

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

THE Forty-sixth Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Caledonian Hotel on November 24, 1934. The President, Mr William Malcolm, was in the chair.

The minute of the last general meeting was read and approved. The Honorary Secretary submitted the Club's accounts. On the motion of Mr J. McCoss, seconded by Mr J. A. Parker, these were unanimously approved.

The Honorary Secretary read a letter from Mr E. W. Watt, intimating his resignation from the Editorship. The meeting accepted his resignation with great regret and accorded Mr Watt a cordial vote of thanks for his invaluable services in connection with the *Journal*.

The membership at October 31 was 300.

Office-bearers were elected as follows:—

Hon. President—Professor J. Norman Collie.

President—Mr William Malcolm.

Vice-Presidents—Dr D. P. Levack and Mr A. Leslie Hay.

Hon. Editor—Mr William A. Ewen.

Hon. Librarian—Mr James A. Parker.

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer—Mr William Garden, advocate,  
18 Golden Square, Aberdeen.

Committee—Mr J. A. Parker, Mr H. C. Dugan, Miss Margaret Skakle, Dr A. R. Martin, Mr H. G. Dason, Mr J. McCoss, Mr J. E. Bothwell, Miss A. M. Pittendrigh, and Mr R. P. Yunnice.

The Club Meets for 1935 were arranged as follows:—

New Year Meet . . . . .	Braemar.
Easter Meet . . . . .	Glen Affric.
Spring Holiday Excursion . . . . .	Beinn a' Bhuid.

Snow-climbing excursions to Lochnagar were fixed for February 3, 17, and March 3, and rock-climbing excursions to Souter Head for March 23 and April 6 and 11. It was arranged to hold three Indoor or Social meets on January 28, February 11, and March 11.

A proposal to change the design of the Club button was defeated by 16 votes to 6.

The Hon. Secretary intimated a gift of books from Mrs T. R. Gillies, details of which appeared in the last *Journal*. It was unanimously agreed to record in the Club minutes appreciation of Mrs Gillies' kindness.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.



SGÙRR NA LÀPAICH (ROSS)—THE SOUTH RIDGE

*R. T. Sellar*

## THE ANNUAL DINNER.

THE Forty-sixth Annual Dinner was held in the Caledonian Hotel on November 24, 1934, at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting. Mr William Malcolm presided over a company of 104 members and guests. The members present were:—

Mr G. J. Allan, Mr D. Anderson, Mr John Angus, Mrs John Angus, Miss L. W. Archibald, Mrs J. C. Blacklaw, Mr James Blair, Miss L. G. Browne, Miss A. J. Cameron, Miss A. M. Cameron, Miss E. J. Christie, Mr H. G. Dason, Miss A. Donaldson, Miss M. Donaldson, Mr H. C. Dugan, Mr George Duncan, Miss H. M. E. Duncan, Mr Norman Dyer, Mr W. A. Ewen, Mrs William Garden, Mr William Garden, Mr J. L. Geddes, Mr J. Gove, Mr Maitland H. Gray, Mr A. Leslie Hay, Mrs A. Leslie Hay, Miss W. Hay, Miss N. G. Henderson, Mrs E. J. Hendry, Dr J. Leith Hendry, Mrs A. C. Hendry, Miss R. K. Jackson, Mr H. Johnston, Miss M. W. Johnstone, Miss E. J. Laing, Dr D. P. Levack, Mrs D. P. Levack, Dr J. R. Levack, Mrs J. R. Levack, Dr J. W. Levack, Mr William Malcolm, Mr R. P. Masson, Mr J. McCoss, Mr C. S. McLay, Miss H. M. Mearns, Mr W. J. Middleton, Mr J. A. Parker, Miss A. M. Pittendrigh, Mr E. Birnie Reid, Dr W. A. Reid, Mr C. D. Ritson, Miss M. Skakle, Mr I. C. Simpson, Mr A. G. Nicol Smith, Mr E. W. Smith, Mr Malcolm Smith, Miss A. W. Stewart, Miss M. Stewart, Mr William Stewart, Miss M. M. Telfer, Dr J. F. Tocher, Miss J. D. Wallace, Mr E. W. Watt, Miss C. H. Wisely, Mr R. P. Yunnie.

