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The Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY

EDWARD W. WATT.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE	
Dreams, by Professor J. Norman Collie, D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S.	59	
A Perfect Alpine Day, by J. H. B. Bell	70	
The Central Buttress, Lochnagar, by W. A. Ewen	77	
Raeburn's Gully in Spring, by E. W. Smith	81	
Ben Nevis at Easter, by Malcolm Smith	83	
A Traverse of the Black Spout Pinnacle, by W. A. Ewen	90	
A Fortnight in the Jotunheim, by J. R. Leslie Gray	94	
The Six Cairngorms	98	
Proceedings of the Club—		
New Year Meet, 1932: New Year's Day Excursion: Lochnagar:		
Pitmedden to Hazlehead: Lochnagar: Rock Climbs at Souter		
Head: Fort William: Ben Avon: Lochnagar: Saturday		
Afternoon Excursions: A'Chioch, Beinn A'Bhuird		100
Notes	114	
Reviews	116	
Illustrations—		
The Central Buttress, Lochnagar: Mont Blanc de Seilon: Raeburn's		
Gully, Lochnagar: Carn Mòr Dearg Arête: North-East Buttress,		
Ben Nevis.		

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The Editor will be glad to consider any articles, notes and photographs submitted to him, and, in particular, he hopes that members of the Club will send records, however brief, of any interesting excursions which they make, so that the "Journal" may constitute an adequate record of the activities of the Club.

Glenburnie Park,
Rubislaw Den North,
Aberdeen.



May 1, 1932.

H. G. Dason.

THE CENTRAL BUTTRESS, LOCHNAGAR.

See p. 77.

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JULY, 1932.

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DREAMS.

BY J. NORMAN COLLIE.

We are such stuff as dreams are made on.

There was a naughty boy, and a naughty boy was he,
He would not stop at home, he could not quiet be,
So he followed his nose to the North, to the North,
He ran away to Scotland.

So Keats wrote about himself, and he further goes on, "He ran to the mountains, and the fountains, and the ghostes, and the witches." Probably he had grown tired of the tediousness of conventional life, and being young and in revolt fled, full of vague unrest and the glamour of youth, to the wilds, to the mountains and the heather, and to the great stretches of moorland, where he could be free from the ugliness of murky and sullen cities and the babble of his fellow men.

In those days the beauties of nature appealed to only very few people, but Keats was one of them, and at an earlier date so also was Shakespeare. To them wide open stood the door, revealing the rich splendour of all Nature's world. Their joy in the proud promise of Spring, in Summer's sovereign garb, and in the golden days of Autumn, rings out like merry bells ; with them fancy plays—

As wanton winds do shake the darling buds of May,

Where can we find odes more haunting than Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale," or "On a Grecian Urn"? and nowhere exist sonnets so exquisite as those of Shakespeare. Beauty

with them exists everywhere, not only in all living things, but in everything created. In the "Ode to a Grecian Urn"

Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

In the sonnets—

Truth and Beauty shall together reign.

A priceless heritage these two great minds have left us,
we are looking through—

Magic casements opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

or,

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green.
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy.

Many years passed away after the death of Keats before the Highlands were often visited. Yet fortunate are those who wandering there can find the Beauty that will reveal itself to those who can understand. For it is a land wild, mysterious, with great open spaces, rushing rivers, lonely lochans, forests of twisted pines, and glens where the birch trees droop, and the burns laugh as they leave the dark corries, whilst far away on the west solitary islands lift their heads out of a sapphire sea, and the long, gleaming beaches of ever-shifting sand keep guard against the onslaught of the hungry waves that—

Rise and fall and roar rock-thwarted under
Bellowing caves, beneath the windy wall.

A land with as many changing moods as the white mists on the mountains, or the fleecy clouds weaving strange pageants athwart the azure sky. A land now glad with the soft kisses of the sunshine, now sad with the gloom of dark clouds and the memories of times gone by. A land of mystery, a land of the Heart's Desire.

If in the days of one's youth one is able to wander free in such a land, one should be grateful to the jealous gods. For youth is of the Spring Time, with all the glorious promise of the month of May, when full of life and gladness, youth

dreams dreams of perilous things and of the happenings of the days to come. With covetous hands, therefore, should youth win from that Tyrant Time such spoils as he may, "while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Yes! We must gather rich plunder before those evil days come. Happily, however, should the gods permit, though our Spring-time passes, before us our Summer and Autumn yet remain. Far distant lies that time of year when the stormy gusts of Winter's day make wail in—

The bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.

With summer a richer gold greets us with new and more subtle entrancements. The song of the wilds is set to a different tune than that of "proud-pied April." In the supreme sovereignty of our summer days we no longer owe fealty to the gods of Spring, our worship is offered at other shrines. Summer comes a full-robed queen to welcome the Sun god as he floods with his glory the hills, the glens, and the far-off islands. Colour finer than Art can fashion flames on the rose-coloured clouds of dawn, when—

Lo in the Orient the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head.

All day as the long hours hasten by, the errant clouds, the lights and the shadows play an endless rhythm. Idly one listens to the song of a bird rising out of the heather, greeting the day with glad notes, or the drowsy hum of the wild bees; the melancholy cry of the curlew and the plover are heard far away. Some young grouse come out into the open and disappear again. A faint scent of the bog myrtle drifts by. Perhaps there may be a small stream with pools of clear amber water flowing over the many coloured pebbles, a few ferns and the branches of a small rowan bend down to the unruffled surface below, and near moss-covered rocks the yellow trout feeding on the gravel at the bottom of the pool. Irresistible is the charm of these small moorland waters—

Clear and cool, clear and cool,
By laughing shallow and dreaming pool.

Undeified, they laugh and play, not knowing that they must lose themselves in the great rivers, where on black and sombre pools the lost foam flakes wander ceaselessly to and fro, sadly remembering their joyous dancing in the sunlight on the open moorlands. Far away on the uplands lie the lochans with their beauty of still waters, fringed with water lilies and rich weeds. The wild duck and the sea birds know them; on their islands the nests are hidden in the grass and the heather, whilst at night on their dark waters, the moon and the silent stars are gently mirrored amongst the rushes. Wonderful is that early summer time. The new life playing and rioting over the whole land. Masses of yellow gorse in the sunshine, patches of broom flash like gold against the new green of the grass. Primroses and violets and small blue flowers hide almost unseen amongst the herbage, the tall iris nods slowly in the wind, whilst the white and red blossoms on the wild briar proclaim that the end of summer's reign is not far distant.

And summer's lease hath all too short a date.

So in our summer time may we gladly rest content with the rich gifts offered to us, woven by summer from out the shining threads of the passing hours. When the soft winds gently pass across the moors, when the sun is kind, when the hills and the glens are asleep, then can one idly lie in the heather and dream as the hours decline. Images of great mountains and blue lakes with islands and old ruined towers can be seen in the drifting clouds. Memories of bygone days pass ghost-like through one's mind; sad thoughts of the old Clans, full of tragedy and gloom; how in a struggle that was worthy of a better cause they fought nobly to the bitter end.

One sees once more the Great Marquis and "the plaided Clans come down through wild Lochaber's snow," we hear again the pibroch and the savage song of the claymore, and the clash of shields in that fierce fight by Inverloch's shore. The great precipices of Glencoe silently watch, where on that winter's night the butchers from Glen Lyon fell upon the doomed McIans, and all were put to the sword. The rushing waters of the Garry, and the weeping birches,

forever mourn the dead Dundee, "when in the glory of his manhood, passed the spirit of the Graeme."

Still dreaming, legends of older and more distant days drift across one's mind. To Ossian, the Orpheus of the Gael. How he married Niamh of the golden hair, a daughter of the Fairy Folk, and how with her he journeyed to the world's end, to Tir na'n Og, the Land of Youth; and the story goes on, after what seemed to him only a few days he returned to his native land, finding that the world had grown old, and that Fion and all his comrades were dead three hundred years, and those he had loved were beneath the turf. But to St. Patrick he told the tale of the heroes of his youth, and of the free and joyous life they led in the woods and the glens. Where can we find a more beautiful legendary story than the one that tells of the great love of Deirdre and the Sons of Usna. Deirdre, fairest among the daughters of Erin. It was in the glens and forests of wild Loch Etive that they lived and hunted. Dun Scaith in Sleat sends one's thoughts back to the greatest of all the old Celtic tales—the Saga of Cuchulain, son of Lugh the Sun God. From his youth, when he learnt the art of war from Sgathach the warrior-queen of Skye, to his death after seeing the "Washer of the Ford," the story marches with high-sounding tread that falls not far short of the greatest of epics, the story of the Siege of Troy. If in Deirdre we see the counterpart of Helen, in Cuchulain, the mightiest hero of the Celtic race, may be found a parallel with Achilles. In the great battle at the Ford, Ferdia's death is as sad as the death of Hector, and the divine help to the Greeks is the same as that afforded to Cuchulain by his father, Lugh.

In one's wanderings, many are the great standing stones and stone circles that can be found scattered over the land, left by the Druids in those prehistoric days, gone long before the dread rovers from Lochlan swept in their birlinns down through the Western Isles, and the whirling swords shouted in triumph to the waves, crimson with the blood of the slayers and the slain. Only the stones are there. When were these silent monoliths, hoary with age, first lifted from the brown earth? What were the old beliefs? Who were the

now forgotten Gods in whose honour these stones were raised? Their megalithic builders are unknown, but they have left an imperishable record. Their buildings remain far flung across the world. From Western Europe to Egypt, Java, the islands of the Pacific, in Peru, and Mexico, they still point silently to the skies. Who were they? If Plato's account in the *Timæus* is to be believed, the artificers of the Great Pyramid were but a remnant from the lost island of Atlantis. It may be that some of the old Celtic myths of Lyonesse, Hy Brazil, and Tir na'n Og, the land of youth in the western seas, are but a recollection of the perished Atlantæan continent, the garden of the Hesperides.

In an ancient Gaelic chronicle there is a legend of "four sunken cities of a world that was," Falias, Finias, Murias, and Gorias. Were these also of that "land of old upheaven from the deep, to sink into the abyss again"? From Falias, so it is believed, came the dark stone on which all the High Kings of Ireland were crowned at Tara. In the 6th century Fergus the Great, King of Scotland, begged it from his brother Murtagh MacErc, King of Ireland, and in 1297 Edward the 1st took it from Scotland to Westminster, where it still remains the Coronation Stone. Even in those days, when man contended for his right to live, the mysteries that surrounded him in Nature were not altogether hidden. All the old Celtic Deities were Nature Gods. Lugh is the great Sun God. Angus Og, Lord of the Spring Time, and Love and Song. Mananan, God of the Sea, whose horses are the sea waves. Dana, the Earth Mother. They all represent man's early efforts to find in the sky, the earth, and the sea, something he knew not what, but something that was above him and around him. Are these desires only vain enchantments? Unreasonable and rebellious? Is this hidden Beauty only something that common sense disowns? But reasonable or unreasonable, this gesture of discontent finds a home in all living things. Man throughout the ages has always rebelled against what he is; always has he dreamed strange dreams to help him during the short period of his earthly days. These vain enchantments may

after all be shadows, but they are shadows of great worth and beauty. This vague shadowy land of the Gael in which he sees beauty everywhere is now almost a thing of the past. Fewer and fewer are the Highland folk who can repeat the ancient lore, or who now use the rites and customs of their fathers. The beautiful Blessings, Invocations, Charms, and old songs are being forgotten. Still, however, a few folk remain in whom the old spirit lives. An aged crofter who could say—"Every morning I take my bonnet off to the beauty of the world," or the old woman, throwing sticks into the sea—" 'Tis sorrows I am throwing away," they have the knowledge. It was this knowledge that enabled the Gael to give such poetical names to the birds, the flowers, and the glens. "Coire an Uaigneis," the corrie of solitude, the dandelion is "Dealán Dhé," the wee flower of God, and the Curlew "Guilbhron," the wail of sorrow. This love of all earthly things by the Gael is a precious gift, he is a friend of the glens and the green pastures, and a brother to the open spaces and the many-sounding sea.

There is a Canadian boat song, more than a hundred years old, sung by the Highlanders banished from their native land:—

From the lone shelling on the misty island
Mountains divide us and the waste of seas—
Yet still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

A cry as bitter as the wail of lost birds driven far from their home by cruel winds across a waste sea, whose waves storm-tossed cry—

Vae, Vae, Vae, habitantibus in terra.

The sea foam flashing on the grey shores, the woods, the crofts, and the lone shielings will see them no more, but under the shadowy rim of the Gaelic rainbow a fairy gold lies hid, more precious by far than the dross coveted and fought for in the marts of the world. Although the old life in the Highlands has nearly passed away, the remnants of all that was beautiful in those old times shine with sunset splendour, with all the glory of Autumn leaves decay.

If one wishes to see the Highlands ablaze with colour,

the Autumn is the time when the whole land clothes itself with a garment rich and stately, fit for the palaces of kings. In the Gaelic, September is called "the month of peace." Then the mountains sleep and dream in the sunlight, as they rise out of the marshlands and the purple-brown moors, with long, curving slopes that lead to the corries, and the dark precipices above, little troubled by the affairs of men. The rivers with hurrying waters wind through the glens amidst forests of flaming birch and rowan, and dark pines that keep guard over the deep pools, and the falls where the silver salmon leap. These clear waters, whose murmurings are like the sound of bells crying on the wind, have heard the raven's croak and seen the great eagles circling in the sky, they have spoken to the timid deer in the glens, and all the wild life on the far-flung moors hails them with welcome voice, bidding them God-speed on their journey to the great ocean. In the glowing splendour of those Autumn days the isles lying low down in the west are as jewels set in the diadem of the pale sea, lonely, faint blue against the sky, they dream all day, while the restless waves, pure beryl in the sunlight, lap against the weed-covered rocks, whispering to the sandy bays old strange sagas of the yellow-haired rovers from Lochlan, or wandering only to be lost in the seal-haunted caverns, by man unknown.

