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'OUT OF THE GOLDEN REMOTE WILD WEST.'

(I.)

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"OUT of the golden remote wild west where the sea without shore is,
Full of the sunset, and sad, if at all, with the fulness of joy,
As a wind sets in with the autumn that blows from the region of stories,
Blows with a perfume of songs and of memories beloved from a boy,
Blows from the capes of the past oversea to the bays of the present,
Filled as with shadow of sound with the pulse of invisible feet,
Far out to the shallows and straits of the future, by rough ways or pleasant,
Is it thither the wind's wings beat? is it hither to me, O my sweet?"
—"Hesperia," *init.*

THESE words, put into the mouth of her lover who evokes the "bountiful infinite west" and all her pleasant memories, seemed to a devoted Swinburnian a not unsuitable prefix to an attempt to sum up and convey to others some recollections "as a ghost rearisen" of remote far-flung rugged peaks stretching down to quiet sea-lochs ringed round with their characteristic yellow tangle, and all dominated by the "slow passionate pulse of the sea," in that (alas) so little known western land with its view stretching to the

"happy memorial places
Full of the stately repose and the lordly delight of the dead,
Where the fortunate islands are lit with the light of ineffable faces,
And the sound of a sea without wind is about them, and sunset is red."

WESTER ROSS and Inverness! How the memory thrills at the very mention of the magic phrase, bringing back recollections of "corrie and fell where the eagles dwell," and of kindnesses unceasingly given by shepherds and keepers to one who came a stranger albeit a fellow Highlander and Gaelic enthusiast. Indeed were there nothing else to write about, this continuous chain of hospitality linking the first day of a month's holiday to the last in unbroken sequence, and enabling one to leave *friends* and not mere acquaintances behind as each district was explored, such unbounded generosity deserves all possible acknowledgment due to a debt that can never be fully repaid. But as the districts explored were undertaken largely for the sake of the "Guide Book," and are to a great extent unknown to members, it becomes a public duty to try to piece together what little information one can about hills ascended in a somewhat constant round of mist and rain. So this article will perforce consist of *disiecta membra*, days here and there selected on account of their greater interest, an interest solely due to more timely breaks in the mist, and not to any one hill being inferior to another. For like beer, there are hills and there are good hills, but there are no bad hills! The total number of tops climbed was sixty-seven in twenty-five week-days (net), and all but two were members of the Club clan. Of course no off-days were taken, and none needed or desired. The σαββατισμός was not considered an off-day.)

Sgùrr Thuilm (3,164 feet) was my objective on 21st June 1916, having the day before inaugurated my holiday by conquering its western neighbour Sgùrr nan Coireachan* (3,133 feet), in much rain. This hill used to be spelt Choileam (so "Guide Book," and Index has no cross reference), but such a monstrosity has now disappeared from the maps. Who 'Tulm' was seems to be as unknown as the Torquil of Coire Torcuill, S. of the main

* This hill is glossed as 'The scaur of the steep places' in VIII. 200, but for such there seems no lexicographical authority. The word coireachan is simply gen. pl. of coire, a cauldron, hence 'corrie,' Welsh pair, Cor. and Br. per, *qerjo, N. hverr (kettle), A.S. hwer, Sk. carú, Gr. κέρνος (MacBain). Hence quern (??) (self).

peak of Sgùrr nan Ceathramhnan. Sgùrr Thuilm lies south of Glen Pean [pronounced payn], and S.W. of Loch Arkaig, N.N.E. of Glenfinnan station. A wooden bridge crosses the Pean just E. of the confluence of the Allt a' Chaorruinn, and a fitful path continues up the south bank to a bridge near the mouth of the Allt a' Choire Dubh, but is quite a respectable track from the bridge eastwards to Kinlocharkaig. Peat haggs, however, are one's only method of gaining the path up Gleann a' Chaorruinn, which, like the other paths here mentioned, is unknown to Bartholomew, and which also is a high road to Kinlocharkaig. In the glen, however, it is somewhat indistinct where most needed. The river to be ascended is more noteworthy for its fringe of birches than its eponymous rowans, though the name was doubtless given in order to distinguish it from the stream down Coire a' Bheithe of Sgùrr nan Coireachan. The glen is lovely at this part, and the bracken with its red-brown roots must be seen to be appreciated. The ridge to be attacked was very conspicuous from nearer Loch Arkaig, for it came down second from the furthest end of the hill. Once near it, however, it seemed lost in a mass of equally long flanks. The brae was steep (or was this merely the effects of a sleepless journey from Chichester two nights before?). However that may be, the cairn was reached after four and a half hours' easy going. Here I saw a brown bird, smaller than a blackbird, whose note somewhat resembled the twanging of a bit of membrane or elastic, only more liquid. The mist was now thick, but not wet. After a while it cleared somewhat, so I waited hoping to glean some information for the "Guide Book." When the Streap * appeared it showed to great advantage, the N. side being excessively steep and fully deserving its appellation: (the) climb. It is, I should think, quite as sheer as Beinn na Muich Dhuibhe from the Pools of Dee, but minus the boulders. But (though drawn indeed from a different angle,) I thought at the time that the sketch in Vol. I. was perhaps just a

* Pronounced strîhp or rather שְׂתְרִיהְפּ, the vowel being drawled a little.

wee bit fanciful, as the hill is more of a wide face than a peaked ridge. Its cairn is easily seen from Sgùrr Thuilm. When Sgùrr nan Coireachan appeared, it revealed a long bumpy ridge connecting it to Sgùrr Thuilm.

The cairn lies well back on this hill, to the left of the Finnan's sources, and in a thick mist the E. peak might easily seem the highest point.* Gulvain was next to clear, and hardly seemed to merit the meaning given to it by a man I had met in the train : wild,—but perhaps this referred to its remoteness. From here one of the most conspicuous hills is Sgùrr Dhòmhnuill† of Ardgour. This shapely cone, showing out well from Sgòr na Ciche, Ladhar Bheinn, Saddle, Aonach air Chrith and in fact all over N.W. Inverness and Wester Ross, does not deserve the neglect accorded to so many fine peaks under standard height. It may be searched for in vain in the Index, and all the notice as yet given to it is comprised in some three (enthusiastic) pages (XII. 154 *sqq.*). Yet even if not a Munro it looks one, and its steep contour makes one wonder if there cannot be some climbing. And if visibility *from* a number of points equally ensures visibility *of* a number of points, then for view alone this hill should be given a niche in the new revision of the S.M.C. Pantheon. (The same may be said of the equally ignored Ben Tee (2,956 feet) in Glengarry forest.) Descending by the Coire Chaiseil burn in a fine sunset, I lay down when below the level of Meall an Fhìr Eòin [pron. fîĕren = eagle] to enjoy the view of Sgùrr Thuilm which now fully justified its name, the peak standing up tall and handsome. From where I was, E. of the summit of the meall and with its connecting ridge out of sight, the hill looked very fine, a solitary dome studded with rock at the top.‡ Yet very little of it would yield pitches.

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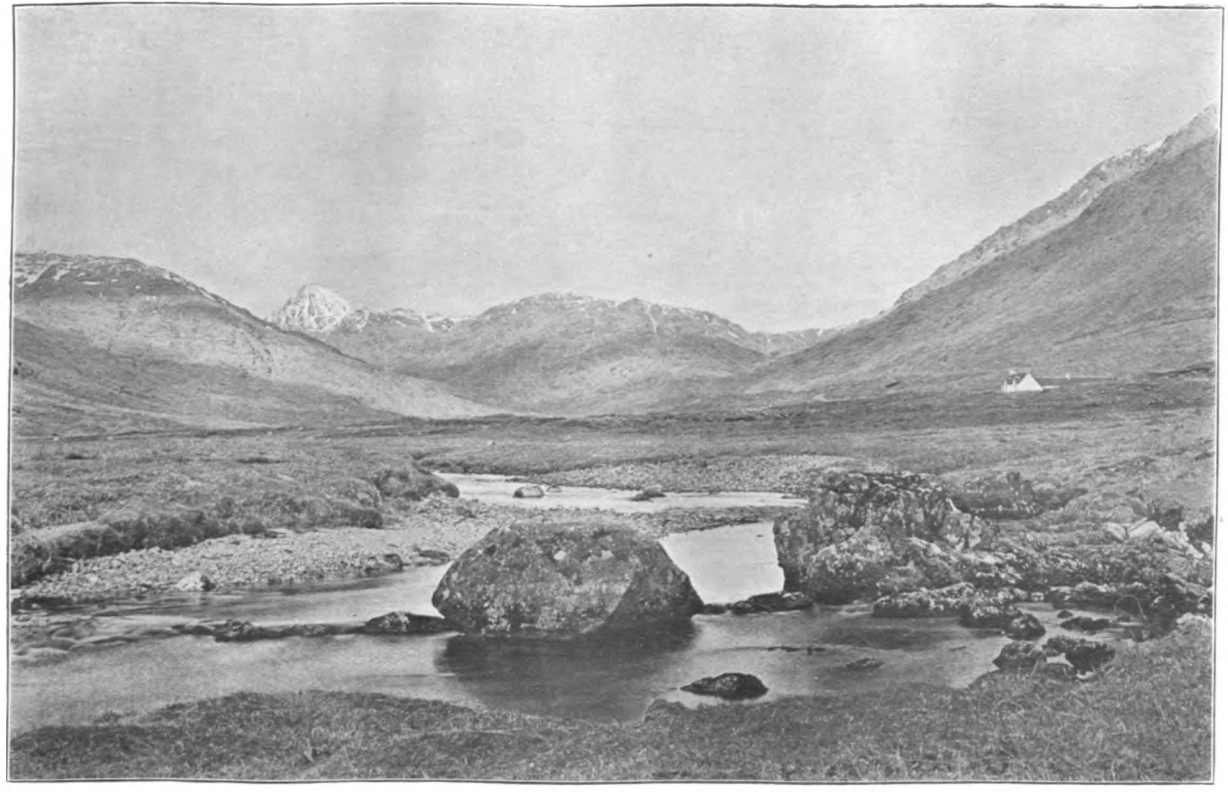
* The cairn vouchsafed to Sgùrr Thuilm is a very miserable affair and seems to lie a few yards from the highest point. I have noticed this to be a rather common trait among cairns.

† 'Donald's peak' is misspelt in Bartholomew who gives it as Dhomhail.

‡ The boulders on this hill, all over it and along the path up Glen Finnan are very deeply scored and contorted with lines twisting in all directions. The number of garnets to be found is not, as Corner says



May 1906. GLEN DESSARRY. *A. E. Robertson.*

(This remark from my diary is confirmed by VIII. 134.) The return was made along the Pean, here wonderfully clear and still, with beautifully coloured weeds. The track, as noted above, was fitful, but that on the other side could be seen rounding Monadh Gorm, and inquiries revealed the fact that it goes about as far or further than the Allt Coir' an Eich. From the N. side of the Dessarry it is not in evidence, and so I cannot say if it connects with the path up Gleann an Lochain Gaineamhaich to the 820 feet point. Glen Pean and Glen Dessarry are under sheep, and as my stay coincided with the shearing the atmosphere was quite pastoral. Lochiel owns all the sheep but they are tended by the various shepherds, each being confined to his own 'chaiseal.' These play Jacob to Lochiel's Laban,—and curiously enough one of the women is named Rebecca! The latter told me that her father and others drove sheep to Falkirk before the railways, using the old drove roads now so seldom in anything like good repair. One gets quite into old world times in this corner of Inverness.

My diary for next day commences: "Th. June 22. Thank goodness I haven't got a companion imbrued with any form of ὀρθρο-φοιτο-συκοφαντο-δικο-ταλαίπωροι τρόποι, who, in a case of unmitigated laziness, would not deliberate whether to use the spike or the pick. Veil we the subject by merely remarking that the boots *did* take a long time to grease." Gulvain was the objective, and the way thereto was by the path marked along Loch Arkaig.

(viii. 134), by any means either excessive or peculiar to this district. I saw far more and better stones on the Fannichs in 1915, and in other districts. A reference to the only *Memoirs of the Geol. Survey* I have, viz., 82, 93, and 65 (where I have added to its index, *s.v.*, twenty-eight references), proves correct Prof. J. Morris' statement in the *Pop. Science Rev.*, xxvii. 131 (1868), that "garnet is probably the most extensively distributed of . . . British precious stones." Macnair, "Geology and Scenery of the Grampians" (*pass.*), gives the evidence for Perthshire. All metamorphic schistose rock, of which Sgùrr Thuilm is a specimen, seems liable to garnets (so Prestwich, "Geology," i. 16; J. Geikie, "Field Geol.," p. 24; "Outlines," p. 228, &c. &c.). Hinxman's Tables, which deserve to be as famous as Munro's, will show the areas of this formation (v. 283 *sq.*). *Cf.* also Heddle, "Mineralogy," ii. 46, *sqq.*; Rosenbusch (E. T.), p. 130 *sq.*

But owing to there being two I took the higher one, expecting that the lower might peter out among cliffs. This was a mistake, and the level road would have been better. The way was through a dense forest of hyacinths in bloom and tall bracken. The scent was delicious, and one felt sorry that it was impossible to avoid crushing this beautiful flower. But, as the most perfect interpreter of Nature says:—

οἷαν τὰν ὐάκινθον ἐν ὄρρεσι ποίμενες ἄνδρες
πόσσι καταστείβοισι, χάμαι δ'ἔτι πόρφυρον ἄνθη.*

But after a mile or so the track degenerated, and, once in a dense birch-root and heather jungle, kept forking, and whichever prong I took, it invariably petered out. The going was awful, and one was quite glad to reach Gleann Camgaraidh. (For the cut across the nose of the hill (in Bartholomew) was not to be seen—probably it was one of the forks I did *not* take. Yet there was nowhere any evidence of its other end in the glen.) A bridge crosses the Camgaraidh near an old fold, and then at the end of the wood the path considerably widened along the hill-slope. Just about the house marked Glencamgarry is a second bridge, and the path does not end here, as in the map, but goes on for about a mile, ending at a ford where the heather ceases. The house is a fraud—it has been ruined fifty years —as is the case of so many others inserted into maps. The Camgaraidh is an easy stream to cross hereabouts, and I forded it above the bridge. The exact position of this bridge is just west of the inflow of the O.S. Allt a' Choire Scriamhaich,† a corrie which makes a very noticeable

* Sappho, Fr. 94, adopting Edmonds' certain emendation ("Sappho in the Added Light of the New Fragments," p. 26[94]). His rendering is subjoined—for the benefit of the ladies:—

"As the hyacinth which the shepherd tramples on the hill
Lies upon the ground, and lying bloometh purple still."

† *Sic*! Sgreamhach [pronounced sgrâowng'uch—the c being sounded like ȝ or gh hard] was explained to me very picturesquely by an old shepherd. "It means droosy-like, like a girl not in good trim, with a dirty face and her hair undone." It is applied to the corrie with the idea of uselessness to the herds, *qs.* a nasty ugly corrie full only of heather, and barren of pasture.

rent in Gulvain, and divides it into two massifs, E. and S. The N. face of Gulvain is easy on the whole, with several bluffs but no climbs. Once the ridge of the S. massif is gained a narrow deer path steers straight along for the top. By this time the mist had come down. The cairn (3,224 feet, five and a half hours) is large and tapering. At once the ridge narrows but unfortunately never becomes interesting and soon widens again, easing down gradually to the col (2,850±), and then up to the 3,148 top.* There is no cairn, but the spot is rocky and more pointed than the main peak, and on the N.N.E. is a little ridge, that but for careful steering by the help of the Editor's compass and the continued existence of the deer track, might have got me 'wandered.' At the foot of this top is a hagg with no water. Past the top the ridge rapidly falls, and from here (going N.) no difficulty should be experienced in finding it. In order to glean what path information I could for the "Guide Book," I descended N.W. and explored the wood lying just underneath the hillock marked 1,623 and named Fraoch Mór. ('Fraoch' Mór (name not in map) is as much a misnomer as Mullach 'Fraoch' Coire, and there is, too, only a very little 'heather' on 'Fraoch' Bheinn above Strathan to justify that name.) The bealach is called Beal. a' Choire Réidh. In this wood is Coire Leachdach. Though one might expect to find the Allt a' Choire Réidh path continuing down Gleann Camgaraidh, none is apparent anywhere here, but the shepherds assert that an old road once existed. Lower down at the ruins of a fank a path is just discernible, but it almost immediately apologizes for its existence by becoming invisible to the naked eye. Nor is there any path on the S. bank, and I was later informed that no path ever connected on to the Streap track. In this glen,

* I have somewhere seen it stated that the main top is Gulvain Mór and the 3,148 one G. Beag. These names are utterly unknown to the natives, including two shepherds aged about seventy, and five other men. The southern top of Gulvain is Stob Coir' an Ach, the corrie being the big west corrie of Gulvain under the col. The east one is Coire Chaorruinn. Space compels me to omit the numerous place-names and other information I got.

at whose woody head one expects to find at least traces of a house, pasture Lochiel's Highland herd, but there is no Mary to call these cattle home across the sands of Arkaig. After floundering along I got the stony but beautifully clear road at the ford where it ends. Opposite is a well-preserved round fold with two walls on N.E. and S.W. sides. This is never used. Indeed, the only one in use in the whole district (Glens Pean, Kingie, Dessarry, &c.) is at Coire nan Uth in the last-named glen. Here gather all the different 'chaiseals,' except Lochan and Cuinich who go to Cuinich. But Lochiel has also sheep in all directions as far as Glen Finnan, Loch Eil, and Kinlochourn. As only a fine day can be used for gathering the sheep—they have to be driven from all parts of all hills to one centre—the shearing, &c., is a slow business. Sometimes the shepherds will walk over the bealach and foregather at Glen Kingie by 6 A.M. and then have to wait till midday before the sheep can be collected and driven over the hill. Truly, from the top of Gulvain or any other hill hereabouts, one can echo (slightly altered) the well-known remark of the Highlander: "All that you see and all that you do not see, that's Lochiel's." Once at the ruined house, as I funked facing the pathless forest of heather, I ascended Leac na Càrnaich, but when at the ridge found I was not nearly W. enough. The result was that I came to holdless rocks among a birch wood. Here friction-grip and a little daring had to come into play before I could breathe freely. Once home, I inquired the meaning of Gûlvain, and was informed it was for Gaothar-bheinn, greyhound-mountain. The appearance of the hill, conspicuous from most hills I climbed, is not against the derivation, but I cannot vouch for the phonetics, for if the explanation be correct the word has got *diablement changé en route*!

Sgùrr Gairich (3,015 feet) was my next conquest. This was generally explained to me as being the same word as Garry. On the other hand it is sounded gerrich. The path up the Dearg Allt was at first indistinct, and did not really improve till the bealach—called Tom a' Chorrain. The ravine of this burn is very bonnie. From the bealach

(considered half-way between Strathan and Glen Kingie) Sgùrr an Fhuarain looks as much a Munro as its neighbours. It is famed for its wells. The suspension bridge across the Kingie was quite unhurt by the winter storms which snowed up most of the glens for four months, and were the worst known for forty years or more. One of the bridges on the road from here to Loch Quoich [pronounce it cooich] is now impassable for carts, and in Glen Affric the Coire Coulavie bridge is barred, and the Coire Gàidheil completely swept away (though these two will by now be repaired).

Once at Kinbreack (sometimes, through Sassenach influence, called Glen Kingie house), the shortest way to the road on the other side of the Kingie* is to use the stepping-stones. These are recognizable by a sandy path running down to them from the road. This (cart) road is not in Bartholomew. It goes at least a mile or two further W. up the glen, and in the other direction meets the path from Kinbreack suspension bridge, this latter being marked. Another bridge leads across the Allt a' Choire Ghlais, and just E. of it our road is joined by another which meets the path on the S. bank of the Kingie, about where that path crosses the Kingie. Bartholomew ought to mark the road from Kinbreack to Kinlochquoich with two lines, as it is as good as any average farm road. (Just before the Coire Glas bridge a subsidiary track fords this stream and cuts off two sides of a triangle.) As the day was fairly fine, I resolved to traverse all the N. face to the top, in case I could find any rocks to report to the Club. Several fine ravines were passed with traces of winter torrents, but no climbs anywhere, and this is the only exposed side. On the way up, the long mournful wailing whistle of a hawk crying over her young was very distinct. It sounded like frenzied people calling one back to safety! This was the first day that I heard no cuckoo.† The summit lay further back

* Sounded king-gie, meaning unknown and put down to 'one of those old words' which have to bear the brunt of so much modern ignorance.

† I ought not to omit also the exquisite scents, sometimes like roses and other garden flowers which seemed to follow one about on all these

than appeared from Tom a' Chorrain, being at the extreme E. end of the hill. There are two cairns, each with a stick, and only a yard or so apart. All the land W. is a gradually sloping table out of which some razor-blade flags protrude their ankle-twisting edges. By the way, *this* hill is Gairich Mór on some tongues, and Gairich Beag is the W. ridge with Druim Gairich as the E. ridge. The view was glorious, and enabled one to recognize many old friends. A haze to the E. hid the Cairngorms, so that this view was bounded by the Monadhliaths. But all the Ben Nevis chain and Easains stood out, with Ben Alder and Creag Meaghaidh. Sgùrr Dhòmhnuill was again conspicuous. Gulvain looked all his height, and Sgùrr nan Coireachan of Glen Pean had recovered the peakedness he had lost up and down Glen Pean and Gleann a' Chaorruinn. There was a grand muster of mountains to the west.* The Cuillin in mist, Ben Sgriol, Saddle and Cluanie range as far as Maol Cheann Dearg. Some Glen Affric hills were in the background but hard to identify, as I had not at that time the (mark VII.) prismatic I had meant to get, and now have got in order to detail good views for the Club. Probably these were Sgùrr nan Ceathramhnan (this almost certainly, a bulky peaked steep snowy mass) and A' Chràileag and (less certainly) Sgùrr nan Conbhairean. Gleourach and Spidean Mialach were full in front, and only allowed Druim Shionnaich to complete the Cluanie range. Sgùrr a' Mhaoraich looked very handsome, as indeed it seems to do from almost any point. Loch Quoich was just the gem it is always described. After drinking in all the beauty round, I explored the N.E. and N.W. faces for rocks but can report nothing. Indeed, contrary to the usual rule, the S. face is the more seamed. The boulders on N.W. side are white, and seem different from the grey granite blocks

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hills. I only noticed them in this district, and not in Glen Shiel or Affric, or Strathfarrar, or Strathcarron. The perfume just came and went, and one never knew when to expect it.

* Even Sgùrr Mór, though higher, does not block out much. It lets the steep point of Sgòr na Cìche appear to its right. In fact the whole panorama is thoroughly worth going far to see.

tilted at easy angles on the S. side. But, reluctantly, as it was getting late and cold, I had to descend, going back by the W. ridge (Sgùrr Gairich Beag), after two hours on the top sufficient to atone for all the mists, past, present and to come. Sgùrr Gairich can gain no prize in an Ultramontane contest, but

'Why crown whom Zeus has crowned in soul before?'

The command of the Editor was to write up any hills not previously mentioned in the *Journal*, if any, but this has proved impossible, for only such little known names as Éididh nan Clach Geala and Sneachdach Slinnean seem (apart from Munro's Tables) quite unmentioned, and neither of these have I done! The former was left to another year, the latter (the attraction in both was the pretty name) was put down as a *πάρεργον* in case the programme set were too small. But truth to tell I had set myself more than I could do, and even my hope of finishing off the Mamores and Loch Laggan hills was quite out of the question. Hence my next description must, like the foregoing, be of hills already partially written up, though it nearly fulfils Goggs' other condition: that of being what a famous Greek scholar called his first child, a *ἅπαξ λεγόμενον*.

There is but little to say concerning Sgùrr Mór (3,290 feet). I went up by sloping along Sgùrr an Fhuarain* which, had not mist threatened, I would have climbed. Once the ridge was gained, the going was easy and much less steep. At one point a tarmachan's nest was all but tramped on, the cup-shaped hollow lying in the grass unhidden and showing seven brown-spotted eggs. Of course the bird tried on the game-leg stunt—but I had been caught before! Past the col and over the next bump is a longish shallow pool whose smooth lining of flags and peat invited a bathe. The water was quite warm. After it a shooting path, some-

* Means: Peak of the wells—I also confirmed this obvious derivation by asking if it were so called because of its wells, and was told it was noted for its springs. I heard nothing of the Fingalian etymons adduced for this hill and Sg. Gairich in VIII. 202. (Also Coireachan was always sounded cawr-yahan—for meaning see p. 156, footnote.)

what damaged by winter storms, helps one up the steepest slope. It ends at what looks like the top from most points in Glen Kingie. But a short descent and rise is needed to gain the wide, low cairn and broken stump. Once here, thunder commenced and a flash of lightning passed right in front of me. One of the finest experiences is a thunderstorm on the hills. I remember one such at the end of July on Lochnagar, where the echoes were terrific. It was followed by hail and sleet and when, after reaching the top, we got to the Fox Cairn well, we picked the ice off each other's backs. To-day however the storm was to the E. and little rain fell though the mist was down. Several paths line this hill. Besides that up Glen Kingie and that up the steep part, another comes up Coire Réidh and zigzags up An Eag, while a branch of this leads up between An Eag and Sgùrr Beag. A third goes between Sgùrr Beag and Sgùrr Mór.

Monday saw my departure from this district, having bagged all the Munro's within reach and now about to traverse the western part of Na Garbh Chrìochan na Cnoidairt via the Sgòr na Ciche group.

As I went along the Glen Dessarry road (reputed to be a Wade road) among these "rough bounds" I thought over some of the many stories I had heard, some of which may be worth setting down here.

All this glen from Morar downwards, plus Glen Pean, Glen Kingie, and Loch Arkaig, used to be owned by a self-made man called Coirechoille, from the name of his house. (The (ruined) house is S.W. of Roy Bridge.) This man began with one hen and made enough money out of it to be able to buy cattle, and finally bought up land wholesale. This was in the days when the right bank of the Dessarry alone had twenty houses. Glen Dessarry has always been famous for its reivers, and some fifty years ago there were one or two stills on the S. side of Loch Arkaig. I myself possess a piece of pipe from a 'poit-dhubh' once in an old farmhouse near New Deer in Buchan, and the smell of it is good. The hillock between An Eag and Sgùrr nan Coireachan is Meall Fuaran a' Feòla (the round bare hill of the spring of the flesh) and between this meall and

Sgùrr nan Coireachan is Feadan na h-Urchaire [pron. hŏŏrŏŏchar] (the (chanter-like) gully of the shot). The story goes that when some Glen Dessarry reivers had taken cattle from the other side of the bealach, the Loch Hourn lads pursued them. But the mèirleachan made good speed and once they topped the bealach judged themselves safe. So one of them derisively put his hand to his backside, but a well-aimed shot pinned it there fast.

The name of the highest peak of Fraoch Bheinn is Spidean Mhic Iain Ghlais. This man had been invading the glen in order to steal, and had got off successfully. But one day while working in the barn he was surprised and had to run for his life. He was killed at the top of Fraoch Bheinn, and for years afterwards the corn could be seen growing out of his boots at the spot.* The expanse of hill above Glen Dessarry (a shepherd's, *not* a farm as so often stated) forming the lower slopes of Druim a' Chùirn, is Sgùrr Chois Breacaich [pron. brâḥcoiḥ] (the peak whose foot is speckled with stones—my informant was unable to

* I tell the tale as 'twas told to me, and in the same spirit. Now English people often complain that we Gaels are too reticent to unload our stores of folklore. The reason is this. The tradition is related by the narrator not as true, but simply in the same spirit as he had it given to him, namely as an interesting story of olden days, handed down correctly by each previous narrator, but none of them guaranteeing its truth. But when an Englishman is let into the circle he generally asks at the end: "But surely you aren't such a fool as to believe that." Naturally the Highlander retires into his shell and refuses to tell any more legends. And nowadays, unfortunately, the reaction has resulted in even a Highland keeper-friend who 'has plenty Gaelic,' and is known to be interested in folklore, being unable after thirteen years to get anything like all the stories that the old people know. I had this point emphasized to me many times, and it greatly needs to be more widely known. *Coronidis loco*, I think it only right to add that I have not consulted books to see if the tales be related there differently. For I have preferred to set down as accurately as I could the traditions just as I heard them: disregarding any variants from printed sources, should there be any. To weave a diatessaron would impugn the first principles of folklore-collecting. My aim is best expressed in the words of Papias (ap. Eus., iii. 39): *οὐ γὰρ τὰ ἐκ τῶν βιβλίων τοσοῦτόν με ὠφελεῖν ὑπελάμβανον, ὅσον τὰ παρὰ ζώσης φωνῆς καὶ μενούσης.*

translate it, but agreed with me that this seemed correct when I hazarded it. I feel little doubt about it myself). Well, among the crags on the top a man buried gold right underneath the full moon, hoping to find it again any time he wished!

An interesting place-name is Lochan Leum an t-Sagairt. For if the good priest ever did leap across the loch he did well, impossibly well. The story is either unknown or one told only to the highest initiates. All I could glean was that he was chased by reivers and saved himself thus. The loch is passed on the way up to the Pillar of Glen Pean, which rock offers some pitches and lies opposite Coire a' Bheithe and on Càrn Mór, 1 mile W. of the loch.

Loch Arkaig, besides its brewing associations, was also the lair of one MacPhee, a notorious character. He was so avaricious that he let no one pass that way unrobbed, and generally murdered them. By the Rudha Ghiubhais is a stone* in the loch marking where a pedlar was killed for his siller. But MacPhee once overreached himself. For one dark night his son returned bearing on his back a bag of gold. MacPhee challenged him but the young man refused to answer, wishing to play a joke on his father. It was the last joke he ever perpetrated. This MacPhee lived at Cuinich, and more than one tale is told of him. Whether his equally notorious namesake at Loch Quoich mentioned in Ellice's most interesting book (pp. 118-121—index here as elsewhere needs correction) be the same, I cannot say. Strangely enough though, this one also lived two years in the woods of Loch Arkaig, but on the

* Called Clach Chailneiche, if I transcribed the sound correctly, but I imagine I mis-heard it and that the word is really Ceannaiche (=pedlar—*cf.* Sg. nan Ceannaichean of Moruisg, and Watson, "Place Names of Ross," p. 159 [pron. ḥyan—with initial ch as in above word]; and also Bac nan Ceannaichean=pedlars' hollow (*cf.* VIII. 260) with similar tale attaching). (Against this may be set the new O.S. spelling, Canaichean=cotton-grass [so Glen Cannich], but though perhaps supported by the derivation given me of Sg. a' Mhaoraich [pron. voroiḥ] as so called from a grass growing on the summit which is otherwise only found on sea and sea-lochs, the new orthography cavalierly sets aside the story outlined by A. E. R. *u.s.* Personally I prefer old *mumpsimus*!)

May 1906.

MÀM NA CLOICH' ÀIRDE

A. E. Robertson.

other hand he "was a well-known character . . . about fifty years ago", and, surely, therefore, lived in days too civilized to allow such unblushing slaughter and robbery.

On the Glen Dessarry side of the Màm na Cloich' Àirde and by the path, is a large boulder. One stormy night a Loch Nevis man made up his mind to 'convey' a cow from Glen Dessarry. Curiously enough a similar impulse came over a Dessarry shepherd; only that *his* destination was Loch Nevis! Each carried out his plan successfully. They passed on either side of the stone, each sublimely unconscious of the true facts, and from that day it has had the name Clach dhà Mèirleach.

A mile W. of Rudha Cheanna Mhóir on Loch Arkaig is a stone, Clach Cùil-Chàirn. Near it stands a tree, still to be seen, and on it a Hanoverian mercenary rested his gun, hoping to shoot a laird called Cùl-Chàrn. But the Jacobite had changed clothes with his valet, who was killed at the stone. A similar story told of Prince Charlie is commemorated in certain Ceannacnoc place-names—but the reader will be exclaiming: *Mantisa obsonia uincit.*

(*To be continued.*)

SOME MEMORIES OF SKYE.

By J. H. Buchanan.

At the present moment, when every one's thoughts are more or less occupied with the great struggle in progress amongst the nations, it is a relief to turn aside for a moment and conjure up memories of those happy days when one could still indulge in regular holidays with an untroubled mind.

The members of our Club are accustomed to explore many remote and out-of-the-world corners both at home and abroad, but of all the thousand and one spots which might be chosen for a holiday, surely none will question the pre-eminent attractions of the Misty Isle of Skye. It is without doubt one of the most fascinating places on the face of the globe, not only to the mountaineer but also to every man who is alive to the charms of beautiful, wild, and unpolluted surroundings.

It is therefore hoped that these few random recollections of Skye, small though their intrinsic merit may be, will at least give some pleasure to the reader by taking his thoughts back to familiar scenes and "joyous days upon the mountain side."

The first time the writer was privileged to spend a holiday in Skye, the approach was made by steamer from Mallaig to Loch Scavaig. It has been a matter of satisfaction ever since that this route was chosen for the first visit. The whole savage majesty of the Cuillin was gradually unfolded in all the glamour of a brilliant July afternoon, and the colouring of sea and sky and hills was vivid to a degree that one rarely sees elsewhere. It may be held, with some justice, that the approach by way of Portree is much less impressive; one is introduced to the mountains by degrees, and the mind is distracted to some extent by tamer features in the landscape. In any case the characteristic qualities of the mountains do not show up so well in the distant view as seen from this direction.

As had been arranged previously, the writer was joined at Loch Scavaig by W. A. Morrison. The latter, after the

departure of the steamer, interviewed the Soay fishermen who had come to help in landing the passengers, and arranged that they should convey the two "towrists" round the coast and land them opposite Soay.

Presently the boat rowed out and worked along the coast for some miles till a small inlet on the rocky shore was reached within convenient distance of Glen Brittle. The voyage round the coast was full of interest, not the least of which was provided by the innumerable sea birds which nest on the rocks and ledges. Even when the boat passes within a few yards these birds are quite undisturbed, if no noise is made to alarm them. It is very curious to see eggs lying quite openly on a ledge of rock as if placed there casually, while the young birds may be seen, scarcely able to walk, and seeming to be in imminent danger of toppling over into the sea.

After the friendly fishermen had departed for their lonely homes in Soay, a bathe was proposed, as bathing is considered the correct thing to do on a hot day in Skye. The water, however, proved to be most piercingly cold, probably due to the fact that it was deep right up to the edge of the shore. The bathe was therefore rather hurried, and the last stage of the journey was soon begun.

On this walk, especially on a glorious summer evening, each mile reveals fresh delights to the eye of one who sees the Cuillin at close quarters for the first time. There is a wonderful pleasure in picking out and naming the different peaks and corries from recollections of books or articles which have been perused in preparation for some occasion such as this. Almost inevitably one finds memory at fault sooner or later, and turns to one's more experienced companion for further enlightenment. In such fashion the journey was completed, and at dusk the travellers reached their quarters in Glen Brittle.

The newcomer had speedy proof of the fickleness of Skye weather. The following day was exceedingly wet, the first wet day after a prolonged spell of unbroken weather. However, the rain cleared off in the course of the afternoon, and a start was made about 4.30 with ascent of the Window Tower as the objective. By the time this

was accomplished the clearness of the evening was irresistible, and tempted two pairs of hobnailers on to the top of Sgurr Dearg. The light being still good the natural result was a traverse of the Inaccessible—up the long side and down the short. By this time dusk was approaching, so, after the sunset had been photographed, a rapid descent was made to the hospitable cottage, where dinner was served at 11.40 P.M.