Mr H. MacRobert, C.A., President of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, was the guest of the Club, and the other guests were:—

Mrs G. J. Allan, Mr D. M. Anderson, Mr E. W. Burness, Miss J. Burness, Mr W. A. Cameron, Miss Daly, Mrs H. G. Dason, Captain L. W. J. Dryland, Dr F. C. Garrow, Miss Geddes, Miss F. Geddes, Dr W. A. Hendry, Mr J. A. Hopkins, Miss M. Johnstone, Miss Kirkcaldy, Miss M. W. Laird, Mr L. MacGregor, Mr W. J. MacPherson, Miss E. Malcolm, Mrs R. P. Masson, Dr J. A. Mearns, Rev. P. C. Millar, Mrs P. C. Millar, Dr W. H. Milligan, Mrs W. H. Milligan, Mr Hector Monro, Mrs W. A. Reid, Miss A. E. Rothnie, Lt.-Col. Scott, Miss I. C. Scullion, Mr L. A. Shields, Mrs Malcolm Smith, Mr Valentine, Mrs Warren, Mrs Watson, Mr E. W. Watt, Mr R. A. Yunnie.

The Royal Toast honoured, Mr Malcolm spoke of the year's activities and outlined the programme for 1935. "It is a privilege and an honour," he said, "to address the Club from the President's Chair and to give you the toast of The Cairngorm Club. I feel that the Club represents all that is best in the spirit of sport. In recalling many outings to the hills, some of which were like summer picnics and others which were a severe struggle with the elements, I can always recollect the happy comradeship existing between members of the Club and which the solitude of the mountains seems to foster."

He then referred to the death of Mr T. R. Gillies, who was an original member of the Club; of Mr R. Gordon Nicol, a member for thirty-three years; of Mr Alex. Booth and Mr Norman McLeod. The membership had, he said, increased to 300. The Junior Club was still in its infancy [*sic*], but it was hoped that in a short time it would become a large and active body.

Referring to the popularity of rock and snow climbing on Lochnagar, the President emphasised the need for a new guide to Lochnagar. Since the publication of Mr A. I. McConnochie's "Lochnagar" and of the "S.M.C. Guide to the Cairngorms," many new climbs had been accomplished. He expressed regret at the resignation of the Editor, Treasurer Watt, and spoke in appreciation of Mr Watt's work during his eight years of office.

In concluding, he said that the honour of occupying the position of President would be a far less enjoyable one were it not for the whole-hearted assistance he had met with from all members and especially from the office-bearers. While the spirit of good fellowship, which had always existed in the Club, continued to thrive, the Club will continue to prosper.

Dr J. R. Levack, proposing "The Guests," commenced on a most promising note. "When I was in Craiginches," he said, creating a sensation, "giving a lantern lecture," he continued—and the fair name of the Club remains unsullied! He coupled the toast with the name of Mr MacRobert.

Mr MacRobert, replying on behalf of the guests, was afraid that the juxtaposition of the Church and the presence of so many ladies might cramp his style! But his entertaining speech—which included a free advertisement for the S.M.C. Guides!—hardly suggested that.

The healths of the Honorary Secretary and of the Honorary Editor were then pledged. Mr Garden, responding, remarked on the satisfactory numerical and financial state of the Club and expressed regret at Treasurer Watt's retiral from the Editorship.

Treasurer Watt said that he gave up the work most reluctantly, for it had been a great pleasure to edit the *Journal*, and expressed his indebtedness to those who had furnished the necessary material.

Messrs Monro and Simpson were thanked, on the call of Mr A. Leslie Hay, for providing the musical entertainment of the evening, and Treasurer Watt proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

In the course of the evening Mr H. G. Dason showed Cine films of the 1934 Meets and of climbing in the Cairngorms. While protesting that he was a novice at the game, Mr Dason's long experience of still photography must have been a great asset in making the film. The Crianlarich Meet was his first venture in motion photography. Even so, and although the light was invariably very bad, the results were very creditable. We still await, however, some reasonable explanation of the events which led Mr Dason—and the President—to make an early visit to Tyndrum to photograph Beinn Laoigh and of their returning

with a photograph of Ben Chuirn! The later Meets were excellently done, and the views taken in the vicinity of the Dubh Loch could scarcely be improved upon.

Dr D. P. Levack moved a vote of thanks to Mr Dason for his most interesting and entertaining exhibition, and paid tribute to the time and work of the photographer in preparing the film.

#### NEW YEAR MEET—BRAEMAR, 1935.

IF the success of a Meet is to be gauged by the number of members present, then the last New Year Meet must, in comparison with those of recent years, be accepted as a failure. Is it that Braemar as a centre has lost its appeal to Aberdeen climbers? Have the snows and fastnesses of the Cairngorms become too familiar to members of the Cairngorm Club? Surely this is not so when to one who has known these hills in all their moods for fifteen years their appeal has not depreciated one iota. Then where has one to look for a cause to explain the apathy of members last New Year? One is loath to attribute the poor turn-out to certain unfortunate incidents which occurred the previous Easter, since such a conviction would but indicate a lamentable opinion of the mettle of the modern generation.