The long moors with mysterious distances are lustrous with light and shade and colour, spread out like some rare Eastern carpet. The more delicate summer colour of the grasses and heather has changed to flaming gold, to warm browns, soft as velvet, or to the yellow of rich amber. In the dewy twilight when the sun is setting, the earth and the heavens are lit with rich orange and crimson, a furnace fire of splendour, and the mountains and the corries are bathed in delicate dim topaz and purple beneath the gold-dusted sky, indescribable and magnificent. Slowly the glory fades and "swart complexioned night" holds pallid sway. The crescent moon and the stars look down with cold, clear beams, and quivering, the moonlight passes away in the distance over the waves, to die like a dream on the far horizon.

There are other times when storms sweep over the mountains, then a different and more subtle beauty reveals itself, when the rain falls, and the winds shout and wail over a grey land ; when the streams gather, and the rock faces of the hills are streaked with white waters. Torn clouds, shadowy horses of the Valkyrie, tear in mad hunt along the ridges, wan gleams of light struggle and die away in the ruined corries, and the deep voice of the tide calling on the beach can be heard in the distance, its wild waves dashing against tall cliffs and barren shores. Sometimes when the winds are at rest, the mists come down and all is hidden in a garment of white stillness. The loneliness and silence is of another world. Strange thoughts wander through one's mind. The old mysterious tales of ghostly beings who haunt the wilds. There are places that one dreads, where one trembles and is afraid, one knows not why, and fears stand in the way. For the Sidhe have power over us and can weave strong spells of magic to our undoing, and there are others, the Great Lords of Shadow, the Herdsman of Dreams, the baying of the White Hound, the Washer of the Ford who weaves shrouds out of the moonbeams by the river of Death, and those unnamed ones who can entice the soul out of the body, driving it afar into the dark and madness. To guard one from the dominion of These there is an old Gaelic prayer—" Send God in his strength between us and the Sidhe, between us and the dread Hosts of the Air."

But listen ! The faint music of a dainty feadan is heard, and then lost again ; dream-like yet clear, plaintive and played on thin pipes of reed. The melody low, gentle as the winds of summer, then rising with the gladness of the lark in gay laughter it soars to the blue sky, then down and down with fluttering wings it sinks to earth and dies away, only to break out again with white notes cold as snow flakes falling, changed is the tune, sad, full of tears, mournfully lamenting the ruined gold of the Autumn, and woods helpless and torn by the stormy gusts of the dying year—

And barren rage of death's eternal cold.

It is the age-long song of the Spring Time, and the lament of age. It is the cry of youth throughout the endless years, that with all boldness seeks the Grail, for—

Nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence,

rebelling against injustice of this world, and the thankless days of old age, and winter's dull decay.

Who then may this be who plays with honey-sweet appeal, and melody that is the wistful cry of all created things? Who is this God who makes sad moan? Faintly a voice answers—

I am God Pan, and I am sad to-day.

Dreams, only dreams!

σκιάς ὄναρ γ' ἀνθρώπου.

Yet a wanderer's dreams are happy dreams. He should sacrifice often at the shrines of the Gods of the Wilds, for they are pleasing Gods when they whisper to one in the dusk. But the altars of the Gods of Wealth, the Gods of Power, and the Gods of the hurrying crowds of Cities he passes by. His Gods are those of the open sky and the mighty woods, the lakes, the rivers, and the mountains. It is they who send the memories of how in the early dawn all the tall flowers are a-swing in the wind blowing across the uplands, how in the dusk the trees—

Those green rob'd senators of mighty woods,
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,
Dream and so dream all night without a stir,
Save from one gradual solitary gust
Which comes upon the silence and dies off,
As if the ebbing air had but one wave.

It is they who give remembrance of the great mountains towering upwards, snow-covered, stately and alone, gleam in the sunlight; and of the winter storms, savage and cruel, that clothe them in dark, mysterious gloom, only to pass with the dying day, as the sinking sun weaves magic webs in the hurrying clouds, where "the threads are purple and

scarlet, and the embroideries flame," to the Gods that send these gifts be all the praise, and when—

All our yesterdays have lighted fools
the way to dusty death,

and

Our sable curls all silvered o'er with white,

the old memories from the dream gardens of our youth return ; perchance it is only the Gods sorrowing have relented, and are but giving back some of the gold that they robbed from us in the days of long ago, when we troubled not that the years were slipping silently beneath our feet, and when, full of the alchemy of the Spring Time, we walked in the land of the Heart's Desire, careless and unafraid.

A PERFECT ALPINE DAY.

(Being an account of a new combination traverse of Mont Blanc de Seilon and the Ruinette.)

BY J. H. B. BELL.

ON the afternoon of July 19, 1928, a party of four Scottish mountaineers were returning to Arolla across the Pas de Chèvres, after climbing the Pigne d'Arolla. We had done a good day and were resting on the col, when C. W. Parry drew my attention to the steep rock buttress which plunges down in a single uniform sweep from the summit of the Mont Blanc de Seilon to the level upper basin of the Seilon glacier. We did not know whether Mont Blanc de Seilon had ever been climbed by this route, but it certainly appeared to us to be quite feasible in the extraordinarily snowless summer of the year 1928. We made up our minds there and then to return to the attack in a few days' time. Information as to the history of the north face of Mont Blanc de Seilon was forthcoming later from the genial keeper of the bazaar in Arolla. Our friend, M. Metrailler, told us that the buttress had been only twice climbed, and on each occasion with the same Arolla guide in the leading position. The difficulties had been considerable, and on both occasions the party was forced to traverse to the left across steep snow slopes in order to avoid the upper impending rocks of the buttress. The actual climb had occupied six or seven hours, apart from the time taken in approaching the foot of the rocks. It was clear to me that the exploit was well worth while. With the optimism born of youthful energy, we even proposed to make an attempt to traverse Mont Blanc de Seilon in the southward direction, including the Ruinette as well. This mountain is frequently traversed, but always in a line between east and west, between the Col de la Serpentine and the Col de Seilon. The ridge connecting Mont Blanc de Seilon and the Ruinette is long and narrow, and is well decorated with gendarmes. We were told by the Arolla



1926.

J. H. B. Bell.

MONT BLANC DE SEILON.

The route described is the long rock rib which descends from the summit to the glacier, and is in the centre of the photograph.

guide, Antoine Georges, that he had just been over it a few days before with a client, and that it had taken them about four hours from peak to peak. Parry and I knew pretty well, therefore, what we were in for, but we each had considerable confidence in our combined ability to move fast over difficult rocks, and we resolved that if we should succeed in gaining the summit of Mont Blanc de Seilon by 11 a.m., we would consider ourselves justified in tackling the Ruinette as well.

During the next few days other climbing problems occupied us pretty fully. After returning to Arolla from the ascent of the Dent Blanche, we had an off day in preparation for our venture on the north face of Mont Blanc de Seilon. The weather was still perfect. About 2 a.m. on the morning of July 26 we left Arolla by the steep track leading in the direction of the Pas de Chèvres. The night was starry and beautiful. Looking across the valley we could see several points of light zig-zagging up the moraine of the Zigiore Nuove Glacier, apparently belonging to parties en route for the Pigne. At one bend of the track we stumbled over the sleeping form of a cowherd, who seemed to regard the path as the most comfortable site for a bivouac. We pursued our course steadily, and by 4.15 a.m. we were on the top of the pass. The descent of the little rocky pitch on the west side above the Seilon Glacier was quickly effected, and about 5 a.m. we sat down on a boulder and proceeded to put the cooker into action for our second breakfast. There was a beautiful, clear dawn, but it was mighty cold on the upper glacier. It is always curious, on an Alpine expedition, how warm and still is the air about 1 to 3 a.m., when one is starting out, and how bitterly cold is the sunrise and the two hours which follow it. Even in perfect weather I have usually found this to be true. We saw another party who had evidently passed the night at the Dix hut in the Seilon valley, and who were making for the Col de la Serpentine, probably en route for the Mont Blanc de Seilon. Lazily we speculated as to whether they would be likely to discharge any stones on to the upper part of our route from above. Suddenly there was a terrific crack in the glacier almost at

our feet. The sudden, loud noise was most disconcerting. I think we half expected at first that we would be swallowed up in a new-formed crevasse. On looking around, however, there was nothing out of the ordinary to be seen at all. Another report followed the first some distance off, and we were left to speculate on the peculiar habits of the Seilon Glacier, in relieving its pent-up stresses at such an unusual hour.

At 5.40 a.m. we packed up and ascended the easy snow slope to the base of our rock rib. There were only a few small crevasses to negotiate, and it was easy to establish ourselves on the loose rocks of the lower buttress. Once on the crest of the rib or buttress, we found that things went splendidly. The rocky edge was at a uniform high angle, but was well split up, thus affording plenty of good holds. We were not troubled with snow at all, as the crest of the rib was quite clear of it. Occasionally we came across sections of loose and rotten rock, but on the whole we made very rapid progress. Throughout this lower section we never used the rope at all, although there was one part nearly half way up where the rock was so loose that we had to keep very close together. Beyond half way the rock rib steepened considerably, and the climbing became much more interesting, although still of a nature to allow of rapid progress being made. At length we were brought to a halt beneath the vertical rocks of the upper section, where our predecessors had been forced to traverse out across the snow slopes on the left. This latter procedure we wished to avoid at all costs. Still it was quite clear that we could not negotiate the blank wall above us. The only solution was to try a short upward traverse to the right. Parry was in great form and took the lead. The traverse was very short, and then he led straight up what must be called an extremely exposed and difficult pitch. I joined him, and it was clear that the rocks directly above us were quite practicable, although still difficult. This steep and interesting part of the climb continued right to the top, and would probably be between 300 and 400 feet in vertical height. It was a wonderfully satisfactory finish, for it led right out on to the summit.

cairn. We had only halted once during the ascent from the glacier for about a quarter of an hour, and I think we were both surprised and delighted when we found that it was only 8.56 a.m. as we sat down to rest on the top of Mont Blanc de Seilon (12,700 feet). The reputed difficult rock buttress had only taken three hours of climbing time, and the vertical height was quite 3,000 feet. We had had no difficulties of any kind with snow or ice on the rocks. The other party from the Dix hut was still a fair distance off on the ridge leading up from the Serpentine Col. We had the summit to ourselves, enjoyed a sort of preliminary lunch, and set off for the Ruinette at 9.30 a.m.

To begin with, the ridge was very easy, crossing over a subsidiary top where the route to the Col de Seilon falls away steeply to the right. Almost immediately our ridge became very narrow and studded with gendarmes. We decided to cut out some of these by traversing a snow-slope on the right to just below the level of the next small col. At this point a little hard climbing and the cutting of a few steps enabled us to regain the crest of the ridge. On the whole we probably saved a certain amount of time by this manoeuvre. The character of the climbing was now altogether delightful and reminiscent of the Bidein section of the main Cuillin range in Skye. Most of the gendarmes could be turned on one side or the other, and we moved together fairly rapidly. Some distance beyond the col the character of the ridge again became different. We were on a snow-covered section, and it was necessary to be heedful of the cornices on the steeper side. The snow was in very good condition, however, and we met with no double cornices. Before us was another small col at the foot of the steep rocks leading to the Ruinette. The rocks were for the most part quite clear of snow and in good climbing order. Many of the pitches were interesting and delightful, but we could see well enough how difficult the climb would have been with new snow on the rocks. We encountered nothing so difficult as the final section below the summit of Mont Blanc de Seilon, and it was often possible for both of us to move together. Near the top we were obliged to traverse to the

right in order to avoid some impossible-looking gendarmes on the summit ridge. The traverse, though sensational in some respects, was really easy, and we gained the summit of the Ruinette (12,727 feet) at 11.42 a.m.

I think we were both of us rather surprised at the phenomenal rapidity with which the Ruinette ridge had been crossed. The rocks were certainly in remarkably good order during the summer of 1928. We felt entitled to a prolonged rest on the final summit for the day. There was plenty of snow around, and it was not long before the spirit cooker was in action. After our mid-day meal we lay down on the warm, rocky slabs on the southern slope and puffed contentedly at two excellent cigars which we had brought along to celebrate the expected achievement!

There was not a breath of wind on the summit. For clearness of visibility it was one of the most perfect days I have known in the Alps. Neither of us believed in the way some guides have of wasting the precious hour on the summit by going to sleep, though I expect the time passed with a like stealthy rapidity as we gazed dreamily across a sea of snowy summits to the legion of fleecy clouds advancing over the plains of Italy. It would be tedious to attempt to describe the view in detail. In the west we admired the magnificent Italian face of Mont Blanc, and endeavoured vainly to sort out the Aiguilles into their proper groups. Without rising from our position the eye took in the main group of the Pennine Alps, including the Mischabel-Hörner, the Monte Rosa group and the Matterhorn. The latter held a special interest for us, as we were contemplating an attack on the Zmutt ridge within the next few days. To the north the Oberland peaks were all clear, but although I had climbed amongst them a year or two previously, their outlines from the south-west were somewhat unfamiliar, with the exception of the Jungfrau and the Finsteraarhorn. We were knocking out the ashes of our second pipe, when one of us suggested that we had still far to go. I recollected a passage in Whympers' "Scrambles amongst the Alps," where he is quite surprised at the remarkable ease with which he succeeded in climbing the Ruinette from the Val de Bagnes. Our

route of descent lay in the same direction of the Col du Mont Rouge, but we knew that two Passes intervened between there and Arolla—the Col de Seilon and the Pas de Chèvres. It behoved us to be up and doing.

