairngorms mention has been made to No. 41, p. 56, of the narrow ridge separating Coire an Lochain and Coire Ruadh as affording the only safe route in winter from the summit of Braeriach into Glen Eunach. Much more interesting, however, is the companion arête between Coire Ruadh and Coire Bennie, any reference to which I have been unable to discover. To any virtue it may possess as a view point—and the exhilarating prospect gained from it is not one to be forgotten readily—may be added its charming narrowness, which for a considerable distance is more nearly one foot than two. With its summer appearance I have no acquaintance; but a descent by it on 9th April, following an ascent from near the Pools of Dee, was a fitting termination to the finest day enjoyed by a friend and myself during a week's visit to these mountains. For convenience to mist-enveloped climbers it may be added that the arête is almost due north from the summit cairn, of which, however, on the occasion of our visit, not a stone appeared above the snow.

HUGH STEWART.

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#### LIFE MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION.

107 ST VINCENT STREET,  
GLASGOW, 26th June 1905.

DEAR MR EDITOR,—At the last General Meeting in reference to Life Membership Funds, "it was decided to remit to the Committee (Messrs Goggs, Naismith, and Napier) to consider how best to deal with the funds arising therefrom, and to report regarding the same to next General Meeting.

"It was (also) remitted to the Committee to bring up a report as to appointment of Trustees for Life Membership Funds."

The Committee now submit the following proposals, which they trust will meet with the approval of the members:—

1. That Messrs R. A. Robertson and A. E. Maylard (both ex-Presidents) be appointed Trustees of all invested funds of the Club.
2. That a separate account should be opened to which all commutation payments shall be credited.
3. That this account be credited with interest at 4 per cent. annually on the balance brought forward each year, and also on any commutations received each year, this interest to be debited against the ordinary revenue of the Club.
4. That at the end of each year a sum of 12s. shall be transferred from the Commutation Fund to the ordinary income of the Club for each surviving member who has commuted.

I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

R. GRAHAM NAPIER,  
*Hon. Treasurer.*

## MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

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**"TWENTY YEARS ON BEN NEVIS." By Wm. T. Kilgour. Paisley : Alexander Gardner.**

This is a memorial volume of somewhat miscellaneous character, the author's chief qualifications being a love for, and acquaintance with, Ben Nevis and its meteorological work. It is not a formal history of the Observatories and it is not a scientific record of the work done there, but it gives, in a number of interesting if rather haphazard chapters, some account of each of these, added to many experiences of the observers and their visitors. The author makes no profession of being a mountaineer in any but the widest sense. There is a chapter headed "Mountaineering," in which the doings of the Club are mentioned with no very obvious wish to imitate them. This perhaps is not surprising when we learn that we think nothing of driving a cornice tunnel twenty feet long. It is to be hoped too that the author's description of rolling boulders over the edge will not lead to the repetition of this performance when any climbing party is in the neighbourhood. The account of the party who gave themselves up for lost because they strayed from the path during an ascent on a winter night, suggests chiefly the reflection that such a party had no business to attempt any such ascent.

While the most of the matter is interesting, the style is often most irritating on account of carelessness in the use of words. One can guess what is meant by the "Broken" spectre, the "missives" hurled about by the wind, and the ski-runners "deporting" themselves on the snow, but "caligenous" glens are rather staggering. The expression is "caligenous," if it means misty or anything like it.

Most of our members will doubtless concur heartily in the opinions expressed regarding the closing of the Observatories, and the terribly lame apologies which were made on behalf of the Government.