After various climbs and experiences which need not be chronicled here, the writer was left to spend the last few days of his holiday without a companion. This, for ordinary persons, means good-bye to serious climbing. Nevertheless there are in this wonderful playground many easy expeditions which may be enjoyed by a solitary climber. There is even a kind of subtle charm for some persons in wandering in lonely state amongst the fastnesses of the Cuillin. Such at least was the opinion of the writer on the occasion of a solitary ascent of Sgurr Mhic Choinnich from Bealach Coire Lagan during one of the bright intervals in a spell of rather broken weather. When the weather was too bad for the tops many peaceful hours were spent in wandering about the corries, or sometimes sheltering (and smoking) under the lee of a boulder.

The last day dawned with a hopeless prospect of mist reaching to the bottom of Coire Lagan, and a steady downpour of rain. Nevertheless another solitary expedition was decided on, and carried out. The objective was Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn, and the route taken was via the Sgumain Stone Shoot and Coire Ghrunnda. As the mist was entered below the bottom of the stone shoot, and the whole route was being traversed for the first time, great care was exercised in using map and compass. Coire Ghrunnda was likewise found to be full of mist, and the rain was still very heavy. But there was compensation for the state of the weather in the feeling that for the time being one was virtually an explorer in an unknown country, far from the usual haunts of men.

The top of Dubh na Da Bheinn was safely reached, but the descent was not made quite so successfully. Probably through too much reliance on memory and too little on

July 1910. *J. H. Buchanan.*

SUNSET FROM SGURR DEARG.

the compass the route was allowed to deviate into the Garbh-choire. It was only after various futile peregrinations failed to discover the Lochan that this fact became clear. The next job was to locate the correct point on the ridge at which to cross. The first attempt led to a low but impassable overhanging cliff. Nevertheless it was plain that the top of the ridge was just above, and a slight traverse to the right solved the problem. The return from Coire Ghrunnda presented no further difficulties.

While crossing lower Coire Lagan on the way home the writer was fortunate in witnessing a most extraordinary colour effect. The mist gradually cleared away from the face of Sron na Ciche till only the very top was concealed. A dense mass of cloud lay overhead and completely filled the upper corrie. Just as the rock face became visible a brilliant beam of evening sunlight broke through the clouds in the west and illumined the whole cliff with a gorgeous orange glow, at the same time by contrast making the cloud above appear to shine with many different shades of purple and violet. The effect persisted for some considerable time, and served to round off what was, in spite of rain and mist, a perfect day from the point of view of enjoyment.

Another summer a week's holiday in Skye was planned to take place in the beginning of July. On this occasion the writer was accompanied by Francis Greig. As it was desired to visit some of the more remote corners of the island, to which transit usually presents rather a problem when the time available is limited, it was decided to overcome such difficulties by the use of motor cycles.

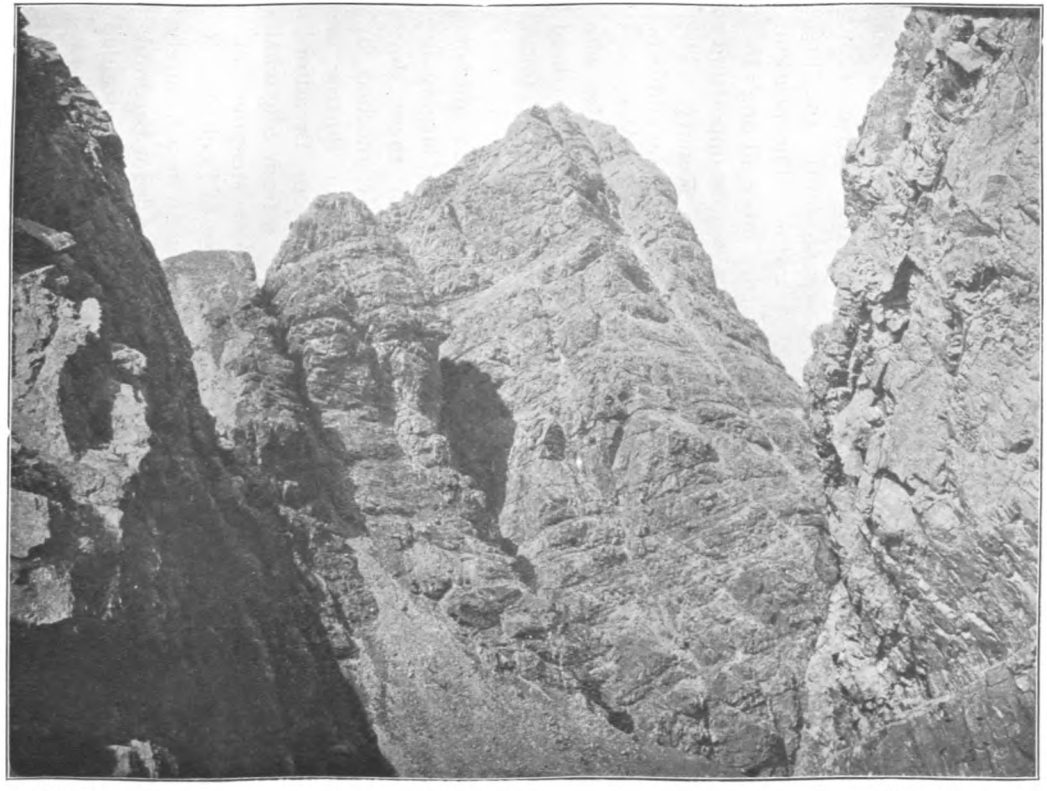
The long journey from Edinburgh was made in two stages, the first night being spent at Rannoch, under the hospitable roof of a well-known member of the Club. The next night was spent at Kyle of Lochalsh which was reached via Fort Augustus and Dornie.

Beyond the securing of accommodation at Glen Brittle no definite plans had been made, but the ascent of Blaven was one of the things which it was particularly desired to accomplish. Consequently, a proposal made next morning to "bag" Blaven, before going on to Glen Brittle, was immediately and unanimously carried.

An early crossing was made to Kyleakin as the motor ferryboat was required later for other purposes, and the seven or eight miles to Broadford soon lay behind. From Broadford the road over the moor by Loch Cill Chriosd was followed to Torran, and thence round to the further shore of Loch Slapin. Here the machines were left by the roadside, and the expedition was continued on foot.

No sooner was the road left behind than the heat became almost overpowering; for in the shelter of the hills there was not a breath of wind. The course of the Allt Dunaiche was, therefore, followed until the first inviting pool suggested a stop for a bathe. The peaceful luxury of that bathe was a thing to remember all one's life, and while drying in the sun one had ample opportunity of realising the exquisite perfection of the scenery. The scenery had all the charms of novelty for both the climbers, and moreover the views of sea loch, lonely glen, and shattered rock are second to none in Skye. Those who go in search of pastime and recreation to this lovely island are all too apt to miss out what is one of the finest expeditions on the score of the troublesome journey required from the more favoured resorts. Even climbers frequently undertake it in the first instance largely for "peak-bagging" reasons. Nevertheless, in these days of rapid locomotion, Blaven is very easily reached by motor car or motor cycle from Sligachan or Portree, or even by the more humble "push-bike" from Broadford. The only drawback to the journey by road from Sligachan lies in the terrors of that hill of tremendous steepness and appalling surface which rises from the head of Loch Ainort.

After the bathe progress was continued in a leisurely manner up the glen, the beetling cliffs in front becoming even more imposing. After a consultation it was decided to make for the top of Blaven by the first apparently practicable route which could be accomplished without great loss of time. Accordingly the great eastern buttress was approached and ascended some little way. It was found, however, that some difficult work was in front, and in addition the holds were insecure and sloped the wrong way. It was therefore agreed to make a retreat and to try again further to the south.



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CLACH GLAS FROM BLAVEN.

J. H. Buchanan

It was necessary to descend a considerable way in order to cross a couple of deep gullies with vertical holdless walls. Thereafter a new start was made, and without further serious difficulty the climbers progressed steadily until in course of time the angle eased off and they emerged on easy ground more or less covered with screes.

The desire to see over towards the face of Clach Glas dictated the next item in the proceedings. Hence a bee line was made for the crest of the ridge which crowns this buttress, and a rest was enjoyed in a nick from which a steep gully descends on the other side in characteristic Skye fashion.

From this point the south-eastern face of Clach Glas is plainly seen, and all the rock details can be studied at comparatively close range. This view gives the impression that there are great inducements here to the enterprising rock climber, and that it is marvellous how this side of the Cuillin has been so systematically neglected.

After some minutes devoted principally to photography and cooling, the ascent was resumed. The southern top was first visited and then the northern one, where two perspiring individuals lay down and smoked and gazed in wonder at the extraordinary panorama of rock peaks which was spread before their eyes. Surely there can be no finer view in all the Cuillin than this. It has only one defect, and that is that Blaven itself is missing—for who will dispute that Blaven is one of the most splendid in that group of mountains where each one has an individuality of its own, and stands in its primitive strength like some viking hero of old?

What a sight on which to feast one's eyes on a sunny midsummer day! From Sgurr nan Gillean to Garsbheinn the whole main ridge of the Cuillin stands revealed. Nearer at hand are Loch Coruisk and Glen Sligachan and many of the lesser peaks with their attendant corries. These the climber eagerly scans, whether this view be new to him or whether he has beheld it a score of times; for this is a view of which none but the dullest clod can ever grow weary.

But this is not all; on the other side there is another

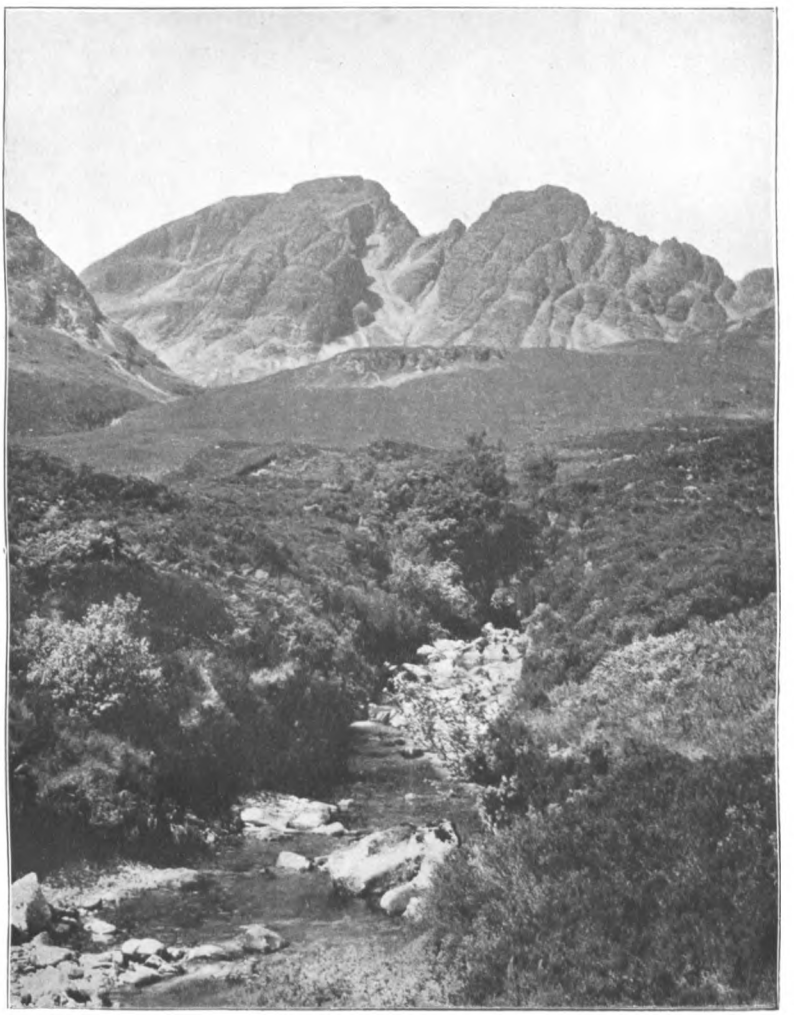
magnificent picture. One's eyes pass from the rounded but wild-looking peaks of the Red Cuillin, over the nearer view of sea loch and headland, to the distant mountains of the mainland, where several well-known friends may be recognised one by one. To the south lies that enchanting prospect of a sea bearing on its bosom those fairylike islands of Rum, Eigg, and Canna which glow like gems in the summer sunlight. Over all is laid in riotous profusion such a revel of bright colour as few city-dwellers have ever beheld.

But time presses, and there are still many miles to be covered before the climbers reach their quarters in Glen Brittle at nightfall; so reluctantly the descent is begun. This was made by an easy route—over screes for the most part—which goes directly down from the nick separating the twin summit peaks.

After a rapid descent into Coire Uaigneich, a brisk walk soon brought the climbers back to the road, where it was found that the motor cycles had failed to tempt the voracious appetites of some Highland cattle which had been observed to pass that way. The reader may think there was little danger to be apprehended from those meek and lowly animals; nevertheless the writer solemnly asserts that on another occasion one of these hungry monsters actually tore off and presumably devoured a strip of rubber from one of his tyres, to say nothing of a towel which had been spread out to dry and the loose end of a leather strap.

The run from Loch Slapin to Glen Brittle was very pleasant in the coolness of the evening. By road, via Broadford, Sligachan, and Carbost, the distance is nearly forty miles, although it is only about ten miles as the crow flies. Between Broadford and Sligachan the road makes a detour round the head of Loch Ainort where two rivers which formerly became impassable after heavy rain have now been bridged. After passing the head of the loch the road bends off to the left up a long and very steep hill, in order to avoid a precipitous bit of coast.

This hill, which has already been referred to, provided quite a tricky climb to finish off the day's work. It begins with a sharp turn, which, along with all the lower portion



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BLAVEN AND CLACH GLAS FROM THE ALLT NA DUNAICHE.

has a surface of loose sand and gravel to a depth of about a foot. First Greig and then the writer rounded the bend but stuck a few yards beyond on account of the difficulty of steering in the loose gravel. An attempt at a fresh start nearly resulted in one machine being dashed to pieces down a steep declivity on one side of the road. In the end it was necessary to push the machines a few yards until a better surface was reached after which there was no further difficulty. It is worth noting that this hill rises 400 feet in about half a mile.

The remainder of the journey was uneventful. During the last stage from Carbost over the hills to Glen Brittle it was impossible to avoid contrasting present ease and rate of progress with previous experiences over the same ground. At last the end of the journey came into sight, and the few remaining miles down the glen were soon covered. It is to be feared that a certain lady was for the moment most grievously startled when the two strange machines suddenly and unexpectedly appeared round the corner of the house. However, there was no cause for alarm, and the two visitors received the usual warm Skye welcome.

In conclusion, the writer would like to remark on the inborn politeness and courtesy of the natives of Skye. It may be said with truth that every Skyeman is a gentleman born, no matter how humble his circumstances. A typical illustration of this occurred one day when Greig and the writer set out to motor to the Quiraing, but were defeated by the puncture fiend. About midway between Snizort and Portree an old man with a horse and cart was encountered. The horse evidently had a profound dislike for motor bicycles, for it danced and turned and pulled the cart right off the road. Nevertheless the man, in place of uttering the usual surly remarks, began to apologise and to blame his horse for what had happened. Experienced motorists will no doubt realise all that this unusual behaviour implies.

GAICK.

By Henry Alexander.

Every one knows the Drumochter Pass, that great crossing over the Grampians traversed by road and railway, and many know Glen Tilt and Glen Feshie. Between these lines there lies a wide stretch of country with minor glens leading up from the south and the north, and having their source in the main watershed among the hills of Gaick. It is a region seldom visited now, though in the old days, before wheeled vehicles were known in the Highlands, it was probably more familiar than Drumochter. The shortest route from Atholl to Badenoch lies through this district by the Minigaig Pass, and this is the obvious path for the traveller on foot, who would not dream of taking the long detour westward by Drumochter. The construction by General Wade of the road through Drumochter diverted most of the traffic to that pass, but soldiers on foot making for Ruthven Barracks at Kingussie must have continued to use the Minigaig, and drovers used it down to comparatively recent times. A Kingussie drover, Rory Macdonald, brought cattle over the Minigaig for the Doune tryst every October until twenty or thirty years ago. On one occasion his drove was bought up by Ogilvy Dalgleish, the shooting tenant of Glen Bruar, down which the route comes to Atholl, and this, it is said, was the foundation of the Highland herd at Errol Park, the Ogilvy Dalgleish residence in the Carse of Gowrie. The story of the old drove routes through the Highlands has still to be written. This, however, is away from my subject, and so perhaps is the Minigaig, for it lies a little to the east of Gaick itself. A very interesting account of the Minigaig, by the late Mr William C. Smith, appeared some years ago in the *Cairngorm Club Journal.* The existing road by Drumochter was laid out by Telford, who was called in to advise upon the Highland roads in 1802, and it substantially followed the line of General Wade's road. Surveys were, however, made for an alternative road by one

of the glens to the east, and had this route been adopted the new road would then have marked a reversion to the older and more historic footpaths. I cannot say whether this alternative route followed the Minigaig by Glen Bruar and Glen Tromie, or went by Gaick.

It was the row of three lochs, the thick-set contour lines above them, and the escarpments of cliff, marked on the Ordnance map, that first attracted my attention to Gaick. Then I came across a reference to the Loss of Gaick, or the Gaick Tragedy, and this opened up a chain of historical and legendary matter, which determined me to visit the district at the first chance. This occurred last June when I found myself at Kingussie with a day to spare. I had a bicycle with me, and I decided to go up to Gaick Lodge, to which there is a driving road, trust to pushing my machine through to Edendon Lodge on the Atholl side, and there pick up the driving road, which comes out at Dalnacardoch. The total distance is 23 miles, viz., Kingussie to Gaick Lodge via Falls of Tromie, 13 miles; Gaick to Edendon, 5 miles; and Edendon to Dalnacardoch, 5 miles. It is well worth taking a cycle for the journey. The roads at either end are good, for hill roads, and for the greater part of the way between Gaick and Edendon there is a good path where the machine can be wheeled without difficulty. The only tedious part is for a mile or so along the side of Loch an Duin, where the path is on the steep slope above the water's edge, and you have to push the cycle over the heather and stones either below you or above you. As it was almost the longest day of the year and there was very little darkness, I resolved to go through the pass by night, or at least get so far on the journey by night—the result perhaps of twenty years' midnight journalism—and so I allowed myself to be turned out of the hotel at eleven o'clock when they were locking up. I cycled away down over the Spey and past the Ruthven Barracks, that picturesque pile which, like the Bernera Barracks, recalls a time when the Highlands of Scotland were in much the same condition as the Balkans are to-day. Though it was eleven by the clock it was only ten by real time, thanks to the summer-

time juggling, and everything was visible in the long summer twilight. Had I been on foot, I would have struck across the hill from Ruthven Barracks and come down upon the Tromie several miles up its course. But with a cycle I had to follow the road which crosses the river at the pretty falls, and then runs up the right or east bank the whole way to Gaick. The day had been sunny and warm, and I had had visions of a "lovely night in June" during which I could sleep several hours away beneath a tree. I tried this, but the night was bitterly cold, and when the daylight came in, it seemed colder still, and I was glad to get up and move on again. Sleeping out of doors is greatly overrated, and I imagine that the soldiers who have had to do the real thing and not merely play at it, like some of us, will say the same At anyrate, I longed for the sun that June morning. As I wished to see the keeper at Gaick, Mr Ormiston, and it was useless to arrive there at an inconceivable hour in the morning, I killed time by walking the whole way instead of riding. How eagerly I watched the sunlight creeping down the hills on the west of the valley, and when at last, about seven o'clock, it reached the road, I sat down and literally warmed myself at the rising orb.

At Glen Tromie Lodge, a couple of miles up from the Speyside road, the valley is prettily wooded with old birch. Above this it is bare and treeless, save for some scattered trees on the steep slopes of Loch an t' Seilich. There is a cottage on the roadside a little below the Allt Bhran, where the Minigaig path strikes away to the east—the path is not very obvious—and here, as I learned subsequently, lives Rory Macdonald, the old drover I referred to at the outset. There was no one stirring when I passed it, not even chanticleer. Of the three sheets of water in Gaick, Loch an t' Seilich is the largest. It is set in a sort of trench between steep hills, and at the head of it on the grassy valley bottom stands Gaick Lodge, a gaunt white-harled building in a walled enclosure, and not a tree or shrub about it. Beyond the Lodge the valley branches, one arm going south-east, and the other south-west past Loch Bhradain and Loch an Duin. This last loch drains into

the Tromie, but it is on the watershed, and might almost as easily be drained into the Edendon Water. The county march, in fact, runs across Loch an Duin, from hill-top to hill-top, leaving the greater portion of it in Perthshire, though the waters strictly belong to Inverness-shire. The group of hills round Gaick and its three lochs is remarkably uniform in height and configuration and appearance. The valley is about 1,400 feet, and the hills rise another 1,400 feet or so above it. They are very steep, and at some places, especially above Loch an Duin, there are the remains of cliffs with long scree slopes running down to the water. The rocks do not seem worth attention from a climbing point of view, but they added wildness to the scene and justify the Gaelic description "Gabhaig dubh," Gaick dark and wild. It was not dark that June morning, with the sun shining full into the valley and illuminating everything with the clear limpid light of early day, but one can well imagine that it looked dark and wild that December night a hundred and sixteen years ago when there fell the Loss of Gaick, the "Call Gabhaig."

Round this incident a mass of historical and legendary lore has accumulated. The older people throughout the Central Highlands can all tell you the story of the Black Officer and how he perished at Gaick. The incident has gathered many supernatural additions, and readers of the *Journal* will perhaps excuse me if I go into the story in some detail, for there is no previous reference to it in these pages, and for several reasons it deserves notice. One reason is that the Loss of Gaick is the only case recorded in the Scottish Highlands of a hut and its occupants being overwhelmed by an avalanche. The historical part of the story is briefly told. In the first week of January 1800, Captain John Macpherson of Ballachroan, near Kingussie, accompanied by four men, went up to Gaick to shoot deer. Their intention was to spend several days in the place, and they were to stay in a stone hut or bothy in the centre of the forest, close to where the present lodge stands. A heavy storm came on. After some days, as they did not return to the low country, fears began to be felt for their safety, and some messengers were sent up to Gaick to find

out what had happened. They came to the spot and found the hut and the whole site obliterated by a great mass of snow fallen from the hillside above. Everything was buried deep. Next day a larger search party came up, and when they dug away the snow they found the bodies of Ballachroan and three of the men in the ruins of the hut. The fifth body was found some distance from the hut, later in the year when the snow melted. The guns of the party were found bent and twisted among the debris of the hut. On the site where the hut stood there is now a small granite monument, of which more later, bearing the inscription given below. The surface of the stone has been only roughly dressed, and the lettering is not easily followed. The spelling of several of the Gaelic words is erratic, and does not follow the standard :—

THE LOSS OF GAICK
In Memory of
CAPT'N JOHN M'PHERSON OF BALLACHROAN
A valiant and patriotic gentleman
Born at Glentruim 1724
Who perished on this spot
By an avalanche in Jan. 1800
Along with 4 companions in the chase
JAMES GRANT, DONALD M'GILLIVRAY
DUNCAN M'PHARLANE, JOHN M'PHERSON
O duisgibh mun fas sibh liath
Sdhuibaibh bhur cas air ant-slieh
Feuch gum bi bhur fascath deant
Mun teid a'ghrian a laighe o ribh
This memorial stone
Erected August 1902
Is due to the exertions of the late
ALEXANDER M'PHERSON
Provost of Kingussie
Who never wearied working for his chief
His clan & Badenoch, and who died
11th Jan 1902 sincerely regretted
By all who knew him.

The Gaelic verse in the above inscription is a warning to the hill man to be up early and not to tarry lest ill betide him. I do not know its source, but a rendering in English

of it and a preceding verse is given by Provost Macpherson in a booklet, to which reference is made later:—

"The last Christmas of the century,
Late, late may it come again,
There came no pleasure in its train,
But anguish and sorrow.

Awake before your locks are grey,
Quicken your footsteps on the moor,
See that your shelter is secure,
Ere dawneth to-morrow."

The last line "ere dawneth to-morrow" would be more correctly translated "ere the sun goes down upon you."

So much for the strictly historical part of the story. The legendary part is more exciting. The disaster happened in the first week of January, 1800, according to the modern calendar, but at Old Yule, according to the reckoning of the time, and whether the night of the storm was actually Christmas Eve or not, still the coincidence with the festival was close enough to emphasise the event in the popular imagination. Gaick had an evil reputation of old. It was in Gaick that Walter Comyn was torn to pieces by witches in the form of eagles. Another legend told of the hunter sheltering in his bothy in Gaick and meeting there his unearthly lover, who turned upon him and tore him limb from limb, and still another legend told of a Macpherson who in Gaick first met the famous witch of Laggan, a single hair of whose head could sever a great wooden beam. Little wonder, then, that when the news of the disaster spread through Badenoch, men began to recall these older stories. An avalanche is terrific in any case; happening on Christmas Eve, away among the hills in a glen of evil memory, and with not a survivor to tell the tale, it was doubly terrific. The incident made a deep impression upon the countryside. And soon a new element entered into the affair. Captain Macpherson, or as he was called from his dark visage, the "Othaichear dubh," or Black Officer, had been a keen soldier and recruiter. Many a Speyside man had he persuaded or

trysted away to enlist, and there were grievances and old scores, not a few, against him in Badenoch. These were all recalled and awakened once more by the tragic and mysterious manner of his death. It seemed a judgment upon him. He was reputed to have been in league with the evil one, and as the story of the tragedy passed from mouth to mouth, it became more and more invested with the supernatural and the terrifying. Last October, when at Inverey, I happened to say to one of the older dwellers there that I had been at Gaick, and to mention the Black Officer, and at once my friend—some readers will no doubt know him, Mr Robertson, who was for many summers at the Corrour Bothy—launched out on the story of how the Black Officer once gave a ball at Ballachroan and invited all the young men of the district. He had military uniforms all ready, and he told the lads how nice they would look in uniforms, and so they put them on, and then the soldiers came and took them all away. So here was the story of the Black Officer and his deeds, still living and oral among the older generation of Deeside people. In a little volume, "Highland Legends and Fugitive Pieces," by "Glenmore," published in 1859, there appears an account of the Loss of Gaick with two verses in Gaelic from a poem by Duncan Gow, a bard of the time, describing the tragedy. They are translated :—

> "The wild raving winds blew furious and fast
> Through the deep narrow glens of the deer,
> And Destruction rode forth on the wings of the blast,
> Proclaiming dire judgment with sentence severe.
>
> Fierce, fierce was the Tempest, and awful the doom,
> When all were so suddenly hurried away,
> And no one was spared on the death scene of gloom,
> The tidings of sadness from thence to convey."

There is also given a set of verses, said to be by "an esteemed friend of the author," but possibly by "Glenmore" himself, in which the mysterious and terrible character of the incident is similarly founded upon. The Loss of Gaick was not an accident; it was a doom. The verses describe the tempest outside :—

"There's a voice in the gale and a shriek in the blast;
Rude rages the tempest, the snow falleth fast;
The corpse lights are flickering over the heath—
Forebodings of woe, the omens of death."

Then come the hunters, safe, as they fondly think, inside the hut "in Gaick's stern sombrous solitude":—

"Bold, reckless men, no harm they dread,
Tho' loud the storm raved overhead."

They hold "roistering wassail" and heed not the tempest:—

"But he, their chief, that dark-browed man,
His mind that night, O who could scan!
Now rapt in moodiest thought seems he,
Then foremost in the revelry,
Now darker grows his visage swart,
Then shuddering sudden he would start
With whimpering cry, half-stifled scream,
As waking from a ghastly dream,
Then would he shout, 'Drink, comrades, drink,
Nor from the wassail let us shrink,
Tho' wild, in sooth, this Eve of Yule,
Let us defy all scathe and dule.'

But, hark! a piercing cry, a yell
Borne on the dreadful tempest's swell;
'Twas heard on dark Loch Ericht's side,
It pealed thro' Nethy's forest wide,
From high Craigelachie to Craigdhu,
Upon the surging storm it flew,
Rock, mountain, vale, afar around
Reverberate the fearful sound.

Now the tumult is lulled, the tempest is ceased,
And brightly the morning shines forth from the east,
And many fond eyes look along the dark burn,
And wistfully gaze for the hunters' return;
But, tho' fondly they look, they look all in vain,
Their homes shall the hunters ne'er visit again,
Gashed, torn by the demon, the merciless foe,
In Gaick lie their corses deeply swathed in the snow."

So what with fact and myth, tale and verse, the Loss of Gaick became one of the great legends of the Highlands,

and as the story was often popularly told, the avalanche ceased to be a mere fall of snow and became a thunderbolt or whirlwind launched from heaven against sinners, which swept away the Black Officer and his comrades so that their bodies were never found at all, but utterly vanished. As a matter of fact, Captain Macpherson lies buried in the old churchyard of St Columba at Kingussie. This, however, does not affect the growth of the myth. One wonders if a century hence some similar legend will have sprung up about our recruiters of to-day.

Finally towards the close of the last century, nearly a hundred years after the event, the late Mr Alexander Macpherson, banker and Provost of Kingussie, a descendant, I believe, of the Ballachroan family, went into the subject, and in his "Glimpses of Church and Social Life in the Highlands in Olden Times," published in 1893 by Messrs Blackwood, he gives an account of the Black Officer and of the whole affair. This sketch was subsequently expanded and reproduced in a booklet, one of the Clan Chattan Papers, under the title, "Captain John Macpherson of Ballachroan and the Gaick Catastrophe of the Christmas of 1799 (O.S.): A Counter-Blast." The booklet was published by Mr G. A. Crerar, bookseller, Kingussie, in 1900, but it is now out of print. The proceeds were devoted, along with other subscriptions, to erecting the memorial at Gaick already referred to. Provost Macpherson devoted himself to demolishing the myth that had grown round the Black Officer, and he shows, or claims to show, that he was a greatly maligned man. The myth seems to have begun very early. The story of the accident first got into print in *The Scots Magazine* in 1800. Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, gave a more imaginative version of it in *The Spy* in 1810-11, and then Sir Walter Scott took it up and further developed it in *The Foreign Quarterly* in 1827. "These distorted and imaginative versions," says Provost Macpherson, "all apparently derived from superstitious native sources, naturally enough gave great annoyance to Captain Macpherson's family and friends; and 'the great Wizard' himself, as appearing from his 'Journal', published in 1890, was in 1828 brought severely to task by

Mrs M'Barnet, a daughter of the Captain." Still more recently Mr Andrew Lang served up the tale in his "Angling Sketches," 1891, with new embellishments, as got from a boatman on Loch Awe, who hailed from Badenoch. Provost Macpherson proceeds to give some of the fantastic stories told of the Black Officer and of his recruiting villainies, and his dealings with the Prince of Darkness. The Inverey story, however, is not amongst them. He then gives us what he says is the true narrative of his life. Iain dubh MacAlastair, or as he was more generally known, Othaichear Dubh, Bail a Chrodhain, belonged to the Phoness or Invereshie branch of the Macphersons, now represented by the Macpherson Grants of Ballindalloch, who still own Gaick. He served in the 82nd Regiment, and, retiring with the rank of captain, he settled down in his native district, where for several years he was employed in recruiting service. "This duty," remarks the Provost, "oftentimes a disagreeable, always an unpopular one, Captain Macpherson discharged with so much judgment and success, that of the number of his recruits from the superabundant population, no less than seventy are said to have become commissioned officers. . . . But fond mothers always will lament pet sons, albeit otherwise useless, who willingly or unwillingly don the 'red coat,' and the Othaichear Dubh, the first recruiting officer they had seen, other than the Chief, reaped more than the usual measure of opprobrium." How far the Provost's whitewashing of Ballachroan is correct one cannot say. Probably it is correct, but that spoils the story. The Black Officer's son became a colonel in the army. Hunting was Ballachroan's favourite pursuit, and he was a man of nearly seventy-five when he went up to Gaick for the last time. Ballachroan was only a few miles from the Manse of Laggan, the home of Mrs Grant, whose letters are so well known, and the two households were on terms of close intimacy. In one of her letters Mrs Grant describes the accident at Gaick, and speaks of the regret caused by Captain Macpherson's death. Her husband, she says, was "always partial" to him. Malcolm Macintyre, who as ghillie had often accompanied the Captain in his

hunting expeditions, wrote a tender elegy in Gaelic, some passages of which Provost Macpherson quotes, while his kinsman, Captain Lachlan Macpherson, Biallid, wrote of him in 1847—and with this we shall take leave of the Black Officer:—

"His mind was full of generosity, kindness, and sensibility, and if he had faults, they were the errors of his age and not of his own heart. In his latter days his liberality in assisting others embarrassed his own affairs; but in every trial his conduct was distinguished by honour and integrity. Amidst his misfortunes he was deprived of his wife, after which he went little into society, but in his old age spent many of his days, like the ancient hunters, alone on the hills of Gaick or the corries of Beann-Aller, with no other companion than his 'cuilbheir' and his grey dogs! Such was one of the last true deer-stalkers of the old race of gentlemen—a man who, if we lived a hundred years, we should not see his like again."

The site where the hut stood is now marked by the memorial stone, set on a base of masonry and cement. Its rough and only slightly hewn character is far more in keeping with the surroundings than a formal and finely-dressed stone would be. It stands a hundred yards or so from the south-east corner of the enclosure surrounding the lodge, close to the base of the hill and near the little gully and stream which will be seen in the map coming down from Mullach Coire nan Deareag in a south-westerly direction. I cannot say from which side of this gully the avalanche descended, or whether it came down the bed of the stream itself. Looking up from the valley one sees on the south side of the gully, on the edge of the ridge, a place where a great snow cornice would very probably form in winter, but it is possible that the avalanche was not caused by the collapse of a cornice, but simply by the sliding of the snow on the steep hillside itself. Mrs Ormiston told me that she had twice, during the thirty years she has spent at Gaick, seen an avalanche come down at the same spot and sweep as far almost as the enclosure of the lodge. A person interested in the snow phenomena of the Scottish mountains might find it

worth his while to visit the spot in winter. The only fall of snow I have seen worthy of being called an avalanche was once in March in Glen Geusachan, at the foot of a gully coming down from the Devil's Point. The great mass of tumbled snow lying there was quite enough to have swept away a hut.

Of the rest of the journey from Gaick to Edendon and down to Dalnacardoch little need be said. The path passes Loch Bhradain. The scene here, and as one winds round the base of An Caorunach to Loch an Duin, is very fine. The green valley below, the steep hillsides, fringed here and there with rock, the little side glens running up between the hills, and the sheets of water and streams sparkling in the June sun, composed a noble prospect. Even to one who knows the Scottish hills well, Gaick opens up a combination of features which well repay a visit. After Loch an Duin the scenery becomes tamer. The tiny islets at the northern end of the loch with the sand, as seen from the path above, stretching in crescent shape under the water, are very quaint. One would expect the upper end, that is the southern end, of a loch like this, which lies at the source of a stream, to be closed by hills. Not so Loch an Duin. It is flanked by a thousand-feet hill on either side, with rock and slopes of scree coming right down to the water's edge, but at the further end it runs out into the open moor, and you find yourself on a terrace looking away south over Atholl. As was remarked before, very little cutting would divert the loch into the Edendon Water, and as a mark of impartiality the county march, which otherwise follows the watershed, here runs straight across the loch.