At a quarter past one we moved off down the south ridge. This was quite interesting, but after we had descended about six or seven hundred feet we decided that we might as well attempt to gain the level surface of the Glacier de Gietroz without proceeding as far as the Col du Mont Rouge. The way led down an exceedingly loose rib of red rock on our right. The descent could not be termed pleasant. The rock was abominably loose, and when we had got about half way down an avalanche of stones suddenly roared down behind us, causing us to jump aside hastily. Doubtless we had started the trouble ourselves. The rock had developed a sort of inner gully at this point, and we were quite safe as long as we kept out of it. At 2.30 p.m. we reached the level surface of the glacier, and set off up the gentle slopes towards the Col de Seilon. It was a stifling hot afternoon, and the upper glacier was so much denuded by the snowless summer as almost to simulate the "nieve penitente" of the Andes. On this unpleasant surface we stumbled and sweated laboriously until, as we approached the Col, we found ourselves getting bogged in a complicated system of crevasses. A wide detour to the right eventually landed us on the pass at 3.12 p.m. The descent to the north promised to be equally interesting. In the year 1926 there was hardly a single open crevasse between the Pas de Chèvres and the Col de Seilon. The snowless conditions of the year 1928 forced us to descend the icefall by a very tortuous course. Probably our first abandoned intention of keeping very close in to the left bank would have been better than our actual unsteady track down the centre. However, in due course we reached the "dry" glacier, which effectually belied its name, for the crossing to the foot of the Pas de Chèvres involved an interminable series of leaps over glacier torrents swollen by the efforts of the blazing sun of the afternoon.

We crossed the Pas de Chèvres at 4.20 p.m., and soon

descended to our favourite bathing pool. The cooker was again requisitioned, for afternoon tea this time, whilst we enjoyed an excellent dip in the icy stream. It was an ideal spot for the last halt of the day. We were back in the world of bright Alpine flowers, on a bank of greensward ornamented with anemones, gentians, and Alpine roses. The sun was so warm that even at six o'clock we could hardly be persuaded to continue the descent. We gazed contentedly at the peaks around us, and were overawed by none. We felt ideally fit, and on this, our last day in the Arolla valley, we were not minded to shorten the aftermath of what, both to Parry and myself, was the most perfect climbing day we had ever enjoyed.

THE CENTRAL BUTTRESS, LOCHNAGAR.

BY W. A. EWEN.

'Tis with our judgments as our watches,—none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own.

THE morning of the 1st of May dawned fair enough, but by the time I called on Malcolm and Dason the sky had become overcast. I was pleasantly surprised to find that both had breakfasted; their attempt to convey the impression that the meal was a thing of the remote past was defeated by Malcolm's failure to masticate the last morsel as surreptitiously as he intended. There followed anxious glances at the clouds and much consulting of aneroids, pocket and pendant; with the gloomy prognostics of the local weather-worthies outweighing the optimistic observations of the hairdresser, we added raincoats to our packs and set out for Lochnagar.

At 10.25 a.m. we arrived at Altnaguibsaich, where a cheerful keeper was optimistic enough about the weather—"Shooers, jist shooers." Expecting reasonably fine weather between these, we dumped the raincoats. The aneroids were consulted and a weighty discussion followed. The owners were agreed that the O.S. map was probably right in recording 1,310 feet as the height of the loch. The considerable discrepancy in the aneroid readings was explained airily away. The glass was falling; this apparently did not affect the two instruments to quite the same extent.

On the way to the Well we passed two parties, the second of which intrigued us immensely. They were "travelling light," but were to attempt the Black Spout. A length of thin cord, meantime supporting a camera—the limit of its usefulness—was the main item of their equipment. But I trembled for the abuses to which it might later be put! I looked at the intrepid trio, and from them my glance wandered to Dason, laden with 80 feet of Alpine rope, ice-axe, "spare" clothing, camera (not to mention an aneroid!),

and then to Malcolm, only less lightly burdened, and I wondered if we were fools—or not.

A large party was going up via the Ladder and the tracks of a smaller party led over the col. Later we located them under Raeburn's Gully, mere specks on the snow. Again we trembled for the party following us; deep grooves lined the gullies; avalanche snow lay piled on the slopes, and many stones had fallen. This was no time for gully climbs so we devoted some time to examining the cliff for a safe route. The Central Buttress appealed to us all and we made for it.

On the lower outcrop of rock we dispensed with the use of the rope. Before commencing the buttress proper we stopped for our first lunch, at a point where we could see the activities of the climbers in Raeburn's Gully (at whose identity we could guess. Several prominent members of the Club seem to have taken the Gully on lease for the winter season). As we watched, we heard the sound of falling stones; the Raeburn's party stopped and we could imagine their anxious glance upwards. But the fall was well to their left, so they continued. Below us, the party with the "clothes-rope" were forging gamely through the knee-deep snow "roped" together. But there was some admiration mingled with our amusement; they were making forward with considerable determination, and were only turned back when the cornices began to peel off in quick succession and the impossible nature of their task became obvious.

Malcolm announced that an avalanche had come down the Red Spout; we had been too absorbed in the actions of the Raeburn's party to notice it. The next one made itself heard. Just at first, I thought it was above us and felt a desire to "duck." The roar seemed to die away, and we saw a beautiful cascade of snow pouring over the first (overhanging) pitch in Parallel Gullies "A."

Consulting aneroids, Malcolm and Dason announced the height. I expect they were both wrong. We roped up and started the buttress. Almost at once we saw the Raeburn's party come racing down. "Avalanche," we thought—and then we heard it. Our route on the arête was a

perfectly safe one, but to reach it we had perforce to climb over long stretches of iced vegetation, on which neither boot nor axe made much impression.

The rock arête proved quite interesting, particularly the small pinnacles on its crest, and led nearly to the top. The cornice above looked quite small. Anticipating no difficulty, we lingered on the ridge, watched the "Raeburn's party" (now attempting the Black Spout), photographed, lunched, and wasted time generally.

The climbers were just out of sight when an avalanche came down the Spout. Apparently it did no damage to the party, but it turned our talk to climbing accidents and from that to amusing coroners. When we re-started, Dason had reached a Macabre stage, inquests, I think. With a glance at the steep gully on our right, Malcolm requested him to stop—only less politely!

The obvious route was on the rock, but Malcolm and Dason preferred to flounder among the soft snow, which Malcolm called "perfectly good." I found the surface soft and ready to peel off, and if more snow than was strictly necessary was sent down on him, Malcolm can have had no objection!

When we reached the "summit" the observers got out their aneroids and, after a lengthy debate, announced that we had climbed 820 feet. A current piece of American slang fits the case. With much less calculation and much greater accuracy I was able to announce that we had spent $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours on the Central Buttress. We reached the Indicator, in mist, mainly, I think, to give Dason the opportunity to turn out the food. Malcolm discovered that one party had got up the Spout branch. He then consulted his barometer and, without announcing the expected 8,000 feet, gave it as his considered opinion that the glass was going down! He received the obvious comment, "Cheer-i-oh."

We made our way down in thickening mist and had difficulty in locating the Well. Malcolm opined "Left" and Dason "Right." To be impartial, I kept a middle course. Then Malcolm had a brain-wave; the correct thing to do was to consult the aneroid! He gravely

announced that we were 200 feet above it. Twenty feet lower down we found it.

At the "corner" we found a pile of coats; the "clothes-ropes" party had gone astray. Then we picked up the Raeburn's party and hailed their camp through the mist. The present tenants of Raeburn's Gully were very much at home. After some conversation with Gordon, and a long distance chat with a voice in the mist, which invited us to soup, extolled Raeburn, and requested a taxi, we carried on.

It had been a glorious outing; at Altnaguibsaich Malcolm and Dason consulted their aneroids—and agreed that they were working well.

The writer paid several visits to the hill during this "avalanche period." As early as April 16 the cornice in the Black Spout had fallen forward, leaving a miniature "crevasse" behind. This was concealed by a covering of soft snow, distinguishable from the cornice snow by its colour. The leader was late, however, in observing this. On May 1 we counted eight large falls during our stay in the corrie. On May 14 we saw, from the summit of the Pinnacle, a large cornice break away in the Spout branch. Next day we returned (such was the fascination of these avalanches) and from the Black Spout Buttress saw a wonderful cascade come down the rock on the other side of the Spout. The crack of the falling cornice, the hiss and ensuing echo from the cliffs are hard to describe. They present a fine spectacle, but it should be remembered that stones often accompany the fall and the path that they may follow cannot be calculated.



June 12, 1932.

E. W. Smith.

RAEBURN'S GULLY, LOCHNAGAR.

Head of snow-tongue below the 70-foot pitch.

RAEBURN'S GULLY IN SPRING.

BY E. W. SMITH.

THAT Raeburn's Gully of Lochnagar would be climbed in winter conditions in 1932 was our ambition. Twice in winter and once in spring it was tried: twice it failed, but at last with the departure of the frosts it "went."

The first attempt was by Yunnie, Gordon, and Brockie on February 28, when an ice wall barred the way, and because of the short daylight available, it was given up.

The next attempt was made by the same trio on April 30, but the precarious state of the cornices put an ascent out of the question: indeed the cornice came down before the party was clear of the gully. No mishap occurred, and Yunnie joined Smith and Gove in an ascent of the left-hand branch of the Black Spout. A more successful effort was made on June 12, which, although it cannot be claimed as being done in winter conditions, is earlier in the year than any recorded ascent. The party, consisting of Yunnie, E. G. Gordon, Gove, and E. W. Smith, camped overnight on the shores of the Loch, under the West Buttress, a scramble up which, and a walk round the corries to beyond the top of the gully, from where a fine view of the last pitch is to be had, proved of no little worth in confirming the belief of the leader (Yunnie) that this time the gully would "go." The descent of the Black Spout, which was still very full of hard snow, was quite thrilling, as it was getting dark before we started.

We were up and about in a morning of glorious sunshine. Quite a few people had spent the night climbing Lochnagar by the Ladder, judging from the shouts and noise carried over the morning air. The sunshine soon gave way as the corries donned their mantle of cloud, and by the time a start was made we were in a dense fog, which never lifted during the entire climb. The scramble up the boulder fan from the the camp was, to one member of the party at all events, not the least tiresome time of the day.

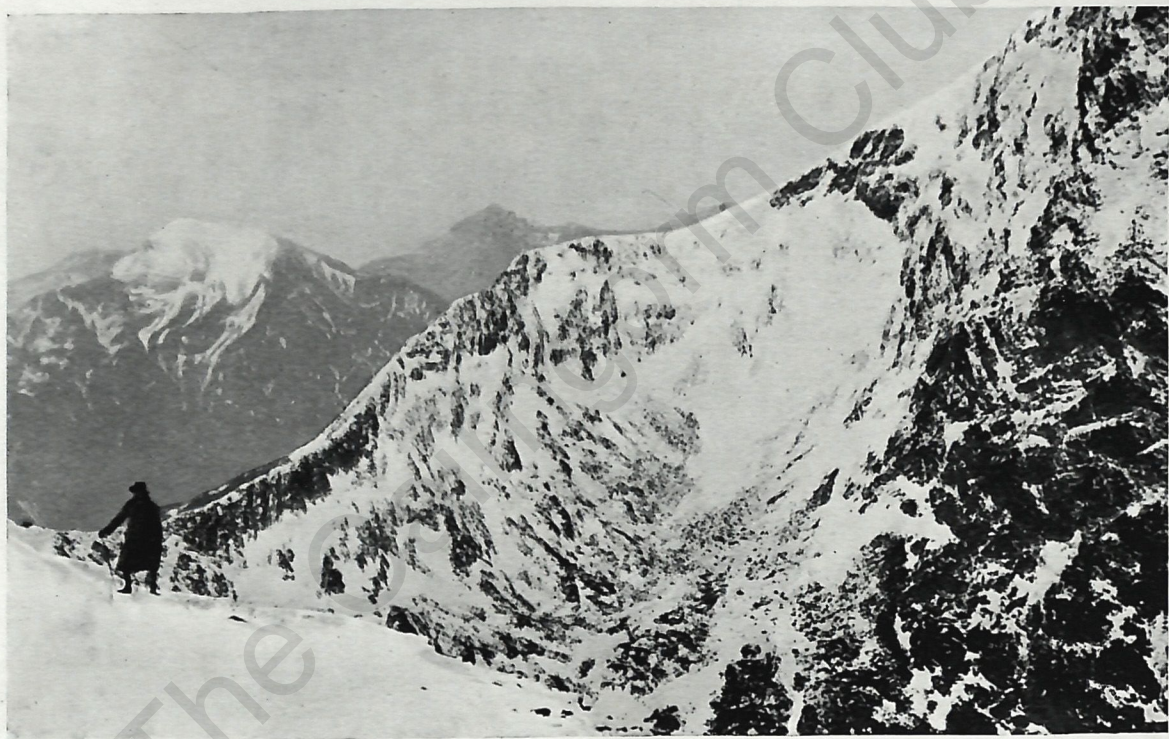
The first part of the actual climb was over a stretch of hard-packed snow. The kicking of steps was difficult, and ice-axes (which were most of the way to prove a great nuisance) were very useful. The rocks beyond the snow-field were wet and very crumbly on the surface: a little difficulty was encountered with a small cave pitch, and again more snow—or rather ice, for on this occasion it was very hard—and we were on the Great Cave Pitch below the Chokestone.