# INDEX.

**A**CCIDENT on Sgurr nan Gilleann, 84.  
A' Chioch, A' Chralaig, *Guide Book*, 270.  
A' Chir, Arran, 28; ascent from the Saddle, 37.  
A' Chralaig, *Guide Book*, 270.  
A' Ghlas Bheinn, *Guide Book*, 273.  
Airgoid Bheinn, 172.  
Alps, the, in 1903, 79-82; in 1904, 216-219.  
Am Bathaiche, *Guide Book*, 260.  
Am Bodach, Glencoe, 87.  
Angel's Peak, Cairn Toul, 183.  
Angles of snow in Scotland, 288.  
An Riabhachan, *Guide Book*, 279.  
An Ruadh Stac, 222.  
An Sgarsoch, *Guide Book*, 176.  
An Socach, 170.  
An Socach, Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan, *Guide Book*, 276.  
An Stac, Loch Aylort, 135.  
Aonach air Chrith, Clunie, *Guide Book*, 262.  
Aonach Beag, 105; N. E. ridge, 142-148.  
Aonach Meadhoin, *Guide Book*, 269.  
Arêtes in Scotland, 289.  
Arran—Brodick Bay, 12; Etymology, 14; Goatfell, 15; Cioch na h'Oighe, 21; Glens Rosa and Sannox, 22; The Saddle, 25; Beinn Nuis, 25; Beinn Tarsuinn, 26; The Bowmen's Pass, 26; A' Chir, 28; Cir Mhor, 29; Caisteal Abhail, 30; Beinns Bhreac and Bharrain, 31; Loch Coirein Lochain, 32; Loch Ranza, 33; Cock of Arran, 34; South Arran, 34; descent into Glen Sannox from the "Saddle," 35-37; ascent of Cir Mhor from "Saddle," 37; times for ascent, 38; books on Arran, 38; letter on, from G. B. Gibbs, 82; Geological Survey of, 92.  
Avalanches recorded in Scotland, 289.

**B**AKER, E. A., "Moors, Craggs," &c., 92.  
Balance, the advantage of a good balance in climbing, 286.  
Beinn a Bha'ach Ard, *Guide Book*, 320.  
Beinn a' Bhuid, 41, 47; route from Braemar, 47; from Derry Lodge, 47, 182.  
Beinn a Chliabhain, Arran; ascent of chimney on, 87.  
Ben Aden, 202.  
Beinn a' Ghlo, *Guide Book*, 172.  
Ben Attow, *Guide Book*, 273.  
Beinn Avon, *Guide Book*, 41, 42; The Tors, 43; routes from Tomintoul, 44; from Ballater, 45; from Crathie, 45; from Inver Inn, 46; from Braemar, 46.  
Ben Bhuidhe, 282.  
Beinn Bynac, *Guide Book*, 41, 48.  
Ben Chonzie on Ski, 133.  
Beinn Dearg, Blair Atholl, *Guide Book*, 174.  
Beinn Fhada, *Guide Book*, 273.  
Beinn Fhionnlaidh, *Guide Book*, 277.  
Beinn Mheadhoin, 183.  
Ben Muich Dhui, 183.  
Beinn nan Aighean, 282.  
Ben Nevis—staircase climb, 86; Observatory Ridge, 86; N. Trident Buttress, 104; Carn Mor Dearg, 105; Tower Gully Ridge Traverse, 107; Gully on Meall-an-t-Suidhe, 109; Trident Buttress, 149; a variation on the Staircase climb, 180; Slingsby's Chimney, 180, 219; N. Castle Gully, 220; Tower Ridge, 220; Trident Buttress, 221; Staircase, 221; Observatory Ridge, 221.  
Beinn Nuis, Arran, 25-26.  
Beinn Iutharn Beag, *Guide Book*, 170.  
Beinn Iutharn Mhor, *Guide Book*, 170.  
Ben Lomond, ascent of chimney near gully H, 87.

Ben Lui, ascent of central gully, March 1904, 95.  
 Ben Sgroil, *Guide Book*, 209.  
 Ben Starav, an ascent from Dalmally, 330-332.  
 Beinn Tarsuinn, Arran, 26.  
 Beinn Tharsuinn, *Guide Book*, 323.  
 Ben Vrackie, *Guide Book*, 173.  
 Bergschrunds in Scotland, 290.  
 Berwickshire coast, 313-319.  
 Bidean an Eoin Deirg, *Guide Book*, 323.  
 Bidean Choire Sheasgaich, *Guide Book*, 324.  
 Bidean nam Bian, Church Door, 86.  
 Boot Nails, 283.  
 Bowmen's Pass, Arran, 26-28.  
 Braeriach, 118, 183, 332.  
 Braes of Angus, *Guide Book*, 125.  
 Braigh Coire Chruin Bhalgairn, 172.  
 Broad Cairn Range, *Guide Book*, 58, 59, 62, 63.  
 Brodick Bay, charms of, 12-13.  
 Buchaille Ètive Mor, ascent of ridge left of D gully, 87, 182.

