

THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY

EDWARD W. WATT.

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EDITED BY
EDWARD W. WATT

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1931

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- 1929 C. R. Ward, Oberland, Bucklesham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.
- 1925 Miss Ruth Warren, 41 Murrayfield Gardens, Edinburgh.
- 1928 John A. F. Watson, 1 Arundel Gardens, Kensington Park Road, London, W.11.
- 1929 J. P. Watson, W.S., 32 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh.
- 1912 Edward W. Watt, M.A., Glenburnie Park, Rubislaw Den North, Aberdeen.

- 1929 E. W. Murray Watt, Glenburnie Park, Rubislaw Den North, Aberdeen.
 1929 George T. Robertson Watt, 10 Moray Place, Aberdeen.
 1920 James Watt, Chief Valuer for Scotland, 9 Wemyss Place, Edinburgh.
 1929 Miss Marjorie M. Watt, Glenburnie Park, Rubislaw Den North, Aberdeen.
 1911 Theodore Watt, M.A., 10 Moray Place, Aberdeen.
 1908 Hugh D. Welsh, 159 Forest Avenue, Aberdeen.
 1920 A. M. M. Williamson, M.A., LL.B., Advocate, 5 North Charlotte Street, Edinburgh.
 1925 C. W. Williamson, B.A., C.A., 98 Queen's Road, Aberdeen.
 1925 G. A. Williamson, B.L., Advocate, 74 Queen's Road, Aberdeen.
 1926 R. B. Williamson, M.A., LL.B., Advocate, 22 Rubislaw Den South, Aberdeen.
 1911 A. Morice Wilson, M.A., LL.B., Advocate, Beechwood, Rubislaw Den South, Aberdeen.
 1920 Mrs. E. T. R. Wilson, 9 Albert Street, Aberdeen.
 1920 Gordon Wilson, 9 Albert Street, Aberdeen.
 1932 Norman J. Wilson, M.A., LL.B., Advocate, 8 King's Gate, Aberdeen.
 1926 William Wilson, LL.B., Advocate, Professor of Public Law in the University of Edinburgh, 38 Moray Place, Edinburgh.
 1924 Alfred Wright, M.A., 52 Queen's Road, Aberdeen.
 1931 Miss Mina Yeaman, 13 Blackness Avenue, Dundee.
 1931 Robert C. Yunnie, The Ridge, Pitfodels.

LIFE MEMBERS.

- 1911 Miss Mary Angus, Immeriach, Blackness Road, Dundee.
 * John Clarke, M.A., 7 The Chanonry, Old Aberdeen.
 1890 James Conner, 58 Gladstone Place, Aberdeen.
 1897 Edred M. Corner, M.C., F.R.C.S., Woodlands Park, Great Missenden, Bucks, England.
 1893 Alexander Esslemont, 30 King Street, Aberdeen.
 1928 Mrs. A. E. Esslemont, M.A., LL.B., 114 Kenton Lane, Kenton, Middlesex.
 1896 Mrs. Mary Gillies, 375 Great Western Road, Aberdeen.
 * Thomas R. Gillies, Advocate, 14 Golden Square, Aberdeen.
 1920 James Cooper Lyon, Freshfield, West Cults, Aberdeen.
 * Alex. Inkson McConnochie, F.Z.S., C.A., 109 Sutherland Avenue, Maida Hill, London, W.9.
 1897 George Mackenzie, Advocate, 77 Crown Street, Aberdeen.
 1911 The Rt. Hon. Lord Macmillan, P.C., LL.D., 44 Grosvenor Road, Westminster, London, S.W.1.
 1911 William Malcolm, 150 Bon-Accord Street, Aberdeen.
 * Walter A. Smith, Waverley House, 35 Royal Terrace, Edinburgh.
 1926 G. Roy Symmers, B.Sc.(Eng.), 26 Wentworth Road, York.
 1892 Robert M. Williamson, M.A., LL.B., Advocate, Investment House, Union Row, Aberdeen.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS.

- 1918 Mrs. William Garden, 4 Rubislaw Terrace, Aberdeen.
 1917 Mrs. J. R. Levack, 10 Golden Square, Aberdeen.
 1927 Ian C. Simpson, West Bungalow, Cults.

RULES.

(Adopted 15th November, 1921.)

(Abridged.)

I.—The Club shall be called “**The Cairngorm Club,**” and shall have its headquarters in Aberdeen.

II.—The objects of the Club shall be—(1) To encourage mountain climbing in Scotland, with special reference to the Cairngorm group of mountains; (2) to procure and impart scientific, topographical, and historical information about the Scottish mountains, their superficial physical features, minerals, rocks, plants, animals, meteorology, ancient and modern public routes, giving access to and across them, and the meaning of their local place-names, literature, and legendary or folk-lore; (3) to consider the right of access to Scottish mountains, and to adopt such measures in regard thereto as the Club may deem advisable; and (4) to issue a Journal or such other publications as may be considered advantageous to the Club.

V.—Every candidate for election as an Ordinary Member shall be proposed by one member and seconded by another member, both having personal knowledge of him, and shall supply, for the information of the Committee, a list of his Scottish and other ascents, stating the month and the year in which each ascent was made, or a statement of his contributions to science, art, or literature in connection with Scottish mountains. Such list, signed by the candidate and by the two members acting as proposer and seconder, will be considered at the next meeting of the Committee; and if, in the opinion of the Committee, the qualifications be deemed sufficient, the candidate shall thereupon be admitted a member. Members of the Alpine Club and of the Scottish Mountaineering Club shall be eligible without supplying such a list.

IX.—Entrance fee, 7/6.

X.—Annual subscription, 7/6. Provision for commuting the subscriptions.

XI.—Associate member's subscription, 5/- annually.

XV.—Office-bearers:—a President, two Vice-Presidents, an Honorary Secretary, an Honorary Treasurer (or an Honorary Secretary and Treasurer), and an Honorary Editor.

XVI.—Committee of 9 members.

XVII.—Office-bearers and members of Committee to hold office for one year, but eligible for re-election. President and Vice-Presidents not to hold office for more than three consecutive years. The three senior members of Committee ineligible for re-election for one year.

XXIV.—The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held in Aberdeen on the last Saturday of November of each year for the transaction of the following business—(1) To receive the Honorary Treasurer's accounts for the year; (2) to elect the Honorary President, Office-bearers, and Committee for the year; (3) to fix the Meets and Excursions for the following year; and (4) to transact any other competent business.

XXIX.—The Chair, whether at a General Meeting or at a Meeting of Committee, shall be taken by the President of the Club, or in his absence by one of the Vice-Presidents. In the absence of the President and Vice-Presidents, the Meeting shall elect a Chairman from among the members present. The Chairman, whether at a General Meeting or at a Meeting of the Committee, shall, in the case of an equality of votes, have a second or casting vote.

XXX.—At least seven clear days before either the Annual General Meeting or any Special General Meeting, the Hon. Secretary shall post to every member of the Club a notice of the time and place of such meeting and of the business to be transacted.

XXXII.—Save in exceptional circumstances, of which the Committee shall be the sole judges, a Club Dinner shall be arranged for in Aberdeen in each year immediately after the Annual General Meeting.

XXXIII.—The Committee are empowered to entertain three guests at the Annual Dinner in the name of the Club.

XXXIV.—Any member shall be at liberty to introduce guests at his own expense, subject always to such regulations as may from time to time be made by the Committee.



May 24 1928

MOUNT ARROWSMITH, VANCOUVER ISLAND, B.C.—THE SUMMIT RIDGE.

J. A. Parker

THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

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No. 67.

MOUNT ARROWSMITH, VANCOUVER ISLAND,
B.C.

By J. A. PARKER.

IN the course of my wanderings up the west coast of North America from San Francisco to Skagway, in Alaska, I found myself in Vancouver, B.C., with a fortnight to spare. Casting about in a C.P.R. office for a tempting lure I chanced to pick up a modest little "folder" advertising the charms of the Châlet on Cameron Lake in Vancouver Island, and so to speak just on the other side of the street, the Strait of Georgia. The said folder contained these fatal words, "Come and explore Mount Arrowsmith, a little climb of 5976 feet; really not strenuous." Needless to say, I seized the bait greedily and crossed over the next day.

Cameron Lake I found to be a beautiful sheet of water set deep in the hills, all of which are densely covered with primeval forest. The railway runs along the north shore of the Lake, and the Châlet is a cosy little hotel erected by the C.P.R. in a delightful situation at its eastern end. In spite of Mount Arrowsmith being only "a little climb" I considered that a companion was advisable, even although I had been told in Vancouver that there was a good trail all the way up; and very fortunately a Mr. Stove, who is employed on the railway, offered to go up with me on

Sunday, the 20th May, the only condition he made being that we should start not later than five o'clock in the morning, which looked rather ominous for a climb that was "not strenuous."

And so at 4.55 a.m. on a perfect morning we sallied forth from the Châlet and hit the Arrowsmith Trail. On packing up we had found that three lunches had been set out ; one for each of us and one (some choice bones) for the hotel dog in case we wished to take him with us. We took all three lunches but left the spaniel at home. The forest is, of course, for all practical purposes simply impenetrable, but the trail through it is quite good and led us up easily through magnificent forest scenery for thousands and thousands of feet. At about 3500 feet patches of snow began to appear among the trees, and then finally as we neared the timber line the snow became continuous and we said good-bye to the trail. The snow was fairly firm and we made good progress towards the north summit, called the Hump, which was now well in view. The final ascent of this involved much step kicking up steep snow and at 9.10 a.m. we reached the top (c. 5250 ft.). This is the usual end of the ascent of Mount Arrowsmith and it commands a very fine view.

We, however, found that we were standing on the north arm of a rugged crest which circles round the western end of a profound valley in front of us, and on the far side of which rose the highest tops of the mountain. Halting only to take a photo. of the summit we pushed off along the ridge. The first part was a rather unwelcome drop of about 500 feet down a very steep rock-face which demanded care ; but was not difficult as the rock was sound and there were abundant holds. Then, after a more or less level bit, we had to tackle a steep buttress which led up to the final crest of the mountain by way of a very steep snow slope, a steep snow arête, and, finally, some very steep rocks. Quite an interesting little bit of climbing and we got on to the top of the west end of the crest

at 10.35, having thus been on the move for fully five and a half hours without any rests. By descending a little to the south we found water and wood and soon had a good fire and a billy of piping hot tea. While we were thus having our first lunch I asked Mr. Stove, "what about the bones that were intended for the dog," and he replied laconically, "I am the dog." The bones had been stripped.

Lunch over we faced the next problem. We were a short way down the south face of the final crest of the mountain which led eastwards for about three-quarters of a mile to a snow peak, just to the south of which, and cut off from it by a small snow saddle, was a big knob of rock which was about 50 feet higher and was the actual summit. The side of this knob facing us was manifestly impossible, and the left hand profile, very deep snow leading up to steeper and at one place overhanging rock, did not look at all inviting, Mr. Stove now said that there was an easy way up just behind the skyline, and that while I went over and did the climb he would wait and watch me doing it. Very thoughtful and considerate on his part.