The gully all the way up had been full of loose boulders and very wet. When the vicinity of the Cave was reached it was found that the winter had wrought great changes in this part of the climb. The rock near the Chokestone, which before had presented sheer wall, was now terraced. So great was the change that Yunnie at first thought he was facing a pitch which he had entirely forgotten. After the leader and second got over the cave pitch it was necessary to unrope, to tackle the Chokestone with the threaded rope. The rope by this time was very wet, fingers numb, and unroping a tedious job. The effort of getting over the Chokestone left us puffing, but after we had a breather good progress was made, for we knew we'd win through. The only other snag encountered was in the last pitch (*C.C.J.*, Vol. XIII, p. 21). It looked so simple our leader was to take it in his stride, but neither foothold nor handhold was to be had on the convex wall. An escape was found to the right, with the help of a back up, or rather by very unique "combined tactics," for Yunnie's Alpine boots were resting on Smith's head before he finally got himself drawn up to a decent stance!! Gordon was over in the same manner, and the other two, to save time, were up on the rope, safely belayed from the top of the corries. The small cornice offered no difficulty.

The danger from falling boulders cannot be too well emphasized, and the menace of the stone-throwing "wandering hiker" (*C.C.J.*, Vol. XIII, p. 24) might well be brought to the notice of those hill lovers, who more than ever haunt the top of Lochnagar.

Sgurr à Mhaim

Stob Ban



Easter, 1932.

Carn Mòr Dearg Arête.

James McCoss.

BEN NEVIS AT EASTER.

BY MALCOLM SMITH.

THE experienced mountaineer who reads this may possibly think that the climb which I am attempting to describe was nothing to make a song about. I, alas, am not experienced. My modest tale of peaks, all bagged by the easy routes, would soon be told. Rocks and gullies I had left to the young and nimble, and to the rope and ice-axe I was a complete stranger. Also the Fort William Meet was my first. I did want to climb Ben Nevis, and hoped that amid the glamour of my Clubmates' triumphs among the crags and corries my own modest ascent would pass unnoticed.

The walk to the S.M.C. Hut on Friday morning was nothing out of the ordinary, except that my share of the rations for nine hungry folk for twenty-four hours weighed considerably more than the usual hill lunch, and made what should have been a pleasant tramp a somewhat laborious trudge. The start had been propitious, however, for an unexpected motor bus and a penny fare had saved four of us a good mile of hard, high road. At the distillery we took to the heather and, with the Allt a' Mhuillin Burn for guide, commenced the tramp to the Hut. For the month of March the weather was distinctly warm, and as numerous burns had to be crossed, progress was somewhat slow. For the first two or three miles the scenery was rather plain, but slowly the bold headland of Carn Dearg came into view and was passed on our right hand, to be succeeded by the stupendous array of towering precipices, the North-East side of mighty Ben Nevis itself. The rough and rocky track had been getting gradually steeper, and the soft air of the coast had changed to a cold wind blowing right in our faces as the valley narrowed between the steep slope of Carn Mor Dearg on the left and the terrific and awe-inspiring face of Ben Nevis on the right.

For a long time we had been looking and hoping for the first glimpse of the Hut and our journey's end, but it proved most elusive until almost before we realised it an extra steep

pull brought us to a level plateau in the middle of the valley, and there it was. The other members of the party had reached it before us so the door stood hospitably open. At once our loads were dumped off and we examined the marvels of the interior of our temporary abode. It is really a misnomer to call it a Hut. An up-to-date dwelling, replete with all modern conveniences from the mountaineer's point of view inadequately describes it, but as this is a record of a climb and not a description of housing property, it is sufficient to say that it contains everything that the knowledge, experience and ingenuity of its designers could possibly foresee, and nothing whatever which could possibly make for the comfort and well-being of its inmates is lacking. We were continually making new discoveries; in fact it was not until we were on the point of leaving next morning that we realised that our very cosy bunks might have been rendered even warmer by the use of hot bottles. But, as the most useful member of the party remarked, she had enough to do boiling water for tea, supper, and breakfast.

Standing in the centre of the valley at an altitude of about 2,500 feet and facing the rugged pile of crag and gully of the Tower Ridge and the whole tremendous array of the precipices of the Northern face, there must be few, if any, dwelling places of man set in such scenes of savage grandeur. To my inexperienced eye those cliffs seemed impregnable to human effort, and I realised that if there was an easy route to the summit, it did not lie on this side of the mountain.

Lunch over, no time was lost in attacking the Ben. There was some talk of No. 3 Gully, and a strong party, consisting of McCoss, Miss Bruce, Symmers, and Orkney, set off complete with rope and ice-axes. Another party, not so strong, of whom I was one, walked up the valley without any definite objective, while Doctor and Mrs. Hendry elected to remain at the Hut and housekeep. Of the second party's doings there is little to record. We reached the foot of the cliffs at Corrie Leis hoping, perhaps, to find some hitherto undiscovered and easy means of ascent to the summit, but Ben Nevis was experiencing the mildest

winter ever recorded, and the snow on the almost vertical slopes of the corrie was too soft and thin. One sank through it to the loose and treacherous scree, causing small landslides. The side of the Carn Mor Dearg Arête, like an unscalable wall, towered above us, so we decided to call it a day and retraced our way down the corrie to the Hut. Here a scene of domestic bliss awaited us. The Hut had been spring-cleaned. A bright fire crackled cheerfully in the workmanlike range, where a steaming kettle announced that tea was ready. Off came our heavy boots and, with dry stockings and the goloshes which the S.M.C. have thoughtfully provided as part of the Hut's equipment, we soon felt ready for anything which the morrow might have in store for us.

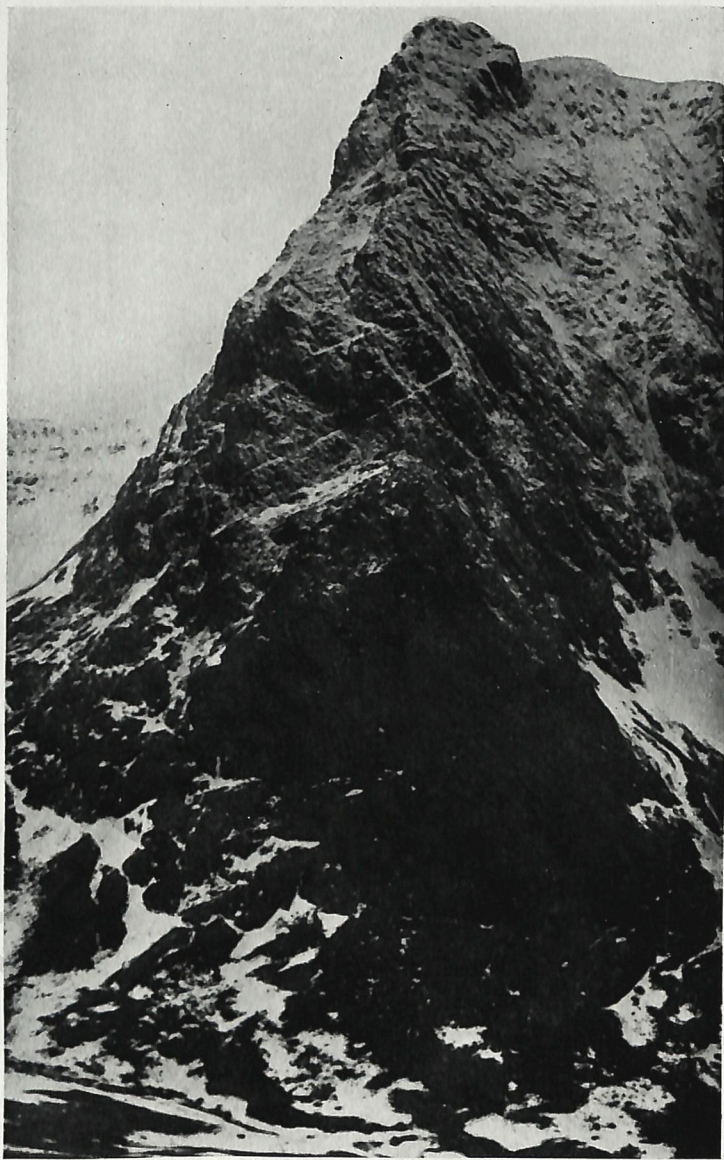
Later on McCoss' party returned, having had a successful rock and snow climb up No. 3 Gully to the summit. Their posterior aspects denoted glissading on the homeward journey, and the Hut fairly filled with steam as they stood with backs to the fire drying their nether garments.

Supper was the next item, and what would we have done here without Mrs. Hendry? The sausages, bacon, tomatoes, and brown bread which had weighed down our rucksacks on the journey from Fort William, now fried to perfection, disappeared like snow off a dyke before the onslaught of nine hungry mortals. There were plenty of willing helpers to wash, dry, and stow away the crockery and cutlery, so with the Hut tidied up we settled down to a happy evening of bridge, talk, and tobacco. Gradually the bunks became occupied with blanket-wrapped forms. The last bed-goer turned out the lamps, and soon nothing was heard but the sounds of slumber, blending with the howling of the wind round the Hut.

Next morning (Saturday) our waking thoughts were of the weather. The Doctor, who was first up, replenished the fire, which was still alight. He then went out for water but returned for an ice-axe, and the sound of chopping from the well told of a frosty morning. Our morning toilets were necessarily somewhat sketchy, and once more our invaluable cook produced another batch of sausages, bacon,

and tomatoes which, with the keen mountain air as an appetiser, we disposed of with the same celerity as supper. Breakfast over and the dishes washed and stowed away, we set to work to clean up so as to leave the Hut in as spic and span a condition as we found it. While thus engaged we were visited by two young men, members of the Rucksack Club, who had spent the night in sleeping-bags out in the open. I might also mention that, at the summit the previous day, McCoss' party had met another hardy pair with an Arctic expedition tent, which they intended to pitch on the snow-covered top of the Observatory and there pass the night.

During breakfast it was decided that a party, consisting of McCoss, Dr. and Mrs. Hendry, S. C. H. Smith, Ritson, Orkney, and M. Smith, should climb Carn Mor Dearg, from there traverse the Arête and make the ascent of Ben Nevis by the Eastern summit ridge. Kits were soon packed up and at ten o'clock the key was turned in the door. Miss Bruce and Symmers set off with the intention of climbing the Tower Ridge, while the other party departed in the opposite direction and on an easterly course crossed the Allt a' Mhuillin for the steep slope of Carn Mor Dearg. The weather was all that could be desired, crisp and frosty, with bright sunshine. The lower slopes had a fair covering of mossy turf, which made the going easy to begin with. This gave way to a long, steep stretch of boulders, rock, and scree, where care had to be taken to avoid dislodging loose stones. The higher up we got the steeper appeared to be the slope, and as you can't sail a boat to windward except by tacking, so we pushed ahead by diagonal traverses, and whether going on all fours is orthodox climbing I don't know, but I certainly found this method frequently necessary. This part of the climb was the most fatiguing, but as height was gained, the superb views across the valley of the Ben Nevis precipices became more and more impressive and gave excuse for frequent halts. The snow-line was reached at about 3,000 feet, and owing to the frost a fairly hard crust had formed, ensuring good footholds. It was just as well I thought, for now the slope had vanished and



Easter, 1932.

S. C. H. Smith.

NORTH-EAST BUTTRESS, BEN NEVIS.

we seemed to be on a vast convex roll of snow, from which neither the valley nor the top were visible. I looked up at the boot soles of the man above me and down on the cap of the one below. The footsteps of the leaders, however, provided an excellent staircase, and using these and my ice-axe, and endeavouring to look as unconcerned as my neighbours, I continued my laborious progress until a mighty cold wind and a flat, narrow ridge appeared before my eyes and the top of Carn Mor Dearg (4,012 feet), and the first lap, was attained.

It must be from here that the finest and most comprehensive view of Ben Nevis is visible. In the clear air across the valley every feature of the rugged mass of buttress and gully showed up in perfect clarity. On one of the snow slopes below the snow-corniced ridge of the summit a pair of climbers, reduced by distance to the merest specks, could be seen going slowly upward. The intense cold did not permit of a prolonged inspection, so after our breather, we started off along the ridge to where it narrowed into the Arête. Before doing so, however, as all notable achievements nowadays are recorded on the films, we decided thus to immortalise ourselves, and our various efforts to appear like "expert climbers negotiating a difficult ridge" were duly "shot."

A word here about the Arête, which runs in a South-Easterly direction and forms the connection, about a mile long, between Carn Mor Dearg and Ben Nevis. Studying it beforehand on the map and in my ignorance of the sharp ridges of the West Highland tops, I had imagined a fairly wide and flat surface affording an easy mountain walk. Imagine my dismay then when actually seeing it. Width and flatness it had none nor was there any semblance of a path. It looked exactly like a gigantic dry-stone dyke, rather broken about the top. Here soaring up to a pinnacle, there dropping down to a saddle, the sides always terribly steep, sometimes positively sheer, and powdered snow blew off it in the wind gusts. Its appearance did not seem to worry the others, so I took my place near the tail of the party and trusted to luck.

It was just like walking along the top of a wall, and soon I found that I had made two mistakes in my equipment. A loose raincoat which flaps about the legs and even tries to blow up over the head is no use for ridge-walking in a high wind, while the foot of the rucksack should be secured round the waist to prevent it blowing over also. When the wind, combined with slippery rocks, prevented an upright posture, I found it necessary to descend a few feet and progress along the weather side, using the topmost rocks for a hand rail. The scenery was wonderful. I had brief impressions of dizzy crags and yawning chasms, with snow swirling about their dark depths, while during brief halts ever-changing views of the Allt a' Mhuillin and the massive front of Ben Nevis were revealed. After a scramble over the highest point of all and a steep descent, the ridge swung round to the right above the Corrie Leis, and when this was passed it widened somewhat. The last rocks were left behind and right before me was the steep Eastern summit-ridge of the Ben, covered with good, hard snow and with no lack of foot-holes left by those in front. The strong wind which had been such a nuisance on the Arête was now right behind and greatly assisted me on the last lap. Here I met a party of half-a-dozen young Englishmen running swiftly down. They informed me that they were bound for the Arête and were hurrying up to get warm. I was warm enough, and felt pleased that I had not met them on the Arête which, doubtless, they would also pass at a run, in contrast to my undignified scramble. Ritson now overtook me and together we continued. The slope gradually eased and merged to a broad, wind-swept plateau of glistening untrodden snow sparkling in the bright sunshine. From the middle of it arose two irregular snow-covered shapes. We had reached our goal.