Sound mountaineering knowledge is built on the fruits of experience. I think I am quite safe in saying that there is no mountaineer (in the strict sense of the word) alive to-day who has not, at some time or another, been involved in an accident, and that as a result he has improved his climbing capabilities. Let those who may, as an outcome of last Easter's misadventures, take strength from the knowledge that he who never took a wrong step or never descended the side of a mountain remote from a hotel, never climbed to a summit worth attaining!

Returning to the Braemar Meet, the Club would extend its welcome to Beverley and the Smiths as members attending their first Meet.

The curtain rises on the evening of Friday, December 28, when a modicum of members assembled for dinner in the Invercauld Arms Hotel. Five stalwarts composed the nucleus of the Meet and discussed plans for the forthcoming day. Three fixed on Lochnagar by Gelder Shiel as their programme, while the remainder decided on a breaking-in walk in the Cairnwell region. Saturday, with regard to weather, was the best day of the week-end. The Lochnagar party completed the ascent of the Central Buttress which was in easy condition. Two of the party foolishly descended the Black Spout afterwards, to find that progress downwards was almost an impossibility on account of soft snow. The third member came down the north ridge to the lower end of the loch and enjoyed a long rest while waiting to join up with the Spout party. The Glen Clunie contingent had a good day on the Cairnwell and Càrn Aosda, but were unsuccessful in their attempt to run off all the bath water at the Invercauld on their return.

The arrival of the President that evening (together with a bad weather report) and a few other members lifted the number present to a round dozen. The atmosphere became distinctly brighter despite the rumoured depressions and the President's refusal to don the tartan and herald dinner's advent according to established custom. It is a pity if this rite, where the President in full Highland evening dress pipes the members in to dinner (successfully introduced by Parker many years ago\*), is allowed to fall into disuse.

On Sunday a second ascent of Lochnagar was made from the Gelder Shiel by a party of seven. The conditions were so miserable that the Rev. Butchart was constrained to give a "sermon on the mount," in which he summarised at length, with much quotation from scripture, the failings of Presidents past and present, ending up with a somewhat uncalled-for indictment of the hotel staff for having given him a double ration of cheese sandwich. Two stragglers, who set off with the above party from Gelder Shiel, found that the Gelder Burn had risen in the interim since the passage of the advance guard and was quite impassable. Later they found themselves on the summit of the Meikle Pap and much to their surprise were able to vacate that position by the line of their advance. After assuring themselves that the Gelder could again be forded by the Lochnagar party without their assistance, they retreated to the Invercauld and forthwith resumed their attack on the hot-water system of that establishment. Meanwhile an enthusiastic, albeit damp, party were exploring the upper reaches of Glen Ey. The report as to their findings was so vague that it would appear their objective, Càrn Bhac, had proved elusive and that the expedition had not been wholly successful.

On Monday a slight improvement in the weather and numbers was noticed, and a large party set out for Cairngorm of Derry. As an appetiser for the Hogmanay Dinner the day was a great success, but the views, which make Cairngorm of Derry such an attractive mountain, were mostly missing, and hill lunch on the summit scarcely a delicacy over which to linger.

That evening the company, reinforced by a further small contingent from Aberdeen, made merry until Mrs Gregor heralded in the New Year in the time-honoured way. Someone then suggested first-footing Maggie Gruer, and a fleet of cars was soon threading a way tortuously up to Inverey. Despite the early hour, we were, as so many of us have been before, welcomed to Maggie's kindly hearth, and many greetings and reminiscences were exchanged ere Invercauld and bed claimed recognition. Even then, and I have this on the best authority, one member had to have his head forcibly inserted in a basin of cold water before he could be prevailed upon to go to bed. It may not be accepted, but is nevertheless true, that this same member was only prevented from making a midnight ascent of Lochnagar to see the New Year sunrise by a locked gate somewhere on the Balmoral estate. Such is the spirit which pervades Braemar at this season!—G. R. S.

\* Our contributor surely errs ?

## THE INDOOR MEETS.

THE first of the three social evenings was held in the Caledonian Hotel on Monday, January 28, at 8 P.M. Over forty attended. The President, in the throes of a bad cold, declared the meeting "oben" and called upon Mr Garden to commence his lecture. The promised informality of the proceedings was at once made evident when Mr Garden failed to respond to the call. It transpired that, at that moment, he was somewhere in the basement searching for his alpenstock. He appeared in due course, adequately equipped for a tour of the British Isles and an ascent of the Store Skagastöltind.