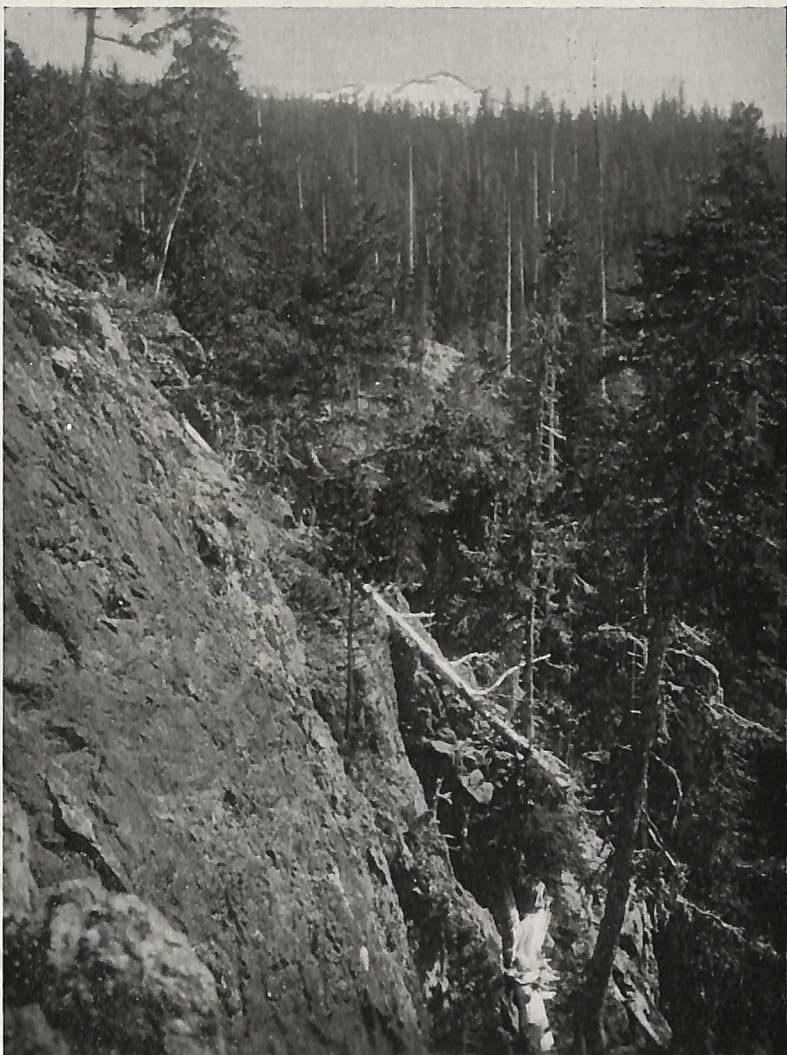
However off I went alone. The rock traverse across the south face of the mountain, to avoid two false tops, was very exposed in places, but I soon got across it and on to the actual ridge along which it was a simple walk on snow to the snow summit. This was right opposite the business side of the knob which now received my closest attention. In the first place, the "easy way up round the back" was a very forbidding precipice, and the only possible route was up the profile we had seen from our luncheon place. The lower part was a sharp snow arête butting up against some very steep and in places overhanging rock. A thin fixed rope hung down the face of the rock, and as it in places hung clear it was evident that the rope would require to be depended on a good deal. It was manifestly not a place to be tested, for the first time after the winter, by a solitary climber. So I had just to be satisfied

with the snow summit and the view from it, fortunately as afterwards transpired.

The view was magnificent, as Mount Arrowsmith is the highest mountain in this part of the Island, and the day was superb with perfect visibility. The features were the snow-clad mountains in the north end of the Island, and, across the Strait of Georgia, the peaks of the Cascade and Coast Ranges running from Mount Baker in the south to as far north as the eye could reach. And to the west a little bit of the Pacific. A glance at a map of British Columbia will show what this means.

Returning I reached Mr. Stove in due course, and on sitting down beside him for a few minutes I noticed that the shaft of my ice axe was cracked right across about nine inches from the head! And with a very slight pressure it broke in two, which caused me furiously to think what might have happened had I tackled the final summit. There must have been an internal flaw in the shaft for a long time as dry rot was visible; but it could only have come to the surface a few minutes before I rejoined my companion. The axe was bought in 1894, and was not worn to any extent at the part of the shaft which broke. It had not been subjected to any rough use on Arrowsmith, but may have been strained in coming from Aberdeen to Victoria, B.C., by Parcel Express. The moral of course is that an old axe should be very carefully examined and tested, with special attention to the shaft, before being used.

Mr. Stove very decently let me use his axe for the descent while he used the shaft of mine as a stick. We had no difficulty, as the rock simply demanded care, and the steep snow afforded us many glissades. The Hump was passed over at 2.30 and, descending rapidly into the trees, we reached a rest shack about 3.15. Here we lit a fire and brewed a big billy of tea, and after a good meal we cleaned up the place, which it badly needed. The shack belongs, of course, to the



May 24, 1928

J. A. Parker

ON MOUNT ARROWSMITH, VANCOUVER ISLAND, B.C.—THE FOREST,



May, 1928

CAMERON LAKE CHALET.

I. A. Parker

C.P.R. and I presume that my companion considered that as a matter of duty he was bound to tidy it up. Our subsequent long descent by the trail through the forest was very fine indeed and we reached the Châlet at 6.55 p.m. well pleased with our long day of fourteen hours. The early start had been justified.

Four days later I went up the mountain alone as far as the Hump, to get photographs, and in the descent through the upper forest had just a little trouble in hitting the trail, (and the right valley!) However I luckily got it. Had I not done so it might have meant an uncomfortable night out in the primeval forest with bears and cougars for companions!

[NOTES ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS.]

Mount Arrowsmith : The Summit Ridge.—This view was taken from the North Summit (the Hump) looking south. The highest point is obvious, and the snow summit which was reached is just in front of it. The steep snow and rock buttress which we climbed is seen leading up to the west end of the Summit Ridge, just to the right of the two false tops.

On Mount Arrowsmith : the Forest.—The view was taken from near the Trail at about 3000 feet, looking up to the north summit which is much foreshortened as it lies a long way back. The view gives some idea of the going one would be up against were the Trail to be lost.

The Châlet, Cameron Lake.—The view was taken looking west and shows a portion of the Lake through the trees.

WITH A ROPE ON THE CRAGS OF LOCHNAGAR

BY N. BRUCE AND G. ROY SYMMERS.

I.—RAEBURN'S GULLY.

EVERYTHING was in favour of a successful ascent of Raeburn's Gully on August 5, 1928. The weather had been settled for a considerable period. The day was fine and not too hot, and there was no wind to speak of. Climbing conditions were ideal except for water, which in several places was unavoidable. Symmers had already made two attempts, but it was my first essay at anything bigger than the tors on Clachnaben and Ben Rinnes. We reached Allt-na-giubhsaich by 9 a.m. on a motor bicycle. By 10.30 we were at the foot of the screes and by eleven we had started up our climb.

The gully was entered above its actual commencement by a traverse out to the right, on the white quartz intrusion mentioned by Symmers in an earlier article, and then back over some rather unreliable rock into the gully. The object of this was to avoid certain slabs at the foot of the gully, which had given a former party no little trouble in surmounting. Progress was rapid up to the foot of the pitches, which commence some 300 feet from the start of the course. The route follows the bed of the gully, which is carved in solid rock. The climbing was fairly easy, but disagreeable because of the amount of water present. Looking up-

wards from the bend in the gully, it seemed to be completely blocked by a series of chokestones, piled high one above the other—a rather disconcerting obstacle for a beginner as they appeared to be so delicately poised. However, in this case appearances were quite deceptive. Upon investigation this barrier resolved itself into three distinct steps. The first pitch, some thirty-five feet in height, required some negotiation at the start and at the finish. The next one, about fifteen feet or so, was easily surmounted by a traverse to the left. The final pitch, which is the most interesting, and which has marked the limit of the ascent of the gully on some former occasions, is in the form of a double cave pitch. The upper one is reached by climbing the left wall and traversing back to the right. Wedged in this cramped recess we rested and revelled in the view. The overhanging boulder, which forms the roof of the cave, was overcome by using a threaded rope and a “stirrup” made from a length of thin rope doubled and threaded behind the chokestone. This boulder required two tries before it was conquered, and provided the thrill of the climb. Before I followed on, Symmers cleared away much loose stone and the going was greatly improved thereby. The next 150 feet was “after” the Black Spout, and the rope became a nuisance. About a hundred feet from the top were two uncomfortable pitches formed by masses of rock wedged in a narrow part of the gully. The rock was rotten and covered with slimy green moss, but by keeping to the left we avoided the worst of the difficulties, getting very grimy in the process. Above this the gully divided into three. The left branch looked as if it might go easily but the rocks looked loose. There should be plenty of hard work for those who like it in the right hand branch. Straight ahead, the final obstacle, about ten feet high, was climbed on the left on some rather unobstrusive holds. The exit on to the plateau is a gravel shoot set at a decidedly slippery angle, on which I thought Symmers was quite

unnecessarily slow. I had to crawl up ignominiously "a quatre pattes."

It is interesting to note that we saw no sign of the through-route which the late H. Raeburn mentions in his description of the climb.

II.—THE WEST GULLY.

Emboldened by our success in Raeburn's Gully the previous week, the West Gully was tackled enthusiastically if somewhat less hopefully. It was raining hard when we left Ballater by car for the Spital of Glen Muick. Crossing the footbridge, which was then undergoing reconstruction, we reached Allt-na-giubhsaich about 9 a.m., and the foot of the Black Spout about 10.30. It rained hard all the way to the col. At this point the weather cleared a little but the cliffs were veiled in mist, and it seemed as if we might have some difficulty in deciding where to attack the gully.

At the foot of the Red Spout we passed a veritable plumber's paradise. Water gushed from holes in the turf, for all the world like a burst water-main. By the time we reached the cliffs above on our way home, the flow had ceased as if the tap had been turned off. We examined these holes a fortnight later and found them to be almost three feet deep above a subterranean burn.

By the time we reached the screes to the left of the gully, the sun had dissipated the mists and we had the choice of three routes. The right-hand one was obviously out of the question. A regular waterfall was tumbling down it. The left-hand one was not much better, and I doubt if the middle route, which we chose, was any drier than the others. Scrambling up the steep vegetable slopes with some difficulty and considerable discomfort, we reached a heathery ledge, about two hundred feet above the screes, and traversed to the right to enter the real foot of the gully. The vegetation was very thick and



August, 1928

G. Roy Symmers

THE CENTRAL BUTTRESS LOCHNAGAR.

[The dotted lines indicate the routes followed. On the right, ending in a cross, is the abandoned course up the shallow gully. On the left, starting at the top of the broad gully referred to, is the route followed to the summit of the buttress.]

countless Alpine plants flourished luxuriantly without much fear of disturbance. The first section of the gully was the most disagreeable part of the climb. It consisted of rotten slabby rock set at a steep angle with grass and moss and any amount of water. These conditions continued until, at about half the height of the gully, the first pitch was encountered. This was a slab of rock about seven feet high, which formed the door-step to a small cave under an overhanging choke-stone. The upper edge of the slab was sharp and presented no difficulty—not so the choke-stone. It was overcome by climbing out to the right and then traversing back to the left, above the overhang, on rather small holds. Above it the gully branched on either side. The left branch was well defined and rather steep, but the right one was not so distinct. Here we rested and hoped that the sun, which slanted down the left branch, would mitigate the general dampness. So far the climb had been very, very wet, especially the cave below. Directly above us, the gully narrowed considerably and a huge cave-pitch seemed to hint that the left-hand branch might have to be tried. As a further deterrent, the cave was a regular shower-bath. It must have been at this point that Raeburn made use of a threaded rope. We decided to tackle a narrow crack in the perpendicular right wall instead. With the help of a shoulder from Symmers, I reached a comfortable hand-hold and so on to the platform above, he following on the rope. The wall above, about twenty feet high, was climbed with some difficulty, much moss and dirt having to be cleared away before holds could be discovered. Here again the gully had two exits. The left branch seemed the less formidable, but as it was a variation we decided to carry on straight ahead. The gully now became very narrow and steep, and above a short pitch of rotten rock, we reached a cave below a mass of boulders, piled above the choke-stone in the grandest confusion, forming an absolutely perpendicular pitch about twenty

feet high. This provided a most amusing through-route. At the top of the cave we discovered a small window, and through this Symmers squeezed himself—his length of limb at this point a serious disadvantage. Puffing and blowing and muttering darkly to himself, he turned and twisted, kicking down stones and gravel on my defenceless head as I sat in an unavoidable pool of water, hoping that all these gymnastics would not bring down a certain unpleasant looking boulder on my toes. When my turn came, I too learned how hard and unyielding a rock can be. Another twenty feet of easy scrambling and we were out on the top and into the sun again.

III.—FAILURE.

After two glorious conquests earlier in the month, we had both admittedly a bad attack of "swollen head." So far as rock-climbing was concerned we were certainly "it" ! Our usual luck in striking fine weather held good, so that 11 a.m. on the 26th found us basking on the knoll of rocks immediately below our objective, the Central Buttress in the north-east corrie of Loch-nagar.

