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THE MITRE RIDGE—BEINN A' BHUIRD.

BY JAMES A. PARKER.

“SURELY not?” says the reader. “Beinn a' Bhuid is not supposed to have any ridges, and certainly none worthy of being named.”

“Wait and see,” replies the author, “and if you are not then convinced that there is one, you had better go and try to make its first ascent.”

This, of course, raises the question whether a ridge should be named before it has been climbed, and to this the writer would reply that the ridge in question is such a fine one that it deserves a name, whether it can be climbed or not.

Beinn a' Bhuid has the official reputation of being “for the most part a featureless and somewhat uninteresting mountain.”* Seen from the west, a stranger asks, “What is that long, flat hill?” From the east it is more striking, and shows two good corries, the Coire an Dubh Lochan and the Coire nan Clach, with, to the left of the former, a conspicuous Chioch, and well to the left of that again a big patch of snow which usually survives long into the summer.

The hollow which holds the big snow patch is locally called the Snowy Corrie; but it really hardly deserves the name of corrie, as it is only a sort of high shallow

* *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. VIII., p. 47.

valley between Bruach Mhor and Carn Fiachlach. It, however, carries the big patch of snow, and is therefore so named.

South of the Chioch there is a very small corrie, which on the new Ordnance Survey Map is called the Coire na Ciche, and on the north side of it stands the Chioch. This is a very large tor on the top of the buttress which guards the south side of the Coire an Dubh Lochan. The ascent of this buttress and the Chioch presents no difficulty, although it is not specially easy in winter with everything hard frozen and iced.

The Coire an Dubh Lochan is a very fine one, and measures fully half a mile across. It contains the little Dubh Lochan, height about 3,075 feet, and is guarded on the south by the precipices running westwards from the Chioch. In these there is one steep chimney, or rake, which was climbed under winter conditions during the Easter (1908) Meet at Braemar. The head of the corrie is composed mostly of very steep screes, which in winter are usually covered with treacherous slopes of snow. A party of two, who essayed their ascent a few weeks before the above Meet, were carried down 400 or 500 feet by a very respectable avalanche. The north side of the corrie terminates in the fine buttress which separates it from the Coire nan Clach. This buttress gives quite an interesting climb, but is not difficult except under adverse weather conditions. It contains a short level ridge, which on one occasion proved impossible with a strong westerly gale and had to be turned by means of a somewhat sensational traverse across the east face into the head of a very steep and dangerous-looking snow couloir.

The Coire nan Clach is surrounded by great scree slopes, and does not even boast a lochan. The most that can be said in its favour is that it thoroughly deserves its name.

Then we come to the Cnap a' Chleirich, the Priest's Hillock, which dips down to the Sneck between Beinn a' Bhuird and Ben Avon. The summit of the Cnap is not quite so featureless as the north and south tops of Beinn a' Bhuird, and boasts a few prominent rocks. The

Sneck is quite interesting, having a number of most extraordinary weather-worn rocks on the skyline, and besides it has the merit of being probably the highest well-defined pass in Scotland, its height being 3,196 feet. It is a very fine pass, and when seen by Alexander and the writer at the end of last June, was quite Alpine, the path on the north side dipping down into a big snow slope down which we had to cut a few steps with our axes.

The Sneck stands at the head of one of the grandest recesses in the Cairngorms—the Slochd Mhor—which is enclosed on the one hand by the precipitous slopes of Ben Avon, and on the other by those of Cnap a' Chleirich and Stob an t-Sluichd, and opens out northwards into Glen Avon. The innermost recess of the Slochd Mhor, to the west of the Sneck, is the Garbh Choire, lying between Cnap a' Chleirich and Stob an t-Sluichd, and it is one of the loneliest corries in the Cairngorms—perhaps the loneliest. And on the south side of the Garbh Choire, near its head, stands the Mitre Ridge.

The south side of the Garbh Choire (see Fig. 3) consists of very steep precipices running from 400 to 600 feet high, up which there are perhaps several possible routes, including one which should give an interesting and varied snow climb in winter. The upper part of this route is seen on the left side of Fig. 1, leading up to the skyline. As the rocks approach the Mitre Ridge they get steeper and very slabby and, to all appearance, impossible of ascent.

The Mitre Ridge is 600 feet high (aneroid measurement), and is well shown on the three photographs which accompany this article, although it is very much foreshortened in Fig. 2, which was taken from below and pretty close in. The rock is granite, weathered very dark. The east face, as stated above, consists of great unclimbable slabs, and the west face (Fig. 1) is just a great and almost vertical precipice, down which a stone thrown from the highest point falls five seconds before touching bottom. There are several conspicuous vertical cracks in the west face, most of which run up to the extreme edge of the ridge.

The edge of the ridge is divided up into four well-defined pitches, best seen on Fig. 3. The lowest pitch seems to

be about 375 feet high, and the rocks on its west side are fairly well broken up. When examined last June by Alexander and the writer, no difficulty was experienced in effecting a lodgment on the rocks which, on close acquaintance, proved to be most unexpectedly broken up into gullies, ledges, and cracks. The point at which we got on to them is just above the lower visible end of the long snow slope seen on Fig. 1. We did not get very far, however, as it was not on our programme to make a serious attack, and we had no rope. It was evident, however, that a very strong party could gain the foot of, and might possibly force their way up, the black crack which leads up to the extreme edge of the ridge at a point almost directly above the end of the snow slope, which point is the small platform at the top of the lowest pitch.

The second pitch, which is about 125 feet high, rises very steeply from the platform and becomes almost vertical, if not actually overhanging, at one part. The greater part is manifestly impossible, and the steepest part, as seen from below, presents the appearance of three great parallel vertical slabs with curious white markings. Help from above would certainly be required for this pitch unless the crack on the west face leading up to the top of it could be reached and climbed.

Then we come to the second "platform," which is evidently a knife edge and is ornamented by one big tooth, seven small ones, and a hole. This knife edge leads to the foot of the third pitch, which is about 60 feet high and looks impossible, as it is almost vertical. At the top of the third pitch there is a second knife edge, much longer than the first, which has three well-defined teeth and leads to the final pitch, of about 40 feet, leading to the summit (height, about 3,700 feet).

An investigation of the upper part of the ridge was made in July 1921, when Drummond and the writer descended the top pitch by means of some awkward rocks on the east face, with a somewhat risky traverse back to the inner end of the upper knife edge. This latter is very narrow, but there was no difficulty in climbing along



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FIG. 2

J. A. Parker

THE MITRE RIDGE, BEINN A' BHUIRD



July 1921

FIG. 3

J. A. Parker

SOUTH FACE OF THE GARBH CHOIRE, BEINN A' BHUIRD
(Taken from near the Sneck)

it, taking all the teeth on the way, to the extreme end where our venture came to an abrupt end. A small stone man was built on the top of the highest tooth, the outer one, and we regained the summit by the route we had descended by, H. Kellas kindly giving us the moral support of a rope for the most awkward step of the traverse.

Whether the ridge can be climbed or not can only be decided by actual trial. If the trial be ever made, a strong party should be sent to the top of the ridge with instructions to reach the lower knife edge and lower a rope therefrom to safeguard the party which makes the attack from the foot. It will be a magnificent climb—if ever accomplished.

The writer has named the ridge the Mitre Ridge, because, as seen from the corrie (Fig. 2), it shows two peaks of nearly equal height—the left-hand one being the nose of the upper knife edge, and the other the summit. The name also seems appropriate, as the hill is called the Priest's Hill. Why should he not have a mitre?

The remaining rocks of the Garbh Choire call for little remark, but those on the north side are fairly interesting, and their extreme end gives quite a good scramble from the corrie to the beginning of the long ridge leading out to Stob an t-Sluichd. This latter hill is very interesting, the ridge containing a number of small tors, while the summit itself is a well-defined rock summit, the path to which leads over a natural bridge. It commands a fine view.

It takes fully three and a half hours of very steady going to reach the foot of the Mitre Ridge from Braeniar, via the Slugain Glen and the Sneck. The traverse from the latter to the foot of the ridge is of the roughest description. Possibly the quickest route would be to cross Cnap a' Chleirich immediately to the west of the summit, and descend into the Garbh Choire by the easy slope to west of the Mitre Ridge. The whole ground is under deer, and these hills should, of course, not be visited during the stalking season, and at other times it is well to ask permission.

STOB COIRE AN ALBANNAICH.

BY J. G. STOTT.

IN the dark ages, before the S.M.C. was born, the Dalmally district was the favourite hunting ground with a few of us, who afterwards were amongst the original members of the Club. We had climbed nearly all the surrounding summits, but fortune was invariably against us whenever we planned the capture of Stob Coire an Albannaich. We were attracted by the very remoteness of this peak, away back amid the solitudes of Blackmount, by its shapely contours when seen from afar, by the music in its sonorous appellation, by the very meaning of it!—"The Peak of the Scotsmen's Corrie." Who were these Scotsmen? Were they of the ancient Picts and Scots who here did battle? Were they the gallant Gaels, dwellers in the corries, who marched away south to stem the Roman invasion? No matter! We also were Scotsmen, therefore their descendants—on whom it was incumbent to respect our ancestors. But whilst we had stood on the heads of the other hills round about, whose names suggested no traditions, none of us had more than a bowing acquaintance with this aristocrat among mountains who appealed so strongly to national sentiment. Thus the years went by, leaving this duty unperformed, and in due course I went away to Mexico. And again the years went by, and far from my native land I remembered this mellifluous *bonne-bouche* in contrast with the cacophonous jumble of consonants denominating Mexican mountains.

Returning at last to Scotland I found that those friends of my youth who were still available had grown bald, rubicund, and portly like myself: jolly old fellows, who, whilst they still loved the S.M.C., were too stout and plethoric to disport themselves at the Meets, and whose active support of the Club was confined to laying their ample bread baskets up against the Annual Dinner table.

Formerly as keen as eagles, these old birds loved reminiscing, but it was in vain I tried to rouse them to attempt, even on a small scale, one of our brave old mountain expeditions. The name of Stob Coire an Albannaich failed to charm; indeed I knew that it was the spirit rather than the flesh that called *me* there! And yet how I did want to climb that Stob before I died! During the years of my absence it seemed to have remained unknown and unvisited. Little of it is said in the "S.M.C. Guide Book," and the only recorded ascent is one by my dear old friend, the late Frank Dewar. For my own mind it was more than ever one of the highest as well as noblest of Scottish mountains, and I had always felt sure that a mistake had been made in crediting it with only the comparatively paltry height of 3,441 feet.

One night I dined with my eminent medical friend, Professor Blank, and we talked about oxygen as a mountaineering aid, as recently exemplified in the Mount Everest expedition. The Professor shook his head in answer to my query, whether it was possible that oxygen might so far stimulate my own failing powers as to enable me to take an active part in a Club Meet. But he laughed as he added, "You would have to go abroad, my friend, and submit to the surgical ministrations of some of these foreign savants who have been experimenting with monkey glands and the organs of young rams. Wonderful results have been claimed."

This set me thinking,—not that I contemplated anything so severe as surgical graftings; but, to secure a purely temporary stimulus such as would enable me to ascend a mountain, was it not possible that subcutaneous injections, or doses to be swallowed, of these marvellous elixirs might serve my purpose? My host doubted it, but he very kindly put me into communication with some of these foreign investigators. To make a long story short, after much correspondence, and a visit to laboratories in Paris and Vienna, I returned home furnished with a supply, in sundry phials, of wonderful elixirs that were supposed to make old men young—for the nonce anyway. To prevent accidents, I had enlisted in Edinburgh the services

of two medicos to whom I had been introduced by Professor Blank, and who had made a special study of the new theories; and at the instigation of one of these, a Dr Hillgoat, it was resolved to use a decoction prepared from young *he-goats*, as more likely to impart a certain liveliness in climbing, although his colleague, Dr Ramsbotham, firmly maintained that the animal from which he derives his patronymic could not be excelled for staying power. Leaving these two worthies, however, to butt at one another, I set out on my quest for suitable companions in my proposed adventure.

I found, alas, that time had made sad havoc in the ranks of my old friends, but "still there were some few remaining," and among these I fixed upon three who had been, with myself, the heroes of many well-fought battles in the past, in whom I found still lingering some glimmer of the heroic flame, and whom I judged to be, with myself, fit subjects for the scientific experiments which I had in view, and who were willing to subject themselves to the necessary treatment. One of them—long of body, as of head—contented himself now, in the intervals of a strenuous business career, with pottering in his garden and shooting dandelions with a patent pop-gun. Another was in such demand at public dinners that—like a swan out of water—he never looked himself when divorced from his habitual surroundings. And the others, though willing to celebrate at any time, in prose or verse, the glories of departed days, were, by their own confession, now "fat and scant o' breath."

Let me say that the names of the four of us were Donnachie, Church, Reimouth, and Bounce. My old friend the Professor was greatly interested, and promised his collaboration, and every day he gave each of us a subcutaneous injection of goat essence, and we swallowed a good dollop of the monkey brand. The results, however, pertain more to a medical than a mountaineering journal, so I must be brief: needless to add that Stob Coire an Albannaich was to be the object of our quest, but before setting out finally on this we made frequent ascents of Arthur's Seat to test the improvement in muscle and in

wind engendered by the elixir, and in one of these test-climbs we succeeded in beating by a few seconds the record which had been set up many years before by one of our party, of 35·7 minutes from the Post Office to the top of Arthur's Seat and back.*

It was interesting to note how, after a very short time, we all began to feel a sense of well-marked rejuvenescence, our bald scalps began to grow a strong thatch, and Bounce, a big hairy chiel, had to use the razor twice daily—and three times on Sunday—to check a too redundant beard. There were other manifestations also. Donnachie's son, going out one day to consult his father on important business, found the latter ensconced in the prickly branches of a tall araucaria in his garden, clad in pyjamas only, and eating nuts. It was discovered one morning that Church had, in the watches of the night, eaten most of the blankets off his bed, while Reimouth—generally the most peaceful of men—had a slight altercation one day with a tram conductor, when, in an uncontrollable impulse, he suddenly lowered his head and butted the unfortunate man in the stomach. Presently, however, though with difficulty, we learned to control these abnormal impulses, and further climbs on Arthur's Seat showed that our muscle and wind were improving.

After about a month of this preparation we felt sufficiently fit, and a date about Easter time was fixed for the expedition. Professor Blank accompanied us, and the party moved to Dalmally, where we completed our training. The equipment recommended for mountaineers, which was published thirty years ago, had been carefully studied, to adapt our minds to the enthusiasm of youth; and thanks to a suspicion of senility, which our elixirs had failed entirely to remove, we were seriously impressed by the necessities depicted in an old print of De Saussures' first attempt on Mount Blanc. Accordingly, we determined that the thing was to be done with the most approved precautions, and we provided ourselves with ice axes, ropes, ski, crampons, goggles, aneroids, cameras, ladders, sleeping

* This is a fact.

bags, tents, &c. As has already been stated, little seemed to be known of this beautiful mountain, and we felt that it was left to us practically to discover and to describe it, therefore nothing was left to chance. We carried a large supply of cocoa nuts, which we found an excellent and, in our rejuvenescence, easily carried mountain provender—and there was not lacking a small flask of the Mountain Dew—for emergencies. At Dalmally we had added a piper and a masseur to our retinue, and we now moved up to Inveroran. We were a party of seven, of whom four were elderly gentlemen, white-haired, cheery, burly, and rosy. The Inveroran people could not credit that we were “for the hills,” especially in view of the wintry-like conditions; but we were a surprise packet.

On the eventful morning we were favoured with bright frosty weather. At an early hour the Professor had measured our blood pressure and administered double doses of the elixir. Then we donned our new mountaineering paraphernalia, grasped our axes, and strode forth. The great moment of the test had come! “Stob Coire an Albannaich” was our slogan. Stob Coire an Albannaich, or bust!

The mountain is about 7 miles crow fly from Inveroran, but distances in mountain travel are measured rather by time than by miles, and it needed a long spell of heavy moorland plodding before we actually set foot on our objective. By this time we had attained a region of fairly deep snows, for the most part soft, and lying at a steepening angle. For the first mile or two our retinue had convoyed us—to help to carry impedimenta, our piper blowing lustily, but they had long left us. We now roped up, and Donnachie—our veteran Alpinist—went to the front. The temperature was now 27° F., and the clinometer gave varying degrees of steepness, according to the slope it was laid to; several of these were very severe, some perpendicular, but the latter we avoided. Of fauna and flora there were no signs—among the snow; but every now and then one or other of the party, true to his acquired type, would run up a rock and scratch himself.

Slowly we won height ; sometimes we traversed, moving in approved Alpine fashion ; sometimes we scrambled amid ice-clad rocks, where the axes came into play. The aneroid had told us we were doing well, when suddenly we were enveloped in dense clouds, and the snow came down in a regular blizzard. There was no seeing where we were going, so a course was set by prismatic compass, and once again we advanced. So long as we kept going up hill we could hardly go wrong. The "Guide Book" says there are fine corries with steep rocks on the north face of the mountain—but these we saw not. Mr Dewar says there is a big tableland at the top—neither did we discover this. We were puzzled when we found ourselves on a steep ptlevel* with overhanging cornice, and it took time and stratagem to overcome this. I believe that the agility begotten of the monkey brand had much to do with its circumvention, while the effects of the "goat elixir" were certainly recognisable in the way we butted the leader up the cliff. The rest of us soon followed, and we found ourselves apparently on a shapely snow ixpatl (Mexican peak), but in the mist and storm it was impossible to form an idea of our surroundings. We certainly could not get any higher.

Failing photography, we fell back on our aneroids. One of these gave the height of 3,550 feet, another 3,900, a third 4,700, and the fourth approximately 5,000 (both the latter obviously incorrect), at which point the needle stuck—shivering as if it had ague. The mean of these readings is, roughly, 4,200 feet, proving what I had always suspected, that the height of this mountain was incorrectly given on the maps, and that it is really one of the highest, as it is one of the grandest, peaks in Scotland. To verify our readings we had intended to bring up some fuel for the boiling test ; however, it had been forgotten. As the best substitute within our reach, our smallest aneroid was plunged into a thermos flask of very hot pea-soup (Church

* Mexican for couloire, or chimney.

Editorial Note : "Why use foreign nomenclature for a Scottish hill?"

Author's Answer : "To show my erudition."

protesting very violently, and with some gibbering), and when removed the shivering of the needle had ceased; but the altitude was unaffected, thereby verifying the height. The temperature of the air was 24°.

In the way of lunch we did ourselves well, as in the old days, Church hurling the empty cocoa-nut shells upon imaginary wayfarers on the slopes below. Soon, however, the cheery voice of Bounce was heard calling us from our skrogmalunkie (Pictish—a hole in the snow), and having combed the icicles from our beards, we roped up and started cautiously on the descent. The mist was thinning, and when we had reached again comparatively easy ground, we halted. It was then it happened. Reimouth, forgetting, apparently, that he was not all goat, attempted to leap from one rock to another, 20 feet below; the result was that, being roped, the entire party were jerked violently from their tracks, and had descended several hundred feet before they were pulled up by the lessening slope. Fortunately, we had fallen on a slope of comparatively soft snow, with few out-cropping rocks, and there were no serious casualties, though Reimouth was black in the face before we got the rope from round his neck, and Donnachie was almost out of sight, buried head downwards in a seven-foot snowdrift. The only ill-effects upon the others of the involuntary glissade were some bruises, considerable rending of broadcloth, and the loss of epidermis and some teeth (artificial, luckily). But it was curious to note that the victims of Reimouth's indiscretion merely bleated when they tried to swear.

But we were soon under way again, and off the steep ground into boggy moors on our way back to Inveroran. When nearing the inn we spied several men hastening towards us. Had the Professor unnecessarily sent out a search party? No; on a nearer approach they turned out to be merely newspaper reporters. Our secret had been well kept, but some one at Dalmally had given us away. However, as the Professor had syndicated our news, we refused to be drawn, and the highly embroidered narratives which appeared in some of the papers were unauthentic and inaccurate.

Well, we had done it. The ministrations of the masseur and a good night's rest quite removed the effects of the accident and of eleven hours of continuous effort. When, on our return home, we left off drugging, we soon returned to our normal condition, though, curiously enough, we all retained for many years a marked partiality for nuts. But we all agreed—and it is hardly to be doubted—that, but for these wonderful elixirs, we could never have climbed Stob Coire an Albannaich.

A WEEK-END HILL TRAMP IN THREE COUNTIES.

BY WALTER A. SMITH.

ONE fine Friday evening in the middle of June last year we arrived at Ballinluig Station, on the Highland Railway. The familiar journey from Edinburgh by Glenfarg and Dunkeld was full of happy reminiscences of former holidays. The brilliant early summer colouring of the countryside was at its best. The golden fields of broom, the rich masses of pure white hawthorn, relieved here and there by the warm purples of lilac and rhododendron, were a varied charm all the way. As our train slowed down to Ballinluig the noble shapely ridge of the distant Schiehallion stood sharply out in the far north-west, and reminded me of my first ascent of that mountain (my first 3,000 !) in the year 1864.

The route planned out for us (*i.e.*, Charles Macpherson, Arthur Russell, our friend Walter Oliphant—a keen and experienced hill walker—and myself) was to cross, by hill paths, the comparatively low moorlands separating the valleys of the Tay, Strathardle, Glen Shee, and Glen Isla, and from the head of the last-mentioned glen to find our way over the high mountains between that and Braemar, and finally to walk to Blair Atholl by the Dee and the Tilt in time to catch the evening train south, and so reach home after only three nights' absence. This was successfully accomplished as follows :—

Shouldering our rucksacks at 5.30 P.M. we found a path up through a little wood near the Ballinluig Post Office which soon took us on to the driving road to Tullymet, and along this road to the east for about a mile we came to the iron gate to the wooded avenue leading up to old Tullymet House (belonging to the Duke of Atholl), a charming and typical specimen of an old-fashioned picturesque Highland mansion, standing among fine old trees on a plateau above a lovely park about 1,200 feet

above sea level, and commanding glorious views up and down the rich valley of the Tay with its noble stream gleaming in the evening sunshine. According to local information received, the recognised hill road to Kirkmichael was round by the east of the house, and thence we found the old track past the sawmill, where much of the neighbouring wood had been cut down, and so leading up on to the open moor above. The path now kept north for a couple of miles or so with the Alt Ruigh an Lagain on our right and, after passing a lovely well of cold spring water marked by a post, we crossed the watershed above and east of the lonely Loch Broom, and then gradually descended in a north-easterly direction, with some rather picturesque little crags up above it on the south, to the Glen Derby burn opposite the shepherd's cottage known as the Mains of Glen Derby. Crossing the burn here we gained the rough cart road down the Glen to Kirkmichael, about $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the cottage and about $10\frac{1}{2}$ from Ballinluig. As we got nearer the foot of the Glen we heard a hearty voice singing in the evening air, and found it came from a cheerful pedlar resting at the pathway side among the broom and heather. Mutual friendly greetings passed, and he informed us, in slightly bibulous accents, that he had walked that day from Braemar by the Spital of Glen Shee and over the direct old hill road south-east of Beinn Earb to Dirnanacan, and vowed he would get to Aberfeldy (his native place) that night ! We told him he would not, but gave him a shilling, for which he blessed us, with a roguish twinkle in his eye, and then resumed his pack, and the sound of his cheery song gradually died away up the glen. And so farewell Autolycus :—

“Jog on, jog on, the footpath way,
And merrily hent the style-a :
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a !”

Neither did we feel sad nor tired, and at the last mile we passed a magnificent large field of golden broom all ablaze in the evening sunshine, which was a brilliant introduction to the quiet little village with its old bridge over the rapid

River Ardle. A short way down the main road to Blairgowrie, on the east side of the river, we passed, on a high knoll above the road, a picturesque war memorial of rough native rock "to the gallant men of the Strath who had fallen in the late war," and immediately thereafter reached our inn, the "Allt Clappie," where we found a warm welcome and a good supper awaiting us. The old inn, now rebuilt and modernised, is quite comfortable, and has a pleasant situation within earshot of the rippling river.

Next morning was bright and cool, and, after consultation with some local worthies, we found the rather obscure beginnings of the winding old Drove Road to Lair in Glen Shee, some 7 miles to the north-east. Only 4 miles "as the crow flies," but not being crows, nor the path (of necessity owing to the contours and nature of the country) at all a straight one, it is practically 7 miles rough but very pleasant hillside walking. Leaving Kirkmichael nestling in the pretty strath below us we traced our route up some high lying fields, with the ruined Whitefield Castle well to our left and Ashintully Castle in its surrounding woods on our right, and crossed the Alt Menach stream. Thence through a gate behind Ashintully the track takes us north-east along a hillside at the 1,250 feet level, with two small lochan below us on our right. Soon passing through another gate and descending a little round to the right, we cross the "Coire a' Bhaile" stream (*The Laird's Dell?*) flowing southwards down to the Black Water of Shee. Regaining at once the 1,250 feet level, and bearing slightly to the left and north, the route crosses a saddle about the 1,400 level between Lamh Dearg to the north and a lesser hill to the south, and descends direct over the moor to Lair, which is just where the driving road from Glen Shee to Glen Isla by the north of Mount Blair crosses the Shee water by a stone bridge. Looking up the Glen to the north from here we got a striking view of the great hills in the Glen Ey Forest, with their crags and precipices outlined in snow. I have thought it well to try and describe thus particularly this old route, as it is obviously very little used, and is sometimes rather difficult to follow. We did not see a human being all the

way. But it is an interesting cross-country walk, commanding charming views of heathery glens and hills, and finally brings you down right opposite the big brown imposing mass of Mount Blair.

We found a sunny corner at the riverside to enjoy our lunch at, and crossing the bridge and going along the Glen Isla Road past the Free Church and the entrances to the pretty houses of Cray and Dulnaglar, we then took to the moors again and began the long ascent of Mount Blair. A straight but comparatively gradual climb, aided by a fresh north-west wind on our backs, the only disturbers of the solitude being a few roe deer, brought us to the top (2,441 feet) in about an hour (at 3.30 P.M.), where we were glad to shelter behind the big cairn from the gale, now blowing hard and fast, and which had unfortunately brought much cloud over the surrounding country, and greatly restricted the view we had hoped to have. Even now, after the lapse of more than fifty years, when I last sat on that old cairn, I well remember the wonderful outlook over "the land of the mountain and the flood," from Schiehallion and Ben Lawers in the west to the sea at Montrose in the east, and from Lochnagar in the north, and across wide Strathmore to the Sidlaws and Fife Lomonds in the south. But to-day there was no temptation to linger on this windy height, so we soon descended, rather slowly owing to its great steepness, the north-east side of the hill to the ruined Forter Castle at its foot. This old keep of the Ogilvies, commanding the head of Glen Isla, was destroyed by the Earl of Argyll in 1640 :—

"On a day, a bonnie summer's day,
When the corn grew green and fairly,
The great Argyll, wi' a' his men
Cam' to plunder the bonnie house o' Airlie."

It seems the Earl had been instructed by "the Committee of Estates" (*i.e.*, of the Scots Parliament) "to go upon the lymmars at Forter to punish them for injuring and oppressing the Forbes. So he raised 5,000 men to do so. But Lord Ogilvie, hearing of this great force, fled and left the Castle empty. So

Argyll beats it to the ground, and robbed and took away Ogilvie's tenants and servants, their hail goods and gear and cattle, and whatsoever else they could get." A typical tale of these troublous times in the Highlands! But it was in a different atmosphere, and at a more kindly time, that we this summer evening raided Forter. By the kindly intervention of a member of our party, the genial Laird had most hospitably placed his comfortable house of Little Forter at our disposal for the night, and had instructed his worthy housekeeper to entertain us in his absence in Edinburgh. This she did most royally, as was evidenced by a great baking of scones and cakes and spreading of jams and jellies for tea, and thereafter a roast leg of hill mutton for supper, comfortable beds to sleep in, and a real Highland breakfast next morning.