We found the rest of our party getting what shelter they could at the old Observatory, which had the appearance of being built entirely of snow and ice. Here we off-loaded rucksacks and ate our sandwiches. The distant hills were hidden in haze, so that our view was rather limited. All around was a wilderness of mountains, all of a monotonous

brown in colour save where the higher slopes merged into peaks of glistening white.

I personally felt a little disappointed, as I thought that the view from the highest summit loses something by the mere fact that one is looking down on everything. On the top, however, in spite of the mild winter, the conditions seemed positively Arctic. I do not know what the temperature was, but it must have been well below freezing point. After the heat of climbing we soon felt rather chilly so got a move on. Our descent was to be by the Observatory path, but we made a detour to the right and, approaching as closely as we could to the edge of the precipices, looked down on the buttresses and gullies we had gazed up at from the Hut, while across the valley lay Carn Mor Dearg.

After the thrills of the ascent the journey homewards was rather an anti-climax. We had some mild glissading while the snow lasted, but very quickly we were off the snow and on the scree, and then the path with its seemingly countless traverses. At Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe I saw two figures apparently about to sail a model yacht on this most desolate sheet of water, but a nearer view showed them to be the two aforementioned adventurers with the Arctic tent. They were evidently choosing a more temperate climate to sleep in, though to my idea their proximity to the water suggested damp, but perhaps they were undergoing some hardening process.

Climbing the mountain from this side must be a dull business, but the monotony is relieved from time to time by wonderful views into Glen Nevis. Cutting corners wherever possible we eventually reached the lower levels. Sheep appeared, then Achintee Farm and the hard road. We "put on a step" but it didn't last long, and so we returned to civilization. A football match, houses, and Fort William. Some small boys greeted us with "Ye've been hiking the Ben," and when we had passed them in dignified silence, "They've got these things on their backs." Last of all the Alexandra Hotel where, with the inner man refreshed by pints of tea and the outer by the most luxuriously hot baths, our adventure came to a most satisfactory termination.

A TRAVERSE OF THE BLACK SPOUT PINNACLE.

BY W. A. EWEN.

IN 1928 G. R. Symmers and J. Silver made the first ascent of the Black Spout Pinnacle from the base (*C.C.J.*, Vol. XI, p. 313; *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 119). The gully by which the ascent was made Symmers refers to as "the Green Gully. . . ." In order to avoid confusion, we refer to this gully leading up to the Pinnacle Gap as Pinnacle Gully No. 1. From the gap a gully descends for about 200 feet to the left-hand branch of the Black Spout—this we call Pinnacle Gully No. 2.

On July 3, 1932, W. Middleton, R. Lees, and the writer ascended Pinnacle Gully No. 1 to the Pinnacle Gap, descended Pinnacle Gully No. 2 to the Spout branch, thereafter ascending No. 2 Gully and descending by No. 1 Gully, thus effecting a complete traverse of the Pinnacle in either direction.

The climb commences near the foot of Raeburn's Gully; it has been admirably described by Symmers, and details are unnecessary. Two slight variations on the original route were made: the first cave was climbed on the right. Starting immediately at the entrance of the cave, the leader climbed the steep right wall on holds that were excellent for some 10 feet. Progress then became difficult; a steep, smooth slab forced us into a traverse, which revealed an easy route. A return to the chimney can then be effected simply.

At the second cave, which Symmers turned by a chimney on the left, our party decided on a direct ascent via the "thro' route." An oblique crack, into which the body can be jammed—not comfortably, be it said—leads to a good standing place about 12–15 feet above the floor. Facing out, the leader then climbed on to the boulders forming the door of the cave. The second man was brought up, and the leader continued the ascent on the right wall for a few feet

to the top of the obstacle. Both variations are mildly difficult.

Below the cave there is a veritable garden of ferns and flowers: they included a large plant, not unlike a dahlia, which the third man referred to on the descent as "the potato patch." Above, the gully opens up and a continuous grass slope leads to the Pinnacle Gap, where we arrived at 2.25 p.m., two hours and twenty-five minutes after the start.

The leader then descended Pinnacle Gully No. 2, leaving both the second and the third man at the gap. The top part of the gully was not promising—we found a profusion of loose blocks, slime, and moss. The first (top) pitch is scarcely worthy of the name, but we note it here as being one of the few stable boulders in the gully. The second pitch was more formidable in appearance and much loose matter lay above it. Some of this was placed out of harm's way, but one or two boulders were, unavoidably, sent down. The pitch took the form of a cave, with a through route, and this at first looked hopeless. A way down the right wall was tried, without success. There was nothing for it but to descend via the through route to the cave—the boulders of which did not look too stable. Indeed, when a heavy boulder fell on them from above the whole structure was seen to quake. Descent was a very simple matter, absurdly so when one reflected on the labour spent in clearing the impossible route on the wall.

No. 2 was called down for some 20 feet to enable the leader to examine the lowest pitch. A good deal of gardening was necessary, and even then the pitch looked impossibly difficult. There was every chance of our being able to "rope down," so the leader returned to the gap and acquainted the others with the situation. We agreed to rope down if the pitch was not otherwise negotiable; the vote in favour of continuing the traverse was unanimous.

No. 3 was sent down into the cave and No. 2 followed, making things as secure as possible below while the leader made the descent. A useful belay was found just above the lowest pitch, to which No. 2 secured himself as No. 3 made

the descent of the lowest pitch ; he had an uncomfortable time, but the second man, with a long reach, succeeding in getting down in very fine style and without assistance. The leader had a strong desire to double the rope over the belay before embarking on this venture ; the report from the party below was not hopeful, there being scarcely standing room below the pitch. The rope would probably have jammed on the belay ; instead it was turned, none too securely, over the chokestone, and the operation was begun. The edge of the main boulder was quite sharp, and descent was at first easy ; steadied by the second man, who had discovered some good holds, the manoeuvre was completed successfully ; it was possible to " stretch " the gully and " back " down. The overhang was very awkward. We then " glissaded " the final 60 feet through slime and moss to the Branch. This done, we considered that one of the main caravan routes had been reached and that a satisfactory traverse had been made. After a few minutes' rest, we commenced the traverse in the other direction.

The initial 60 feet was climbed on the slime that still remained ; a route on the left wall looked feasible, but it was now raining hard and we did not stop to examine it. The first pitch was climbed by backing up underneath the jammed boulder. A hold immediately under the chokestone and a ledge on the wall enables the climber to proceed obliquely up to the left and out under the overhang. An awkward turning movement reduces the feeling of security considerably, but the second man can do something to minimise this fly-on-the-ceiling sensation. The second man is in an extremely poor position, and out-and-out " combined tactics " are scarcely possible. The consequences of a fall, while undoubtedly unpleasant, would probably not be of a very serious nature. (Much depends on how one falls, of course ; all that the writer implies is that the pitch is not of a sensational nature !)

The cave above was a refuge from the rain, and No. 3 had again an unenviable task in getting over the initial difficulty in a downpour. The gap was reached without trouble, and there the order of the going was again changed.

The rain had become less of a deluge, but mist hampered our route-finding. Happily, No. 2 has a prodigious memory for details, and we experienced no real difficulty. (At this time, unknown to us, a party was attempting to return from the Indicator to Altnaguibsaich; they returned, inadvertently, to the summit on two occasions. The moral is obvious!) The through route pitch was turned on the right, and at the lower cave a little exploration was carried out in search of Symmers' chimney. At first this chimney "crevasse" was ruled out as the wrong chimney. After descending it, however, we recalled Symmers' description and were agreed that we had struck his route of ascent. The cave was immediately below and we hastened down to it; the state of our garments demanded haste; I believe a slight drizzle had set in by this time, but we would scarcely have noticed a deluge.

The only pitch between the cave and the starting point takes the form of a narrow crack, close under the Pinnacle Wall. Here one of the party discovered a superfluous hold and for some moments held up the second man, speculating on this phenomenal promiscuity and questioning the uses to which it might be put. It would better adorn the first pitch in No. 2 Gully; but the suggestion of tying a pink ribbon round it was met with the reply that it was worth a place on the Indicator.

The climb was completed in five hours; at 6 p.m. we were at the col, and our bus left Ballater at 8 p.m. We raced down to Altnaguibsaich, which was reached at 6.35 p.m.; at Ballater at 7.5, we had scarcely an hour to remove traces of the day's scrambling.

A FORTNIGHT IN THE JOTUNHEIM.

BY J. R. LESLIE GRAY.

THE following is an account of a visit I paid a few years ago to this wild and picturesque region, which is not so well known to British travellers and mountaineers as it might be.

Towards the end of June I sailed from Newcastle to Bergen, and on the morning after my arrival left by the Bergen-Oslo train for Myrdal, a village situated in a high-lying valley surrounded by snowy mountains (part of the Hardangerfjeld), down the sides of which descend many waterfalls, varying from 500 to 1,000 feet high. The Hotel Vatnahalsen, where I stayed for a week, stands on the top of a precipitous crag, and like all the other hotels in the interior, is built of wood.

The weather at Myrdal was very unfavourable. Several times I tried to climb the mountains in the vicinity, and on each occasion was turned back by a heavy snowstorm and driving mist. The day before I left the sky cleared, and I had a delightful walk up the valley along the margins of the two lakes which occupy the greater part of its length. On looking over a precipice at the head of the valley I saw a charming picture—a litter of fox cubs enjoying themselves in the unaccustomed warmth. They were rolling over and over, lolling out their red tongues, chasing one another, and playfully pretending to bite.

My next move was to Laerdal, via Flaam. The distance from Vatnahalsen to Flaam is about twelve miles, and the road descends from about 2,400 feet to sea level. The first section consists of an extraordinary zigzag path (like the conventional drawings of a flash of lightning) down a steep bank about 700 feet high. The sail from Flaam to Laerdal was my first on a Norwegian Fjord—the Sogne. The scenery was most impressive, but it is unnecessary for me to try to describe it here, as the Fjords have so often been the subject of more practised pens. On the boat I had some

conversation with a student who was curious to know where I was bound for. I told him I was going to the Jotunheim. He said, "That is nice, but do not die." I replied that I didn't intend to if I could help it, but that I supposed he meant to warn me not to risk getting killed. He said, "Oh, yes, do not get keeled on the mountains." I promised to be very careful. From Laerdal I travelled up the valley of the Laera River by motor bus. On the way I visited a very ancient wooden church (stavekirke), said to have been built about 800 years ago. It looks—and smells—like it: the interior is filled with the odour of antiquity rather than of sanctity.

At Lake Tyin the road terminates, and I embarked on a motor boat for Tyinholmen. The lake is about 3,500 feet above the sea, and the scenery suggests the Arctic Regions. Snow-clad mountains rise to a great height on either side, large snowfields come down to the water's edge, and at that season masses of ice float on the surface. At one place I saw a numerous herd of reindeer, tended by Lapps. I landed at the north end of the lake, and walked across the isthmus which divides Lake Tyin from Lake Bygdin, and constitutes the watershed in that part of the country. I stayed for the night in the hotel at Eidsbugaren at the west end of Lake Bygdin. Near the hotel there is a monolith erected to the memory of Aasmund O. Vinje, the poet, sometimes called the Norwegian Burns, also a cottage which was formerly his shooting lodge, and is now turned into a sort of memorial museum.

Next morning I sailed to the other end of Lake Bygdin, and put up at the Bygdin High Mountain Hotel. The weather had now greatly improved, and I got a good deal of walking and climbing. My first ascent was to the top of the Bitihorn, 5,250 feet, which is about a mile south of the hotel. From the summit, looking north, there is a superb view of the peaks and glaciers of the Jotunheim. That is probably the finest prospect of the kind on the Continent north of the Alps. The mountains are intermediate in elevation between the Alps and the Grampians. The two highest summits, Glittertind and Galdhøpiggen, both over

8,000 feet, are rather more than half as high as Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa, and rather less than twice as high as Ben Nevis and Ben Macdhui. The chief glory of the Jotunheim is its glaciers, such mighty masses as the Hestbrae and the Memurubrae being much more impressive than, for example, the Mer de Glace and the Glacier des Bossons.

Next day I climbed the Synshorn, about 4,800 feet, which rises just behind the hotel on the north side, and the following three or four days were occupied in ridge walking on the range which runs parallel to the northern margin of the lake. Here it is possible to walk for miles over rough rocks and extensive snow-beds without descending below 5,000 feet. Being in very good condition after all this exercise, I resolved to attempt the ascent of Kalvaahögda, about 7,200 feet, the highest peak in the neighbourhood. This mountain stands in much the same position relatively to Lake Bygdin as Ben Lawers to Loch Tay, but the gneissose rocks of Kalvaahögda are far more rugged than the Ben Lawers schists. Here I have to record a failure and sound a warning note. The official map of the Jotunheim, otherwise a good one, shows an unbroken path along the northern margin of Lake Bygdin. Therein it misleads the traveller, for there is no real path, and the shore is intersected in several places by unfordable torrents. I walked along the shingly strand for miles until I came to the first of these torrents, which cut me off hopelessly from the main mass of Kalvaahögda. To reach it entailed a tremendous detour over ground nearly as rough as the Larig Ghru at the Pools of Dee, with an ascent of about 2,500 feet. This I accomplished, but found that I was still about 1,300 feet below the summit, with a large snowfield and some very bad rocks before me. In spite of this I might have got to the top, but if I had done so I would not have been back at the hotel before midnight. That would not have mattered much, as at that time of the year there is practically no darkness in Norway, but I had visions of our worthy host organizing search parties, so I sorrowfully retraced my steps. Advice to those about to climb Kalvaahögda—get on to the ridge immediately behind the hotel at once, and keep as high as

possible the whole way. Success will then be assured, if you are fortunate in the weather.