The project we had in hand was to try and force a route up a shallow gully on the right face of the buttress. From our resting-place this groove appeared to run almost perpendicularly up to the sky-line, giving out on the nose of the ridge somewhat more than half-way up. Besides the fact that the gully looked rough and the rock reliable, it gave very little else in the way of encouragement.

As we approached up the scree, its unholy aspect changed; it smiled down on us; what appeared hopeless from down below, now took on a semblance of simplicity. Lured on by this artifice, we, blind and innocent, full of pride, set forth to conquer. But after taking out fifty feet of rope, I began to feel a little uneasy. Things were more difficult than they

looked. Holds which from below seemed plentiful in their profusion had disappeared, leaving smooth, rounded granite slabs in their stead. Nor did matters improve! Above the little platform on which we were standing, a narrow chimney rose up to the skyline. Its steepness may be gauged from the fact that the continuation of the gully above could not be seen beyond its overhanging lip. Twenty feet of the sensational right wall was climbed but had to be given up. This left the chimney as the only alternative. Up it we had to go, or else return. Almost forty feet of continuous back and knee work landed us on a second platform. The gully above this widened considerably and the angle became less severe although still over 60°. An attempt some thirty feet up the centre was completed by an ignominious return. The left wall was next tried, and progress made to a small shelf which I had to vacate before Miss Bruce could take possession. An exposed, upward traverse on moss covered holds, allowed a second small ledge to be gained. Here a sharp spike of rock formed an excellent belay, round which the rope was hurriedly passed. A further short traverse, round an outstanding spur of rotten rock, landed me back in the centre of the gully. From this position no further progress could be made, and since there seemed every possibility of a rapid descent in the near future, I decided that we had had enough.

"Up, up," is one story, "down, down," another! The two hundred feet to the scree below looked very, very steep. To add to our discomfort, far below us, down near the loch, some unthinking idiots yelled to each other, making the corrie resound with the clamour of their cries, and the thunder of boulders which they from time to time dislodged down the slope. However, all things come to an end, and after having on two sections to use a doubled rope for the safety of the last man, we at length descended to the screes. It was with feelings of humble gratitude that we reached

the bottom of the gully. We had gone up full of vanity in our own prowess, we came down, gently down, back to earth.

Rather tired and somewhat disheartened by our ill-success, I suggested going to the top via the Black Spout. This time the proposal met with stern disapproval, at which I handed in my resignation. Miss Bruce now took the lead and went confidently up a broad gully some distance to the left of our abandoned course. This terminated on the main ridge of the buttress. The terraced left face was then climbed, until we could traverse across back on to the nose above a steep wall of rock. From this point a very distinct rib was followed up to a couple of small pinnacles. Below us on the right we obtained now and again a thrilling glimpse into the gully which had defeated us. The finish to the climb presented no difficulty and we moved up the last portion together, the rope being of little or no assistance.

We had now to find someone who could tell us the time, since neither of us had a watch. Imagine our surprise when the first person we met informed us that it was past five. We had been scrambling on the cliffs for six hours! It had been for my companion a day of success, for myself one of abject failure.

THE CAIRNGORMS.*

THE S.M.C. GUIDE.

Reviewed by Alexander Inkson McConnochie, F.Z.S.

THIS is a wonderful volume of over 200 pages, with no fewer than fifty-seven panoramas, photogravures, diagrams and map. The illustrations are as good as they are numerous. The book is compiled on a well-defined plan, and has manifestly entailed much research and labour on the part of the author. It was a very happy thought to make the Cairngorms the central figure in the plan while including the hills and mountains of the north-east of Scotland; these are described in regular order according to their position. Paper and printing are both good; altogether the S.M.C. is to be congratulated on this most important addition to their series of Guides, as well as on their selection of such a competent author. I found the work entrancing from the first to the last page. The style of writing will appeal to others than mere hillmen; facts are clothed in language which compels the reader to go on to the last page. Strict accuracy is a matter of the greatest importance in such a work; and, as in duty bound, I looked for errors and omissions but found none. As one of the very few original members of the Cairngorm Club I feel a certain pride in handling this work on the Cairngorms. I may be forgiven for recalling that

* THE CAIRNGORMS, by Mr. Henry Alexander. Published by the Scottish Mountaineering Club, Edinburgh. Paper, 7/6; cloth, 10/-

after breakfast at the Shelter Stone, on the morning after Queen Victoria's Jubilee, six enthusiasts stood by the head of Loch Avon and had the courage to found the Cairngorm Club. I am the only survivor of these daring men, but all of us lived long enough to see the Club pass on from strength to strength.

Writing about mountains is often enough monotonous work, but every reader will find "The Cairngorms" fascinating. Therein the rock-climber is not forgotten, and ski-ers are told where the best sport in Scotland is to be found. No trouble seems to have been spared in bringing together references to all who have contributed in any way by their writings to a knowledge of the huge group of mountains between Spey and Dee as well as of the surrounding minor heights. The author makes no extravagant claims for climbers; sportsmen are allowed to have certain rights. Writing of the ascent of Ben Macdhui it is stated that "in the shooting season it is courteous to avoid the Luibeg"; the same might be said of Glen Geusachan, the sanctuary of Mar forest.

There is just one sentence to which I should take exception; it is the last complete sentence of page 85. That legend was copied into Macdonald's "Place-names of West Aberdeenshire", not to mention other publications. I have the best of reasons for now stating that there is no foundation for the so-called legend.

With regard to the reference to the Shelter Stone at page 126, I may add that the "series of articles, unsigned," was written by me in 1886.

Most of us who have made it their pleasure to explore thoroughly the Cairngorm mountains have ideas on the subject of the grandest scenes among them. Let us take the mountains themselves first; Mr. Alexander says—

Cairn Toul is the finest of the Cairngorm summits. In the view of the range from Braemar it is the most commanding object, and seen nearer at hand from the Lairig path it forms a lovely peak, with

long and very steep ridges running straight up from the Dee and with a tiny hanging corrie nestling just below the summit.

Concerning Braeriach—

If Braeriach be disappointing as a mountain because of the lack of a single well-defined peak such as Cairn Toul possesses, this is compensated for by the remarkable number and variety of its corries. A mere ascent to the highest point is not enough to give an adequate idea of Braeriach ; the mountain is one to be wandered over, and, when so explored on a long summer's day or taken in sections on different excursions, it becomes strangely interesting and impressive.

I quite agree with him.

As for the walk between Ben Macdhui and Cairngorm he writes—

This high-level walk of 4 miles ($1\frac{3}{4}$ to 2 hours) requires comparatively little exertion as the going is good for almost the whole distance, and, though various ups and downs occur, no great loss of height is involved as the route nowhere falls beneath 3600 ft.

The walk from Cairn Toul to Braeriach he describes more eloquently—

The circuit of the Garbh Choire between Cairn Toul and Braeriach, in whichever direction it is done, affords perhaps the grandest high-level walk in the Cairngorms, and exceeds in interest even the corresponding round from Ben Macdhui to Cairngorm. The distance is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles and the time required is $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hours, but no one will seek to hurry it, for, if the weather be clear, he will pause often to gaze on the varying views which one after another present themselves, into and across the mighty amphitheatre of which Cairn Toul and Braeriach form the outer points.

No great loss of height is involved in the round, as the route at only one spot falls below the 3750 ft. contour, and it is at or over the 4000-ft. level for $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles. If the walker, instead of cutting across the hollow in which are the Wells of Dee, goes round the watershed over all the 4000-ft. tops of Braeriach, the total distance at or over the 4000-ft. level is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the longest walk at such an elevation to be enjoyed in this country.

Again I quite agree, only I should have liked a little more said on the charms of the stroll across the Feith Buidhe. I am deeply in love with both these high-level walks; certainly the circuit of the Garbh Choire is the grandest mountain walk in Scotland.

Finally, compare the loch scenery; Mr. Alexander writes of Loch Avon—

There is no easy way to Loch Avon or out of it, not even a path or a track, and this loneliness, added to the majesty of the surrounding heights, makes Loch Avon the grandest loch in the Scottish Highlands. Queen Victoria, who visited it on September 28, 1861, wrote: 'Nothing could be grander and wilder; the rocks are so grand and precipitous, and the snow on Ben Macdhui had such a fine effect'. Other descriptions, more eloquent but not a whit truer, might be quoted, but this is unnecessary.

His description of Loch Einich is brief but pointed—
Loch Einich . . . yields to Loch Avon alone in wildness and almost rivals it in sombre majesty.

These words, I venture to think, must have been carefully selected; comparing the one loch with the other the description could not be more accurate.



THE LARIG GHRU FROM CARN A' MHAIM.

I. M. Pittendrigh

THE INNER CIRCLE OF THE CAIRNGORMS.

BY JAMES L. DUNCAN, M.A.

WHEN Alexander of Macedon seated himself upon a stone to lament that there were no more worlds to conquer, he demonstrated the littleness of the field which lies upon to the soldier conqueror. For the mountaineer conqueror the situation is happily different. The world will always have its array of virgin peaks to challenge the courage of the adventurous, but even for the less adventurous, to whom the Himalayas and Rockies must remain more or less remote dreams, the mountains of Scotland offer a field which is not likely to satiate them. Even, to come nearer home, to one who is really in love with them the Cairngorms always offer a field for fresh conquest. Certainly I should feel very disappointed if after a month's holiday in Braemar, I were to come home without having struck something new. The particular new conquest last year, which afforded me most pleasure, was that of the "inner circle of the Cairngorms", in as much as it was the means of laying what had long been a mountaineering bogey.

I have a friend who, whenever he thinks I am unduly lethargic, deems it to be his duty to urge me to climb. His energy in this, although he no longer climbs himself, has not diminished a whit with the passage of the years. One of the proudest achievements of his own mountaineering days was the walk which he has christened "the inner circle of the Cairngorms", and for long he has urged that I should follow in his foot-

steps. I never used to discuss with him plans for mountaineering expeditions without his reverting to this topic. He always used to tell me that when I had done this particular walk then I might pride myself on being a walker almost equal in prowess to himself. Nor were hints lacking that I "funked" attempting it. Somehow something always seemed to prevent the challenge being taken up. Meanwhile, the longer the walk was delayed, the more numerous became his taunts on the subject, and the heavier did it weigh on my mountaineering conscience. Definitely I resolved that last summer the thing must be done. And now it has been. I went, I saw, and I conquered, and the recollection of a very precious day upon the hills has become one of my cherished mountaineering memories.

The route of my friend's walk proceeds from Derry Lodge to Carn a' Mhaim, thence to Ben Macdhuì, thence to Beinn Mheadhoin, thence to Beinn a' Chaorruinn, thence to Beinn Bhreac, and so back to Derry Lodge. It is possible of course to make an infinite variety of outer and inner circles on the Cairngorms and to boast of record distances covered in record times. Such is far from being my purpose. I do not claim that "the inner circle of the Cairngorms" is anything in the nature of a pedestrian feat. It involves a walk of some twenty miles and some six thousand feet of climbing, which may, (comparatively speaking) be a trifling day's work. It is a round, however, quite worthy of general notice on account of various intrinsic attractions, the interest of the climbs, the variety of the scenery, and of the views afforded into the inner recesses of the Cairngorms. These are attractions which the walk offers to every lover of the hills, while to me it has the great additional attraction that I can now meet my friend without a blush!

To essay this conquest a band of six heroes and one heroine left Braemar on the morning of August 26. We were lucky in our numbers and lucky in our day. Derry Lodge was reached at the propitious hour of nine

o'clock. The sun was up and shining. There was a merry sparkle in the waters of the Lui, while the hills had the far away look of enticement which generally heralds golden days upon them. Truly God in His heaven and all right in our world at any rate! We were not spared minor misfortunes however. One of the company had brought a bottle of the concoction called Kia-Ora, the cork of which had become unloosened in his knapsack, with the result that his sandwiches and other articles had become saturated with the liquid. Fortunately another member of the party who had come armed with liquid of a more potent nature had fastened his cork more carefully. Disaster there had been disaster indeed!