**C**AIPLICH, *Guide Book*, 41, 48.  
 Cairngorms—The Eastern, *Guide Book*, 41, 110-120; camping in, 182, 183; from Deeside, 192.  
 Cairn na Glasha, *Guide Book*, 125.  
 Cairntoul, 184.  
 Cairnwell, *Guide Book*, 167.  
 Caisteal Abhail, Arran, 30-31.  
 Camping in the Cairngorms, 182.  
 Carn a' Chlamain, *Guide Book*, 176.  
 Carn an Fhidleir, *Guide Book*, 176.  
 Carn an Rìgh, *Guide Book*, 170.  
 Carn Bhac, *Guide Book*, 171.  
 Carn Eige, *Guide Book*, 277.  
 Carn Fuaralach, *Guide Book*, 269.  
 Carn Ghluasaid, *Guide Book*, 270.  
 Carn Liath, 172.  
 Carn na Cairn, 177.  
 Carn nam Fiacan, *Guide Book*, 322.  
 Carn nan Gabhar, 172.  
 Carn nan Gobhar, *Guide Book*, 321.  
 Cashlie Forts, Glen Lyon, 245-248.  
 Castel Abhail—the need of compass work in mist, 184.  
 Ceum na h-Aon Choise, *Guide Book*, 274.  
 Cioch na h' Oighe, 21-22.  
 Cìr Mhor, Arran, 29, 184.  
 Ciste Dhubh, Sgurr a' Bhealaich, Dheirg, *Guide Book*, 269.  
 Ciste Dhubh, Mam Sodhail, *Guide Book*, 277.  
 Clach Glas, Skye, a new climb on, 328.  
 Climbing Ideal, A Purely, 1-3, 96.

Coire Odhar, A' Chralaig, *Guide Book*, 270.  
 Club Room, additions to Library, 75-78, 255.  
 Clunie Forest, *Guide Book*, 262.  
 Clunie or Cluanie Inn as a climbing centre, 263-264.  
 Creag a Chaoruinn, *Guide Book*, 270.  
 Creag a' Choir Aird, *Guide Book*, 276.  
 Creag a' Mhàim, Clunie, 232; *Guide Book*, 262.  
 Creag Dhu, Kingussie, 11.  
 Creag Dhubh Mhor, *Guide Book*, 322.  
 Creag Ghlas, Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan, *Guide Book*, 276.  
 Creag Ghorm a' Bhealaich, *Guide Book*, 321.  
 Creag Meaghaidh, 4-11.  
 Creag na Damh, Clunie, *Guide Book*, 262.  
 Creag nan Clachan Geala, *Guide Book*, 276.  
 Creag nan Damh, 231.  
 Creag Toll a' Choin, *Guide Book*, 322.  
 Crevasses in Scottish snow, 291.  
 Cock of Arran, 34.  
 Collie, J. N., "Canadian Rockies," 92.  
 Coolins, the new height of, 137.  
 Cornices, 291.  
 Corrie Arder, Cliffs of, 4-11; Approach on bicycles to Loch Laggan from Dalwhinnie, 5-16; Pinnacle inspected, 7; Bridge of Snow, 7; The Posts, 7; A climb on the face, 8; Birds observed, 9; The central "Post" climbed, 9-10; Brocken Spectre, 10-11.  
 Crois, climbs on, 309-312.  
 Crowberry Ridge of Buchaille Ètive Mor, Mr Naismith's route, 304; Mr Abraham's route, 304; Mr MacLay's route, 306.

**D**RIESH, *Guide Book*, 125.  
 Drochaid an Tuill Easaich, *Guide Book*, 270.  
 Druim Sionnach, Clunie, *Guide Book*, 262.

**F**AIRY Knoll, Lochfyne, 329.  
 Fraochag, *Guide Book*, 258.

**G**AICK Forest, *Guide Book*, 177.  
 Garbh-bheinn of Ardgour, 106-107, 139, 220.  
 Garbh Chioch Mor, 202.  
 Geological Survey of Arran, 92; of Skye, 224.