A day or two later I returned to Eidsbugaren, and the next day ascended the Uraanasbrae. This is a true glacier—that is proved by the greenish-white colour of the water at the western end of Lake Bygdin—but owing to its gradual slope it is hardly crevassed at all, and resembles a vast snowfield rather than a glacier. From the lake to the summit the distance is about six miles, and on this occasion the surface of the glacier was covered with a recent coating of soft, wet snow, which made the ascent rather toilsome, as the climber sank knee-deep in the unpleasant slush at every step, but the toil was more than repaid by the view from the summit, over 6,000 feet, of mountains (some of them veritable aiguilles), and great glaciers and snowfields.

Next morning I motored back to Laerdal, sailed from thence to Gudvangen, and ascended the wonderful Stalheim Gorge, which reminded me of Glen Einich, but is even grander and more profound. From Stalheim I motored to Vossevangen, a neat little town situated on a lake famous alike for its beauty and its trout, and so back to Bergen and home across the North Sea.

Norway is without doubt a magnificent country, and its people are worthy of it. As Ben Jonson said of Shakespeare, they are "indeed honest and of an open and free nature." The two best books on mountaineering in Norway are "Norway and its Glaciers," by Principal J. D. Forbes, and "Norway, the Northern Playground," by William Cecil Slingsby. Of course transport and accommodation have been much improved since those works were published.

THE SIX CAIRNGORMS.

It is 24 years (June 20, 1908) since the six highest Cairngorms were all ascended in one day (*C.C.J.*, Vol. VI, p. 49).

The climbers who took part in that excursion aimed only at traversing these hills within 24 hours, midnight to midnight, and they succeeded. The members of the party were:—H. J. Butchart, L. J. Davidson, H. G. Drummond, H. Kellas, and I. M. McLaren, and the time they took was:—

Loch Builg ..	Midnight.		H.	M.	
Ben Avon ..	2 23 a.m.		2	23	
Beinn a' Bhuird	3 50 ..		1	27	
Cairngorm ..	8 0 ..		4	10	
Ben Macdhui ..	10 34 ..		2	34	
Cairntoul ..	3 16 p.m.		4	42	
Braeriach ..	5 30 ..		2	14	
Glen Eunach ..	7 0 ..		1	30	
			<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>		
			19		0

Three and a half hours were spent en route, resting, photography, and for meals. A very enjoyable day was spent. They had ordered a trap to meet them at Glen Eunach at 7 p.m., and no object would have been served by getting there before that hour.

No other attempt was made till this year. On June 26, 1932, three members of the Club set out to reduce the time taken by the first party, and they certainly set up an excellent record.

The members of the party were—J. Beattie, Wm. Hutcheon, and Geo. Shand. Their time was—

			H.	M.	
Loch Builg ..	1 0 a.m.				
Ben Avon ..	2 55 ..		1	55	
Beinn a' Bhuird	4 10 ..		1	15	
Cairngorm ..	7 50 ..		3	40	
Ben Macdhui	10 40 ..		2	50	
Cairntoul ..	2 10 p.m.		3	30	
Braeriach ..	3 55 ..		1	45	
Glen Eunach ..	5 15 ..		1	20	
			<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>		
			16		15

A week later, on July 3, 1932, four other members made an attempt on this record. The party consisted of A. J. W. Brockie, E. G. Gordon, J. Gove, and R. P. Yunnie. This party was very unfortunate. Gordon had an accident to his knee after leaving Beinn a' Bhuid, so that only Brockie and Yunnie were able to proceed.

The time taken was :—

	H.	M.		H.	M.
Loch Builg ..	10	15	p.m., 2nd		
Ben Avon ..	11	45	„ „	1	30
Beinn a' Bhuid ..	1	55	a.m., 3rd	2	10
Cairngorm ..	5	30	„ „	3	35
Ben Macdhui ..	7	20	„ „	1	50
Braeriach ..	10	40	„ „	3	20
Cairntoul ..	12	5	p.m., „	1	25
Carrour Bothy	1	0	„ „	0	55
				<hr/>	
				14	45

It will be noted that this party did not follow quite the same route as the other two parties, and Yunnie was the only member of the party who finished in the above time.

This was also a very fine performance. The distance appears to be 28 miles, and the climbing height 9,000 feet. If we take the climbers' formula :

	H.	M.
3 miles per hour—28 miles ..	9	20
9,000 feet—30 minutes per 1,000 feet	4	30
3 rests of half-an-hour	1	30
	<hr/>	
	15	20

this is very good going.

I think it is fitting to point out here that this racing over hills is not true mountaineering, and is to be condemned. However, I happen to know personally all those who took part in this adventure, and realise that they have the true climbing spirit. Still, my advice is—Very good, but don't do it any more.—J. McC.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1932—BRAEMAR.

It was a somewhat daring experiment on the part of the President to insist that a recently elected, though not young, member of the Club should record the doings of the large number of members and friends who assembled at the Invercauld Arms Hotel, Braemar, for the 1932 New Year Meet. Owing to the size of the party and the variety of their interests, it has been somewhat difficult for the scribe to make a comprehensive survey of the activities of all the members present, and it is quite possible that many of the more interesting events, especially on the social side, may have been overlooked.

The following members were present at the Meet :—

J. McCoss (President), W. Malcolm (Vice-President), J. E. Bothwell, H. J. Butchart, A. G. C. Collins, H. C. Dugan, Dr. W. G. Evans, Wm. Garden, G. P. Geddes, H. D. Griffith, A. L. Hay, W. D. Hutcheon, J. Morison, R. Mackay, J. C. Orkney, J. A. Parker, E. B. Reid, Dr. J. A. Sellar, R. T. Sellar, S. C. H. Smith, G. R. Symmers, A. Taylor, N. J. Wilson, Mrs. Garden (Queen), Mrs. E. J. Hendry, Misses A. E. D. Bruce, M. R. Harbinson, E. McCoss, B. P. Macfarlane, M. Yeaman. In addition there were the following guests :—Dr. Hendry, R. D. W. Mackay, Capt. Tireman, Misses Moncur, Morison, E. G. Gordon, R. P. Yunnie, members, and Brockie and Gove, guests, stayed at the Inver Inn—39.

The weather on December 31 gave great promise that those members who hoped to indulge in the much-advertised winter sports would not be disappointed. Snow was lying to a depth of from two to six inches on the roads, and those who had been fortunate enough to arrive earlier in the week had already had some ski-ing.

Unfortunately New Year's Day brought a complete thaw, and the snow rapidly disappeared. In spite of this, however, the Meet must be regarded as a great success.

After dinner on Hogmanay the party, headed by the President with his pipes, and E. B. Reid with the hotel gong, marched to the Fife Arms Hotel, and joined the guests there in dancing. Shortly before midnight they returned to the Invercauld Arms, and the New Year was ushered in according to custom.

January 1, 1932.—In spite of the late hour at which many of the members retired to rest on the previous night, an early start on the serious work of the Meet was made.

The following excursions were carried out :—

1. The President, Malcolm, Bothwell, Evans, Griffith, and Hay, with Mrs. Hendry and Misses McCoss and Yeaman, took the Black

Shiel route to Lochnagar. Visibility was poor owing to mist, but fine views were obtained on the way down. Two members glistaded 300 feet on the east side of the North Ridge. There was a strong gale blowing, one member having his spectacles blown from his face.

2. Orkney, Smith, Symmers, and Miss Harbinson motored to the Garawalt Shiel and made for the Staic Buttress, via the White Mounth. The buttress was climbed with great ease, several variations being made as a matter of interest. The party then circled round and visited the indicator on Lochnagar. The summit was left in a strong, westerly breeze. Visibility was poor throughout. Reaching the path as night fell, the remainder of the excursion was carried out in pitch darkness.

3. Parker and a small select party made a highly sensational trip per Hotel 'bus to the Linn of Dee. Thence, under experienced leadership, through the primeval forest to the Glen Lui Road, which was reached at the well-known cairn, which was repaired and brought up to the scratch. A difficult traverse was then made by road to An Drochaid Dubh. The crossing of the bridge presented no difficulty, and the party then retired in good order to Braemar, via the north road and the timber bridge at the sawmill.

4. Brockie, Gordon, Gove, and Yunnie climbed Lochnagar by the Black Spout, from Inver Inn.

January 2, 1932.

1. Bothwell, Hay, Hutcheon, and Miss Yeaman motored to Derry Lodge and climbed Carn a Mhaim from the Lui Bridge. They followed the ridge up to Ben Macdhuì, descending by the Sron Riach. Miserable conditions prevailed throughout the day.

2. Orkney, Smith, Taylor, and Misses Harbinson and Macfarlane ascended Ben Macdhuì via Sron Riach. The return was made by the same route.

3. Morison, Reid, and Dr. Sellar ferried across the Dee and climbed to the south top of Beinn a' Bhuird via the Slugan Glen. There was very thick mist and rain all the way up the hill, and the fast disappearing snow was very soft.

4. The President, Dr. Evans, Griffith, Malcolm, Mrs. Hendry, and Miss McCoss walked from Derry Lodge to the foot of Sron Riach, and returned the same way.

5. Geddes and Wilson were out stalking on Carn Turc. They killed "the Baby" and one hind, and nearly killed themselves dragging the latter home. On arrival at Callater a target sweep ended in a tie, there being no score.

The event of the evening was the crowning of the Queen of the Club, (Mrs. Wm. Garden). Headed by the President, with his pipes, she was borne shoulder-high into the room on ice-axes by four strong

and handsome henchmen, and the crowning ceremony was carried out with all due formalities. After having the crown of stag-moss placed upon her head by the President, and receiving a present sent from Aberdeen by Mr. Walter A. Reid, she charmingly acknowledged the honour, and after amusing speeches by E. B. Reid and Col. Innes Shaw, M.P. (a guest at the Hotel), her health was drunk in a bowl of punch, brewed and served by the capable hands of G. P. Geddes and R. T. Sellar, who were dressed specially for the occasion.

The next part of the programme was the initiation of new members. After a test, consisting of Gaelic pronunciation and walking on an Alpine rope blind-folded, the new member, Miss H. R. Harbinson, was declared to be a fit and proper member of the Club. The members then indulged in dancing under the able leadership of Miss Bruce.

Not satisfied with his activities during the day, a well-known C.A. practised at a late hour various traverses, etc., on his wardrobe before retiring for the night.

January 3, 1932.

The local weather prophet who, in answer to our enquiry, replied, "Maybe it'll no rain a' the day" was far too optimistic. There was no cessation of a steady downpour. In spite of the miserable conditions, the following excursions were planned and carried out:—

1. The President, Bothwell, Hay, Hutcheon, Orkney, Smith, and Misses Macfarlane and Yeaman motored to Derry Lodge and "slushed" up Glen Derry to the Shelter Stone via Corrie Etchachan. Difficulty was experienced at times in crossing the burns. We were surprised to find that in the New Year two names were already inscribed in the book there. We also recorded our visit, and all returned the same way, with the exception of Hay, Hutcheon, and Miss Yeaman, who came back by Derry, Cairngorm, and Carn Crom.

2. Symmers and Miss Harbinson had a short practice rock climb on the Lion's Face.

3. Reid, Morison, Misses Bruce and Morison, together with two guests from the Hotel, climbed Lochnagar via Black Shiel Burn and Garbh Allt Falls and over the north-west shoulder of Cac Carn Beag. There was practically no snow in the corries. The return journey was to Callater.

4. Malcolm and Mrs. Hendry followed the path from Loch Callater to Lochnagar as far as the Staic Buttress. After examining the upper rocks of the buttress they met the Lochnagar party and descended with them to Callater. Ptarmigan and snow bunting were observed on the slopes of White Mounth.

January 4, 1932.

Many of the guests left. The following excursions were made by those remaining:—

1. Orkney, Smith, and Miss Macfarlane motored up to the Cairnwell, which they ascended. Thereafter Carn nan Sac, Carn a' Gheoidh, Carn Bhinnein, An Sococh and Carn Aosda were climbed and the party descended to the Cairnwell Road. The last five of the seven tops were negotiated by compass, as the mist level seemed about 2,800 feet. Wonderful effects of light and cloud could be seen of the lower levels; later a gale with driving mist persisted. Deer, mountain hares, red grouse, ptarmigan, and snow buntings were seen at close quarters. An amazingly fresh growth of mosses and heather was observed.

2. The President, Malcolm, Parker, and R. T. Sellar climbed the Cairnwell.

3. Taylor, Miss Harbinson, and a guest climbed the Cairnwell and Carn Aosda, descending via Carn Chrionaidh towards Glen Clunie Lodge, and walked back along the banks of the Clunie.

January 5, 1932.

The last of the members regretfully returned to Aberdeen, carrying with them vivid memories of a most enjoyable break from "the daily round."—S. C. H. S.

JANUARY 1, 1932—NEW YEAR'S DAY EXCURSION TO MOUNT KEEN.