Having left our car we set forth for our first objective. That of course was the summit of Carn Mhaim, the journey thereto being made by the usual route along the path towards the Larig. Leaving this path half-a-mile beyond the bridge over the Lui, we proceeded to strike upwards. We were in no hurry and allowed ourselves abundance of time to enjoy the beauties of the morning. Halts were not infrequent when we could sit down, gaze into heaven, and cheerfully damn all whose opinions were not coincident with our own. The worries of life easily slide into small perspective on such occasions. If only the lotus could always be so easily grasped! The only real worry I had was the slow response of my pocket aneroid in recording the height which subjectively we appeared to have attained. I would gladly have dashed it against a rock when, on drawing it forth, perspiring the while, I found it recorded only a little over 2000 feet. We had to climb to 3300 feet and there is no means of cheating nature. However, *per ardua ad astra!* With much toil we resumed our way till presently we reached the top of Carn Mhaim at 11.15, our first summit of the day.

No top in the Cairngorms affords finer simultaneous views of Ben Macdhu, Cairn Toul and the wild grandeur of the Larig Pass flanked at the back by

the corries of Braeriach. All was clear this morning which was remarkable considering August's record and the fact that Jonah was with us. Jonah was the heroine, whom I have already mentioned. I give her this appellation because previous to this walk she had climbed Ben Macdhui thirteen times and twelve times she had climbed it in a mist. Only on the thirteenth time had it been clear, thus refuting one popular superstition, and also showing how much more energetic Jonah was than Bruce's spider.

From the top of Carn a' Mhaim we proceeded along the narrow ridge to Ben Macdhui, the high level route to that hill as it is called. Here we obtained an excellent view of an eagle which flew out from one of the gullies below us. It was rich brown in colour and soared off in magnificent style towards the Devil's Point. We proceeded up Ben Macdhui, over the boulders along the side of the Taillear's Burn, at the highest point of which we sat down to have lunch. At this stage catastrophe seemed to loom nigh. Clouds came stealing up from the south. The top of Cairn Toul was suddenly obscured. Then a brush of mist swept over us on Ben Macdhui. Of course we all blamed Jonah and wondered what would be the most acceptable way of offering her up as a sacrifice to propitiate Ferlah Mhor, the familiar spirit of the mountain! But this time the gods were kind. When we reached the cairn at 1.30 it was once more clear.

Despite the clearness in the immediate vicinity the distant horizon was hazy. It was clearly not a day for the enjoyment of long distant views, but, although that is certainly one of the rewards of one's toil, I have never regarded it as the main reason for climbing hills. It is impossible to describe one's spiritual reaction to mountaineering in exact scientific psychological terms, but, to talk vaguely and unscientifically, I regard it as soaking one's whole being in the spirit of the mountains. Hence even a climb in mist may be quite productive of satisfaction, even apart from the

opportunity it offers of enjoying beautiful vignettes through unexpected openings in the clouds.

The summit of Ben Macdhui we left at two o'clock. The inspirer of the journey had laid particular stress upon the fact that we had to proceed in a straight line from the top of Ben Macdhui to the top of Beinn Mheadhoin no easy deviation by the Ben Macdhui path being permitted. This is not strictly possible as a straight surface line between the two tops would go through the middle of Loch Etchachan. We approximated to perfection, however, by making in a straight line for the north end of the loch. The journey lies across boulders but is not steep until just above Loch Etchachan. Here the scene is one of supreme charm. "Stridency and clamour are forgotten in the ancient stillness." To-day the beautiful sheet of water lay before us still and serene, scarcely a ripple disturbing its profound blue. On all sides crags and cliffs kept their ancient sentinel watch.

We disported ourselves by loosening huge boulders and sending these spinning down the steep incline into the loch. For that amusement I offer no apology. It is one of the pleasantest ways imaginable of passing the time, and if the way be clear, unlike most sports, it hurts nobody. Those who criticise it as a silly amusement should listen to these wise words of Sir Leslie Stephen—"The amusement characteristic of the genuine mountaineer consists in rolling big stones down a cliff to dash themselves to pieces at its foot. No one who cannot contentedly spend hours in that fascinating, though simple, sport really loves a mountain." Ruskin also adds his tribute in one of his letters. He says, "I spent an hour pleasantly enough throwing stones with Couttet at the great icicles in the ravine. It had all the delight of being allowed to throw stones in the vastest glass and china shop that ever was established".

If time had allowed we might well have spent the whole afternoon beside Loch Etchachan and sauntered

down to Derry in the cool of the evening. But other tasks remained to be done. Before continuing on to Beinn Mheadhoin we saw at the far side of the loch two figures bathing. One of our company had field glasses through which he inspected them, but he would not allow the rest of us to do so as he said the spectacle was too Grecian !

The ascent of Beinn Mheadhoin from Loch Etchachan is a mere bagatelle compared with our previous ascents. The top plateau was quickly reached and here we were delighted with a second close view of an eagle. I always regret that I have never been close enough to an eagle to see its beak ! It is always the great expanse of its wings which takes the eye. The highest point of the highest tor was reached at four o'clock and here we sat down to debate how we were going to proceed. On the far side of the Larig an Laoigh Pass appeared Beinn a' Chaorruinn, our next objective, but before gaining the top of it we had to drop sixteen hundred feet into the Pass and then climb thirteen hundred feet on the other side. On paper that may not sound impressive, but, after what had already been a fair day's walk, it gives one pause to think. As a matter of fact thinking was idle, because, after one has made up one's mind to go down into the Larig an Laoigh from Beinn Mheadhoin, all roads there are equally rough. Great play is made by Bunyan of the hardships encountered by Christian in climbing Hill Difficulty, but the hardships, if there were any, of the descent are passed over in silence. Certainly no bodily exercise is more irksome than a prolonged steep descent over rough ground, as Bunyan might have known if he had not lived in a flat country. We now had a surfeit of this scrambling down as best as we could over rocks, grass, heather, bogs and burns. The valley at last being reached, we decided that it was time to have "tea". Accordingly a welcome half-hour was spent by the burn side before girding up our loins for the ascent of Beinn a' Chaorruinn. The climb here is sharp and precipitous, but we

decided that the best thing to do was to face it boldly. So without making any detours to lessen the incline, we "speeled" right up the face of the hill. It only took us about half-an-hour to reach the top, the cairn being reached at six o'clock. The evening was very fine. We had a sharp shower after leaving Beinn Mheadhoin and the level of the clouds was now considerably lower, deep banks of mist concealing the higher tops of the Cairngorms. Yet the gradations of light and colour were extremely lovely. If the Cairngorms appeared to frown, some of the more distant hills stood out startlingly clear and blue. Nearer at hand stretched miles of desolate moorland, brown with black scars, "evolving a thing majestic without severity, impressive without showiness, emphatic in its admonitions, grand in its simplicity."

After a brief respite we set forward towards our last top, Beinn Bhreac. About three miles of moor and bog separate the two tops, but there is little fresh climbing. We had been warned that the going here was very bad, my friend having drawn a picture of the miles of peat hags that had to be encountered. It hardly turned out, however, to be the slough of despond that we had been led to believe it was. At any rate we managed to steer a successful course between the bogs. Not very far from the top of Beinn a' Chaorruinn we came upon a rain gauge. It is rather surprising the tracks of civilization that one sometimes finds on the high hills. Two days before in climbing Beinn a' Ghlo we had been surprised to see a weather-cock stuck up on top of one of the hills on the other side of Glen Tilt. I do not know who comes to measure the rainfall on Beinn a' Chaorruinn but a considerable amount of rainwater had collected inside it. The top of Beinn Bhreac was reached at 7.40, the climbing part of the day now being at an end. The rest of the walk was easy, and we joyfully made our way down the gradual slope to Derry Lodge. We had achieved what we had set out to do and it

was with feelings of triumph that we set our faces towards home !

Some amusement was caused at this late stage by my mistaking a grouse for a frog ! Success had apparently gone to my head. I shouted to someone to come and inspect a huge frog, when suddenly it took wings and flew up into the air. Naturally I was accused of having partaken of the potent liquid erstwhile referred to—which incidentally had been invisible all day—so that the allegation was entirely without truth. It is curious none the less how one's senses cheat one at times ! On reaching the Derry Burn we did not waste time searching for an easy place to ford it, but boldly entered the water where we happened to reach it. This is the time of day when one begins to feel curiously light-hearted. Dusk falls more softly than usual, the aroma of tobacco is more delightful, and, to proceed from the general to the particular, the "inner circle of the Cairngorms" was a *fait accompli*. There would be no more reproaches, no more taunts, no more subtle innuendoes !

Darkness fell as under the giant trees of the Derry Forest we finished our walk. Few things are more pleasant than the perfect harmony between mind and body on such occasions as these—a sense of physical weariness accompanying a deep spiritual repose, on which no jarring notes intrude. External nature too seems to be at one with the human spirit. The fever and the fret have been forgotten, and, if to-morrow the road is again dusty, we have at least lingered for a time in pleasant places.

THE PILGRIMS OF THE HILLS.

BY MARY AGNES SKAKLE.

I.

WE come by Dee or Deveron, by Coylum or Braemar ;
 No Fiery Cross constrains us as the clansmen called to war ;
 With scrip on shoulder, staff in hand, and careless of our ills,
 We seek the mountain glories with the Pilgrims of the Hills.
 On the steep Cairngorms, where we wander all together,
 There's a something you never find below ;
 And it's calling you and me o'er the bracken and the heather,
 Where the eagle and the ptarmigan go.

II.

It calls us in the spring-time when each mountain torrent sings ;
 We hear it in the thunder that the heat of summer brings ;
 It lures us o'er the hillside bright with autumn's purple glow,
 And we follow it in winter by a ladder cut in snow
 Up the steep Cairngorms, there to test our climbing powers,
 Or to muse in the wilderness alone,
 Where we find amidst the elements a mood for each of ours,
 Or a Bethel by the Shelter Stone.

III.

There's a corrie for a temple and a boulder for a shrine ;
 For incense there's the odour of the heather and the pine ;
 For a font of holy water we've the crystal Pools o' Dee,
 Where we track them from the shining Silver City by the Sea
 To the eerie Cairngorms with their ghost on Ben Macdhui,
 And the Spectre on sharp Sgoran Dhu ;
 Where the Devil from his Point hails the kelpies on the Lui,
 And the Angel watches o'er Làrig Ghru.

IV.

There's neither sect nor party in our happy pilgrim band ;
 The only " Reds " are those who burn first on the top to stand ;
 The strongest helps the weakest as we journey o'er the cairns,
 For in the Cairngorm Club we're a' John Tamson's bairns.

On the steep Cairngorms as we wander on together,
 We are brothers united and true ;
 And when storm-clouds overtake our Republic of the Heather,
 Still undaunted we see each other through.

V.

As on the Mount in Palestine the Holiest Mountaineer
 To weary, worldly climbers gave an Indicator clear,
 And showed the lofty heights where all Beatitude may find,
 We have charted the horizon for a mystified mankind.

On the far Cairngorms, like a humble imitator,
 Copland pointed us to peaks seen afar ;
 And to help his climbing brothers Parker set an indicator
 On Macdhuì and on dark Lochnagar.

VI.

When the moon lights up the Larig and the winds are hushed
 and still,
 A troop of silent mountaineers comes stealing o'er the hill,
 As the shades of dead companions return to make once more
 The well beloved traverse from the Dee to Aviemore,
 Through the old Cairngorms, 'neath their summits grim and
 hoary,
 With an air ever tranquil and serene ;
 And when comrades yearly gather for the festive song and
 story,
 In our memory they shall live evergreen.

VII.

Now here's to every pioneer who's helped us on the track,
 To Copland, Parker, Anderson, to Garden or Levack ;
 Of them shall men in future tell—what can they better say?—
 They pointed to the mountain tops, and then they led the way

Up the steep Cairngorms by the paths that are the surest,
Though the going be toilsome and hard,
Guiding others to the summits where the airs of Heaven are
 purest,
And the climber finds his manifold reward.

VIII.

O Heart o' Bonnie Scotland where the Cairngorms rise,
Around your rugged Bens for us a bit of Heaven lies !
When our spirits seek the ether after climbing days are o'er,
Your crags shall be Earth's outposts from which at last we soar.
Above the steep Cairngorms we'll be face to face for ever
With the something that called us long before ;
We'll have joined the elfin chorus drawing others o'er the
 heather,
Just as we were drawn in happy days of yore.

