

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

### NEW YEAR MEET, 1923—BRAEMAR.

THE New Year (1923) Meet was held at Braemar, from Friday, 28th December, to Monday, 1st January. The following members were present:—Dr. J. R. Levack (President), Dr. J. L. McIntyre, Dr. I. S. Stewart, Messrs H. J. Butchart, D. S. P. Douglas, G. Duncan, W. Garden, D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, J. McCoss, J. Murray, J. A. Nicol, J. A. Parker, E. Reid, W. A. Reid, C. P. Robb, M. J. Robb, R. T. Sellar; and as guests—Dr. J. F. Tocher and Mr. H. Reid—a total of twenty. Ten of the above are also members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and two are members of the Alpine Club.

On the opening day of the Meet (Friday), two members and a guest, who had travelled by the 8.5 a.m. train, enjoyed a short preliminary climb near the Lion's Face in clear frosty weather. In the evening conditions were still very promising, and the company, which had increased to ten, decided on Ben Muich Dhui for Saturday's excursion. Early next morning, however, as has happened before at New Year, the weather was entirely different, being so boisterous and wet that the only possibilities seemed ascents of Craig Coinnich or Morrone. Messrs G. Duncan and W. A. Reid contented themselves with the less severe alternative, while a party of eight decided on Morrone. The route selected was by the gully on the east face, which was found to contain plenty of snow, for the most part fairly soft. As the party ascended, the sleet turned into snow and mist was soon entered. This became more dense, and at the top of the gully it was necessary to steer by compass for the cairn. On the plateau the snow was hard in only few places, and the weather was very rough and intensely cold. After visiting the cairn the party divided. The President, accompanied by Dr. Tocher and J. W. Levack, crossed the north peak and descended to Corriemulzie, while Drs. McIntyre and Stewart and Messrs D. P. Levack, Nicol and Sellar found their way by compass along the ridges, crossed Carn More and descended to Glen Ey. The snow on the north slopes of both hills was in quite good order and some glissading was available. In the evening the weather hardened and the Inverey road was covered with an almost unbroken sheet of ice.

On Sunday morning at nine, a party consisting of Dr. McIntyre and Messrs Butchart, Garden, McCoss, Murray, Nicol, Parker, C. P. Robb, M. J. Robb, and Sellar set off for Beinn a' Bhuid. After crossing the Dee by the ferry in relays, the party took the usual

route through the wood for the Sluga Glen. The snow was found to be fairly deep well below the 2,000 feet line. On the slope down to the Quoich a short halt was made for a discussion as to the route, some of the members being in favour of a snow climb in one of the corries. As the conditions for this did not seem favourable, it was decided to cross the Quoich and ascend to the south top by the ordinary route. The snow was soft and occasionally more than knee-deep, so that the steeper portions of the climb were by no means easy. At 2,600 feet, however, the going was much better, large patches of old snow in fine order being met with. At a few hundred feet below the cairn a halt was made for lunch in a rather exposed place. The cold was severe, and members who were not wearing gloves found it quite painful. After visiting the cairn in cloud a descent was made much further to the south in order to return by the Quoich valley. Glissading, unfortunately, was impossible although numerous attempts were made. Fine views were obtained of the neighbouring hills and of more distant ones, such as Beinn a' Ghlo. The time taken to reach the south top was four-and-a-half hours, while the whole excursion occupied eight hours, or very nearly schedule time for the eighteen miles in summer.

At 10 a.m. on the same day, the President, Drs. Stewart and Tocher, Messrs Douglas, Duncan, D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, E. Reid, H. Reid, and W. A. Reid left in a brake for Loch Callater. The loch was frozen over and a good deal of snow was lying even on the lower slopes (about 1630 feet). The party proceeded to Corrie Kander through snow which was often nearly knee-deep. All the gullies were full of snow and the well-known one with the rock, on this occasion covered with blue and green ice, was chosen for the climb. Messrs G. Duncan and W. A. Reid returned to Callater, and the remainder ascended the gully; J. W. Levack alone, and the others roped in two parties. The snow was very soft at first but later improved. Near the top some step-cutting was necessary, while the last bit was mostly gravel and ice and had to be taken with care. Shortly after the hard snow on the plateau was reached, mist came down and gradually became more dense but not before the party had enjoyed some very beautiful sunset effects. Without visiting the cairn on Carn Turk the members followed the ridge and descended to Callater, finding the going very stiff at several points.