ALTHOUGH on leaving Aberdeen the weather was very depressing, the ascent of Mount Keen was made under a cloudless sky amid bright sunshine. There was very little snow, and the climb was made in good time. From the summit a wonderful vista of the snow-clad hills was obtained, Lochnagar and Ben Avon being clearly distinguishable. From the point of view of numbers the outing was one of the most disappointing in the more recent history of the Club, the total number present being only five—Miss Daniels, Messrs. Slessor and Collie (members), and Dr. Lillie and Mr. D. J. G. Shennan (guests).—G. F. C.

FEBRUARY 14, 1932—LOCHNAGAR.

THIS excursion was arranged specially for snow-climbing and, as it happened, the condition of the snow was perfect. The weather on this day was also excellent, there was a hard frost and a lot of sunshine.

The party left Golden Square by charabanc at 8.30 a.m. for Alltnaguibhsaich. Those present were—Mrs. Agnes, Mrs. Ross Mackenzie, Mrs. Wilson, Misses Daniel, Duncan, Mackenzie, Stewart, Messrs. J. Angus, J. E. Bothwell, H. G. Dason, H. C. Dugan, A. L. Hay, W. Malcolm, J. McCoss, J. McHardy, R. T. Medd, J. C. Orkney, M. J. Robb, E. W. Smith, S. C. H. Smith, A. Taylor, R. P. Yunnie—22.

Mrs. Angus, Mrs. Mackenzie, Mrs. Wilson, Miss Mackenzie, Angus, and Dugan ascended by the Ladder.

Dason, Malcolm, and S. C. H. Smith climbed the Central Buttress Snow Gully.

Bothwell, Orkney, and Yunnie climbed Raeburn's Gully up to the bend and found that they could have ascended to the foot of the Great Cave Pitch. This pitch, however, would not have gone, as it was covered by a mass of ice.

Hay, McHardy, and Medd cut an ice-staircase up the Green Gully (green in summer) on to the Mound.

Bothwell, Hay, McHardy, Medd, Orkney, and Yunnie climbed the left-hand Branch of the Black Spout.

Miss Duncan, Stewart, and M. J. Robb on one rope, and Miss Daniel McCoss, E. W. Smith, and Taylor on another rope, did the Black Spout.

The snow was in excellent condition with a great deal of ice, and very fine climbing was obtained. Owing to the dryness of the snow the party did not return with wet feet.

The cliff was a great sight. It is true there were not any cornices, but the rock-face carried a layer of ice which was thickly plastered with snow.

An eagle sailed over the Black Spout for a while, and a white hare ran up the Black Spout in front of the climbers and ascended by the steepest part at the top.

The magnificent sunset was enjoyed by the party as they went along the top of the cliffs at 5 o'clock. The brilliant greens, fiery reds and purples, showed in the west, and were a great contrast to the greys, slates, and blacks of the east.

Darkness settled down as the last of the party reached the foot of the Ladder. The sky became brilliantly clear, and the planets Jupiter and Venus, to the east and west respectively, shone large and clear. The constellation of Orion sparkled in the south, and the moon at first quarter gave sufficient light to guide the lazy members of the party down the path.

A lantern was lit at the wood, and was useful in negotiating some fallen trees.

The party assembled at Mr. Dason's Hotel, Ballater, and had the usual ham and egg tea there, and so home at 10.30 p.m.

The excursion was voted by all to be a most excellent one.—J. McC.

FEBRUARY 20, 1932—PITMEDDEN TO HAZLEHEAD.

Then slowly sunk the ruddy globe of light,
And o'er the shaded landscape rush'd the night.—

Odyssey, Book III.

A PARTY of members, under the leadership of Parker, took the 5.45 p.m. train for Pitmedden. The party made its way along the

side of the old canal, then gradually ascended uphill by a shaded pathway where the bare tree branches cast shadows in the moonlight. Away to the north Benachie was silhouetted on the sky-line, and the winding Don could be seen faintly in the foreground.

At a point apparently well known to him, Parker gave the order for the lanterns to be lit, and a route was taken up through the wood to the Blue Hill. The route led along a most charming series of footpaths on the Hill of Marcus, and through various gaps in the trees magic views of the moonlit landscape were obtained. The silence which reigned over everything was broken only now and then by a startled wood pigeon or grouse. Here was a time and place for Robin Hood and his men. On such a night as this, one was on the alert for the appearance of the fairies, and sure enough these charming little folk appeared, as anyone of the party will verify.

Leaving the fairies and the trees behind, the party crossed the heather and arrived at Tyrebagger Hill-top, where one of the ladies climbed the cairn on the outside, disdaining the stone steps in her ascent. We gazed on the ghostly moonlit landscape and—

Radiant Hesper shone with keener light,
Far-beaming o'er the silver host of night.

Iliad, Book XXII.

Our route now led down to the North Road, which was crossed. At the Toll House the side road was taken which leads toward Elrick Hill, and the party was soon among the woodland pathways again. At a certain point in a cutting of trees, Parker stopped, and the lanterns were again lit. He seemed positively uncanny. We plunged into a most bewitching winding pathway where the moonbeams could not penetrate, and where without a lantern it would have been impossible to have gone a yard. Beyond this charming route we crossed a space of soft turf, whitened by frost, and burrowed into by rabbits.

The lanterns were now put out again for good, and we ascended the Brimmond Hill in 25 minutes, arriving at the indicator at 9.25 p.m. An excellent view of the moonlit landscape was obtained, from the Bay and the twinkling light of the town to the Hill of Fare, which was clearly seen. The party descended by Fairley and over Geese Hill to Hazlehead, which was reached at 10.45 p.m.

Those present were—Misses A. E. D. Bruce, P. Bruce, M. Daniel, E. Mavor, E. A. Mavor, Messrs. W. Garden, J. McCoss, J. A. Parker, and A. Taylor.—J. McC.

FEBRUARY 28, 1932—LOCHNAGAR.

A most enthusiastic party of members left Golden Square, by charabanc, at 8.30 a.m.

Those who attended the excursion were:—Mrs. D. P. Levack, Misses A. E. D. Bruce, Harvey, E. Mavor, E. A. Mavor, C. M.

McDowell, McHardy, Messrs. Bennett, J. E. Bothwell, Brockie, G. F. Collie, H. G. Dason, H. C. Dugan, Wm. Garden, E. G. Gordon, R. Hart, D. P. Levack, Wm. Malcolm, J. McCoss, J. McHardy, C. S. McLay, J. C. Orkney, J. A. Parker, A. Taylor, H. D. Welsh, R. P. Yunnie—26.

A slight fall of snow had turned the lower brown heather slopes of the hill into a grey shade, which left a spoor behind as one crossed it. Higher up there was a bigger fresh fall of snow, the cliffs were quite white and there was a great deal of ice. The mist and the wind had left their traces behind, and fog-crystals, the shape of ostrich feathers, covered the rocks above a layer of ice. Mist covered the top of the cliffs all day, but the conditions were very favourable and the excursion was much enjoyed.

The Misses E. Mavor, E. A. Mavor, C. M. McDowell, and Messrs. Collie, Bennett, Garden, Hart, Orkney, Parker, and Welsh ascended by the Ladder; Collie and Bennett descended by the Glas Allt.

Dason, Malcolm, and McLay climbed the Ladder Gully.

Miss McHardy and Messrs. McCoss, McHardy, and Taylor climbed the Red Spout.

Misses Bruce, Harvey, and Bothwell climbed the Central Buttress Snow Gully.

Brockie, Gordon, and Yunnie spent the whole day trying to cut a route up Raeburn's Gully, but without success. They climbed as far as the first cave, where their progress was stopped by a wall of ice. Their performance was very creditable under the prevailing conditions.

Dugan went down to the loch-side and afterwards went up on the plateau.

The Misses Mavor, McDowell, and J. C. Orkney ascended the Meikle Pap on the way down.

Mrs. Levack and D. P. Levack walked up the side of Loch Muich.

After tea at Ballater the party started for home again very pleased with themselves.—J. McC.

ROCK CLIMBS AT SOUTER HEAD.

March 5, 1932. A rock-climbing practice excursion was held at Souter Head. The party consisted of Misses A. E. D. Bruce, D. M. Carle, Messrs. H. C. Dugan, J. McCoss, and G. T. R. Watt. The day was very fine and some good practice was obtained. G. T. R. Watt climbed the Through Route Chimney, and Miss Carle and Watt did the right wall of this chimney.

March 12, 1932.—The second rock-climbing practice excursion was attended by Dewar, E. G. Gordon, J. McCoss, and J. A. Parker. The day though cold was fine. The rocks were sheltered from the

land-wind, and the conditions were excellent. The party participated in very fine practice, which was enjoyed by all present. Dewar and Gordon did the Slab-top Chimney and the right wall of the Through Route Chimney.

March 19, 1932.—The third and last rock-climbing excursion was a most enjoyable one, and fine practice in this fascinating branch of mountaineering was had by the party. Those present were Misses A. E. D. Bruce, D. M. Carle, M. Daniel, Messrs. E. G. Gordon, J. McCoss, L. McGregor, S. C. H. Smith, and R. P. Yunnie. Carle, McGregor, and Yunnie climbed the Slab-top Chimney, and Yunnie climbed the crack on the left of the Slab-top Chimney. The crack above the Pool was ascended by Bruce, Carle, Gordon, McCoss, McGregor, and Yunnie. Yunnie did the Through Route Chimney, and the Grassy Pinnacle was ascended by Carle, Gordon, McCoss, and McGregor.—J. McC.

EASTER MEET, 1932—FORT WILLIAM.

THOSE who attended the Meet were :—Mrs. J. L. Hendry, Misses N. Bruce, P. Bruce, Martin, Mitchell, Paterson, and Telfer, Dr. J. L. Hendry, Messrs. J. McCoss, J. B. Miller, M. Morrison, J. C. Orkney, F. A. Ritson, M. Smith, S. C. H. Smith, J. J. St. Clair, G. R. Symmers.

Thursday, March 24.—Arrived at Alexandra Hotel, Fort William, Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Hendry, Miss N. Bruce, Messrs. McCoss, Orkney, Ritson, M. Smith, S. C. H. Smith.

Friday, March 25.—Mrs. Hendry and Miss N. Bruce, Messrs. Hendry, McCoss, M. Smith, S. C. H. Smith, Orkney, Ritson, and Symmers, who arrived that morning, set off for the Scottish Mountaineering Hut. The weather was mild. The hut was reached by the first party at 1.15 p.m., in 2 hours 50 minutes. After lunch, Miss N. Bruce, McCoss, Orkney, and Symmers climbed No. 2 Gully. The snow was easy, and step-cutting was not resorted to till about three quarters of the way up. The cornice gave little trouble. M. Smith, S. C. H. Smith and Ritson explored Coire Leis, while Dr. and Mrs. Hendry remained at the hut and organised the domestic arrangements. M. Morrison, Misses P. Bruce, Martin, Mitchell, Paterson, and Telfer arrived at Fort William.

Saturday, March 26.—Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Hendry, Messrs. McCoss, M. Smith, S. C. H. Smith, Ritson, and Orkney ascended Carn Mor Dearg from the hut and proceeded by the arête to the summit of Ben Nevis, and thence to Fort William by the path. Symmers and Miss N. Bruce attempted the Tower Ridge. Starting by the gully to the east of the Douglas Boulder, the ridge was climbed to the bottom of the Tower. The Eastern Traverse would not go. Time was lost

exploring this exit, which allowed several parties of climbers to get ahead into the Recess, where the chimney was giving trouble to the party leading. At this point there were in all fifteen climbers on the ridge, mostly queuing up between the foot of the Tower and the Recess. As a long wait was in prospect all hope of finishing the ridge was abandoned, and a descent was made into the Tower Gap Chimney by a long glissade. This was descended to a very steep pitch, and thence by a long traverse by Goodeve's Route the party emerged near the top of No. 2 Gully.

M. Morrison, Misses P. Bruce, Martin, Mitchell, Paterson, and Telfer ascended to the hut, climbed into Coire Leis and returned to Fort William. Miller and St. Clair left for the hut at 9 p.m.

Sunday, March 27.—Miller and St. Clair reached the hut at 12.30 a.m. in sleet and rain. In the early forenoon they set out in a blizzard to tackle the Tower Ridge. As with the previous day's party, the traverse on the east of the Tower would not go, and the Recess Route was abandoned owing to lateness. Turning back, with two parties from the Climbers' Club, from Cambridge, they reached the Boulder Gap in almost pitch blackness.

Miss Paterson, Morrison, and Symmers ascended Ben Nevis by the path. Symmers proceeded along the arête to Carn Mor Dearg, having some difficulty in making the arête owing to a blizzard. He descended to the hut, collected some kit, and returned to Fort William.

McCoss, Orkney, and S. C. H. Smith went peak-bagging in the Glen Nevis direction, and returned with Mullach nan Coirean, Stob Ban, and Sgurr a' Mhaim to their credit.

Dr. and Mrs. Hendry, M. Smith, and Ritson motored to Mallaig for the day.

Monday, March 28.—All except Miller and St. Clair left for home. These two climbed No. 2 Gully and found conditions very hard and icy, with not the slightest trace of anyone having been there three days before. From the summit they made Carn Mor Dearg by the arête, and descending by the hut to collect kit, reached Fort William, and Glasgow eventually that night.—N. B.

SPRING HOLIDAY EXCURSION, 1932—BEN AVON.