At Edendon Lodge, which has a small plantation round it, you pick up the road, and it is a pleasant run down to Dalnacardoch. Incidentally I may say that the place-name used locally for this route is not Edendon or Dalnacardoch, but Sron Phadraig. When I spoke at Gaick and at Struan about going through by Edendon and Dalnacardoch, they said I meant Sron Phadraig. This place does not appear on the 1-inch map, and it would be interesting to have a note upon it and know where exactly it lies. Etymologically the name seems interesting. At Dalnacardoch there

is a big white shooting lodge at the roadside. It was an inn originally, as the tablet over the door shows :—

Hospitium Hoc
in publicum commodum
Georgius III. Rex
Construi Jussit
A.D. 1774.
Rest a little while.
Gabhail Fois Car Tamaill Bhig.

Some day perhaps Georgius V. will order this and the other resting places for the traveller, which have been closed in the Highlands, to be opened again. For the present, however, Dalnacardoch is closed, and the invitation in three tongues is a mockery.

Opposite the inn there is a bank of turf, close-grown as if it were the stance of some forgotten market, and it was pleasant to lie there in the sun and doze an hour away. Past me, and away down the valley, ran the road leading to the lands of the south. There was something of the same feeling as when one crosses the Alps and descends on the Italian side. The analogy may seem far-fetched, but it always recurs to one when coming through a pass or over a high hill road in the Grampians. There is a fascination about these walks across a great dividing chain of mountains. It does not lie in mere thousands of feet of altitude, but in some element more subtle and elusive, and it very pleasantly capped this June day's journey through the hills of Gaick.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

GENERAL MEETING.

THE Twenty-eighth Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the North British Station Hotel, Edinburgh, on the evening of Friday, 1st December 1916, with the President, Dr W. Inglis Clark, in the chair.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held in Glasgow were read and approved.

Mr WALTER NELSON, acting Hon. Treasurer, reported on the state of the Club funds. He mentioned that the ordinary business of the Club had been very economically carried on during the year, but that the revenue had suffered considerably owing to the non-receipt of subscriptions from many members serving at the Front. The balance in favour of the Club on the ordinary revenue account was stated to be £134. 16s. 8d., and on the Commutation Fund, £305. 8s. 4d. In answer to an inquiry, the Treasurer stated that it had not been the custom to estimate the value of the stock of the *Journal* kept at the Club Room or of the Club library, but that possibly future accounts might have a note inserted mentioning the existence of the assets in question.

The Income was stated at - -	£109	5	7
The Expenditure at - - -	110	13	8
Cost of *Journal*, net - - -	£57	10	11
Club Room Expenses - - -	30	11	0
Printing, Postages, &c. - -	22	11	9
	£110	13	8

The total funds at the Club's credit amounted to £540. 5s.

The report and accounts were duly passed.

The PRESIDENT thanked Mr Nelson for his complete report, and for his year of ungrudging work.

Mr RENNIE moved, and Mr FRASER CAMPBELL supported, a proposition that a second donation of twenty guineas be made to the Scottish Branch of the Red Cross

Society. Some discussion took place as to whether the motion was in order, &c., but eventually the donation was agreed to by a majority.

The HONORARY SECRETARY, Mr George Sang, read the following report on the membership of the Club, &c.:—

Since last I had the honour of reporting to this Club our membership has decreased from 196 to 188. Up to the end of last October, when our books may be said to close, I regret to remind you that no fewer than 5 members have been killed in the service of their country—Lieutenant Beckett, Major Macalister, Major Macdonald, Captain M'Jannet, and Captain Rorie. One, Mr Harvie-Brown, has died, and two, Messrs F. J. Dewar and W. C. Slingsby, have resigned. We have added by election three—Rev. A. R. G. Burn, Messrs Ernest A. Baker and R. C. Paterson. Of the 188 members now on the Club roll, 72 have taken advantage of the commutation scheme, 31 are original members, and 64 are also members of the Alpine Club.

Since October I have received intimation of the death of one of our original members, Professor Ferguson, and the resignation of Mr John S. Napier and Mr James Rose.

A successful meet was held at Lochearnhead last New Year, at which 19 members and 7 guests attended. Unfortunately the weather proved most exceptionally wet.

The meet arranged for Easter at Kinlochleven had to be shifted at the last moment to Fort William, in consequence of a communication I received from the authorities. It was favoured with better weather than at New Year, and 16 members and 4 guests attended.

Your Committee at their annual meeting instructed me to prepare special minutes to be sent to the relatives of those members who have fallen in battle. These I have submitted to the President for revisal, and now hold awaiting the sanction of this meeting. They also had under discussion the form of a suitable memorial to our fallen soldier members, and have appointed a Special Committee, consisting of the President, Mr Galbraith, and myself, to consider the matter. We have been given power to add to our number, and should greatly welcome any suggestions which members care to lay before us, that we may report to your Committee at its next meeting.

A proposal was also made to the Committee that a collection of Swiss and other mountain views on photographic slides might be

added to our present excellent collection of Scottish views at the Club Room. It is intended that the Editor be asked to publish in the *Journal* an appeal to members for donations of slides, and it is hoped that through the generosity of members the foundation of a representative collection may be laid.

The thanks of the Club are due to Mr J. H. Buchanan for the valuable time and labour he has devoted to the management of the slide collection, of which considerable advantage has been taken by members in the past season.

The Special Committee appointed at last annual general meeting to consider the loaning of photographs of mountains to hotels frequented by the Club, reported to the Committee meeting recommending that no action be taken at present owing to lack of funds.

The Special Committee reported to the Committee on the position of the "Guide Book," recommending the delay of publication till times of peace.

I regret to intimate that owing to absence of members, and the demands of national service even among civilians, the customary monthly meetings at the Club Room have practically ceased to exist. The convener of the Club Room Committee will be able to report to you that he has been able to continue the lease of the rooms on advantageous terms, and it is hoped that we may be able to resume our social gatherings on the arrival of settled times.

The report was approved, and the Secretary was cordially thanked for his services.

The SECRETARY read a report by the Hon. Editor on the *Journal*, and stated that it would be of material assistance to the Editor if some of the members present would contribute short articles on excursions made during the coming year, or on any kindred mountaineering subjects likely to be of interest to the Club. The Editor was thanked for his successful efforts to keep the *Journal* going during War time.

A report on the "Guide Book" embodying the finding of the small Special Committee appointed last year, that its publication be delayed till times of peace, was read and approved.

As regards rule No. 26, Mr Rennie moved that it be amended by the addition following:—

"Provided further, that so long as Great Britain is engaged in military hostilities against Germany, nothing contained in this rule shall prevent the Club, at its annual general meeting, from re-electing for one year only from the date of said meeting the President, Vice-Presidents, and ordinary members of committee, notwithstanding that they have already held office for three or more consecutive years."

The proposed alteration was discussed and agreed to.

The present Office-Bearers, Committee, and Trustees of the Club funds were then reappointed for another year, and Mr JOHN GROVE was elected to fill a vacancy on the Committee.

After discussion, the meeting accepted the Committee's suggestions that the New Year Meet be held at Killin and Fortingall, and the Easter 1917 Meet at Loch Awe.

The SECRETARY then read to the meeting the special minutes to the relatives of those members who had fallen: these were duly approved, and the Secretary was instructed to send copies to the relatives.

A motion of thanks to the President for his services in the chair was unanimously passed.

TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL DINNER.

On the termination of the general meeting the annual dinner was held in the same hotel, with the President, Dr W. Inglis Clark, in the chair. As, for the third December in succession, the nation was at war, no reception was held in the afternoon, and the dinner was of an informal character for members only. Twenty-nine attended, and those who were able to be present much appreciated the opportunity of meeting their fellow-clubmen—a somewhat rare pleasure nowadays.

The President made a short speech in which, after referring to our friends who had fallen, and to what in due course might be a suitable memorial for the Club to set up in their memory, he asked how far were members, who had opportunity, justified in pursuing our

sport? The obvious reply was, in his opinion, that efficiency is a personal duty, and, to most of us at least, a visit to the hills is the surest way of attaining this. This led on to a somewhat scientific examination of the physical and mental effects of the hills. The exhilaration could not be measured by per cent. of ozone, absence of microbes, humidity, temperature, or pressure, nor even in heart action or muscle exercise. In addition, there was the intense effect of observation, and this led to the effect of contrast on the eye and the hundred problems of light and shade, spring and summer, &c., which keenly affect the observant one, but also unconsciously stimulate the many who feel without knowing why. The very purity of this near revelation of God's universe in itself is a refreshment of the deepest and truest nature. The mental balance is by all these surroundings brought to the highest, and we are fitted for our duty, whatever that might be.

NAMES OF MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE DINNER.

Allan Arthur.
Ernest A. Baker.
Thomas Fraser S. Campbell.
D. A. Clapperton.
W. Inglis Clark.
C. Inglis Clark.
William Douglas.
J. W. Drummond.
William Garden.
Geo. T. Glover.
G. B. Green.
John Grove.
W. G. C. Johnston.
John R. Levack.
W. N. Ling.
D. Mackenzie.
C. E. W. Macpherson.
John MacRobert.
A. Ernest Maylard.
W. A. Morrison.
Sir Hugh T. Munro.
Walter Nelson.
R. C. Paterson.
Scott Moncrieff Penney.
J. Rennie.
George Sang.
Alfred D. Smith.
Godfrey A. Solly.
Robert W. Worsdell.

NEW YEAR 1917 MEET OF THE CLUB.

As mentioned earlier, the Club decided to hold the New Year Meet at Killin and Fortingall. Just after this decision had been come to, the Government issued an appeal to the general public to avoid all unnecessary travelling, foreshadowing an increase of fares and a restricted train service.

Under all the circumstances, the Club's Committee decided that their duty was to cancel the official meet, and this was done. For the first time in the Club's history, therefore, no New Year's Meet was held, and at present it looks very doubtful whether the Easter 1917 Meet will not have to share the same fate.

It may be a consolation to members to know that the weather at the New Year was very poor.

ALPINE SLIDES FOR THE CLUB COLLECTION.

Owing to the fact that there are many photographers in the Club who have contributed slides of Scottish scenery, and who also possess good photographs taken by themselves of mountain scenery on the Continent, a proposition was made at the last general meeting that it would be to the advantage of members if contributions of this nature were solicited for the Club's slide collection.

The proposition was unanimously agreed to; and as a means of ventilating the proposal and soliciting a response, it was further suggested that the best way to do so would be to make an appeal through the medium of the *Journal*. Members are therefore asked to contribute slides of Alpine interest in the same way as has been done in the past in the case of purely Scottish scenery; and it is hoped that the response to this appeal will be such as to render the newly created "foreign" department as successful and outstanding in quality and quantity as has been the "home" section. Contributions and communications should be sent to the acting custodian of lantern slides, Mr J. H. Buchanan, "Sherwood," South Lauder Road, Edinburgh.

S.M.C. ROLL OF HONOUR.

THE following name must be added to the lists that have already appeared :—

GLOVER, G. T., Lieut.-Col., R.E., Expeditionary Force.

The following promotion has come to our knowledge :—

HENRY C. COMBER, 2nd Lieut., R.G.A.

Particulars of the circumstances under which Messrs Morrison and Sang gained the honours mentioned in our last issue (p. 136) are set out below :—

EXTRACT FROM "GAZETTE" OF 1ST JANUARY 1917.

"His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to award the Edward Medal of the First Class to William Alexander Morrison, and the Edward Medal of the Second Class to George Sang and Archibald Young, under the following circumstances :—

"On 20th June 1916 a small explosion occurred at 10 A.M. in a building at the Roslin Explosives Factory. Morrison and Sang, who were aware that four girls were in the building which had caught fire, and that the building was full of explosives, at once ran towards it. As they approached, two of the girls came out and fell unconscious on the grass. The building was now blazing furiously, but Morrison and Sang, who knew the position of the explosives within, used the fire buckets so as to allay the flames in the dangerous quarter, and to enable Morrison to dash in. He groped through the smoke, which was dense white, found one girl, and passed her out to Young, who had arrived meanwhile; he then returned for the second girl, and eventually brought her out, while Young placed the first girl on a bogey, which he thrust along the line out of danger, and then returned for the second. Sang meanwhile kept the fire down as far as possible with water buckets. During the whole of this time small explosions were continually taking place within the building, and immediately after the second rescue a heavy explosion

occurred, which flattened down part of it. Twelve minutes after the original explosion, the whole building blew up."

Mr Young is not a member of the Club, but to him, as well as to our two members, we offer our heartiest congratulations.

The medallists are very reticent and deprecatory about their heroic action and the circumstances which led up to it, claiming, like all true heroes, that they only did their duty. It is not so much the mere performance of the duty as the seizing, without the slightest hesitation, of the opportunity of doing it, that brings out men's true characters. In this case we gather that it was impossible to either see or breathe inside the house, and there was always the uncomfortable knowledge that at any moment the whole place might be blown to matchwood. The rescued girls were unfortunately very badly burned, but owing to the prompt action of our friends no fatality resulted.

It is comforting to think that while so many of our members serve their country in destroying the enemy abroad, our members left at home can, when the opportunity presents itself, prove that they too are ready to maintain a mountaineer's reputation for courage and prompt action in emergency.

Alpine Club of Canada.—From time to time we have had the pleasure of welcoming members of this Club at our meets. At Easter 1910, Kinlochewe, Mr G. M. Smith was present, and wrote an appreciative article in *The Canadian Alpine Journal*, 1910, "With the S.M.C. at Easter." At the New Year 1912 Meet at Tarbet, Dr Bell attended, and at the Easter 1912 Glencoe Meet, Mr E. O. Wheeler.

The following notes show what splendid war services these gentlemen have rendered our Empire. Before the war members of the Alpine Club of Canada were always welcome at our meets; they will be doubly welcome now, and we sincerely trust that the above-mentioned will be able to renew their personal acquaintance with the S.M.C.:—

Lieut. G. M. Smith (Princess Patricia's C.L.I.) went to France early this year, and has gained the Military Cross. "He fought his machine gun with great skill and courage. He set a magnificent example to the men, and contributed very largely to the success of the operation."

Dr F. C. Bell (Major) went to France in 1914: he has been wounded, and has twice been mentioned in despatches.

Captain E. O. Wheeler, R.E., has served both in France and in the East, and has been three times mentioned in despatches, and has gained the Military Cross and the Cross of the Legion of Honour.

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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.

GLEN FESHIE.—On p. 153 I notice a reference by Mr Corner to the torrential nature of the Eidart. He found it was impossible to cross the stream at a point about six miles above its confluence with the Feshie, and had, in consequence, to walk down the left bank of the stream to the footbridge (*sic*) which carries the Glen Feshie path across. Mr Corner was fortunate in finding this bridge intact, otherwise he would have found himself caught in the "fork" between the Eidart and the Feshie, and would probably have had to walk up one or other of these streams to near its source before he could have got across. This was my experience in May 1913 when walking with two friends from Kingussie to Braemar. We found that the Eidart Bridge had been washed away, and we had to walk up the right bank of the stream for five miles before we found a place where we could cross in safety by means of a snow bridge. We reached Braemar about six hours later than we had anticipated, and had there been a weak member in our party the consequences might easily have been serious. The bridge across the Eidart is frequently washed away, and when it does exist it is of a very slim nature, and I consider, unless a satisfactory bridge is erected, that a serious accident will some day happen, either to a party slipping off the bridge or to some one attempting to cross the flooded stream during one of the periods when the bridge is away.

The question of putting up a substantial bridge has been before the Cairngorm Club, and I am hopeful that after the conclusion of the war such a bridge will be erected. See *C. C. Journal*, Vol. VIII., p. 220. J. A. PARKER.

LOCHABER : HEAVY RAINFALL, 11th OCTOBER 1916.—The following excerpt from the *Glasgow Herald* of the 13th October 1916 is interesting :—

"A rainstorm probably without parallel in the district swept over Lochaber throughout the night of Wednesday and the early hours of yesterday. The fall was practically confined to a period of twelve hours, and the measurement made at the Fort William Meteorological Station shows that it amounted to no less than 4½ in., or a total deposit of water equivalent to 450 tons to the acre. The mean rainfall at seventy-eight stations in Scotland is 51.56 in. per annum, so

that the deluge at Fort William is almost equal to the fall in an average month.

"Fort William yesterday was entirely isolated so far as railway communication was concerned, as numerous wash-outs had taken place, alike on the West Highland, the Mallaig, and the Invergarry and Fort Augustus railways. Between Spean Bridge and Tulloch the abnormal rush of water washed away the line at three points, and the passenger train from Glasgow was held up at Rannoch, beyond which station no passengers are being booked. Communication between Glasgow and Fort William is thus entirely blocked, and it is feared that it will be next week ere this can be restored. On Lochielside and near Glenfinnan the line to Mallaig has been similarly cut. The branch line connecting Spean Bridge and Fort Augustus has suffered severely, and along Loch Lochy side the permanent way has been alternately washed out and silted up for a considerable distance. The damage caused to public roads cannot at present be computed. Bridges have been bodily swept off, and a number of the turnpikes have been rutted and scoured like river beds, while in other cases the depositing of hundreds of tons of debris on their surfaces has rendered some of the highways impassable.

"Glen Nevis was converted into a lake, and several houses were inundated, the inmates in some cases escaping only with difficulty. Many large trees were carried down by the river spates, and yesterday Loch Linnhe was studded with flotsam. Considerable damage has been done to turnip and potato crops, while flock masters have likewise incurred loss. On the farm of Inverlochy alone close on sixty sheep were drowned. Owing to the interruption of railway communications no newpapers reached the district yesterday."

The following extract from the Monthly Weather Report of the Meteorological Office, October 1916, also relates to the above :—

". . . during the first fortnight the wind over practically the whole country was drawn from off the lower Atlantic region. Its influence in producing abnormal mildness was very striking. At one or more stations, gales were of everyday occurrence. . . . Great rainstorms occurred on various days. On the 5th, Killarney measured 42 mm., Giggleswick 48 mm., and Snowdonia 100 to 142 mm. Scotland had the heaviest on the 11th, Glencarron 111 mm. and Fort William 114 mm. . . . On the 14th, Scotland was again the most flooded region, with amounts up to 56 mm. at Glencarron, 59 mm. at Fort Augustus, and 94 mm. at Fort William."

. . . . . .

The relation of millimetres to inches is 254 mm. to 10 inches, or approximately 25 mm. to 1 in. ; Fort William had thus about 4½ in. of rainfall on the 11th. The records show that during the month of October, Fort William had a total rainfall of 16.2 in., which is more than double the normal : but Pen-y-Gwryd had 24.1 in., and it is possible that some of the other records not yet published may be correspondingly high.

Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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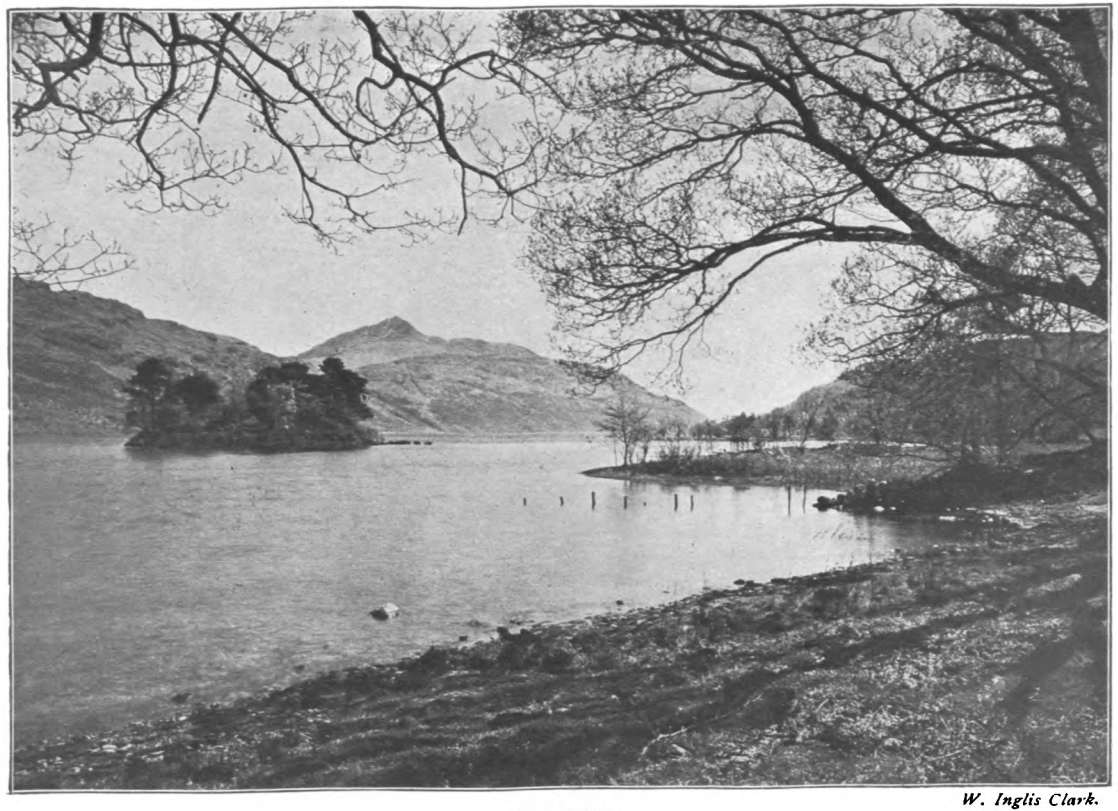

W. Inglis Clark.

"PEACE."
(Loch Lomond.)

THE SCOTTISH
Mountaineering Club Journal.

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CREAG M'RANAICH.

BY W. INGLIS CLARK.

IT is now a long time since I wrote anything for the *Journal*. Don't imagine that my conscience has been idle. That unruly member (if it can be so designated) has given me a bad time, and my writing-desk can testify to the presence of at least two unfinished articles. But, during these years of war, romance and enthusiasm seem lacking, and any energy is absorbed by the daily effort to supply what is needful for the war. Being nowadays of a more reflective nature, the fact that we are all getting older—about three years older than we were at our last pre-war meet at Fort William—has led me to some very commonplace conclusions. The old brigade, of which I am one, though still full of enthusiasm, and in many ways in their best form, no doubt feel that less ambitious excursions must be selected in the future. The midway brigade may find that strenuous cross-country walks, such as they used to indulge in, should only be undertaken in fine weather. The young brigade, bless them at their heroic work, are, at anyrate, three years older, and these conclusions have led me to tell you of an easy and repaying expedition, but little known. I spent a week at Strathyre in the latter end of January 1917, and during this time the ground was covered with snow, while a biting, frosty east wind blew with varying velocity. Needless to say, the district is rich in walks, high and low, but as my right to be on holiday was the result of previous overwork, the selected excursions were

not of the arduous kind. The morning train northwards leaves at 9.13 A.M., and as I paced the platform the patches of blue sky gave promise of a fine day. Looking down, and being of a self-respecting type, I was horrified to notice that while my right calf was neatly encased in a well-arranged puttie, the left had none. The station-master remarked that nowadays few people were to be seen without putties, whereupon I entered into the history of the puttie, and pointed out all about the mountaineers and the use of it. I remembered distinctly adjusting the left puttie and putting it on, but now it had disappeared. The train ran into the platform, and I was soon *en route* for Killin Junction, carefully hiding the diversity of my clothing from my only fellow passenger. At 10.5 A.M. we reached Killin Junction. I had often been before at Killin Junction, for it is a very favourite ski-ing resort. Indeed, on more than one occasion I have attached my skis on the platform, and returned wearing them to the same spot. The morning train from Edinburgh gives ample time to climb up even to the ridges and enjoy numberless zigzags on the road down. Furnished with a tea basket, the well-heated waiting-room, generally empty, makes an excellent dining-room, and the evening train takes home the wearied ski-runner well content with the day. But, on this occasion, the station-master remarked, "So you're back to your favourite country. But there's too little snow for ski-ing." I explained that I meant to cross the pass by the side of Creag M'Ranaich to Strathyre. "Eh, mon, ye'll get an awfu' time up yonner," pointing to the snowstorm hiding from view the upper part of the glen. Climbing the paling, the firm snow crinkled below my hobnailers, and I cut across the corner of the hill to the footpath which runs up from the railway bridge, and follows the side of the Dubh burn well up to the head of the glen. There is a special charm when the snow is deep enough to fill up the lesser inequalities, but not sufficient to entirely cover the mosses with their star-like leaves. This morning every cushion of snow was pierced by their tiny stems, and the green pattern looked exquisite on the white background. The heather branches were laden with snow, which fell

in dust as I passed along. The river, for the most part unfrozen, threw up sufficient spray to furnish each boulder with a crystalline mantle, from which a tassellated fringe of icicles depended. Particularly active were the grouse, which, emulating Longfellow's advice to the aspiring mountaineer, "Beware the awful avalanche," called out in warning tones, "Go back! Go back!" and then, with a slight pause, "Go back!" But I was not to be intimidated by these warnings, and ere long the path terminated where it crosses the stream to a gate. It must depend on conditions whether it is better to cross, or continue on the eastern side. I crossed and was soon floundering in snow wreaths, readily formed in such rough country. On a former occasion the east side gave better progress. The easterly gale, heavily laden with hail-like snow, drove down the pass (some 1,800 feet) where it narrows between the rocky crags of Creag M'Ranaich (over 2,500 feet on the left) and the buttresses of Cam Choreag (about 2,500 feet on the right). A paling runs across the pass, and here, crouching down behind a hillock, I adjusted my cravat over my ears and blessed the oil-silk sleeved poncho which withstood all penetration by the wind. A mountaineer's appearance is often extraordinary, and the words of an old Scots doggerel, heard by me in my youth, came to my mind. Referring to two women who, in face of a storm, had to reach Aberdeen, it says, "They row'd their legs in straeen rapes, magurkies on their heads for keps, and buskit ower like twa bee skeps, set aff for Aberdeen." But the ladies were better off than the writer, for have I not said that my left leg was puttieless? The snow poured into my boot, and although I racked my brain for a solution, I could not explain the missing garment. After passing the paling I kept to the right, over most execrable country, with dozens of deep ravines, the idea being to skirt the slopes of Meall ant Seallaidh (2,792 feet) so as to reach Kingshouse direct. In this I was successful, and so quickly that I was opposite Balquhidder station by 1.10 P.M., and in plenty of time to get the train south should I have desired it. I wish here to point out that the alternative was to turn to the left at the pass round the

foot of the Creag, and reach the footpath which runs on the left side of the river Kendrum (Ceaum Droma).

By going through the pass as I have described, one misses one of the rarest sights to be seen at a low elevation. I mean the cornices of Creag M'Ranaich. There is, indeed, a second pass, and an infinitely finer one. About 200 yards before the paling the rocky crags on the left become visible. Although no pass is evident, climb sharply to the left, a steep slope of about 500 feet. This leads on to a narrow ridge, and in front one looks down into a corrie facing south-east, and bounded on the right by M'Ranaich, and on the left by Meall Sgallachd. Before descending into the corrie and thus reaching the aforementioned footpath, turn to the right along the level ridge or neck which leads on to the Creag itself. Hemmed in by rocky walls, steep gullies descend on either side, more especially to the north, and these are frequently heavily corniced, giving all the effects of a mountain of much greater elevation. I have not visited this spot in fine weather, but photographs taken in gloom might easily be supposed to represent heads of Ben Nevis gullies. The height of the Creag is but little over 2,500 feet. Can anyone point to fine cornices at as low an elevation? In any case this excursion is one of the plums of the district, and suitable for a short winter's day. By the time I reached Strathyre the snow in my left boot had melted with well-known results. Now for the mystery of the puttie. It was nowhere to be found, not even in my rucksack or by the fireside. Slowly I unpealed the other puttie, and there, lo! below was the missing one. I had put them both on one leg. Is absent-mindedness a sign of old age?

'OUT OF THE GOLDEN REMOTE WILD WEST.'

(II.)

BY REV. A. RONALD G. BURN, B.A.

TURNING over in my mind the stories I have related, together with some information received about braxie and stùirteag,* I was not long in reaching the Allt Coire nan Ùth (correct p. 162), very sorry to leave the pastoral scenes of Glen Dessarry. Pastoral they are, but not of the Theocritean order, for one could hardly imagine the shepherds calling attention to the chirp of the grasshopper and the song of the lark, though doubtless the charms of the local Amaryllis are discussed, and the winter cèilidh takes the place of the singing match.†

* In case it may interest any members, I here add what I learnt about stùirteag. [The word is given by MacBain as from Sc. 'sturdy,' a derivative from O.F. estourdi, dizzy-headed, now êtourdi, giddy-headed, from [Low] Latin extorpidire. From Fr. comes Eng. sturdy.] An Aberdeen professor had a theory that the egg-shaped (half egg size) lump in a sheep's brain, making it 'sturdy' (*i.e.*, refuse to move on with the rest, but simply walk round and round till it died), was caused by its having eaten dog's tape-worm. The worm passed through the system and back into the brain, where it finally lodged in the swelling. But my informant did not agree with this. Apart from the improbability of the worm's not passing out in the ordinary way, and the unlikelihood of its working backwards into the head, he also pointed out that when he and other shepherds had opened the sore with a special instrument they found no tape-worm. Moreover, he had observed Lowland sheep to be far more liable to it than Highland, and that too without any contact with dogs or proximity to where dogs had been. Hence he believes that it arises from their having lived too long in low-lying parts. He also told me that the professor had been allowed to experiment at Fort William with sheep suffering from braxie, and that he gave them 'poverty,' which was a worse complaint. It may possibly be worth noting that the newer Ordnance Survey maps give the name Lochan Stùirteag to what was formerly spelt Suarach, a little sheet of water under Cairntoul.

† Perhaps their prototype was rather the poet of the Sabine hills :—

> "An' hoo's your hoast?
> An' what's the price o' woo'?
> Has Bauby gotten owre that bairn she lost?
> But was the deacon fu'?"
>
> —"Horace in Homespun," p. 32.

The upper reaches of the road (from the farm of "Upper Glen Dessarry" * and westwards) diverge from their original course as laid out by General Wade, and become a narrow track. The Allt Coire nan Ùth has a pretty little spùtan whose cliffs require the burn to be crossed no higher than where the path fords it. The slope of Sgùrr nan Coireachan is easy enough, and affords ever-widening vistas of the bealach and of the sea beyond. About one-third of the way from what seems from below to be the top, the summit of Sgùrr na h-Aide [pronounced an ât=hat] looked exactly like the Cobbler, photographed when resting from work and leaning back tae hae a crack aboot the 'fut-resties' o' sair forfochen loons—clamjamfreys he's fain tae hurl doon. Of course the soncy bit lassie and the aul' carlin were out of the picture. It was a most striking likeness. Two rises more and the apparent top was reached, but another ascent separates it from the 3,125 summit.†

There is no cairn, but two pieces of iron from the fence near by, joined at the top, grace the spot. I had only time to put a few stones round this triangle. The fence is now a constant companion W., sometimes in more stony bits giving place to a Galloway dyke or to the boulders just as they lie. The climb to the next top (not named in O.S^3. or Bartholomew) is long, and gives a foretaste of efforts to come (col 2,500±). This is the cairnless Garbh Chìoch Bheag (3,100±). But apparently the natives know only one hill, collectively named the Garbh Chìoch. [The pronunciation is not as given in VIII.202, but is garra-chyo͡oh, the last syllable rhyming with Tough.] From this steep minor peak the ridge becomes harder and rockier. The dyke so constantly gives way to

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* The true name is Sròn Chon, and the house marked Glen Dessarry is properly Inbhir Chìcheanais—the word is not in any Dictionary, but it certainly is a derivative of cìoch, gen. cìche, seen in Sgòr na Cìche [pron. Kee-hyĕ] peak of the (female) pap, pap-shaped point. Spelt Sgùrr in new O.S^3. 1′ (1910) just purchased, but Sgòr retained here for consistency's sake.

† This last commands several ridges and might from its cairnlessness get one 'wandered' in mist. In any case, do not get on the N. side of the fence. [Pronounce Coireachan as Cawr-yahan.]

nature's obstacles that in a mist it would not be easy to know where to go next, as the arête, though often narrow, is ill-defined and winds in all directions most unconscionably. *The* Garbh Chioch (Mhór) ($\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ m. from the last top) demands a long pull, and from the work accomplished the distance on the map seems absurdly under the mark. This hill (3,365±, no cairn) is an unmistakable top, and looks down on several fine corries, but there is no climbing on either N. or S. side, so far as I could see—and I tried to keep a careful look out for "Guide Book." The view is much better than from the 3,100± point. Here I had an eerie experience, though it lasted but a minute or two. The wind was moaning up the rocks to the S., but everywhere else was perfectly still and calm. I went to see if there were any precipice. But the sound had ceased, and the little gale, now released, was blowing with all its might on one tiny patch of grass. It raised up a feather and hurled it far over the other side of the ridge. I stood but a foot or two from the spot, and all around me was a νηνεμία; except in that one place one could have held a match alight. A modicum of imagination, and one had witnessed the scudding by of the fauns led by Pan—

> "Whose footfall is felt on the breach of volcanic
> Sharp steeps that their fire has forsaken."
> —Swinburne, "Palace of Pan";

or of Diana who

> "per iuga Cynthi
> Exercet . . . choros, quam mille secutæ
> Hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades."

No wonder that Greek and Celt alike know of "the splendid oppression of nature at noon which found utterance of old in words of such singular and everlasting significance as panic and nympholepsy."*

The ridge was long and broken, though never uncomfortably narrow; but at last came the col and with it a large mass of melting snow, providing a draught of nectar.

* Swinburne, "Dedic. Ep. to Collected Poems," I. xxxiii. *Cf.* Patterson, "Eur. Cyclops," p. xxx., for a similar euhemeristic description.

Then the long steep grind up to the top of Sgòr na Ciche (3,410). Though the last peak was 3,365 ±, yet the drop seems so great in between that one does not realise that the net difference in height is less than 50 feet.* For Sgòr na Ciche is a fighter to the last. If Gulvain's easy flanks are the king of the eastern parts of the Rough Bounds, then Sgòr na Ciche is king of kings. Not an inch of ground does he yield anywhere. All has to be won by sheer hard work. Ladhar Bheinn had some steep bits towards the end, and the Càrn Dearg arête at Easter 1915 was stiff work with steps to cut; but Sgòr na Ciche is the match of them all, and more. Boulder-cliffs and a (more or less) upright slope were the order of the day. Most had to be scrambled. Even the last few feet to the cairn were just as stiff as the rest. From Sgùrr Mór the hill had appeared quite A. P. and altogether inaccessible; this, however, had only whetted my appetite, and the reality was no disappointment. Whatever the true angle, it *feels* vertical! And, so far as I could see, there is no gentle slope up from any side.†

It is a magnificent hill, thoroughly sporting, and is strongly to be recommended. Climbing is said to exist in the north gully between Garbh Chìoch Mhór and Sgòr na Ciche, called Feadan na Ciche—feadan originally meaning a chanter of the bagpipe. The view was better than the earlier part of the day had led me to expect. I thought I could see the Cairngorms, but Skye and the Affric hills were in their usual smoking caps. I came down by a wide green portion of the hill pronounced Corrie Götshen, and meaning whirlwind (presumably spelt gaoith'-chuairtein—unless the Sutherland word gaoitein be used here of whirlwind as well as of ordinary breezes. Gaoitein would suit the phonetics better). The corrie looks towards the confluence

* I very much regret here and elsewhere being unable to give the height of cols. The fact is, I measured carefully with aneroid all I came to, but found the results so erratic as compared with the figures for those whose height I had previously inserted on my map, that I did not consider my own readings worth preserving. Yet the instrument was nearly always accurate in recording heights ascended, notwithstanding its habitual disagreement with other people's col measurements!