On Monday, which was an exceptionally clear day, Dr. McIntyre and Messrs Murray, Nicol and Parker motored along the icy road to Inverey and ascended Carn Bhac. The party made good time, finding much less snow than they expected in Glen Connie, and reached the higher top at 1 o'clock. The snow was hard on the upper slopes and the leader had to kick steps near the summit. After visiting the other top (3014 feet) the party returned by the

same route. Carn Bhac is an excellent view-point. It is seldom visited although 3,098 feet in height and only about five miles from Inverey.

On the same day, Messrs Butchart, Garden, McCoss, C. P. and M. J. Robb motored about a mile beyond Glen Cluny Lodge with several stops to admire the really excellent views of the Cairngorms. It was intended to get the car much farther, but the snow was too deep three miles below the summit. After H. J. Butchart had instructed two of the party in the first steps of skiing, a start was made for the top. The novices managed to get up with few tumbles, except when short runs were attempted. They afterwards negotiated a very enjoyable slow run down to the car. H. J. Butchart tried the higher slopes but found the snow conditions quite unsuitable.

On Monday members not mentioned in the above excursions ascended Craig Coinnich, where some photographs were taken by Dr. Stewart.

The Meet was greatly enjoyed by everyone present, and was considered to be one of the most successful ever held by the Club. It is most satisfactory to get two really good climbing days at a New Year Meet, and very unusual to get such a brilliant day as the Monday, when the views of distant hills were superb. The Carn Bhac party never experienced such a fine view of the Cairngorms in winter before, and the glimpse of Glen Tilt in a deep Swiss blue sky background was alone worth going a long way to see. On Sunday and Monday evenings the reflected sunset tints on the snow, rose pink to mauve, were seen and admired by all the parties. During the Meet several large herds of deer were seen. The skiing party saw quite a variety of wild life near the road, and noticed during the return a pack of grouse being pursued by an eagle.

MARSHALL J. ROBB.

#### EASTER MEET, 1923—TYNDRUM.

THE Easter Meet of the Club, at Tyndrum, Perthshire, from Friday 30th March, to Monday, 2nd April, though not a large one, was voted highly successful by all members present. Some S.M.C. members and other visitors made a very good hotel party. Members present were the President, Dr. Levack, Messrs. W. Garden, J. Gray Kyd, Dr. J. L. McIntyre, D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, E. B. Reid and his guest, G. A. Laing, and Dr. J. Sellar.

On Friday, 30th March, Reid, Laing, Sellar, and McIntyre made an ascent of Ben Doireann (3523 ft.) The weather was thick, and mist very low, so that no view was obtained. Nothing notable occurred in the climb, and the party returned to the hotel, having justified their existence as mountaineers.

On Saturday, 31st March, the party was joined by Dr. Levack, Messrs. W. Garden, D. P. Levack, and J. W. Levack. The whole party, together with some S.M.C. friends, motored to Falls of Cruachan, and climbed Meall Cunail, the main top of Ben Cruachan, and Stob Dearg. The weather was very thick, with a strong wind from the N.W. At the col, between Meall Cunail and the main top, the party lunched, and shortly after began the ascent of the main top. Two visitors overtook the party, anxious to get to the top, but ignorant of the use of compass and map. They were shown the use of both, and the whole party reached the summit of Ben Cruachan, in dense mist and a gale of wind. Here the President, J. W. Levack, and J. L. McIntyre left the rest of the party, and with the two visitors, began the descent to the col, using compass and map constantly. The remainder traversed the ridge to Stob Dearg, and returned later to the main top. Considerable difficulty was experienced in descending the main ridge, but eventually the party emerged from the mist, and dropped down to the falls of Cruachan, and met the President and his party at Loch Awe Hotel, to which they had walked. Here tea was provided, and the whole party returned to Tyndrum, some by rail, others by motor.