Commencing at Land's End, Mr Garden showed some fine coast views—for all of which, he said, he would not give a yard of Muchalls! Of his Lake District views the most remarkable was the ascent (?) of Moss Ghyll by a party of four proceeding feet first! His best pictures were, naturally, of the Scottish hills, and to these he had contrived to impart something of an Alpine grandeur. Liathach, under snow, looked quite as impressive as the Store Skagastöltind. From Scotland the lecturer proceeded to Norway, showing a number of excellent slides of fjord and mountain scenery. At the conclusion, Mr Garden was accorded a very hearty vote of thanks for a most enjoyable lecture.

Later the President promised a demonstration of knot tying and a first course in map reading, at which there was an excellent attendance. Unfortunately, following the Hon. Secretary's example, the President was not to be found. The task, therefore, devolved upon Mr Garden and Mr McCoss—with asides by Mr Parker!

The proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to the President.

For the second Indoor Meet, which was held in the Caledonian Hotel a fortnight later, there was an even larger attendance. The President was in the chair and called upon Mr Parker to commence his lecture on the Western Highlands. Without preliminary Mr Parker transferred the company's attention to Ardnamurchan, where the hills, though small, are volcanic and of great geological interest. Moving north-east, he covered Ardgour and Moidart. His next pictures were of the Outer Hebrides, the scene of his recent explorations. The hills of South Uist are akin to the final rock summits of the best Munroes. His illustrations of the Harris mountains were even finer. The lecturer left his audience in no doubt as to the nomenclature of the district, every subject being defined with a wealth of reminiscent and descriptive detail. *En route* for the mainland again, he showed some fine views of Skye and then put on the screen all the attractions of the country around Tomich, the venue of the Easter Meet.

Mr John Angus, in a short speech, thanked Mr Parker for a most well-informed and interesting lecture.—W. J. M.

On Monday, March 11, a third Indoor Meet was held in the Caledonian Hotel. Dr J. R. Levack treated us to a lecture which was

entertainment of a high order. His slides were astonishingly beautiful—I do not refer, of course, to the pictures of the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Librarian, draped in ice, nor do I include the senior Vice-President, in a kilt, at the age of ten, but to his pictures of mountains and other mountain phenomena! In Dr Levack's company we covered most of Scotland and finished up in Switzerland with some of the most beautiful pictures of the Matterhorn that I, and possibly most others, have ever seen. Dr Levack called his lecture his mountain memories, and they proved to be memories of a singularly happy kind, spiced with all sort of anecdotes of ten and twenty years ago—I think he even said something about thirty-five years ago, when the Black Spout was a new climb! And in those days they did not have to go out of their way to look for snow. His pictures included views of the Matterhorn, Unter Gabelhorn, Dent Blanche, and other Swiss mountains, and together with pictures of Lochnagar and the Cairngorms, the West and North Highlands and Skye, he showed some remarkable photographs of the fall of an avalanche on Lochnagar, the Spectre of the Brocken (the only time, he remarked, that one of his companions would have a halo!), thunderstorms, and other natural phenomena. The range of his remarks was equally wide and were as much enjoyed.

Lieut.-Col. Geddes thanked Dr Levack for a most agreeable and interesting lecture.

Later, Mr Henry Dugan showed a number of photographic enlargements, largely of Deeside scenery, the Cairngorms, and Lochnagar. Mr Dugan's work reaches the very highest standard of excellence and needs neither praise nor comment from me. But I discovered something of the qualities that go to make the perfect photographer while arranging with Mr Dugan the reproduction of some of his pictures in the present *Journal*. You may find him at work, if you are astir very early, at six of a summer's morning, and you may pass him again at the same place in the evening waiting for some particular lighting effect! We welcome the opportunity of reproducing some of Mr Dugan's pictures in this issue.

These social evenings were most successful and were very well attended. The lectures presented by Messrs Garden, Parker, and Levack were highly appreciated, and the innovation has proved sufficiently popular to warrant continuing the series during the winter months. It would be helpful if members who have slides would communicate the nature and number to any member of Committee. Members, by so doing, will not be committed to anything! While members fought shy of the President's suggestion regarding the exhibition of photographs, we would hope for an improvement in this respect next year.



LOCHNAGAR EXCURSION—FEBRUARY 3, 1935.

*Members Present* :—Messrs W. Malcolm (President), Dyer, Yunnie, McHardy, E. W. Smith, Lawson, McLay, Birnie Reid, Malcolm Smith, G. P. Geddes, Johnston, Dr Martin and Messrs Michie, Angus, and Dr Garrow (guests). Misses A. M. Donaldson, A. Donaldson, Rodger, Paterson, A. Stewart, M. Stewart, Wisely, Hay, Christie, Archibald, Mrs Hendry and Miss Murray (guest). The following arrived by car: Messrs Hay (Vice-President), Dugan, Bothwell, W. N. Aitken, and Misses Dugan and Johnston.