BALLOCHBUIE IN WINTER.

By JAMES McCoss.

The solid earth whereon we tread
In tracts of fluent heat began,
And grew to seeming—random forms,
The seeming prey of cyclic storms.

THE first morning of January, 1928, was clear and calm with 12 degrees of frost, and the snowy Cairngorms were flushed with a beautiful rose colour, which reflected a ruddy glare on dark objects.

It is now nearing the close of this short winter's day, and these hills, most of them, quite inaccessible under prevailing conditions reveal their far-flung snow-slopes in a pale lifeless and sullen hue, suggesting that the time is close at hand for shelter before one is overtaken by the approaching 15 hours of darkness and probable further fall in temperature.

We have descended from Cac Carn Beag, and our clothing is a mass of ice, as we have been battered with drift carried by a merciless south-west wind. At the wide saddle between Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe and Cnapan Nathraichean where we stand there is no tumultuous surge between moss-held banks, the streams are silent and the lochans are asleep, the tufted grass is far below the snow, and there is not a single sign of life, even the hard croak of the ptarmigan is not heard, and winter holds complete mastery at the col. The rocks are covered with an inch of ice, and the powdery snow lying above the original snow-cap is

packed hard by the wind in places. This old snow-mantle having thawed and frozen alternately bears one's weight and walking is delightful where it lies bare.

Amidst those glorious surroundings my companion and I headed for the small lochan at the source of the Ballochbuie Burn. In the corrie we are sheltered from the wind, and an impressive silence reigns. There is no soundlessness like it. Over the top of Sleac Gorm (as the slabs of Cnapan Nathraichean are called) snow-banners are streaming, which tell of the blizzard still in progress. Sleac Gorm itself is singularly clear, glittering, and silent, and seems quite indifferent to the fury of the storm bursting on the Blackshiel side of the hill.

Steep snow-powdered rocks are always most attractive, and how strong and massive they seem to little humans passing below. Surely, if beauty be an object of worship, those glorious hills with rounded shoulders of the purest white are well-calculated to excite sentiment of adoration. One wonders if the fairies are in this silent corrie, or perhaps the spirits of those who loved the hills, and have gone to the other side are watching us as we flounder through the deep snow. Who can tell? The condition of the snow is fairly good as far as the lochan, but beyond, it does not continuously carry our weight, and locomotion becomes most laborious. Thirst began to assert itself, so with an axe the snow is cleared from the ice of the stream, a hole is made, and we lie down and drink our fill.

Near the trees of the forest we come to a well-defined pathway in the snow, about nine inches wide, made by wild animals, and we are glad to follow it. We can trace the footmarks of the deer, the fox, and the hare. In the forest we see many signs of wild animals and their struggle for existence, and great stretches of mossy turf have been scratched clear of snow, and foot-marks are everywhere. Surely "Reynard the Fox" has been here, as the snow is scattered with fur.

Hinds watch us as we pass, and seem to wonder what is our business. Through the forest of dark pines which are gathered like a cloud at the foot of Carn Fiaclach gleamed the white slopes soaring far above, crowned by the solitary torch of Jupiter, and to the left the seven days old Moon. Both become blotted out, however, and the sky seems dulled by approaching snowflakes. At last, as the shades of night are falling, we arrive at the road and are welcomed by a robin with a very red breast, and later through the trees we see what appears to be a will o' the wisp, but we find on nearer approach that it is only an old woman carrying a lantern. Through the deep snow we turn up the steep path on the Old Bridge of Dee and homewards just as the long night with a snow-storm is closing down on the forest and its four-legged folks.



September, 1928

G. Roy Symmers

DUBH LOCH: THE THROUGH ROUTE PITCH.

[This pitch is situated about half-way up the south-east gully.]

AN UNCLIMBED GULLY.

BY G. ROY SYMMERS.

But, courage ! for around that boisterous brook
The mountains have all opened out themselves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen ; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.

Wordsworth.

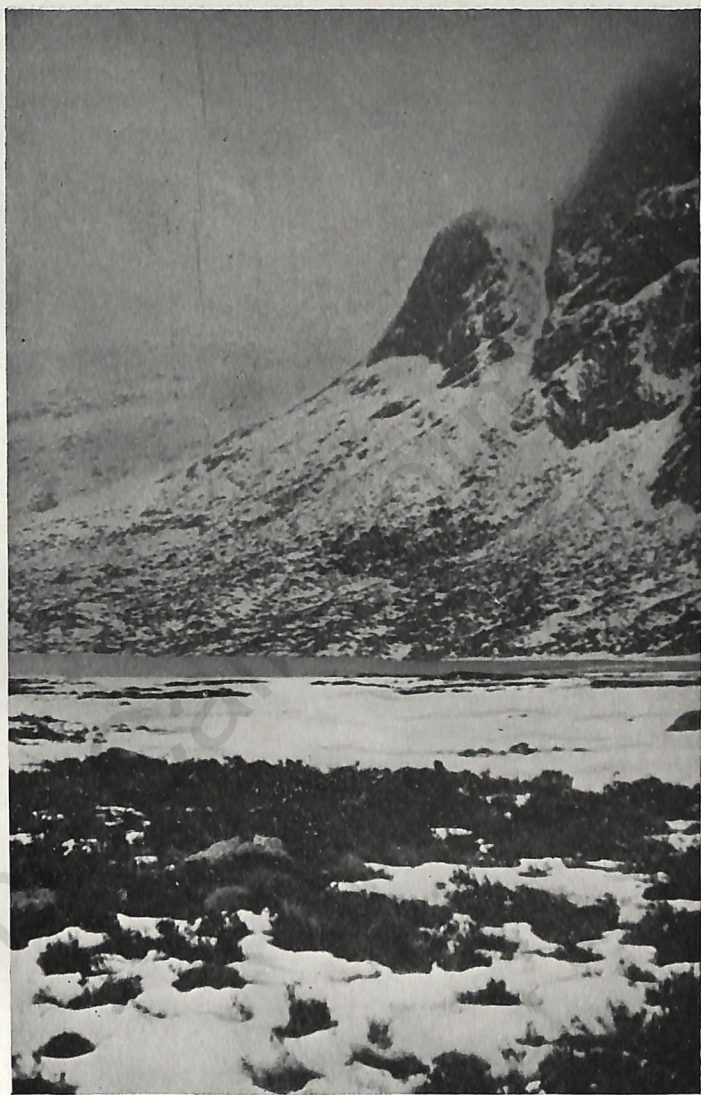
ONE morning in the late September of this year, N. Bruce and writer left the Glas-allt Shiel with designs on the south-east gully of the Creag an Dubh Loch. The day was perfect. Scarcely a puff of wind disturbed the polished surface of Loch Muick. From the distance came the sound of tumbling waters ; now whispering, then booming out as the light breeze stiffened slightly. In the background, Broad Cairn proudly reared its shapely cone above the dark and narrow glen.

Who could hurry on such a morning? Every little detail standing out clearly in the bright morning sun caused a sensation of pleasure. Such mornings are few and far between. Little wonder then that we took somewhat more than schedule time to complete the walk up to the Dubh Loch. What a vision of grandeur ! What a heavenly blue, merging to a deep purple where the shadow of the overhanging crags fell upon the surface of the tarn.

Ah ! then, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
To express what then I saw ; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea and land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream.

Gentle ripples crossed the surface of the loch, lapping noisily against the little boulders strewn around the shore. From each little island rock radiated a series of concentric rings—tiny waves of ever-increasing girth. These, intermingling with other families, formed a beautiful lace-like pattern along the margin of the loch as far as the eye could see.

A rough scramble, first over moraine and bog, then up steep scree slopes, took us from the edge of the loch up to the foot of the gully. The structure of the cleft bore a striking resemblance to Raeburn's Gully on Lochnagar. The bend at the commencement was there; the steeply inclined left and vertical right walls were both there; and jambed in the V shaped section were a series of great boulders forming pitch above pitch. After an ascent of thirty feet on loose scree, the first obstacle was encountered and the rope put on. The back of the gully narrowed down to a width of about two feet. This chimney, some twenty feet in height, although leaning back at a fairly easy angle, was singularly devoid of holds, especially so near its commencement. The pitch was climbed by lying sideways in the stream of water which was hurriedly descending it, and resorting to back and knee methods. After I had restored the circulation in my numbed fingers, my friend neatly climbed the pitch, coming up to where I stood in about half the time which I had taken. From this point for about eighty feet the bed of the gully was steep and extremely rotten. The less said about this section the better, suffice it that several incidents occurred which will long remain imprinted on the writer's memory. At last the cave below the second pitch was gained ! What a relief once more to handle solid, immovable rock ! By the aid of a threaded rope and a steady hand from my companion the



G. Roy Symmers

THE DUBH LOCH IN APRIL.

[The south-east gully is seen running perpendicularly between the two dark cliff masses.]

pitch was climbed in a twinkling. The complete pitch, including some boulders on the right, which had to be climbed before the cave could be reached, was possibly about twenty feet in height. A short stretch of scree brought us up to the next pitch, which took the form of a cave with an immense through-route. No difficulty was met with in surmounting this rather spectacular obstacle, the passage up the back of the huge jammed-block being quite easy. After a short rest, a scramble up to the fourth and final pitch ensued. This was easy, and apart from the fact that several of the big stone masses were slack, scarcely required a thought. The finish up the gully, that is the last 150 feet or so, was distinctly unpleasant. Granite of the consistency of brown sugar was encountered the whole way up. The writer felt very insecure throughout this section, and as the angle of the gully steepened towards the top, it was with feelings of great relief that the summit was gained. Twenty feet from the skyline a number of ledges, which zig-zagged up the left wall, were utilized in preference to the direct finish. We are of the opinion that the direct finish is unjustifiable because the rock is in such a state of disintegration.

How pleasant it was, after two hours of strenuous exertion, to lie above that sheltered cliff and gaze out over the tarn to where a tumultuous waterfall, like some white serpent descending from heaven to earth, tumbled in cataract after cataract into the loch below. But what had happened to our loch ?

The sun is set, the clouds are met,
The louring scowl of heaven
An inky view of vivid blue
To the deep lake has given.

As we watched, dark clouds stealing up from the north warned us that it was time to move on. Accordingly, shouldering our packs we strode off. A visit to the north-west gully was made, where we came to the conclusion that the overhanging top could not be

climbed. A brisk walk took us over to Cairn Bannock, from which a magnificent view was enjoyed. The tramp across grass plateau to Fafernie occupied but a few minutes, then back over undulating tableland to Broad Cairn where we were overtaken by rain.

The descent to the Allt an Dubh Loch was made by way of an open, scree-filled shoot. The top being steep and gravelly it took us rather longer to get down than we had anticipated. On the right wall (descending) of this gully was an exceedingly fine chimney about 200 feet in height. It would certainly make a very fine climb and is well worth a visit. At last the burn was reached and the path regained. We turned for a last look at the loch. Everything was grey: the mighty cliffs gleamed wet, at their base the sullen loch lay unruffled—surely a scene of sinister, forbidding grandeur. That night the snow came.

YOUTH ON THE HILL-TOPS,

Youth, in the wake of many hued romance,
 Gaining the hill-tops with a careless stride,
 Sees yet ahead with visionary glance,
 Fresh heights to scale, and will not be denied.

Taking the path that leads for ever onwards,
 Scaling each unknown peak with joyous zest,
 Breaking a trail where none before have wandered,
 So Youth should stride, that age may fitly rest.

Fleet be our footsteps, sturdy, Lord, our will
 While Youth is ours, while yet the summit gleams;
 That there may be *one* hill-top in our dreams
 Where vision lies, where memories wander still.

H.M.B.

A CASE OF FORBEARANCE.

By J. C. ORMEROD, M.A.