The Highlands of Forfarshire, with the beautiful glens of the North Esk, Clova, Prosen, and Isla running through them, are full of romance and richly-coloured variety of scene. Their numerous mountains (many of them over 3,000 feet) were a favourite haunt of our late popular President Munro. I had, in former years, crossed from Ballater to the Esk by Mount Keen, from Braemar to Clova by Glen Doll, and wandered over the hills from Clova by the head of Glen Prosen to the Kirkton of Glen Isla. But this far head of Glen Isla, above Forter up to the Tulchan and Caenlochan, I had never seen, and had long wished to explore. And so in genial company, and fortified by the aforesaid breakfast and with a substantial luncheon in our pockets, we, that lovely Sabbath morning, after a friendly "God-speed" from our kindly hostess, were driven up the 4 miles of rough, hard road to the Tulchan, the Earl of Airlie's shooting lodge. About 2 miles up the road we passed the few remaining ruined walls of the old House of Graudarb, the scene, we were told, of a fierce battle between two local chieftains. The Tulchan is well hidden in a pine wood at the head of the Glen which, closely shut in by mountains of great height and steepness, is a veritable "cul-de-sac," except for the very ancient hill path (the Monega Pass) over the hills to Glen Clunie above Braemar.

This, as already mentioned, it was our purpose to traverse. It is, I believe, the highest of the recognised hill paths in Scotland, as it crosses the heights at rather over the 3,300 feet level quite a short way east of the summit of Glas Maol (3,502 feet), whose enormous cairn marks the meeting-place of the boundary lines of the THREE COUNTIES of Perth, Forfar, and Aberdeen. About three-quarters of a mile up the Glen beyond the Tulchan we came on a little guide post at the bridle roadside, pointing in a north-westerly direction to the steep green ridge of Monega Hill, and stating, "Path to Braemar." But no traces of a path through the rough grass are at first visible. However, a post on the skyline of the ridge above indicates the direction and, after crossing the Glas Burn, a short way above where it falls into the Isla Water, we found a fairly well-defined track up above the burnside, and then going due north on to the main narrow Monega Ridge and, zig-zagging steeply, reached the first summit of the path slightly to the west of the top of the hill (2,917 feet).

The route, once it is on the ridge, is well (and very necessarily) marked by cairns all the way for the next 4 miles or so until one is able to look down into Glen Clunie. It is said to have been much used by smugglers in olden days, when theirs may have been a sufficiently profitable occupation to justify the hazards and risks of so difficult and exposed a journey. But, however seldom it may be crossed in these rather degenerate times, the Laird at Forter told me "*there always was a road that way*," and that several generations ago some of his ancestors had land both in Glen Isla and Glen Clunie, and frequently used this direct "high level" passage between these glens. From the top of Monega the track bears more to the north-west towards Glas Maol. But before following it so, we turned aside a little to the east to look over into the steep depths of the strange and wonderfully beautiful Caenlochan Glen, down which runs from the surrounding wild, precipitous hills one of the two main sources of the Isla. It is in the heart of the deer forest. The lower part is, indeed, a thick pine wood, some 1,100 feet straight below, and as we looked down we saw a

herd of red deer grazing on the green grass at the burnside higher up the hollow than the wood. The rugged, encircling crags and screes, with many beds of snow still clinging to them, the varied colours on the steep slopes down to the dark forest, and the green meadow with the deer moving slowly on it, was a striking and romantically lovely and unusual scene—not easily forgotten. It reminded one, somehow, of a Swiss valley.

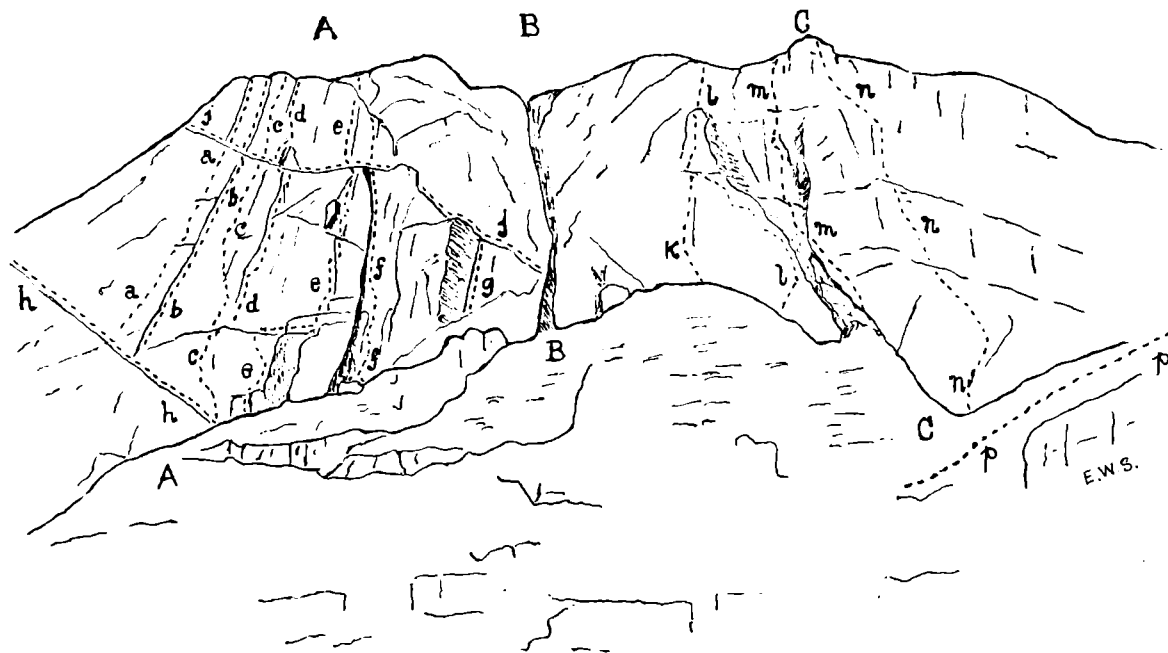
But as the weather was not now looking quite so good as it did, we reluctantly turned our backs on this entrancing sight and moved on towards Glas Maol. Some 400 yards to the east of the top of Glas Maol the path reaches its highest point, so we turned up to the left to gain the summit, which is broad and flat and unrecognisable from the level of the path. A pillared cairn of pure white quartz above the path indicates, however, the direction in which the summit lies. Alas! we were again unlucky, and a light, damp mist came down about us as we reached the summit cairn, and so deprived us of the grand view we had hoped to enjoy. We *should* have seen up to Lochnagar and the Cairngorms and away west to Ben-y-Gloe and Ben Lawers. (Indeed, from Monega I think we did get a sight of Ben Avon, but we were anxious to have the wider view from Glas Maol.) So retracing our steps to the track across a small snow field, we reached a sheltered hollow at the point (3,158 feet) where the path crosses the boundary line between Forfar and Aberdeenshire, and enjoyed our well-earned lunch and consolatory pipes amidst the gathering gloom. Enlivened by this refreshment, the indomitable and enthusiastic Russell left us and disappeared in a peat hag through the mist to bag another 3,000 footer by ascending Cairn-na-Glasha (3,484 feet), a mile and a half to the north-east, trysting to overtake and meet us again in Glen Clunie, where the path is *supposed* to join the high road to Braemar, about 8 miles up from the Castleton and about 9 miles from the Tulchan. From the boundary line above referred to the track, still marked out by cairns, descends gradually, keeping on the ridge to the north-west with the Alt Coire Fiona down below on the left, and the Alt a Gharbh Choire

down below on the right (*i.e.*, to the north-east), to about the 2,000 feet level, just north of the peaked hill Sron na Gaoirthe (the noisy wet Nose?), from which it descends steeply to Glen Clunie (to the 1,660 feet level), near where the Alt a Gharbh Choire falls into the Cairnwell Burn. But at the 2,000 feet level (or thereabouts) the guiding cairns apparently cease to exist, and there is no friendly guide post in Glen Clunie to show where this most interesting old mountain path leaves the Cairnwell Road. In fact there is no visible trace, so far as we could see, of the track at its western end here—just where it is most important one should get a proper start upon it from the west. The Scottish Rights of Way Society should certainly put up one of their guide posts here, and also have some cairns or posts to show the route up to the 2,000 feet where the line of existing cairns begins.

Russell joined us in Glen Clunie sooner than we expected. He apparently had seen nothing but some rocks in the mist on Cairn-na-Glasha! However, the weather had now cleared up, and we walked in leisurely fashion down the high road to meet a wagonette which we had ordered to meet us, and in this we drove down the last few miles, reaching the Invercauld Arms in good time for dinner. It was pleasant to stroll thereafter, in the long evening light, through the pretty, clean village, and recall previous interesting visits (*my* first one was in 1873) to this popular Highland resort. But I confess I prefer the Glen Feshie and Rothiemurchus side of the mountains.

Monday morning was bright and sunny, with a cool west wind. As we desired to get over to Blair Atholl before 6 P.M., so as to get home to Edinburgh that evening, we motored up to the Linn of Dee at 9 A.M., having telegraphed to Blair Atholl for a conveyance to meet us at the Marble Lodge in Glen Tilt, so as to reduce our actual walk to about 20 miles. Although we all knew Glen Dee well, and the lower part of Glen Tilt was also familiar to us, it so happened that three of us had never traversed the *whole* of this famous through route. So, as the weather kept brilliantly fine and clear all day, we

greatly enjoyed this last stage of our three days' journey. The great heights of the Cairngorms were all clear to their massive summits, and we spoke of many climbs and wild rambles we had had, at various times in former years, among them. Then, as we got west, the familiar great heads and shoulders of the Ben-y-Gloe came grandly into view, and the long, narrow defile away down by the Tarff Bridge was a constant source of interest in its picturesque local features of lateral rocky gullies with bright white waterfalls tumbling down them, and of deep rocky pools and cheerful running reaches of the Tilt itself. And then the big turbulent Falls of Tarff and the graceful Bedford Memorial Bridge across the foot of them is a truly romantic corner, and here we rested and had lunch. And so thereafter down the long green Glen by the Forest Lodge to the humble cottage with the grandiloquent name of the Marble Lodge, near which we duly met our wagonette. The drive down the last 6 miles to Blair was very charming that bright, warm, late afternoon. A short way down we saw a pretty sight. Thousands of sheep were being gathered down off the green braes to the south by half a dozen wise collies under the direction of two shepherds, and the Glen resounded with the plaintive crying of the flocks. The final road through the wooded grounds of Blair Castle, with their splendid trees and fine clumps of rhododendrons, was refreshing and restful after our long days on the bare hillsides. And so at last we arrived at the Atholl Arms in good time for a welcome cup of tea before getting into the 6.14 express train south, and were soon rushing past our starting point at Ballinluig. A farewell dinner at Perth before the train left for Edinburgh was a happy ending to a most delightful Three Days' Tramp in Three Counties.



THE LOWER CRAGS OF COIR' A' GHRUNDA

A—South Crag.
 B—Watercourse.
 C—North Crag.
 a—Far South Buttress.
 b—Green Recess Chimneys.
 c—Central Buttress.

d—Trap Dyke Route.
 e—White Slab Route.
 f—South Crag Gully.
 g—Owl Chimney.
 h—Stony Rake.
 j—Pinnacle Rake.

k—Red Wall Variant.
 l—Stack Buttress direct.
 m—North Crag Gully and Black Knight's Wall.
 n—Slab Buttress.
 p—Route to Upper Corrie.
 E.W.S.

THE LOWER CRAGS OF COIR' A' GHRUNNDA.

BY E. W. STEEPLE.

OF the many wild and beautiful corries in the Cuillin, it may safely be said that the most impressive are Coire Lagan and Coir' a' Ghrunnda. The magnificent scenery of the former, with its line of towering crags extending from Sron na Ciche round to Dearn, is unsurpassed, and should be viewed under all conditions of weather to be thoroughly appreciated. Coir' a' Ghrunnda also has fine crags, though these are smaller and much less continuous than those of Coire Lagan. But the extraordinary characteristic of the corrie is the structure of its floor.

If we approach the corrie from the great marshy flat of Lònn Bàn, we are first struck with the remarkable preservation of the terminal moraine, which, with its almost unbroken line of boulders, thickly clothed with moss and heather, and supporting numerous small trees, resembles in shape a gigantic horse shoe.

After leaving the moraine, we mount steeply into the lower corrie, and its unusual character at once becomes apparent. The floor is formed of enormous flat slabs, extending right across the centre of the corrie. The fragmental remains of upper sheets of gabbro enclose the slabs with a vertical wall, which forms convenient terraces on either side. Where the floor begins to rise steeply to the upper corrie, there is a high transverse step, over which the little river plunges. The negotiation of this step is not altogether simple, and the pages of this *Journal* have recorded curious happenings during its descent in misty weather.

On reaching the upper corrie, the little lochan is seen nestling behind a huge rounded boss of ice-worn rock, a splendid specimen of a *roche moutonnée*, and on the far side of the lochan we discover a new wonder. Scattered thickly about the corrie are countless numbers of blocks

of the peculiar pitted rock known to geologists as peridotite, fallen from the ridges of Sgurr Dubh na Dabheinn. The shape of many of these blocks is grotesque in the extreme. In misty weather one may fancy the corrie peopled with dragons and other fabulous monsters. Some of the blocks resemble petrified sponges; others are so deeply pitted as to be mere shells, which give out a fine metallic note when struck.

But the business of this paper concerns the lower corrie. The crags on the south-east side of the ridge of Sron na Ciche, facing Sgurr nan Eag, are, as I have already mentioned, on a smaller scale than those of Coire Lagan, but nevertheless give very good climbing, and are easily reached from Glen Brittle. A good plan is to follow a high level track which leads round above An Sgùman at an average height of 1,400 feet into Coir' a' Ghrunnda, immediately below the crags.

The main cliff is divided by a watercourse into two sections, which may be called the South and North Crags respectively. The South Crag is a compact cliff, steep and slabby, and of a very striking appearance when viewed in profile. A rake which runs across its upper part supports two remarkable pinnacles. The North Crag is cut by a large gully into two main buttresses. There is also a northerly extension of bold aspect, but of little interest.

The various routes here described were made by Dr G. Barlow and myself during the last three summer seasons.

THE SOUTH CRAG.

The Green Recess Chimneys.—This route utilises the first continuous break in the cliff seen when ascending the corrie. The break does not quite descend to the foot of the rocks, and the commencement of the chimneys is reached either by a little stony rake which runs diagonally upwards from right to left, or alternatively by slabs to the left. The climb is so definite and straightforward that a detailed account of the various pitches is unnecessary. Chimneys, cracks, and chockstone pitches in rapid succes-

sion led to a semicircular green recess immediately below the Pinnacle Rake. The recess is a noticeable feature from below, and supplied a convenient name for the route. Above the Rake numerous steep pitches continued to the summit. Of these the last, a double trench on the right of the water channel, was particularly neat. These chimneys make a good climb of 600 feet.

The Trap Dyke Route.—The next depression to the north is a long trap dyke. The "trap" appears to consist of a moderately fine-grained dolerite, furnished with numerous excellent holds, firm and sharp edged, the weathered surface of which has the texture of fine sand-paper. Consequently we found its ascent, though presenting no great difficulty, very enjoyable. It was climbed in shoes, during a burst of sun which made the rocks almost uncomfortably hot to the touch.

The main dyke-line commences at the Horizontal Ledge, which runs across the central part of the face 130 feet above the scree. The Ledge was reached by following a very thin curving dyke cutting through the lower slabs. At about 100 feet above the Ledge a dislocation made it necessary to bear a few yards to the right to pick up the line, when the dyke was again entered. On reaching the Pinnacle Rake, it was seen that our dyke and that which forms the rake had apparently had a difference of opinion, which was settled in favour of the latter. Consequently, we were confronted by a ridiculously uninviting trap wall, which, however, was easily turned on the left. On the Rake below this wall stands a lofty pinnacle, one of the two previously mentioned.

About 80 feet above the Rake we arrived on a delightful juniper-covered ledge. Beyond this the dyke was again deeply cut, and gave a further 100 feet of good climbing to the summit plateau.

South Crag Gully.—This lies a little to the north of the centre, and cuts through to the foot of the rocks, forming the most important water channel on the crag. Its ascent was the first breach made in the defences of the cliff.

The first 200 feet or so were climbed by a series of

shallow trenches and slabs on the right of the water channel. At a point where the slabs became smooth and undercut, a traverse was made into the gully bed, and a short mossy pitch climbed by ungainly wriggling. This was followed by a chockstone pitch and a rather difficult chimney containing wedged stones. Above this a cave pitch was climbed by working out under the roof on to the right wall. Here the gully widened, with a possible variation up a chimney on the right, and a less possible one up a vertical crack in the left wall. Straight ahead the gully bed was choked by a leaf of rock, forming a very neat pitch. Several smaller pitches led to the Pinnacle Rake, at a point midway between the two pinnacles. Above, the main channel was represented by a wet and narrow crack. The rocks on the right of the crack, however, were particularly good for the remaining 200 feet, and gave a charming finish to the climb.

The Owl Chimney.—At the extreme right of the crag, near the watercourse, is a difficult chimney which would make a useful second climb for energetic pluralists. For us it was the means of turning failure into success, as we took it at the end of an otherwise blank day. We were accompanied on its ascent by A. H. Dougherty.

The lower part of the chimney was constricted: the middle section was more open and V shaped, and here, where hand-holds were most needed, they were most absent. Near the top an overhang, which looked fearsome from below, proved easy by reason of a small ledge on the right wall.

The chimney faces across the crag, and the right wall is merely a thin balustrade, from which there is a vertical plunge to the scree below. The height is about 150 feet, and it gives out on the north end of the Pinnacle Rake, below an extraordinary pinnacle resembling a watchful owl.

The Far South Buttress.—This lies to the left of the Green Recess Chimneys. A slab and a vertical wall of trap were climbed to a bollard on the gabbro above. A wide stretch of slabby rock with numerous stances was then followed for 200 feet or so. Here the buttress began



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THE NORTH CRAG, 'COIR' A' GHRUNNDA

Guy Barlow

(*N.B.*—The Gully is shown on the left, but the Stack Buttress is nearly completely cut off)

to assume the form of a tower, which was climbed by its left edge. The Pinnacle Rake was crossed, and slabs ascended to the foot of a high wall of trap, with a second tower to the left. The trap was avoided by traversing a ledge to the left and climbing a very steep and rather difficult pitch, above which the well-broken vertical edge of the tower was followed until it became possible to work to the right and up to a flat rock ledge. A short stretch of easy rock then led to the summit.

The Central Buttress.—This buttress is defined on the left by the Green Recess Chimneys, and on the right by the Trap Dyke. Though slabby in appearance, it is provided with good resting places, and gives very captivating climbing of some difficulty.

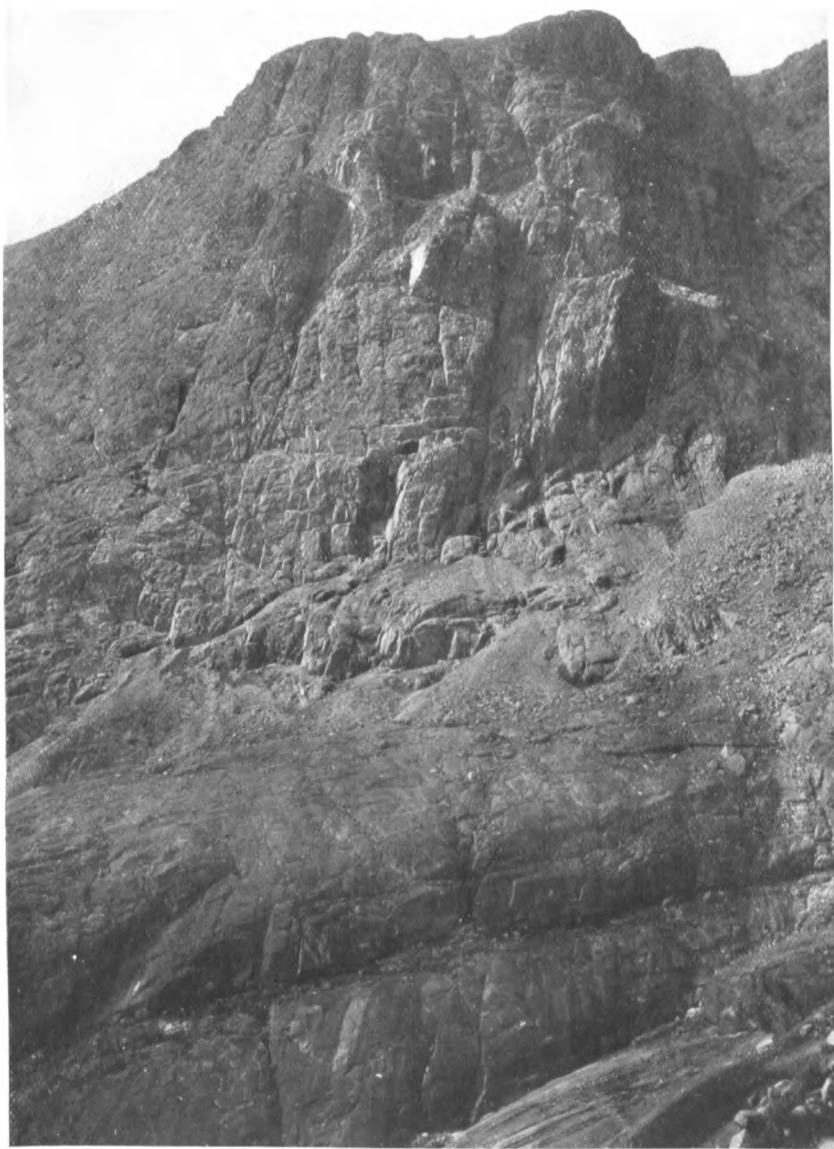
Reaching the Horizontal Ledge by means of the little curving dyke, the buttress was attacked at a point where a projecting rib overlooks the commencement of the Trap Dyke. Ascending by the left side of this rib, and following a narrow dyke-line, a ledge was reached on which rests a large block. A hundred feet of open slabs led to a second block ledge, finely situated. From a stance on white rock 25 feet above the block, we bore upwards slightly to the right for 40 feet to a good bollard, and in a further 20 feet arrived on a wide ledge, from the left end of which we continued up the edge of the buttress. The angle was very steep, but became rather easier as the Pinnacle Rake was approached. A hundred feet of easy slabs above the Rake led to the foot of an upper tower. This presented a smooth and vertical face. The left edge was climbed to a stance on shattered rock. A further 50 feet of rather casier rock brought us to the final stack, which was climbed on the right.

The stances are well spaced throughout, and a 60-foot rope is sufficient for a party of two.

The White Slab Route.—This follows the steep and smooth rocks on the left of the South Crag Gully. The climb was commenced 15 feet to the left of a remarkable water-worn depression 120 feet high. A shallow recess was ascended for 15 feet, then a traverse of 12 feet to the right and the ascent of a short but severe crack led to a

good platform on which rests a block of rock (cairn). A little rib on the right was climbed to a small stance, from which a line of trap rock running diagonally up to the left was followed to the Horizontal Ledge. We then bore back to the right to the point where the Ledge is broken by the top of the great depression. Here it was necessary to climb up a little chimney for 10 feet and make an exposed traverse over the depression to a knob of rock. A belay was obtained by threading the rope behind a stone in the chimney. A good grass ledge was now reached, and starting about 6 feet to the right of the knob, a smooth gabbro wall was climbed to a large platform (cairn). Two converging cracks rose at a high angle from this platform in the direction of the White Slab. That on the left was choked by overhanging rock. The other is better described as an open corner, and is generally wet, but is furnished with good though not very plentiful holds. This was climbed for 40 feet, when an exposed traverse was made on to the right wall to avoid an overhang. Great care was required owing to the length of rope run out. A delectable stretch of 20 feet led to a belay. Easy rocks were then followed to a broken ledge beneath the bold under-cut mass of rock of which the White Slab forms the south-west wall. The centre of the face of this tower is marked by a square-cut projection with vertical cracks on either side.

We ascended at first by the left edge of a shattered recess (cairn at foot), and bearing a little to the left towards the right-hand crack, climbed the rock wall by small flat ledges. When the wall became strictly vertical, we traversed a few feet to the right to a large block resting on a ledge (belay). Above the block the wall almost trespassed beyond the perpendicular, but was made possible by good flat holds, and after a short ascent the top of the crack was crossed by a sensational movement on to the upper part of the overhanging projection. Working diagonally to the left, we reached a small recess (cairn), and a few feet higher a triangular juniper-covered ledge in a gully-like depression. Following this for a short distance, we broke out on to a rib on the left and reached a beak of rock on the Pinnacle Rake.



August 1922

THE SOUTH CRAG, COIR' A' GHRUNDA

Guy Barlowe

Crossing the Rake, we ascended a wall on the left of a wet crack for 30 feet to a sloping ledge at the foot of a fine vertical chimney, which gave good climbing for 40 feet. We now reached a juniper ledge (juniper is quite a feature on this crag), from which broken rocks on the left were ascended for a further 15 feet to a second ledge, and a 20-foot corner in the line of the lower chimney climbed to the open buttress above. Following a trap line for a few feet to the left, we ascended rough slabs for 80 feet to the top of the buttress, where we built our final cairn on a large flat slab of rock.

This route, the last to be discovered, makes the finest climb on the crags. It is continuously difficult, and occasionally sensational, but the rock is good throughout, and the climbing varied and attractive. In fact, of the face climbs with which I am acquainted, I know of none on which the standard of difficulty and interest is so well maintained.

THE NORTH CRAG.

The Stack Buttress—Direct Route.—Of the two main buttresses of the North Crag, that on the left of the dividing gully commences at a higher level than the right-hand, or Slab Buttress, and is crowned by an imposing stack of rock. Two routes were made to the foot of this stack. The Direct Route follows as nearly as possible the right edge of the buttress, overlooking the gully, and gives a very captivating little climb.

We first ascended an oblique trench on the left, with several awkward obstructions, to a broken ledge. The ridge-line was then followed to a group of loose blocks. Passing these on the left, a second ledge was reached, from which a steep wall was climbed by good holds to a sloping shelf which communicates with the gully. Bearing up to the left for a few feet, the wall was again ascended to a similar shelf or glacis, cut off from the gully by a vertical drop. A smooth trough, awkward to enter, was climbed, from which easy rocks led to a wide rake below

the Stack. The ascent of this commenced with a steep slab of very rough rock, giving few holds but good friction. Half-way up this I found a projecting crystal of augite useful as a toe-hold. Its remains may be of some service to a future party, as Barlow, with a longer reach, found it unnecessary.

From a ledge at the top of the slab we worked to the right in order to reach a prominent crack in the face of the Stack. This accommodated the left foot only, the right seeking support on its rough edge, but finding little. At a height of 30 feet a depression at an easier angle was entered, and the top of the Stack reached in a further 50 feet. Easy rocks were then followed for 200 feet to the top of the crag.