Twenty-seven members and guests left Aberdeen by bus about 8.40 A.M. and arrived at Spital of Muick at 10.45 A.M. They were met on the hill by several other members and friends who had travelled by car. The weather was fine with a slight mist over the tops, the sun making unsuccessful attempts to shine through. A sprinkling of new snow was not sufficient to impede walking and good progress was made to the Well, where a first halt was called for lunch. Above the Well the ground was frostbound, and it was estimated that there were several degrees of frost at the summit. The Central Buttress was most popular with the climbers, but some parties did the Red Spout and another gully in its vicinity. The snow was in excellent condition for cutting, and all parties enjoyed the climbs. The descent was made in gathering darkness, the last arrivals reaching the bus at 6.15 P.M. After a hearty meal at the Alexandra, Aberdeen was reached at 9.30 P.M.—W. M.

EXCURSION TO LOCHNAGAR—SUNDAY,  
FEBRUARY 17, 1935.

*Present* :—Misses Archibald, Daniel, Hay, Murray, Rogers, A. W. Stewart, and Mrs Hendry. Messrs Dugan, Ewen, Johnstone (guest), Lawson, McHardy, Malcolm, Slessor, and Dr F. C. Garrow (guest). (The above by plebeian transport.) Messrs L. Hay and Hughes, Bothwell and Burgess (guest), Hutcheon and two guests.

The weather was excellent, but mist occasionally hid the highest tops. Good time was made up the path by the burn from Allt-na-giubhsaich to the Fox's Well where, amongst the snow-covered rocks, some suitably uncomfortable and exposed sites were found for lunch. Arriving in the corrie the gullies were seen to be well filled with snow.

Hutcheon and party tackled the Black Spout and were followed by the Hay and Bothwell parties. The snow conditions were poor, the climbers sinking almost knee-deep at every step, but an enjoyable ascent to the summit was made.

Dugan, Ewen, Johnstone, Miss Archibald, and Mrs Hendry took things easily up the Red Spout. The President took the others to a precipitous snow-slope and there expertly demonstrated to them elegant methods of using the ice-axe to stop the human frame from sliding down

icy slopes consequent on injudicious steps or inadvertence. Although he flung himself out of his steps, buried his ice-axe to the hilt and grabbed the head at the very last moment with his nails to show how easy it all was, nobody had the temerity to imitate him despite presidential coaxing. Nothing discouraged, our fearless leader then carved steps for the party up the precipitous slope to the cornice where, having already shown how to carve steps with either hand singly, and with both hands at the same time, he bit out the last dozen steps with great mouthfuls of snow. The slope is unnamed on the O.S. map, but this was a first and wonderful ascent for all who saw it. The President and his followers arrived in time to see the other party reach the head of the Red Spout, the comparative gentle slope of which invited glissading. Truth must prevail, and, magnificent though the efforts of the President, Ewen, and others were, the honours in this line must go to the lady who, flinging her ice-axe with gay abandon at the President as she out-distanced him, descended on the back of her neck and reached Ewen at the bottom first. Limitations of time alone induced the President to dissuade her from repeating her effort, keen though she was.

The glissaders descended as they had come, while Daniel, Murray, Rogers, Dugan, Hay, Johnstone, Lawson, McHardy, and Slessor returned via the Glas-Allt, as did Hay and party. Welcome food was partaken of at the Alexandra Hotel, where on all sides could be heard murmurs of "What a climber." A good outing.—F. C. G.

#### EXCURSION TO LOCHNAGAR—SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 1935.

*Present* :—Misses Archibald, Brown, Daniel, Dugan, Martin, Murray, Rogers, A. W. Stewart, and Mrs Ross Mackenzie. Messrs Aitkins (guest), Dugan, Dyer, Malcolm, Melville, McHardy, Reid, Rose, Smith (and guest), Welsh, Whelan (guest), and Dr F. C. Garrow. (The above by charabanc.) Misses Duncan and Pittendrigh. Messrs Beard, Hutcheon, Medd, McLennan, and Dr A. R. Martin. (By private cars.)

Mr Whelan being from New Zealand and having his introduction to Scotland's mountains, mist covered everything above about 2,000 feet. Lochnagar, however, was pointed out to him with the invaluable aid of the mariner's compass. The main party started off in gentle rain preceded by Dyer, Smith and guest, and the car parties. Progress up the path from Allt-na-giubhsaich was slow, but the leaders left a track through the knee-deep snow which was followed to the cairn at the fork where the Gelder path goes off. The snow here was deep, and fine hail and mist blowing strongly half-blinded the parties. The main party missed the cairn marking the start of the route to the Fox's Well, but continued upwards by a corkscrew route to find Misses Duncan and Pittendrigh lunching in the lee of a large boulder. The blowing snow was now rapidly covering up the tracks, so the President wisely



CLIMBING DAYS

*H. C. Dugan*

decided to turn the party back, visibility being a matter of a few yards and conditions in general very uncomfortable.