† Yet *cf.* XII. 179.

of streams from burly Ben Aden [pron. ay-den] and the Càrnach burn.*

This, I was told, is not the best descent, there being a less steep one by the Druim a' Ghoirtein (=ridge of the small piece of arable land—no connexion with whirlwind, as even the pronunciation shows). All the way down, Ben Aden showed up well, fit mate to Sgòr na Cìche,† but apparently providing no pitches, unless there be any on the rocks seen from Loch Nevis. As for the Màm na Cloich' Àirde, though unable this time to traverse it, I was consoled by having seen most of it gradually unfolded all along the ridge. The 'high stone' (or rather, stones) from which it takes its name are on Druim nan Uadhag.

Next day (June 27)‡ the mists that had brooded over the waters spread inland, and on starting for the Ladhar Bheinn range were as low as the rocky slopes of steep Sgùrr na Sgéithe [pron. skay].§ Yesterday's combat with the Scottish Matterhorn made me feel the steepness of the path on to the 1,709 feet bealach (called Màm Meadhail). But once surmounted, the slopes of Meall Buidhe seemed less arduous. The top (3,107) lies well W. of the bealach, so the ascent can be shogged up as diagonally and leisurely as one desires. As befits a meall, this cairnless lump is not well defined, and seems to have two equal tops, both on a long westward-stretching ridge and requiring but little exertion. The hill, as remarked in XIII.92, seems misnamed,

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* No bridge over the Càrnach till near the keeper's, but easily fordable where a large flat rock juts most of the way across. The spot adjoins a conspicuous tree. (One of the many niggling tinkerings of O.S[3]. is to spell the house (only) as Carn*o*ch.)

† Between Ben Aden and Sgòr na Cìche is an old drove route, but no path. It is a right-of-way, and the name is Bealach na h-Eangair—meaning unknown.

‡ Guns were often audible to-day and are reported to be a common sound. It seems incredible, yet is true, that the echo travels from Invergordon and Cromarty forts right on to the West Coast. In 1915 I heard them when on "Màm Soul."

§ O.S[3]. omits article before Sgéithe, but misaccentuates it in the effort. It is difficult to be sure of the accuracy of these numerous small alterations, when one has no local keeper at hand who could check them.

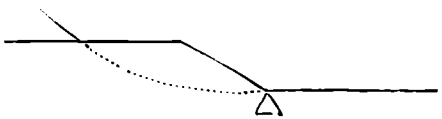
for Sg. na Sgéithe is mostly precipitous and dominates all Glen Càrnach, and there is also An t-Uiriollach (=the precipice. Curiously enough, I found this last name unknown in Barrisdale, and any precipice at all on the hill denied—and that by a keeper on this same forest). From the summit I went over the E. ridge, which commands a noble corrie. The end of this arm too is almost as high as the true top of the hill. The descent to Bealach Eala (Ile, O.S³.) Coire is not very steep, and by keeping to the left at the foot I avoided going over the whole ridge to Luinne Bheinn.* Just about where one would keep to the right if traversing the whole ridge, is a large hollow in the peat, and a delicious spring within. Here, instead of keeping up over the subsidiary tops (non-Munro's), I skirted the ridge on a level with the spring, and continued thus till near Luinne Bheinn. To the W. was the large Coireachan Leacach with its two lochans. While going along the side I was puzzled to know what part of Luinne Bheinn to attack. For, both here and on the top of Meall Buidhe, a beannach on the E. end looked undoubtedly the top, and yet this seemed too far E. from the 3,093 summit (height from Bartholomew; 3,083 in O.S³.). I finally decided to traverse the whole ridge westwards, lest by taking the W. top first I should find the E. one to be the summit, and so waste time on a double journey. But by avoiding the connecting ridge I had got lower than the 1,950± Beal. a' Choir' Odhair. A steepish rise at length put me on to the apparent top, which was now obviously lower than the rest of the hill. On the way up, a cliff, black and steep, could be descried, and it looked climbable. A keeper confirmed this later. (On the other hand, *cf.* IV. 301.) Though named a beinn, the hill is a long flat druim with a subsidiary top near the (small) summit cairn, but separated by a slight dip high

* Pronounced lŭnyĕ-ven (yĕ hardly audible), and interpreted as = ship ben, with the explanation that in the old days some people who were carrying boats over this hill to Loch Nevis left them on the top on seeing the loch. The pronunciation suggests that the name should be spelt luinn, from Norse hlunnr = oar-handle, launching roller, so vessel; otherwise one would have been tempted to assume a dialectic pronunciation of luing, gen. sing. of long (nauis longa).

enough to block out the E. view. It was now 3.30, and still the greatest treat was in store. On setting out I had hardly dared hope to finish off all three hills in one day, but the temptation was too strong, and I still felt quite fresh. So, as mist hid every high mountain all round, with the exception of Ladhar Bheinn* alone, I spent some time here in prospecting it. I saw a fine short cut to near the summit. A ridge led down from the top thus (\ ), and joined the Aonach Sgoilte one (——) at an obtuse angle (___). This easterly one ended in a connexion to Luinne Bheinn

Luinne Bheinn cairn.

Thus (roughly) the whole scheme of ridges was



and all I had to do was to take the third side of the triangle (` ` . . .). So I cut down the steep slopes of Luinne Bheinn, over the low bealach (Màm Barrisdale), and made across the grassy streams and undulations for the (___), to meet it exactly where the ridge to Ladhar Bheinn summit (\ ) joined on. It was now about five o'clock. So up a short but sharp green gully I hustled, full of the thought of the easy cut at the top, congratulating myself the while that I had not followed the ridge round its wide angle. When I had topped the gully, I looked down between two boulder-cliffs on—emptiness! There was nothing for it but to go along Aonach Sgoilte till it chose to connect me with the main ridge. This was annoying enough, but there was worse to follow. That Màm Barrisdale bealach was low, but now there were three more, each of them steep and studded with rocks to be scrambled, and

* Pronounced lūr-ven, not lār—as sometime sstated. It means: the hill rising to a definite top and shaped like a hoof.

none of these obstacles had been visible from Luinne Bheinn. At long last I surmounted this tiring ridge (called An Diollaid) and a short divergence W. landed me at the summit (3,343). The top of this ridge, though looking from Luinne Bheinn quite as high as the real peak, is a little smaller (3,000 cont.), and is simply the hinge on which the W. and N. and S. portions of the hill turn. The cairn at the 3,343 point, to the left of the hinge, is small and the summit not very well defined, for one does not expect to find it to the left of the central pivot of the hill, with Màs Garbh to the W. and the hinge to the E. each apparently of about the same height. All the way from the green gully (Co. na Cabaig), the cliffs of the famous corries displayed their grand solemn buttresses. Yet there seemed to be no climbing on them when seen from below. But they are worth a visit for themselves alone. I descended to the Beal. a' Choir' Odhair, and then over the top of Stob a' Choir' Odhair (3,138) as it was a Munro—the only subsidiary one on this hill. The sides of this grassy peak are very steep. Then I gained the path in Co. Dhorrcail which goes from Am Bràigh well up to nearly under Co. na Cabaig.* It was a fine sight, as one descended, to look back at those stupendous cliffs, and I often wished that every member of the Club could visit them. They cannot be adequately described or realized till seen.

It may be advisable to add that I do not think my round is possible except in fine weather. There are so many ridges and twists and turns, especially between Luinne Bheinn and Ladhar Bheinn, that I doubt if the two hills could be found in a thick fog. Anyhow, they should only be attempted by one who knows the ground well. Meall

* There is another path down right bank of Allt Co. Dhorrcail to Barts'. (not in O.S.[3]) 'footbridge,' and I think a parallel one down the left. A bridge spans the Barrisdale stream at the point marked 'ford.' A path (in O.S[3].) connects Kinlochquoich via L. an Lagain Aintheich with the Barrisdale path. The track to Kinloch Hourn (turn off good road to right, and up hill, at church on right-hand side a short way from B. House) has bridges for winter use across the larger burns. At Kinloch Hourn there is a bridge across the Allt Co. Sgòir Adail and a path up each side of it, that up the right bank ceasing opposite the top of Sgùrr a' Mhaoraich.

Buidhe and Luinne Bheinn by their connecting ridge would be feasible, but not more. In any case the round is a long one, and it appears that no one has previously combined all three.

The morrow's (Wednesday, 28th) adventure deserves to be described, but as I can throw scarcely any fresh light on the handsome and little known Sgùrr a' Mhaoraich,* I need not relate my experiences at length. Suffice it to say that after a risky traverse of some rocks along lovely Loch Hourn,† near Skiary, I bagged this Munro

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* Name locally referred to a certain sea-grass only found on summit and seashore, not to fossil shells (as in VIII. 260, though supported by Dictionary), and the pronunciation is voroih (not voo-rich), see above, p. 168, where Ellice, "Place-Names of Glen Garry," p. 124, should have been referred to. He gives the Gaelic word as moroch, and translates sea-pink. Moroch is not in any Dictionary, but this is not surprising, for the sea-pink has a just complaint against its treatment, the Argyll names feusag (also Wester Ross) and fearstag, Badenoch fionntag [Ruigh Fionntaig, a house in Glen Feshie], being omitted from all Dictionaries. [Sgùrr na "Festig" in East Monar (pronounced fáy-stăg) is named after this plant.] The Dictionary, however, gives feartag (Wester Ross), fearsaideag, tonn a' chladaich and neòinean cladaich as other names. Doubtless, then, the 'grass' of my informant is the sea-pink, a flower not peculiar to this hill, but said to be plentiful on Sgùrr na Lapaich—and *cf.* XI. 142 *sq.*

† The common explanation, whereby Loch Hourn is assigned to hell (*gs.* iuthairn), and Loch Nevis is contrariwise translated loch of heaven, must now be given up in view of Watson's decisive assertion that Hourn means furnace, *i.e.*, shuirn ("Place-Names of Ross," p. 190, quoting Dean of Lismore's book). Those, however, who still wish to associate Loch Hourn with the infernal regions will no doubt see in the new interpretation merely a picturesque epitome of the warning we used to put in our school books :—

" . . . . .
And if you do, the Lord will say,
Where is the book you stole that day?
And if you say you do not know,
The Lord will cast you *down below* ;
Among the fire, among the smoke,
And each little devil will give you a poke."

But unfortunately tradition wobbles as to the derivation of Nevis. For 'heaven' the spelling would be nèimh-, but Watson gives (Beinn), nibheis (ap. Dwelly, p. 1024—not in his Dictionary) ; Clark (VII. 134)

(two cairns) and descended the Allt Coire a' Chaorruinn path to Alltbeithe. Here I expected to find a bed, but the keeper was in the throes of flitting, and, what was worse, both Doire Leathain and Glac a' Chuilinn had long been tenantless ruins. So, as I wanted to take "Gleourach" and Spidean Mialach on my way to Sròn a' Choire Ghairbh and the S.,* I realized that the only thing to do was to make Cluanie Inn of it that night. The day had been very rainy, but the mist was now (8.10) off the hills, and I got a good path to the gap between "Sgùrr Coire na Féinne" and Maol Chinn Dearg. It was the nearer, though more laborious, way to any night-quarters. And now, being so near Maol Chinn Dearg, I could not resist the temptation to turn aside and ascend it. Fortibus est fortuna uiris data: at Alltbeithe I had learnt that the descent from the bealach would be rough, whereas by making a détour I had my reward. For, straight from the top descended a ridge (Druim Coire nan Eirecheanach †), smooth and easy-going, suitable to 10 P.M. This gradually debouched into the plain. Thus the digression cunctando restituit rem. Moral—always bag a Munro when you can! The road once reached, the mile and a half was reeled off without the least strain at the rate of 6 miles an hour.

Next evening round the fire my old host and one-time shepherd, regaled me with many stories, chiefly relating to a well-known character born about 1800, concerning whom I want to collect as many anecdotes as I can. Coinneach an Àiridh, for Kenneth of the Shieling was his Gaelic trade-name, had been a great friend of the old man's

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and *cf.* Robertson, "Gaelic Topography," p. 226, neamh-bhathais = sky-touching [should be nèamh, gen. nèimh, and bathais literally = forehead]; while at Achintee I was told that the word was amhais = cold, raw [amh is nearest word in Dictionary], but that though this was most prevalent, other derivations were suggested.

* The ambition, alas, remains yet to be attained this June.

† The local meaning of this name is billy-goat; the pronunciation clips off the final syllable. The name of the rough ridge is Dr. Thollaidh: it descends from "Sgùrr Coire na Féinne," and seems the more obvious route from the col.

father.* He lived at Lùib nam Meann, goat kids' bay [pron. may-own], now a ruin and opposite Còsag on Loch "Mullardoch" (Maol-àrdaich in Watson, *u.s.*, p. 182). Few Highlanders there are in N.W. Inverness and Ross who have not heard of this champion story-teller, and who have not some incident to relate concerning him. The favourite story, and one Coinneach himself used to tell, is as follows:— Some friends had come in to have a crack, and were discussing an old mahogany table the laird had just bought, which had lasted well and was still as good as new. Coinneach was near, and not knowing mahogany from Adam, burst out: 'Oh I had a vest made of that stuff—didn't I, Mary?' 'Yes, you did'—'Oh,' they all cried, 'but it's wood we were talking about.' 'Ach well, whether it was wood or iron it was a grand waistcoat, the best wearing one I ever had, for it won't wear out.'†

On another occasion Coinneach and his companions had gone up some hills to a shieling, leaving Coinneach to fish in a boat on a lochan. They were surprised to hear him call out that he had seen the fairies, and that a black old cailleach among them was saying (of course in Gaelic) to her dusky partner, 'Dear, dear, let's be hasting away, for there's Coinneach an Airidh with his gun, and he will be shooting a sixpence at us.'‡

* Coinneach an Àiridh (pronounced, however, in Glen Shiel as Àirich) has a son living in that Glen.

† A variant makes him at dinner at the laird's, he having been invited because he would be certain to enliven the proceedings. The desk was described, its excellent wood and fine green baize cover. Coinneach thought the cover was being discussed as long-lasting. The rest follows as above.

‡ The most widely held explanation of this superstition is that of Gomme in his fascinating "Ethnology in Folklore," who considers witchcraft to be the 'survival of aboriginal beliefs from aboriginal sources,' and fairycraft as the 'survival of beliefs about the aborigines from Aryan sources.' When the Aryans conquered the pigmy race they found them in the stone age, using 'fairy darts,' 'elf shots' (*i.e.*, stone arrow heads), and therefore not knowing and doubly afraid of any kind of metal. It is but fair to state that this of Gomme's and all other theories as to fairies have lately been combated by Wentz in his "Fairy-faith in Celtic Countries." His is the psychological theory. A believer in their existence, though having never himself seen any,

One day Coinneach was hunting a deer which turned and nearly gralloched him, but he simply cleaned out the rent at a burn and pursued and killed the stag, and when he got home his wound was healed.

After a stag on another occasion, he found himself without a shot. So he loaded his gun with peas but failed to bring the beast down. When next he saw it he recognised it by the peas growing out of its ears.

During one winter he happened to be on the top of a hill. Snow had balled on his heel and he kicked it off. It ran down hill, collecting more as it went, and finally got so huge that it gathered deer and rabbits into it before it finally bounded into the wood by his house and came to rest. It was now frozen hard, and all Coinneach had to do was to get an axe and hew out as much food as he wanted for the rest of the winter. No wonder this man was a *persona grata* everywhere, and would keep a houseful up all night hearing him make it up as he went along! He was allowed to fish and shoot as much as he wished and no laird said him nay. He always wore a kilt, and when old added a great coat reaching to his feet. Only on one occasion did he wear trousers, and that was when his son, returning one dark night with a sack of barley on his back for the 'bree,' fell into a well. After the funeral Coinneach tried on the breeks. But before he reached home he had slit up the sides and tied them like a loin cloth round his thigh. He died in Strath Glass of a good

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he holds that they can be seen by those whose minds are rightly attuned. And as there is no smoke without a fire, so there would be no popular conception of these beings and no tales about them if they did not really exist, and occasionally show themselves like the kingfisher. The spirit creatures cannot be stuffed and put on view, yet the most sceptical do not doubt the existence of kingfishers, though 999 out of every 1,000 pass their whole lives without ever having seen a living specimen. The beings of the spirit world may also exist, though to only 1 in 1,000 is it vouchsafed to see them. The book gained the Oxford Research B.Sc. and is printed by the University Press. Its earlier form won a doctorate from Rennes. Each of the sections dealing with the lore of the six Celtic lands has an introduction by a native specialist, Sir John Rhŷs dealing with Wales, Dr Carmichael with Scotland, Dr Douglas Hyde with Ireland, &c.

old age, doubtless making his own whisky to the last, and spared the sadness of seeing the smokes of the numberless stills that living memory recollects in Straths Glass and Cannich all exchanged for a humdrum law-abiding characterlessness.

The above ana are offered in order to compensate for the dryness of the narrative. Like Chesterton, *I* have written this article, but nothing on earth would induce me to read it! For some strange microbe of mountain-madness had made my over-enthusiastic pen cover some thirty further pages of MS., but the mens prouida Reguli inherited by the editor has spared the reader this infliction, forcing me to take Corinna's advice and τῇ χειρὶ σπείρειν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ὅλῳ τῷ θυλάκῳ. The next adventure must, alas, end this labour of love, and on the touch-wood principle, let it recount a less fortunate day.

Some subsidiary Munro's of Glen Affric were left to next year, the main ones having been mostly done twice over, and I had now (Thursday) to push on to fresh hills and ridges new. The way down Gleann Choilich seemed longer than before, but, after renewing acquaintance with the genial keeper and his wife at Lùib na Daimh * (and their excellent milk and oatcakes), and answering their tender inquiries after the editor, I felt much more fit, fortified as I now was with the remark that if ever I were out of a job I should become a shepherd or a keeper, 'for your heart is in the hills.' I had felt too tired to bother with the whole of Riabhachan in the thick mist, and hoped to tackle Creag Dhubh instead. A path ascends the Allt Maolàrdaich (Watson's spelling, *u.s.*, p. 182) from the similarly-named house spelt in map Mullardoch, and leads right into the Coire Deoch † [pron. jee-oḥ]. This (sanctuary) corrie is subjected to witticisms by Englishmen, I was told, who, on learning that deoch means a drink, nickname it 'the whisky corrie.' Locally the explanation is that it drinks up its abundant rainfall. Anyway it was distilling its

* Not named in 1′ though known to Bartholomew.

† O.S³. has a spelling all to itself: Co. an t-Sith, a name not used on either side of the corrie, I think.

contents in the shape of abundant mist to fuddle the head of the unwary reveller among its slopes. The path bent to the right to zigzag up Creag Feusag, which has a fine pinnacled terrace along the horizon. Once it reaches the col and estate boundary it stops. Then 400± yards further on (? across a fence) another starts down the Allt na Féithe Bàine to 'Inchvuilt' (Innis-Mhuilt = wedders' wood-protected vale). (A third path goes from W. of Ardchuilk (where river fordable) between Meallan Odhar and An Soitier to Liarie.) But for Cr. Dhubh I left the path before it started to climb in earnest, and followed an inferior one which soon melted into deer tracks. I kept to the left, and up an easy slope with a snow patch, and over stones to the flat. The cairn was to the left, and aneroid made it 3,350±. The descent was easy, no crags at all. Then I followed a burn down marsh and haggs, and so gained that brawling, mad torrent the Uisge* Misgeach (=(the) drunk stream). Now, whereas the Spey only starts to be half seas over when over half way to sea,† and then once launched on its carousing career does not stop its vagabond, Goliardic rakishness till it reaches that quiet inn‡ where all streams find their level, though from its middle-age revelling its song were rather

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* Uisge (pron. ōōsh-gă) is same word as Usk, Esk, Exe, Axe, and Ouse, and of course whisky is an Anglicised form of the same (=uisge-beatha 'usquebaugh')—Ir. uisge, *ud-s-kio, √ud, ved; ὕδωρ, Sk. udán, unda, water.

† MacConnochie, "Strathspey," p. 10.—'It may be counted heresy by some to say that the Spey has no claim to be regarded as the most rapid river in Scotland. Such is the undoubted fact, however. . . . Only this much can be said: the Spey, rising at no great altitude, makes a respectable "fall" in the first few miles; then follows a long stretch, during which it receives many tributaries, where it simply glides along, in some places almost imperceptibly; when, at last . . .' [1 m. beyond Boat of Garten] 'it sets off in great haste, never pausing till' [the sea at Kingston] 'is reached,' [where the tide can make no headway up stream], see also p. 98.

‡ εἶτα χ'ημεῖς ὕστερον
εἰς ταὐτό γ' αὐτοῖς ἥξομεν καταγώγιον.

Antiphanes, "Aphr.," 2.5, Bothe, *cf.* Bailey, "Com. Gr. Fr.," p. 245.

"Meum est propositum
In taberna mori,
Ubi uina proxima
Morientis ori" * ;

contrariwise, the Uisge Misgeach, 'fou, fou, aibsolutely fou,' from the start, latterly settles down to flatulence and 'plain' living during its last lustrum, for it now

"drinks small beer
And goes to bed sober
Fades as the leaves do fade
And dies in October,"

reforming into a wide, stony, respectable stream 'drowned in dull decorum,' † by whom Terra Mater, now successfully appealing from Philip drunk to Philip sober, is rewarded by creeks of nourishing moisture in an alluvial haugh.

But the mellow fumes of the 'whisky corrie,' flushed down with the jovial ooze from the 'Boozy Ouse,' had proved a drop too much for me, and I did not realize, just because I hadn't broached anything stronger than the uisge of the moors, how groggy to-day had been my 'elevated' but 'wibbly-wobbly walk,' until I had come to the seclusion and sobriety of the 'wedders' copse,' a *wood* whence only Adam's ale was drawn. For not till I had recounted my orgy of adventures to the good folk at Innis Mhuilt did I discover that I had not set foot on Creag Dhubh at all, but had been on Carn nan Gobhar‡ (3,251). Several things now became clear—the easy descent; the long way to the glen; the fact that I couldn't cross the Uisge Misgeach because I had encountered it too far down; the identity of the road across the torrent that I had seen so far out of reach, while I floundered unsteadily among birch roots in an endless wood—viz., the driving road up the Uisge Misgeach, which connects via Aultfearn (ruin) § with Pait, though at the Pait end after a gate in fence ¾ m. from

* "Confessio Goliardi," in Wright, Walter Mapes.

† "The Confession of Golias," tr. Symonds, "Wine, Women, and Song,"[2] p. 71.

‡ This hill is locally pronounced gö-ee, *i.e.*, na Goibhre.

§ Generally, however, called Còsag.

Lodge, it is mostly a *perhaps* road. Allt Riabhachan has a bridge, though there is talk of moving it.

And with this hill the *printed* narrative of my sixty-eight Munro's * must end, much as I should have enjoyed introducing to members the half mile of continuous falls down the hanging valley which contains the source of the Orrin (where the path is what a witty friend calls 'one of the used to was-es'), the old whisky bothies near Pait, and much else that I dare not let a too garrulous pen come within half an inch of writing.

To sum up. The whole time had been like a triumphal march owing to the wonderful kindness of the keepers and shepherds with whom I had been privileged to stay. Nor can I omit to acknowledge my debt to all the lairds whose kind permissions enabled me to roam at will. I had had the best month of the year for mountaineering purposes, daylight almost unending, and no fear of spoiling sport, for, if I may parody Byron :—

> "In June even keepers are tame and domestic
> To those who would rove o'er the mountains afar:
> Their language is then neither wild nor majestic,
> *Re* steep frowning tempers of dark lairds an' a'."

The weather had been cold and somewhat misty, but I came home fit as a fiddle and brown as a berry, my only regret being my inability to share this delightful holiday with others less fortunate. This article is a feeble attempt to give members 'a second-hand holiday,' as a friend neatly phrases it.

Mais où sont les neiges d'antan? Yet if the white pall have given place to the purple heather, the memory of the snow still remains, and hid in some sequestered corrie a precious stray relic may be found. So too the recollection of the everlasting hills ever abides to cheer the spirit in its long months of exile, and one returns uplifted and invigorated in body, mind and soul from the spacious majesty and silence of a retreat in

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* Correct p. 156, and for sixty-seven read sixty-eight. On reaching home I was gratified to note in vii. 10, that A. E. R. had spread some seventy-five Munro's over ninety days.

"A temple whose transepts are measured by miles,
Whose chancel has morning for priest,
Whose floor-work the foot of no spoiler defiles,
Whose musical silence no music beguiles,
No festivals limit its feast.

Mute worship, too fervent for praise or for prayer,
Possesses the spirit with peace,
Fulfilled with the breath of the luminous air,
The fragrance, the silence, the shadows as fair
As the rays that recede or increase.

The spirit made one with the spirit whose breath
Makes noon in the woodlands sublime
Abides as entranced in a presence that saith
Things loftier than life and serener than death,
Triumphant and silent as time."

—Swinburne, "Palace of Pan."

A VISIT TO THE CAIRNGORMS IN 1875.

BY WALTER A. SMITH.

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THE Artist and I had some difficulty in persuading the Professor * to go. On broaching the question to him he retreated behind his big treatise; and began to talk in a despondent sort of way about "that paper for the British Association." But Mrs Professor at last settled the question by packing his knapsack, and we then cut off his escape by writing to Mrs Grant to engage the rooms. Mrs Grant keeps that comfortable and quiet little inn at Abernethy, Speyside, which we had determined to make our head-quarters during a week to be spent in the exploration of the Cairngorm mountains; and on Saturday afternoon, after enjoying the most wonderful of railway rides in the United Kingdom—through the romantic Killiecrankie Pass, up over the wild streams and mountains of Drumochter, and down again to the banks of the quieter but still rapid Spey—we received a hearty welcome and capital dinner from our estimable hostess. Having settled down and taken possession of our quarters, we went out and sat on Nethy Bridge in the evening to survey the mountains, the scene of our week's work. There they were, all grand and beautiful, with the brilliant rosy light of the evening sun shining full upon their rugged crests—the outline of each ridge and shoulder and snowy precipice showing sharp and clear against the light blue expanse of sky beyond, unsullied by even the semblance of a cloud. The light blue sometimes merged into an equally splendid pale green, an effect of colouring which the Artist described as "mediæval." And as we sat the sun sank behind the low range of hills across the strath behind us, and the rosy flush faded from the mountains so that they became black and mysterious, although their outlines still remained

* A future member of the S.M.C.—Sir Alexander B. W. Kennedy, previously Professor of Engineering at University College, London.

almost as clear as before. The clearness of the sky-line now—at 9.30 P.M.—was indeed truly marvellous! Then, over the broad high forehead of the Cairngorm rose in sparkling splendour a solitary star. This was the crowning glory of the night. The Professor cried out in the enthusiasm of his admiration—"Behold! the hills are the gates of heaven, and the star is the spirit of the mountain leading upwards and onwards with a hopeful, kindly light!" And so we went in to toddy and to bed, hoping to go up to-morrow.

But it was Wednesday morning, after a large and early breakfast, that we started to ascend the Cairngorm. As we intended sleeping at the Loch Avon "Shelter Stone," we took with us plaids, a small tin of spiced beef, a dozen large scones, a small tin of prepared coffee and milk, a packet of firelighters, and the indispensable pocket-pistols, primed with the best "Balmenach." ("Aye, but it was a coot speerit.") The morning was very hot, and the walk up past the Dell of Abernethy and through the pine forests was rather toilsome. For the first 4 miles we had an excellent and well-made cart road running S.S.E. A footpath continuing in the same direction across a heathy opening in the forest, and afterwards out on the open moor, brings us in twenty minutes more to the gamekeeper's cottage—named, we believe, "Ranettan." Having a slight acquaintance with the honest ranger, we go in and have a chat, and a jug of creamy milk. A man of some humour, he guessed there were no "red deer" in Piccadilly, and wondered how folks could live in towns at all. The Professor was beginning to explain, but we cut him short, and got outside again. This being the last human habitation we shall see for the next thirty hours or more, it has a peculiar interest beyond the grandeur of the view from its door. Standing pretty high on the west side of the valley of the Nethy, it commands a very complete and striking view of the whole great mass of Cairngorm, and further to the east of the strangely backboned and sharply peaked ridge of Bein-na-Bynach. Down the dark, narrow, and terribly rugged glen between the two mountains, rush in wild career over the granite boulders and *débris* the

light brown waters of the Nethy, here called the Garavault (rough water). This is a very remarkable glen, almost forbidding in its dreadful stoniness. The whole surface of the ground in it is heaped over with broken rocks, and up in its desolate corries on either side, great beds of loose boulders seem ready on the slightest provocation to pour down in stony flood upon the stumbling wayfarer below. When on a previous day we had explored this "Valley of the Shadow of Death," as the Artist likened it unto, we found in the principal corrie on the eastern side, just under the lower peak of Bein-na-Bynach, a large ice-bound snow-bed and a very lofty waterfall. By following the Garavault to its highest spring, and crossing the comparatively low ridge above it, the adventurous explorer will find himself close upon, and not many hundred feet above, the north-west corner of Loch Avon. But to return to the Cairngorm and our present route. The long northern flank of Cairngorm is terminated at a point about 3½ miles south of Ranettan by a narrow and romantic break in the range of hill, through which the path that we are now on finds its way into Glen More. About 500 yards before entering the pass, the track passes a small ruined hut on the bank of a little burn rattling down from the north-east side of the large-coned "Herd's Hill," which forms the western side of the pass, and is the culminating peak of the Nethy range of hills. This pass is well worth exploring. Up its high steep sides the Scots fir climb and cling in the most daring and picturesque fashion. In its centre lies a remarkable little loch of great depth and without visible outlet. It is called the "Green Lake," on account of its peculiar colour. Although the water is of great purity, its bottom is invisible; but lying on its steep sides below the surface may be seen bare skeletons of giant pine trees, ancient denizens of the forest, fossilising or rotting there, I know not which, but still spreading out their knarled white arms through the clear green water in quite a ghastly manner. The path goes by the west side of the lake, and it is a most delightful walk from it down Glen More by the fir-clad shore of Loch Morlich, and through Rothiemurchus Forest to Aviemore.

The ruined hut mentioned above is the point from which we begin the actual ascent. Crossing diagonally a little gully in front of the cottage, we bear gradually up the side of the steep, heathery slope directly in front, towards a curious small stony gap in its ridge. Passing along the western edge of the gap, a very slight descent is made to where a small stream comes down from the ridge beyond the one we had just crossed. This second ridge meets the first almost at right angles. It is near an hour's work from the ruined hut to this small stream, and the ground is very rough. In fact this has been about the most fatiguing part of the whole ascent. The heat has now become very great, and not a breath of air was stirring. To make matters worse, we were persecuted by swarms of buzzing, bloodthirsty flies. For protection from these horrible creatures (I'm afraid our language regarding them was at the time considerably stronger, and might truthfully have been described as "week-day"), whose buzz was, however, much worse than their bite, as well as for a shade from the sun, we here erected a tent by suspending a plaid over our walking sticks, and reposed in quietness beneath. A most successful dodge! The Artist has since produced a most "characteristic picture" of this romantic scene. It consists of a background of flies and a foreground of six human feet encased in nailed leather, and is very beautiful. On our feet once more, we skirt along the west side of this second ridge, without much farther ascent for, say, a quarter of a mile; and then, where some black boggy ground occurs, a sort of track is seen bearing a little to the left, and ascending pretty steeply a third ridge. This is the actual main north ridge of the Cairngorm itself, and we are soon on the top of it, with the "Garavault" immediately below us on our left, and away far down on the right the forests of Glen More lying peacefully in the bright sunshine, with Loch Morlich glistening like a shield of silver in their bosom. It is plain sailing now all the way to the summit of the mountain. Keeping on the backbone of the ridge, we more or less gradually ascend to the top, a height of 4,090 feet. The climb is very long, and owing to the heat

we had to take it very leisurely, so that it was 5.30 P.M. before we reached the cairn. Just below the topmost ridge, in a slight hollow on the west side of the almost level saddle which there occurs, is a magnificent spring of extremely cold water, bubbling slowly up beside a bright green patch of moss among the slabs of granite. This was a great and merciful refreshment. We ascend from here to the top, keeping slightly to the right hand, but owing to the rounded formation of the summit we do not see the cairn until we are quite close upon it. But there it is at last :—

> "See yon lone cairn, so grey with age,
> Above the base of proud Cairngorm ;
> There lies the dust of Avon's sage,
> Who raised the spirit of the storm."

The sage and the spirit were represented by two ptarmigan, hopping about on the stones, but they fled, and we were left in exclusive possession. What a glorious sensation it is to get to the top of such a mountain as this! All the toil and labour of the ascent is at once forgot, and as you sit quietly on the "lone cairn," you feel lifted up above all mundane cares and troubles. A noble sense of freedom is wafted on the wings of the mountain breeze, and as you look abroad over the length and breadth of the land you feel that for the time being it is all your own, to be enjoyed to your heart's content. And what a wonderful land of hills it is we looked abroad upon! To the east and south the great masses of Bein-na-Bynach, Ben Muich Dhui, and their neighbours shut off any distant view, but are themselves a striking panorama of craggy peak, snowy precipice, and ponderous mountain top. To the west and south-west again, however, the eye roams over an endless series of mountainous ranges and deep valleys, reaching one beyond the other far away into the blue distance, until it rests upon, some 60 miles or more away, the giant head of Ben Nevis towering grandly above his fellows. Glancing round to the north-west the broken pyramid of Ben Slioch attracts your attention, and you are carried away in imagination to the brilliant beauties of Loch Maree ; and then across the misty firths of Inverness and Cromarty, Ben Wyvis

looms darkly in the distant north. But we cannot remain to look at this magnificent prospect all evening. We begin to descend the mountain, bearing a little to the left of the top, and in an opposite direction from that in which we had ascended. Very soon we come upon the head springs of a stream that falls down into Loch Avon about half a mile below its upper end. At these springs we disturbed a large herd of wild red deer, which were evidently preparing to pass the night at them. They galloped off, however, in a long column of two abreast, headed by an advance guard of nobly-antlered stags, and disappeared over the sky-line towards Ben Muich Dhui. We, on the other hand, follow our stream, which rushes down a steep stony gully in a south-easterly direction, making some fine waterfalls in its descent. It is a "pretty considerable scramble" down to Loch Avon, but who would not imperil his ankles for the sake of the truly grand and magnificent scene which opens gradually up before us as we pick our steps cautiously down. It was now almost seven o'clock. The great peaked and rugged mural precipices round the head of the deep blue lake lost in terribleness, but gained in picturesque beauty in the bright light of the evening sun, and the large white snow-beds on the rocky slopes above the crags blushed roseately beneath the warm kisses of its horizontal rays. The shadow of the mountain side we were upon was cast with great distinctness on the still deeper cliffs of Ben-y-Main across the loch; but it's no use—words *cannot* describe the weird grand beauty of this place under these evening lights and shades. It was a sight once seen never to be forgot! We are looking forward with much interest to the completion of the Artist's picture of the scene which he is at present preparing "from sketches taken on the spot." His whole soul was then imbued with its grandeur; so doubtless will his canvas.