IT had been raining in Braemar day and night for six days, but now on the seventh the floods had been called off, and the Sunday was perfect. We were bound for the Cairngorms, and as we swung up the glen he would be a poor sort whose heart didn't rise up inside him. It was good to see the river still in spate, all foaming white and amber, good to hear the wind in the firs, and to pick up the scents the hot morning sun was drawing out of the blaeberreries. As we rounded the last bend of the stream and the high ground came into view and our way up it showed out clear, we called a halt and sat down on the heather. We lighted our pipes and I told him how it surprised me to find an Auld Kirk elder in sic a place at sic an hoor, and he replied that he made it a rule to be out of his pew just the two Sabbaths in the year—it kept a man from getting narrow-minded, he said. I was wondering whether a change had come over Scotch theological views, or whether he was only having his little gibe at the Englishman, when he added, "Besides, it's only on the Sunday you're sure of being safe from Donald Grant's gillie." At that, there was nothing for it but to ask him who Donald was and who the gillie was; and as we sat there under Beinn a' Bhuid, he told me.

Donald Grant, it seemed, was a schoolmaster who had been kept back from entering the ministry by

theological difficulties. He was on holiday in Braemar, and they had been having our kind of weather, the usual thing in August, but on the very last day of his holidays the change had come, and Grant had set off on this same walk. He'd made an extra early start so that he might get well ahead of any deer-stalking parties, and he was just saying to himself that a man could have even the Highlands to himself, if only he would get up early enough, when as he sighted the bothy at the top of the glen, he saw a gillie standing on the very same spot that we were sitting on. He knew him at once by the hideous pinky tweed with the brown check in it. It was Ian Macpherson, a character familiar to folk down the valley. So it looked as if Donald Grant was in for trouble after all.

Macpherson strode across and put himself right in front of Grant, blocking his way—he was a big fellow too—and for a minute or so they sized each other up without saying a word. At last the gillie said it was a braw morning they'd got, and where did he think he was going the day? Grant told him, and in detail. He was going round An Diollaid there, up the stalkers' path, and then on to the top of the Ben, and he would be for a look at the corries there, and a fine sight they would be sure enough with the sun bringing all the green out of them. Then he would make over the North Top, and if his legs lasted out, he wouldn't be surprised if he finished up with Ben A'an. One of the finest walks in the Cairngorms, too—he knew every inch of it. Macpherson listened to all this, and then told Grant he was of a mind he was mistaken, and was thinking he wouldn't be going there at all. "Mind ye," he said, "it's no what I would call exactly safe. They're oot shooten o'er they hills, and ye'll maybe be getting a bullet in your wame." To which Grant had answered that he'd take his chance of that all right—of course it was a pretty remote one—and he'd better be moving on.

But the gillie never moved a step out of the way, not he. "Ye'll ken Davie Ogilvie?" he said after a while. "That's the head gamie as is over all the Duke's gillies. Well, he's put me here from Monday morning to Saturday night, and it's my job, by fair means or foul, to stop you or the likes of you, from going up any of them hills yonder." Now Grant was a chap whose temper wasn't his strong point, and he asked the gillie what he thought his little game was. Was he after stopping him? Then let him try it. He knew as well as he did that there was no law of trespass, not in Scotland, and if he just dared to lay a hand on him, he'd be hanged if he wouldn't have him up for assault. He was well within his rights, and he was going on. Hadn't he been waiting down in Braemar there for a week on the watchout for a day like this, and it had rained for twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four, and now he'd got his day and he was taking it. And he moved a step forward, and told the gillie he'd thank him to step out of the way.

Well, this time Macpherson did move out of his way right enough, and Grant marched past, the law on my side in every stride of him. He'd gone some twenty yards or so up the hill, when the gillie called after him, "Come you down alongside o' me till I tell you," he called out. "I want a word wi' ye." Grant came half of the distance back, and the gillie went the other half forward. "Man," he said; "it's this way. Dae ye no see yon hoose yonder doon the glen?" And he pointed to a house standing on a little rising ground at the end of the valley, so placed that it commanded a view of the approaches to all the mountains round about. "Well," the gillie continued, "Davie Ogilvie is just now sitting in the front room of yon house. And he's got his telescope to his eye, and he's seen you and me talking. Now if you go up that hill yonder, this is what'll happen on Saturday night when he hands me o'er my siller:

'Ian Macpherson,' he'll tell me, 'last Wednesday you let a man through on to Beinn a' Bhuid, and there's you paid up. I'll no be requiring your services ony mair. Man, ye're sacked.' That's just the way of it," the gillie wound up. And now, you must just please yourself. Go on up yon hill if you like."

Donald Grant had been meant for the ministry, and if there was one thing he disliked, it was being put in the wrong on a question of conduct. He weighed the case up for a full minute. This was his last morning, and wouldn't the green corries with the little black lochan lying at the bottom be a bonny sight just now? But he turned his back on it all, and without another word but just one—"Damn Davie Ogilvie"—he set off down the glen the way he had come.

And that was the gillie my friend didn't want to meet on the way up Beinn a' Bhuid. As we slipped our shoulders through the straps of our rucksacks again, I told him that though we'd missed the morning service, I was obliged to him for a sermon. "And a better one than most," he replied. "And now for the best foot forward, and at the cairn on the top we'll have the psalm."

THE FATALITY ON BRAERIACH.

DIARY OF THE CLIMB.

THE story of the double fatality which took place in the Cairngorms at the New Year, may now be completed, for the body of the second climber was found on the 25th of March, and all the facts as far as they will ever be known, are now available. A narrative was given in the January issue of the *Cairngorm Club Journal* recording the accident. It will be enough to recall that on Monday, 2nd January, two visitors from Perth came upon a young man lying in an unconscious condition near the lower bothy in Glen Einich, who died in a short time without recovering consciousness. He was identified as Thomas Baird of the Geology Department of Glasgow University, and it was learned that he and a Glasgow medical student, Hugh Barrie, had arrived at Aviemore on Wednesday, the 28th of December, and spent the night in an empty house near Whitewell in Røthiemurchus and had set out early on the Thursday morning, leaving word that they would not be back again until the Sunday evening. Search for the missing man was made on various days in January, so far as the weather permitted, on the slopes of Braeriach overlooking Glen Einich but without result, and parties from Braemar also visited the Corrou bothy at the foot of Cairn Toul, the supposition being that Baird and Barrie had crossed the Lairig Ghru and had spent the week-end there. Nothing was found at the Corrou to either support or disprove this.

On the last Sunday of March a search party again visited Glen Einich and Barrie's body was found near the upper bothy, lying in a peat bog between the bothy and the foot of Loch Einich. It was conveyed down the glen and buried near Whitewell at a spot commanding an impressive view of the Cairngorms, thus carry-

ing out, as far as possible, the wish expressed by Barrie in the remarkable poem which he wrote last summer.

The position where Barrie's body was discovered did not of itself throw any light upon the course of events, but some time previously one of the search parties had found the two rucksacks belonging to the men lying on the slope of Braeriach at about the 2,500 ft. level, and this and Baird's diary, which was found, made clear that the two climbers had spent the week-end at the Corrou and had been crossing to Glen Einich. The diary stated that they went through the Lairig Ghru on the Thursday and climbed the Devil's Point on the Friday. The entry for the Saturday is not very explicit but suggests that they may have climbed Cairn Toul. There is no entry for the Sunday.

The circumstances attending the fatality were extensively reviewed by Professor J. W. Gregory, Mr. Baird's chief at Glasgow University, in an article in the *Glasgow Herald* on 30th March. The weather on the Sunday was fine to begin with but broke down in the afternoon, a blizzard coming on when the men were probably still upon the hill. Professor Gregory is inclined to think from the position in which the rucksacks were found and from the fact that the ice-axe carried by one of the party is still missing, that they had slipped when descending the very steep slopes from the Einich Cairn of Braeriach to Glen Einich and became separated in the blizzard and darkness. Barrie had finally collapsed near the upper bothy while Baird had made his way down the glen to within a short distance of the lower bothy where he had collapsed. Possibly he had seen a light in the bothy because it was learned afterwards that a party of walkers spent the Sunday night in the bothy and left on the Monday morning little dreaming that a man was lying in the snow a few hundred yards away. Baird may have been making a last effort to reach the lower bothy when he broke down.

[To the Editor of *The Cairngorm Journal*].

DEAR SIR.—Regarding the New Year fatality, may I point out that neither Baird nor Barrie was concerned in the Rectorial kidnapping. This was the work of Findlay and Stewart, both of whom are now doctors and keen climbers. Baird and Barrie had climbed in the Cairngorms however. I knew all four (indeed Baird and Barrie and I were going to start a University climbing club in January, 1928).

HUMANITY DEPARTMENT,
THE UNIVERSITY,
GLASGOW, *February, 1928.*

I am,
Yours sincerely,
RONALD BURN.

U.S. MOUNTAINEERING ACCIDENT.

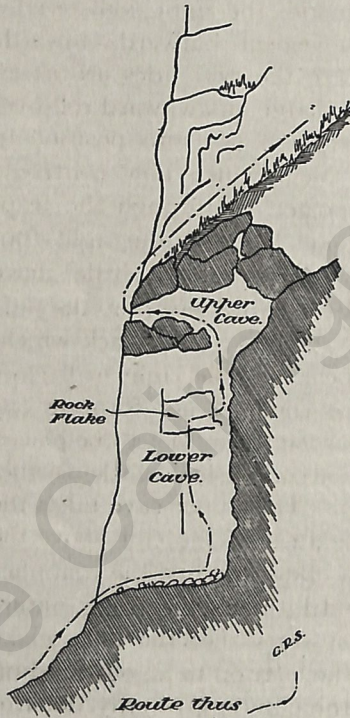
THE New York correspondent of *The Times* gives a graphic account of the fate of an inexperienced climber. Six Dartmouth students, he says, started out from the college at Hanover, New Hampshire, on Wednesday, November 28, to climb Mount Washington during the Thanksgiving Day holiday. They were all experienced climbers but one, a freshman named Herbert J. Young, of St. Louis, who had never been up a mountain before. On the following Sunday night five of the six returned to Hanover with the body of Young. All of them were in a pitiable condition, and two had had their feet frozen. The party had climbed to the top of Carter Notch on Thanksgiving Day (November 29) and next morning they set out for the Appalachian Club hut at the Lake of Clouds, far above the timberline of the mountain. The hut was still a mile away when Young complained of feeling weak. With a gale raging, his companions decided it was wiser to try and reach the base station three miles below than to push on to the hut. But before they reached the timber they were caught in a heavy snowstorm. Young pleaded to be allowed to sleep, but they dragged him along as well as they could. Progress, however, was so alarmingly slow that two of the party, Allen and Fairchild, decided to go ahead to the base and get a toboggan to bring Young in on, while the others remained with him to keep him awake. They left at 1 a.m. on Saturday, and, after a heroic struggle through the snow, reached the base cabin, only to find no toboggan. It was late on Saturday afternoon before they got back to the party on the mountain. Young was then unconscious. The five students carried and dragged him down the mountain, and some time during the journey he died. When they did not know.

THE PANNANICH CAVE-PITCH.

THIS summer a short but certainly difficult rock climb was discovered by W. Ewen on the hill behind Pannanich Hotel. The crag on which the course is situated can be readily seen from the train before entering Ballater Station.

Anyone sufficiently interested to pay it a visit, should, while still on the railway, make a mental note of its approximate position. A flat, perfectly perpendicular face of rock will be found at the eastern extremity of the line of crags, and our route starts immediately to the right of this slab.

The cave, which appears from the outside as a vertical fissure in the rocks, decorated on each side by



Pannanich Cave-Pitch.

clumps of ferns, is readily entered by a short introductory climb of about eight feet. Inside, smooth, vertical walls rise abruptly on either side for a height of almost twenty feet to a boulder roof in which, at the very back, is a small trap-door-like opening. Through this hole nothing but the gloom of an upper

cave is visible. The crux of the climb lies in getting up to and through this aperture. On the left wall, some eight feet under the opening, is an ample ledge at the foot of a firm flake of rock. Ewen has shown that this ledge may be reached by climbing on small holds up the back of the cave. Personally, I prefer to use the back and leg method as a means of upward progress. By the latter method, with feet on the right wall, the commencement at the back of the cave is easy. After a little progress has been made, the right wall recedes slightly, necessitating a movement outwards towards the mouth of the cave, where the two sides are closer together. At the level of the ledge an awkward roll-over has to be performed in order to get into position to grasp the flake. The problem which now confronts the climber is how he is to get up through the trap-door from the ledge. A good hold for the right foot is to be found at the base of the flake, a little above the level of the shelf. From this position the left foot can be wedged high up in a vertical crack which, from the cave beneath, appears on the right wall close to the roof. A pull on the choke-stone, forming one side of the trap-door, allows the right foot to be placed on top of the flake. This accomplished, little further resistance is to be met with. The upper cave takes the form of a tunnel out to the face of the cliff above the entrance to the cave below. Beyond this, the route lies up a well-defined gully, until the overhanging nature of the rocks near its summit force the climber to make an exposed traverse out to the left, on to an outstanding nose of rock. Above this the climbing rapidly deteriorates.