Lunch was snatched in ideal club conditions, the various groups being practically snowed over before the last mouthful of snow and sandwich disappeared. The party retreated cold, wet, but gladly and in good order to the charabanc. A stop was made at the Falls of Muick for the botanists and more enthusiastic photographers, but the most enjoyable part of the outing was spent in the Alexandra Hotel in dry clothes.

Messrs Beard, Dyer, Hutcheon, Medd, McLennan, Smith and guest, and Dr Martin had persisted beyond where the main party turned back and eventually recognised the Glas Allt path. From there the next recognisable spot was the head of the Red Gully. Descending, the party found they were going down the Gelder path, turned back, and, identifying the correct path, arrived safely at Allt-na-giubhsaich and Ballater.

The main feature of the excursion was the excellent part-singing in the homeward-bound charabanc. Superman conditions, visibility *nil*.—F. C. G.

#### EXCURSION TO SOUTER HEAD.

A VISIT to the Souter Head rocks was arranged for Saturday, April 8. In view of the importance of the occasion and the exclusive nature of the personnel, we propose to depart from the customary narrative of events at Souter Head—anyway, we have it on the best authority, Mr Parker's, that one rock climb is very like another!—and to confine ourselves to the events prior to the start of the Meet (2.50 P.M.), arranged in chronological sequence. On account of his arriving one minute late, we propose to disqualify Mr Dugan, whose name, therefore, will not appear in the list of members present.

2.45 P.M.—Archibald arrived.

2.48 P.M.—Johnston arrived, acting as the President's courier. The President had a cold; in the circumstances he was unwilling to forgo his usual Saturday afternoon nap.

2.49 P.M.—Johnston departed—in the direction of Pittodrie.

2.50 P.M.—The Cove bus departed. The Meet wavered.

2.51 P.M.—Dugan arrived.

Among those absent were the members of Committee who advocated three excursions to Souter Head!

## THE EASTER MEET—1935.

“ . . . not but that Pym and you  
Will find me news enough—news I shall hear  
Under a quince tree by a fish pond side. . . .”

ALAS, I doubt if I would recognise a quince tree and fish ponds at Tomich. Unless Loch Beinn a' Mheadhoin might be so described, they are not to be easily discovered. One might have supposed that twenty-eight members of the Cairngorm Club, a delectable glen like Affric, and a plethora of mountain peaks was as potent a formula for the production of news as a quince tree and a couple of gold fish! Far from it; almost I am persuaded to write simply a list of members and their several conquests, a course to which I might have had easier resort had my own bag contained more than it did! In these days of elaborate equipment, and with the wisdom of half a century behind us, the historian starts under a handicap. A mere seventy years ago I should have been permitted to describe my somewhat fitful slumbers, broken by dreams of frightful precipices down which I would, at frequent intervals, hurtle headlong; my awakening at the specified hour was an event not to be passed over without comment; the departure alone was good news value to the extent of a page—with the provisions and strong waters to describe, a venerable quadruped to provide subject for humour, and then, perhaps, just a trace of anxiety lest there should be left out, in the excitement, the japanned tin vasculum! And shortly I should be able to enthuse over the first view of our mountain, piercing the sky. Those were the days—“when earth was 'nigher heaven than now!”

This is but a very plain tale from the hills. The Meet was favoured with glorious weather and, on the first day, the majority of those present were attracted to Glen Affric and Mam Sodhail. By virtue of rising late, the historian saw from an advantageous position in the rear the mists gradually unfold on Sgùrr na Làpaich—a worthy sight; and reaping the reward of patience under insult, discerned from afar that the only worm those early birds had caught was soft snow! It was an easy matter to gain the summit by a rocky rib laid at the easiest of angles and thence to Mam Sodhail by a long ridge with fine views to the westward and several hazards in the shape of early birds at their still uncompleted breakfasts. The view obtained from the summit of Mam Sodhail was very nearly perfect; the reader must lend his imagination, for in all that vast and imposing array of mountains I recognised but three ranges—the Coolin, Ben Nevis, and, I hope, the Cairngorms. And to describe it all, from the delicate blue of the snow shadows to the warmer blue of the distant Coolin, it is not in this pen to do. As elsewhere in Ross, the summit views are, on the occasional fine days, too sumptuous, too great a feast of mountain is provided; but at Easter this panorama of hills is seen at its best. Still farther west the sea lends variety to the views; there, too, you may find better climbing, sharper

and more complex ridges, but nowhere are the glens more magnificently beautiful.