We were on the granite beach at the head of the loch before 7.30, and crossed the stream that enters it about 200 yards above its mouth. This point is directly below the "Shelter Stone," which lies up the slope a good bit, under the shadow of the sharpest and most striking crag above the south-east end of the loch. A rough and hardly

discoverable path leads up through the immense boulders with which the slope is strewn, to the "Stone," which may perhaps be best recognised from the burn side by three large patches of a greyish-brown colour on its great flat face. Arrived at our "lodge in this vast wilderness," we soon got a good fire lit, and the coffee was boiled in an old tin can in which the writer had heated some soup only two years ago! Soon after supper, as the long dark lake below began to look cold and very desolate in the gloamin', we turned in under our plaids, and made ourselves as comfortable as possible on the dry heather on the floor of the "Shelter." But the night was not to pass without adventure. After various pretences at sleep, we were roused from our dozing condition about 12.30 A.M. by the startling sound of distant voices, and then of footsteps scrambling up towards the entrance. They drew nearer and nearer, and then ceased. There was a few moments' silence, during which a hundred wild conjectures were made as to the origin of the sounds, and (must it be owned?) "Young Farquhar's" solemn warning occurred to one of us at least:—

> "Yet still at eve or midnight drear,
> When wintry winds begin to sweep,
> When passing shrieks assail thine ear,
> Or murmurs by the mountain steep;
> When from the dark and rocky dells
> Come eldrich cries of wither'd men,
> Or wind harp at thy shelter swells—
> Beware the sprite of Avon Glen!"

We shouted out—"Who's there?" A low mutter in Gaelic was the only response. Then some one seemed to creep cautiously into the "Shelter"; but we first became certain of the presence of our intruder by his beginning to strike vigorously with a flint and steel. We shouted out again, but no answer was made until the stranger managed to light an old end of candle, which he immediately held up and revealed to our blinking eyes a large, red, hairy head, bound up in a white handkerchief. On seeing us, the head gruffly answered to our queries that it had come up from Speyside in the afternoon, and

then disappeared, but returned immediately with two men much younger than its owner. They all expressed great astonishment at seeing us, but did not seem at all desirous to enter into conversation, and were soon apparently fast asleep at our feet. But sleep with us now seemed impossible, so we stepped out about 2 A.M. over the prostrate bodies of our strange bedfellows, and were surprised to find it such a brilliant night. The stars were bright and numerous, and although the moon was concealed by the great crag immediately above us, it was evidently shining with a strong soft light that cast sharp shadows of the cliffs upon the loch and the opposite rocks. There was an indefinable air of wild romance about the place, as seen by this strange soft light—a romance not lessened to us by the remembrance of the recent mysterious interruption to our repose. We went in again for an hour or so; but day began to break soon after three, and the three strangers and ourselves were astir by the half-hour. It seemed, on further conversation, they had come up to fish in the loch—a proceeding of the strict legality of which we have grave doubts. However, as they lighted a fire for us, we shall not pursue the question. Spiced beef, hot coffee, and scones don't make a bad breakfast when you are on a mountain at 4 A.M. And then the sunrise over the lower mountains at the foot of the loch rivalled in beauty and colouring effect the sunset of the evening before. It sent a great flood of light right up the lake, transforming its surface into a blaze of brilliancy, and, striking on the precipices above, lit them up with a glow of delicately-coloured splendour. It was on these precipices, by-the-by, that the Ettrick Shepherd had that marvellous adventure with the eagles which he is made to relate in such graphic and thrilling language in the "Noctes Ambrosianæ." We did not see the eagles, though doubtless some are still about the place. It was a little past five, after an invigorating plunge into the lake, that we started for the top of Ben Muich Dhui. Climbing up by the first cataract that falls into the south side of Loch Avon, we reach in an hour's time the shore of the small mountain tarn—Loch Etchachan—lying peacefully in the

bright morning light below its snow-capped cliffs. Crossing the hollow in which it lies, just where the burn escapes from the loch to flow down the Corrie Etchachan into Glen Derrie, we see gradually ascending the side of the steep slope opposite the well-marked track from Braemar to the summit of Ben Muich Dhui. This, of course, we got on to as soon as possible. It sweeps in a south-westerly direction round the heights above the south side of Loch Etchachan, and passes along the verge of the columned cliffs at the head of Glen Lui Beg. From here a grand view of the Lochnagar mountains is obtained, as well as of the distant wooded basin in the Dee valley in which Braemar lies so beautifully. The track now bears round to the right, and gradually turning almost due north leads past the roofless sappers' hut to the topmost cairn—the second highest point in the United Kingdom.

We sit down on the summit at 8.30, a time when many people are beginning to think of getting out of bed. A morning's work like this teaches us what a large and most beautiful part of these summer days we regularly waste. Could not people get up at four, and go to bed at nine? It would save no end of candles, and be so much more pleasant and wholesome. We proved how much we were impressed by the desirability of this reform by breakfasting at Mrs Grant's at *nine* next morning! The view from the desolate plateau of grey granite, which forms the summit of Ben Muich Dhui, is of the same magnificent character as that from Cairngorm, only more extended to the south and south-east, the principal object of interest in the former direction being the grand group of the domes of Ben-y-Gloe. The near view across the Larig Glen of the great corries and rough bald ridges of Braeriach is also imposing to a remarkable degree. Leaving the cairn we go gradually down the northern shoulder of the mountain to a depression of considerable extent, from which issues a double-headed stream that descends rapidly to the Larig burn, and joins it not more than 2 miles below the "Wells of Dee." Round the sources of this stream, whose headlong career we are to follow, are large beds of the most beautiful Alpine mosses. They form soft damask cushions among

the rocks of the most brilliant colours imaginable. Light and dark green, red and purple, show side by side in striking contrast. This descent, which is made on the *right*-hand side of the stream, is very steep and rough. Great part of the way we have to scramble down over large loose rocks lying on the steep slope, and if a slip is made a bad sprain, if not a broken leg, is pretty sure to be the result. We loosened some boulders as we climbed, and they went thundering and crashing down before us, making ever higher leaps into the air as they acquired velocity in their descent.

The Wells of Dee are reached about eleven. The "last of the scones" is here produced, and divided solemnly by the Professor into three equal portions, after which he takes a nap in a comfortable after-dinner sort of fashion; the Artist and I occupying the interval by a bathe in the ice-cold waters of the second well. The path from here through the defile to the Allt Druic Glen, whose waters flow down to the Spey, is of the very roughest description, and several times seems to lose itself almost entirely in a sea of rocks and stones. It gradually improves, however, as we descend the wild narrow glen towards Rothiemurchus. The distance from the "Wells" to the Aviemore station on the Highland Railway is about 13 miles. A shorter route from the top of Ben Muich Dhui to the same place is to keep along the top of the mountain ridge until you are above a point perhaps a little more than a mile from the head of the pass over to the "Wells." A snow-bed lies here between two cliffs, and a track slants down from it to join the path by the burn side. But this route avoids the Wells of Dee, which are most interesting and curious phenomena. About 2 miles down the Allt Druic, where the glen begins to broaden out a little, the path bears considerably away to the right of the stream, gradually coming back to its old companion, however, as the outskirts of Rothiemurchus Forest are entered. It then keeps on the top of the wooded bank above the water-course, and not long afterwards is crossed by a cart road. We turn to the *left* along this road, which a very little way further on bears to the right across a small oasis of

meadow land in the forest, along the west side of which flows the now "softly purling brook." A foot-bridge is here seen crossing the water, but this should *not* be gone over. Continuing on the road and shortly after re-entering the wood we come upon a second foot-bridge, which *must* be crossed. The cart road should now be forsaken for a footpath that follows the course of the stream, a little way from its left-hand bank, and in little more than an hour the traveller should once more find himself among his fellow-creatures and their habitations at Aviemore. The paths through the great Rothiemurchus Forest are rather perplexing, so we have thought it important to describe thus particularly this route, as the probability of meeting anyone from whom to ask the way is very slight indeed. We got down to Aviemore station in time for the afternoon train north to Nethy Bridge, where Mrs Grant expressed great satisfaction at seeing us all safe back again; the Artist being regarded with special interest as "the gentleman who put all the hills into pictures."

These few hints as to routes, &c., we trust may be useful to future explorers of this grand mountain region, and yet still one other route we would recommend as full of interest and beauty. From the north-eastern shore of that loveliest of little lakes, "Loch-an-Eilein," about 4 miles from Aviemore, ascend the steep wooded conical hill directly above it, and proceed along the ridge to the summit of the peaked mountain above the west side of Loch Eunach. The view from this point (called, as far as we can find out, "Scorgiel," *Sgòr Ghaoith*) is equal to, if not finer than, that from the higher mountains above spoken of; and, being a sharp rocky peak, it is a most satisfactory mountain to ascend; it cannot be much under 4,000 feet in height, and it has magnificent precipices that fall sheer down from below its summit to the shores of Loch Eunach, which is enclosed on the other side by the western slopes of Braeriach. From the ridge of Scorgiel, above a point in the Eunach burn about a mile below its exit from the loch, a descent may be made into the glen, and on the east or right-hand side of the stream there is a good path which goes all the way back to Aviemore.

THE SHELTER STONE—LOCH AVON.

MR WALTER A. SMITH, in this number of the *Journal*, pp. 224-234, describes a visit made by him and his companions to the Shelter Stone in 1875. His slumbers there were disturbed by the entrance of strangers, and the reading of that occurrence brought to our mind a somewhat more tragic episode related in a romance, written by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, entitled "The Wolfe of Badenoch," and first published in 1827.

It may interest our readers to compare the two accounts, and we therefore reprint below pp. 188-206 of the edition of 1886.

Dramatis Personæ.

Sir PATRICK HEPBORNE—Knight. The hero of the romance.

MAURICE DE GREY—his page. A girl disguised as a page boy.

MORTIMER SANG—the Knight's Esquire.

DUNCAN MACERCHAR—a Celt. Owner of "a miserable looking house" in the upper part of the valley of the Dee, where the Knight and his party found entertainment on the night before setting out for the Shelter Stone.

Two "mountaineers" or "guides."

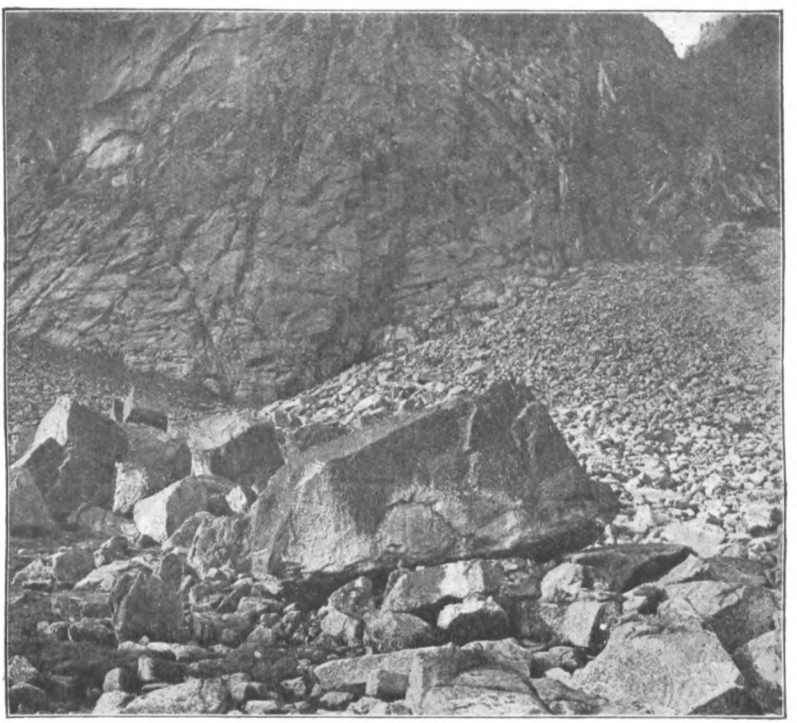
"The knight and his party were now led up some of those wild glens which bring down tributary streams to the river Dee, and they gradually began to climb the southern side of that lofty range of mountains separating its valley from that of the Spey. They soon rose above the region of forest, and continued to ascend by zigzag paths, where the horses found a difficult and precarious footing, and where the riders were often compelled to dismount. The fatigue to both men and animals was so great, that some of the latter frequently slipped down, and were with great labour recovered from the hazard they were thrown into. At length, after unremitting and toilsome exertions, they found themselves on the very ridge of the mountain group, from which they enjoyed a view backwards over many leagues of the wild but romantic country they had travelled through during the previous day.

"They now crossed an extensive plain, the greatest part of which was covered with a hardened glacier, while two high tops reared themselves, one on either side, covered with glazed snow, that reflected the sunbeams with dazzling brightness. The passage across this stretch of table-land was difficult, the horses frequently slipping and often falling, till, at length, they came suddenly on the edge of a precipice, whence they looked down into one of the most sublime scenes that nature can well present.

"The long and narrow trough of the glen, bounded on both sides by tremendously precipitous rocks, rising from a depth that made the head giddy to overlook it, stretched from under them in nearly a straight line, for perhaps six or seven miles, being cooped in between the two highest points of the Grampians. The bottom of the nearer and more savage part of this singular hollow among the mountains was so completely filled with the waters of the wild Loch Avon, as to leave but little shore on either side, and that little was in most places inclined in a steep slope, and covered with mountainous fragments, that had fallen during a succession of ages from the overhanging cliffs. A detachment of pines, from the lower forests, came straggling up the more distant part of the glen, and some of them had even established themselves here and there in scattered groups, and uncouthly-shaped single trees, along the sides of the lake, or among the rocks arising from it. The long sheet of water lay unruffled amidst the uninterrupted quiet that prevailed, and, receiving no other image than that of the sky above, assumed a tinge of the deepest and darkest hue. The glacier they stood on, and which hung over the brow of the cliff, gave rise to two very considerable streams, which threw themselves roaring over the rocks, dashing and breaking into an infinite variety of forms, and shooting headlong into the lake below.

"The sun was now sinking rapidly in the west, and night was fast approaching. The great elevation they had gained, and the solitary wilderness of alpine country that surrounded them, almost excluded the possibility of any human habitation being within their reach. Hepborne became anxiously solicitous for the page Maurice de Grey, who had for a considerable time been manifesting excessive fatigue. Their dumb guides seemed to stand as if uncertain how to proceed, and Hepborne's anxiety increased. He endeavoured to question them by signs, as to where they intended the party to halt for the night. With some difficulty he succeeded in making them understand him, and they then pointed out a piece of green ground, looped in by a sweep of the river, that escaped from the farther end of the lake. The spot seemed to be sheltered by surrounding pine trees, and wore in every respect a most inviting aspect. But if they had been endowed with wings and could have taken the flight of eagles from the region of the clouds where they then were, the distance must have been five or six miles. Taking into calculation, therefore, the immense circuit they must make with the horses in order to gain the bottom of the

glen beyond the lake, which must necessarily quadruple the direct distance, together with the toilsome nature of the way, Sir Patrick saw that Maurice de Grey must sink under the pressure of fatigue before one-twentieth part of it could be performed. He was therefore thrown into a state of the utmost perplexity, for the cold was so great where they then were, that it was absolutely impossible they could



J. Gall Inglis.

SHELTER STONE: LOCH AVON.

remain there during the night, without the risk of being frozen to death.

"One of the guides, observing Hepborne's uneasiness and doubt, approached him, and pointed almost perpendicularly downwards to a place near the upper end of the lake, where the masses of rock lay thickest and hugest. The knight could not comprehend him at first, but the man, taking up two or three rough angular stones, placed them on the ground close to each other in the form of an irregular circle, everywhere entire except in one point, where the space of about the width of one of them was left vacant; and then, lifting up a stone

of a cubical shape, and of much greater size, he placed the flat base of it on the top of the others, so as entirely to cover them and the little area they enclosed. Having made Hepborne observe that he could thrust his hand in at the point where the circle had been left incomplete, and that he could move it in the cavity under the flat base of the stone, he again pointed downwards to the same spot he had indicated near the upper end of the lake, and at last succeeded in calling Hepborne's attention to one of the fallen crags, much larger than the rest, but which, from the immensity of the height they were above it, looked like a mere handful. The guide no sooner saw that the knight's eye had distinguished the object he wished him to notice, than he turned and pointed to the mimic erection he had formed on the ground, and at length made him comprehend that the fallen crag below was similarly poised, and afforded a like cavernous shelter beneath it. At the same time he indicated a zigzag path that led precipitously down the cliffs, like a stair among the rocks, between the two foaming cataracts. This was altogether impracticable for the horses, it is true, but it was sufficiently feasible, though hazardous enough, for active pedestrians. The guide separated Hepborne and Maurice de Grey from the rest of the party, and then, pointing to the men and horses, swept his extended finger round from them to the distant green spot beyond the end of the lake ; and this he did in such a manner as to make the knight at once understand he meant to propose that the party should proceed thither by a circuitous route, under the guidance of his companion, whilst he should himself conduct Hepborne and his already over-fatigued page directly down to the Sheltering Stone below, where they might have comfortable lodging for the night. He further signified to Hepborne that the horses might be brought for a considerable way up the lake to meet him in the morning.

"So much time had been lost in this mute kind of conversation, that the night was fast approaching, and Sir Patrick saw that he must now come to a speedy decision. The plan suggested by the guide seemed to be the best that could be followed, under all the circumstances, and he at once determined to adopt it. At the same time, he by no means relished this division of his forces, and, remembering the caution he had received from Duncan MacErchar, he called Mortimer Sang aside, and gave him very particular injunctions to be on the alert, and to take care that his people kept a sharp watch over the mountaineer who was to guide them, and to be sure to environ him in such a manner as to make it impossible for him to dart off on a sudden, and leave them in the dark, in the midst of these unknown deserts. Had they once safely arrived at the green spot, where there was a temporary, though uninhabited, hunting-hut, and plenty of grass for the horses, he had no fear of his being able to join them with the page next morning ; for the trough of the glen was so direct between the two points where they were separately to spend the night, that it was impossible to mistake the way from the one to the other.

Mortimer Sang engaged to prevent all chance of the savage mountaineer escaping. He produced from one of the baggage-horses a large wallet, containing provisions enough for the whole party, which the good and mindful Master Duncan MacErchar had provided for them, altogether unknown to Hepborne. From it he took some cakes, cheese, butter, and other eatables, with a small flask filled from the host's stoup of spirits ; these were added to their guide's burden of the flesh of the wild bisons they had slain ; and, bidding one another God speed, the party, under Sang, with one of the Celts, and all the dogs, departed to pursue their long and weary way.

"Maurice de Grey had sat all this while on the ground, very much exhausted ; and when he arose to proceed he had become so stiff that Hepborne began to be alarmed for him. The poor boy, however, no sooner remarked the unhappy countenance of his master than he made an attempt to rouse himself to exertion, and, approaching the edge of the precipice, he commenced his descent after the guide, with tottering and timid steps, dropping from one pointed rock to another, and steadying himself from time to time as well as he could by means of his lance, as he quivered on the precarious footing the rough sides of the cliffs afforded. The height was sufficiently terrific when contemplated from above ; but, as they descended, the depth beneath them seemed to be increased, rather than diminished, by the very progress they had made. It grew upon them, and became more and more awful at every step. The crags, too, hung over their heads, as if threatening to part from their native mountains, as myriads had done before, and to crush the exhausted travellers into nothing beneath their ruins. They went down and down, but the lake and the bottom of the valley appeared still to recede from them. The way became more hazardous. To have looked up or down would have required the eye and the head of a chamois. A projecting ledge increased the peril of the path, and the page, tired to death, and giddy from the terrific situation he saw himself fixed in, clung to a point of the rock, and looked in Hepborne's face, perfectly unable to proceed or to utter a word. There he remained, panting as if he would have expired. The knight was filled with apprehension lest the boy should faint and fall headlong down, and the guide was so much in advance as to be beyond lending his assistance, so that he alone could give aid to the page. Yet how was he to pass the boy, so as to put himself in a position where he could assist him? He saw the path reappearing from under the projecting ledge, a little to one side of the place where the page hung in awful suspense, and, taking one instantaneous glance at it, he leaped boldly downwards. He vibrated for a moment on the brink ; and his feet having dislodged a great loose fragment of the rock, it went thundering downwards, awakening all the dormant echoes of the glen. He caught at a bunch of heath with both his hands ; and he had hardly recovered his equilibrium, when Maurice de Grey, believing, in his trepidation, that the noise he had heard announced the fall and destruction of his

master, uttered a faint scream, and dropped senseless from the point of rock he had held by. Hepborne sprang forward, and caught him in his arms. Afraid lest the boy might die before he could reach the Sheltering Stone, he shouted to the guide, and, waving him back, took from him the bottle, and put it to the page's lips. The spirits revived him, and he opened his eyes in terror, but immediately smiled when he saw that Hepborne was safe.

"Sir Patrick now put his left arm around the page's body, and, swinging him upwards, seated him on his left shoulder, keeping him firmly there, whilst, with his right hand, he employed his lance to support and steady his ticklish steps. The timorous page clasped the neck of his master with all his energy, and in this way the knight descended with his burden. Many were the difficulties he had to encounter. In one place he was compelled to leap desperately over one of the cataracts, where the smallest slip, or miscalculation of distance, must have proved the destruction of both. At length he reached the bottom in safety, and there the page, having recovered from his terror, found breath to pour forth his gratitude to his master. He now regained his spirit and strength so much, that he declared himself perfectly able to proceed over the rough ground that lay between them and the Sheltering Stone; but Hepborne bore him onwards, until he had deposited him on the spot where they were destined to halt for the night. The grateful Maurice threw himself on his knees before the knight, as he was wiping his manly brow, and embraced his athletic limbs from a feeling of fervent gratitude for his safety.

"Sir Patrick now proceeded to examine the curious natural habitation they were to be housed in. The fallen crag, which had appeared so trifling from the lofty elevation whence they had first viewed it, now rose before them in magnitude so enormous, as almost to appear capable of bearing a castle upon its shoulders. The mimic copy of it constructed by the guide furnished an accurate representation of the mode in which it was poised on the lesser blocks it had fallen upon. These served as walls to support it, as well as to close in the chamber beneath; and they were surrounded so thickly with smaller fragments of debris, that no air or light could penetrate between them, except in one or two places. On one side there was a narrow passage, of two or three yards in length, leading inwards between the stones and other rubbish, and of height sufficient to permit a man to enter without stooping very much. The space within, dry and warm, was capable of containing a dozen or twenty people with great ease. It was partially lighted by one or two small apertures between the stones, and the roof, formed of the under surface of the great mass of rock, was perfectly even and horizontal. It presented a most inviting place of shelter, and it seemed to have been not unfrequently used as such, for in one corner there was a heap of dried bog-fir, and in another the remains of a heather-bed.

"The mountaineer carefully deposited his burdens within the

entrance, and then set about collecting dry heather and portions of drift-wood, which he found about the edges of the lake ; and he soon brought together as much fuel as might have kept up a good fire for two or three days. Having piled up some of it in a heap, he interspersed it with pieces of the dry bog-fir, and then, groping in his pouch, produced a flint and steel, with which he struck a light, and soon kindled up a cheerful blaze. He then began to cut steaks of the flesh of the wild bison, and when the wood had been sufficiently reduced to the state of live charcoal, he proceeded to broil them over the embers, on pieces of green heather plucked and prepared for the purpose. Meanwhile the knight and the page seated themselves near the fire. . . .

"Their savage guide, who, having finished his unsophisticated cookery, now made signs to them to approach and eat. . . .

"The day's fatigue had been long, they were faint for want, and the odour of the smoking hot steaks was most inviting. They speedily obeyed the summons, therefore, and made a very satisfactory meal. Maurice de Grey had no sooner satisfied the cravings of nature, than, worn out by his exertions and overpowered by sleep, he wrapped himself up in his mantle, and throwing himself on the heather, under the projecting side of the huge rock, his senses were instantly steeped in sweet oblivion.

"Sir Patrick Hepborne regarded the youth with envy. His own thoughts did not as yet admit of his yielding to the gentle influence of sleep. He tried to divert them by watching the decline of the day, and following the slow ascent of the shadows as they crept up the rugged faces of the eastern precipices, eating away the light before them. A bright rose-coloured glow rested for a time on the summits, tinging even their glazed snows with its warm tint ; but in a few minutes it also departed, like the animating soul from the fair face of dying beauty, leaving everything cold, and pale, and cheerless ; and darkness came thickly down upon the deep and gloomy glen. In the meantime the mountaineer had been busying himself in gathering dry heath, and in carrying it under the Shelter Stone, for the purpose of making beds for the knight and the page.

"While the guide was thus employed, Hepborne sat musing at the fire, listlessly and almost unconsciously supplying it with fuel from time to time, and gazing at the fragments of wood as they were gradually consumed. His back was towards the entrance-passage of the place where the mountaineer was occupied, and the page lay to his right hand, under the shadow of the rock.

"As Sir Patrick sat thus absorbed in thought, he suddenly received a tremendous blow on his head, that partly stunned him, and almost knocked him forwards into the flames. The weight and force of it was such that, had he not had his steel cap on, his brains must have been knocked out. Before he could rise to defend himself, the blow was repeated with a dreadful clang upon the metal, and he was brought down upon his knees ; but ere it fell a third time on him,

a piercing shriek arose, and a struggle ensued behind him. Having by this time gathered his strength and senses sufficiently to turn round, he beheld the horrible countenance of their savage guide glaring over him, his eyeballs red from the reflection of the fire, his lips expanded, his teeth set together, and a ponderous stone lifted in both hands, with which he was essaying to fell him to the earth by a third blow. But his arms were pinioned behind, and it was the feeble page who held them. Hepborne scrambled to get to his feet, but, weakened by the blows he had already received, his efforts to rise were vain. The murderous ruffian, furious with disappointment, struggled hard, and at length, seeing that he could not rid himself of the faithful Maurice whilst he continued to hold the stone, he quickly dropped it, and, turning fiercely round on the boy, groped for his dirk. Already was it half unsheathed, when the gleam of a bright spear-head came flashing forth from the obscurity on one side, and with the quickness of thought it drank the life's blood from the savage heart of the assassin. Down rolled the monster upon the ground, his ferocious countenance illumined by the light from the blazing wood. In the agony of death his teeth ground against each other; his right hand, that still clenched the handle of the dirk, drew it forth with convulsive grasp, and, raising it as if for a last effort of destruction, brought it down with a force that buried the whole length of its blade in the harmless earth. Hepborne looked up to see from what friendly hand his preservation and that of the courageous boy had so miraculously come, when to his astonishment he beheld Duncan MacErchar standing before him.

"'Och, oich!' cried the worthy Highlander, 'Och, oich! what a Providence!—what a mercy!—what a good lucks it was that she was brought here!'

"'A Providence indeed!' cried Hepborne, crossing himself, and offering up a short but fervent ejaculation of gratitude to God; 'it seems indeed to have been a most marked interposition of Providence in our favour. Yet am I not the less grateful to thee for being the blessed instrument, in the hands of the Almighty, in saving not only my life, but that of the generous noble boy yonder, who had so nearly sacrificed his own in my defence. Maurice de Grey, come to mine arms; take the poor thanks of thy grateful master for his safety, for to thy courage, in the first place, his thanks are due. Trust me, boy, thou wilt one day be a brave knight; and to make thee all that chivalry may require of thee shall be mine earnest care.'

"Whether it was that the boy's stock of resolution had been expended in his effort, or that he was deeply affected by his master's commendation, it is not easy to determine; but he shrank from the knight's embrace, and, bursting into tears, hurried within the Shelter Stone.

"'By what miracle, good mine host,' said Sir Patrick Hepborne to Master Duncan MacErchar—'by what miracle do I see thee in this wilderness so far from thine own dwelling?'

"'Uch! uch! miracle truly, miracle truly, that she's brought here; for who could have thought that the false faitours and traitrous loons would have led her honour this round-about gate, that they might knock out her brains at the Shelter Stone of Loch Avon? An it had not been for Donald and Angus, her two cushins, that hunts the hills, and kens all the roads of these scoundrels, she would never have thought of coming round about over the very shoulders of the mountains to seek after them. But—uve! uve!—where's the t'other rascals? and where's her honour's men and beasts?'

"Hepborne explained the cause and circumstances of their separation.

"'Uch! uch!' cried MacErchar; 'uve! uve!—then, Holy St Barnabas, I wish that the t'others scoundrels may not have them after all; so she shall have more miles to travel, and another villains to stickit yet! uve! uve!'

"And then changing his tongue, he began with great volubility to address, in his own language, his cousins, who now appeared. They replied to him in the same dialect, and then he seemed to tell them the particulars of the late adventure, for he pointed to the dead body of the ruffian on the ground, while his actions corresponded with the tale he was telling, and seemed to be explanatory of it. The two men held up their hands, and listened with open mouths to his narration. He then took up a flaming brand from the fire, and, followed by his two cousins, proceeded to explore the passage leading into the chamber of the Shelter Stone, whence they soon returned with the burden of wolf-skins which the ruffian guide had carried. Duncan MacErchar threw it down on the ground near the fire, and as it fell—

"'Troth,' said he, with a joyful expression of countenance—'troth but she jingles; she'll swarrants there be's something in her. Sure! sure!'

"With this he went on his knees, and began eagerly to undo the numerous fastenings of hide-thongs which tied the wolf-skins together, and which, as Hepborne himself had noticed, had been closely bound up ever since they started in the morning, though the other guide carried his hanging loose, as both had done the night before. The knots were reticulated and decussated in such a manner as to afford no bad idea of that of Gordius.

"'Hoof!' said Master MacErchar impatiently, after working at them with his nails for some minutes without the least effect; 'sorrow be in their fingers that tied her; though troth she needs not say that now,' added he in parenthesis. 'Poof! that will not do neither; but sorrow be in her an she'll not settle her; she'll do for her, or she'll wonders at her.' And, unsheathing his dirk, he ripped up the fastenings, wolf-skins and all, and, to the astonishment of Hepborne, rolled out from their pregnant womb the whole of the glittering valuables, the fruit of his English campaigns.

"'Och, oich!' cried MacErchar with a joyful countenance, for-

getting everything in the delight he felt at recovering his treasure—'och, ay! blessings on her braw siller stoup, and blessings on her bony mazers; she be's all here. Ay, ay!—och, oich! ou ay, every one.'

"The mystery of Master Duncan MacErchar's hasty journey and unlooked-for appearance at Loch Avon was now explained. His sharp-eared cousin, Angus MacErchar, had been loitering about the door at the time of the departure of the knight and his attendants in the morning, and had heard something clinking in the Celt's bundle of wolf-skins as he passed, but seeing no cause to suspect anything wrong, as regarded his kinsman's goods, he neglected to notice the circumstance until some time after they were gone, when he happened to mention, rather accidentally than otherwise, that he thought the rogues had been thieving somewhere, for he had heard the noise of metal pots in the bundle of one of them. Duncan MacErchar took immediate alarm. Without saying a word, he ran to his secret deposit, and having removed the heap of billets and the wattle trap-door, discovered with horror and dismay that his treasures were gone. It was some small comfort to him that they had not found it convenient to carry away what he most valued; and he bestowed a friendly kiss upon the black bugle, and the swords and daggers that were still there; but the whole of the silver vessels were stolen. What was to be done? He was compelled to tell his cousins of his afflicting loss, that he might consult them as to what steps were to be taken. They advised instant pursuit; but well knowing the men and their habits, they felt persuaded that the thieves would carefully avoid the most direct path, and guessed that, in order to mislead their pursuers, they would likely take the circuitous and fatiguing mountain-route by Loch Avon. Taking the advice and assistance of his cousins, therefore, Master Duncan MacErchar set off hot foot after the rogues, and he was soon convinced of the sagacity of his cousins' counsels, for they frequently came upon the track of the party where the ground was soft, or wet enough to receive the prints of the horses' feet; and when they came to the ridge of the mountains, they traced them easily and expeditiously over the hardened snow. It was dark ere they reached the brink of the precipice overhanging the lake; but Angus and Donald were now aware of their probable destination, and the fire they saw burning near the Shelter Stone made them resolve to visit it in the first place. They lost no time in descending, the two lads being well acquainted with the dangerous path; and no sooner had Master Duncan MacErchar set his foot in the glen, than, eager to get at the thief, he ran on before his companions. And lucky was it, as we have seen, that he did so; for if he had been but a few minutes later, both Sir Patrick Hepborne and Maurice de Grey must have been murdered by the villain whom he slew.

"Hepborne now became extremely anxious about the safety of the party under the guidance of the other ruffian. For the attack of one

man against so many he had nothing to fear; but he dreaded the possibility of the traitor escaping from them before he had conducted them to their destined place of halt for the night, and so leaving them helpless on the wild and pathless mountain to perish of cold. He had nothing for it, however, but to comfort himself with his knowledge of Sang's sagacity and presence of mind.

"Master Duncan MacErchar, with his two cousins, now hastened to cut off a supper for themselves from the bison beef, which they quickly broiled; and, after their hunger had been appeased, the whole party began to think of bestowing themselves to enjoy a short repose. Before doing so, however, Hepborne proposed that they should bury the dead body. This was accordingly done, and from the debris of the fallen rocks a cairn was heaped upon it, sufficiently large to prevent the wolves from attacking it.

"The page, wrapped in his mantle, was already sound asleep within the snug chamber of the Shelter Stone, and Sir Patrick lost no time in seeking rest in the same comfortable quarters; but the three hardy Highlanders, preferring the open air, rolled themselves up, each in his web of plaiding, and then laid themselves in different places, under the projecting base of the enormous fallen rock, and all were soon buried in refreshing slumber.

"It happened, however, that Duncan MacErchar had by accident chosen the spot nearest the passage of entrance. The fire had fallen so low as to leave only the red glow of charcoal; but the night, which was already far spent, was partially illuminated by the light of the moon, which had now arisen, though not yet high enough to show its orb to those in the bottom of the glen. He was suddenly awakened by a footstep near him, and, looking up, beheld a dark figure approaching. With wonderful presence of mind, he demanded, in a low whisper, and in his native language, who went there, and was immediately answered by the voice of the other guide, who had gone forward with Hepborne's party, and who, mistaking MacErchar for his companion in iniquity, held the following dialogue with him, here translated into English.

"'Hast thou done it, Cormack?'

"'Nay,' replied Duncan, 'it is but now they are gone to sleep, and I fear they are not yet sound enough. What hast thou done with the party of men and their horses?'

"'I left them all safe at the bothy,' replied the other, 'and if we had this job finished, we might go that way, and carry off two or three of the best of their horses and trappings while they are asleep, and we can kill the others, to prevent any of them from having the means of following us when they awake. But come, why should we delay now?—they must be asleep ere this; let us in on them—creep towards them on our knees, and stab them without noise: then all their booty is our own.'

"'You foul murderer!' cried Duncan MacErchar, springing at him, his right hand extended with the intention of making him

prisoner. The astonished ruffian stepped back a pace, as Duncan rushed upon him, and seizing his outstretched hand, endeavoured to keep him at a distance. Both drew their dirks, and a furious struggle ensued. Each endeavoured to keep off the other, with outstretched arm, and powerful exertion, yet each was desirous to avail himself of the first favourable chance that might offer, and to bury the lethal weapon he brandished in the bosom of his antagonist. The ruffian had the decided advantage, for it was his right hand that was free, while MacErchar held his dirk with his left. They tugged, and pushed stoutly against each other, and each alternately made a vain effort to strike his opponent. The brave MacErchar might have easily called for help, but he scorned to seek aid against any single man. They still struggled, frequently shifting their ground by the violence of their exertions, yet neither gaining the least advantage over the other, when, all at once, MacErchar found himself attacked behind by a new and very formidable enemy. This was one of the great rough wolf-dogs, which, having come up at that moment, and observing his master struggling with Duncan, sprang upon his back, and seized him by the right shoulder. The ruffian, seeing himself supported, and thinking that the victory was now entirely in his hands, bent his elbow so as to permit him to close upon his adversary, and made an attempt to stab MacErchar in the breast; but the sturdy and undaunted hero, in defiance of the pain he experienced from the bites of the dog, raised his left arm, and after receiving the stab in the fleshy part of it, instantly returned it into the very heart of his enemy, who, uttering a single groan, fell dead upon the spot. But the dog still kept his hold, until MacErchar, putting his hand backwards, drove the dirk two or three times into his body, and shook him off dead upon the lifeless corpse of his master.