After a spell of bad weather, unless the climber wishes to get extremely wet, the Cave-Pitch at Pannanich had better be avoided. A person with a free afternoon at Ballater could not do better than take a walk up to this remarkable feature, even although he had no intention of trying the climb.

G. R. S.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THE ANNUAL MEETING.

THE fortieth annual general meeting of the Club was held in the Imperial Hotel, Aberdeen on Saturday, November 24, 1928. The President, Mr. James A. Parker, was in the chair.

With reference to remits from the last annual meeting, reports were submitted by the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. John A. Nicol.

(a) The Blue Hill Cairn.—The President stated that he had arranged to see Colonel D. B. D. Stewart at an early date.

(b) The Shelter Stone.—The Committee recommended that no action should be taken.

(c) In regard to the investment of the Club's funds, it had been decided to put them in the Savings Bank.

(d) As to the suggested leasing of Derry Lodge, it had been found that this was impracticable. It had been suggested, however, that the Club might inquire as to the possibility of securing the use of the Corrour Bothy, apart from one or two days in the season, and putting it into a state of repair.

These reports were approved of.

Mr. Nicol then submitted the accounts which showed that the balance for the year at the credit of the Club was £130 2s. 11d. as compared with £100 14s. 8d. for the previous year, but the cost of No. 67 of the *Journal*, apart from blocks, had still to be met.

On the motion of Mr. Porter, seconded by Mr. Garden, the accounts were adopted.

All the office-bearers were unanimously re-elected. Messrs. Douglas and McCoss retired from the Committee and were not eligible for re-election and there had been another vacancy since 1926. These three places were filled by the unanimous election of Messrs. William Garden, Arthur Taylor, Jun., and James E. Bothwell.

It was decided, on the recommendation of the Committee, to

hold the 1929 New Year Meet at Braemar and the Easter Meet at Spital of Glenshee, or, if the Cairnwell road were blocked, at Clova. For the Spring Holiday excursion Broad Cairn was chosen, in preference to a suggestion for a cross-country walk from Aboyne to Glen Esk. It was remitted to the Committee to arrange Saturday afternoon excursions.

The Allt-na-Beinne Bridge was reported by the President to be very badly in need of painting, and authority was given to have the work carried out at the expense of the Club, the estimated cost being £25.

A report on the Club *Journal* was submitted by the Editor and the President appealed strongly to members for support.

The President referred to the question of amalgamating the Club's three special funds for the Allt-na-Beinne Bridge, the Eidart Bridge, and the Ben Macdhuì Indicator. They were anxious that these three funds should be amalgamated, but it was felt this could not be done without consulting the subscribers. He proposed that a meeting should be called of the subscribers to the Ben Macdhuì Indicator fund and their consent obtained to the amalgamation of that fund with the other two, the united fund then to be available for the repair of indicators and bridges, and similar objects. This was agreed to.

On the motion of the President, the following resolution was very cordially adopted :—

“That the Club put on record their high appreciation of the Guide Book to the Cairngorm Mountains which has recently been issued by the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and that the Hon. Secretary be instructed to convey to that Club our congratulations for the excellent manner in which the book has been prepared and thank them very cordially for having published a book which will be of the greatest value to the members of the Cairngorm Club.”

Hearty votes of thanks were given to Mr. Nicol, the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer (to whom the usual honorarium was also voted) and to his assistant, Mr. Leslie McGregor.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING.

IMMEDIATELY after the annual meeting, a special general meeting was held to consider the following motion :—

“That Rule 17 be altered to read :—The Office-bearers and Ordinary Members of Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting in November to hold office for one year from the day following that meeting. They shall be eligible for re-election provided always that the President and Vice-Presidents

shall not hold their respective office for more than two consecutive years except that the two Vice-Presidents when of equal seniority shall ballot for retirement; and that the three senior Ordinary Members of Committee, to be determined by ballot in cases of equal seniority, will be ineligible for re-election for one year should they have completed three years' consecutive service in that office."

Mr. William Garden, in moving the motion, said he had been discussing this matter with Mr. Parker. They had both come to the conclusion that in a Club like this, it was a very great thing to accelerate the honours as much as possible, so that young fellows might always look forward to getting into office. Following what had been done recently in the S.M.C., he suggested that they should alter Rule 17 as set forth in the motion. When he was President, he had made this suggestion. Mr. Parker agreed with him. It gave the younger members something to look forward to, being in the chair and becoming Vice-Presidents. That was his sole object. Let the honours go round.

Dr. J. R. Levack seconded.

Mr. Walter A. Reid moved the previous question. He did not think this system of rotation should be admitted or carried on. The Club had existed very largely from the long tenure of their Presidents. Mr. Copland, Mr. Gillies, Dr. Levack and Mr. Garden had had a good long spell. Really the success of the Club depended on the continuity of a good President and he did not see why they should tie their hands in this way. He thought it would be quite out of place to make any change in their Rules. Let them have some elasticity. They had prospered on their present system.

The President stated that the number of years during which each of the Presidents had held that office was as follows:— Mr. Copland, 2; Mr. Ruxton, 2; Professor Cameron, 2; Mr. Anderson, 3; Rev. R. Semple, 2; Mr. Porter, 2; Mr. Harvey, 2; Mr. McGregor, 3; Mr. Hadden, 3; Mr. Clarke, 3; Mr. Gillies, 6; Dr. Levack, 6; Mr. Garden, 3.

Dr. J. F. Tocher seconded Mr. Reid.

On a vote being taken, 16 supported the motion and 6 the amendment. The requisite two-thirds majority of those present (27) not having been obtained, the motion was lost.

The proceedings ended with a cordial vote of thanks to the President.

THE ANNUAL DINNER.

A RECORD gathering of 120 members and guests attended the dinner which followed the annual meeting. The chair was taken by the President, Mr. James A. Parker, C.E., and the feature of

the proceedings was his comprehensive and racy narrative of his recent tour round the world, illustrated by many magnificent lantern slides. An account of some part of this with illustrations, we hope to publish in a future issue.

The President, in submitting the toast of "The Club," thanked the members for electing him to that office. He regarded this as a very great honour, following so closely, as it did, on his presidentship of the S.M.C. The Club was still going strong. There were 253 members on the roll, the highest number in its history. In referring to events of the past year, Mr. Parker spoke in sympathetic terms of the Braeriach tragedy last New Year and stated that, on hearing of it at Shanghai, he had written Mr. Baird. The issue of the S.M.C. "Guide" to the Cairngorms was an outstanding event, the book being a notable addition to mountaineering literature and of special value to the members of the Cairngorm Club. He understood that the first edition of 1,500 copies was practically sold out and a second edition was in contemplation. The book was a credit to the S.M.C. and especially to the author, Mr. Henry Alexander, one of their own members. He had, however, noticed that there was one error in the book. The weight of the Cairngorm *massif* above the 2,000 ft. level, was stated, in Appendix B, on the authority of an eminent Aberdeen civil engineer, to be about 234,053,806,401 tons. Astronomers had calculated that the mean distance from the earth to the sun was about $92\frac{1}{2}$ million miles and it appeared that the Cairngorm calculation showed a degree of accuracy comparable to calculating the distance from the earth to the sun to the nearest six inches—(laughter). The stated weight of the Cairngorms, however, was inaccurate, because, since the calculation was made, half a ton of building material had been taken from Derry Lodge to the summit of Ben Macdhui for the Indicator—(more laughter). Mr. Parker went on to refer to his recent tour round the world and spoke in terms of warm appreciation of the very cordial and valuable assistance he had received from members of the Japanese Alpine Club, the Sierra Club, the Mazama Club, Portland Ore.; Mountaineers Inc., Seattle; and, most especially, the Alpine Club of Canada to which he had now been elected. These clubs were very live bodies, the four North American ones holding summer camps for two weeks every year in remote districts. As to their own Club *Journal*, he was disappointed that the June issue had not appeared, the sole reason for that being that the members had not furnished the editor with sufficient material. This was greatly to be regretted and he hoped that members would make a point of contributing to the *Journal*, as it was almost the only bond between many of the members. If, he said, we let the *Journal* down, it would be difficult to maintain the enthusiasm which at present reigned in the Club. A good

magazine, issued regularly, with interesting articles and first class illustrations, is the best assurance we could have for the future prosperity of the Club.

The toast of "The Guests" was given by Dr. D. P. Levack and responded to by Mr. Gilbert Thomson, Glasgow. A hearty vote of thanks was given to the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, on the call of Dr. J. R. Levack and Mr. Nicol, in acknowledging, threw out the suggestion to the guests and others that they might become members.

The Club song was heartily sung under the leadership of Mr. George Skakle, the composer's brother and he and Miss Skakle, with Miss Rawer as accompanist, submitted an appropriate programme of Scotch music.

EASTER MEET, 1928—AVIEMORE.

Thursday, April 5. D. P. Levack arrived at Cairngorm Hotel, Aviemore, late in the afternoon, and found four ski-ing men, about to try out the snow in the Cairngorms, from their point of view.

Friday, April 6. E. Birnie Reid came off the early train from the south, had breakfast, and, with Levack, motored to Loch Eunach, and had a first class snow climb, in the fourth gully, and on the fifth buttress of Sgoran Dubh. There was some wind, but the weather remained clear the whole day, and the views were magnificent. The return was made along the whole ridge of the mountain, to a point below the upper bothy, and then down to the floor of the valley, and across the bothy, and so home by car, arriving in the late afternoon. The two Robbs, and Miss N. Bruce, had arrived, and it was decided, over a most excellent dinner, to attempt Cairngorm, the following day.

Saturday, April 7. The five members motored to Glen More Lodge, and crossed the forest, being lost through the maze of cut timber and E. B. Reid's sense of direction(?) but eventually came out on the right path, and commenced the ascent in dry but very windy weather. As the snow line was approached, the wind became more violent, and the mist dropped lower and enveloped the party, below the 2500 foot level. Here the wind was at blizzard force, and driving ice particles made it very difficult and painful to see. The last 1000 feet were done entirely by compass, and the summit cairn reached in perfectly awful weather. The whole cairn was buried in drift, and coated with ice crystals. A very short stay was made, and the party returned by the same route, finding most of their footprints obliterated, and having to use the compass continually. The weather had got progressively worse, and did not promise well for the following day. It was found that the ski-ing party had had

to abandon their skis on the saddle between the Lurcher's Crag, and the plateau of Ben Macdhui, having had a very hard battle with the blizzard. It was decided to try the ascent of Ben Macdhui by this route, the next day, and assist in the recovery of the skis.

Sunday, April 8. The Robbs left for home, after an easy morning taking photographs; Miss Bruce, Reid, and Levack motored to a point in the forest, as far as the car could be taken, and then proceeded to the Allt-na-Beinne Bridge, and so on by the Larig path up to the mouth of the pass. There was a gale of wind, and rain began to fall, near the upper limits of the forest, and when the snow line was reached this became sleet and froze on the clothes making the party very cold. The gale increased in force, the higher the level, and it was soon realised that the ascent of the mountain itself would not be possible. It was with some difficulty the party struggled against the blizzard, and found the upper Pool of Dee frozen over. The descent was a welcome relief, with the wind behind, but when the forest was reached the thawing out of frozen clothes made a most uncomfortable end to the day. The contents of a small flask of cognac, in the remains of the thermos coffee, were most acceptable before the return to the hotel.

Monday, April 9. Miss Bruce, Reid and Leveck, returned to Aberdeen by road, via Craigellachie, the Cabrach, and Donside.