The Red Wall Variant.—The foot of the Stack was also reached by climbing the face of the buttress more to the left, and near the watercourse. A wall of red trap was ascended from an earthy ledge, and a broken rib of gabbro followed above. When this rib terminated, we moved a little to the left and climbed a long and shallow chimney.

North Crag Gully and Black Knight's Wall.—The North Crag Gully, *qua* gully, is not altogether satisfactory, and we have not climbed it directly throughout, as it has generally contained more water than was desirable.

The lower part can be turned by the rocks of the Slab Buttress. The upper part widens out considerably, and at its right corner there is a high cave pitch, which might perhaps be feasible in very dry weather. Between this and the sheer side of the Stack an attractive wall rises to the summit of the crag. Near the top of the wall stands the Black Knight, a large upright block which forms a noticeable object. We climbed directly up the centre of this wall, passing the block on the left. The wall gave a fine climb of moderate difficulty, with impressive views of the Stack on the one hand and the cave pitch on the other.

The Slab Buttress.—This gives the longest climb on the crags, as the buttress runs well down into the corrie. Its continuity is broken by several rakes, but its wide

expanse of rough, bare slabs makes it an ideal climb for practice in shoes.

We made this climb with A. H. Doughty, building our cairn at the foot of the vertical snout of the buttress, on the grassy floor of a large recess which is passed to reach the upper corrie. The first section gave delightful climbing on slabs set at a suitable angle for obtaining good friction. Above the first rake the rocks steepened considerably, and were turned on the right. The third section was similarly steep, but more broken, and gave excellent climbing of some difficulty. The buttress terminated at a large square-cut mass of rock with a flat top. The total height of the climb is 800 feet.

AVOIRDUPOIS.

BY T. FRASER CAMPBELL.

I CANNOT recall in what year the following incident occurred, but it must have been before the weight of years and the pressure of domestic ties had weaned me from the more active pursuit of mountaineering. I remember that it was in spring, and a small party of us had been climbing in Arran and had finished off a brief holiday on the golf links at Machrihanish.

A fresh breeze had been with us all the way up Kilbrannan Sound, and the white crested waves were racing merrily after one another until they broke in showers of spray along the Kintyre coast. Goatfell was capped with cloud, but through the mist we could just make out the rugged profile of The Castles, and the ridge of the Saddle as it runs up to Cir Mhor. As the "Davaar" swung round the Garroch Head a slant of sunlight had struck the Cumbraes, and as we laboured up the river, the mountains on Loch Long were flying white pennons in a sky of spreading blue, while here and there in the higher corries a patch of snow reminded us that we had not left winter far behind.

In Gourock Bay the little sailing craft tugged at their moorings, as if impatient to flutter their white wings once more above the dancing waters of the Firth; and a great ocean liner, her sides fringed with eager faces, sounded reverberating blasts from her sirens, as she steamed slowly to her moorings at the Tail of the Bank.

At Princes Pier we had tumbled ourselves and our belongings into a third-class carriage, and as the train began to move, the door was opened and, helped by a timely push from the guard, another passenger was shot in among us. He sat for a minute or two in breathless silence, embracing us meantime, however, with a comprehensive and fraternal smile. He was in shore clothes,

but the sea had marked him for her own. His tanned cheeks and crisp, yellow hair were in perfect harmony with a pair of eyes of that peculiar blue which we seldom see, except in the faces of those who go down to the sea in ships, eyes washed by days and nights of exposure to salt seas, and brightened, too, just now, by the suggestion of a dram.

He lost no time in taking us into his confidence: he had just been paid off from an ocean tramp which had been trading for the past year between various South American ports, and on landing that morning he had immediately fallen among friends. "A've an awfu' heap o' freens in thae pairts," he informed us, "an' they wur awfu' pleased tae see me." And after a pause he added, "A've had a dram." This remark brooked no denial, and seemed to call for no comment. "A wuz boarn i' Por' Glesca," he continued, "an' a'm gaun there the noo." We suggested that a change of train at Paisley might facilitate his arrival at that desirable port, and he acquiesced, with perfect cheerfulness, in the suggestion. As we approached Gilmour Street he recalled again to our minds the place of his birth, and he reiterated his account of the pleasure evinced by his friends on his return. But as we drew up to the platform he said, in what seemed to us a somewhat chastened tone, "But a'm gaun hame noo tae ma dearie—*she'll* no be sae pleased tae see me." The train came to a standstill, and with these last words he left the carriage, closing the door behind him. But in a second he had returned, and opening the door he looked in and said, "She's saxteen stone."

Then we saw him steer a somewhat devious course down the platform and across the bridge. He had gone home to his dearie.

But he had to reach Port Glasgow first, and we have often wondered whether his nerves required to be further braced for the fall of the curtain.

THE RELATIVE HEIGHTS OF THE CUILLIN
PEAKS.

BY G. BARLOW.

MANY years ago Mr Colin B. Phillip called my attention to the fact that the height of Sgurr Thearlaich was still very uncertain. The Ordnance Surveyors had, in the Second Edition (1903) of the 6-inch map, assigned to Sgurr Alasdair a height of 3,309 feet, or 34 feet above Dr Collie's estimate, 3,275 (*S.M.C. Journal*, Vol. II., p. 168). The Surveyors did not give any height for Sgurr Thearlaich, and the *S.M.C.* map issued with the Skye section of the Guide Book in No. 54 of the *Journal*, retained Dr Collie's value 3,230, although it appeared that some increase should be made. An addition of only 4 feet would suffice to put this peak level with Sgurr Dearg (O.S. 3,234), and the full 34 feet would make its summit overlook even the Inaccessible Pinnacle.

My interest in the heights of the Cuillin peaks thus excited, has since steadily increased, but it was not till July 1921 that I made any serious attempt on this problem, and then only one day, my last in Glen Brittle, was available. It appeared to be simply a matter of measuring the difference—Alasdair-Thearlaich. Using a surveying aneroid reading to 2 feet, instead of traversing from one peak to the other, a point X exactly level with the top of Thearlaich was determined on the ridge of Alasdair, above the head of the Stone Shoot. This point was found by sighting across, from Alasdair, with a reflecting pocket level of the Abney type. On account of the nearness of Thearlaich, the point X could be located within a couple of inches; it was afterwards verified by sighting from Thearlaich. It only remained to determine the rise from X to the top of Alasdair. One can climb from X to the summit in two or three minutes, and it was therefore easy to make repeated and rapid readings with the aneroid, entirely

avoiding the loss of time and the disturbance of the instrument due to descent into the gap between the peaks. The readings gave fair agreement with a mean of 49 feet, and thus Thearlaich seemed established as the second highest point of the Cuillin. The hand level sighted from Thearlaich appeared to make the Inaccessible Pinnacle slightly higher, but the instrument was too insensitive for this test. But earlier in the day a single reading of the aneroid had been taken on the summit of Sgurr Sgumain, and on examining all the results afterwards I was greatly disturbed to make the difference—Alasdair-Sgumain—only about 156 feet instead of 205 feet, given by the O.S. A few other observations—in particular a determination of the angle of elevation of Alasdair from Sgumain—tended to confirm the aneroid. Also, Dr Collie had made the difference only 171 feet.

Last summer I went again to Glen Brittle, and this time my outfit included a light mountain theodolite, two pocket levels, a new aneroid, a steel tape, and other gear. Three days were spent on Thearlaich, Alasdair, and Sgumain, repeating the aneroid observations and using also a simple levelling method, which may be of interest to describe, as it proved very effective, and possessed the merit of not requiring an assistant, or "staff man." Thus, in the case of Alasdair, having carefully verified the point X level with Thearlaich, the vertical distance to the tip of Alasdair was determined by "step-cutting" up the slope, as a friend aptly described the operation. I had provided myself with a jointed rod of bamboo, 5 feet long, to the top of which the pocket level was screwed transversely. Placing the toe of the rod on the mark X, the rod was swung about till the bubble of the level came on to the index in the field of view, and in this position a sight was taken of some mark, often a crack or bit of lichen on a stone, on the slope above. Proceeding to this object, and using it as a base for the next "step," a second sight was taken, and so on, going up the slope in steps of exactly five feet rise. In awkward places, or where the slope was abnormally steep, it was necessary to remove a section of the rod and use a step of only half the amount.

On reaching the cairn the outstanding difference was measured on a pocket rule. It has invariably been my lot to do this step-cutting in cold, misty weather without a companion. It is then tedious and chilling work, but the accuracy obtained is repaying. Each step is marked with chalk on the rock and recorded in writing at once, otherwise there is risk of miscount. On steep slopes, such as Alasdair, where the sights are very short, the error made in a 100 feet rise should not exceed a few inches. This method was also employed on the south-west ridge of Alasdair, starting at a point level with the Sgumain summit. The steep, scree-covered rocks here made it difficult to obtain good stances, and it became necessary to ascend by a zigzag of steps.

The various results are tabulated below. It is seen that my earlier measurements were confirmed, and there is now no doubt that the true difference—Alasdair-Sgumain—is 147 feet instead of 205 feet, an error of 58 feet in the Ordnance Survey.

	Alasdair- Thearlaich.	Alasdair- Sgumain.
Ordnance Survey - - -	...	205
Dr Collie (aneroid) - - -	45	171
1921. Aneroid (Stanley) mean - -	49	156
„ Inclinator (with O.S. distance) - -	...	147
1922. Aneroid (Watts) mean of six observations - -	50.5	...
„ Levelling ("step-cutting") - -	50.3	147.0
„ Theodolite on Dearg - -	51	146.6

The interest was now transferred to Sgumain, a trigonometrical station which one hesitated to suspect. But Sgurr Dearg was selected as a final reference level, for the substantial cairn on that summit inspired me with confidence. The theodolite was now brought into action for what appeared the crucial test, and several days were spent on Sron Dearg and at the Dearg summit. An

unforeseen difficulty at once arose. From the Dearg cairn a fine view of all the peaks to the north is obtained, but the Inaccessible Pinnacle completely cuts off Mhic Coinnich, Thearlaich, Alasdair, Sgumain, and the other peaks to the south. Doubtless the O.S. men must have wished that obstructing wall of rock would anticipate by a few thousand years its ultimate fate, and slide down the slabs to Coruisk.

My first day at the cairn was spent in taking the depression angles of all the northern peaks and many of the "dips," for a persistent mist to the south was in league with the Pinnacle to prevent all observation in that direction. The theodolite hidden under a boulder then endured a week of wet weather. At last a day of good visibility was secured for observing the Alasdair group. The instrument was set up on the ridge 60 feet away from the cairn and only a few feet lower, and from this eccentric station all the southern summits as far as Sgurr nan Eag were observed. From the angles of depression, or elevation for Alasdair, the differences in level with respect to the Dearg cairn were calculated by using distances measured on the 6-inch O.S. map.

Already having suspicions of Sgumain, it was not unexpected to find the difference of level 102 instead of 130 feet, or an error of 28 feet. The deduced differences for Alasdair-Thearlaich and Alasdair-Sgumain agreed perfectly with the step-cutting, and are given in the above table for comparison. What could be wrong with Sgumain? Was the error in some way associated with the impossibility of a direct sighting from the Dearg cairn? Another visit was made to Sgumain to see if the O.S. 3,104 station could have been on a visible shoulder 30 feet below the summit. But there was no obvious place, and as a carefully measured position angle with respect to Sgurr nan Eag located the top of Sgumain within 5 feet of the point on the map, this theory was abandoned.

Meanwhile, some of the other observations from Dearg had been worked out, and it was a shock to find all the other peaks taken as a check giving serious deviations from the O.S. heights. The troubles now extended to

distant Sgurr nan Gillean. A complete triangulation appeared to be the only satisfactory solution. But this was a task for which I was ill-prepared, and the final break up of the weather prevented any further measurements.

After my return from Skye all the results were thoroughly analysed, and it was then seen that the greater number of the observed deviations could be removed by the single assumption that *Dearg itself is really 3,206, i.e., 28 feet lower than the accepted value, 3,234.* The trigonometrical stations, Sgurr nan Gillean, Bruach na Frithe, Banachdich, Sgumain, and Sgurr nan Eag, were then all within the limit of observational error, which ranged from 1 foot for Banachdich and Sgumain to about 8 feet for Sgurr nan Gillean.

The O.S. "spot levels" of Sgurr Mhic Coinnich, Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn, and Sgurr Dubh Mor also gave good agreement, but in other cases the differences are remarkable. Sgumain, 3,104, is now taken as correct, hence Alasdair must suffer a reduction of 58 feet, and becomes 3,251. This is practically identical with the 3,255 (first given by Dr Collie?) in the original Munro tables. Earlier still, Mr J. C. Hart, by his barometer, made the height 3,260. Sgurr Thearlaich becomes 3,201, retaining its place next to Dearg.

A special measurement of the Inaccessible Pinnacle made it almost exactly 20 feet above the Dearg cairn. The same difference is given by the O.S. The Pinnacle is therefore 3,226, or 25 feet below Alasdair—a difference which Dr Collie had estimated as nearly 20 feet by his clinometer.

Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh, N. top, is reduced only about 10 feet. On the other hand, it is satisfactory to be able to raise Sgurr Thormaoidh by 32 feet, thus restoring the height originally given by Dr Collie.

The peaks of Bidein and Mhadaidh present peculiar difficulties, as they are wrongly located on the O.S. map. The highest point of Bidein is certainly very nearly 2,850 (Collie, 2,860), not 2,900. The south-west peak of Mhadaidh (highest point) is reduced slightly, but fortunately it remains a Munro, with a few feet in reserve.

To sum up, it may be said that the additional heights given in the Second Edition of the O.S. map are mostly defective, and there is a general tendency to return to the values given by Dr Collie, Mr Harker, and other members of the Club.

Any uncertainty regarding the error made in taking the distances from the O.S. map has been entirely removed by Mr Howard Priestman, who has most kindly allowed me to remeasure the required distances on the map he has recently prepared from a photographic survey. The radial distances from Dearg differed appreciably from the O.S. in many cases, but as only approximate distances are needed in the theodolite calculations, the corrections introduced into the heights were generally insignificant.

The error of 28 feet in the height of the trigonometrical station of Sgurr Dearg is remarkable, and it appears unaccountable unless we suppose some confusion in the records due to the "Old Man of Skye," who seems to have been always a source of trouble to the map-makers.

In Memoriam.

EDWARD BACKHOUSE.

EDWARD BACKHOUSE was born at Hurworth Grange, Darlington, in 1876. He was the son of John Edward and Elizabeth Backhouse, and was of an old Quaker family, which had included Barclay of Ury and John Backhouse, who was imprisoned in Lancaster Castle, amongst its members. He was educated at Oliver's Mount, Scarborough, and at Leighton Park, Reading, and then went up to Balliol, taking an Honours Degree. Owing to the early death of his father, his residence at Oxford was not continuous, and he had to enter the family bank at Darlington before he had kept the necessary number of terms. Later, he became a Local Director of Barclay's Bank. In 1902 he married Lucy Backhouse Mounsey, and for eleven years lived at White House, Stockton-on-Tees. In 1916 he resigned his Directorship, and he moved to Purley in the following year. He took a leading part in Quaker activities in London, and at the time of his death he was eagerly looking forward to combining with these labours a strenuous political career. He had been President of the South-East Durham Liberal Association, and was to have stood as Labour candidate for Bedford at the last General Election. He was also a Justice of the Peace for the county of Durham.

But it is with his climbing career that members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club are more interested. He joined the Club in 1907, having then been a member of the Alpine Club for three years. No member of the Club could possibly have been more enthusiastic about the hills than Backhouse was. He had many opportunities for

satisfying that enthusiasm. He climbed in many districts, both in the Alps of Switzerland, Italy, and Tyrol, and at home, and he combined botany with actual climbing. But climbing was his main object, and, once a holiday had started, nothing would stop him, an off day being anathema in his mind. He had also visited the south-east parts of Europe, having travelled in Bulgaria and amongst the mountains of Macedonia in 1912-13 on relief work, for which purpose he also went to Vienna in 1919-20. Recently he had travelled in Algeria for health.

Backhouse's last visit to Switzerland, in the summer of 1922, was originally undertaken with the object of restoring his health—an object of which ascents of the Dent Perroc, Petite Dent de Veisivi, Dent de Bouquetin, and the traverse of the Obergabelhorn from the Wellenkuppe to the Arben Joch in his first fortnight indicate the fulfilment; and if it had not been for the unfortunate accident on the Leiterspitz on the 19th August, in which both he and his guide (Thomas Biner) were killed, he would undoubtedly have returned home in a position to take up once more the useful work in which he was engaged. Unfortunately, his career has been cut short while he was still in the prime of life; but he will always be remembered by members of the Club, as well as by other mountaineers who have been so fortunate as to come into contact with him, as a thorough enthusiast and a delightful companion.

P. J. U.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THIRTY-FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

THE Meeting was held in North British Station Hotel, Edinburgh, on Friday, 1st December 1922, the President, Mr W. N. Ling, being in the chair. The minutes of last General Meeting, held in Glasgow on 2nd December 1921, were read and approved.

Mr HARRY MACROBERT, Hon. Treasurer, referred the meeting to the annual statement of accounts circularised to members, and commented on the changes which had taken place in the financial position of the Club during the current year, which had resulted in an improvement, the year ending with a surplus of £9. On the motion of Messrs REID and LEVACK, the accounts were adopted, and the thanks of the meeting conveyed to Mr MacRobert.

The SECRETARY'S report was next read, in which he pointed out that the membership had increased to 210.

Mr ERIC BUCHANAN, the Hon. Editor, reported upon the present position of the *Journal* and explained what had been done to increase its circulation, and reduce, as far as possible, the cost of its production, while maintaining its present standard of efficiency. He was warmly thanked by the meeting for his labours, and complimented upon the success of the publication.

Mr G. B. GREEN, the Hon. Librarian, reported upon the present state of the Library and Club Room, and formulated some suggestions as to disposing of the back numbers of the *Journal*. He was authorised by the meeting to sell back numbers of the *Journal* to new

members at such reduced price as he might consider reasonable. The meeting also approved the purchase of a copy of the list of early members of the Alpine Club.

The meeting next homologated the appointment of Mr J. H. Bell as President, in place of Mr Ling, whose period of office expires ; Mr Thomas Meares as Vice-President, in place of Mr Parker, who retires ; and Messrs H. Kellas, F. Greig, Allan Arthur, Alexander Harrison as members of Committee, in place of Messrs J. H. Bell, H. Buchanan, H. J. Craig, and G. E. Howard, who retire ; also the reappointment of the remaining office-bearers, members of Committee, and trustees of the Club's Funds, in terms of the Committee's recommendation under Rule No. 26.

The meeting decided to hold the Easter Meet at Kinlochewe, with an alternative at Inveroran, and the New Year's Meet at Crianlarich, the Hon. Secretary being instructed to endeavour to have the charge, suggested by the Crianlarich Hotel, reduced to 15s. per head ; failing which, negotiations were to be entered into at his discretion with some other hotel prepared to receive the Club at reasonable terms. The Hon. Secretary suggested that it might be to the advantage of the Club to hold two extra Meets in the year—one about the beginning of June and another in October—and after some discussion it was agreed that the matter be left in the Secretary's discretion to fix the Meets, the intimation of time and place to be circularised to members by post card.

Some discussion followed upon the question of appointment of an Honorary President to take the post now vacant through the death of The Most Honourable The Marquess of Breadalbane. Several names were suggested, and the Hon. Secretary was instructed to make inquiries with a view to discovering whether any of those suggested would be willing to accept the post if offered. Among others, the following names were mentioned :—Lord Ronaldshay, The Duke of Atholl, Captain The Hon. Donald Howard, and Sir John Stirling Maxwell.

This concluding the business, the meeting adjourned.



CRUACH ARDRAN

J. H. Buchanan

impedimenta as ice axes. However, let it be duly recorded in these pages that at New Year, 1923, the axe was again to the fore.

When the advance party, comprising Green, Lawson, J. MacRobert, Nicholson, and Valentine, visited An Caistael on Friday, they found the snow, although recently fallen and somewhat soft up to the 2,000 feet level, surprisingly hard on the higher slopes. This party ascended by Sron Garbh and descended to Glen Falloch from near the col between An Caistael and Beinn a Chroin. A keen west wind, which swirled the snow into the faces of the party in a most uncomfortable manner, was met with on the ridge, and more than one member had to request the aid of his friends to rub the life back into frozen fingers. No views were obtained owing to the mist.

That night there was a large influx of members. Three of the arrivals, namely Allan, Rusk, and Scott, detrained at Balquhiddy and walked up to Inver Lochlaraig, from which point they bagged Ben Tulachan and Cruach Ardran. As a reward for their perseverance they had the more or less pleasant experience of cutting steps down the face of Cruach Ardran by moonlight.

The following day the wind blew strongly from the north, and conditions on the hilltops were even more severe than on the preceding day. However, the mist was not so dense, and was occasionally blown aside to reveal the tops in their wintry mantle. The President and Clapperton were over An Caistael. Ling and Sang ascended Beinn Chabhair from the Glen Falloch Road and returned by An Caistael. C. E. Bell, R. A. Brown, and the two MacRoberts traversed Ben More and Stobinian. They reported very hard snow on the Stobinian north ridge, and that they had to cut steps from the col to the summit. Alexander, Douglas, the two Harrisons, Lawson, Menzies, and Nicholson ascended Cruach Ardran by the Gully, and descended by devious routes to the Stob Garbh col, where they were joined by Galbraith, who had left Green and Rennie on the Grey Height. They continued over Stob Garbh and finished at Inverardran Farm. In the failing light of evening a wonderful view of Loch

Dochart was obtained. The loch lay blue-black at the foot of the hills, except where it reflected in brilliant tones the rich oranges and browns, purples and greens, of the hillsides sloping to its shores. Howard, Jack, and Priestman were also on Ben More. The two Craigs, Grove, Hutchison, Paterson, and Rutherford paid a visit to Beinn Chalum. Allan, Rusk, Scott, and Thomson, by aid of the early train to Tyndrum, climbed Ben Lui via the Central Gully, and descended on the western slopes. They had a long trudge along the Dalmally road back to Tyndrum, and on arriving there had the bad luck to see the last train for the day leaving the station. They reported that the snow in the gully was plentiful but very soft.

The weather on Sunday was almost perfect in every respect. From the Wallace Monument in the east to the hills of Jura and Mull in the west the view was uninterrupted. It was even said that Ailsa Craig was visible. Unfortunately the views to the north and north-east were disappointing, the hills in those directions being still obscured in mist. This day was also remarkable for a determined assault on Cruach Ardran, no less than twenty members visiting its cairn. Two of its devotees, Hutchison and Rutherford, included Tulachan in the day's work. J. MacRobert left in the morning to walk to Alexandria, at which point he was to proceed to Glasgow by electric car. Douglas, A. Harrison, Lawson, and Nicholson were on Ben More and Stobinian, while Buchanan, Galbraith, Greig, J. Harrison, and Menzies contented themselves with Ben More. The President, Alexander, Clapperton, and Green walked up to the Chononish Glen and back.

New Year's Day dawned full of promise of good things for those who visited the hill-tops, but, like Mr Pecksniff's horse, in some way or another did not perform. To those early rising stalwarts, who braved the morning train and the wrath of the members still abed, the best part of the day was reserved. Rushing forth from the hotel, boots in one hand and puttees in the other, and followed by the maledictions of the disturbed slumberers (who by

that time should have been out of bed), they arrived breathlessly at the station, only to find that they had still five minutes to spare before the train started. Allan, Rusk, and Thomson trained to the Bridge of Orchy and traversed Beinn an Dothaidh and Beinn Doireann. Burn, who had come up from Glasgow that morning, detrained at Tyndrum and did Stob nan Clach and Creag Mhor. A large party, consisting of Donald, Douglas, the two Harrisons, Lawson, Menzies, and Nicholson, also left the train at Tyndrum and climbed Ben Lui by the Central Gully. They found the tracks made by the party which had been there on Saturday very useful. Remarkably fine sunrise effects were seen by all the early risers. The Ben Lui party, as they approached Chononish Farm, were fortunate in witnessing a thoroughly Alpine effect. The peak of Ben Lui, heavily clad with snow so that even the rocks were covered, with the pale green sky of a winter morning for a background, suddenly became alight as it were with fire. For the space of about ten minutes the light travelled gradually down the slopes, and then faded almost as suddenly as it came.

Alexander, R. A. Brown, Jack, and H. MacRobert traversed An Caistael and Beinn Chabhair, finished the day at Ardlui, and returned to Crianlarich by train. Sang accompanied them to the foot of the former hill and then walked to Ardlui and back. Beinn Chabhair was also visited by Galbraith and Green. Clapperton and Greig were on Stobinian, while the President, Anderson, Grove, Ling, the two Marshalls, Rennie, Tomkinson, and Valentine tackled Ben More. Howard, Mackenzie, and Priestman contented themselves with the road, Mackenzie getting as far as to the foot of Beinn Doireann and back. Paterson and Buchanan walked nearly to Chononish and back.

That night a large number left, and on the Tuesday morning the remainder, with the exception of Burn, followed their example. Burn, with his friend Easter, who had arrived that morning, climbed Beinn Mòr by the ridge west of Cuidhe Crom. On Wednesday they visited Beinn Cheuchdaidh, via the Ach' Easain bridge,

and thence to Meall Glas. Burn reports that a 30 m.p.h. wind had to be faced. On Thursday they moved to Killin and had a day out on Sròn na Mucaidh. On Friday they had an off day owing to bad weather, and they finished their holiday on Saturday with Meall nan Tarmachan and Meall Garbh.

An account of the Meet would not be complete without a reference to the kindness and attention of Mr and Mrs Stephenson and the hotel staff, to whom the thanks of the Club are due. Although the accommodation of the hotel was taxed to its utmost everything possible was done for the comfort of the guests. At night the cheery crowd in the lounge and smoke-room bore ample testimony to the success of the Meet.

G. M. L.

LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

"In and Around the Grand Canyon," by George Wharton James. Little, Brown, & Co., Boston, U.S.A., 1900. No. 217 of the Pasadena Edition.

Presented by

Mr T. C. Ormiston Chant, to whom the thanks of the Club are tendered.

Periodicals received :—

Alpine Club Journal. November 1922 (No. 225).

Yorkshire Rambler's Club Journal. 1922 (Vol. v., No. 15).

Bulletin Pyrénéen. October - December 1922; January, February, May 1923.

Cairngorm Club Journal. January 1923 (Vol. x., No. 60).

Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal (Vol. vi., No. 1).

Italian Alpine Club Journal. September-October, November-December 1922, and Index for 1922; and January 1923.

Mazama. December 1922 (Vol. vi., No. 1).

L'Echo des Alpes. September, October, November, December 1922; January 1923.

La Montagne. September, October, November, December 1922; January 1923.

CATALOGUE.

The Librarian has compiled an alphabetical catalogue of the books, &c., added to the Library since the catalogue was printed in 1917. It has been placed in the Library for the use of members.

BACK NUMBERS OF JOURNAL.

By a resolution of the Annual General Meeting, the Librarian was authorised to sell sets of all the old *Journals* remaining in the Club stock to members at a reduced rate,

up to No. 90. Those available at present are Nos. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 45, 49, 50, 52, 53, 55, 57, 59, 62, 64, 65, 66, and 67-90 inclusive, forty-eight numbers, which will be sold for £2. Of some numbers few copies are left ; as they are sold out, the price will be proportionately reduced. Members are invited to apply to the Librarian.

CLUB-ROOM MEETINGS.