The President and a large following descended by the south-west ridge; Misses Stewart, Duncan, and Pittendrigh and Dr Garrow went northwards over Càrn Eige and had a long walk back to Glen Affric; Beverley, in splendid isolation, came down the south-east ridge.

On the same day Messrs Parker, Sellar, and Douglas motored up the wilder and rougher road along Glen Cannich and accounted for the higher and more magnificent Sgùrr na Làpaich—"Pelion heaped upon Ossa and Olympus upon them both, its summit lost in the heavens." These were perhaps not the exact words used by Mr Parker; still, he gave me to understand that here was an ascent worth recording! But when I asked for incidents, he replied, "There were no incidents; it was a plain, common or garden ascent; we went up and we came down." Questioned about the view, he replied, "The view from the summit was indifferent; the Coolin were but dimly seen on the horizon; Clisham in Harris was not seen." Nothing about issuing from the gloomy trees and spectral wood, nothing about the grisly precipices of An Riabhachan. And the Press, in wanton generosity, once described him as a seasoned mountaineer! Miss Dugan was helpful, if charmingly modest, about her ascent of Beinn na Sparra, a difficult mountain—to find! And so Friday passed with no great ascents and no thrilling incidents to record, which gives the historian but a poor chance.

On Saturday, greater doings appeared to be on foot when the Palmer brothers made a rapid descent on the breakfast-room; as they left they revealed that they had just spilt a large quantity of water on their bedroom floor—immediately above! The President went to market and Parker left for an unknown destination. But things will out, and the historian will be pleased to give anyone interested in Parker's somewhat clandestine movements a private audition! It is believed that he later picked up Sellar and Douglas and visited Glen Strathfarrar, where more jokes were produced; but these, as Parker discovered, were very small beer and hardly worth recording. With the weather breaking, several parties were content to walk on lower ground, the Giusachan district and Glen Affric being sufficiently attractive. Two parties went to Benula Lodge, one proceeding to Sgùrr na Làpaich and the other to Beinn Fhionnlaidh, which, in spite of the misty conditions, appeared to be rather a fine hill from this side. Unfortunately, mist hid what might have otherwise been a good view of An Riabhachan and Sgùrr na Làpaich. Glen Cannich itself was well worth the visit, and the parties had quite an enjoyable day. The more recent arrivals had been on Mam Sodhail; MacHardy and Beverley had repeated this climb, which is probably a reflection on the rather inaccessible nature of this mountain district. Hotels are so placed that a car is essential for any climbing at all, and there was an evident disinclination to wander far afield in conditions which might not repay the effort of a big day.

Permission to motor over the glen roads, which are largely private, was greatly appreciated.

If incident on the hill was meagre, there was no lack of event in the hotel. We have heard of entertainers warming to their task, but Bothwell's effort in the smoke-room resulted in a minor conflagration in which the hotel bellows just escaped destruction. Among other events of interest, it was noted that Garrow had secured temporary quarters in the hotel in a wardrobe, and that the younger Palmer had reached Vol. X. of the "History of the Great War"! Sunday, too, started eventfully with a round-the-houses race, in which Mrs Hendry (Mercedes Benz) and Parker (Austin Saloon) were the only protagonists. The Austin did really well to finish level with the Mercedes (handicapped by two long stops), but was disqualified for taking the course in the wrong direction. Some few members left for home—Mr and Mrs Angus and Misses Duncan and Pittendrigh—and the others sat in the hotel with apparently little intention of leaving the fire. It was with relief, therefore, that we saw news in the making with the departure of Messrs Dugan and Bothwell and Misses Dugan and Bothwell for Glen Cannich. The party started in very poor weather conditions, but as the day improved they embarked on the ascent of Sgùrr na Làpaich and were repaid with fine views, scarcely less extensive than Friday's. There appear to have been no other ascents made, and the historian's task grows harder; it would seem that we become less energetic in the pursuit of Munroes and that our prowess on the hills compares unfavourably with past records. It is known that two members once did 27 map miles and 8,000 feet of climbing at the head of Loch Monar between 8 A.M. and midnight; the same party did practically all the peaks in the Mam Sodhail group in a day. The President sends me a note which may explain why we accomplish less than our predecessors. It is to the effect that Mrs Hendry and the Palmers climbed Sgùrr na Làpaich from Benula, and continues: "On the way up several woolly caterpillars were overtaken! Near the summit a small piece of tin-foil was discovered lying on the snow. There being no handy receptacles for litter, this was, at great inconvenience to the party, carefully carried to the base and restored to the original owner." But Miss Stewart and Garrow gave the moderns a lift by collecting Sgùrr nan Ceathreamhain, Stob Coire nan Dearcag, An Socach and one of the western peaks of Mam Sodhail, the most inaccessible group in the district. Yunnie and Beverley left for Ben Nevis, which they climbed by the path. They descended part of the North-East Buttress and climbed back by a gully somewhere in Coire Leas, afterwards descending to the head of Glen Nevis.