"'Heich!' cried he, very much toil-spent—'Foof!—Donald—Angus—Uve, uve!—Won't they be hearing her?'

"His two cousins, who had been fast asleep at the end of the Shelter Stone, now came hastily round, making a great noise, which roused Sir Patrick, who instantly seized his sword, and rushed out to ascertain what the alarm was.

"'Oich, oich!' continued Duncan, much fatigued, 'oich! and sure she has had a hard tuilzie o't!'

"'What, in the name of the blessed Virgin, has happened?' cried Hepborne, eagerly.

"'Fu! nothing after all,' cried Duncan, 'nothing—only that t'other villains came up here from t'others end of the loch, and wanted to murder Sir Patrick and his page; and so she grabbled at her, and had a sore tuilzie with her, and sure she hath stickit her dead at last. But—uve! uve!—she was near worried with her mockell dog; she settled her too, though, and yonder they are both lying dead together. But troth she must go and get some sleep now, and she hopes that she'll have no more disturbance, wi' a sorrow to them.'

"'But, my good friend,' said the knight, 'thine arm bleeds pro-

fusely, better have it tied up; nay, thy shoulder seems to be torn too.'

"'Fu, poof!' said MacErchar carelessly, 'her arm be's naething but a scart; she has had worse before from a thorn bush; and her shoulder is but a nip, that will be well or the morn.'

"So saying, he wrapped his plaid around him, and rolling himself under the base of the stone where he had lain before, he composed himself to sleep again, and the others followed his example. The knight also retired to his singular bed-chamber, and all were very soon quiet.

"As MacErchar had hoped, they lay undisturbed until daybreak, when they arose, shook themselves, and were soon joined by Hepborne from within. The sun had just appeared above the eastern mountain-tops, and was pouring a flood of glory down among the savage scenery of the glen. . . .

"Some food was now prepared for breakfast, and Maurice de Grey, who had made but one sleep during the night, was called to partake of it. . . .

"Hepborne now resolved to proceed to join his party. Duncan MacErchar had already ordered his cousin Angus, who was perfectly well acquainted with the way, to go with the knight as his guide, and not to leave him until he should see him safe into a part of the country where he would be beyond all difficulty. Sir Patrick was much grieved to be compelled to part with him who had been so miraculously instrumental in saving his life. He took off his baldrick and sword, and putting them upon Duncan—

"'Wear this,' said he, 'wear this for my sake, mine excellent friend—wear it as a poor mark of the gratitude I owe thee for having saved me from foul and traitorous murder. I yet hope to bestow some more worthy warison.'

"They now prepared themselves for taking their different routes, and Hepborne reminding MacErchar of the injunction he had formerly given him, to be sure to claim his acquaintance, wherever they should meet, and giving him a last hearty shake of the hand, they parted, and waving to each other their 'Heaven bless thee!' and 'May the blessed Virgin be with her honour!' set out on their respective journeys.

"Hepborne and his page proceeded slowly down the margin of the lake, preceded by their new guide; and as they looked back, they saw the bright plaids of Duncan and Donald MacErchar winding up among the rocks, and appearing on the face of the precipitous mountain like two tiny red lady-bird beetles on a wall. The way towards the lower end of the lake was rough and tiresome; but in due time they reached the place where the party had spent the night, and where they found Mortimer Sang looking anxiously out for their arrival. He had almost resolved to go himself in quest of the knight, for he had strongly suspected treachery, as his guide had more than once manifested symptoms of an intention to escape from them during

the previous night's march, and had been only prevented by the unremitting watch kept upon him by the squire, and two or three of his most active and determined people, to whom he had given particular instructions. This circumstance, coupled with the subsequent discovery that the villain had gone off in the night, the moment he had found an opportunity of doing so, had made Sang so apprehensive of some villainy, that nothing would have kept him with the party so long, had it not been for the remembrance of his master's strict orders to permit no consideration whatever to detach him from them.

"Poor Maurice de Grey was considerably fatigued, and required to be indulged with a little rest ere they could set forward. At length the whole party mounted and got in motion, and, taking their way slowly down the glen, under their new and intelligent guide, they soon found themselves buried in the endless pine forests. Game, both fourfooted and winged, of every description, crossed their path in all directions. Red deer, and roe deer, and herds of bisons, were frequently seen by them; now and then the echoes were awakened by the howling of a rout of gaunt and hungry wolves, sweeping across the glen in pursuit of their prey; and often the trampling of their horses' feet disturbed the capercailzie, as he sat feeding on the tops of the highest firs, while their palfreys were alarmed in their turn at the powerful flap of his sounding wings, as they bore him rapidly away.

"Leaving the deeper forests for a time, they climbed the mountain sides, and, crossing some high ridges and elevated valleys where the wood was thin and scattered, they again descended, and began to penetrate new wildernesses of thick-set and tall-grown pine timber; until, after a very long march, they arrived on the banks of the rapid Spey, where they rested for a time, to refresh themselves and their horses. There Angus procured a guide of the country for them, on whose fidelity he could depend, and, having received a handsome remuneration from Sir Patrick, returned the way he came."

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

UNOFFICIAL MEET.

LOCH AWE—EASTER, 1917.

THE Committee of the Club resolved that, following upon its decision to hold no New Year Meet this year, the Easter Meet should also be abandoned; and thus we had a state of matters, unprecedented in the Club's annals, that a consecutive New Year and Easter Meet were both allowed to lapse. But it would have been unpatriotic, and perhaps unseemly, had it been otherwise.

In the present-day strain, however, it was by no means surprising to find that, at the supposed close of a winter which, on account of the Great War, had been quite dreary enough within, as well as without, the advent of Good Friday associated itself with a long week-end on the hills, and we remember Miss Blanche C. Hardy's poem, "To Scotland from Italy," where she expresses the longing of a child of the North for the Homeland in the following well-chosen lines:—

> "The skies are grey in the tender North,
> And the distant hills are blue:
> Purple and red the heather blooms,
> And the hearts are kind and true.
> O north wind, blow from the hills I love!
> Come whistling over the wold:
> Bring courage, and strength, and memory
> Of the reckless days of old."

Thus it may be that Thursday, the 5th of April, found a guest and five members of the Club, of whom no less than three were officials, attending an unofficial Meet of the Club, at the old-time rendezvous—the Loch Awe Hotel.

We all know the familiar scenes from Dunblane to Loch Awe, but they never showed up to greater advantage than on the journey in question. From the familiar top of Ledi to the many-peaked Cruachan, all stood out spotless white against the deep blue vault of heaven.

An evening stroll towards the sheep-fank on the slopes behind Loch Awe church gave a picture of rare beauty in the East, with the rosy—almost Alpine—after-glow on the snowy sides of Lui, and dome-shaped Beinn Bhuidhe. What a land of peace for the keen-eyed lad with A. & S. H. on his tunic strap, son of a Cruachan shepherd, who stepped from the train! He had come for a few days' respite from the turmoil of the Somme battlefields, where now for eight long months he assured us he had neither night nor day ceased to hear the roar of the guns. "Aye, gentlemen," said he, "it's like bein' in a cemetery here." With equal truth might he have said he had just left the largest one the world has ever seen!

The party being small—Clark, Clapperton, Garden, Green, Ling, and Lyon (guest)—resolved to combine forces, so on Friday morning we all proceeded by the somewhat toilsome slope immediately behind the hotel. Our fine evening had given place to a doubtful morning, and, before we had reached Monadh Driseig, we had experienced a prolonged shower of very fine snow. Here, however, and right on to the summit of Beinn a Bhuiridh, matters improved, and occasional glimpses of well-known landmarks, including the various points on the "Horseshoe," which were our objectives, were obtained. Bhuiridh topped, the wind began to round and slap us on the left cheek, and the day settled down for bad. A rapid descent was made to the col above the Lairig Torran, where the wind blew great guns, but, behind an icicled boulder, we managed to stow away a fairly substantial meal before tackling the higher summits of the "Shoe," namely, Stob Garbh, Stob Diamh, and Sron an Isean, all of which were surmounted in due course, the descent being finally made by the long Sron, running south-east from the last-named top. In the descent the snow, which had latterly become a good-going blizzard, naturally converted into rain, and by the time we had crossed the Allt Coire Chreachain, just below its junction with the Allt Choire Ghlais, we were in the midst of the usual torrential west coast rainstorm.

The now disused railway to the Cruachan quarries—the sleepers of which, we observed, are being lifted at

present, no doubt for transport to a more useful sphere—served as a good track for the last lap, and we were soon housed once more under the hospitable roof of Mr Currie's hotel, if somewhat drenched, at any rate all the fitter for our day in the fresh air.

Saturday dawned dull, and the sextet pulled up the south face of Ben Eunaich in rather soft and slushy snow. A long monotonous grind eventually led us to the top, which seemed, to some of us at any rate, rather far pushed back on this occasion! No view was obtainable, and, indeed, on account of the dense mist and the depth of snow, it would not have been a difficult matter to miss the summit cairn altogether. Here the party split up, because Clark had to catch the evening train to Edinburgh, and Lyon wanted to keep his powder dry for Ben Cruachan on the following day, so these two returned by the most direct route, while the remainder of the party bagged Ben Chochuill. The going along the Chochuill ridge was very heavy, and at the far end, where the ridge narrows somewhat, and the snow became cockscombed, the walking was by no means enjoyable, had it not been varied by the interesting views obtained every now and again of lonely Glens Kinglass and Liver, with the white mass of Ben Starav beyond.

Sunday was a hopeless day, with a strong south-west gale and incessant deluge of rain. Some walked to the Falls of Cruachan, but that only as a duty, or to get up an appetite! Others never stirred out of doors. On Sunday evening the temperature dropped, and the rain changed to sleet and snow. When Garden and Lyon caught the east-bound train at 6.20 A.M. on Monday there were no less than 3 inches of snow on the station platform—an unheard of state of matters at Loch Awe so late in the season. The day turned out fairly good overhead, however, if it was bad underfoot, and so Clapperton, Green, and Ling trained to Taynuilt, and walked up Glen Noe, Green going *solus* over the Bealach, and the other two topping the Taynuilt peak of Cruachan, and also Cruachan himself.

The Rev. Ronald Burn arrived on Monday morning from Chichester by the 11 A.M. train, and walked over

Meall Cuanail; he stayed till Friday, and, *inter alia*, climbed Ben Eunaich twice, but he found the weather mixed and the snow soft.

From the above it will be seen at once that nothing approaching the serious was attempted. Assuming the party had been in form, the weather conditions would not have permitted that. But all present voted the meeting a success for the purpose it was intended, namely, a means to "carry on" a bit further till the long wished for peace has been restored. W. G.

LIBRARY.

THE following additions are reported :—

	Presented by
Angelo Mosso—Life of Man on the High Alps -	J. J. WAUGH.
G. P. Gordon—Bracken : Life-history and Eradication - - - - - - -	AUTHOR.
(Reprinted from *Transactions of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland*, 1916.)	
Memoirs of Geological Survey :—	
Sheet No. 53. Glencoe and Ben Nevis -	EXCHANGED.
„ 92. Fannich Mountains - -	„
„ 60. Rum and Eigg - -	„
„ 45. Cruachan and Lorne - -	„

Alpine Slides.—The Club tenders its thanks to the following members for responding to the suggestion that a representative collection of Swiss slides should be formed :—J. J. Waugh, Stuart F. M. Cumming.

S.M.C. ROLL OF HONOUR.

THE following name must be added to our roll :—

D. CAMERON-SWAN, Lieut., R.N.V.R.

Captain A. C. M'Laren was wounded for the second time on the 9th April 1917 north of Arras, and has been for some six weeks at the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth. He was rather badly wounded in the leg, but the doctors say he will be able to attend the Easter 1918 Meet fit for duty, which by that time, we trust, will mean climbing hills.

Messrs Morrison and Sang received the Edward Medals, which were respectively awarded them for bravery displayed under circumstances fully set out in our last issue (pp. 197, 198), from the hands of His Majesty the King at Buckingham Palace, London, on Wednesday, the 4th April 1917.

In Memoriam.

ALLAN GOW MARSHALL.

1881–1917.

ALLAN MARSHALL joined the Club in 1912, and was a regular and keen attender of the Meets until the outbreak of war. When he went on any expedition he never failed to take with him a wealth of good fellowship, and great appreciation of the hills themselves, and the other beauties of nature, which he was always so anxious to share with his companions. This is what we who have climbed with him shall miss when we go back again to the hills. He spent several holidays in Skye, where he did many of the well-known climbs, and became imbued with the peculiar charm of Skye and the Western Isles. How often, looking westward from the tops of Cuillin, may he have thought of "Tir nan Og," the Land of the Ever Young, which was so soon to call him. The Club mourns the loss of a reliable and steady climber on snow or rock, and of a very attractive personality.

Upon the outbreak of war Captain Marshall joined the ranks of the 17th H.L.I. He was given a commission in this battalion in May 1915, and was promoted Captain of his company in November 1916. On the morning of 12th February he "went out to reconnoitre alone. It was a thing he was very fond of doing"—when he fell, the victim of a sniper's bullet. Of him a brother-officer writes, "His loss to us is an enormous one, and all those qualities which were so striking in civil life were accentuated in the army. His extraordinary power of keenness, his shrewdness, and his forethought made him train up his company as second to none."

Captain Marshall took an active part in the work of Woodlands United Free Church, Glasgow, especially in the Sunday School, of which he was superintendent, and in the men's club connected with the mission. The knowledge and experience of men which he gained here were of great

value to him when he was training his company in the army.

To his many friends the loss is an irreparable one, which is but accentuated by the recollection of those sterling qualities devoted so whole-heartedly and unselfishly to the welfare of others.

So there falls to be added to the list of those whom we can so ill afford to lose the name of another brave and gallant gentleman, who answered the call of duty, and has given his all for a great cause.

The sincerest sympathy of the Club is extended to his widow with her little son, and also to his parents and the other members of his family. R. C. P.

MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

MEMOIRS OF THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF SCOTLAND.

"THE GEOLOGY OF BEN NEVIS AND GLENCOE" (SHEET 53). Price 7s. 6d.

The Club has received from the Geological Survey a copy of their Memoir on the geology of Ben Nevis and the surrounding country, and the Survey has kindly promised to send all future Highland memoirs in exchange for the *S.M.C. Journals*.

The mapping of the area of Sheet 53 was superintended for several years by our esteemed member, Dr Peach, and the southern part of the field was surveyed by our friend, Mr Kynaston, who, it will be remembered, died a year or two ago in the Transvaal.

The preface states that the district contains the highest mountain in Great Britain, and many other great mountains, as also deep and remarkably picturesque glens. "For boldness of relief and for opportunities for studying the origin of geographical features this tract is not surpassed in Britain. . . . The geology is both varied and complex. Upon a groundwork of crystalline schists an extensive covering of lavas was spread in the time of the Lower Old Red Sandstone, but of this covering only parts have survived denudation. At that time also great intrusions of granite rose, and igneous dykes were injected in vast numbers, more especially in the two 'swarms' of Ben Nevis and Glen Etive. . . . No less interesting are the phenomena of contact-alteration induced within the aureoles surrounding the plutonic masses. Schists and lavas all display in varying degrees the changes due to heating in the neighbourhood of the molten rocks."

Some remarkable geological features were disclosed while the six-inch survey progressed. It became apparent that "the schists had not only been folded, but that the folds had been prostrated, and pushed forward horizontally in a recumbent position . . . accompanied by slides and fold faults." A diagrammatic photograph of the Mamore Hills shows some of these fantastic foldings.

The glaciation of the district was effected by an ice-sheet by which the whole district was smothered, advancing towards the Atlantic from the north-east—from an ice-parting somewhere near our old friend Stob Choire Claurigh. The course of the ice would be determined mainly by the great hollow of Loch Linnhe. At a later stage every glen would be occupied by a valley-glacier.

The memoir introduces us to some new terms. It seems that there are "hanging valleys" as well as "hanging glaciers." The profound

depressions of Loch Linnhe and Loch Leven are "shatter-belts." A "corrom" (from the Gaelic *cothrom*, a balance) is a delta watershed, ormed by a sturdy tributary stream joining a main valley which has been "beheaded," *i.e.*, had its head water supply cut off. The divide at the top of Glen Nevis is such a corrom.

Regarding the origin of Scottish "through-valleys" generally, the writers of the memoir adopt the view that the low cols of the through-valleys are for the most part secondary watersheds in process of development, rather than primary watersheds which have been nearly obliterated by glacial erosion.

As an instance of earth movements causing old faults to move again, Dr Horne's description of an earthquake at Inverness in 1901 is quoted, to the effect that a crack half an inch wide could be traced along the towing path of the Caledonian Canal for a distance of 600 yards.

The opinion is given that practically all Highland corries are of glacial origin; that the corries in this part of the country favour a north-east aspect, and that other northern lands show the same orientation. Landslipping caused by frost has probably been the chief agency in their formation, the moving glacier below tugging at the riven rocks, and then carting them away; and an interesting analogy is here drawn from Alpine bergschrunds.

While most of the country under consideration is composed of schists and quartzites, many of the mountains have granite cores. Ben Nevis itself, in addition to an outer core of granite, has an inner core of hornblende-andesite lavas, with some agglomerate interspersed, the volcanic rocks being now reckoned as older than the granite. The broad, rounded summit of the great Ben shows conspicuous evidence of long exposure to the action of frost, at a time when the valleys were no doubt occupied by glaciers, its surface being littered with an accumulated mass of slabs and fragments. These have been prised loose by water freezing in joint-fissures, and afterwards arranged in smooth terraces or pushed over to form scree slopes below.

Enough has perhaps been said to indicate that this memoir is well worth a perusal, and most of it is not too technical to be enjoyed by non-geological readers.

The illustrations are good, and among them will be found:—

A striking view of the Glen Nevis Gorge with Ben Nevis behind.

A fine photograph of the head of Allt a' Mhuillinn, showing every rock on the North-East Buttress clearly defined.

A pot-hole apparently caused by a burn of the glacial period tumbling down a marginal crevasse. W. W. N.

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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.

Extract from "A Motor Almanack for 1916," *published in London.* —"The Western Highlands of Scotland contain the finest scenery in Britain, although the roads are terribly steep and dangerous, whilst hotel accommodation is so scarce that the district is rarely penetrated.'

"Many a hillman brave and bold
Has gone to his sarcophagus,
Through pouring water, icy cold,
In draughts, down his œsophagus."

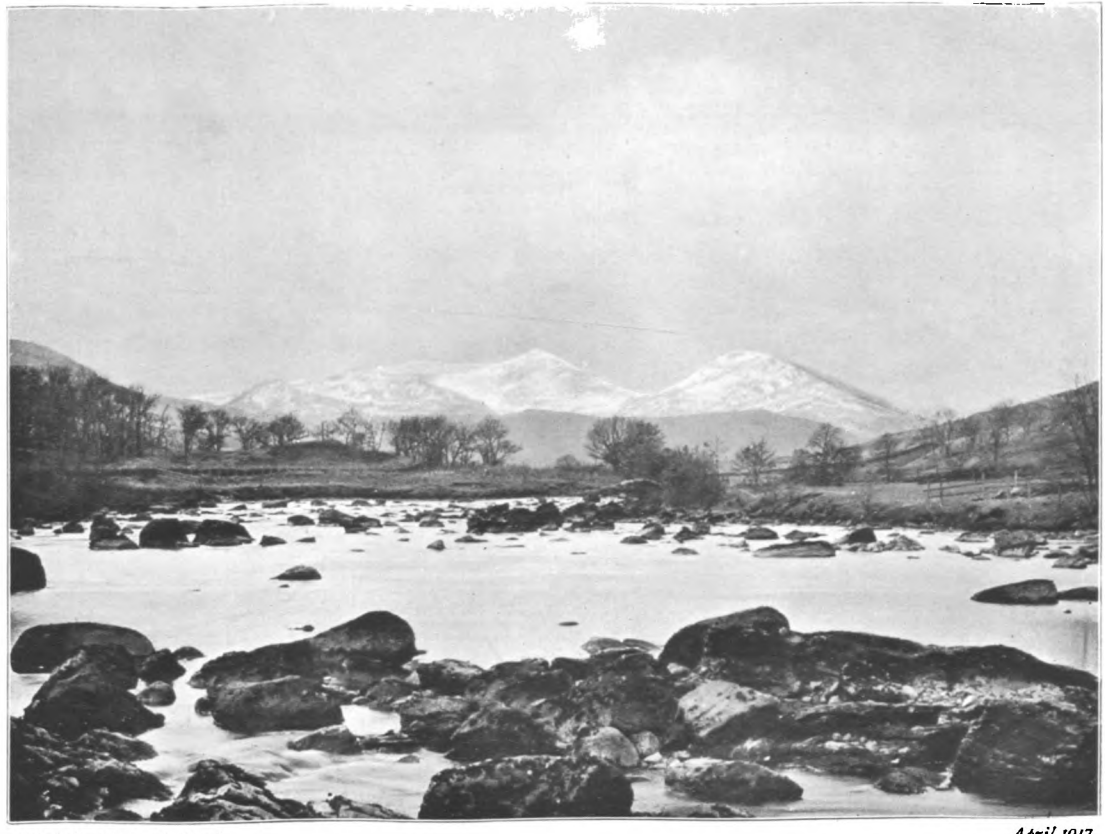


Photo by W. Inglis Clark

April 1917

BEN MORE AND STOBINIAN FROM KILLIN

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THE HIGHLANDS IN JUNE.

BY J. G. STOTT.

From "The Holiday Annual" for 1891, *by kind permission of the Editor, Mr J. M. Morgan.*

I THINK it is Horace Walpole who speaks of "the summer beginning with its usual severity." If he were justified in such language in his day, I wonder what he would say at the present time, when lagging winter, chilling spring, and darkening autumn scarcely allow us any summer at all. But whether you consider it spring or summer, there is no doubt that the month of June—once called "leafy"—is the pleasantest time for an invasion of the Bens. At no season is the country more beautiful. Nature is arrayed in her brightest garb; the air is rich with the scent of flowers and opening buds; blossoms of a thousand hues enamel the meadows and hedgerows; the woods resound with bird melody; the snow is fast melting on the old steadfast hills, and the brimming torrents and streams course swiftly downwards through the pastures to the blue lochs reposing far below.

Such were the favourable circumstances under which our little party set out for a ramble of a few days. Never had Loch Lomond looked more lovely than it did that afternoon. Every shade of green and yellow glowed in the woods, or rolled in waves of colour along the hill-sides. Wet crags and rocks flashed back the sunlight; the burns ran riot on the slopes, gleaming like strings of sparkling gems; the loch—blue as the sky overhead—danced and shimmered in the sun, or broke in foam-tipped wavelets on the black rocks or beaches of shingle girding the wooded islands. High up above, the grim old Ben supported the heavens on his rocky peak; and as we drew

sufficiently up the far-reaching loch to bring his north-western cliffs into view, we saw that they were streaked with winter's snowdrift. From Inversnaid we looked west, up the course of the Inveruglas water, right into the heart of the rough and rugged mountains of the Macfarlane country—Ben Vorlich, Ben Ima, Ben Vane, and the Cobbler—as stalwart a fraternity as one could wish to look upon; their streams roaring among the boulders, their cliffs throwing deep dark shadows, their snow-streaks gleaming like glass in the sun. Old friends all; and it was a year, almost to a day, since we had scrambled and clambered among them. Higher up the loch the north-westward view disclosed a huge peak as sharp as a lance, and we almost shouted with joy as we levelled our glasses and greeted our old love, Ben Laoigh. Then came Ardlui, and the smooth lower reaches of the Falloch river; and in the quiet of the evening hour we started on our walk up the glen to Crianlarich. Two years ago we were here on just such a night; and now, as on that occasion, the cuckoo's note rang through the woods, and the air was heavy with the scent of larch and hawthorn. We stop not at the good old inn of Inverarnan to-night though; but away we go north and by east; and ever the river roars below us, and—climbing though we are—the mighty hills tower higher and higher into the soft light. Glen-falloch ranks very high in point of beauty among the straths and glens of Scotland. A walk through it is a fitting termination to the sail up Loch Lomond, leading you as it does from pleasing and well-harmonised grouping of rock, wood, and water, to the sterner scenery of the north. Anything prettier than the hawthorns clustering like banks of snow at the foot of the crags, I have never seen; and the lavish profusion of wood that mantles the lower slopes, the coppice that straggles up to meet the rocks and the heather, the ferns and the flowers, go to make a scene that might well pass for fairyland. Nor must I forget the cascades that come splashing and sparkling down the side glens and passes in the hills, with Gaelic names as melodious as the rush of their waters. Nor the "many-sounding" Falloch itself—the chief feeder

of Loch Lomond—slipping in liquid amber over its shingle, boiling and seething 'mid crags and boulders, crashing with wild turmoil and tumult in its deep darksome linns. And often we would pause to watch the adventurous flight of the bold little dipper, as he flashed like a sprite through foam and spray, tripped about the rocks that were momentarily submerged by the swirling waters, or dived beneath the surface of the sullen black pool, seldom emerging without a tiny silver fish in his beak, with which he sped away to a nest of hungry little ones.

We were sorry rather than glad when the road swung down the hill—green Glen Dochart opened before us, and the white gables of Crianlarich came into view, nestling almost at the foot of huge Ben More, whose lofty cone seemed miles away up in the sky, where the silver points of the stars were just commencing to glimmer and twinkle.

The ancient proverb anent men and mice, and their schemes, was fully and unpleasantly exemplified next morning. When we had taken our last look round, about midnight, the sky was blue and star-spangled, flushed with warmer colour in the west and north; the mountains were unclouded, and the air was soft and balmy, dew-laden, and heavy with the scent of wild flowers. But while we slept the slumber of the just (by whom I mean pedestrians) the weather demon had gone to work, slewed round the wind to the east and nailed it there by the ears, laid his cold hand on the thermometer and lowered it by nearly ten degrees, rummaged up the clouds from the four quarters of heaven and piled them on all the mountains round about. Thus, when we came down from slumberland, things were looking very glum; and of the three hills we had come to climb not a trace was visible. We breakfasted heartily, however, for the good folk of Crianlarich were determined that if we replenished their exchequer we should also deplete their larder; and having consumed immoderate quantities of Highland provender, we spent the forenoon in a course of tobacco smoke, tempered with barometer beating. I am an infallible believer in beating the barometer. If you only thump it hard enough and long enough it is sure to go up. It did not disappoint us

on this occasion, and about one o'clock—most of the mist in the neighbourhood being furled in curious folds round bulky Ben More—we departed. It was too late now to think of our westmost hill—Ben Chaluim—so we turned our faces east, and for three miles strolled down Glen Dochart. At the foot of Loch Tubhair we crossed the river, and lunched on the north bank, among the rocks and the pine trees that overhung the water. Then we crossed a stream—the Essan—and laid a diagonal course across the hummocky moor to reach the upper waters of the Riobain burn, our peaks being yet about three miles away from us.

We soon made up our minds to confine our attention to Meal Chuirn. Its Gaelic name describes it as a *hill* rather than a *mountain*, and although it is a little more than 3,000 feet in height, there is some justification for it. You climb up over slopes of bent and heather—some of them very steep it is true—and reach the shoulder. There is really a very handsome little rocky peak—quite one of the best among the summits immediately surrounding—and when you have surmounted its last ledge, and stretched yourself out by the cairn, you are surprised at the singular excellence of the view you command. From no other point is there such an imposing view of Ben More. His peak overtops us by more than 800 feet, nearly six miles away, in the south-west. From base to summit it is one long steep slope. I will go the length of saying that the slopes of Ben More are the longest of any in the kingdom. From behind his great green brother peeps the rocky cone of the Binein, and over its shoulders again are seen Balquhidder braes, and the rugged Bens to the east of Glen Falloch. Farther round to the west is the Ben Laoigh group. Grand old Laoigh himself looks regal from here. If you can imagine a huge rocky cone that has been cleft down the middle, and one half removed bodily, you will have an idea of him. Now tear the inside out of what is left, plaster his black old ribs with ice and snow, pull one of them half out here and there, and heap up the shattered ruin of the removed half round about, and you will complete the picture. Viewed from

the north-east in the first half of the year, Laoigh is one of the most imposing mountains in Scotland. Then the eye travelled on to Cruachan, and from Cruachan it came north and eastwards to the clans of giants away about Blackmount, Dalness and Mamore; Ben Heasgarnich's flat top and snow-patched face, forming the stepping stone to Meall Ghaordie and the dozen or so of first-class mountains that lie between Lochs Rannoch and Tay, and form what is known in the botanical world as the Breadalbane Range. Every cottage in Glen Dochart, from near Tyndrum down to Killin, was in sight; every reach of the river; every dark clump of pines. The day was a good one now, and the blue sky and flying white clouds were mirrored on the bosom of loch, and tarn, and watercourse. Not often, indeed, does it fall to our lot to command such a sweeping panorama.

Rising at length, we shut up map and telescope, and started on a wild run down the steep snow slopes on the north side. The corries here are deep and precipitous, making a much finer show from a climber's, as well as from a scenic, point of view than the south face of the hill. Soon, however, we left the ptarmigan and the blue hares behind, and descended to the grouse habitat. Some of the deep gullies we crossed were perfect little botanical gardens, and one of our party impounded the handkerchiefs of all the others in order to carry ferns in them; breaking his stick outright, and his bones very nearly so, in his mad scrambles in search of specimens, and making life a burden to himself as he toiled down the steep, laden with hundred-weights of wet earth.

In due course we reached the Lochay at Innischaorach, and were able to refresh ourselves at the cottage of a shepherd. The sun was fast stooping westward as we got away again. For about seven miles we marched down this lovely glen, which is virtually unknown to the tourist fraternity. Its head being closed by a wall of mountains, few but pedestrians venture into it, and even the falls on the Lochay river, about three miles above Killin, are little visited. Girt in by lofty crags and dense leafy wood, the stream rushes along to Loch Tay, making a series of

magnificent plunges through a barrier of schist. The spray boils up among the dark rocks; the heaving, swirling mass of water speeds ever onwards; the hoarse roar of the cataract rolls along the gorge day and night, from year's end to year's end. Down in the calm black pools you may watch the silvery salmon leap; the crow of the pheasant rings out among the copse-wood; the evening is glad with the song of birds, and rabbits gambol on every patch of green sward. Such were the Falls of Lochay as we visited them; and, tearing ourselves with difficulty from so pretty a spot, we reached Killin just as the sun sank behind the snows of Creag Mhor at the head of the glen, and his last ray died upon the fantastic peaks above us.

Astir at six next morning, we found the east wind still asserting its sovereignty; but the sky almost cloudless, the mountains free from mist, and a strong, chill breeze causing the blue waters of Loch Tay to dance and sparkle. Our pleasant triumvirate was unfortunately broken up to-day, both my companions having to return by the early train to Edinburgh. After their departure I strolled along to one of the gems of Perthshire scenery—the old bridge across the Dochart. The dark salmon pool, the crash and swirl of the falls, the tall grey rocks, and the solemn old pines on the islet in the channel have a charm that can never cease to interest.

Alas! for the bright promise of the morning. By the time I had finished breakfast, and seen to forwarding my knapsack by the steamer, great piles of grey cloud had gathered and the mist lay like a pall along the hills. Worse luck! but, in the hope that it might improve before I reached its elevation, I set out for Ben Lawers. For about six miles I followed the road along the shore of the loch—a pretty walk, but not particularly striking—till I came to a burn bearing the high-sounding name of Àllt an Tuim Bhric. It had its sources in a corrie near the peak, and up the gentle heathery slopes on its eastern side I directed my course. The grey mist lay thick high up on the hillside, and as I approached I could see how fast it was flying, impelled by the strong wind. There is some-

thing a trifle gruesome in plunging into the fog belt. Just as it begins to twine its filmy folds around you, you halt and look about for a minute. Down below, ever so far away it seems, are the dark loch, the woodlands, the cultivated slopes, and all the warmth and comfort of civilisation. Above is cloudland. You face the slope again; it gets suddenly darker; above, around, below, nothing is in sight but an intangible wall of greyness, an impenetrable envelope of swiftly flying vapour, in which the crags and rocks immediately about you loom ghostly and indistinct, like grotesque spirits of the mountain that have assembled to crush you for your rashness in venturing into their dominion. But you grasp your staff more firmly on the stiffening gradients; and up—up—up—you win your way slowly. You are above the larger forms of vegetation now; the scanty turf is sowed with shingles and boulders, and slippery and spongy from wet. Now you climb over a rocky ridge; now you plunge upwards through a snow-slope. Suddenly it grows light just in front—the pull up ceases—you have topped the ridge; and in a moment all the winds in heaven are let loose on you, the mist swirls and boils round about, and you catch momentary glimpses of black, dripping crags of rock, deep gulleys and corries, and curving crests and long slopes of snow. A hundred yards or two you rise gently along the line of the ridge, and then something like a giant looms above you in the fog. A few steps more reveals it to be nothing more terrible than the big cairn on the summit, and your whoop of joy startles the echoes.

The peak of Ben Lawers is just about three miles back from the shore of the loch, and rises to a height of 3,984 feet. A few years ago—with the view of bringing the total altitude up to the 4,000 line—a splendid cairn 17 feet high was built on the highest point. It is a masterpiece of cairn architecture, constructed of enormous blocks of schist, and capped with a white mass of quartz that must weigh two or three hundredweight.

It is a curious sensation, sitting thus lonely on a storm-swept mountain peak. Except the rocks close round about, all is veiled by the mist. You are as solitary as if on a desert

island. Not a living thing is within ken; you are above the habitat even of the raven and the ptarmigan. Only the tiny mosses and the stains of the lichens on the rocks remind you of life. The wind rushes and roars amid the crags, the mist surges onward like an angry sea. But look! suddenly the light increases; above you the sun appears—pale, green, and sickly; the mist thins away and discloses shadowy glimpses of lands beyond; or it is rent asunder for a moment, and like gleams of fairyland there flash upon the eye deep snow-filled corries, shoulders and slopes, and summits of neighbouring mountains; here the blue gleam of a tarn, there the white streak of a water-course. Then the curtain is drawn again, but the busy fingers of the sun and the wind are at work; golden shafts strike down through the fog, gleam along the wet rocks, roll the mist into wreaths, and ribbons, and bannerettes, and send them curling and sweeping along the corries, like white surf beating on a rocky shore. Ben Lawers is famous as commanding one of the finest views in Scotland, extending from the Cairngorm mountains to the Lothians, and from the Atlantic to the German Ocean. It is perhaps the easiest and most accessible of all our high hills. From Lawers Inn on Loch Tay you can ride a pony up to the ridge, and along it to the cairn. South, east, and west its slopes are for the most part very gentle; but it shows some very fine corries on the north side; and the view in this direction, when the hollows are full of snow, when the peaks that soar so close at hand are belted with white mist, and streaked with foam of the waterfalls; when sunless Lochan-a-Chat lies fathoms deep below you—black and gloomy as Acheron or Styx; when this is the case, I say, the view into the wondrous north is alone worth coming a long way to see! without counting the far-reaching panorama of loch and river, mountain, wood, city, and ocean that stretches through every gradation of colour down into the dim grey horizon.