Meetings in the Club-Room have been held regularly every month during the winter. Slides have been shown as follows :—

1922. October 3. Swiss, Caucasus, and Himalayas, by *W. N. Ling*.
 „ November 7. Glencoe and Blackmount, by *F. Greig*.
 „ December 5. Greek Sites in Asia, by *the Librarian*.
 1923. January 9. Clouds as seen from an Aeroplane, by *Mr C. R. M. Douglas*.
 „ February 13. “Italia Redenta,” by *Dr Inglis Clark*.
 „ March 8. Club Slides, illustrating the Easter Meet at Kinlochewe, by *the Secretary*.

The success of the meeting on February 13th was enhanced by the presence of a number of ladies and other guests.

SLIDE COLLECTION.

The Club is indebted to Messrs Parker and Sang for the addition of five new slides to the collection, and to Dr Inglis Clark, who has kindly presented a new lantern screen.

The thanks of the Club are due to Dr Guy Barlow for his kindness in presenting the blocks for the illustrations to Mr Steeple's article.

REVIEWS.

The Cairngorm Club Journal, Vol. X., No. 59 (July 1922), No. 60 (January 1923).—Owing to lack of space we were unable to deal with the July 1922 number of the *Cairngorm Club Journal* in our October issue. In this number Mr Robert Clarke gives a most realistic description of a tramp across the Lairig Pass in mid-winter in the worst of weather conditions. Mr Charles Davidson, M.A., contributes an attractive little article on "Lochnagar in December," while Mr William Barclay, L.D.S., provides a second instalment of "Summer Days on the Mountains." There is also a contribution—the author of which is not disclosed—entitled, "Glen Tilt and Glen Dee as Described Seventy Years Ago," which is based on an article which appeared in the *Dublin University Magazine* for 1851.

The January 1923 number contains an interesting contribution on the Barns of Bynaek, by Mr James M'Coss and Mr R. T. Sellar. Mr William Barclay, L.D.S., is again to the fore with an article entitled, "Two Hill Walks from Clova." Mr David P. Levack writes on "Ben More Assynt," in which he draws attention to the advantages of the motor in mountaineering, particularly in the case of remote districts, such as that with which he deals.

Mr Parker, in "The Horizon from Lochnagar," gives a comprehensive list of the hills to be seen from that summit, with their heights and their distances from the view point. The list includes Cheviot, and it would be interesting to know whether there is any record of Lochnagar having been seen from this Border hill.

The Yorkshire Rambler's Club Journal, Vol. V., No. 15.—In any publication of the Yorkshire Rambler's Club one naturally looks for sensational descriptions of their pastime of "Pot-holing." Nor does one do so in vain in this *Journal*, for there appears from the pen of

Mr J. W. Swithinbank some sketchy and entertaining memories of that unique form of sport, embracing tales of a ghost called from the vasty deeps and a terrible revenge following upon an encounter with a very dead sheep. The moral which the author draws of never undertaking an expedition without leaving sufficient particulars of your destination to enable a rescue party to take timely action, is one well worth earnest consideration. Mr C. D. Frankland, whose fame as a rock climber has reached even to Scotland, contributes an article on the sensational ascent of the Flake Crack, on the central buttress of Scawfell, describing the combined tactics resorted to for defeating the difficulties of the pitch above the chock-stone. This standard of climbing may perhaps be described as the present blue ribbon of the gymnastic art. It is, at any rate, only to be indulged in by experts in prime condition, shod in rubber (or not shod at all), and possessed of exceptional skill

Mr Matthew Botterill contributes a few excerpts from the log of the M.A.Y. "Molly," describing a cruise among the Hebrides, and towards the end makes a few very sketchy remarks upon some climbing on the Scur nan Eigg and Askival. He closes his article with some words on Gaelic pronunciation, which are, to the ears of the Scot, weird in the extreme. To say that Mallaig is pronounced "Mallag," and Eilean Rarsaidh "Ellen Rarsee" is somewhat like telling a foreigner that "hooter" is pronounced like "butter."

Mr J. F. Seaman writes an interesting account of crossing the York Fells in deep snow, with mention of the ancient cattle drove track between England and Scotland. The Editor contributes a paper on "Climbs in the Alps Around Saas Fee," his description of the traverse of the Dom and Tasch-horn from Zermatt to Saas being particularly interesting and charmingly written. It contains information valuable for guideless climbers ambitious for strenuous ascents. There is also an interesting paper by Mr Arthur Bonner, F.S.A., upon the "First Exploration of Swildon's Hole."

The British Ski Year Book, Vol. I., No. 3 (1922).—

Perhaps the chief interest to the mountaineering fraternity will centre in Mr N. E. Odell's paper on the "Oxford University Scientific Expedition to Spitzbergen," where he touches lightly upon some of the difficulties met with in piloting a heavy sledge over the Arctic glaciers.

Mr d'Egville offers some interesting comments on the accident by which Ulrich Grasse and Mr Keep lost their lives on the Piz Muraigh. There is also a note of comments on the Parsenn Furka accident, in which Mr Pearce was killed. The publication, although it mainly deals with the sport of ski-running as distinct from mountaineering, is of interest to the mountaineer, especially the lover of the Swiss Alps. It is beautifully illustrated, and contains some illuminating comments on the condition of the Tyrol during the winter before last. Its greatest drawback is, that this is all rather old history now.

The Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal, Vol. VI., No. 1.—The price of this book is now 4s. At that it is quite one of the best bargains in current mountaineering literature. The number contains an exhaustive guide to the numerous climbs on Doe Craggs. There are over fifty of them if the variations are included. Also several other climbs in the district of Conistoun. It is abundantly clear that there is little hope of the stranger finding new climbs in this district, but if he is content to follow in the footsteps of specialists in rock climbing, he will surely find this guide a precise and satisfactory introduction to the courses which that wonderful gymnasium offers. The gradation of the climbs is of interest through giving some indication of what may be expected on any route selected, and the visitor may take it that if the guide styles any climb "very severe," he will find it so. There is probably no other quarter of the globe where rock climbing has been brought to so fine an art and so accurate a balance as in this playground of the experts of the Fell and Rock Club. The volume does not confine itself to the Lake Districts. It contains illustrated articles upon the Dolomites, Majorca, and the Swiss Alps. Mr Eustace

Thomas contributes a paper upon his Fell circuit in 1922, when he succeeded in ascending 25,500 feet in 21 hours 54 minutes, and thereafter carried on until he had ascended an aggregate of 30,000 feet in 28 hours 35 minutes. He explains how he got into condition for this exceptional feat, but not, so far as we can see, why.

There is a gem of a little poem over the initials of Miss Katherine C. Hopkinson, called forth by Mr Lawrence Pilkington's speech at the Club's dinner in 1921.

The New Zealand Alpine Club Journal, Vol. III., Nos. 10 and 11, published in March and December 1921. ---The Club was founded in 1891. A *Journal* has not appeared for twenty-five years. We now welcome its reappearance, and hope that the Club may enjoy a brighter future, and continue to publish their periodical. We are especially interested in the prosperity of this Club, for we have, as a well-known member of the S.M.C., Mr R. S. Low, who acts as the N.Z.A.C.'s representative in Britain, and whose task it is to interest mountaineers here in the doings of their fellow-sportsmen of the Antipodes. One can become a subscriber for 10s. 6d. a year, and several members of the Kindred Clubs have come forward to assist the N.Z.A.C. in this way. It is hoped that many more may see fit to add their names, and so ensure the continuance of the *Journal*. One of the aims of the numbers now published is to bring the history of exploration in the New Zealand Alps up to date. Mr Fletcher, the editor, contributes an able paper upon what has been done in the Keith Johnston Range of the Main Divide. There are numerous descriptions of first ascents in this fortunate land, which appears still to be the happy possessor of virgin peaks. If we might add a word of criticism, we admit to a feeling of disappointment that four of the illustrations used in No. 10 reappear—rather better reproduced, it is true—in No. 11.

Oxford and Cambridge Mountaineering, 1922 (published by the Holywell Press, Oxford).---In the preface to this volume the joint-editors, L. A. Ellwood,

Trinity College, Cambridge, and J. H. Wolfenden, Balliol College, Oxford, state that the indulgent reception received by the collection of essays and sketches made in the 1921 issue have encouraged them to publish a successor. The 1922 magazine contains ten interesting contributions of climbing and walking excursions in Switzerland, France, and in this country, with additional articles connected with the proceedings of the Cambridge University Mountaineering Club and the Oxford Club. Appended are Notes written by different members of tours in the Zermatt country, Tyrol, Dolomites, Chamonix, and the Lakes. The editors have succeeded in assembling contents to form a volume which should be very useful to climbers visiting the different localities dealt with. The climbing fever appears to find an outlet in the environment of the universities, as a most amusing article on climbing "on the Oxford Roofs" bears witness. We are sure that the publication will meet with every success, and we trust that its issue will be persevered with. It only remains to mention the illustrations, which are of a high order of excellence.

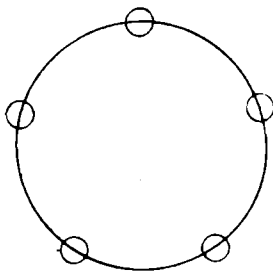
EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.



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.

WIND PHENOMENON ON GOATFELL.

At the recent New Year's Meet, at Brodick, a succession of hurricanes rendered mountaineering difficult. Among other excursions was one to the summit of Goatfell, when a series of wind vortices swept down the slopes, tossing members here and there. Owing to the slight sprinkling of snow, the passage of these cyclones was made visible, each circle of wind raising a margin of snow like



a wall some feet in height. But the most interesting thing was that each large circle, revolving, say, at 40 miles per hour, had on its margin five vortices, as shown in the diagram, where the velocity seemed more like 100 miles per hour, and at each of these a pyramid of snow was raised to a height of perhaps 30 feet. The whole circle with its satellites had a rapid movement down the mountain face. To those who were able to look, the sight was an awe-inspiring one. Some of the members were in advance of the writer and, as the

circle bore down on them, one could see them brace themselves to resist it; but if by chance they encountered a secondary vortex, resistance was in vain, and they were tossed about with resistless force. No doubt these wind movements accompany every violent storm, but in this case the whirlwinds were rendered plainly visible owing to the snow. The writer could easily recognise the part of a circle in which he chanced to be, but when in the secondary vortex, he was thrown certainly more than 20 feet in a fraction of a second.

W. INGLIS CLARK.

S.M.C. ABROAD.

Mr J. A. Parker was in the Pyrenees for a few weeks last September with a friend who is not a climber. Most of the time was spent in the beautiful Vallee d'Aure, from which one ascent was made—the Crete de Moudang on the frontier (8,100 feet). Afterwards the Pic du Midi de Bigorre (9,440 feet) was climbed in perfect weather, and visits made to Gavarnie, Lourdes, Biarritz, and San Sebastian.

Scottish Mountaineering Club.

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May 1920

H. Gardner

THE PERFECT DAY FOR A SUMMIT
THE TOP OF CRUACHAN FROM THE TAYNUILT PEAK

THE SCOTTISH Mountaineering Club Journal.

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STORM AND SUNSHINE ON CRUACHAN; OR, CHOOSING ONE'S WEATHER.

BY HUGH GARDNER.

WHEN the Editor asked me if I would undertake an article for the *Journal*, I had some hesitation over selecting a subject. A writer is usually only justified in writing about his own experiences when he has either some good adventures to describe or some discoveries of general interest to disclose. I am afraid I can do neither. Accordingly it has seemed to me the best plan to make a couple of pleasant days spent on Cruachan a few years ago an excuse for a certain amount of digression, and to justify myself in so doing, I have ventured to add a sub-title.

Probably most members of the Club have, like myself, recently made the acquaintance of Dr E. A. Baker's book, "The Highlands with Rope and Rucksack." I have little doubt that all will have read it with the greatest enjoyment. Apart from the literary merits of the book, Dr Baker writes as a keen sportsman, and his graphic accounts of battling with the elements and forcing his way through every kind of obstacle serve to bring out the truth that the sporting side of mountaineering includes a great deal more than mere rock-climbing and step-cutting. And yet I feel that, from the landscape-lover's point of view, Dr Baker's method of exploring the mountains must lead to many a bitter disappointment. To start off on a long tramp with a night's shelter many miles away, which must be reached whatever the weather,

is not always the best way to enjoy a mountain. Many a day, which will provide no summit view, may be a perfect one for wandering and picture-making by the coast or loch-side, and I am sure there is much to be said for a practice of choosing a comfortable inn for one's headquarters for a considerable period, and a policy of never making one's plans more than an hour or two in advance. I have sometimes spent many days at a centre without bringing off the very excursion I went to make, but I have never failed to find countless beautiful views and effects which were all the more enjoyable from their very unexpectedness. I have sometimes started out to look at a mountain in the distance, and somehow found myself on the top of it before the day was over. Similarly, if I start for a mountain, it is usually with a feeling that, before I get to it, it may seem preferable to go somewhere else altogether. And I really believe that an indefiniteness of plan is often one of the secrets of enjoying a holiday to the full in a fickle climate like that of the West Highlands.

After thus much preamble I will get on to my main subject. For a good many years, and especially during the war, it was my practice to study various districts in the guide-books with a view to visiting them when normal holidays became possible again. Accordingly, the first spring after the war my brother and I spent a most satisfactory five weeks of glorious weather in two or three of the most inviting parts. This was the first of repeated spring visits, and towards the end of April 1920, after visiting the neighbourhoods round Dundonnell and Lochinver, we decided to go and see what we could in our last few days of Loch Etive and Cruachan. We reached Taynuilt on 28th April, and the 29th, a beautiful spring day, was spent in exploring the eastern shores of Loch Etive and admiring the glorious views of the Glencoe peaks at the head. Incidentally we had a good look at the northern side of Cruachan, and decided that for ordinary pedestrians the most enjoyable way to see the mountain would be the regular ridge walk over its main summits from Stob Diamh to



April 1920

APRIL SHOWERS

H. Gardner

A STORMY DAY ON THE EASTERN PEAKS OF CRUACHAN

the Taynuilt Peak. Next morning seemed promising, though it did not look altogether settled. We took the train to Lochawe station and started off, following the old quarry line and the Allt Coire Chreachainn. It gradually became clear that we were in for one of those days of hailstorms and bright intervals which are common in the spring. There are many worse kinds of weather than this, especially beside a lake, but it is not always the pleasantest type of day for a long ridge walk. However, we decided to push on and see what we could between the showers, without setting our hearts on necessarily reaching the higher summits. We made our way up the northern side of the corrie, occasionally pausing to shelter from a short, sharp hailstorm, or to photograph the fine clouds that formed behind the ridges leading to Beinn a' Bhuiridh. But it was not until we reached the 3,000-foot shoulder to the north-east of Stob Diamh that the beauty and the inconvenience of this type of weather became simultaneously apparent. The beauty of the effects kept one waiting, camera in hand, wondering what would appear through each clearing in the clouds, while the cold wind and driving hail did what they could to counteract the exquisite beauty of the scenery. At one moment the view was of Strath Orchy and Ben More, the distant hills steaming in the sunshine; at another a sudden rent in the clouds showed a distant glimpse of peaks away to the north-east, whither one gazed searching for traces of the Cairngorms. At intervals the clouds would break and go rolling up the cliffs of Cruachan, revealing for a moment one or other of the main peaks, looking twice its height in the distance.

After waiting for some time watching these effects we proceeded up Stob Diamh. We reached the top in time for a momentary glimpse of the Main Peak, flanked by massive clouds, and looking like an Alpine giant, but after a few seconds the clouds closed in again. It was clear that the storms were becoming more frequent, and the bright intervals fewer and shorter. It was very doubtful whether it would be worth while to force our way over the mountain, but we decided to go on to the

3,312-foot peak (Drochaid Glas) before deciding for certain. Once there the weather decided for us. Instead of hail showers, it began to snow in earnest, and the ground, where not already covered, soon whitened. After waiting some little while to give it a last chance of clearing we began to beat a retreat down along the Allt Cruachan. The snow was of a peculiarly sticky variety, and, unless we stopped every few steps to scrape our heels, we found ourselves inclined to sit down with a violence that seriously endangered the contents of our pockets. This slippery combination of steep heathery slopes and wet snow must have extended for about a thousand feet down the mountain; but the snow melted quickly, and soon ceased to trouble us. As soon as we had retreated far enough to make a return out of the question, of course the weather began to mend once more. First came a glimpse of Loch Awe stretching away far to the south. After a while it cleared overhead, and by the time we were in the lower stretch of the corrie, about a thousand feet above the loch, the summit of Cruachan shone out glistening white, and looking immense in the lights of evening. Hereabouts we passed a fox lying dead in a trap. No doubt he was a sheep-marauder and richly deserved his fate, but one could not help wondering what thoughts such a sight would call forth in England. We continued our walk down past the Falls of Cruachan and back along the main road to Taynuilt. We arrived not unreasonably late for dinner after a most interesting walk. We had been defeated by our mountain, it is true, but we had seen far more by waiting for the views on the lower peaks than we should have by forging ahead through the storms and obstinately sticking to our first plan; and—we had come down the right side of the mountain without ever losing our way.

We had now seen something of a fine mountain in one of its most interesting moods, but we had not been up Cruachan, and we had not enjoyed a summit view. We had not long to wait before we gratified these further desires. The next morning, May 1st, broke clear and bright, obviously frosty up aloft. This time we decided

to make sure of the main summits by going straight up the Taynuilt end of the mountain. Baddeley suggests that this is a rough piece of mountaineering, but we found the ascent as simple and straightforward as can be. Possibly the snow on the upper part of the mountain may have made the going easier by filling up cracks between the stones and levelling up the ground. The day was perfect for our purpose, calm, sunny, and brilliantly clear. Fine weather clouds increased the beauty of the view without hiding the sun; the night's frost still held its grip on the feathery festoons of snow which had formed on the upper rocks, and the absence of wind made it possible to walk or sit down in equal comfort. We first went up the Taynuilt Peak. There we spent some time admiring and photographing the view. I entirely disagree with Baddeley's suggestion, that each of the two chief peaks detracts from its neighbour's view. On the contrary, from each peak the other is the chief feature, a splendid middle distance which sets off the far-away panorama to perfection. I have endeavoured to reproduce something of this effect in my second illustration. The splendid lines of the Main Peak far more than compensate for the loss of Strath Orchy in the view, while to the left of it can just be seen the snow-capped peaks of Ben More and Beinn Laoigh,* the latter concealing Am Binnein. Further

* As an Englishman with scarcely any knowledge of Gaelic, I cannot refrain from a protest against the practice adopted in many of our best tourist maps and guide-books of trying to "simplify" the Gaelic names. This well-meant "simplification" always ends by substituting a meaningless jumble of letters for a rational name. Beinn Laoigh is a typical instance. I know that the word Laogh is a proverbial "shibboleth" for any Englishman. I have no more hope of pronouncing it correctly than of saying Przemysl, but it does not help in the least to spell the name Ben Lui. It is no indication of the true sound of the word, and at the same time it robs one of the satisfaction of looking the word up in a dictionary and finding its meaning. Beinn Fhada is another sufferer in the same way. The FH may be mute, but no one, except possibly a native highlander, would think of recognising Attow for the feminine form of Fada, while the English appearance of the name in this garb has earned the mountain a place in maps out of all proportion to its importance. Of

to the left we could make out Ben Lawers, while much farther away a long line of gleaming white showed unmistakably the Cairngorm range.

But it is to the north that one must look for the chief beauty of this view—the long arm of Loch Etive running up towards the background of the Glencoe peaks. Exactly over the head of the Loch is Bidean nam Bian (3,766 feet), while towering above it to the left, though twice as far away, one can easily recognise the familiar outline of Ben Nevis. To the left again stretched a distant sea of snowy peaks, some of them recognisable with a field-glass, right away into Ross-shire. Then came the jagged outlines of Skye, then again those of Rum. Rum is sixty miles away, but so clear was it that it can be clearly seen in another photograph taken that day. Far away beyond Rum could be seen another island, which can have been nothing but South Uist, well over a hundred miles distant. To the south alone the clearness was interrupted by a peculiar gloomy haze, through which the Paps of Jura could barely be distinguished. We were just in time. As we walked along the ridge to the true summit this haze gradually spread towards us from the south-east. We reached the top in time to enjoy the view of the Taynuilt peak with the Firth of Lorne and Mull behind it. Then the wonderful distant view was gradually swallowed up, the sea of peaks to the north-west being the last to go. It was still a fine sunny

course a few names like Ben Nevis and most of the lochs and villages have become household words in their English form, and it would be as pedantic to try and alter them as to write Firenze or Wien for Florence or Vienna. But where the genuine name survives, it is a thousand pities to disguise its meaning by spellings which really do not help anyone. We surely should not tolerate in a standard guide-book false concords which would earn any schoolboy a severe chastisement. Could not some member of the Club contribute an article or articles on the correct spelling of names, and so help to standardise them in an intelligible form? He would be doing a real service. The Ordnance Maps are nearer than most, and I notice they have been followed in the Munro Tables, but I have heard them severely criticised by Highlanders. An especially interesting point might be made of the reaction of Gaelic and Norse upon one another on the west coast and in the islands.



May 1920

"VISIBILITY GOOD"

H. Gardner

LOCH ETIVE AND BEN NEVIS FROM THE TAYNUILT PEAK

day, good enough for most views, but the peculiar beauty of the morning was gone. One other interesting sight we had from the summit. Soon after we reached it a magnificent eagle flew out from close beneath us and hovered over the corrie beneath. The descent to Taynuilt was uneventful. In the evening it began to rain, and the rain continued until the middle of the next day.

Having given some description of what will appear to climbers a couple of very tame excursions, I will attempt to justify my sub-title by dwelling for a little while on how it has often seemed best to utilise one's weather to the full. In the West Highlands a holiday will never be entirely "set fair." It is a very good thing that it cannot be so. Perhaps this may seem a strange remark, but I am approaching the subject from the point of view of the Rambler who wishes to enjoy every aspect of the landscape, and to record what he can with his camera. From this point of view the worst kind of weather is the wholly wet, the next worst, the wholly fine. Unbroken fine weather usually means haze, with no distant views, no pure colours, no transparently blue sky, and no sparkling clouds. In choosing the time of year for a visit, one must look for something beyond the months with the lowest rainfall. "Visibility good" is, perhaps, the first meteorological requirement for a holiday of this kind. I have seen the West Highlands in every month of the year except February and March, and on the whole I have found no better time for wandering than April "with his shoures sote." To get the best out of this weather one's headquarters should be, if possible, near the coast or beside a lake. Even in the worst weather it may then be possible to rush out in a brief interval and catch a momentary gleam of sunshine over the water, or watch the clouds racing across the sky. Only last April I spent a most enjoyable week of very mixed weather at Airdferry. We never succeeded in getting up anything bigger than Sgurr an Airgid, and contented ourselves with admiring Sgurr Fhuaran in the distance; but nothing could have been more beautiful than the constantly changing aspects of that glorious peak. Surely no loch

can boast a finer head than Loch Duich. When we arrived and took our first training walk round the loch, it was the end of a spell of mild, dry weather. The snow was reduced to a few small patches; spring foliage was already being tempted out; and even roses were in blossom on one cottage beside the road. A day or two later we enjoyed a wonderful view of an entirely different nature from Auchtertyre Hill. This little hill commands one of the best-composed views in Scotland, Loch Duich and the Five Sisters being, of course, the chief features. The day was something like the first one on Cruachan: brilliant sunshine with occasional hail showers. Whenever hail showers take the place of rain, it is usually a good sign. On this occasion we benefited by being on quite a minor height. The hail never reached us, but swept with great effect across the landscape, leaving the air clearer and the mountains whiter after each shower. This was the ideal walk for such a day. An attempt on a high peak would certainly have been uncomfortable; perhaps we should have seen nothing. From this little hill the view was seen at its very best.

The absolutely perfect summer day seldom comes more than once or twice in a holiday. The second day on Cruachan was an example, though the weather deteriorated during the afternoon. Very occasionally an equally brilliant day is accompanied by a perfectly clear sky. I remember one such on Sgurr nan Gilleann in May 1919. We basked on the summit—where could one do it better?—for hours, marvelling at the view. In every direction it was equally clear. Over the top of the Outer Hebrides we could see the Atlantic extending far away towards St Kilda. Eig was reflected in the ocean as in a mirror. So still was the air that a companion lit his pipe without shading the match. This again was the right day in the right place, though from the photographer's point of view even the most perfect day is improved by a few white clouds. More often, however, the most beautiful scenes come on the clearing-up days after rain. Often, if the weather looks like mending, it

is wisest to risk wasting part of a day, if by waiting one can make sure of a good afternoon. Often a secondary peak will be the place best remembered for its views for this very reason. One may hesitate to risk getting weather-bound on the Cuillin, but no such risk attaches to the Red Hills, and some of the most glorious clearing days I can remember are associated with walks over the hills on the east side of Glen Sligachan. The hazy day is usually one of the most disappointing, except perhaps to a rock enthusiast. Its fine outlook tempts one to be vigorous and to tackle long excursions, but summit views under these conditions are not a proportionate reward, and photographs taken are usually so many wasted plates. Yet even these days may have their beauty. One such day I remember well. I was wandering alone in October over the Broadford mountains, and I shall never forget the effect of the sun's rays first over the sea, and then sloping across the spurs and buttresses of Blaven, each cliff throwing a long line of slanting shadow through the misty air.

I have been trying, as far as possible, to make out a case for the policy of a more or less fixed headquarters, whence one can explore each direction throughout an area according to the weather of each day. I know there are many who will disagree with me. I have no scheme for exploring the distant recesses of the Cairngorms or the Fannich Forest, none for becoming familiar with the grand cross-country routes from Strathglas or the fairyland between Dundonnell and Loch Maree. To do these justice one must wait for some answer to Dr Baker's appeal, and for the establishment of harmless mountain inns in such places as Glenshiel, Upper Glen Affric, or Strath na Sealga. But I cannot but feel that, where a good headquarters can be found, the policy of settling down and proportioning each day's excursion to its weather will provide the most enjoyable holiday.

WATCHES OF THE NIGHT.

BY "BETA MINUS."

9.30 P.M.—The "Gardien" has just put out the light and bumped noisily into his cubby-hole. The hut is as dark as the pit; an uneasy quiet reigns, and I compose myself to sleep.

This (my reason tells me) is the precious hour of rest; the storehouse of the body's strength against the toil and tribulation of the morning; not a moment must be lost! Come, now, let me concentrate upon oblivion: I will speak softly—perhaps I shall catch it unawares—Sleep . . . Sleep . . . (It would be easier, all the same, if there were fewer lumps in this mattress, and if the straw were less prickly within the pillow.)

Sleep . . .

It is a grim business. Half an hour has gone already. I have tried all manner of ways; on the right side, and on the left; I have passed in hot pursuit down all the byways of my mind; I have lain in wait among the shadows of idle thought—and sleep eludes me still! It has been deaf to my prayers; it has scorned my little scientific ruses; it has treated my mathematical contrivances with contempt. As usual, it has played the woman with my over-anxious wooing, and taken a delight in denying the too assiduous lover. Fool that I am! To conquer, my wooing should, of course, be the wooing of the Apache: I must be careless and brutal, seemingly indifferent, lazily sure of my success. Men of genius have always done this. Napoleon, for instance, found sleep the moment he desired it, even on the eve of a critical battle. Wonderful!

I fear in this respect I do not resemble Napoleon. It is unfortunate.