Glas Maol, *Guide Book*, 125.  
 Glas Mheall Mor, *Guide Book*, 177.  
 Glas Thulachan, *Guide Book*, 167.  
 Glen Finnan Hills, 134.  
 Glen Nevis, Corroul to Fort-William, 104.  
 Glen Rosa, Arran, 22-25.  
 Glen Sannox, Arran, 22-24.  
 Gleourach, *Guide Book*, 261.  
 Glissading as practised in Scotland, 291-294.  
 Goatfell—The derivation of name, 15; different ways of ascent, 17-19; view from summit, 19.  
 Gulvain, 134; *Guide Book*, 198.

**H**ARKER, Alfred, "The Tertiary Igneous Rocks of Skye," *Review*, 224.

**I**CE on Scottish Rocks, 294.

**K**ILGOUR, Wm. T., "Twenty Years on Ben Nevis," *Review*, 334.  
 Kingshouse Hotel, tariff, 136.

**L**ADHAR Beinn (Larven), *Guide Book*, 206.  
 Lantern Slide Collection, 78, 210.  
 Library, the Club; additions to, in 1903, 75; in 1904, 121, 213.  
 Life Membership Subscription, letter from W. Douglas, 88; from W. Inglis Clark, 90; from R. Graham Napier, 91; from N. B. Gunn, 138; from W. A. Smith, 138; from the Treasurer, 332.  
 Loch Aylort Hills, 134-136.  
 Loch Coirein Lochain, Arran, 32.  
 Lochnagar, *Guide Book*, 49; the routes, 53-58; the top, 59-62; the climbs, 65-69; lochs and streams, 70.  
 Loch Ranza, Arran, 33.  
 Luinne Bheinn, *Guide Book*, 205.  
 Lurg Mhor, *Guide Book*, 324.

**M**AOILE Lunndaiddh, *Guide Book*, 322.  
 Maol Cheann-Dearg, Clunie, *Guide Book*, 262.  
 Mam Sodhail, *Guide Book*, 277.  
 Mam Soul, *Guide Book*, 277.  
 Mayar, *Guide Book*, 125.  
 Meall a' Bhealaich, Ben Attow, *Guide Book*, 274.  
 Meall a' Chaoruinn, 177.  
 Meall a' Chinn Dearg, 222.

Meall an Teanga, *Guide Book*, 197.  
 Meall Bhuidhe, Cruachan, No. 2 gully ascended, 283.  
 Meall Buidhe, Loch Hourn, *Guide Book*, 205.  
 Meall Cheann Dearg, 231.  
 Meall Mor, *Guide Book*, 324.  
 Meall na Cuaich, 177.  
 Moruisg, *Guide Book*, 325.  
 Mount Battock, *Guide Book*, 125.  
 Mount Blair, *Guide Book*, 166.  
 Mount Keen, *Guide Book*, 125.  
 Mullach Fraoch Choire, *Guide Book*, 270.

**O**FFICE-BEARERS of the S.M.C. for 1904, 93; for 1905, 228.

**P**ARR, Robert Kerr, In Memoriam, 185.  
 Plaide Mhor, *Guide Book*, 274.  
 Proceedings of the Club—Fifteenth Annual General Meeting, 73; Reception, 74; Fifteenth Annual Dinner, Glasgow, 1903, 74; Additions to Club Library, 75; Additions to Lantern Slide Collection, 78; Fort-William Meet, January 1904, 100; Aviemore Meet, Easter 1905, 110; Sixteenth Annual General Meeting, 210; Reception in Royal Arch Hall, 211; Sixteenth Annual Dinner, Edinburgh, 1904, 211; Loch Awe Meet, January 1905, 249; Sligachan Meet, Easter 1905, 251; Kingshouse Meet, Easter 1905, 252.

"**R**ANDOM Musings," by A. Stair Gillon, 187-191.

**S**ADDLE, The, Arran, 25; descent into Glen Sannox, 35-36.  
 Saddle, The, 230, 231; *Guide Book*, 258.  
 Sail Chaoruinn, *Guide Book*, 270.  
 Saileag Sgurr a' Bhealaich Dheirg, *Guide Book*, 269.  
 Saoiter Mor Mam Sodhail, *Guide Book*, 277.  
 St Abb's Head, 313-319.  
 Scour Garioch, 202.  
 Sgoran Dubh, Attempt on the Rose ridge, 118, 119; Ascent of Rose ridge, 152.  
 Sgor an Fhuarain, 202.  
 Sgor Choileam, *Guide Book*, 200.  
 Sgor Coireachan, 134.