On Sunday, 1st April, the bad weather justified a day off.

On Monday, 2nd April, the President, Messrs. D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, Dr. Sellar and Dr. McIntyre, made an attempt on Ben Lui. Dr. Sellar and Mr. McIntyre went as far as the snow line on the corrie. The others attempted an ascent of the snow slopes, but abandoned it, as avalanche snow had come down and was still coming down from the slopes above, hidden in thick mist.

The weather throughout the week-end was very disappointing. A high wind, bitterly cold, together with snow on the hills and rain below, made climbing somewhat unpleasant.

D. P. LEVACK.

#### EXCURSION, MAY 1923—BENAQUHALLIE.

THE Club had a very pleasant excursion to Benaquhallie\* on 7th May, the Aberdeen spring holiday. The day was an ideal one for a hill tramp. A strong N.W. wind blew, and the alternate cloud and sunshine kept the views constantly changing. The party left town by the morning train, and took to the hill at once on arrival at Tillyfourie station. Benaquhallie, as no doubt most members of the Club know, is the westmost top of the Corrennie Forest Group, which consists of the White Hill, the Green Hill, the Red Hill, and Benaquhallie. After passing through a fir and spruce plantation,

\* In local writings, sometimes Ben-na-caillich, probably representing Beinn a' choillich, "Hill of the (grouse) cock."

and toiling through some rather long heather, the high ground between the White and Green Hills was reached, and eventually a very good path, coming from the east side, led the party to the top of the Green Hill (1,607 feet). From here to the top of the Red Hill was an easy bit of going, and the views on all sides were wide and interesting. Down on the right lay the fertile and peaceful Vale of Alford, with the woods of Haughton and Tonley making a pleasant break in the agricultural land. Due east could be seen such familiar landmarks as the Barmekin of Echt and Brimmond Hill, and, in the immediate vicinity, the great shapeless plateau of the Hill o' Fare. Away south the eye was arrested by the ubiquitous Cloch-na-Ben and Mount Battock, while, straight ahead, the familiar forms of Mount Keen, Lochnagar, and the Braemar giants north of the Dee stood out in all their whiteness. A very striking feature was the glimpses of the Dee in the neighbourhood of Aboyne. Morven, Leadlich, and Mortlich were prominent points in the middle distance, while the foreground of heather-slope and stretching woodland and field completed a very varied and exhaustive picture. From the Red Hill a slight descent was made to the dip between it and Benaquhallie, and here, in a dry ditch, and near what is one of the sources of the Beltie, the party lunched in perfect comfort, immune from the strong headwind which had now reached the strength of half a gale. Fortified by the repast, the party made the last ascent, which brought them out at the cairn on Benaquhallie (1,621 ft). The cairn is a prominent point for miles round. It consists of a huge square, built of stone, and is the size of a moderately large crofter's house. Why it has assumed these dimensions cannot be explained, but it afforded the company an excellent shelter from a sharp blast of hailstones. Those more daring spirits who ventured on top took all their time to keep their feet. The view from this top was practically identical with that from the Red Hill. A quick descent was made to the farm of Upper Broomhill, and from there the road was followed to the main road to Tarland. That road was crossed, and the Torphins road then led the party to a point on the Beltie Burn opposite Findrack where it was crossed by a small footbridge, and the climbers, nothing daunted with their previous efforts, next traversed the west top of Learney Hill, and so, over fields and the Torphins Golf Course, to the Learney Arms, where a most enjoyable "high tea" was served. The party reached the city about 8 p.m., after a most exhilarating and by no means over-fatiguing day, the distance covered having been only about ten miles.

W.G.

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A Saturday afternoon excursion to Ben Aigan took place on 23rd June.