Raymond does though ; he is off already---the lucky devil. So does the Gardien. *Nom d'un nom !* How the man snores ! It is like a double-bass played by clockwork : in spasms it is like the thunder of the Atlantic on a rock-bound shore.

Why don't they make men wear silencers ? They have to have them on motor bicycles and things. Compulsory silencers—for use in all S.A.C. huts—a brilliant idea ! (I am often exceptionally brilliant on these occasions.) It will be defended not to use them when requested to do so by other Clubists—another excellent precept for voyagers ! And why not ? After all, they climb Everest in gas-masks ; at least, they do on the posters. Why not have some similar sort of apparatus, instruments of silence for the cabane ? Surely Mr Unna could invent an ingenious device ?

I wonder if it would matter very much if I murdered the Gardien quite quietly ? He is probably insured. Not that it would be of much use, for another in all respects like unto him would take his place in the morning.

Hang it all ! I MUST get to sleep ! It is getting on for eleven o'clock by now : only two hours more, and then—breakfast and that infernal moraine. Perhaps if I try the counting game again. . . .

One . . . Two . . . Three . . . Yes ; we shall take quite three hours to reach the ridge. And then—how many hours ? I wonder ! Old Dübi is nearly lyrical about it : the stern decorum of topographical science is quite overcome ; it has even compassed the majestic word “anfractuosités” in its service ; these are, apparently, numerous, and many of them are difficult (*varappe scabreuse*). Finally there will be an *arête de neige tranchante*, not seldom *garnie d'une corniche*—however, that part looked all right, as far as we could see. But, in any case, we shall have our work cut out ; there will be more than one tense moment before we find the summit under foot and are at liberty to descend that glorious sweep of ridge which leads to the broad slopes beyond.

We shall . . . we shall. . . .

What did you say, Raymond ?

This valley, into which we are so unaccountably descending, seems strange to you ? My good sir ! Why—of course—it's the . . . it's the . . . Well—funny thing—now you come to mention it, it DOES seem a bit unfamiliar, even to me. . . . It must be. . . . But—never mind—we shall soon come upon things we recognise—when we get a little lower.

The curious part about it is that the Swiss map seems wrong somehow. I've never known it happen before. It's really quite extraordinary ! We shall have to put a pithy little note about it in the next *A.J.* : "Alpine topography still incomplete—lingering defects in Swiss maps—theory of 'wet' drinks among (dry) Federal surveyors." It'll cause a minor sensation ! Theory questioned by Prof. X., angrily pooh-poohed by the Rev. Y., supported by General Z., and so on, to another merry controversy !

It is a very beautiful valley, Raymond ! Those pastures—what an exquisite shade of green ! How deliciously cool will be those woods after this furnace of a moraine. . . .

We are going down—down—down the pathway under the pines. The sunlight creeps stealthily in through the leaves and spreads a quivering trellis-work of light at our feet. Here and there little streams play hide-and-seek with great moss-clad boulders, and gurgle happily under bushes of alpen rose : we drink as we pass downward and are well content. Anything may happen in these woods. We may wander on for ever. . . .

Hullo—what is this ?

We have come to a clearing in the forest, a grassy glade among the pines, and in the middle of it stands a large chalet, many windowed, generously roofed, and richly carved about the corners and under the eaves. The very sight of the place is an invitation. The perfect valley must possess a perfect inn. We approach and enter as a matter of course. We have scarcely crossed the threshold before a stately old man, clad in flowing robes of purple

edged with gold, comes forward to meet us with a smile of welcome. Strange . . . but it is almost certainly the concierge. We murmur the usual phrases about food and beds. "But yes, Messieurs, everything is prepared! The Messieurs will surely bathe before they sit down to eat? All is in readiness. Excusez." With the utmost deference he relieves us of our axes and sacks. If we will be so good as to follow him. He leads the way down several passages, and then, opening a door suddenly, ushers us into a darkened chamber. As soon as our eyes grow accustomed to the gloom, we see that it is a beautifully appointed *chambre de bain*, floored with black marble, and in the centre is a circular pool of clear water from which the steam is rising softly to fill the chamber with a delicious perfume, as of a garden of roses on summer's morning. "Messieurs will take an *apéritif* while they prepare for the bath . . . and a cigarette, perhaps?" "Certainly we will, mon ami!" Silent-footed attendants appear from out the shadows, bearing stimulating drinks. Hastily we shed our clothing and leap into the pool. The temperature is perfect; we abandon ourselves to an ecstasy of physical well-being and delight.

Dimly I am aware of Raymond's sun-burnt visage, like a great blood-orange, floating in a cloud of steam.

"Ah!" says he, in a deep languorous voice, "this is wonderful! Amazingly . . . incredibly . . . wonderful."

The bath is over. The attendants bring us clean raiment, soft and very pleasant to the touch. I dress myself at leisure. Then I wander out into a spacious hall. Through a curtained doorway I get a peep into an inner room which is full of light. A magnificent banquet is being prepared within! The table groans under great bowls of silver filled with flowers and luscious fruits: melons, grapes, figs, peaches, and pomegranates. Numberless little dishes are there also, laden with the trifles which toy with the palate at unimportant intervals. From somewhere underground there comes the inviting aroma of savoury meat well cooked. Comely maidens pass with beakers of sparkling wine.

"This," I find myself murmuring, "is a fit reward of toil. This must be the climber's Valhalla."

Hark!

That will be the dinner gong! The feast is about to begin. I feel I possess a hunger worthy of the occasion. We will go in. The sound of the gong is faint at first; it has a deep note, soft and seemingly distant. How sweetly it rouses the echoes of that sombre hall! Then it grows louder and more shrill; louder yet—until now it is drumming in my ears.

Ding-dong — ding-dong — ding-dong — ding-ding-ding-ding-ding. . . .

DAMN!!

Where are my matches? Stop that infernal din, will you? I'm awake. One o'clock.

Through the window of the hut I can see a cold, triangular wedge of stars. It is a perfect night.

I tumble out of bed and start to light the fire. There is a stir among Raymond's blankets; he sits up and rubs his eyes. Has he, too, I wonder, been piped out of Elysium on the note of the alarm?



Mrs A. C. M'Laren

ON THE SHORE AT CROIG, MULL.



Mrs A. C. M'Laren

LOCH A'CHUAIN FROM ABOVE DERVAIG, MULL.

WANDERINGS IN MULL.

BY ALASTAIR C. M'LAREN.

"My blessings, fair Mull, will be ever with thee
And thy green mantled bens, with their roots in the sea."

LYING as Mull does somewhat off the beaten track, and not possessing any great stretches of climbing rocks, it is not so well known to the greater number of our members as it might otherwise be. It has much wild beauty and many a bold sea cliff and lonely waterfall, and is nowhere tame or uninteresting. Although only about 25 miles from north to south, and averaging perhaps 15 to 20 miles in breadth, its circumference must measure over 200 miles, owing to the many sea lochs which cut into it, sheltered by their long promontories, hence its name, *An t-Eilean Muileach*—the Island of Headlands.

A rashly given promise to our Editor emboldens me to give a few notes of odd days spent among its bens and on its coast line.

Ben More (3,169 feet) is most easily accessible from the bridge on the shore road, half a mile on the Salen side of Derryghuaig. From this point a stiffish grind of about 1,800 feet lands one on An Gearna, from whence a pleasant ridge walk leads to the final pull of a little over 1,000 feet to the summit. The view from the top on a fine day takes some beating—the mainland hills, then Jura, Islay, Colonsay, and many another sea-girt isle leading the eye round northwards to the Mecca of the faithful—An Cuilinn Sgiathanach, the Skye Cuillin.

I have been three times on Ben More, and have never failed to see deer. On the last two occasions, with G. L. Bartrum and Dr D. W. Inglis respectively, we saw very large herds, and as they swept down over a stream and disappeared round the edge of the corrie,

the old Gaelic saying came vividly to mind—"High is the head of the stag in the rocky wilds."

A fine group of islands lie off the north-west coast of Mull—Ulva, Gometra, and the Tresnish Isles. On one of the latter are the ruins of a castle. It had only one entrance, to which a steep, rocky path led up from the beach. In the days when it was inhabited, its warder was reputed to be the hardest worked man in the whole of Mull. Through the night it was his duty to roll enormous stones, at short intervals, down the path, and during the day he had to carry them up again from the beach to the castle; which shows that even in those remote times the question of munitions demanded and received careful attention in Mull.

Another pleasant day with Dr Inglis comes to my mind. Motoring from my home past the head of Loch Cuan, round Dunan Neill, of which more anon, we skirted Dervaig, and on up the steep brae past Kilmore and the old Celtic, or perhaps pre-Celtic, stone circle, and after negotiating many a steep hairpin bend—the only sensation of the expedition!—reached Loch Mishnish. From the deserted cottage on its shore (Bartrum, by the way, thinks of rebuilding it, and catching trout from the drawing-room windows), we ascended 'Sairde Beinn, the highest point north of the Tobermory-Dervaig road. On the summit there is a small loch deeply embosomed in an old crater, and literally "hotching" with small trout. Tearing ourselves away from the contemplation of their alluring rings—we had no rod with us—we made tea on the north rim of the crater, with Suaineart, Ardnamurchan, and the Small Isles spread at our feet, and the Holy of Holies (the Cuillin) fitly bringing the eye to rest in the distance. Looking lazily across the sound to Ardnamurchan and the ruins of Mingary Castle, a pleasant tale of the "good old days" came drifting into my mind, momentarily dispelling the thought of the huge uncaught "catch" of trout just 100 feet below us. This had been told me by one Sandy MacKillop, two summers ago, as we pulled an 18-foot boat round from Tobermory to Croig against the tide. In a cave some-

where between Ardnamurchan point and Mingary there lived an enterprising gentleman, whose stock in trade consisted of a very fast sailing boat, and an unquenchable desire to possess himself of other people's property. He systematically raided the north of Mull—Croig, Quinish, &c.—and when beef became scarce there—the Bill for the importation of Canadian cattle not being then on the Statute Book—he bestowed his attention on the shores of Suaineart and Morven. A strict watch was, of course, kept for him, but as he had hit on the plan of having one side of his boat painted black and the other white, he remained uncaught for a long time, as the black or white boat seen going one way by the watchers *never returned*—it was always a different colour on the return trip! Suspicion, however, eventually centred on his cave, and Red Duncan thereupon went the way of all flesh. Doubtless he now spends his time in roasting phantom bullocks, the facilities being excellent.

To hark back to Dunan Neill or Neil's hillock. This is a small island in the fork of the River Bellart, where it splits on entering Loch Cuan, on which the road runs on a sort of causeway, occasionally giving sport to the motorist when the tide is high and the river in flood. Neil was a follower of MacLean of Duart some 250 or 300 years ago, and luck being against Duart in one of the numerous clan squabbles of the time, Neil had to go into hiding in a cave on the Quinish hills, coming down to Dervaig by night to get food. One night he stayed on in his house till near daybreak, in spite of repeated warnings from his wife, who knew the house would be watched. Sure enough, as invariably happens when husbands take the bit in their teeth, disaster overwhelmed him—he was seen by his enemies as he left the house.

Being cut off from his cave, he made across the Bellart and turned to bay on the top of Dunan Neill. They struck him down and left him, as they thought, dead, but when they looked back from the brae where the parish church now stands, he had struggled to his knees. They returned and finished him. I confess I never cross

Dunan Neill on a dark night without a pious resolution to remember in future what Mrs M'Laren tells me.

A good day can be got on the Gribun cliffs above Loch nan Ceall. Starting from a point on the road half a mile west of Derryghuaig, and due south of the island of Eorsa, one starts up, keeping the cliff edge on one's right, and reaches the summit at about 1,000 feet level. This level is maintained right round for about two miles to above the crofting township of Gribun, when an easy scramble takes one down to the shore and a swim. In Gribun just above the road a huge mass of rock, with a terrible history, is to be seen, called Clach na Lanain, or the Stone of the Rafter. About 200 years ago, a young shepherd from the Ross of Mull got married and brought his bride to Gribun. I have seen the ruins of the barn in which the wedding party are said to have danced that night, close to their house. On the morning following the wedding, when the neighbours came out, they were horrified to see a great rock had fallen from the cliffs in the night, right on the top of the young couple's house, completely burying them. The great-grandmother of the man who showed it to me remembered seeing the rafters sticking out from below the rock.

There is a very deeply cut and tempting-looking gully about half-way along this line of cliffs, which drew Bartrum and me one summer to investigate it. We were stopped, however, about half-way up, by a large piece of very rotten rock, which could not be turned.

There are low but firmer cliffs round the bays in the north end of the island at Croig and Quinish, on which good scrambling can be had, punctuated with bathes, and there are countless pleasant hill walks to be enjoyed, though an account of them would not be so interesting as they are themselves. Every little creek and bay has its history of a wreck or smugglers, and on my own farm there is the site of a whisky still, but whether it is now in abeyance or active I shall not confide, even to the members of the S.M.C. !

A PEDESTRIAN EXCURSION IN THE HIGHLANDS.

WRITTEN BY CHARLES SIMPSON INGLIS IN 1856.

EDITED BY J. GALL INGLIS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE paper bearing the above title came into my hands last year, along with a number of interesting jottings relating to the holiday experiences of an uncle who died over thirty years ago. It describes in great detail a fortnight's walking and climbing expedition, undertaken nearly seventy years ago, in the course of which ascents were made of Sgurr nan Gilleann, Slioch, Mam Soul, and An Socach (?) west of An Riabhachan.

From references at the close of the paper, I have every reason to believe that it was read, a year or so later, at the house of my great-grandfather, Mr James Gall, to a Saturday evening "social." The audience would be chiefly composed of personal friends and relatives of both sexes, a fact which obviously influenced the style in which the paper was written. The narrative throws an interesting light on the primitive touring facilities in the remote Highlands about the middle of last century, and on the conditions of travel from Greenock "down the watter," and through the Crinan Canal in 1856. Mountaineers will not fail to note the species of awe with which these experienced hillmen regarded precipices—characteristic of the age before anyone dreamed of climbing hills by "unheard-of routes"!

The earlier adventures were due to the fact that the only maps available at that time were practically blank except in the vicinity of the driving roads. When the travellers started, they were in complete ignorance that their projected route to Craig Inn, in Strathcarron, which looked quite simple, was really a regular maze of mountains and glens, and three other explorations of the locality, some twelve to eighteen years later, failed to reveal to them how they should have gone.

The *dramatis persone* of the narrative were three brothers—William, Charles, and Robert Inglis, sons of the Original Secession minister of Midlem, near Selkirk. As they—along with another brother, James—were among the pioneers of regular Scottish mountaineering, the following notes are perhaps worth recording in the *S.M.C. Journal*. For some forty years

they held a "Meet" nearly every autumn, which took the form of a fortnight's driving, walking, and climbing, usually in Scotland, but varied by occasional visits to the Lake District, Wales, Switzerland, and the Tyrol, and even to Norway.

In their Scottish ascents they very early embraced the cult of the 3000-foot peak and brought up the next generation in the same faith! Hills of lesser altitude, though by no means despised, were little accounted of—in jottings of my father's tours going back to 1846, only peaks over 3,000 feet are ever mentioned by name, except Ben Ledi, Ben Resipol, and Ben Arthur (probably the Cobbler): all others are dismissed in general phrases, "Peeblesshire Hills," "Arran," &c.

In the course of these tours a large number of the best known hills in Scotland were climbed—many of them repeatedly—for the most part on "salvationist" principles, but not altogether, as will appear in this narrative when the ascent of Sgurr nan Gillean is described. All the brothers, indeed, were quite accustomed to rock scrambling. On at least one occasion they conducted a party of ladies up the Cat Nick in the Salisbury Crags, and I was told that James once climbed a long way up the Ravens' Craig on Arthur's Seat, but slipped and would have been killed if his clothes had not caught in a tree!

With the exception of this paper by my uncle, and another by my father on the Monte Rosa climb mentioned below, there seem to be no detailed accounts of their expeditions. Various jottings found among their papers, however, give a good deal of information of what they did, year after year. The earliest expedition of which there is any note was in August 1850, when they slept under the Shelter Stone; when they went out next morning to climb Ben Macdhui they found the ground white with snow which had fallen during the night. Ben Lomond was also climbed this year. In 1856 they went on the tour described in this paper, and ten years later, William and Charles had another cross-country expedition, walking from Ballater to Glen Tilt, via Loch Muick, Lochnagar, Loch Callater, Braemar, Cairntoul, and Glen Feshie: they were benighted in the latter glen, and "slept in the moss" till 4.30 next morning, when they resumed their journey via Geldie Shielling and Bynack Water, to Blair Atholl. In 1863 Sutherlandshire was visited, and ascents were made of Canisp, Quinag, Ben More Assynt, Ben Hope, Ben Loyal, and Ben Klibrick, Ben Stack, Ben Spinnogan; Ben Dearg, near Ullapool, was also climbed, either on this visit or nine years later. These peaks, with Mam Soul, Slioch, Sgurr nan Gillean, Ben Screel, and Cralic, exhaust the list of their more northern climbs. Of numerous peaks climbed farther south it is needless to say anything, except that Schiehallion and Ben Nevis seem to have been special favourites.

A "Glencoe Ridge" (Aonach Eagach?) and a narrow "Ben Nevis Ridge, Glen Nevis," are mentioned in the seventies; the tale of the latter, if I mistake not, was responsible for sending Dr Inglis Clark on one of his early adventures.

On the Continent, Robert and Charles, after a dogged struggle with mountain sickness, made what they understood was the sixth ascent of the *Hochste Spitze* of Monte Rosa, and were the first Scotsmen on that top (28th August 1857); William had collapsed before reaching the rocks. It had been intended to attempt Mont Blanc the following week, but the project seems to have been abandoned as the result of their experiences on Monte Rosa. Apparently the brothers came to the conclusion that the higher Alpine peaks were hardly legitimate sport for men already over forty, for, so far as I know, they never again passed the 11,000-foot line. In August 1859 they went over to Norway, and though the conditions were very primitive, especially in regard to food, they succeeded in ascending Galdhopig, the highest peak of the Jotunheim. They started from Rosenheim at 3.30 A.M., reached the top at 1.15, and got back to Rosenheim at 10 P.M.—a long day.

The brothers kept up their climbing traditions to the end, a plan to climb Cairntoul, in 1886, when nearly all were septuagenarians, being only frustrated the week before by illness. Their last tour in the far north was in 1882, when the Ordnance Survey of the Mam Soul district was at last published. A fifth visit was paid to what they called "Look-out Hill," to solve the Craig Inn problem. It was found that Charles was right as to direction, and Robert wrong, but Charles's route involved crossing several ranges of "Munro's," and was impracticable! It is a curious coincidence that the three who took part in the 1856 expedition, and in the Monte Rosa expedition also, all passed away rather suddenly in 1887-88, within the space of three months.

"Wilson," in the narrative, is William Inglis, the oldest of the family, afterwards a partner in the publishing firm of W. & R. Chambers. "Robertson" is my father, Robert Inglis, of Gall & Inglis, publishers, and the narrator is Charles Simpson Inglis, at one time a bookseller in Edinburgh, along with his brother William, and later, a kind of visiting delegate in connection with Sunday-school work. Some of the "chaffing" in the paper will be better understood when it is mentioned that he was the most active of the brothers—my father once remarked that he could walk any of the others off their feet—and the keenest and most experienced mountaineer of them all. I have been told that he thought nothing of going a 70-mile tramp across the Lowland hills alone, lying down for a sleep *en route*, wrapped in his plaid, in the lee of a dyke. He had a great fund of quiet humour, as will be seen in the narrative.

The fourth brother, who was not present on this expedition, was Rev. James Inglis, U.P. minister in Johnstone.

I. GREENOCK TO INVERCANNICH.

A PEDESTRIAN, though sometimes footsore and weary, has many advantages over the more luxurious traveller. He is much more independent, can choose his own time, and is not obliged to hurry over the country without seeing it, and can even step aside at any time to interesting objects. If he is a botanist, mineralogist, or geologist, he has a thousand ways of adding to the interest of a journey, and if none of the three, he has at least the free air of the mountains, and the inspiring influence of personal adventure and exertion.

It is true that some respectable old ladies—especially those of the male sex—are horrified at other people risking their lives among mountains, rocks, and glaciers, but the mountain, plain, and valley have each their proper fitness for the body and mind of man, and he is no true philosopher who is content only with the view from his own little spot of earth, and does not explore for himself, as opportunity offers, the glorious world around him.

One of the pleasures in connection with a journey is the preparation for it, and our consultations on the subject were neither few nor unimportant. A light burden is a great consideration in a walking excursion, especially when you consider that it has to be carried everywhere by yourself, and that a few pounds weight is a serious drawback to your activities in ascending a mountain, climbing rocks, or jumping burns. Differing from many travellers, we had not to decide how many but how few bandboxes, carpet bags, and brown-paper parcels we were to take with us, and we each succeeded in compressing our whole equipment into a small knapsack, the bulkiest articles being a plaid and waterproof coat.

As to provisions, not knowing how we might be circumstanced, we each took six ship biscuits—as hard as a miser's heart, and as dry as an abstract doctrinal

sermon ! Besides these, we had a small packet of dried prunes—and very useful they proved to be afterwards ; for the rest, we trusted to anything that might turn up, not supposing that we would be at any time very far from necessary food.

Being thus fully prepared for the journey, we sailed from Greenock for Ardrishaig on one of those famous fast-sailing Clyde steamers in which it is really a pleasure to sail. The rate of 16 or 17 miles an hour on water is quite exciting ; you feel you are going ; the scenery changes so fast that you have not time to be wearied, and then you are not subjected every now and then to that nuisance in railway travelling, namely, being shut in between the high banks of a cutting, or plunged into the darkness of a tunnel, which has been somewhat facetiously called “ seeing the country ” !

After a pleasant sail we arrived at Ardrishaig, and walked along the road a few yards to the place where the passenger tug-boat on the Crinan Canal awaited us. The boats on this canal are very well adapted for both wet and dry weather. The cabin is roomy and well lighted by side windows, while the top part is covered by a semicircular roof, on which the passengers can sit back to back, resting their feet on a small wooden rail fastened along the edge of the roof on each side. The day being beautiful and warm, the majority of the male passengers—sixty or seventy in number—very speedily occupied the roof outside ; it was rather amusing to look along such a row of boots and shoes of every size and thickness, blacked and unblackened, ranged in regular order, and the odd appearance of so many feet in such an unusual position caused a general laugh to run along the whole line.

As for the ladies, there was plenty of room for them, but perhaps timidity—or it might be a doubt of the propriety of mounting the roof—kept them back, though many longing looks were cast to what was evidently a good place for sight-seeing. At last, after many private whispered consultations, one lady, bolder or more spirited than the rest, stepped upon a small projecting piece of

wood and helped herself up, and many of the rest followed her example. But here another feminine difficulty appeared : many seemed to have doubts as to the propriety of placing their feet on the small footboard that ran along the roof, but soon finding it inconvenient to do otherwise, they stretched them out and sat for a few minutes comfortably enough. They had not, however, been prepared for the defects that this change of position might disclose, and it very shortly became apparent that if the best bonnet was in a box along with the luggage, the best boots were there also ! Small holes, broken and knotted laces, cloth boots slightly ragged, became painfully evident in the bright sunshine, and the female telegraph was immediately set to work : a significant smile or look, a quiet touch, or a short cough, gave intimation of the alarming discovery, and produced the immediate withdrawal of the offending members !

In a short time we were all properly seated, the luggage stowed away, the two horses yoked, with smart-looking riders in scarlet liveries on their backs ; the signal was given, and away we went at the full Crinan Canal speed of six miles an hour. The change from the noisy clatter of the paddle wheels of the steamer, and the foam of the salt sea, to the quiet still waters and smooth gliding motion of the canal, was very pleasant and soothing, and seemed to have its due effect on the whole party in making them perfectly quiet and still, so much so, that for some time there was scarcely a word spoken, and nothing could be heard but the gentle ripple of the water against the prow of our little ship as it glided along. Every one seemed to feel what a pity it would be to speak and disturb the silence, and there is no saying how long it might have lasted had not an awkward fellow, in endeavouring to change his position, nearly tumbled into the water ! This excited a small commotion, which was succeeded by a general conversation.

As there were several locks on this canal, the company generally got out and walked for a mile or two, where these were sufficiently numerous and close together to make it worth while. The day being warm, we considered

our pennies well bestowed in purchasing tumblers of milk from the little barefooted maidens that offered them for sale—not intrusively, but modestly. It was quite refreshing to see children not spoilt in their manners by the rapacity of their parents or the foolish conduct of tourists.

The canal lies in a sort of natural valley, the ground on each side rising sufficiently rapidly, and being high enough to make it a very picturesque and pretty vale. With the trees in many places growing close along the banks, and the dark hillside rising immediately beyond, with the heather covering the ground to the water's edge, and the bluebell and foxglove appearing here and there among the stones, and a silver birch occasionally appearing, it was impossible to look at this canal with the feelings with which canals are generally regarded. The scenery is not of the grand but of the pleasing order. This canal like other things has a character—in short it is one of the most lady-like canals in existence !

On arriving at the other end of the canal, we changed to the steamer awaiting us on Loch Crinan to convey us to Fort William. Tourist steamers are much alike ; you have the haughty Briton pacing the deck in silence, the affable gentleman making himself agreeable to everybody ; the Englishman, judging that the scenery is picturesque but poor ; the Scotsman, arguing with his neighbour, and telling him that, if he thinks so, he “ has nae mair sense nor a peasewep ” ; the Frenchman, trying to converse with the natives, and remarking, “ Dis scenery is very grand fine.” And as for the ladies, you have every variety ! Mrs Smith, from the city, wondering whatever has become of her trunk ; Mrs Jones, with an alarming expression on her face, searching in vain under the pile of luggage covered by the tarpaulin for her box, which she has not seen for three-quarters of an hour ; an anxious lady's maid narrating to her mistress how an unhappy bandbox has just been “ squeegeed ” under a gentleman's portmanteau ; on the paddle-boxes there is the usual regiment of smokers puffing the livelong day.

Little more than half an hour brought us to the Sound of Luing, to the west of which lay the gulf, or as it

is sometimes called, the whirlpool of Corrievrechan. While passing through this sound we obtained a view of Ben Cruachan, with its naked double top rising loftily above the surrounding mountains. It looks very majestic and striking from this point ; this is partly owing to the arrangement of the hills, from the sea inland, not interfering with the view. The scene presents much the appearance of a straight valley, from the lower end of which you look upwards to Ben Cruachan situated exactly in the centre, at the top.

Proceeding up Loch Linnhe, we entered the pretty bay of Oban, and as our destination was Fort William we could enjoy the race along the pier made by those passengers who were to land at Oban, and anxious to get a bed at this place. Those who were light of foot and had little luggage had evidently the best of it, while those whose trunks and flesh were stout in proportion, soon gave up in despair. All the inns in the country had been very much crowded during the season of 1856, and it seems that on many occasions people had to sleep on tables, chairs, or anything they could get : it was first come, first served. We learned, however, that it was not always advisable to be in a great hurry on such occasions. The day previous, the steamer had come in a little later than usual, just when it was beginning to be dark, and a gentleman who wished to land at Oban did not wait until the vessel was properly laid alongside the pier, but, when sufficiently near, jumped from the deck in safety. Misled by a light, instead of running along the pier he ran *across* it, crying "Hurrah for the first bed!" : and the next moment he was plunged, carpet bag and all, into twelve feet of salt water. He was luckily got out in safety, not a whit the worse.