Sgor na Ciche Group, *Guide Book*, 202.  
 Sgor nan Coireachan, 202.  
 Sgurr a' Bhealaich Dheirg, *Guide Book*, 268-9.  
 Sgurr a Chaoruinn, *Guide Book*, 323.  
 Sgurr a' Choir Ghlais, *Guide Book*, 320.  
 Sgurr a' Choire Gharbh, *Guide Book*, 274.  
 Sgurr a' Dubh Dhoire, *Guide Book*, 274.  
 Sgurr a' Mhaoraich, *Guide Book*, 260.  
 Sgurr a' Mhuilinn, *Guide Book*, 326.  
 Sgurr Alasdair, 2.  
 Sgurr an Doire Leathain, Clunie, *Guide Book*, 262.  
 Sgurr an t-Scarraich, *Guide Book*, 266.  
 Sgurr Coire na Feinne, Clunie, *Guide Book*, 262.  
 Sgurr Dubh Mhor, Skye, ascent of, from Glen Brittle, 299.  
 Sgurr Fhuaran, 230; *Guide Book*, 266-268.  
 Sgurr Fhuar-thuill, *Guide Book*, 321.  
 Sgurr Gaorsaic, *Guide Book*, 276.  
 Sgurr Leac nan Each, *Guide Book*, 258.  
 Sgurr na Carnach, *Guide Book*, 267.  
 Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe, *Guide Book*, 267.  
 Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe, 231.  
 Sgurr na Creige, the Saddle, *Guide Book*, 258.  
 Sgurr na Festig, 321.  
 Sgurr na Forcan, *Guide Book*, 258.  
 Sgurr na Fuar-tholl, *Guide Book*, 267.  
 Sgurr na Lapaich, *Guide Book*, 279.  
 Sgurr na Moraich, *Guide Book*, 266.  
 Sgurr na Muice, 321.  
 Sgurr nan Carn, 230.  
 Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan, *Guide Book*, 275.  
 Sgurr nan Conbhairean, *Guide Book*, 270.  
 Sgurr nan Gillean, accident to Mr Allen, 84-85.  
 Sgurr nan Saighead, *Guide Book*, 266.  
 Sgurr na Sgine, 231; *Guide Book*, 258.  
 Sgurr na Spainteach, *Guide Book*, 267.

Sgurr Ruadh, 221.  
 Sgurr Ruadh of Sgurr a' Choir Ghlais, 321.  
 Shiel Inn, 229.  
 Skiing—On Ben Chonzie, 133; at Fort William, 157; presentation of Ski to the Club, 185; notice regarding, 223; in Scotland, 295.  
 Skye—The heights of the hills as given in New Survey, 137.  
 Sligachan Inn, tariff, 136.  
 Sligachan Climbers' Book, 137.  
 Slingsby's "Norway," 92.  
 S.M.C. abroad in 1903, 79; in 1904, 216.  
 Smith, W. A., "The Pentland Hills," *Review*, 226.  
 Snow, Scottish, 285-298.  
 Spidean Mialach, *Guide Book*, 261.  
 Sron a Choire Ghairbh, *Guide Book*, 197.  
 Sron Creise, 181.  
 Step cutting, 295.  
 Stob Ban, Glen Nevis, 107.  
 Stob Gabhar, Blackmount, 181.  
 Streaps, The, *Guide Book*, 199.  
 Stuc Beag, Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan, *Guide Book*, 276.  
 Stuchd an Lochain, 235-244.  
 Stuc Mor, Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan, *Guide Book*, 276.

**T**IGH Mor, A' Chralaig, *Guide Book*, 270.  
 Tolmount, *Guide Book*, 125.  
 Tom a' Choinich, *Guide Book*, 277.  
 Tuill Creagach, *Guide Book*, 277.

**W**ITCH'S Step, Arran, 184.

**Y**ORKSHIRE Ramblers' Club, dinner of, 137.

**V**ERSES on Ben Lui, by T. Fraser S. Campbell, 98.