Three-quarters of an hour spent in plunging down the slopes brought me to the loch at Lawers pier, where I got on board the steamer, and after a sunny sail found myself at Kenmore. The weather was now all that could be

wished—warm, bright, and breezy; and as I strolled afoot through the woodlands past Taymouth Castle—far and away the finest nobleman's seat in these islands—down to Aberfeldy, I had a view of Schiehallion's long ridge and steep southern scarps. At Aberfeldy I recovered my knapsack, and took train for Stanley Junction, *en route* for Blairgowrie; but so glorious was the evening, that at Dunkeld I leaped out of the carriage with the intention of walking the distance. Of that dozen miles—among the prettiest in Scotland—I have a mass of confused and pleasing recollections. I have more than once dreamed of the walk since, and there were presented to me blue smiling lochs with reedy margins and profusion of water-lilies, where coots and wild ducks revelled; and sweet-smelling larch woods; and over-arching forest trees; and brooks that ran sparkling and singing through the valley; and banks of broom and whin in glorious golden blossom; and dog-rose buds opening on the bushes; and scent of flowers; and song of birds; and merry-voiced children at the doors of pretty cottages; and lastly, a glorious sunset—all crimson and saffron—against which the western hills stood up a crenelated wall of rich purple colour, clear and distinct, and yet dreamy and far away and Elysian-looking, but beautiful as the ramparts of the land of the blessed. Such is my dream of my march to Blairgowrie—and, unlike most dreams, true to the life; and in mine inn at that quiet little town I slept peacefully and gathered strength for the tramp of the morrow.

It was a good day for marching. A blustering, roystering breeze from the north, that at times swelled to storm force, hurried masses of white cloud across the blue, and swung the stalwart trees this way and that; roaring with joy among the leafy branches. One unpleasant feature there was, and that was the dust. For six long miles up the picturesque glen of the Ericht, I legged it along in a perfect simoom, choked and half-blinded; and when I reached the cosy inn at Bridge of Cally, a liquid process — both internal and external — became very necessary. This accomplished, I started again, due north

up Glen Shee; and the harder nature of the road did not admit of so much dust, although the wind blew as stiffly as ever.

Away north along the eastern border of Perthshire—tramp—tramp—tramp—I drew nearer to the mysterious northern mountains. I halted for an hour at Persie Inn, where I lunched; then marched again. Up and down, climbing and falling, but ever gaining higher elevations, the road led me for a dozen miles more up the beautiful Shee water. The heathery hills of Mount Blair and Monamenach flanked it on the right; to the left, I had glimpses of the complicated peaks of Ben-y-Ghlo; and in front, nearer and more near drew the great crags and snow-slopes of Cairn na Glasha, that tower so high over lonely and majestic Caenlochan. The coach to Braemar had not yet started for the season, so the only persons I met were unkempt roadmenders, gamekeepers, and shepherds—decent fellows, with whom I exchanged many a cheery remark. It was evident that I was both getting high, and getting north now. Not a bud had the ash trees put forth, and all the foliage bore the stamp of brand newness, and had evidently not been very long open. But primroses were peeping on the banks, and the copses were melodious with the song of thrush, blackbird, chaffinch, and bunting.

Late in the afternoon, after passing some imposing shooting quarters, I reached the Spittal—a beautiful spot truly. The meeting place of three glens, guarded by three huge mountains, brattling brooks, green meadows, and wild, circling, heathery hills. The inn is a rambling white house nestling right at the foot of great brown Ben Guillepen (the Curlewshill), and round it the road to Braemar swings into Glen Beg, and climbs—climbs—climbs for more than five miles, till it attains its summit level of about 2,500 feet in the wind-swept saddle between the Cairnwell and Meall Odhar. Climbing to the top of Guillepen, more than 2,000 feet, after dinner, I commanded a fine view; and when the sun had dipped in the west, and the sky was hard, cold, and steely looking, I came down, swallowed a steaming jorum of hot, strong toddy,

and buried myself amid the numerous pillows and blankets of a most capacious four-poster.

I shouldered the impedimenta about ten o'clock, bade adieu to my kind hosts, and took the road up Glen Beg for two or three miles. Arrived pretty well opposite Cairn Aighe, the first peak of importance to the right of the Glen, I crossed the river and began to climb. At first sight I took this mountain for Glas Maol himself, but the latter is nearly 700 feet higher, and lies three miles farther away in the north-east. Nevertheless, with its 2,824 feet, Cairn Aighe is a picturesque mountain; and in the hot sun I found carrying a knapsack up its long steep slopes no mean undertaking. The climb is a very easy one; in fact there is little or no difficulty attaching to any of the mountains in this neighbourhood. For the last couple of hundred feet the cone consists entirely of loose stones and boulders of coarse sandstone and schist.

Arrived on top, you get rather a surprise if you have expected your work was done, for the ridge dips a couple of hundred feet, and then rises towards the north-east into the rocky summit of Creag Leagach, 3,238 feet. The saddle is carpeted with soft, brown, fibrous moss, dry as tinder, and on the eastern slope were some heavy snow-wreaths, reaching far down the corries. As I picked my way up the rocky face of the peak, I startled several ptarmigan. The view from Leagach was superb. The eye wandered over all the upper basin of the Tay far down in the south-west; dwelt with delight on bulky Ben Lawers, and was only bounded by the snowy forms of Ben More and Stob Binein, more than sixty miles away. All around were mountain peaks. I made out the names of several dozen with the map; but it was in the north-west that the view had most interest for me; for never before had I looked from this direction at the Cairngorm group. Thirty miles away they rose behind all the billows of green and brown mountain—league on league of huge rounded escarpments almost covered with snow. I could not have believed that our Scottish hills carried such masses of snow so far into the season, had I not seen it. But for the absence of well-marked peaks and pinnacles,

I might have been looking over the Alps. Macdhui's flat summit, Cairn Toul, and Ben-y-Bourd were the most conspicuous, but there were many others of the group that are known by name, only to the mountain fancier.

When I had surveyed the scene sufficiently from this peak, I made my way down the slope toward Glas Maol. With the exception of some of the Lochnagar summits, the Glas Maol is the highest in this part of the country. 3,502 feet it heaves its huge broad back up towards the sky. It is perhaps the least shapely of the group. A great tabular summit, covered with scanty vegetation and gently sloping corries, are its chief characteristics. The snow still lay on it in very considerable patches, and its otherwise dry slopes were marked by the vivid green of numerous springs. On a day like this, when, despite the cold north wind, the sun exercised such scorching power as to make the whole atmosphere shimmer, how refreshing were these oases! I shall never forget the one I lunched at. Toiling from the saddle up the steep brown bank, I saw its green riband above me. On reaching its lower edge the ground was only boggy; farther up its course a tiny rill of cold clear water trickled and gurgled through the moss; and a few yards higher was a little pebbly basin a foot in diameter, filled with liquid crystal that bubbled up from the rock. How fierce, and sunburned, and dishevelled you looked as your hot visage hung for a moment above the clear mirror of the water, before being plunged—open-eyed and mouthed—down to the very bottom. No fear of *bacilli* and *bacteria* up here, 3,300 feet above sea-level; so we splash and drink to our heart's content, and then out comes the flask, the chocolate, and the sandwiches, and we make a meal that puts such vigour into us that we felt as if we could climb all the mountains in the three counties—Forfar, Perth, and Aberdeenshires—that join hands on the ample tableland of the Glas Maol.

Some 200 feet more I rose—marking far away down on the left the white riband of road climbing toilsomely towards the pass—and then the ascent ceased, and over the gently rising plateau I marched towards the great cairn of boulders that marked the highest point. The

view was much the same as from Creag Leagach, except that the Lochnagar summits looked more imposing. So near did they seem, and so tempting on this breezy, sunny afternoon, that had the day been younger, and the need of going to Braemar less pressing, I think I should have started for their exploration—round the head of Caenlochan and Glen Callater—and, unless lost or smashed among crags, cliffs, tarns, and summits innumerable, down by Glen Gelder to Craithie. This would make a magnificent, but a long and arduous day's work, and could only be done in the best of weather.

Leaving my knapsack at the cairn, I took my binocular, and walked east to the edge of the plateau to look down into the famous corrie of Caenlochan. "Huge mural precipices, between 2,000 and 3,000 feet high, extend for several miles on either side of a glen so oppressively narrow that it is quite possible to throw a stone from one side to the other. Dark clouds, like the shadows of old mountains passed away, continually float hither and thither in the vacant air, or become entangled in the rocks, increasing the gloom and mysterious awfulness of the gulf, from which the mingled sounds of many torrents, coursing far below, rise up at intervals like the groans of tortured spirits. A forest of dwarfed and stunted larches, planted as a cover for the deer, scrambles up the side of the precipices for a short distance, their ranks sadly thinned by the numerous landslips and avalanches from the heights above." Such is Caenlochan, as described by the Rev. Hugh McMillan in his beautiful book, "Holidays on High Lands." And such was Caenlochan as I saw it—the sunbeams vainly struggling to penetrate to its depths; the snow-wreaths poised and ready to fall from the summits of its cliffs; the shrill scream of a falcon accentuating the hoarse murmur of its waters.

Regaining the knapsack, I descended through a heavy snow-drift on the north-west face of the hill, discovering a track that ascends from Glen Isla; crossed the depression of the shingly slopes of Cairn na Glasha; and meeting one of these beautiful mountain burns there, I followed its course down to the road in Glen Cluny, and so on through

bold, barren scenery to Braemar, which I reached about six o'clock.

Braemar I found almost deserted—by the tourist fraternity, I mean. Only 8 people were staying in the two large hotels, that between them can stow away more than 200. It was no more than was to have been expected, that the fine weather I had been enjoying could not last for ever. Accordingly, I was not much surprised at hearing the soft patter of rain on my window in the early morning. When I came down to breakfast, although the rain had stopped, everything was cold, grey, and cheerless; and the horny-fisted son of the stables, who did duty as waiter until the arrival of the regular summer staff, informed me that the ground had been white with snow at five o'clock in the morning. It was somewhat doleful to watch the great bodies of mist slowly rolling athwart the snowy Cairngorms far away in the north-west; and as the hotel barometer had been sent to Aberdeen to be mended, I had no hope of being able to improve the weather by tapping upon it. My intention had been to have climbed Lochnagar to-day, and make my way down to the nice little inn in Glen Clova. This day's work, though, would have been both long and toilsome; and with the exception of a very few miles would have been all hill and moorland walking. This would not have been pleasant in rain and mist, let alone the danger of loosing the way; for it would have been a case of map, compass, and landmark throughout. So I was forced to give up the idea of "dark Lochnagar" for the present, and fall back on my alternative plan of going down to Ballater, and crossing the Ladder Pass over Mount Keen into the Glen of the South Esk in Forfarshire. So, after breakfast, I put in about three hours by strolling up to the pretty little linn of Corriemulzie. This I consider quite the gem of Deeside scenery: the deep cleft in the rocks, the pearly sheen of the burn, the moss and ferns, and the overarching trees and shrubbery. Then we followed the path down to the Dee, where the deer were feeding in the meadows, nearly as tame as sheep; and strolled along to the Victoria Bridge, where we regained the road, and soon got back to

our hostelry. Then came luncheon, and, thereafter, in a thin, cold rain, I marched for Ballater.

I found the walk more charming than ever—the great broad river sweeping along through miles of pinewood, dominated by soaring craigs, reminded me strongly of Etnadel, in Norway. And away in the distance—towering grandly above the woods and rocks of Glen Gelder, with the white mists wheeling slowly round its summits—rose the dark curtains of precipice, the snow-sheeted corries, the sharp peaks of kingly Lochnagar.

Striding along in good style, Ballater was reached with no more discomfort than a damp jacket, and no more exciting adventure than a visit to the river's bank, to watch the landing of a silvery ten-pounder. At the hotel here I was rejoined by my knapsack, and crossing the river I walked on a couple of miles further to the wells of Pananich. The chalybeate springs here were at one time very noted for their curative properties; but like many good old families they have rather gone back in the world. The present lessee of the comfortable little hotel is doing his best to restore them to popularity; and he is a landlord who deserves to succeed. The baths seem tolerably well-appointed; the house is comfortable, and situated high on a wooded hillside, it looks right out across the silvery reaches of the Dee to Culbleen and Byron's "dark Morven of snow." The water is rather pleasant to the taste, and to my certain knowledge it makes uncommonly good toddy.

The sun got up early next morning, and from over the nor'-eastern hills poured such a flood of light into my bedroom that he turned me out of bed at six o'clock. A grand day for my last spell of work—cool, sunny, and breezy. Hurrah!

> "The green and breezy hills—away!
> My heart is light, my foot is free;
> And standing on the topmost peak,
> The fresh'ning gale shall fan my cheek;
> The hills were ever dear to me."

By eight o'clock I had mounted the knapsack, and was footing it towards Aboyne. Not for far, however; for in

about a mile I left the road, turned southwards into the deer ground, and over bogs and ridges pointed my course for the Tanna water. Soon getting clear of the crofts and patches of cultivation at the foot of Pollagach Burn, I climbed diagonally along the face of a high heath-clad ridge, abounding with grouse and curlews. The exercise was just severe enough to make one feel tolerably hot; but every yard you rose enlarged the view of the valley of the Dee behind you.

The summit was won at about 2,000 feet, giving a noble view of the Tanna winding 1,000 feet below, and the great central range of the Benchinnin mountains, culminating in the cone of Mount Keen, blocking the way to the south, beyond it. The path over the shoulder was distinctly visible, looking like the course of a stream as it rambled over the brown hillside, skirted the dirty-coloured snow cornice that still clung to the crags of the northern corrie, and finally disappeared over the shoulder into the blue sky-line. Right down to the Tanna I had to go, for a couple of miles along its banks, then up that stony pathway; and higher, too, than it went I should climb—for I meant to reach the top of the hill—and having arrived there, scarcely a third of my day's journey would yet be accomplished.

First, then, for the Tanna. Whoop! away down the heathery hill I sprang, and soon I passed the lonely cottage of Etnach, and quenched my thirst in the cold waters of the river. A road has recently been made up the glen to a shooting lodge beyond the foot of Mount Keen, supplanting the former old bridle-track. This used to be one of the right of way tracks communicating, across the mountains, between Forfarshire and Aberdeenshire.

Crossing the stream, I rose a few hundred feet and then sat down for luncheon. My biscuits and chocolate were soon consumed, and washed home with spring water flavoured with whisky; then I lit my pipe, and lying back in the heather spent one of those glorious half-hours that are only known to pedestrians. Two or three boulders broke the wind before it struck me, allowing only a playful puff to creep round and play with the tobacco smoke. The

sun lay warm on my calves and big boots; the murmur of the river floated up from the glen, and mingled with the nearer sounds—the joyful *kok-kok-kok* of the grouse, the wail of the curlews, the hum of two or three bees that had thus early ventured to the hill in search of honey. High overhead volumes of snowy cloud pursued each other in stately fashion across the blue vault; the grand old hills, brown with shaggy heath and grey with broken shingle, were all around; the wild glen was at my feet, growing greener and more fertile-looking as it opened up towards the north-east, where were hotels, and railways, and bustle that have nothing in common with the spirit of the mountains. All too short seemed the rest. The pipe was put back in the pocket; the knapsack once again made its weight felt on the back; and once more the breath came shorter and faster as muscles and sinews played and lifted you, yard by yard, up this brown slope that rose so close in front of you.

To shorten a long story, in time I reached the top of the pass. Not that there was a pass in reality; the track merely ceased its ascent, crossed the broad round shoulder of the mountain, and dipped over its farther side. I had picked up a few pretty crystals among the shingle and boulders; but now these came to an end, for turning to the left I took to the ling and heather, and for about 600 feet more climbed the mountain side till I came to the huge cairn of stones on the summit.

Mount Keen rises to a height of 3,077 feet, and is the loftiest summit of the so-called Benchinnin range, for which some geographers claim *exclusively* the title of the Grampians. The view takes in the central part of the course of the Dee, and much of the country lying due north of it,—the snowy Cairngorms, the eastern precipices of Lochnagar, and all over the south and west a tumultuous assemblage of mountains that can only be likened to the ocean stirred to its depths by such a storm as mankind has never beheld.

When I left the Cairn I was in Forfarshire. The *march* of the two counties follows the ridge. For a long way down the descent was very gradual; and through the cold

atmosphere I sped along at a sharp trot towards the broomy glens and copse-clad hills of the southern county. Arrived at the head of the Ladder burn more cautious locomotion became necessary; but I soon traversed the steep shingly path and dropped down into the quiet green pastures of Glen Mark. At the keeper's cottage I met with the usual hospitality; but as I had loitered on the hill I could not stay long now, for it was four o'clock, and I had nearly twenty miles to get across. In a meadow close to the cottage is the well where the Queen and the Prince Consort lunched, in September 1861, on the occasion of their crossing the route I had just followed. The water has been enclosed in a stone basin, into which it bubbles up cool and clear from the native rock, and a rude erection of granite arches surmounts it. Round the edge is cut the inscription:—

> "Rest, traveller, on this lonely green,
> And drink and pray for Scotland's Queen."

Some deer were drinking at the stream two or three hundred yards below the spot; and straight overhead, in the south, rose giant Craig Braestock, looking rugged and inaccessible enough to harbour in security the fox and the raven.

A couple of miles down the glen I came to the foot of wild Loch Lee, with Invermark Lodge and the ruins of bluff old Invermark Castle guarding the strath. I had a good road now, and by the side of the hurrying Esk—the joint progeny of the rivers Lee and Mark—I followed it for nearly four miles to Tarfside. It is a bonny little village by the side of a great Highland burn that brings its clear brown waters roaring down from the northern hills to mingle with the Esk. Churches muster strongly here—there are three—and there is also one of those funny little merchants' shops where you can buy anything from ginger beer to gunpowder, and from tin tacks to taraxacum. It was the first of these commodities that I invested in—"dropsical, unmanly, and enervating beverage" though stout deerstalking old Scrope calls it—and then I strode away a dozen miles down the Esk to

Edzell—a beautiful walk. Sometimes high on the side of grassy or heathery hills, with the river roaring far below; sometimes low down in thick copsewood or flower-scented meadows, with the same river flowing calm and glassy and peaceful looking. Many a homely cottage peeped at me from out its encircling foliage; many a bank of broom, glorious in golden glory, lit up the brown hillsides; rabbits gamboling across the road, and birds pouring their melody in the thickets, tempted me to stay. All around the huge hills rose up into the steel-blue sky—green, brown, grey, and purple—and more than once, as I looked back, I caught sight of the rounded top of old Mount Keen—far away now.

Late in the evening, as the sun rested on the western hills, and the cattle went lowing home along the dusty road, I got to Gannochy; and leaving the highway I went down into the woods.

The bonny woods of Gannochy! A few days ago the first evening of my walk had closed in amid the rocks and cascades of the Lochay; it was fitting that the roar of falling water should form the knell of the last night also. How softly the breeze of eventide rustled through the maze of foliage that hung above the dark waters of Esk! how warmly the rays of sunset lay upon the summits of the tall crags and wooded knolls! And, in keeping with the surroundings, the river swam calm, and dark, and sullen under the grey rocks. Not for long, though. A white rapid was the first sign of revolution; but soon the stream plunged headlong into a chasm, and the spray-cloud rose, and the prisoned waters chafed and roared. Then for some distance dark pool succeeded pool, cascade overleaped cascade, and cataract thundered back to cataract; but the climax was yet to come. Where the gorge was cut through a hard conglomerate of red sandstone, a narrow bridge spanned the gulf, and beneath your feet the huge white-crested waves of amber leaped along the rocky walls, flinging their spray up among the ferns and wild flowers—roaring in impotent rage at the foot of the iron crags,—and, broken and subdued, creeping back again in the golden eddies and shallows, to toy with air-bubbles and floating

wreckage, and for a few moments to live over again the calm joys of their childhood far away, back amid the grim old hills. All too soon this fairy glen came to an end; the path emerged from the dense beech woods, and in another mile the road brought me into the village of Edzell.

Here my walk was practically ended, as, although I went on foot half-a-dozen miles further—to Brechin—next morning, there was little to be gained by so doing. Within a week I had traversed the greater part of the breadth of the Highlands, through a succession of scenes scarcely to be surpassed; and I had proved that the early part of the season—before coaches are running, and tourists' arrangements and charges in operation—is perhaps more adapted than any other for giving satisfaction and enjoyment to a pedestrian. It only remains to add that all expenses were amply covered by a five pound note.

SCANSORIAL GLEANINGS IN BELLES-LETTRES. (I.)

BY ERNEST A. BAKER.

SOONER or later there comes a time when the climber, still keen on the sport, who once devoured even the "Committee Notes" with eager relish, finds mountaineering literature unreadable. How hard it is now to recapture the distant mood when one awaited the next number of the *S.M.C.J.* with suspense so keen that if the editor were a day late one felt the same resentment as if he had cut off our news from the front or suppressed the report of a naval battle! What misdeed weighs heavier on my own head than to have added to the vast accumulation of climbing literature, in volume or journal, that now crowds the pictures off the walls in the Club Library? The sole hope of condonation is the abject plea that the man with an itch for writing can no more abstain from describing his climbs than from climbing itself. Climbing literature, in other words, printed matter about climbing, unless it is utilitarian and meant for practical guidance, is a deadly bore. There are only two exceptions to the most sweeping generalization—first, the few passages of description or narrative that happen, through some gift or accident, to be delightful as pièces of writing; and secondly, those instances where a poet, a humorist, or some other genius has touched on climbing in a way that is vital or amusing, whether consciously or unconsciously so. Of the first, when we have mentioned Leslie Stephen, Tyndall, Moore, Whymper, how many are there left? The second class of literary treasure trove is the subject of this article.

Undoubtedly, there is a perennial joy in searching for or, better still, coming by chance on some old or modern author who brings with him a real breath of the mountains, a glimpse of

> "The light that never was, on sea or land,"

except on the high mountains, or an echo of actual life and strife on the topmost levels of the earth. Of a different

kind, but not less refreshing, are those passages in which writers, without a glimmer of our enlightened adoration of the mountains, have set down their crude ideas with an unwary frankness that uplifts us with a sense of superiority and compassion for the blindness of common humanity. Research for such passages might take us a long way back; but the most fertile period is the eighteenth century, the time just before and just after the gradual awakening of intelligent minds from the conception of mountain scenery as terrible, forbidding, and offensive, to the contrary modern view. At the beginning of that hundred years, Addison could say nothing better of the mountainous prospects round the Lake of Geneva than "that they fill the Mind with an agreeable kind of Horror, and form one of the most irregular, mis-shapen Scenes in the World" ("*Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, etc., in the years* 1701-3"). At the end, at full-tide of the romantic movement, this is how Mrs Radcliffe rings the changes on "sublimity" and such-like sentiments, in her account of an ascent with guides and horses into the "thin air" of Skiddaw:—

"The aspect of these rocks, with the fragments that have rolled from their summits, and lie on each side of the road, prepared us for the scene of tremendous ruin we were approaching in the gorge, or pass of Borrowdale, which opens from the centre of the amphitheatre, that binds the head of Derwentwater. Dark rocks yawn at its entrance, terrific as the wildness of a maniac, and disclose a narrow pass, running up between mountains of granite that are shook into almost every possible form of horror. All above resembles the accumulation of an earthquake: splintered, shivered, piled, amassed. Huge cliffs have rolled down into the glen below, where, however, is still a miniature of the sweetest pastoral beauty on the banks of the river Derwent; but description cannot paint either the wildness of the mountains, or the pastoral sylvan peace and softness, that wind at their base."

That is Mrs Radcliffe at her most restrained. Long before, when, in "The Mysteries of Udolpho," she had described mountains without having seen them, this is her more vivacious way:—

"The road had constantly ascended, conducting the travellers into the higher regions of the air, where immense glaciers exhibited their frozen horrors, and eternal snow whitened the summits of the

mountains. . . . Over these crags rose others of stupendous height and fantastic shape; some shooting into cones; others impending far over their base in huge masses of granite, along whose broken ridges was often lodged a weight of snow, that, trembling even to the vibration of a sound, threatened to bear destruction in its course to the vale. Around were seen only forms of grandeur—the long perspective of mountain tops tinged with ethereal blue, or white with snow; valleys of ice, and forests of gloomy fir. . . . The deep silence of these solitudes was broken only at intervals by the scream of the vultures seen cowering round some cliff below, or by the cry of the eagle sailing high in the air; except when the travellers listened to the hollow thunder that sometimes muttered at their feet."

The curious thing is that the writers of the age of reason were as intemperate in their use of adjectives as the romanticists themselves: their adjectives conveyed an utterly different impression, but one quite as forcible. No one would accuse the author of "Robinson Crusoe" of a tendency to fine writing; yet he says of Lochaber:—

"It is indeed a frightful country full of hidious desart Mountains and unpassable, except to the *Highlanders* who possess the Precipices."

When he penetrates the wild recesses of Snowdonia, this is how he writes:—

"I must confess, I that have seen the *Alps* on so many Occasions, have gone under so many of the most frightful Passes in the Country of the Grisons, and in the Mountains of *Tirol*, never believed there was anything in this Island of *Britain* that came near, much less that exceeded those Hills in the Terror of their Aspect, or in the Difficulty of Access to them; but certainly, if they are out done anywhere in the World, it is here. Even *Hannibal* himself wou'd have found it impossible to have marched his Army over Snowden, or over the Rocks of *Merioneth* and *Montgomery* Shires; no, not with all the help that Fire and Vinegar could have yielded, to make way for him.

"Now we enter'd *N. Wales*, only I should add, that as we passed we had a sight of the famous *Plymlymon-Hill*, out of the *East* Side of which, as I mentioned before, rises the *Severn* and the *Wye*, and out of the *West* Side of it rises the *Rydall* and the *Ystwyth*. This Mountain is exceeding high, and, tho' it is hard to say which is the highest Hill in *Wales*, yet I think this bids fair for it; nor is the Country for twenty Miles round it anything but a continual ridge of Mountains. So that for almost a

whole Week's Travel we seemed to be conversing with the upper Regions; for we were often above the Clouds, I'm sure, a very great way, and the Names of some of these Hills seemed as barbarous to us who spoke no *Welch*, as the Hills themselves."

The barbarity of the names has been a good deal mitigated in our time, to judge by the specimens cited by Defoe:—Kader-Idricks, Rarauvaur, and Mowylwynda.

Defoe's "Tour" appeared in 1724. Half a century later, an eccentric Unitarian, mathematician, and natural philosopher, Thomas Amory, wrote a semi-autobiographical narrative entitled "The Life and Opinions of John Buncle," which was one of Hazlitt and Lamb's favourite books, and is perhaps the choicest example of unconscious humour in the English language. Buncle, or Amory, goes on an adventurous journey through the hills on the borders of Westmoreland, Yorkshire, and Durham (which he calls "Bishoprick"), looking, without a map or apparently any very precise directions, for the house of a friend who lives at a place bearing the euphonious name of Ulubræ. The mountains, the crags, the caves, the potholes he comes across in huge numbers in the territory now under the sway of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, are described with a spirit and surmounted with a sportsmanlike energy that should make him the patron saint of that body. Lakes encompassed with mountains, from which torrents pour into fathomless gulfs; lochs so profound that he conjectures they go down to the abyss or "the vast treasury of waters within the earth"; gloomy chasms like Elden Hole in Derbyshire, and caves like Poole's Hole, both of which he describes by name inaccurately; terrific precipices, burning rivers — the district of Stainmore had some wonderful attractions in those days. "Philosophy undertakes to account for everything," he says; "I am sure it is in many cases mistaken." Unfortunately, his veracity was such that he relates how on one occasion he drank so much Burgundy that the sweat ran of a red colour down his body, and his geographical discoveries are not more credible than the mathematical lady, Azora, head of a community of erudite damsels immured in an inaccessible valley, who talk theology, metaphysics, and algebra,

their recreations being set out in whole pages of symbols and diagrams.

"When I had done, I walked about to see if there was any way down the mountain's sides, to go to Ulubræ, from whence I came; but for miles it was a frightful perpendicular rock, next that place and impossible for a goat to descend; and on the side that faced Bishoprick, a fine country house and gardens, about a quarter of a mile off, in a delightful valley, that extended with all the beauties of wood and lawn, meadow and water, from the foot of the mountain I was on. The precipice here was a terrible way for a man to venture down; but it was possible to do it with a long pole, at the hazard of his life, as the rocks projected in many places, and the side went sloping off; and therefore I resolved to descend. I could not think of going back the way I came, since I had got safe into day again. I thought it better to risk my limbs in the face of the sun, than perish as I might do in the black and dismal inside of those tremendous hills. Besides, the house in my view might be perhaps the one I wanted. It was possible my friend Turner might live there.

"With art and caution then I began to descend, and so happily took every offered advantage of jutting rock and path in my way, that without any accident I got safely down; though the perils were so great, that often I could not reach from rock to rock with my pole. In this case, I aimed the point of my pole at the spot I intended to light on, and clapped my feet close to it, when I went off in the air from the rock: the pole coming first to the place broke the fall, and then sliding gently down by it, I pitched on the spot I designed to go to, though six, seven, or eight fathoms off, and the part of the rock below not more than a yard broad. It is a frightful piece of activity to a bystander, but the youths on the mountains of Ireland make nothing of it; they are as expert at this work as the Teneriffe men, from whom I learned it; and made Ralph so perfect in the action, while he travelled with me, that he could go from rock to rock like a bird."

Amory or Buncle obviously plumed himself on his athletic prowess, as well as his mathematics and metaphysics. I fancy the delightful extravagance of his descriptive pen may be put down to the natural intoxication of a sudden awakening to the grandeurs of natural scenery. It was the first time man had been attracted by the call of the wild. Hitherto it had simply frightened him, and made him feel he wanted to go home and sit by the fire. If a date is required for this epoch-making change of mind, I should be inclined to mention the year 1740, when the poet Gray, after quarrelling with Horace

Walpole in Italy, came back to England by way of the Grande Chartreuse, and wrote the famous alcaic stanzas in the visitors' book, beginning,

"Oh Tu, severa Religio loci."

My friend, F. E. Ross, who helped me some years ago to perpetrate an anthology of mountain literature, has, like me, an overwhelming consciousness of the extent to which mountain scenery comes into poetry since Gray's initiative. But I propose to stick to prose for the time being, and skipping the rest of the romantic era, to come down to the period when mountaineering became a fashionable sport, and not only did climbers turn authors, but authors went mountaineering. Charles Kingsley was one of the last, and perhaps the earliest episode in light literature revealing the spirit and likewise the technical knowledge of a mountaineer is that part of "Two Years Ago" (1857) which relates the adventures of the neurotic poet, Elsley Vavasour, *alias* Briggs, when mad with jealousy he rushes out from Penygwryd in the darkness of night, and is caught by a terrific storm on the summit of the Glydrs. The whole passage should be familiar to every climber, and there is only space to quote a few sentences from one chapter, "Nature's Melodrama," describing the height of the storm :—

"What was that? He started: shuddered—as well he might. Had he seen heaven opened? or another place? So momentary was the vision, that he scarce knew what he saw.

"There it was again! Lasting but for a moment: but long enough to let him see the whole western heaven transfigured into one sheet of pale blue gauze, and before it Snowdon towering black as ink, with every saw and crest cut out, hard and terrible, against the lightning glare: and then the blank of darkness.

"Again! The awful black giant, towering high in air, before the gates of the blue abyss of flame; but a black crown of cloud has settled upon his head; and out of it the lightning sparks leap to and from, ringing his brows with a coronet of fire.

"Another moment, and the roar of that great battle between earth and heaven crashed full on Elsley's ears.

"He heard it leap from Snowdon, sharp and rattling, across the gulf toward him, till it crashed full upon the Glyder overhead, and rolled and flapped from crag to crag, and died away along the dreary downs. No! There it boomed out again, thundering full

against Siabod on the left; and Siabod tossed it on to Moel Meirch, who answered from all her clefts and peaks with a long confused battle-growl, and then tossed it across to Aran; and Aran, with one dull, bluff report from her flat cliff, to nearer Lliwedd; till, worn out with the long buffetings of that giant ring, it sank and died on Gwynnant far below—but ere it died, another and another thundercrash burst, sharper and nearer every time, to hurry round the hills after the one which roared before it."

In George Meredith's novels there are many indications of a first-hand knowledge of the Alps, if not of actual mountaineering. One of his most quotable descriptive pieces is in "Beauchamp's Career," where a pair of lovers see the sun rise on the Alps from their boat on the Adriatic:—

"Nevil Beauchamp dozed for an hour. He was wakened by light on his eyelids, and starting up beheld the many pinnacles of grey and red rocks and shadowy high white regions at the head of the gulf waiting for the sun; and the sun struck them. One by one they came out in crimson flame, till the vivid host appeared to have stepped forward. The shadows on the snow-fields deepened to purple below an irradiation of rose and pink and dazzling silver. There of all the world you might imagine gods to sit. A crowd of mountains endless in range, erect or flowing, shattered and arid, or leaning in smooth lustre, hangs above the gulf. The mountains are sovereign Alps, and the sea is beneath them. The whole gigantic body keeps the sea, as with a hand, to right and left."

"The Adriatic was dark, the Alps had heaven to themselves. Crescents and hollows, rosy mounds, white shelves, shining ledges, domes and peaks, all the towering heights were in illumination from Friuli into farthest Tyrol; beyond earth to the stricken senses of the gazers. Colour was steadfast on the massive front ranks; it wavered in the remoteness, and was quick and dim as though it fell on beating wings; but there too divine colour seized and shaped forth solid forms, and thence away to others in uttermost distances where the incredible flickering gleam of new heights arose, that soared, or stretched their white uncertain curves in sky like wings traversing infinity."

Stevenson's "Kidnapped" is not so quotable, but it has the smell of the heather, the tang of the mountain wind, and the right spirit of Highland adventure. David Balfour and Alan Breck's flight through Glencoe, across the Muir of Rannoch, and into the savage fastnesses of Ben Alder, is thrilling reading for a Scottish mountaineer,

who will find it hard to detect any false or exaggerated note. Capital, too, are the Highland scenes of Stevenson's follower, Mr Neil Munro. "John Splendid," to mention only one of several stories, has the march of Montrose's army over the pass of Corryarrick, the flight up Glen Nevis and over the hills to Glencoe and Dalness, and the picturesque scene at Tynree, *videlicet* that well-known resting-place for the Crowberry Ridge, Kingshouse Inn. Here are two scraps of narrative that bring actuality shrewdly before one :—

"Glen Nevis, as I saw it that night in the light of the moon, is what comes to me now in my dreams. I smell the odour of the sweat-drenched, uncleanly cleeding of those savage clans about us ; I see the hills lift on either hand with splintered peaks that prick among the stars—gorge and ravine, and the wide ascending passes filled ever with the sound of the river, and the coarse, narrow drove-road leads into despair. That night the moon rode at the full about a vacant sky. There was not even a vapour on the hills ; the wind had failed in the afternoon."

"At the foot of the hill Carn Dearg (or the Red Mount), that is one of the three gallant mountains that keep company for Ben Nevis, the biggest of all, the path we followed made a twist to the left into a gully from which a blast of the morning's wind had cleaned out the snow as by a giant's spade."