The scenery in the neighbourhood of Oban is very picturesque, and the numerous promontories and ever-changing shapes of the hills between it and Fort William make it very enjoyable. Dunstaffnage, the ancient seat of Scottish royalty, the hills of Loch Etive, the green island of Lismore, with its ecclesiastical associations, dark Morvern, the hills of Appin, the singular colouring



August 1908

BEN NEVIS FROM ENTRANCE TO CALEDONIAN CANAL—CORPACH

J. H. Buchanan

of the mountains of Glencoe, and the perfect calmness and glassy surface of the sea, formed a combination of enjoyments which we could drink to the full. Darkness came upon us before we reached Fort William, but we had the pleasure of seeing the sun set behind the dark mountains to the west, defining their outline with clearness, and reflecting its last glories on the sky, while the rest of the landscape was cast into deep shadow. On reaching Fort William, one of our party performed the office of courier, and by speed of foot succeeded in obtaining for us a place to rest in, some of those who came later not being so fortunate.

As we had to walk from Fort William to Banavie to be in time for the steamer on the Caledonian Canal, we had to start early, and here had an opportunity, for the distance of three miles, of trying how our pedestrianism would agree with our knapsacks, belts, &c. This was of use in ascertaining the proper length or the position of a belt, and the place where the weight of the knapsack would least interfere with bodily exertion. We enjoyed this short walk very much, as a taste of what was coming : the clear morning air, the prospect of a good day, and the sight of the pedestrians hurrying onwards, were pleasant and stimulating, and as to the scenery, we could look at little else but the monarch of Scottish mountains, Ben Nevis, with his wreaths of mist rising and falling, and his grim ruggedness looking through here and there, giving an indication of the majesty that still lay hidden. Arriving at the canal in good time, we went on board the steamer and took breakfast.

The Caledonian Canal is worthy of the name. No one need grudge taking this route, as they will be amply repaid by the variety, and, in many places, by the grandeur of the mountain scenery. The different lochs that form so large a part of the canal give it a character peculiar to itself, and add much to the pleasure of travelling through the Great Glen of Scotland.

After the steamer left Foyers, we began to examine whether or not everything was in readiness for our excursion, which we considered as only now beginning. Some

of the passengers had become aware of our intentions, and when the steamer lay-to off Drumnadrochit, to land us, a number of them looked over the side of the vessel curiously, and some wished us a safe journey back to civilisation again.

On landing at Drumnadrochit, after partaking of a hasty meal, we got a conveyance to take us up Glen Urquhart for about ten miles. This is a very pretty glen, and it was very pleasant to notice that the cottages along the roadside, almost without exception, were exceedingly clean, neat, and tasteful, both within and without, and formed a marked contrast to too many places in Scotland that are conspicuous for nothing but dirt and slovenliness, and are a standing reproach to both landlord and tenant.

When we had gone with our conveyance as far as the road admitted, we began to ascend the range of hills lying between us and Strath Glass, where we purposed spending the night. There is a road marked in some maps as being a continuation of the road leading up Glen Urquhart, but we found this to be a mistake ; it is a mere mountain track, scarcely perceptible in many places, and only practicable to pedestrians.* After an easy climb we obtained a view of dark mountain scenery from the top, and then ran helter-skelter down the other side. We had, however, a much greater descent than ascent, owing to the level of the Strath being much lower than the head of the glen we had left. The sun had set, and it was beginning to get dark when we reached the side of the river flowing through the Strath ; we had trusted to its being fordable, in order to save ourselves the trouble of walking three or four miles round by Fasnakyle Bridge, and happily we were not disappointed. I stripped off my shoes and stockings, and wading through, reported the stream as being nowhere more than two feet deep, though the current was strong in some places. Robertson followed my example. Wilson, without taking off his boots, put on his waterproof leggings, tied them tightly round his ankles with pieces of cord, and then waded

* The present road seems to have been made during the next dozen years.

through ; only, chancing to take a somewhat deeper part of the stream, the water began to run in over the tops of the leggings, and as he quickened his speed to avoid a wetting, he landed safely after a good splashing.

Our next object was to find the Invercannich Inn, to which we had been directed. We soon found the macadamised road that ran through the Strath, and after walking a few yards along it in the direction of a house which we had seen from the top of the hill, we saw dimly in the twilight a low wooden shed without windows, with the door shut, and the roof comfortably clad with turf sods, and having something nailed on its side alarmingly like a sideboard. We did not at all relish the idea of this being our resting-place for the night, and passed on a few yards farther on to see if a small house, which was neatly whitewashed, might not be the inn ; but as it showed no sign of being a place of public entertainment, we were unwillingly obliged to retrace our steps. On coming near to the place where we had been, we saw a man leaning his arms on the top of a dyke, apparently surveying the evening. On asking him for Invercannich Inn, he pointed, to our dismay, in the direction of the wooden shed, saying rather gruffly, " That's it."

There was no help for it, our ideas had been brought down to their proper level, and we advanced to the door. But before we reached it, a woman came out of a small stone house next it, and relieved us considerably by telling us that this house was the real inn, and that the signboard was only put on the wooden shed for the sake of convenience—a statement which we certainly did not see the force of, though it caused us some amusement.

The inn, with its low, unceiled roof, earthen floor, furniture of the plainest description, and peat reek, might not be very inviting to some fastidious people, but then everything in this little place was clean and tidy, and we fared most comfortably, and were well attended to, even though we had no " boots " to whisk off our shoes, and no fine gentlemanly waiter that you were almost afraid to speak to !

3n Memoriam.

PROFESSOR W. P. KER.

IT is with profound regret that we have to include in this issue an In Memoriam notice of our good friend Professor William Paton Ker, LL.D., Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, and Professor of Poetry there. He was one of the original band of enthusiasts who went to the forming of the Club, and the possessor of so charming a personality that he instantly won the interest, even affection, of every member with whom he came in contact. Young or old, it made no difference. His happy outlook on life, his ready appreciation of humour, and his unfailing interest in even the baldest accounts of doings on his beloved hills, made all gravitate naturally towards so sympathetic a listener. His comments were jewels for a mental repository.

I first had the pleasure of meeting him in 1896 at a "cave" Meet at Loch Awe at New Year. He then introduced me to a method of catering for expeditions which I have made a model since, though I must admit that I have never attained his standard. He abhorred sandwiches. His provender consisted of half a loaf, cold meats (various)—I remember turkey was included that first time—cold plum pudding, raisins, prunes, ginger, Carlsbad plums, certain delectable liquids in separate flasks, and the most bewildering assortment of "after-dinner sweets." To a young and healthy appetite, such as mine was in those days, the sight of so many good things on a snow-covered summit in mid-winter was like a glimpse of fairyland. I think my wonder must have amused him immensely, for he insisted on my sampling

everything he had, and never after did he forget the incident, for thinly-veiled references to my capacity for seizing a golden opportunity became a standing joke between us; and I seemed to meet him in the most extraordinary places—now a mountain summit in Scotland, then next, the deck of a Channel steamboat, the *salle-à-manger* of some tiny Alpine hotel, the middle of a glacier, the cloak-room of a London restaurant.

Always he had a cheery word, and usually in the broadest Doric. Standing once at the door of the Hotel Mont Rose at Zermatt, he pointed to the Nord End, quaintly describing it as the Taynuilt Peak of Monte Rosa—a jest so subtle and yet so deliciously apposite that I feel I shall hug it for ever as a recollection of one of the most endearing men Glasgow ever produced.

He was a man who carried his years heavily, for he was only sixty-eight when he died of heart failure, not far from Macugnaga in Italy this summer. He had a programme mapped out, and had engaged his guide Josef Biner (Sohn Anton) to await his arrival at Zermatt. Last year he had carried out several ascents despite the poor climbing conditions, including the Matterhorn and Finsteraarhorn, no mean undertaking for a man of his years.

Biner mourned his loss as that of a real friend. That was the feeling he engendered in his subordinates—one of cordial good-fellowship. Miss Ker, writing of the events which immediately followed on his sudden death on the glacier, is high in praise of the conduct of the guides, and especially of one, Jacchini. Of him she says, "Jacchini that day did so splendidly—he never thought of himself or of fatigue . . . we want the Mountaineering Club to know."

Ker has gone, leaving rich legacies in the realm of literature, delightful works on literary history and mediæval literature, which, if they are not classics to-day, will be to-morrow. The "Epic and Romance" and the "Art of Poetry" are worthy memorials of a man who could express his freshness of thought in a way that held the interest and attention of his readers.

GEORGE SANG.

LIATHACH.

Written on the occasion of Glover's anguished disappointment at the indifference of a young companion on seeing Liathach for the first time.

GLOVER, the High-Priest of Liathach,
 Thus did decide and decree,
 That each one must fall down and worship,
 Whatever his rank or degree ;
 When first his eyes light on that mountain
 His knee he must bend, and adore,
 And then with due awe he must scale It,
 Its shrines and Its temples explore.
 Is the sun shining bright on Its summit,
 Or the mist gently veiling Its crest ?
 Are the storms raging over Its ledges ?
 Is a snow mantle garbing Its breast ?
 Then sing ye the hymn of that mountain,
 And chant ye Its psalm, and depart,
 But never while life may be in you,
 Let Its worship die out of your heart.

J. S. M. JACK



SGURR BAN FROM COULIN

G. Sang

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

EASTER MEET, 1923—LOCH MAREE.

THE following members were present :—

The *President* (J. H. Bell), A. Arthur, G. Barlow, J. H. B. Bell, R. A. Brown, D. A. Clapperton, C. K. M. Douglas, G. W. T. H. Fleming, G. T. Glover, A. Harrison, J. Harrison, J. G. Inglis, J. S. M. Jack, G. M. Lawson, W. N. Ling, J. M'Coss, H. MacRobert, T. Mears, G. B. L. Motherwell, W. A. Mounsey, J. Rennie, M. J. Robb, G. Sang, G. A. Solly, J. L. Stevenson, G. D. Valentine, C. W. Walker.

The *Guests* were :—H. A. Nicholson, H. F. Sharp, R. G. Sharp, E. E. Roberts, C. P. Robb, and R. T. Sellar.

The main Easter Meet was held at Kinlochewe, the first member to arrive being the President on the 24th of March. As the accommodation of the hotel, even after using the surrounding cottages, was not sufficient to house all the members and guests, Lawson, Nicholson, and Sang spent the first few nights at Lochmaree Hotel.

The weather was exceptionally good, except on Sunday, 1st April, when rain fell on the low ground. On the tops the conditions were much more pleasant, as instead of rain there was snow. The rain on Sunday cleared the air which, although bright and sunny, had been somewhat hazy, and on Monday the atmosphere was clear, and the views over mountain and loch were superb.

The spring of this year had been exceptionally dry in Ross-shire and there was very little snow, in fact, many members never took out their ice-axes. There was, however, the compensation that the rocks were in good condition, and some interesting rock climbs were done.

On 25th March the President did Slioch by the south ridge. On the 27th he ascended into Coire Mhic

Fhearchair of Beinn Eighe from Bridge of Grudie, and along the ridge to Sgur Coire Nan Cloich, taking in Ruadh Stac Mor on the way. Barlow arrived on the 28th, and next day did Slioch by the east ridge, descending by the south.

On the 29th, Clapperton, Douglas, Fleming, the Harrisons, Lawson, Ling, Mounsey, Nicholson, Sang, and Stevenson walked over the Coulin Pass from Achnashellach, and were accompanied by the President, their luggage being taken by bus from Achnasheen, guarded by Motherwell, Rennie, and Solly. Walker and the two Sharps arrived by car from Dundee.

On the 30th, Solly, Bell, Mounsey, Clapperton, Barlow, and Stevenson drove down to Torridon House, and ascending from Alt a Bhealaich did the whole circle of Ben Alligin. Rennie and Motherwell did the main top. The view from Ben Alligin is one of the finest in the country, but was rather spoiled by the thick atmosphere. The tea at the keeper's house made up for the loss of view.

Ling, Walker, Sang, and the two Sharps drove down the Torridon Road to Lochan an Iasgaich and did Liathach, taking it from the east by the "nose" of Stuc a Choire Dhuibh Bhig.

The sandstone was found to be sound and gave excellent holds, and a great contrast to the Slioch rocks. There are many routes on the face of the nose, and difficult pitches can usually be turned by traverses along the grass ledges. Ling and H. Sharp went to the main top, while Sang, Walker, and R. Sharp went over Mullach an Rathain as well, getting back to the hotel after eight o'clock.

Douglas and the Harrisons entered Coire Mhic Fhearchair from the Coire Dubh, Douglas and A. Harrison doing the east buttress, getting on to it from the east by traversing the higher of the two terraces which show so conspicuously on the photographs of the Coire. The route was up the crest of the buttress. The rock is extremely good with numerous holds but a good many loose stones.



COIRE MHIC FHEARCHAIR

G. Sang

Lawson and Nicholson walked up Glen Grudie from the bridge, and after looking in at Coire Mhic Fhearchair, did Spidean a Choire Leith by the north ridge, returning to Lochmaree Hotel by Strath Lumgard, a long tramp and no path, but luckily the valley was quite dry.

The party was practically completed by the evening of the 30th by the arrival of J. M'Coss, M. J. and C. P. Robb, R. T. Sellar, H. M'Robert, Arthur, Brown, Jack, and Glover, the two latter walking from Achnashellach.

On the 31st, Coire Mhic Fhearchair claimed most attention, Arthur, Solly, Mounsey, and Barlow attacking the eastern buttress from Bridge of Grudie, starting from the buttress on the lower terrace, close to the gully between the east and centre buttresses. The rocks between the lower and upper terrace were found to be very steep and difficult. Thereafter the route followed was the same as that of the previous day. This is the first recorded ascent from the lower terrace. The party then did Ruadh Stac Mhor and returned to Bridge of Grudie, Arthur, in addition, bagging Sail Mhor.

Ling, Stevenson, and Fleming were also in the Coire and ascended Ruadh Stac Mor, Ling thereafter continuing along the ridge and joining Jack, M'Robert, Brown, and Glover, who had done Sail Mhor.

A party consisting of M'Coss, Sellar, Motherwell, Valentine, and the two Robbs did Spidean a Choire Leith by the south-east corrie, descending by the same route.

The Lochmaree Hotel party launched their galley on the waves, and threading the swift currents which ran between the islands and landing at a point about half a mile east of Letterewe, attacked Slioch by the north-west ridge. Although the rocks looked promising they were very disappointing, being rounded and loose. On arriving again at Letterewe a fire was made and tea drunk, so the day was not wasted for one member of the party. On the top Douglas and the Harrisons—who had tried the rocks on the west face—were met. These rocks were also disappointing, being either very easy or loose and dangerous.

Walker and the two Sharps, resting from their labours

of the previous day, decided to try the water, and spent the day in a boat on Loch Maree.

Next day, Sunday, began in an unpromising way with rain and mist, and many members thought it a good excuse for a slack day, and some went to church. Those who went out found the conditions on the hills much better than on the low ground, as the rain was turned to snow and wonderful effects were got through the eddies of the mist.

Bell, Glover, and M'Robert visited Loch Fhadda, going by Gleann Blàn 'asdail, and returning by Abhunn Bruachaig, being accompanied part of the way by Jack and Brown who ascended Slioch by Sgurr an Tuill Bhain.

Walker, Ling, and the Sharps also ascended Slioch by the south ridge, returning by the east.

The Aberdeen party and Valentine walked round Ben Eighe, and had a look into the corrie, while Arthur, Douglas, and the Harrisons did Ben Eighe ridge from the east via the Black Men going along as far as Coire an Laoigh.

Sang strolled along the odd 10 miles from Loch-maree Hotel during the course of the day, and about eight o'clock in the evening was seen to leave on his return journey. It has been denied that his walk was undertaken to qualify him as a *bona-fide* traveller!

Towards the evening the weather cleared up and gave promise of a fine day on the morrow, and this was amply fulfilled, Monday being a perfect day with clear air and a brilliant sun.

Walker and the Sharps left in the morning for Dundee, and the Robbs, M'Coss, Sellar, and Glover also left.

The chief object of interest on Monday was Liathach, the President, Solly, M'Robert, Mounsey, Jack, Ling, Barlow, and Brown motoring 7 miles down the Torridon Road and doing Spidean a Choire Leith and Mullach an Rathain, finishing up at Torridon Lodge, where they had an excellent tea.

M'Robert and Brown stated that they had a bathe,



G. Sang
SLOCH FROM ABOVE BRIDGE OF GRUDIE

but the other members of the party say they could see no difference in their appearance and had grave doubts on the matter.

Arthur, Douglas, and the Harrisons were also on Liathach, following very much the route taken by Walker, Sang, and Sharp on the Friday, and also doing the Faserinen Pinnacles. The stags in this part of the country are apparently unaccustomed to seeing cars driven at even a modest speed, and one of them, badly underestimating the speed of Arthur's car, was nearly translated into minced venison.

Motherwell and Valentine did Slioch by the east ridge, and Stevenson and Fleming took the same route.

Fleming intended leaving by the late train, but Glen Docherty and a Ford car were too much for him, and he returned to spend another night at the hotel. His language was distinctly picturesque.

The views from the tops were magnificent. To the south-east the mass of Mam Soul was conspicuous, and to the west, over Loch Torridon glittering in the sun, island after island appeared, and far beyond on the horizon stretched the long line of the Outer Hebrides.

In the evening Gall Inglis and Mears arrived from the south, and we were also joined by Lawson, Nicholson, Sang, Bell, and Roberts from Lochmaree Hotel, the first three doing Ben Eighe via Choire Mhic Fhearchair *en route*.

Roberts and Jas. Bell went to Dundonnell on the 29th, and next day did An Teallach from Loch Toll an Lochan, ascending by a snow gully to Lord Berkley's seat and continuing round the ridge to Sail Liath to Larachantivore where they spent the night. The next day they did Beinn Dearg by the north-east ridge, and reached Loch Maree by Larachantivore and Letterewe.

On the 2nd, Jas. Bell and Roberts did the east buttress of Choire Mhic Fhearchair from Bridge of Grudie, continuing along the ridge and finishing off with the Black Men.

There was a general exodus on the 3rd, Jas. Bell, Motherwell, Fleming, Stevenson, Jack, Ling, Harrison, and M'Robert taking the early train, while Brown and Bell

walked over from Glen Torridon to Achnashellach by Fuar Tholl, catching the afternoon train. Mounsey and Barlow went over Beinn Eighe, Mears and Gall Inglis being on the same hill, while Lawson and Roberts did Mullach an Rathain and Spidean a Choire Leith. Arthur was on Slioch by himself.

In the evening Solly, Arthur, and Valentine motored to Dundonnell, and next day Solly and Arthur were on An Tealach, ascending Glas Mheall Mor by "B" Coire (Vol. IX., p. 92), and thereafter traversing all the tops except 3 and 4, as far as Sail Liath, returning to Dundonnell by Loch Toll an Lochain. There was some mist on the tops, and difficulty was found in following the ridge. They both left next day for the south, spending the night at Grantown-on-Spey.

Valentine returned to Kinlochewe by Allt Gleann Chaorachain Loch an Lid.

Clapperton and Inglis ascended Stuc a Choire Dhuibh Bhig and Spidean a Choire Leith from the seventh milestone on the Torridon Road. Next day Clapperton and Mears ascended Sgurr An Tuill Bhain and along the ridge to Slioch.

Valentine spent the 6th and 7th of April fishing, and on the 8th he, with Clapperton and a visitor, did Benn Eighe from the east, traversing the ridge as far as the col east of Sail Mor. A magnificent view was obtained, especially of the Cuillin and the Western Isles.

On the 7th, Gall Inglis and his son ascended Glas Mheall Mor of Ann Teallach, but did not continue, as there was a very strong, cold, easterly gale blowing.

Sang, Douglas, Mounsey, and Lawson had rather an unfortunate experience when returning to town on the 4th, the hotel bus breaking down on the road. They managed to get the car cobbled up, and arrived at the station just in time to see the train leave, and had to spend an unpleasant night in the train.

No new ascents were done at the Meet, but otherwise it was very successful. Many of the members had not been in the district before, and the scenery was unlike any they had previously seen in Scotland.

Special thanks are due to Mr Robertson of Lochinver Hotel and Mrs Urquhart of Kinlochewe for the excellence of the arrangements, and also to the surrounding proprietors for their courtesy to the Club.

A. H.

EASTER MEET, 1923—INVERORAN.

A SUBSIDIARY Meet was held at Inveroran, and there were present—A. J. Rusk, E. C. Thomson, and A. M. M. Williamson, *Members*; and J. A. Scott and J. W. Niven, *Non-Members*.

Scott and Williamson arrived by train on Thursday evening, while Rusk and Niven shared a motor cycle. The inn was full, but all the other visitors were fishers.

On Friday morning Thomson arrived, having left Edinburgh about 4 A.M. He was quite fit and keen, however, notwithstanding his early start. The only thing that worried him was that the cheap Good Friday fares did not start till 5 A.M. that day.

We all went down to Bridge of Orchy to meet him, and then set off along the railway track, the objective being Beinn Achadh-Fhaladair, about five miles from Bridge of Orchy. The party split up, Scott and Thomson setting out for Beinn Creachan, intending to proceed along the ridge to Achadh-Fhaladair, while Niven, Rusk, and Williamson were to do the round in the reverse direction.

The day was very warm, but all the tops were covered with mist down to about the 3,000-foot level. The Achadh-Fhaladair party proceeded up into the corrie and struck up a snow gully on the right, which led out within a few feet of the cairn. The snow was not hard, and although the gully was somewhat steep, it was possible to kick steps all the way to the summit; there was no cornice to speak of. The view from the top was not extensive owing to haze. Leaving the cairn a start

was made for Beinn Creachan, taking Meall Buidhe on the way. While ascending the slight rise to the latter top the Creachan party was met. They had ascended by a gully to the left of the loch in the corrie. They proceeded to drop into the Achadh-Fhaladair corrie and climb the gully the other party had just done. No difficulty was met with in getting to Beinn Creachan, and descent was made to the loch and then back to the railway and so home after a most excellent tea provided by the hospitable Mrs Cowan at Bridge of Orchy.

On Saturday the whole party left for Stob Ghabhar. The mist was thicker than on the previous day, and it was colder, very much colder in the couloir it was found. The upper couloir was reached by scrambling up the outcrop of rock just below it, and the ice-fall was soon reached. It was found to be in nasty condition. The rocks were covered with a thin coating of ice, which threatened to come away whenever steps were cut in it. Rusk led and, after what seemed hours to those below, finally triumphed. The rest only got up with considerable "immoral" assistance from the rope. No difficulty was encountered between the top of the ice-fall and the cairn. The ascent of the couloir occupied three-quarters of an hour. From Stob Ghabhar the party set out for Mam Coire nan Easnin, and then to Clachleathad and Meall a' Bhuiridh. The mist was very thick, and considerable difficulty was experienced in hitting the ridge to Meall a' Bhuiridh. Eventually this was done, and a return was made to Ba Bridge, and thence home.

Sunday opened in torrents of rain, but the party, with the exception of Williamson, who was suffering from a swollen tendon in his foot, set out for Buchaille Etive Mor. They climbed it by an easy route on the central buttress and found it cold work, as there were 2 or 3 inches of new snow on the ground. The weather cleared in the late afternoon, and some wonderful sun effects on the rocks were seen. It was late before they got back to Kingshouse, and they hired a car back, leaving their cycles.

On Monday Scott, Rusk, and Williamson walked to Kingshouse for the cycles, and in the afternoon the Meet broke up.

It was a highly satisfactory one, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who participated. A telegram of greeting was sent to the main Meet at Kinlochewe on Friday and a reply was received on Saturday.

The good people at the inn made the party most comfortable, and future parties using it as a base will have nothing to complain about on that score.

A. M. M. W.

EASTER MEET, 1923—TYNDRUM.

THE following members of the Club were at Tyndrum, where the Cairngorm Club also held a Meet:—W. Garden J. L. M'Intyre, J. R. Levack, D. P. Levack, and J. W. Levack.

On Friday, 30th March, the party ascended Ben Doireann. The conditions were poor, the mist was very low, and no view was obtained.

On Saturday the party, including all the S.M.C. members, motored to Falls of Cruachan and climbed the main top of Ben Cruachan. The conditions were again disappointing, and necessitated the constant use of the compass. To add to the discomfort a strong gale was blowing. At the top M'Intyre, J. R. Levack, and J. W. Levack left the rest of the party and descended to the col. The rest proceeded to Stob Dearg and then retraced their steps over the main top, and so down to Falls of Cruachan.

On Sunday the conditions were so bad as to justify a day off.

On Monday the party, including M'Intyre and the Levacks, set out for Ben Lui, but the condition of the snow was very bad, and after it had begun to avalanche considerably the expedition was abandoned.

The Meet, which was otherwise very enjoyable, was marred by wretched weather and soft snow.

A. M. M. W.

SUMMER MEET, 1923—SLIGACHAN.

PRESENT.—*Members*—Alexander, J. H. Bell, J. H. B. Bell, Burn, Cumming; P. Donald, Ling, Morrison, Philip, Priestman, Sang, E. C. Thomson, and Valentine. *Guests*—Mrs Bell and Mrs Sang, and H. E. Scott, President of the Rucksack Club.

This year's Summer Meet gave members a useful lesson to trust to the wisdom of the Club's organisers. Those who arrived early were rained on, and those who came late were poured upon, while the good people that did as they were told enjoyed a week of sunshine agreeably tempered by a cool breeze from the east and by the shadows of light mists, which hovered around them when they came to a steep bit of uphill but melted away as they reached the top. There they would sit in the sun and praise the managers of the Meet.

Alexander landed in Skye on 21st May and spent some days exploring the northern part of the island. When he reached Uig Hotel, where he meant to stay, he found its dispenlensing sale in full swing. A cottage received him, and in spite of a good deal of rain he visited Duntulm and the Quiraing, and looked out from the last cape over the northern waters. On Friday, the 26th, he made his way to Sligachan, and there found Priestman with a party. The latter had intended to cross to Glenbrittle the next day, but waited over the week-end to give the Club a welcome. On Saturday he and Alexander walked out to Druimhain, and Alexander went on to the top of Sgurr na Stri. The sky was overcast, but the sombre gloom of the mountains at the head of Loch Coruisk was impressive, and equally so the plunging view to Scavaig and the sea beyond, where the sun was shining in the distance. Alexander made a direct descent to Camasunary, and reports that it offers no difficulty. He found stepping-stones just at the mouth of Loch na Creitheach, not at the place near the sea where they are marked on some maps.

The morning of the 27th was unpromising, and a

rumour ran that there was much fresh snow on the hills, so that a strong party in the previous week had been baffled on Sgurr nan Gilleán. It was resolved to make a beginning with Bruach na Frithe, and to proceed as might be thought best. The President, Alexander, J. H. B. Bell, Burn, Ling, Philip, and E. C. Thomson were the party. Fionn Choire was full of snow and mist, but the ridges were almost bare, and as they were reached the mist suddenly rolled away and a spell of lovely weather, which lasted a week, began. From Bruach na Frithe the climbers proceeded along the ridge over the Castle to Bidein, which they traversed. Above the two steps on Bidein there was a good deal of snow plastering the slabs, and these had to be crossed with caution, but it was quickly melting in the sun. This was the last day in which ice-axes were carried. The descent was by Coire Tairneilar.