D. P. L.

THE Spring Holiday excursion was to Lochnagar, and was taken part in by a considerable number of members. The first of the Saturday afternoon excursions was to Kerloch on June 2. No reports have reached us of either of these events, though, in regard to the latter, a member writes: "I have a hazy recollection of spending a very pleasant afternoon at Kerloch, but I was partially overcome, and collapsed towards the finish, and, at this distant date, have no sufficiently vivid memories of the occasion suitable for publication."

HILL OF FARE—SATURDAY, JUNE 16.

THE Club held a most enjoyable afternoon excursion to the Hill of Fare on June 16. A party of members and guests, under the leadership of the Secretary, met in Golden Square at 1 p.m. and motored to Midmar. The weather was clear, though inclined to be cold, and was ideal for climbing. Several of the numerous tops of the hill were visited including what was alleged to be the real top and the site of the Battle of Corrichie was inspected *en route*. A good view was obtained of the surrounding hills, Lochnagar in

particular standing out very clearly, and Ben Avon and Beinn a' Bhuid were visible in the distance. The descent was made to Deeside, and the party had a delightful walk through beautifully wooded country to Torphins. Here tea was waiting and was much appreciated. The motor run home concluded a thoroughly well-spent afternoon.

CLACHNABEN—SATURDAY, JUNE 30.

A PARTY of members and their guests motored by the South Deeside route to the Cairn Mount Road; the motors were stopped at, or near, Scolly's Cross, the point selected as the most suitable to commence the climb. Leaving the road, beside a roadside quarry, the route lay through rough ground: deer fences had to be climbed over and wet ground crossed. On emerging from a narrow belt of dense trees with low branches, a good hill-path of gentle slope was discovered, and rapid progress was made to the top of Greystane Hill (1,091 ft.), about two miles east of Clachnaben. Attracted by the fine rocky mass on the summit of Threestane Hill (1,250 ft.) some of the party hastened there, and perched on the top of the rocks, on which a fine rough breeze was blowing. Advancing westwards, the top of Mount Shade (1,662 ft.) was soon reached; from there a descent was made to the valley from where the Clachnaben path leads upwards to its rocky summit. Several country members, from both sides of the watershed, had arrived before the main body. The weather was sunny and clear, and a splendid view was obtained of the neighbouring country. Rock-climbers took the opportunity to practise their craft on the cliffs. After spending some time on the summit, the descent was made by the path leading across the Avon and the Feugh to the Inn at Whitestone, where tea was served. The motors returned by the North Deeside road to Aberdeen.

BEN RINNES—SATURDAY, JULY 7.

ON Saturday, July 7, the Club had an afternoon excursion to Ben Rinnes. Members and guests, to the number of about twenty-four left Aberdeen by the one o'clock excursion train for Aberlour. Arrived there, the party were fortunate in finding weather conditions ideal. The thoughtful provision of taxis to convey the party to the foot of the hill enabled them to arrive with all energy reserved for the real work of the day. The ascent was made from Glen Rinnes distillery. The track, soon after the start, climbs up through a wood, where the heat began to be felt. Passing clear of the wood, the different members settled down to their respective walking speeds and the company was soon spread out over the hillside. Two enthusiastic climbers were quickly attracted by the

prominent outcrop of rock high up on the N.E. plateau of the hill and made a bee line for this. The more sober members were content to take the line of least resistance and kept pretty well to the crest of the ridge. The slope was easy, but the track was somewhat rough. In due course the rocky outcrop was reached. It proved to be about three-quarters of a mile from the summit and a few hundred feet lower. A halt was made here for refreshments and the more active members, among whom the ladies were well to the fore, indulged in some practice scrambling on the rocks. A further uphill tramp and the main top (2,755 ft) was reached. The view from here was magnificent and it was generally agreed to be the best that members had seen from that summit. The picture of the Moray and Cromarty Firths, with the background of distant blue hills beyond, deserved special mention. The halt on the summit was all too short, but trains will not wait and Dufftown and tea were six miles distant. The descent was made for a short distance by the east ridge, then through the rough, straight down the N.E. face towards the gap between the two Convals. The Aberlour-Glen Rinnes road was crossed about one-and-a-half miles from its junction with the Glen Rinnes road. An old track leading near a cottage a hundred yards above the road was here picked up. This led by an interesting route, with a rise of about 300 feet to the col between the two Convals and then down past the golf course to Dufftown. Here an excellent tea awaited the more or less weary but happy party, and, afterwards the majority were quite content to be driven to the train in the station bus and so home.

REVIEWS.

Hills and Highways. By Katharine C. Chorley. Pp. 232. With wood engravings by Margaret Pilkington. (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1928-6s.) This is a collection of

WYFARING delightful wayfaring essays, written, and cleverly
ESSAYS. written, by one who is manifestly a keen lover of the mountains. The first essay, "Vagabond Holiday Makers," strikes the key-note to the rest of the volume, which deals with rambling in districts ranging from the Cairngorms to the mountains of Switzerland. The English Lake District is evidently the author's happy hunting ground, and the chapter "An English Humorist", which is a life-like sketch of Will Ritson, is specially delightful.

"Spring in the Cairngorms" describes two excursions in our playground and will appeal to all members of the Club; although it is doubtful if any of us have ever tried to give a brew of hot Oxo or its like "a fine tang of the earth" by "stirring the pot with a root of heather", as the author did in the Larig. We all know—"The swinging walk down the Pass and then through the pine groves and green clearings of Rothiemurchus made a worthy finish to our ten hours of great life," and "Presently our moorland track made into the woods. The pillars of the fir-trees were dusky rose in colour, and between them the distant hills to the westward glowed like amethysts. There was a scent of resin in the air."

The Alpine Journal, No. 236, May, 1928. No. 237, November, 1928, 10/6 net each. It is impossible, within the limits of a notice that must be brief, to do justice to the wealth of

THE ALPINE mountaineering lore that is gathered together with-
JOURNAL. in the covers of the *Journal* of our premier mountaineering club. The two numbers for the current year, which make up Vol. XL., are full of interest. What will strike the reader is the very attractive manner in which the material is presented. There is nothing "heavy," even in highly technical articles. Humour is allowed judicious scope and

maps, sketches, portraits and a rich collection of very fine photographs, magnificently reproduced, are of the greatest value in helping towards a clear understanding of what is written. Some idea of the wide variety of the contents may be gathered from an enumeration of some of the subjects of the articles. The European Alps, of course, are dealt with in many aspects. There are articles on Kilimanjaro (with an animated correspondence as to claims to the first ascent by a woman), Mystery Mountain, Iceland, Crete, the mountains of Morocco, the mountains of Israel (by Rev. W. T. Elmslie) and Mount Olympus. Two useful articles on "Knots for Climbers" are very clearly illustrated. Mr. Amery contributes "Off Days on an Empire Tour," describing climbs in the Drakensberg and in the New Zealand Alps, and explaining, incidentally, how a whole expedition ran the risk of being held up "by the deliberate mischief of an old parrot." Mr. Edgar Foa's paper on "The New Frontiers in the Alps" is of special interest in view of the trouble mountaineers have had with the Italian authorities. In regard to this subject, it is recorded that the President of the Club Alpino Italiano brought to the notice of Signor Mussolini the Alpine Club's protest as contained in the article in No. 235, entitled "Closing the Italian Alps" and the hope is expressed "that any regulations which may have incidentally hampered the movements of foreign mountaineers . . . will be suitably modified." In this connection it may be recorded that the Geneva correspondent of *The Times* reported on October 24 that "an agreement has been reached between the Swiss and Italian Governments about frontier traffic regulations. The Italian Government will allow the crossing of the frontier by persons provided with a regular passport or a frontier pass, or a tourist card in cases where they reside in the frontier zone of Canton Ticino." This was the sequel to the notorious Rossi case. Apparently this agreement does not imply any desire to meet the complaint of the Alpine Club, because, in his latest number, the editor of *The Alpine Journal* says "We regret to be unable to report any modification in the lamentable—and vexatious—regulations exposed by the Italian Government last year. . . . For the present the Italian Alps must be considered—like Tibet—a forbidden land for mountaineers." In a review of accidents in 1928, it is stated that the season was "the finest that we can remember, surpassing even that of 1911," and yet in some ways it has proved a disastrous one. A brief account is given of some of the worst accidents and the general comment is made that "it seems that the young French mountaineers of the 1919-28 school have gone ahead too fast." No serious accident occurred to any member of the Alpine Club. An account is given of the search on Aconcagua for Captain Marden who was attempting

the ascent in midwinter, alone and on ski, "an act of sheer insanity meeting its inevitable reward." The search party followed his footprints up to 3,800 m., and shortly after, in view of the conditions, decided to return. It has since been reported (December 21) that his body has been found.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal. No. 105, April, 1928 ; No. 106, November 1928. 2/6 net. each. Mr. Parker contributes

an interesting article on "Beinn Dearg, Ross-shire, S.M.C. and Seana Bhraigh." The five hills in this group,

JOURNAL. he says, have hitherto received scant notice in the *Journal*, "doubtless due to the remoteness of

the hills from civilisation, and also to the fact that they lie in closely guarded deer forests." Our President, however, managed to spend a week there and his story must whet the appetites of climbers. There is obviously plenty to do and to see, and this is confirmed by three really excellent photographs. A reminiscent paper on "Sail Garbh : its Barrell Buttress," comes from another well-known mountaineer, Lord Mackay who succeeds in conveying the thrill of rock-climbing as experienced by himself eighteen years ago in the company of two such masters as Messrs. Raeburn and Ling. Among other contributions are "The Glencoe Road," by Sir John Stirling Maxwell, "The Cairngorm Disaster," by Professor Gregory, and "Some Memories of Braeriach," by Mr. A. W. Russell. The Proceedings of the Club and of the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland are amply recorded and the numerous illustrations reach the usual high standard. With these numbers Mr. Jack MacRobert makes his bow as editor and he is to be congratulated on the result.

NOTES.

A SUPPLEMENT is issued with this number, containing the title page and contents for Vol. XI., the index for which is also printed separately. Cordial thanks are due to the Pre-

VOL. XI. sident for undertaking the laborious job of preparing the index and carefully revising the contents and for other help willingly rendered.

THE BLUE HILL cairn will soon be re-erected on the old site, and hill lovers will again be able to enjoy the

THE BLUE HILL. magnificent view up Deeside which delighted an earlier generation. The trees which in recent years have grown up and blocked the view are to be cut down.

THE Edinburgh University Athletic Club has instituted an annual race up Arthur's Seat and back, the starting point being the University Union in Park Place. The race last year

RACE UP ARTHUR'S SEAT. was held on March 8, and a record time of 20 mins. 8 3-5 secs. was set up by the winner, W. Davidson. The previous record set up by J. A. R. Watt in 1924 was 20 mins. 30 secs. For the second place after Davidson two men tied with 21 mins. 44 3-5 secs Arthur's Seat is 822 ft. high.

Mr. GERALD SELIGMAN, President of the Ski Club of Great Britain, has issued a timely warning to visitors to the Alps to take special precautions against avalanches. He points

WARNING TO SKI-RUNNERS. out that glaciers are particularly dangerous owing to the very dry and hot summer which has weakened the snow bridges. No glacier tour should be undertaken by inexperienced ski-runners unless accompanied by a certificated guide. The warning is effectively summed up in the following rules :—

1. Never go far afield after a heavy fall of snow.

2. Suspect all slopes of 25-30 deg. and over, particularly if they face south or a warm wind is blowing.
3. Avoid slopes topped by overhanging cornices.
4. Until you can distinguish between snow hardened by sun and snow hardened by wind avoid all steep slopes of hard snow.
5. When a dangerous spot must be crossed cross one at a time.

WE are indebted to Miss I. M. Pittendrigh, Aberdeen, for the excellent photograph of the Larig which faces p. 17. The photograph was taken from the summit of Carn a' Mhaim.

THE new Corviglia funicular railway leading to the high snow-fields above St. Moritz, in the Engadine, was officially opened on Saturday, December 15, in perfect ski-ing conditions.

WE should like to draw special attention to the note to prospective contributors which appears inside the front cover. It is intended to publish the next numbers in June and December, but this will be possible only if members co-operate heartily by supplying "copy" and photographs. See the President's remarks on pp. 47-8.

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