Some exquisite pictures of the Western Highlands (in "Among the Summer Isles") and of Arran (in "A Letter by the Way") will be found in Sir John Skelton's "Summers and Winters in Balmawhapple" ; and in the chapters entitled "Alpine Resting Places" are some charming bits describing a first glimpse of Mont Blanc from a train climbing the dreary ascent to Pontarlier, and some vivid first impressions of the higher altitudes on people whose characters are sketched so intimately that the impressions ring true. One passage depicting the Dolomites must suffice, and only because it is brief, not exceptionally fine :—

"The Dolomites, they say, are coral mountains, reared by the same little architects who build the coral islands ; and I can quite believe it, for they are really too unscrupulously eccentric to have been built up by any graver or more responsible machinery, such as ice, or water, or fire. This Martino di Castrozza is a really grand Alpine resting place, 6,000 feet high ; among lovely honey-

laden pastures, and the noble pine-woods of the Austrian Tyrol, and face to face with the marvellous wall of the Saas Maor; but, for real enjoyment, give me the country round about Cortina—the Dolomites of the Ampezzo; which, after all, to be sure, are not true Dolomites, but only a new freak of our old friend, the irrepressible limestone. There you have a wide sweep, and the mountains (except at Landro) do not come close to you—do not frighten you by their cold shadows and startling pallor. For the Dolomites, as a Scotsman would say, are 'uncanny'; and I would as soon go to a Witches' Sabbath on the Brocken as lie out all night on the Pelmo or the Tofana. Take it all in all, the Ampezzo Thal, with its weird procession of bleached and splintered peaks, from the Drei Zinnen to the Antelao, is probably the most fantastic valley in the world, and is wonderfully suggestive of old anarchic forces laid to sleep—shadowy forms of uncrowned gods who troop past in the twilight. If Keats—poor fellow—had gone there on his way to Rome, after parting with that detestable Fanny Brawne, he would have found the very place where the afflicted Titans hid themselves out of sight."

(*To be continued.*)

RIGHTS OF WAY.

By H. P. Macmillan, K.C.

The members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club in the course of their pursuits fortunately do not often come into contact with the law. Still more seldom do they come into conflict with it. They have chosen a more excellent way. Their policy has always been to respect the rights of landowners, and they have had their reward in the generous treatment which they have almost invariably received from the proprietors of the Scottish mountains. It can do no harm, however, to remind ourselves from time to time of the fact that our chosen sport can only be legally enjoyed by virtue of tolerance or consent on the part of those to whom the mountains belong. It depends for its exercise on privilege, not on right. The statement so often glibly made that there is no law of trespass in Scotland is a fallacy. It is commonly provoked by the minatory announcement that trespassers will be prosecuted, so frequently displayed on notice boards. It is true that such announcements are mere *bruta fulmina*, for trespass, apart from infringement of the game laws or the commission of malicious mischief, is not by the law of Scotland a criminal offence, and there can be no such thing as a prosecution for trespass. But the civil law fully recognises the exclusive rights of private property in land, and though the remedies of interdict and damages are seldom invoked, they exist, and can be enforced as the ultimate sanction of the law. The pleasant doctrine that those who best enjoy the beauties of natural scenery are its truest owners is a poetic, not a legal fiction, and the maxim of Béranger's vagabond—"voir c'est avoir"—has no place in the law.

While the law of Scotland thus recognises no right of peregrination, no *jus spatiandi*, on the part of the freeborn Scot over his native hills and moors, it has always admitted the existence of public rights of way. Apart from the broad highways, which have a special legislative status

of their own, proprietors have always had at common law to submit to the passage of the public over their lands by defined routes established by use and wont. The pedestrian in Scotland has a special interest in the law of right of way, for it bestows upon him an undeniable passport to some of the choicest spots among the Highland hills. The origin of many of the Scottish rights of way is matter of ancient history. Some of the most famous trace their existence back to the times before the beneficent advent of General Wade, when their rough tracks served as the only means of passage from one part of the country to another, and many of them are old drove roads. Not a few notable battles of the law have been concerned with the assertion of rights of way, and the landowner who endeavours to close one down is apt to experience the truth of the saying, "qui terre a, guerre a."

It is of some interest to extract from the reports of these hard-fought contests the criteria which the law requires to be satisfied before the existence of a public right of way can be established. The main requirement is that the way must have both its beginning and its ending at a public place. It must lead from one public place to another public place, and it must do so by a definite route. In the words of Lord President M'Neill, "it is from a place where the public are entitled to be to a place where the public are entitled to be." What constitutes for the purpose a public place is a question of some nicety. The typical public place is a highway, and the typical right of way is the short cut which starts from a point on a highway and ends at a point on the same or another highway. But any place to which the public have a right to resort will do as the point of departure or the point of termination of a right of way. A harbour, a kirk, or a market-place will satisfy the law. A mountain top or a spot of antiquarian or picturesque interest, no matter how constantly the public may have visited it, will not *per se* form a competent terminus for a right of way. The public have no legal right to be there.

If the way claimed proceeds by a defined track from

one public place properly so-called to another public place properly so-called, the law next examines the duration and the character of the use which has been made of it. It must have been used by the public continuously for forty years, and the use must have been not by mere tolerance, but as of right and without effectual challenge by the proprietor. In Scotland it is possession by the public, not, as in England, actual or assumed dedication by the owner, which forms the basis of the public title. As the right is constituted by forty years' possession, so it may be lost by failure to exercise it for forty years.

A most important element is that the use of the route by the public must have been from end to end. A right of way from one place to another cannot be constituted by piecing into a continuous whole a series of paths, no one of which by itself could constitute a right of way, and each of which has been used separately. Once, however, a right of way has been duly established, the public are entitled to use any part of it. An authoritative determination on this point was given in the recent Tarland right of way case. It was there contended that a proprietor of land situated on part of the line of a right of way was not entitled to use a portion of the right of way as an access to his property, the argument being that he was not an end-to-end user. Lord President Strathclyde effectually disposed of this contention. While fully recognising that only end-to-end use can establish a right of way, his Lordship laid it down that "when the right of way is once established the user cannot be confined to travellers from end to end." In the course of his opinion the Lord President said:—"The whole route becomes *res publica*, and if so, it seems to me to be a self-contradictory proposition to say the whole route is *res publica*, and from the route a large section of the public is always to be excluded, to wit, those who propose to traverse only a portion, and not to travel from end to end. If a public right of way be once established, then no proprietor at any part of the route can prevent members of the public from using that part unless they undertake to use the whole route." On a right of way, as Lord

Skerrington puts it, "at every step one passes from one public place to another."

The value to the pedestrian of the legal principle embodied in the foregoing quotations from the judgments in the Tarland case is manifest. He can take a stroll along a right of way as far as he pleases, and then retrace his steps without going to the terminus of the route. He cannot, when on a right of way, be asked his destination. On the path he is secure from all challenge. Any other doctrine, indeed, would lead to absurdities. Were the law otherwise, the wayfarer setting out from Coylum Bridge with the *bona fide* intention of going through the Larig Ghru to Derry Lodge would become a trespasser if he turned back at the Pools of Dee owing to stress of weather.

It may be that one of the many consequences of the present upheaval will be a new opening up of the Highlands. The deer which have hitherto monopolised many of the most glorious Highland tracks may have to give way to the less exclusive sheep. The process is already in operation in various quarters. The proposed resettlement of depopulated areas may give occasion for the formation of new roads and paths available to the pedestrian. In these and other ways greater freedom of access to the hills may be gained, and the purpose of Lord Bryce's Access to Mountains Bill be in part at least indirectly achieved. But the Scottish mountaineer will always cherish a jealous and zealous affection for the famous old Highland rights of way which are consecrated for him by the memories of many a happy day's tramp.

TENNYSON (1809-1892).

By F. S. Goggs.

Tennyson was born in 1809, and had therefore attained middle age before the rise of mountaineering as a sport. His son tells us, what indeed no reader can fail to observe for himself, that his father "had the keenest and most delicate sense of the beauties of Nature." Further, he enjoyed excellent health, had a good physique, and from his youth till he became an octogenarian was very fond of walking. When in his twenties we are told:—

"**While Hallam was at Somersby, after the morning's work the Tennysons and he would generally go for long walks together beyond the 'bounding hill.' Not only was my father fond of walking, but of 'putting the stone,' and other athletic feats" (Vol. I., p. 76).***

In 1869 he was with Frederick Locker-Lampson in Switzerland, and the latter, writing to F. T. Palgrave, says:—

"**I think A. T. is happy and quite well. He walks excellently, and is ready for a walk now (2 o'clock), having been at it since 8 A.M." (Vol. II., p. 75).**

Under the date of 1875 his son writes:—

"**With his crook-handled stick, and accompanied by my brother or myself, or a friend, and by a dog, he would tramp over hill and dale, not caring if the weather were fair or foul, every now and then stopping in his rapid walk to give point to an argument or to an anecdote" (Vol. II., p. 209).**

Another ten years go by and we find him still enjoying his walks, as the following excerpt proves:—

"**Mrs de Navarro (Miss Anderson) writes in her 'Memories': 'I had the happiness of joining him in the two hours' walk which, rain or shine, he took daily. His tender interest in every "bud and flower and leaf" was charming. How many pretty legends he had about each! The cliffs, the sky, the sea, and shrubs, the very lumps of chalk under foot, he had a word for them all. The things he read in Nature's book were full of the same kind of poetry as his own; and the "sunbeams of his cheerful spirit" flood all my memories of those**

* Wherever Vol. I. or II. is mentioned, the reference is to "Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Memoir by his Son," in 2 vols., London, 1897. When only a page is mentioned the reference is to the Poet's complete works in one volume, London, 1907.

delightful walks. Though nearer eighty than seventy, his step was so rapid, he moved so briskly, that it was with difficulty I kept up with him. The last twenty minutes of the two hours generally ended in a kind of trot. Weather never interrupted his exercise. He scorned an umbrella. With his long dark mantle and thick boots, he defied all storms. When his large-brimmed hat became heavy with water, he would stop and give it a great shake, saying, "How much better this is than to be huddled over the fire for fear of a little weather!" His great strength and general health were due, no doubt, to the time he spent so regularly in the open air'" (Vol. II., p. 346).

Still later (1889) Mr F. T. Palgrave writes:—

"And (at all but 80) so great were his physical powers that he led me down one of his favourite walks to the Sussex weald some 400 feet below the house, and then climbed the hill, with steps that allowed no hesitation to his companions, and resting only here and there. . . ."

Miss Weld also refers to "the rapid pace, habitual to him."

Here then we have combined in the same individual a love of Nature, a physical capacity for, and a delight in walking. A man possessing such qualifications can nowadays hardly help becoming a mountaineer. Tennyson, unfortunately, came into the world ten years too soon to catch the fever in the early fifties, but I shall endeavour to show from his poems that in spirit he was truly one of ourselves.

He came under the influence of the mountains early in life, for he was only twenty-one when, along with Arthur Hallam, he started in 1830 for the Pyrenees with money for the insurgent allies of Torrijos.

"Alfred and Arthur held a secret meeting with the heads of the conspiracy on the Spanish border, and were not heard of by their friends for some weeks" (Vol. I., p. 51).

"From this time forward the lonely Pyreneean peaks, the mountains with 'their streaks of virgin snow,' like the Maladetta, mountain 'lawns and meadow-ledges midway down,' and the 'long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine,' were a continual source of inspiration; he had written part of 'Oenone' in the valley of Cauteretz. His sojourn there was also commemorated one and thirty years afterwards in 'All along the Valley'" (Vol. I., pp. 54, 55).

In 1861 he revisited the Pyrenees, taking the Auvergne district *en route*, where he climbed the Puy de Dôme and several other extinct volcanoes. From Bagnères de Bigorre he climbed the Pic du Midi, and later walked over the

Port de Venasque into Spain. The Lac d'Oo and the Lac Vert were also visited. From Gavarnie "he climbed toward the Brèche de Roland." Mr Clough, one of the party, noticed how silent he was, and how absorbed by the beauty of the mountains. On 6th August, his birthday, he arrived at Cauteretz—his favourite valley in the Pyrenees: thence he and two of the party climbed to the Lac de Gaube, and Tennyson clambered on alone to the Lac Bleu.

In 1874 he was back again at Cauteretz and Gavarnie, and remarked that "the Pyrenees look much more Homeric than the Alps."

In 1875 he paid his last visit to his favourite mountain region, saw Pau, and made a tour in the western Pyrenees.

Other mountainous or hilly districts visited by him were the following:—

In 1832 he went for a tour on the Rhine and climbed the Drachenfels.

In 1846 he went to Switzerland via the Rhine, and I regret to note "hired a horse up the Righi." After seeing the sun rise from there he went over the Brunig to Meiringen, thence to Lauterbrunnen via the Wengern Alp. "Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height," was written this year chiefly at Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald.

The view of the valley of Lauterbrunnen descending from the Wengern Alp he mentions as one of "the stateliest bits of landskip I ever saw."

1851 found him in Italy: he returned to Paris via the "snowy Splügen."

1858. Norway.

1859. Portugal.

1869. Murren and Grindelwald.

1872. Grenoble and Chartreuse, Geneva.

"Alfred and Lionel" (his son) "climbed the Dent du Chat, more than 6,000 feet high. They had a beautiful view of Mont Blanc. The guide approved of his powers of endurance, and called both father and son good mountaineers" (Vol. II., p. 115).

1873. Pontresina, Italian Lakes, Val Sesia, and Val d'Anzasca. The last-named he considered the grandest

valley that he had seen in the Alps; he began here the poem, "The Voice and the Peak," and described the torrent in the valley as—

"Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of dawn."

Ponte Grande, Macugnaga, Domo d'Ossola, over the Simplon in a thick mist, to Neufchâtel, and home.

1880. Munich, Tegernsee, Innsbruck, Landro, Cortina, Pieve di Cadore, Venice, Verona, Lago di Garda, Milan. Whilst these tours show that he appreciated Continental mountain scenery, the following list proves that he equally appreciated the highlands of Great Britain.

In 1835 he stayed some time at Mirehouse, by Bassenthwaite Lake, and spent a week at Ambleside.

1839. Tour in Wales. Aberystwyth, Barmouth, Cader Idris, Llanberis Lakes, where he wrote "Edwin Morris." I gather that he made the ascent of Snowdon.

1842. Killarney.

1848. Cornwall.

1849. Ireland again. Five weeks with De Vere at Curragh Chase. Killarney, &c.

"Alfred Tennyson's desire to see cliffs and waves revived, and we sent him to our cousin . . . who lived at Valencia, where they are seen at their best. I led him to the summit of Knock Patrick. . . ."

1856. Llangollen, Dolgelly, Barmouth.

"My father spoke of the 'high rejoicing lines of Cader Idris.' Mother wrote, Sept. 8th :—

"A. climbed Cader Idris. Pouring rain came on. . . . A message came from him by the guide that he had gone to Dolgelly."

What a pity that the noun in the middle of the last sentence should occur!

1857. Coniston.

1862. Derbyshire and Yorks., Peak Cavern, Wensleydale, Skipton, &c.

1871. Pont Aberglaslyn, Llanberis.

1882. Dovedale.

1887. Cornwall, Channel Islands.

It will be noted that Scotland has not yet appeared. For convenience sake I purpose referring to the poet's trips to Scotland apart from his other travels. As early

as 1833, when the poet was twenty-four, he was this side of the Border, but no particulars of the places visited have been preserved.

In 1848 he seems to have spent some time in the North, and the following excerpt from a letter of his to Aubrey de Vere, dated Cheltenham, October, is interesting:—

"I have seen many fine things in Scotland, and many fine things did I miss seeing, rolled up as they were tenfold in Scotch mists. Loch Awe, too, which you call the finest, I saw. It is certainly very grand, tho' the pass disappointed me. I thought of Wordsworth's lines there, and, approving much, disapproved of much in them. What can be worse than to say to old Kilchurn Castle, 'Take then thy seat, viceregent unreproved'? Surely, master Aubrey, that is puffed and false. I steamed from Oban to Skye, a splendid voyage. for the whole day, with the exception of three hours in the morning, was blue and sunny; and I think I saw more outlines of hills than ever I saw in my life; and exquisitely draped are those Skye mountains. Loch Corusk, said to be the wildest scene in the Highlands, I failed in seeing. After a fatiguing expedition over the roughest ground on a wet day, we arrived at the banks of the loch, and made acquaintance with the extremest tiptoes of the hills, all else being thick wool-white fog. Dunkeld is lovely, and I delighted in Inverary, tho' there likewise I got drenched to the skin, till my very hat wept tears of ink. I rejoiced in Killeen——" (Vol. I., pp. 280, 281).

In 1853 he was asked whether he would allow himself to be nominated as Rector of the University of Edinburgh, but he declined.

This year he visited Glasgow, Carstairs, and Edinburgh, and at the capital he wrote "The Daisy."

In 1857 he was again at Carstairs, where his college friend, Monteith, lives, and also paid a visit to the Duke of Argyll at Inveraray.

In a letter of the poet's, dated the 7th May 1874, the following episode is related:—

"I was in Scotland about the time when Dr Simpson brought chloroform into use, and I had a slight but very painful operation on the nail of the great toe to undergo, and the friend with whom I was staying urged me to try Simpson's prescription. When I came out of the trance——" (Vol. II., p. 158).

In 1880 the students of Glasgow University endeavoured to obtain Tennyson's consent to his nomination for the Lord Rectorship of Glasgow. Thinking the

request came from the students as a body, irrespective of political divisions, he consented, but when he found he was being put forward as a nominee of the Conservative party, he withdrew.

In September 1883 Tennyson enjoyed a trip in the S.S. "Pembroke Castle." Starting from Barrow-in-Furness, the boat steamed via Ailsa Crag and Islay to Oban.

"From Oban we went to Loch Hourn," Tobermory, "past the grand headlands of Skye to Gairloch. We landed and drove to Loch Maree, between ferny, heathery hills, covered with gray crags, very wild—by the side of a rushing burn. The loch is about eighteen miles long, with rich pine-grown islands scattered here and there, and wooded hills on either hand, sloping up to a grand fellow, Ben Slioch. Gladstone and my father thought the whole landscape one of the most beautiful they had ever seen" (Vol. II., p. 279).

Proceeding onwards round Cape Wrath they landed at Kirkwall, where Gladstone, who was one of the party, and Tennyson received the Freedom of the Burgh. The boat then crossed the North Sea to Christiansand and Copenhagen.

Another link of Tennyson's with Scotland was the Duke of Argyll—a close personal friend, as is proved by F. T. Palgrave's remark :—

"That most true friend, one of the very few who, I think, really replaced for T. the old fraternal circle of Trinity, the Duke of Argyll, was our companion."

Let us now turn to the poems, and note those passages which, in the writer's opinion, show clearly the spirit of the mountaineer :—

"The path was perilous, loosely strewn with crags :
We mounted slowly ; yet to both there came
The joy of life in steepness overcome,
And victories of ascent, and looking down
On all that had look'd down on us ; and joy
In breathing nearer heaven."
("*The Lover's Tale*," p. 482, *written in the poet's nineteenth year.*)

The delight in an extensive view, indicated by the above, is somewhat comically emphasised by the following episode :—

"My father went on to say he told Wordsworth that balloons would perhaps be fixed at the bottom of high mountains so as to

take people to the top to see the views. Wordsworth grunted, thinking this a sacrilege" (Vol. II., p. 377).

Our poet doubtless jested: put "mountain railways" in the place of "balloons," and his prophecy has come true. All the same, to Wordsworth's grunts we join our own.

Could anyone, not to some extent at least a climber, have made use of the following simile?—

> "Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
> The path of duty was the way to glory:
> He, that ever following her commands,
> On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
> Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
> His path upward, and prevail'd,
> Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled,
> Are close upon the shining table-lands
> To which our God Himself is moon and sun."
>
> ("*Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*," VIII., p. 220.)

Or have referred to—

> "Some vague emotion of delight
> In gazing up an Alpine height."
>
> ("*The Two Voices*," p. 35.)

The mystery associated with mountains, which produces in most minds a sense of reverence or worship, Tennyson felt in the highest degree. From several passages illustrating this point I would quote the following four:—

Palace of Feasting and Pleasure

III

> 'And then I look'd up toward a mountain-tract,
> That girt the region with high cliff and lawn:
> I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
> Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
> God made Himself an awful rose of dawn,
> Unheeded: . . .

V

> 'Once more uprose the mystic mountain-range
> . . . . . .
> At last I heard a voice upon the slope,
> Cry to the summit, 'Is there any hope?'
> To which an answer peal'd from that high land,
> But in a tongue no man could understand;
> And on the glimmering limit far withdrawn
> God made Himself an awful rose of dawn."
>
> ("*The Vision of Sin*," pp. 121-123.)

"'Tis not alone the warbling woods,
The starr'd abysses of the sky,
The silent hills, the stormy floods,
The green that fills the eye—
These only do not move the breast;
Like some wise artist, Nature gives,
Thro' all her works, to each that lives
A hint of somewhat unexprest."

(Vol. I., p. 145, *written in* 1834.)

"My wont
Was more to scale the highest of the heights
With some strange hope to see the nearer God.
One naked peak—the sister of the sun
Would climb from out the dark, and linger there
To silver all the valleys with her shafts—
There once, but long ago, five-fold thy term
Of years, I lay; the winds were dead for heat;
The noonday crag made the land burn; and sick
For shadow—not one bush was near—I rose
Following a torrent till its myriad falls
Found silence in the hollows underneath."

. . . . . .

("*Tiresias*," p. 538.)

"The mountains wooded to the peak, the lawns
And winding glades high up like ways to Heaven."

("*Enoch Arden*," p. 133.)

Then there occur numerous references to mountains which show that Tennyson was familiar with them. In that well-known idyl in "The Princess," "Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height," occurs what, according to our first President, Professor Ramsay (*S.M.C.J.*, Vol. I., p. 10), is "the most true and terse description of a glacier—that crowning object of a mountaineer's love—that was ever penned."

"Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls,
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors."

In "The Two Voices" we have the voice which suggests that effort is vain, using the simile of the difficulty of finding one's way up a mountain clothed in mist:—

"Cry, faint not, climb: the summits slope
Beyond the furthest flights of hope,
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.
Sometimes a little corner shines
As over rainy mist inclines
A gleaming crag with belts of pines.
I will go forward, sayest thou,
I shall not fail to find her now.
Look up, the fold is on her brow.
If straight thy track, or if oblique,
Thou know'st not. Shadows thou dost strike,
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like" (p. 33).

Readers will remember how the passage describing the vision of the Holy Grail starts:—

"There rose a hill that none but man could climb,
Scarr'd with a hundred wintry watercourses—
Storm at the top, and when we gained it, storm
Round us and death" . . . (p. 426).

———

"And . . . oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head."
("*The Daisy*," p. 233.)

———

"Far off, three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd: and dew'd with showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse."
("*The Lotos Eaters*," p. 54.)

What a picture springs into the mind on reading the following seven words:—

"These wet black passes and foam-churning chasms."
("*Sir John Oldcastle*" (*in Wales*), p. 521.)

The grand spectacle of sunrise or sunset in the Alps could not fail to appeal to Tennyson. He often refers to both. Readers will remember how in "The Daisy," written at Edinburgh, he describes the view from Milan Cathedral:—

"I climb'd the roofs at break of day;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.

. . . . . .

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there
A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys,
And snowy dells in a golden air" (p. 233).

Again in "The Voice and the Peak":—

> "The Peak is high and flush'd,
> At his highest with sunrise fire;
> . . . . .
> The voice and the Peak
> Far into heaven withdrawn;
> The lone glow and long roar
> Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of dawn!" (p. 240).

And in "Balin and Balan," p. 372:—

> "Sigh'd, as a boy lame-born beneath a height,
> That glooms his valley, sighs to see the peak
> Sun-flush'd, or touch at night the northern star;
> For one from out his village lately climb'd
> And brought report of azure lands and fair,
> Far seen to left and right; and he himself
> Hath hardly scaled with help a hundred feet
> Up from the base."

The soft effect of moonlight is noted in that fine line in "The Passing of Arthur":—

> "Far in the moonlit haze among the hills" (p. 467).

Mountain flowers and birds are also from time to time referred to by our poet. Many will recollect those charming four lines in "The Princess":—

> "Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears
> By some cold morning glacier; frail at first
> And feeble, all unconscious of itself,
> But such as gather'd colour day by day" (p. 212).

> "Nor knew we well what pleased us most,
> . . . . . .
> Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,
> Where oleanders flush'd the bed
> Of silent torrents, gravel-spread."
>
> ("*The Daisy*," p. 233.)

Then, in "Romney's Remorse" (p. 870), occurs a reference to staghorn moss:—

> "I had been among the hills, and brought you down
> A length of staghorn-moss, and this you twined
> About her cap."

One must also not omit reference to that fine fragment, "The Eagle":—

> " He clasps the crag with crooked hands,
> Close to the sun in lonely lands,
> Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.
> The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
> He watches from his mountain walls,
> And like a thunderbolt he falls " (p. 119).

Or to the description of an approaching storm seen from a mountain top. One commentator states it describes an actual experience of the poet on Snowdon.

> " As one that climbs a peak to gaze
> O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud
> Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night
> Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,
> And suck the blinding splendour from the sand,
> And quenching lake by lake, and tarn by tarn,
> Expunge the world."
>
> (" *The Princess*," *p.* 210.)

The love of the mountains, felt so intensely by Tennyson as a young man, continued to the end. In one of his latest poems, " By an Evolutionist," he goes to the hills for a simile to sum up a man's life, and puts into the mouth of " Old Age " the following lines :—

> " I have climb'd to the snows of Age, and I gaze at a field in the Past,
> Where I sank with the body at times in the sloughs of a low desire,
> But I hear no yelp of the beast, and the Man is quiet at last
> As he stands on the heights of his life with a glimpse of a height that is higher " (p. 873).

And in " Locksley Hall Sixty Years After," he turns again to the mountains for his imagery :—

> " Hope was ever on her mountain, watching till the day begun—
> Crown'd with sunlight—over darkness—from the still unrisen sun."
>
> (p. 562).

There is one passage in our poet's writings which shows clearly that he was never a member of the Alpine Club. It occurs in " Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham " :—

> " Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is it far?
> Not far. Climb first and reach me down thy hand " (p. 524).

Tennyson evidently knew nothing of the moral or physical support of the rope, but I trust I have been successful in showing that the poet had the root of the matter in him, and was in full sympathy with the pursuit of our craft.

S.M.C. ROLL OF HONOUR.

MR W. A. MORRISON, who has hitherto been engaged on munition work, is now a Lieutenant in the R.N.V.R., and is attached to the R.N.A.S.

In Memoriam.

C. G. CASH.

TO those of us who have been accustomed to frequent the Cairngorms the late Mr Cash may have been a familiar figure; or if we have not met him in person, we remember with gratitude the panorama in the hall of the Aviemore Hotel of the hills seen from there, also a list of the peaks visible from the summit of Arthur's Seat, which appeared in the *Cairngorm Club Journal* for July 1899, Vol. III., p. 21.

A master of English and History in the Edinburgh Academy, many of his vacations were spent among the Scottish hills, and his deep appreciation of the more rugged features of nature, coupled with a sound knowledge of place names, and of the birds, flowers, and berries of our higher altitudes, made him an exceptionally interesting companion, and ensured an enjoyable tramp over even the smaller hills in the most discouraging weather.

The owner of a strong and kindly personality, he yet was one of those strongly possessed of the instinct for loneliness; and the fact that he has been heard to admit a preference for a companionless wander in the solitudes of the hills may perhaps be a reason why the Club did not number him among its members. For, although not an enthusiast where ice and snow are concerned, nor admitting to any love of rock climbing, he had a multitude of ascents all over Scotland to his credit.

A native of southern Yorkshire, he did not bring the love of the hills with him, but had not been long within sight of them before he fell an ardent and willing victim to their charms.

To those who had the privilege of his friendship the news of his death is a sad reminder that empty spaces at our board must come apart from those caused by the violence of declared enemies. And for his pupils, for whom he had ever the ready hand and the cheery word, there is a painful gap none may fill. G. S.

ODDS AND ENDS.

The Cornhill Magazine, August 1917, pp. 159-168.—"How I dropped 'Marjorie' in Loch Scavaig," by Sir Edward Thorpe, C.B., F.R.S.

"Marjorie" is a yacht, and although there might not seem, at first thought, much connection between yachting and mountaineering, the connection has already been pointed out by one of our members (*S.M.C.J.* Vol. VII., p. 195, "From Sea to Summit," by Harold Raeburn).

The yacht, a 15-ton sailing cutter, starts from Ardrishaig, through the Crinan Canal to Iona. Owing to lack of wind she started badly by drifting through the dreaded Corrievrechan, "The Cauldron of the Speckled Sea." Three days were spent at "The Blessed Isle," and its one prominent hill, Dun Li, ascended. On by Staffa and Treshnish Point to Scavaig—

"The loch is a notoriously evil place in bad weather—'If there's a hell on earth it's in Scavaig,' I once heard a fisherman say—but there is a sheltered anchorage at the back of Soa, near the entrance, and there are certain ringbolts in the rocks behind an island in the loch . . . to which, if necessary, we could make fast.

"Accordingly we steered from Ardnamurchan so as to pass to the end of Eigg to view the famous Sgor—the southern end of the great wall of basalt which makes the island so remarkable an object. In no part of the Western Highlands is the scenery more striking than in this region of the Small Isles. Seen on a summer's evening, when backed by the broken serrated sky line of the Coolins, and tinged by the setting sun, they seem abodes of peace and bliss—veritable Isles of the Blest. At such a time one forgets their troubled past—their stories of rapine and murder by Norsemen, their slaughtered monks, and the bloody raids of reiving clansmen. Nor do we think of them swept by winter gales, smothered in rain-storms, and lashed by the furious seas which fling themselves against the rocks and reefs lining their steep-to shores."

A heavy gale now came on, and "the yacht, under her shortened sail, romped through the rising sea like a thing possessed."

Arriving at length at Soa they found a large yacht in possession of the anchorage and the ring-bolts. "There was nothing for it but to trust to luck and our ground-tackle." At length the anchor started, and the cutter was thrown "bodily against a smooth, flat-topped rock. I recall distinctly even now its slippery, shining surface, seen by the light from the anchor-lamp." The occupants of the yacht managed to land on this flat rock with their dinghy: the rock would be covered at high tide. "The squalls came down Gairsbheinn with such violence that they spun the little boat round, and it would have been blown off the rock had we not held on to it." At length the yacht filled and sank, and when the rock was awash the party were forced to take to the dinghy, and after an exciting interval landed at the mouth of the Mad Burn.

"The nearest habitation was the farm of Camasunary. To reach it we should need to climb the steep sides of Sgor-na-Sorith, over Ru Buidha and the Bad Step, and cross the stream in the valley between Blabheinn and the Black Coolins. It was a rough and weary walk over terribly broken ground, but we eventually got round, and fording the shallow burn, presented ourselves at the farm—as woeful a group as could well be imagined."

The article is capitally written, and should be read in its entirety.

Cairngorm Club Journal, January 1917, No. 48.—This number concludes Vol. VIII., and contains about the usual amount of interesting matter. We are sorry to notice that the Cairngorm Club, like ourselves, have to mourn the loss of several of their members at the Front, and in particular we much regret to learn of the death of their Secretary and Editor, Captain J. B. Gillies. His photograph, which appears as a frontispiece, tells its own tale to those who had not the pleasure of his personal acquaintance, and bears out to the full the eulogy on his character written by the new Editor, Mr Robert Anderson.

Cairngorm Club Journal, July 1917, No. 49.—Two articles in this number deserve notice. The first, by Mr James Cruickshank, "Mountain Indicator on Brimmond," gives a very interesting account of the erection of a brass index chart on a hill 870 feet in height, five miles from Aberdeen. It was erected by a local Literary Guild, and in the words of the inscription appearing on a brass plate on the south side of the pedestal is: "To the memory of the men of Newhills Parish and District who gave their lives in the Great War, 1914-191 ." A reproduction of the design of the chart is given as a frontispiece, and a photo of the indicator also appears. The second article to be specially noted is one by Mr G. Gordon Jenkins, C.E., on "Curvature and Refraction: Notes as to Observations from The Blue Hill, Aberdeen." This article shows that it is not always easy to ascertain whether or not a certain hill is visible from another, and for reasons which would hardly occur to the average climber. How much there is to learn in Nature, and how dangerous it is to be dogmatic, are the lessons which the non-scientific mountaineer will carry away from a perusal of Mr Jenkins' eight pages. A sectional diagram considerably enhances the interest and value of the article.

Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, Vol. IV., No. 1, 1916.—This number, due in November 1916, came to hand in September 1917. The delay was due partly to the difficulty in obtaining suitable matter in these times of stress, and partly to the ill-health of the Editor, Mr Palmer. The illustrations are, as usual, excellent. In the Club's Roll of Honour occurs a notice of the death of L. J. Oppenheimer, in hospital at Boulogne, from the effects of poison gas. Many of our members will have met him either at home or abroad. He wrote an article on the "Ben Nuis Chimney" in the first number of Vol. VII. of our own *Journal*, and his book, "The Heart of Lakeland," was reviewed in Vol. X., p. 233. In January 1915, although five years over military age, he joined the Inns of Court O.T.C. from a high sense of duty, and in June 1916 went to France as a first-lieutenant and machine gun officer. A fine climber and, as his record shows, a fine officer.

MOUNTAINEERING LITERATURE.

"ON THE WINGS OF THE MORNING." By Arthur Grant. Pp. 290. 8vo. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. 1917. 4s. 6d. net.

To avoid misapprehension, we may say at once that the above book contains no record of ascents. It is a volume of essays, and the author tells us that many of them have appeared in the columns of *The Scotsman* and *The Standard*. The author, we surmise, is a Scot, whom Dame Fortune has transferred, like many another, to England. We should also gather from internal evidence that the author has lived in Edinburgh—Allermuir is a favourite hill of his. The essays which specially deal with Scotland are four in number, and come together under the general title:—

THE GLAMOURIE OF THE NORTH.

II. The Island of Saints: an Idyl of the Western Isles.
III. In the Land of Lorn.
IV. Jacobite Memories of the Great North Road.
V. "Stand Fast, Craigellachie!" an Idyl of the Highlands.

Then follow eight essays on

THE GLORIES OF THE SOUTH.

VIII. From Winchester to Thursley.
IX. From Salisbury to Bemerton.
X. Chichester and William Collins.
And others.

Every lover of the "misty moorlands" and "the glens and hills" will read these essays with pleasure, and as regards our own members, "In the Land of Lorn" will revive pleasant memories of Meets at Loch Awe. How far away those Meets now seem; but like the author we look forward to the time, may it now not long be coming, when we may "take once more the wings of the morning even unto the uttermost parts of the sea, and rest for a time in some Island of Saints in the track of setting suns."

INDEX.

As a rule all dependencies of principal mountains have been indexed under the latter. The Index to Volume XIII. has been made up on the same lines as those followed by Messrs Garden and Parker in their Index to the first ten volumes of the Journal, *and for further particulars the reader is referred to the Preface to that Index.*

Section I.—Names of Authors.

Section II.—Maps and Illustrations.

1.—MAPS.

2.—ILLUSTRATIONS.

Section III.—S.M.C. Abroad. *Nil.*

" **IV.—Club Proceedings.**

Section V.—Subject Index.

PART I.—SKYE.

(**Heavy** *type has been used for the Titles of Articles.*)

PART II.—GENERAL.