On 28th May the President, Alexander, Ling, and Valentine visited Sgurr na h'Uamha. They took a slanting course from Glen Sligachan up the Allt a' Ghlais Choire and at a high level along to the foot of the rocks. A little trickle of water suggested lunch. Thence they ascended by an attractive route pointed out by the President. It lies slightly to the east of the steep buttress above Harta Corrie, and leads first over rounded slabs and then up a firm little rock-rib, whose crest is drawn out to a fine line. Crossing to the top of the buttress they finished the climb by a steep, short pitch and a scramble. The ridge leading toward Sgurr nan Gilleán took them off the crag. The eagerness with which they sought the spring a little below the bealach bore testimony to the warmth of the weather. Hence the President and Ling made a great pace homewards, while the other pair ably carried out their professed ambition to be late for dinner. J. H. B. Bell, Burn, Philip, and E. C. Thomson also attained that end. They had ascended Sgurr nan Gilleán by the Pinnacle Ridge, and found what snow was left in good condition and not troublesome. J. H. B. Bell and Burn returned by the West Ridge, the others by the "Tourist Route."

On 29th May, Alexander, J. H. B. Bell, Burn, Ling, and Valentine went up Bhasteir Corrie to the bealach and thence over Am Bhasteir and the Tooth, making the descent to Lota Corrie. A good deal of snow on the long ledge leading down to the corrie looked treacherous but proved helpful. A light mist hanging round the crags much enhanced their grim appearance. For the sake of one of the party who asserted it was the only point on the ridge he had not visited, ten minutes were spent on Sgurr a' Fionn Choire, and J. H. B. Bell and Burn would not be satisfied without Sgurr a' Bhasteir. The others thought Fionn Choire more attractive at that hour, and two of them enjoyed themselves hugely thinking out recondite points the third had not visited. This game, the antics of a golden plover that did not like the look of the party, and the hopeless hope of seeing Bell and Burn fall off Sgurr a' Bhasteir made the way short.

The President, Alexander, Cumming, and Ling on 30th May ascended the north-west buttress of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh. The climb proved a little disappointing, as the party was lured upwards by various seductive gullies and ledges till they discovered that the most interesting part of the mountain had been left below. From above it looked very imposing, but it was too much to expect them to go down and begin again. On the same day, J. H. B. Bell, Burn, Philip, and E. C. Thomson walked over to Glenbrittle and up the ridge of Sgurr Dearg. They ascended the "Inaccessible Pinnacle" by the short side and came down the same way. For the sake of finish, Bell then went up the long side while the others added An Stac. They missed the easiest way down to Corrie Lagan, and had some pretty rough scrambling on the lower rocks. Next day the same four went over Sgurr nan Gobhar to Banachdich, and across Thormaid and Ghreadaidh to the highest summit of Mhaidaidh. From the bealach below Sgurr Thuilm, Burn returned to Glenbrittle, while the others made their way to Sligachan.

The same day, 31st May, Cumming and Ling had an excellent climb on the Third Pinnacle. They first went

out on to the rocks from a point low down at the foot of the gully separating it from Knight's Peak. After ascending about 150 feet they reached a ledge running round to the left to the gully between the Second and Third Pinnacles. An exploration of this ledge showed that the prospect of getting up from it was poor. The angle immediately above was very severe for a considerable distance, and there seemed to be remarkably few holds. The climbers returned to the gully between their object and the Fourth Pinnacle, and ascended it on snow to the point where it narrows. Then for the second time they traversed out on to the face. This time their ledge was a very small one indeed, but it gave foothold that sufficed. The rocks above were good but steep; in places it was by no means easy to find any way over them at all. To Bhasteir Corrie was a long drop now. The mountaineers struggled straight upwards and reached the ridge of the Third Pinnacle, about 100 feet on the Sligachan side of the summit.

On the morning of 1st June the President and Ling shifted their quarters to Glenbrittle. When they had picked up Burn they sweated to the top of the stone-shoot and took the right and left to Alasdair and Tearlach. Next day Burn made great progress with his task of topping all the 3,000 feet mountains. Sgurr Sgumain, Dubh Mor, Dubh na Da Bheinn, and nan Eag were trampled underfoot. The President and Ling contented themselves with a walk along the crest of the great sea-cliffs near Glenbrittle.

This Saturday, 2nd June, was the most perfect day of the excursion, clear, calm, and only too hot. One saw far into the distance, to St Kilda, to Canish and Suilven. Whether Ben Cruachan had been visible was hotly discussed that evening at Sligachan. P. Donald, Sang, and H. E. Scott (guest) thought they had seen it from Sgurr nan Gilleann which they ascended by the Pinnacle Ridge and descended by the Tourist Route. Cumming and E. C. Thomson went over Clach Glas and Blaven. They did their work very thoroughly, omitting none of the pinnacles on Clach Glas, ascending its highest peak

directly from the ridge and continuing down the long shoulder of Blaven almost to Camasunary. Valentine sailed over to Raasay and climbed Duncaan (1,456 feet). He describes the island as a fairyland full of bosky glens winding among cliffs and crags of white limestone. On the east side the rock is pierced by multitudes of mysterious pot-holes. Duncaan is a flat-topped fragment of lava enclosed by grassy ravines, in which lie several small lakes. The summit is guarded by low but fierce-looking cliffs, except on the west, where a rough path ascends. The view of the islands and looking towards Ben Alligin and Liathach is superb, that of the Coolin mediocre.

After this grand day the weather broke. On Sunday torrents of rain confined all to the hotel except Sang, H. E. Scott, and E. C. Thomson, who were brave enough to walk to Loch Coruisk, and Donald who climbed Marsco.

The 4th of June was dry, though mist hung persistently on the hills and clouds covered the whole sky. The President and Mrs Bell, now back from Glenbrittle, went round into Lota Corrie and climbed Sgurr Beag; they came down into Glen Sligachan partly on rock and partly on scree. Morrison, Mrs Sang, Sang, and Scott went over Bruach na Frithe. The two first returned by Fionn Choire, while the others went round by Coire Bhasteir. P. Donald and E. C. Thomson were on the same hill and returned over Sgurr a' Bhasteir.

Cumming and Valentine made what they were pleased to call an early start, so astutely timed that every one was up to see it; they thus gained great glory without losing much sleep. They tramped through Harta Corrie and by a deer path over Druim na Ramh. After crossing the streams running from the Glac Mhor and Coire an Uaigneis they went on for a good half-hour to the left under the lowest cliff of Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh in the direction of Coireachan Ruadha. The last rocks overhung and formed a long, dewy cave filled with mountain flowers. Cumming led the way up the crags by a ledge which wound round still farther to the left, and slanted at a great height on to the wall of a gorge separating two

huge bastions. This ravine is shown between *b* and *c* on the diagram at page 78 of the "Club Guide." To avoid the chasm they scaled steep and dizzy rocks for five or six hundred feet on a line a little to the left of *cc* in the diagram. About half-way a bank of juniper formed a luxurious resting-place, ample for two or even a few more, with a glorious view of Loch Coruisk behind. Above, in spite of all efforts, they were gradually forced nearer the water, and finished in the channel of a branch of the burn. The lower tier of buttresses had now been surmounted and mist was hanging round. The upper cliffs are set back behind a stony terrace, but at this point it is barely a minute's walk wide. A bewildering multitude of crags loomed out. A ridge a little to the right looked as if it would go on ascending, and up its crest the party made their way until stopped by a rock tower. Here again a ledge slanted upward to the left. Along this they gingerly walked or crawled quite a long way till it died out on a blank wall of steep and somewhat rubbly trap. The mist concealed both the top and the bottom. After several unavailing attempts they got a few feet higher and found to the right a shallow, mossy gully which took them back to the ridge. Next came a rise, not steep, but rotten and troublesome. The only sound part seemed to be a right-angled, vertical recess, up which the leader slowly scraped while the material support of the rope enabled his follower to bring on the knapsacks. The road now became commodious and gentle, so that for practically the first time in four-and-a-half hours both had the advantage of moving on together. A tower that pierced through the mist bore a hopeful resemblance to the southern top of Ghreadaidh, but turned out to be about 20 yards below it on the Banachdich side. Sad to say, the feeling on finding that the sport was over resembled relief as much as regret. They had had enough for the day. The rock was mainly trap, and especially on the upper part of the mountain was not to be commended. After a short rest the rope was shortened, and the pilgrims hurried along the ridge of Ghreadaidh, whose crags took the

weirdest shapes in the mist, to the gap which we must not call An Dorus. Here they ran down snow, the first touched that day. A half-hearted attempt to find the terrace leading round to Sgurr Thuilm was soon abandoned, the windings of the Glenbrittle river shone through the mist, and Coire a' Ghreadaidh opened out before them. A long rest was taken at the first spring. Then on a peaceful evening they strolled round Sgurr Thuilm and Corrie na Creich, where an eagle rose from the great gully, watched a fox trotting very unconcernedly on the hunt near the Mam, and so came down to Sligachan at 10.30 after fourteen hours on the hill.

At Glenbrittle, Burn spent the day profitably in securing peaks of Sgurr na Banachdich, omitted by inadvertence on his previous visit. He went up by the corrie of that name, and made an attempt on his descent on Sgurr Mhic Choinnich, but could not find it in the mist. Next day, an even foggier one, he was successful in groping his way on to that hill from the screes at the head of Corrie Lagan, between it and An Stac. He reached the summit and returned as he came.

Tuesday was an execrable day; the weather which began then continued for the rest of the week, and indeed much longer. Many of the party left, and the others got sufficiently chilly and damp in the neighbourhood of the hotel. Next day, 6th June, P. Donald braved the rain and fought his way up Blaven by the south ridge. He believed that he found the top, but at the back of his mind was a doubt. To remove that scruple became the object of the more indomitable despisers of wet weather. The first to attempt the task was Burn, now returned from Glenbrittle. He struggled up on Donald's track in still heavier rain and through thicker mist—if indeed that could be—reached the "squashed cairn" described by his precursor, and pressed on to a farther summit to the north of it, which carried a more substantial cairn. Then the elements drove him back. He returned wet and disconsolate to Sligachan, and his conscience was too tender to let him affirm he had surmounted every peak of the hill.

In the evening striking mist effects on Sgurr nan Gillean collected an appreciative but all too small audience. Sang, who had spent the day in a "picnic" at Corrie na Creich, was inflamed with ardour at the narrative of the obstinate struggle with Blaven and resolved to enter on the campaign next day, when he and Burn ascended the north face and ascertained that the "squashed" cairn visited by Donald stood on the southern summit and that Burn had already conquered both.

With this climb—a separate description of which will be found in this number under "Excursions and Notes"—the Meet closed. It may be claimed that it was an entire success, and justified the innovation of a gathering at this season. Besides those named, it should be mentioned that Cain and Lawson were also met climbing with friends of their own. It is a pity that more members of the Club were not able to be present, but sufficient were there to make up an agreeable party, and all enjoyed themselves. None were idle. Burn alone ascended every peak that overlooked 3,000 feet. All of these with almost every minor summit in the Black Coolin were trodden by others of the band. Even remote Garsbheinn received a visit from Priestman. Nor was the Red Coolin neglected. The Meet was made most pleasant by the attention of Mr Campbell at Sligachan Hotel. There was no talk there of biscuits and tea for late-comers. Had anyone been so unfortunate as to return at two o'clock in the morning, we verily believe he would have been welcomed with the news that "Your dinner is just coming up, sir." Let us hope that there will be many more Summer Meets, each as enjoyable.

G. D. V.

LIBRARY AND CLUB-ROOM.

LIBRARY.

The following additions have been made to the Library :—

“The Highlands with Rope and Rucksack.” By Ernest A. Baker, D.Litt., M.A. Presented by the Author.

“Doe Crag and Climbs round Coniston.” By George S. Bower. Presented by the Committee of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club.

“Panorama seen from Falkland Hill (East Lomond).” By J. S. Ramsay. Presented by Mr Ramsay.

The hearty thanks of the Club are due to the donors.

The following periodicals have been received :—

Alpine Club Journal. May 1923 (No. 226).

Cairngorm Club Journal. July 1923 (Vol. X., No. 61).

La Montagne. February, March, April, May, June, July 1923.

Italian Alpine Club Journal. February, March, April, May, June, July, August 1923.

L'Écho des Alpes. February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September 1923.

Bulletin Pyrénéen. May-June, July-August 1923.

Sierra Club Bulletin. 1923 (Vol. XI., No. 4).

Sangaku (Japanese Alpine Club Journal). 1923 (Vol. XVI., No. 3).

Zeitschrift des Deutschen und Österreichischen Alpes-Vereines, 1922.

CLUB-ROOM.

The monthly meetings in the Club-room were discontinued during the summer months, but they will again be held during the winter.

SLIDE COLLECTION.

During the summer months no new slides have been added to the collection.

If any member has negatives of Ben Avon or Beinn a' Bhuidr suitable for making slides the custodier would be glad to have them on loan.

The special thanks of the Club are due to Mr J. H. Buchanan for the large amount of trouble which he has taken in the preparation of the Index for Vol. XVI., and also to Mr Murray Lawson for his services in revising the Index.

The blocks for four of the illustrations in the present number have been presented; two by Mr George Sang, one by Mr Alexander Harrison, and one anonymously. The thanks of the Club are tendered to the donors.

REVIEWS.

The Highlands with Rope and Rucksack, by Ernest A. Baker, D.Litt., M.A. (H. F. & G. Witherby, price 12s. 6d.).

Dr Baker has certainly succeeded in producing a volume of fascinating description of our mountains. For the most part he depicts them glimmering through a screen of typical "British Hill Weather." It strikes the reader as a little bit odd perhaps that, after thirty years' experience of the Highlands, the author lays stress on the more deplorable days, for brilliant sunshine and still air find little place in his tale of adventures, and where they do are subjects for complaint rather than congratulation. It may be that escapades such as he describes require a setting of flying scud, whirlwind, and blizzard. They, at any rate, form a fair excuse for his persistence in missing his way. One can only trust that these mistakes date from a period anterior to his membership of the S.M.C.

The book, from Chapter II. onwards, is very interesting, perhaps especially so to the S.M.C., for there one finds well-known places most picturesquely described, although it must be admitted that the discreet vagueness of some of the Ross-shire summits leaves a trace of discomfort in the mind of the precisian, and the allusion to the twin cairns of Blaven leave us contemplating upon the ravages of the time. May it be said that it is a rare thing to meet a mountaineer in this damp climate more confessedly addicted to the copious drinking of "yon beelious stuff, waater."

Of the introductory chapter and the vexed questions raised therein it were best not to say too much. There is, of course, right in what is said, but the suggested remedy is pressed too confidently. The hills of Scotland are, after all, in many of their most sporting state for real mountain craft during the very seasons of the year when trespass matters little; and no one could ever make a pleasant summer Switzerland out of the Highlands of Scotland. At least we fervently hope no one will ever try to!

Alpine Journal, May 1923, No. 226. 130 pp. and illustrations. 7s. 6d.

Of recent years the *Alpine Journal* has become more interesting than ever. The editors are conspicuously successful in getting accounts of new ascents from every climbing area. It is becoming more and more an international review of current mountaineering and no one can keep up to date in climbing matters without regularly reading it. The number opens with Dr Norman Collie's valedictory

address as President—a most interesting and informing record of the happenings in the mountaineering world during his term of office.

Mr Ling writes of ascents made in 1910—"The North Face of the Monte Disgrazia and other Climbs." Mr Tyndale of "The Aiguille de Zallion," Arolla.

There are two articles dealing with the New Zealand Alps, two on Canadian Climbs, one on the Sasir Group in the Karakoram, and coming back to the Alps of Europe, a night out on the Dent Blanche is vividly described by Mr G. M. Bell. A grand piece of mountaineering is disclosed in an account by G. F. Gugliermina of his ascent, with his brother and a friend, of the Innominata Arête on the south face of Mont Blanc. The climb was made on the 31st July to 3rd August 1921. The party started from the Gamba Hut, spent one night out at about 3,600 metres at the Col du Fresnay, and a second at about 4,400 metres. The third day about 4 P.M. saw the party on the summit of Mont Blanc and after a night's rest at the Vallot Hut the return to Courmayeur was effected by the Dôme route and the Glacier de Miage. Truly the days of the giants are not yet over! There are two articles on the Mount Everest expedition—"Some Aspects of the Everest Problem," by Dr Longstaff, and "Equipment for High Altitude Mountaineering," &c., by Captain Finch, both of which give further interesting details enabling one to realise a little better perhaps the risks the climbers ran and the high courage shown. Even now there are several articles well worth reading which we have no space to mention, but room must be made for "The Religion of the Mountain," an extract from a speech delivered by General Smuts, Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, when unveiling the Mountain Club Memorial on the Table Mountain. We will not spoil General Smuts' oratory by a meagre excerpt, we refer our readers to pp. 92-94 of the *Alpine Journal*.

Cairngorm Club Journal, July 1923, No. 61. 48 pp., 1 illustration. Price 2s.

The opening page of this number states that at a special general meeting of the Club it was decided to erect an Indicator on the summit ridge of Lochnagar, that the King, on whose ground the hill is, has approved the scheme, and that the Indicator will be placed in position next year. Our well-known member, Mr James A. Parker, drew up the necessary chart, and one can rest assured, therefore, of the accuracy and completeness thereof.

Of the four articles the one which most interested us was that by Sir Leslie Mackenzie, "On the Roads to Helvellyn."

The Rucksack Club Journal, Vol. V., No. 1. 1923. 130 pp., 20 full-page illustrations. 4s. net.

A coming-of-age number! If a club's health is to be diagnosed

from its *Journal*, then the Rucksack Club can be passed at once as a first-class life. Let the climber seat himself in a comfortable armchair, and he will not get up till he has read this number from cover to cover. If he be a member of the S.M.C. he will be gratified to note that out of the fifteen articles two are devoted to Scotland:—"Ben Eighe: the Central Buttress of Coire Mhic Fhearchair," by A. S. Pigott; "Misty Days on An Teallach," by John Wilding, as are also two pages out of twelve headed "Climbs and Excursions."

The place of honour is given to a history of the Club during the twenty-one years of its existence, by A. E. Burns, and a very interesting and encouraging history it is. The Club has grown slowly—its membership now totals 174—but surely, and it is clear from Mr Burns' remarks that the same fraternal and friendly spirit which we are proud to think animates the S.M.C. also inspires our Manchester friends. We then wander on through Partenkirchen, St Ulrich, Saas Fée, Zermatt, Arolla, Fionnay, Chamonix, back to a traverse of "Dartmoor from North to South," then out again to Modane, and a night à la belle étoile *en route* to Pralognan, over the Grande Casse to Val d'Isère, Fornet, the Rutor, and La Thuille. Then to vary the monotony of too much high life we read "Musings without Method," by Mr C. F. Holland. To a Scotsman this title is already sanctified by its use in a little brown-covered periodical, but we leave the bold plagiarist to be fittingly dealt with by the mighty "Blackwood" himself: we do not envy his fate. It may be remarked that Mr Holland's article deals with rocks, belays, pitons, and accidents, of which latter he speaks from an apparently unusually full experience: possibly his choice of a title was an accident! Mr Hirst then takes up the running and lands us at the Great St Bernard, thence we are whirled to Pont, the Victor Emmanuel Hut, and other places in Mr Yeld's own country—the Eastern Graians.

Mr Eustace Thomas concludes the articles with an account of his "Long Circuit of the Fells," 30,000 feet in twenty-eight hours thirty-five minutes: curiously enough the article whilst giving times to a half-minute does not state the day or year on which the deed was done; an attempt to arrive thereat affords the reader useful exercise in the study of internal evidence. Mr Thomas should now apply to the Secretary of the S.M.C. to map him out a 60,000 or 90,000-foot course in Scotland.

We find we have omitted to notice an article "Concerning Inns," by Mr C. H. Pickstone. It is one of the best articles in an excellent number. A note on "Camping in the Alps," pp. 111-112, will interest campers. The illustrations are worthy of the letterpress, and we most heartily congratulate the new Editor, Mr John Wilding, and the Rucksack Club on their twenty-first birthday effort. One small point we might ask the Editor to remedy, and that is to give a "List of Illustrations" after "Contents."

The New Zealand Alpine Journal, Vol. IV., December 1922.
No. 12. 5s.

This number contains exhilarating accounts of exploration and new ascents.

The opening of the railway route through the Southern Alps by means of a tunnel said to be the longest in the British Empire, has brought glaciers within reach of "a short day from Christchurch," and presumably, therefore, a long day from Dunedin—the Edinburgh of the south. The day must come, and that soon, when the followers of our noble craft in the Southern Hemisphere will many times outnumber those in Scotland. New Zealand is indeed a well-favoured land—no country outside our own so well deserves a visit, and it is a matter of congratulation that the Scot is so strongly represented there. We are interested to note from an article on the Mount Cook Hermitage that this inn, originally built by the New Zealand Government, has been leased to the Mount Cook Motor Co. Ltd. at £200 per annum. The Hermitage stands about 2,600 feet above sea level, with fine views of Mount Cook and Mount Sefton, and is distant 132 miles from Timaru on the east coast: at higher elevations are several Government huts built for the use of climbers and tourists. Under Government control the Hermitage was making a loss of £2,000 a year, hence the necessity of new arrangements.

It is interesting to note the new tariff:—

In summer (less in winter), 22/6 to 17/6 per day.

Or more cheaply in two cottages, 15/- „

Or in tents with wooden floors, 12/6 „

Fees for glacier excursions:—

One person, 20/- per day.

Two persons, 25/- „

Three persons, 30/- „

Four or more persons, 7/6 each per day.

For high ascents from huts the fees are:—

One person, 50/- per day.

Two persons, 80/- „

For the ascents of Mount Cook, Mount Tasman, and Mount Sefton:—

£5 per guide per day per climb.

The meaning of "per climb" is not clear to us, possibly it means if *force majeure* prevent actual climbing you do not pay your £5 for that day—no climb no pay.

We learn that the accommodation for Xmas (1922) was severely taxed: we trust the Motor Company will make their venture a success.

Doe Crags and Climbs Round Coniston: a Climbers' Guide, by George S. Bower. 48 pp. and 8 full-page illustrations. 2s. 3d. post free, from Graham Wilson, c/o Town Clerk's Office, Warrington.

The preface to this volume informs us that it is the first of a series of Guides which the Committee of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club hope to issue: the series when complete will cover the rock climbs in Lakeland.

We take from the shelf O. G. Jones's "Rock Climbing in the English Lake District," first published in 1897. Our copy is the second edition, 1900; we turn up Chapter XV., headed "Doe Crag, Coniston," and find eighteen pages devoted to the following five climbs:—

The Great Gully.	The Easter Gully.
The Central Chimney.	The North Gully.
The Intermediate Gully.	

These five have grown in the new Guide to over fifty.

Jones put the Central Chimney, the Intermediate and Easter Gullies into his list of "Exceptionally Severe Courses." Mr Bower has put them all down a class and includes them under "Severe." The very severe courses on the Doe Crag now number some half-a-dozen and the following or similar remarks form the introduction to a detailed description—"Rubbers or suckers essential or desirable for posterity's sake, these or perfect conditions and morale; 100 feet rope."

The lettered illustrations are excellent and the difficult task of describing the various climbs in detail has been well done.

The Editor, Mr Chorley, Mr Bower, and Mr Gross are to be congratulated on the result of their combined efforts, and have set an excellent standard for the remaining numbers of the series which will, we trust, appear at not too great an interval, but the S.M.C. know from practical experience that the production of Guides is not an easy task.

When a second edition is called for, the Index should be revised; as it at present stands, all the pages are plus two, *i.e.*, 20 should be 18, 41 should be 39, &c.: Easter Gully does not appear therein: a list of illustrations would be useful and it would also save time to the seeker for information if on pp. 37-38, "List of Doe Crag Climbs," a column was added showing on what page the route diagram belonging to the particular climb could be found.

Panorama from Ben y Vrackie. Published by L. Mackay, Book-seller, Pitlochry. Price 9d.

A useful and interesting pamphlet to have in one's pocket when the summit of this popular little hill has been reached on a fine afternoon. In the letterpress one or two slips require correction:—

Beinn Dearg (Atholl) has 3,304 feet, not 3,804.

Bidean nam Beinn (*sic*), 3,766, not 3,785.

Pitlochry and District : its Topography, Archæology, and History.
By Hugh Mitchell, F.S.A. Scot. Pp. 160. 21 full-page illustrations
in text. Published by L. Mackay, Bookseller, Pitlochry. Price,
cloth, 2s. ; leather, 4s. 6d.

This book is of much wider interest than would be gathered from its local title. For example, Chapters IV. and V., "Early Inhabitants of Britain," give in twenty-eight pages as good a bird's-eye view of man in Britain from the Great Ice Age to historical times as we remember to have come across, and even that thorny subject, "Who were the Picts?" is handled with skill and clearness, though on this matter, as on many others the author discusses, he frankly admits "opinions still differ."

Crannogs, weems, standing stones, forts, praying stones, cup stones, &c., are all dealt with in an interesting and instructive way. From the general, the author comes to the particular, and anyone who knows Pitlochry cannot fail to appreciate the wealth of detail made accessible, but so little is the interest purely local that no one can read the book without enjoyment, and we would particularly recommend those of our members who have had the misfortune to be born south of the Border to obtain a copy.

Mr Mitchell gives his reasons (p. 36) for thinking that the village of Moulin occupies the site of the ancient Lindum, mentioned along with Abernethy and Perth on Ptolemy's map, 145 A.D. (see also "A Great Pictish Town," pp. 53-54).

We might in conclusion mention a few of the chapter headings which will show the book's wide scope :—

Glacier, Moraines, and Peat Mosses.	Old Roads.
Archæology of the District.	Atholl Clans and Families.
Early Christian Churches.	Place Names.
Historic Events.	

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.

BLAVEN.

CLIMB ON NORTH FACE—3,042 TOP.

GEORGE SANG AND RONALD BURN—8TH JUNE 1923.

ALTHOUGH numerous climbs have been done on the so-called "pinnacles" of Blaven, it is a little bit difficult to identify these from the meagre descriptions which have appeared from time to time, and, as a result, a delightful uncertainty remains as to whether routes followed by succeeding parties can claim the merit of new climbs. The party that negotiated the route of ascent hereafter described have not so much the desire to claim the honour of a first ascent as the hope that the description may be sufficiently explicit to enable others to enjoy the graduated series of surprising situations which entertained them on their venture.