On Tuesday, Tomich returned to normal; on the whole the weather was good, not a few peaks were climbed, and the Meet was generally regarded as a splendid success.

On Wednesday, Parker picked up the tail of the S.M.C. Meet at Kinlochewe and climbed Slioch.

## MAY HOLIDAY EXCURSION—BEINN A' BHUIRD.

*Present* :—W. Malcolm (President), Messrs A. R. Martin, H. C. Dugan, I. F. Cameron, J. Milne, C. M. Clow, H. D. Welsh, J. Angus, Mrs Angus, Misses Mitchell, Archibald, Murray, Wiseley, and Christie. Guests :—Messrs L. A. Whelan, H. Campbell, G. McDonald, Mr and Mrs Mitchell, and Misses Morrice and Malcolm.

The majority of the party left town by bus at 7.45 A.M., arriving at Invercauld House about 10 A.M. Walking via Glen Slugain the south top was reached about 2.15 P.M. As an indication of the loyalty of the Club and in celebration of the King's Jubilee, a Union Jack was hoisted on the cairn by Mr Dugan. The King's health was then drunk in what liquid was available, and the company sang the National Anthem. The weather was perfect and very fine views were obtained, especially of the Cairngorm group. There was very little snow on the top plateau, but large fields lay in the hollows and around the precipices.

About an hour was spent on the summit and then the return made to Invercauld, which was reached about 6.45 P.M. A hearty meal was enjoyed at our old friend the Alexandra at Ballater, and Aberdeen was reached shortly after 10 P.M. Special thanks are due to the proprietor of the Invercauld estates for the facilities he granted the Club to enable them to approach the hill.—W. M.

## BEINN A' BHUIRD BY CLAIS FHEARNAIG.

THE popular approach to Beinn a' Bhùird via Glen Slugain has surely attained its popularity for the most obscure reasons. After several visits to the mountain they remain elusive; the views are in no way superior and the path, although good, seems, like the maiden's song, to have no ending. During the season, permission to use this route may not be forthcoming, and in winter the long tramp along the glen practically puts Beinn a' Bhùird out of bounds; although in winter conditions the corries are a particularly fine sight. From Invercauld House to the south top is 7 miles, with 2885 feet to climb. This gives a seven hours' day, and, allowing some eight hours of daylight in winter, leaves little time for difficult snow climbing or for visits to the more distant corries.

Apart from this objection, the writer has no quarrel with the glen, which is really quite attractive. But a shorter though much less used route is available, and is mentioned in the "S.M.C. Guide," where it receives less recognition than the Glen Slugain approach. Starting at the water splash on the road to Derry Lodge (the burn is unnamed on the O.S. map), a rough and, at first, barely discernible path follows the right branch of the burn to Clais Fhearnaig. This narrow gorge has one or two small lochans and a larger artificial one, but is not particularly striking. Once into the Quoich, however, the old pines



make a magnificent foreground; Beinna' Bhùird is not seen to advantage, but, under snow, looks massive enough. The disappointing aspect of the mountain is compensated for by the ease of approach; the path, not marked on the O.S. map, is quite good, although at two points it is easy to lose it. Once the Quoich valley is reached, the south top is easily accessible over Bruach Mhor, and the corries, reached by contouring, could well become the venue of one, at least, of the winter excursions. The south top is 4 miles from the starting-point as compared with 7 miles from Invercauld; there is also a saving of 300 to 400 feet!

The round of Clais Fhearnaig and Glen Quoich—to and from Inverey—is a pleasant and interesting walk for an off day.

#### RAEBURN'S GULLY: FIRST PITCH.

OCTOBER 8, 1934, was fine after several days of heavy rain, as a result of which the gully was not in the best condition. Indeed, the elder Aitken longed for his trout rod! The action of frost and water appear to be seriously affecting the stability of the first pitch, which, since 1928, has slipped a foot or two. Still, the boulders appeared to be well enough jammed; on this occasion, however, our party experienced a nasty moment or two when the top boulder commenced to slide valleywards with the leader aboard. The situation was rendered much more serious by the presence of a third man, who had absolutely no cover. Fortunately, the boulder stopped on the brink, but still poised on the route of ascent. With the aid of exceptional reach, the second and third men were able to climb the pitch on the right, thereby avoiding the boulder. In the interest of future climbers, the boulder was removed. It is believed that some members of the Dundee Grampian Club made the ascent the following week. The boulders which remain appear to be also on the move; it will be interesting to see what happens should they, too, go. In that event the pitch may well be a very formidable one.—W. A. E.