The usual route from Loch an Athain by the Coire Dubh was followed towards the Blaven Clach Glas col. Much mist and a very strong wind deterred the party from ascending all the way to the col, and a start was made up the steep grass and scree slope which rises to the right under the great lateral buttress below the point where the sight of the actual col is first obtained, *i.e.*, about 900 feet above the 553 B.M. fork of the burn. Surmounting the grass and scree one arrives at the spur of the mountain coming down in a north-westerly direction, roughly parallel with the line of the burn which divides the slopes of Clach Glas and Blaven. The party ascended along the base of this spur, over fairly steep scree, passing a small depression where a lively little waterfall comes over the spur, and continued on to near a point where the spur abuts upon the lateral cliff. At the angle made by the junction of these two there is a gully, terminating in a somewhat discouraging-looking pitch, down which, in wet weather, a considerable stream of water finds its way. As on the occasion under description this stream of water was periodically swept from its natural course high up into the air to descend vertically in consider-

able volume, the party decided against following its line as a means of ascending the mountain. An alternative route was given by a small gap in the spur, down which a smaller waterfall exercised its kindly ministrations of keeping the rocks free of moss and dirt, and by this little stream the party proceeded without any difficulty until the spur was crossed and a subsidiary scree-filled gully gained at the back of it. Some way up this gully a succession of slabs commence. These lie at no very severe angle and have a multitude of cracks and irregularities which make their ascent a pleasant and simple matter. The slabs were followed for a height of some 80 feet, until they steepened considerably and forced the leader to traverse over towards his right looking up, where an easy pitch commenced, consisting of trap dyke slabs upon the left and a considerably steep wall of gabbro upon the right. In wet weather, such as prevailed during the time described, a small burn runs down in the angle where the slabs and the wall join, and the course of this little burn is the line of least resistance. The ascent is surprisingly easy up to a point where there is a small rectangular pitch about 12 feet high where loose stones are somewhat troublesome, and care must be taken by the leader against dislodging insecure holds, which would be apt to add very considerably to the difficulties of the members in support. There is not much latitude given for dodging falling matter. Immediately above this rectangular pitch the interest of the climb commences. The trap dyke slabs steepen very considerably, and the gabbro wall on the right overhangs, thus materially assisting the climber by giving him the necessary leverage against the somewhat worn cracks and excrescences of the slabs up which he must make his way. The first pitch is comparatively simple and extends for about 60 feet to a stance where two large stones are insecurely wedged into the bed of the small stream. The second man can be brought to this point, and then the leader is enabled to proceed up the slabs for about 70 feet, to a position where the steepness of the slabs becomes sufficient to form what is practically a sloping chimney, too narrow to allow the climber to walk on the base of it and yet sufficient to give him a purchase to retain his footing upon the slabs. The upper portion of this chimney is entirely blocked by a very large boulder of gabbro, the real top of the gabbro wall, which has slipped over and forms a veritable cave pitch blocking the exit from the chimney. This cave pitch is the real problem of the climb. In dry weather it might be possible to ascend the trap dyke to the left, looking upwards at the chockstone, but the position is very "exposite," and when the climber is subjected to the cooling ablutions of a constant jet of water over his person it is unlikely that he will persevere in the attempt to find an exit on that side of the chockstone. On the other side, at the point where the chockstone has broken away from the wall on the right, there is a tempting-looking escape. The difficulty, however, is the lack of footholds in the wall itself. There is but one hold and it slopes uncomfortably outwards and downwards; it is also

placed rather too high up to be easily accessible and necessitates a long stretch for any but a tall man. Such handholds as there are exist for the left hand only ; or rather, are placed so much to the left of the foothold that it is inevitable a certain amount of confidence in one's ability to stick to the sloping foothold must exist before the climber will be prepared to swing himself outwards and upwards and find another hold, invisible from below, which will enable him to surmount the difficulty. As in most of these cases, confidence is found well repaid, for there is only a fraction of a second when the climber is in doubt whether a satisfactory handhold will be found. Above, the handholds are firm and eminently suited to their purpose, and in thirty seconds the leader will find himself on top of the wall, ensconced in a position from which he will have no difficulty in directing and assisting the struggles of the rest of his party. The height of this pitch is not more than 15 feet. From this point an entirely different class of climbing will be indulged in, less athletic perhaps, but possessing wonderful rock scenery and, in mist especially, remarkably awe-inspiring appearance. To the left as one looks up is a huge tower split away from the main ridge which rises steeply on the right. At the bottom of this split lies a great gully, the floor of it never excessively steep, but formed by a series of stages where enormous blocks of scree have jammed together. These demand careful climbing. Thirty feet above the climbers' heads are two monstrous boulders jammed in the gap and poised, one of them especially, in a position which looks the very reverse of secure, and causes the climbing party to lose no time examining them from underneath. The ascent continues actively but easily for upwards of 200 feet, then all further progress is barred by a very large chockstone which fills the gully from side to side. The containing walls are steep, and it is doubtful whether any escape could be made, even on the right, which appears the easier of the two. Without elaborate "combined tactics" it would be impossible to overcome the chockstone from below, and were it not for the fact that a hole of comfortable dimensions has been left at the right side under the corner of the chockstone, the party might be forced to return from that point by the way they had come. The hole is reinforced by two large unfixed stones which offer material assistance to the reptile movements of the climbers. Once through and at the upper side of the chockstone progress was very considerably assisted on the occasion under description by the presence of a large quantity of hard snow rendering the approach to the final pitch simple. The final pitch is about 20 feet in height only, and although it is vertical on the right-hand side, is sufficiently broken up upon the left, and also sufficiently narrow to allow the use of back and knee until a lodgment can be got on the more broken portion of the left-hand wall. A short scramble further finds the climber on the ridge connecting the Tower Buttress with the top of the mountain, and it is probable that a route could be forced direct to the cairn from this little col. On this

occasion, however, the experiment of following this route was not made because of the prevailing weather conditions which caused the party to descend to the other side of the ridge, and after a short climb up steep scree to join the ordinary route from the Blaven Clach Glas col up the rocks to the 3,042 cairn.

G. S.

THE HEIGHT OF SGURR DEARG—SKYE.

As reported in the last number of the *S.M.C.J.*, observations made with a theodolite on Sgurr Dearg led me to conclude that this peak is about 28 feet lower than the O.S. height. To confirm this result by more direct measurements an accurate optical level was taken to Skye after the Club Meet last Easter. Points on Sgurr Dearg level with the near trigonometrical stations—Sgurr Sgumain, Sgurr na Banachdich, and Sgurr nan Eag—were determined, and the small differences in level between these points and the Dearg Cairn were measured by the “step-cutting” method. These three results—which do not depend on any measurements on the map—were in satisfactory agreement, but indicated that the error in Dearg was probably nearer 26 than 28 feet. This confirmation appears good enough to make further revision of the numbers unnecessary at present. Moreover, there is an uncertainty of one or two feet as all my measurements were made to the tops of the cairns, not to the O.S. reference points.

G. BARLOW.

CLACHAIG HOTEL VISITORS' BOOK.

To the Editor of the S.M.C. Journal.

DEAR SIR,—Will you allow me to ask through the *Journal* whether any reader knows in whose possession the Visitors' Book of the Clachaig Hotel from about 1888 to 1898 now is? The late Mr Gourlay was then the landlord, and I have asked his daughter, Mrs Cameron, about it. She told me that she thought it had been given to the Club, but that, if it was not in the Library, she did not know where it was. The book contains many entries of early climbs in the Glencoe district, and I should like either to secure the book for the Club, or to borrow it so as to have an opportunity of copying the more interesting items.—Yours, &c.,

GODFREY A. SOLLY.

Rev. RONALD BURN writes :—On 20th July with the two tops of Beinn a' Chròin I completed all the hills over 3,000 feet, *i.e.*, all the mountains and tops contained in both editions of Munro's Tables, 558 in all (including, therefore, those omitted from revised tables). I believe I am the first and only one to have done everything.

S.M.C. ABROAD.

W. N. LING and G. SANG spent a few days in Arolla, commencing 30th July. Piloted by Mrs and Miss Sang they spent a most pleasant and profitable day traversing the Petit Dent de Veisivi, including the Gendarme. An hour and a half was most delightfully passed on the summit, enjoying the view and making tea. Alone they did the traverse of the Aiguilles Rouge d'Arolla. The working out of the route across the faces of the southern pinnacles was of very considerable interest. With the ladies they crossed the Col Collon to the Val Peline, stopping at the comfortable little inn at Pré Rayé (Pré-Rayé-Bionaz). This place is confidently recommended to mountaineers, as also is a new hotel about three hours farther down the valley at Oyace—Hotel Mirevalle, proprietor Simone Ferrati—the latter might prove a very suitable, quiet spot for winter sport, and would certainly be much more economical than the customary Swiss resort of that class. The ladies went on to Aosta, and Ling and Sang up to the Capanna d'Aosta, from which unsavoury refuge they ascended the Dent d'Héréns on a glorious day. The mountain is easy from this side, and forms an interesting scramble in good weather. The summit is a splendid viewpoint. They spent another night at Pré Rayé, and next day, owing to the great heat, only got as far as Oyace, thence to Aosta and up by motor diligence to Cogne. Cogne is quite spoilt by the making of a motor road, and neither of the hotels can be recommended. There is, however, a small new building—something in the form of a café with a few bedrooms—called Pavillon Licone, which is very comfortable, and serves excellent food; it is, however, apt to be overcrowded.

From Cogne the reunited party ascended to Rifugio Vittorio Sella and crossed the Col de Lausanne to the Valsavranche, putting in two nights at Hotel Ristorante Grivola in Degioz, which is a comfortable, economical house, in most captivating surroundings; from there a return was made to Aosta, and thence to Valtournanche and up to Breuil; from there across the Theodule to Zermatt brought the combined tour to an end. Ling returned home, and the Sangs went up the Loetschental for a final week. Sang had the pleasure of climbing the Grosshorn with a Swiss doctor and his guide—an interesting climb, almost all on snow and ice. An attempt was made by him and the ladies to cross the Petersgrat to Kandersteg, but a severe snowstorm prevented them getting beyond the graat, and they were forced to return and walk humbly back down the valley by the way they had come.

Mr H. R. C. CARR sends the following notes:—Fionney and Mauvoisin, in the Val de Bagnes, are delightful centres, whose attractions do not seem to have gained adequate recognition from mountaineers. Madame Carron's excellent hotel we found empty on

the 5th of August. The valley appears to possess all the beauty of the Val d'Hérens, while as yet it is free from the canker of popularity.

The Cabane Val de Dix, at the head of the Hérémence Glen, is not often visited by British climbers to judge from its log book. It is a very good hut, roomy and comfortable, and about three and a half hours' distant from Arolla. A good round which we did from the hut is the combination of La Lurette, the Mont Pleureur, and La Salle, the only difficulty on the circuit being the descent of the north arête of the Pleureur, where we had to cut steps for two hours in ice. The round should occupy about nine hours.

FERPÉCLE TO ZERMATT. An interesting alternative to the usual route by the Col d'Hérens is to combine the Col du Grand Cornier and the Col Durand. Having descended to the névé of the Durand Glacier, one swings to the right under the Dent Blanche until brought up by the rocky rib of the Quatre Ânes which descends towards Zinal. There is only one place where this ridge can be conveniently crossed, and this takes one at first over very rotten rocks. However, there is no great difficulty.

The Dübi guide book seemed to represent the northern side of the Col de Zinal as a simple slope of snow, but we found 400 feet of peculiarly steep ice, with rotten rocks as the only alternative, so we made for the Col Durand: the ice-wall on this pass was quite short, but it proved very entertaining.

Zermatt was reached in three and a quarter hours from the top of the second col, about fourteen hours being taken from Ferpécle, inclusive of several prolonged halts.

G. BARLOW and E. W. STEEPLE were in Lofoten during July, and experienced very fair weather, with occasional short lapses. Reaching Svolvær on the morning of the 13th, they caught a local boat to Reine in Moskenesøen. The misfortune of the date was at once apparent, and after a tempestuous voyage, Reine was reached in steady rain. A second wet day was followed by a spell of fine weather, during which the Festæltind and the Navern were climbed, and a small but apparently new peak on the ridge west of the Klokkeitind, which was found rather difficult. They then returned to Svolvær and went by motor-boat to Liland on the Ostnesfjord, where they camped for some days. A glorious midnight effect was obtained from the summit of Gjeitgaljartind. After spending two hours on the top they descended to the snowfield on the west and climbed a striking rock peak, unnamed, on the ridge between Higravstind and the Troldtindmuren, returning to camp for breakfast.

Two days later they ascended Higravstind by the west ridge in a thick mist. This rolled off, however, late in the evening, and again a grand view was obtained from the summit. They then chartered a motor-boat and moved camp to Svartsund on the Raftsund—a

charming situation facing the group of the Troldtinderne. A day, or rather night, was spent on the Store Svartsundtind, but the summit was not reached. Another night expedition was to the fine group of the Blaafjeld, reached from the remarkable frozen lake of the Tverdal. The party were again fortunate in witnessing a gorgeous sky effect.

After this they broke camp, and, rowing round to Lauksund, picked up a local boat to Svolvaer. On the following day an attempt was made on Vaagekallen, but time did not permit of the summit being reached, as Steeple was leaving by the evening boat for Bergen.

Barlow remained in Lofoten for a few weeks longer, and had a number of fine walks round the fjords east of the Raftsund.

Mr ROBERT CORY writes:—I arrived at Zermatt with my family on the 6th August. The weather was splendid till about the 15th, but it was somewhat unsettled after that date. On the 13th I ascended the Wellenkuppe with my daughter, on the 17th the Zinal Rothorn, on the 20th the Breithorn with my son, and on the 24th the Rimpfischhorn, also with my son. Guide—Emil Graven of Zermatt.

Mr A. J. RUSK writes:—The last week of July I spent at Saas Grund with Peter-Marie Zurbriggen, an excellent guide and companion, climbing the Portjengrat, Sonneggrat, Fletschhorn and Laquinhorn, and Südlenspitze and Nadelhorn.

Thence I went to Grindelwald to join a party—Somervell, Beetham, Smythe, and Brown.

We climbed the Wetterhorn, Kleine Schreckhorn, Eiger, and Mönch. Then we climbed the Grosse Schreckhorn, and Brown and Smythe went elsewhere. The rest of us traversed the Finsteraarhorn from the Schwarzegg to the Concordia Hut, and from there to Ried via the Aletschhorn. From Ried we climbed the Bietschhorn and went on to Randa by road and rail. We climbed the Weisshorn, encountering a thunderstorm on the east ridge, our only bad weather.

We went up to Zermatt for a day, where Somervell and Beetham made an expedition in bad weather after I had left them on 18th August.

Mr J. A. GARRICK sends the following notes:—During July and August I spent six weeks in the Alps, climbing with various people. At Arolla, where the campaign began, the weather was extraordinarily fine and hot, and off-days occurred with great frequency. Sufficient energy was, however, produced to get us up the Aig. de la Za twice: once by the ordinary route (sleeping at the Bertol Hut), and again by the West Face. Another day we traversed the Petite Dent de Veisivi.

A move was then made to Argentière, where nothing was done save two expeditions on the Mer de Glace in search of views. From Champex, the next place visited, an expedition was made to the Dupuis Hut for the purpose of ascending the Tête Crettex and the Aig. de Javelle, two peaks in the chain of the Aiguilles Dorées. The hut was very unclean and rather unpleasant, but it is magnificently situated, and the famous chimney on the Javelle—a narrow, smooth, and holdless rift which extracted the last cubic inch of breath from the struggling leader—was an added compensation.

The last ten days of August were spent at Montenvers, and in spite of the weather, which had become thoroughly unsettled, we were able to get through quite a lot of useful work. With the Brothers Simond of Levanchez as guides we traversed the Grands Charmoz and the Grépon. Between these two climbs we had a day without guides on the Aig. de Tacul, which proved to be a much longer and less easy task than we had anticipated, possibly because our route was rather unusual. As a climb, the Aig. de Tacul is very much inferior to the better known Aiguilles, but as a viewpoint it is superb. The final expedition was to the Col du Géant, and lasted three days. The Simonds were again with us. The first day was spent in a leisurely ascent to the col through the wonderful scenery of the Glacier du Géant, and the night passed at the Refugio Torino. Next morning we hauled ourselves up the fixed ropes on the Aig. du Géant midst audible sniffs from the rock-climbing purists, who thought it a climb more suited to the operations of mariners than of mountaineers, but quite worth doing on account of the unique situations. The second night at the Refugio Torino was very stormy, and the prospects for the next day almost hopeless; but our luck held, and on our way back to the Montenvers we managed to get the Dent du Requin. The weather did not definitely clear until we were within 300 feet of the summit, and when it did clear it was with dramatic suddenness. This may have somewhat coloured our impressions of the peak, but whatever the cause, the Dent du Requin was voted the prettiest climb which we did from Montenvers.

Mr SOLLY was in Switzerland from the middle of July to the middle of August, and had almost continuous fine weather. His headquarters were at Arolla, where he met the members of the L.S.C.C., and at Saas Fée. He was with Dr A. R. Hargreaves, whom some will remember as having attended the Killin Meet as a guest at New Year 1913, and for part of the time with Mr B. Beetham. His principal climb at Arolla was the Dent Perroc. The party then crossed some passes to the Panossière Club Hut from which they ascended the Grand Combin. From Saas Fée Mr Solly and Dr Hargreaves with Miss de Fonblanque traversed the Mittaghorn-Eggnerhorn arête, and subsequently the two former crossed the Fée

Joch to Zermatt, returning by the Adler Pass which Mr Solly had crossed thirty-six years before as his first glacier pass.

Dr INGLIS CLARK writes :—Last February and March we sailed to Algiers, and in a private motor Mrs Clark and I toured over Algeria and Tunisia. First visiting the snow-clad Djurdjura Mountains (8,000 feet), we descended to Bougie with its lovely bay, the “Petite Kabyle Mountains” rising from the water’s edge to a height of 6,000 feet and glittering with snow. Passing for 50 miles through picturesque gorges we came to Constantine over the great plateau (about 3,500 feet), going south to Batna, visited the Roman towns of Lambese and Timgad. Passing over ranges of the Atlas reached Biskra (Garden of Allah), and then 120 miles south and reached Touggourt, where the desert was entered, and on camel back went to a camp and experienced life in the Sahara. Thence back to Bona on the coast. Visited Kroumen’a Mountains (about 3,000 feet), and on to Tunis. South over the desert to Holy City of Kairooan and the Roman Amphitheatre of El Djem.

In August we went to Salz Kammergut intending to explore northern approaches to Gross Glockner. Bad weather forced us to Vienna. Returning to Lienz the Glockner again drove us back from Heiligenblut. We then visited the Dolomiten Haus in Fischleimboden at the foot of the Zwölferkofel. This comfortable hotel is kept by the son of the celebrated Sepp. Innerkofler, “the gentleman guide” of the Dolomites. Various passes were explored. Our next haunt was at Lake Misurina, and finally the charming (and very cheap) resort of Alt Prags below the Croda Rossa.

Mr R. A. ROBERTSON was at the Riffelalp all August, and had several good days on the Findelen and Gorner glaciers.

Mr C. A. M. DOUGLAS writes :—Fine weather set in in the Alps early in July, and continued almost unbroken throughout the month, except for occasional thunderstorms. I first spent a week at Grindelwald and ascended the Wetterhorn and Shreckhorn on 5th and 8th July respectively. These were the first ascents of the season of these mountains, and, after a bad June, the quantity of snow was unusually large. I then proceeded to Chamonix for a fortnight, and the following climbs were carried out :—Aig. de l’M, Petit Charmoz, Tacul, Dent de Géant, traverse of Grand Charmoz, traverse of Grépon, traverse of Grand and Petit Dru. The ascent of the Dru was the first of the season. The summit of the Grand Dru was reached in five hours from the hut, and the whole expedition occupied only twelve hours, including over an hour at the summits.

Messrs H. ALEXANDER and J. A. PARKER had a fortnight's walking and climbing in the Pyrenees in September. Starting from Gavarnie they crossed into Spain by the Port de Gavarnie, and put up for several days at Ordesa in the beautiful Vallée de Arasas. From this an attempt was made on Mont Perdu which had to be given up on account of bad weather after a wretched night had been spent in the new Cabane de Gaulis. From Ordesa a return was made to Gavarnie by the Cirque de Salarous, the Taillon, Brèche de Roland, Echelles des Sarradets, and the Cirque, a most interesting expedition.

After a day in Gavarnie another trip across the frontier was made this time by the Brèche d'Alans, Port de Pinède, and Vallée de Pinède to the Spanish town of Bielsa. Of the comforts (*sic*) of this "très pittoresque" town the less said the better; sufficient to say that the food and general surroundings completely upset one of the party, and an extensive programme for climbing the Fulsa, Suelsa, Posets, &c., had to be abandoned, and a return made to France as speedily as possible. This was done by the Port de Barroude to Fabian, and thence by easy stages via Lac d'Orredon and Col d'Aubert to Bareges and Luz, Alexander climbing the Montpelat and Neouville on the way.

At Luz the weather broke down completely, and a retreat was therefore made to the plains, after a very enjoyable fortnight had been spent in the mountains.

Capt. T. HOWARD SOMERVELL sends the following list of climbs accomplished this summer all without guides :—

Dolomites.—Kleine Zinne. Croda da Lago by Pompanin Kamin. Traverse of Langkofel by North-East Ridge, a very fine climb, 3,200 feet of magnificent rock. Cimon della Palla and traverse by Travignolo glacier, one of the longest glissades in the Alps. Rosetta by "S" face. Saas Maor. Cuira della Madonna, a good little peak. Vajolet Towers. Fünffingerspitze by Schmitt Kamin, not as hard as it is supposed to be. Zahnkofel (also a few odds and ends—Cinque Torri, Becca di Mezzodi, &c.).

Alps.—Traverse of Eiger. Wetterhorn. Kleine Schreckhorn. Four days' traverse of Oberland, including Jungfrau, Schreckhorn, Finsteraarhorn, Aletsch-horn. Bietsch-horn from Ried (disappointing climb). Weisshorn by Schalligrat, a fine rock ridge. Traverse of Gabelhorn and Wellenkuppe.

Mr GALBRAITH was at the Riffelalp Hotel above Zermatt during most of August, but did no ascents or climbs worthy of mention to members of the S.M.C. He was able to ascend the Breithorn and Stockhorn on very fine days with splendid views. Climbers on the Matterhorn could be accompanied almost daily, up and

down, by the help of the hotel telescope. The very fine weather made excursions to glaciers, huts, and elsewhere very pleasant, and to meet R. A. Robertson and Meares in the hotel, and the Ex-President and Secretary in the street of Zermatt crowned with fresh laurels, was an additional gratification.

Mr D. A. CLAPPERTON sends the following note :—We left Edinburgh on 6th July for Austria, travelling via Paris. The express trains to Austria are diverted at present by Basle, Zurich, Innsbruck, and thereafter run over the Austrian State Railways through Zell-am-See, &c., to Salzburg, thus giving travellers an opportunity of seeing some magnificent country which the express trains as a rule do not traverse. We spent a fortnight in Upper Austria at Strobl on the Wolfgang See, which lies about 30 miles east of Salzburg. The country is similar to the English Lakes, but on a grander scale. I had two climbs in this district, one the Rettenkogel at Strobl, and the other the Dachstein, 10,000 feet, the only glacier mountain in Upper Austria which lies 30 miles to the south. After Strobl we visited Bad-Gastein, a famous spa in the mountains which is at the entrance of the Hohe-Taurern tunnel through the Alps (the route between the Austrian cities and Trieste). This settlement is 3,500 feet high, and is a delightful spot. It was very full of Austrian visitors. When there I went by railway and post motor to Heiligenblut at the south of the Gross Glockner, intending to climb this mountain which is the highest in Austria (12,600 feet). Bad weather came on, and I went over the Pfandel Scharte, a glacier pass to the north, from which you reach Bad-Gastein by the Fuschertal and railway thereafter. At the conclusion of my visit I climbed the Ankogel (10,600 feet), a glacier mountain to the south of Bad-Gastein.

We had very warm weather during our visit of four weeks, and found the conditions very comfortable. The Austrians are now anxious to receive tourists, and their Embassy publishes a very nicely illustrated guide in English which brings the attractions of the country before intending visitors.

Mr G. B. GREEN was at Arolla from the 5th to the 17th of August, and at Zermatt from the 18th to the 23rd, but did nothing more than ordinary walks from both places, except ascending the Arolla Glacier to the Col de Mont Collon.

Mr EDNIE writes :—My wife and I spent two weeks this summer at Wassen in the Reusthal. I had not visited this valley for seventeen years, and observed that while some of the villages had grown, Wassen was practically unchanged ; moreover, it seemed the best

centre for excursions in this beautiful district. Several interesting side valleys were visited—the Göschenenthal to the Hotel Dammagletscher, the Maderanerthal to the Hotel Alpenclub, and the Meienthal to the Susten Pass; the Oberalp Pass was crossed to Tschamut. I ascended the Hörnli (8,670 feet) which is the highest point of the Schwarzenstock, the Meiggelenstock (7,945 feet) from the head of the Rohrbachthal, and the Pazzolastock or Piz Nurschallas (9,000 feet) from the Oberalp Pass. I had really started out for the more ambitious Badus, but found it too long an excursion for one day from Wassen, even with the aid of the railways, as the ascent from Andermatt to the Oberalp Pass (nearly two and a half hours) had to be done on foot.

Three weeks were also spent at Arolla, where I had arranged to meet some English climbing friends. Two excursions were made up the Lower Glacier, the Durand Glacier was visited via the Pas de Chèvres, and walks were taken to the Lac Bleu and the Cascade des Ignes. A walk to the Col de Zarmine was rendered specially interesting by the view of a fine thunderstorm from the top of the Col. The peaks ascended were Mont Dolent, Roussette, Aiguille de la Za from Bertol Hut, traverse of the Pigne d'Arolla in one day from Arolla via the Jenkin Hut and the Pas de Chèvres, and the traverse of Mont Collon.

On the last expedition, which was certainly the finest, we were accompanied by the guide Antoine Georges of Forclaz. The weather was almost uniformly fine until 15th August, after which conditions were less stable. I had the pleasure of meeting Green, Ling, and Sang during part of my time at Arolla.

MR VANDELEUR sends the following account of a visit to Corsica in April:—The first mountain I attacked was Monte Renoso (7,733 feet), from a village called Bastelica. This expedition was a failure. I very stupidly missed the proper way, keeping too much to the right, and at ten o'clock the clouds came up from the west and I retreated, fearing bad weather. The snow was in places very deep and soft, and I sank in over my knees, but at the highest point I reached it was firm and not so deep. Even if I had gone the right way I think the mist would have stopped me, but if the mountain had remained clear, I believe I should have eventually reached the top in spite of my mistake.

On 22nd April I climbed the Pointe Latiniccia (7,887 feet) from Corte. This is the most northerly important peak of the Monte Rotondo range. I found it a very long expedition, but in summer it would be perfectly simple. The snow, however, was very bad up to about 6,500 feet, and in places I was wading in 3 or 4 feet of it. I reached the top just in time to get a clear view before the weather turned bad, and on the descent I had sleet and rain nearly the whole way.

This success encouraged me to attack Monte Cinto (8,890 feet), the highest peak in Corsica, and I succeeded in climbing it on 26th April from Calacuccia. The people at the inn told me nobody had been up it before me this year from Calacuccia, so unless somebody went up before me from Asco, my ascent was presumably the first for 1923. Though there was no real difficulty, I think it was the most formidable ascent I have made alone. The snow was very bad nearly all the way. I did not choose the easiest route in the earlier part of the ascent, and once or twice on the final ridge I feared I should be beaten. However, I did it well within guide-book time, and then made a rather leisurely descent by a different route. Apart from mountaineering, I had some delightful walks and motor drives. I saw the view from the Rocs Rouges hotel, and the Calanches de Piana, under the best conditions, and also the Défilé de Santa Régina. I thought the scenery everywhere very fine.

Mr VANDELEUR also sends the following note of his summer travels:—I did not accomplish a great deal in the Alps this year. I went first to Kandersteg, where I did the Balmhorn and Wildstrubel, both quite easy. Then I went on to Saas-Fée, and climbed the Portjengrat. I also slept a night at the Mischabel hut, hoping to do the Nadelhorn, but a cold, strong north wind prevented us from going beyond the hut.

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