A PARTY consisting of 37 members assembled at Ballater and motored in eight cars to Invercauld House, thence to the stables at Bealach Dearg, where the turning place for cars was very busy till the cars were got into position. (It may be well to note that it is impossible for two cars to pass on the road between Invercauld House and the stables.) The drive through the larch woods and the view to the west was much enjoyed. The route from the Bealach to the foot-bridge at the Gairn, then up Gairnside to the Allt an Eas Mhor was a very pleasant trek in bright sunshine and ideal conditions. Lunch was partaken by the side of the stream at 2,500 feet, where

the snow started. After being refreshed the party, led by Mrs. Wilson, started up the snow and scree slope. Although the summit was clear earlier in the day, as we approached it a dry mist settled down and obscured everything above 3,000 feet. The large party, however, arrived safely at Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar, and most of the members ascended the steep rocks of the Barn. On the way down a splendid glissading run was discovered and great fun was obtained in shooting down this steep slope of snow. The party arrived back at the stables in good time for the cars, and reached Ballater at 6.15 p.m., where the usual tea was partaken at the Alexandra Hotel, with our good friend, Mr. Dason, in attendance.

Those present were :—Mrs. Angus, Mrs. A. Hendry, Mrs. E. J. Hendry, Mrs. Ross MacKenzie, Mrs. Wilson, Misses Archibald, A. E. D. Bruce, P. Bruce, Daniel, Duncan, Jackson, E. Milne, Martin, Mitchell, McDowell, McHardy, MacKenzie, Stewart, Wallace, Messrs. Angus, Burnett, Rev. E. Cruickshank, D. N. Collie, Dr. Evans, Dr. A. W. Hendry, Dr. J. L. Hendry, Dr. Hart, Malcolm, Muir, McHardy, McCoss, Orkney, Robertson, Simpson, M. Smith, S. C. H. Smith, Welsh.

Bothwell, Dugan, and Hay motored to Alltdourie Cottage and walked up Glen Sluga and had a snow climb in Coire nan Clach of Beinn a' Bhuird.—J. McC.

SPRING HOLIDAY WEEK-END, 1932—LOCHNAGAR.

A PARTY of six, namely, Brand, Brockie, Gordon, Gove, E. W. Smith, and Yunnie, spent the May Holiday week-end in camp near the Fox's Well. The original intention when leaving Aberdeen was to camp at the edge of the loch, but when near the Fox's Well it was realized that the condition of the snow would make this arrangement unsuitable from the point of view of comfort. On Saturday evening four of the party walked down to Alltnaguibhsaich, whilst Brand and Yunnie climbed the Meikle Pap to view the Great Eastern Corrie. Their efforts were amply repaid by the magnificent view which was obtained. The last rays of the setting sun turned the snow-corniced cliffs to a beautiful crimson, and the distant Cairngorms lay bathed in a soft, rosy glow. A great silence, which could almost be felt, lay over the hill. Suddenly this silence was broken by a thunderous roar, and an avalanche was seen to come tearing down the Douglas Gully, subsiding with a low muttering on the lower slopes near the loch. This avalanche was followed at intervals by other two, one from the Parallel Gully A and one from the Black Spout Pinnacle, which latter shot into Raeburn's Gully and rushed down the slope below it. After waiting in the hope of seeing more avalanches, this party returned to camp in a chill wind and thickening mist.

Next morning, Sunday, May 1, the whole party set out for Raeburn's Gully, which three of them (Brockie, Gordon, and Yunnie)

intended to climb. A halt was called on the mound below the final slope leading to the mouth of Raeburn's Gully. One party (Brand, Gove, and Smith) then set off for the Black Spout, whilst Brockie, Gordon, and Yunnie commenced the ascent.

The latter ascended some 200 feet when, to their dismay, they saw above them numerous snow cornices seemingly waiting to avalanche. Small snow-falls had occurred during the ascent, but these had been looked upon with amusement rather than with temerity. This was a different proposition however, and the possibilities of a serious accident were discussed. Ultimately it was decided to abandon the ascent until more favourable conditions could be obtained. The descent was speedily made. (Half an hour later a terrible roar was heard and an avalanche was seen to come tearing down the slope below Raeburn's Gully!) Yunnie then ascended the Black Spout and caught up with the other party at the opening to the left-hand branch. On viewing the cornice at the top of the Black Spout it was decided that disastrous consequences might result if it were attempted to cut through it, and the left-hand branch was, therefore, attacked. Soft snow made the climbing heavy, but the ever-present danger of avalanches made the party hurry, and the ascent was completed without mishap. Ten minutes after emerging from the Gully a cornice broke away and roared down it and into the Black Spout, making Brockie, who was ascending the lower reaches, jump hurriedly for the cliff wall.

Lochnagar lay bathed in brilliant sunshine, and a truly magnificent view of the snow-capped Cairngorms was enjoyed. Brand and Smith walked to the Summit Cairn, whilst Gove and Yunnie set off for the Red Spout to indulge in a glissade. After glissading down the Red Spout they turned to the right and trudged through the deep snow to the foot of the Ladder Gully. As they ascended mist enveloped the cliffs. Soon the snow gave way to scree and then rocks. The rope was tied on, and after half an hour's exciting climbing they emerged on the plateau. At the foot of the "Ladder" Brockie and Gordon were met, and camp was soon reached and the joys of hot soup experienced.

An hour later the camp was aroused by a "voice" asking if "Jack and his pal" had been seen. The "voice" came nearer and a figure loomed up in the mist. "Jack and his pal" were apparently lost. Brockie and Yunnie set out with the "voice," and after wandering about the moor on the Balmoral side, the errant climbers' tracks were picked up and followed to Gelder Lodge where the search was abandoned, as it was realized that the wanderers would come out at Balmoral Castle eventually. (Next morning it was found that this was exactly what had happened, the wanderers having asked their way and walked back over the hill to Alltna-*guibhsaich*.) No climbing was had on Monday morning, a thick mist and tired limbs suggesting an "off" morning.—R. P. Y.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON EXCURSIONS, 1932.

MAY 21—CLOCHNABEN.

THE first Saturday afternoon excursion took place on May 21, and 36 members attended. The motors left Golden Square at 2.30 p.m. The party traversed the hill from Glen Dye Lodge to Feughside Inn. In Glen Dye, the beautiful new greens of the beeches and larches were very much admired, and at one's feet the violets and anemones and the fresh shoots of the bracken gave one the promise of summer to come. The route taken was by the green loaning north of Glen Dye Lodge, then over the south shoulder of Mount Shade and across the Devil's Bite to the summit. The last half mile was ascended in thick mist, and the compass had to be resorted to in the descent. The party had tea at Feughside Inn. Those present were:—Mrs. E. J. Hendry, Mrs. Ross MacKenzie, Mrs. Orkney, Mrs. Robertson, Mrs. S. C. H. Smith, Misses Archibald, Bisset, Brown, A. E. D. Bruce, P. Bruce, K. Collie, Daniel, Gibb, Johnston, Laing, E. A. Mavor, Martin, Mitchell, McDowell, Telfer, Messrs. Burnett, Barnes, D. N. Collie, Dr. Evans, Griffith, Malcolm, McCoss, McLay, Orkney, Parker, Raite, Ritson, Slessor, M. Smith, S. C. H. Smith, and Taylor. The trek was a very interesting one and was enjoyed by everyone present.—J. McC.

JUNE 11—THE COYLES OF MUICK.

EIGHT motor cars conveyed 40 members and guests of the Club from Ballater to the Falls of Muick, where the party started the ascent. A most enjoyable afternoon was spent ascending the hill and walking along the broad ridge to Creag Liath. The Cairngorms, with snow gleaming through the heat-haze, looked very near, and the beautiful greens of the woods in Glen Muick were very much admired. Mr. and Mrs. Blair and Miss Jackson also ascended Creag Megen, and Dason and Ewen did some rock-climbing on the way up the Coyle. Mr. Dason very kindly motored twice up Glen Muick and conveyed the last members of the party to Ballater. The party had tea at the Alexandra Hotel and afterwards, well satisfied with the afternoon's outing, trained home again. The following members attended:—Mrs. Blair, Mrs. Chisholm, Mrs. Donald, Mrs. E. J. Hendry, Mrs. Ross Mackenzie, Mrs. Robertson, Mrs. Welsh, Misses Archibald, P. Bruce, Burnett, Daniel, Dargie, Duncan, Gray, Henderson, Hay, M. W. Johnston, M. Johnston, Jackson, Mitchell, Martin, McDowell, Riddell, Skakle, Stewart, Telfer, Wallace, Messrs. Blair, Chisholm, Dason, Dugan, Ewen, Dr. Hart, Ironside, McCoss, Malcolm, McLay, Muir, S. C. H. Smith, and Welsh.—J. McC.

JUNE 18—BENNACHIE.

A MOST enthusiastic party of Club members and friends, numbering 36, started by charabanc from Golden Square at 11 p.m. for the

summer solstice excursion. The party arrived at the foot of the path, near Pittodrie, at 12.30 a.m. and ascended to the Mither Tap, 1,698 feet, by the aid of a glacier lantern, as the sky was very cloudy. From the top, at 1.30 a.m., weird glimpses of the surrounding landscape were obtained in the midnight twilight, and the lights of Girdleness and Buchan Ness were seen flashing on the eastern coastline. Oxen Craig, 1,733 feet, was reached at 2.45 a.m. and tea was partaken by the members. The party then descended to the lovely valley of the Birks Burn as the day was breaking, and the increasing light showed up the colours of the countryside in the beautiful, clear, morning air. At West Haugh the motors were waiting, and the members motored down Donside, arriving at Aberdeen at 5.30 a.m. Those present were:—Misses Archibald, A. E. D. Bruce, P. Bruce, Clark, Daniel, Fowlie, Henderson, M. Johnston, M. W. Johnston, Laing, Martin, Mitchell, McDowell, McHardy, Ritchie, Reid, Telfer, Messrs. Bothwell, R. Bruce, Cowie, J. A. Chisholm, A. B. Chisholm, Dr. Evans, Gordon, Gove, G. Martin, Malcolm, McCoss, McGregor, McHardy, McMillan, Merrilees, Ritson (Junior Section), Thresher, E. W. M. Watt, and G. T. R. Watt.—J. McC.

JULY 2—BEN RINNES.

THE Club held the final Saturday afternoon excursion to Ben Rinnes on July 2. The party, numbering seventeen, arrived at Aberlour at 2.38 p.m., and motored to the distillery (closed), which was reached at 2.55 p.m. The day was gorgeous and the hill was very dry. After walking along the pathway through the wood, the party ascended to Scurran of Well. As it was only 4.15 and much ahead of time, the party enjoyed a rest in the sunshine. A few of the members climbed the tors by all the possible and impossible routes. Scurran of Lochterlandoch was reached at 5 p.m., where a very substantial meal was partaken of by some of the members. The visibility northward was good, and the various lighthouses along the Moray Firth were picked up by one of the members, who is a Major of the Signals and has very keen eyesight. The party arrived at Glack at 7 p.m., where a motor bus was waiting. It was at this point that the "stout fellows" of the party showed themselves. Bothwell, Jackson, Martin, McDowell, Nicol, and Reid decided to ascend the steep slope of Meikle Conval. They crossed the top and descended to Dykehead, and the 'bus was sent back to pick them up. After a very excellent tea, and selections on the piano by Miss Hopkins, at the Fife Arms Hotel, Dufftown, the party left for the train, having enjoyed the excursion very much. Those present were—Mrs. Ross McKenzie, Misses Campbell, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnston, Martin, Mitchell, McDowell, Messrs. Barnes, Bothwell, Griffith, Hay, Dr. A. R. Martin, McCoss, Bruce Nicol, Reid, Malcolm Smith.
—J. McC.

WEST GULLY, LOCHNAGAR—THIRD ASCENT.

On June 12, W. A. Ewen, W. Middleton, and R. Lees (the two latter members of the Junior Section) made the ascent of the West Gully, Lochnagar. Commencing via the Central Chimney, we followed the route described by Symmers (*C.C.J.*, Vol. XII, p. 8). Some difficulty was experienced in locating the gully in the mist. Except in the lower section, where snow still lingered, the gully was comparatively dry, a result, probably, of the unusually dry winter. The "cave" pitch, where Symmers met with a waterfall, was climbed for half its height, when an overhanging boulder at the top presented a very awkward problem. There was no obvious way of circumventing this, so the leader returned and avoided the pitch on the right. The climb occupied two hours and a quarter.

A'CHIOCH, BEINN A' BHUIRD.

W. GARDEN and J. A. Parker climbed Beinn a' Bhuid by a rather unusual route on July 10. Leaving Aberdeen at 7.40 a.m. we motored to half a mile beyond Alltdourie. The path through the Slugan was then followed to the bend below the Clach a' Chlèirich, and the main glen thereafter followed for about half a mile, with the intention of climbing Cnap a' Chlèirich, etc. At this point the weather completely broke down, and, after a very prolonged lunch in the shelter of a big boulder, we decided that our original programme of climbing all the four tops of Beinn a' Bhuid must be abandoned. Turning back we climbed up to Coire na Ciche. This little corrie proved to be quite interesting and contained several small pools of water which were evidently the survivors of a small loch which at one time had been held back by the terminal moraine of a small glacier. The moraine is very distinct. After examining the corrie we struck up steep, grassy slopes and screes on our right, to the beginning of the rocks of the east ridge of the Chioch. These rocks are very interesting, and we followed the crest, more or less, all the way to the top of the Chioch. When difficulties appeared in front we shirked (*sic*) them by traversing to the left and got into greater trouble. Anyway we had a very pleasant scramble, and at one place had to go through a curious small natural arch in the solid rock. Had we traversed to the right we would probably have avoided all trouble and have found easy and uninteresting scree slopes to near the actual top. The rocks of the Chioch are well worth a visit and should afford many little problems in rock scrambling. We were in thick mist from 3,250 feet up. After going over the top of the Chioch, we visited a neighbouring ridge of huge rocks to the north; but failed to get on to the top of the highest point, which is an enormous boulder. We then struck out a compass course to the South Top, reached at 3.50 p.m., and from it down the Snowy Corrie to Càrn Fiaclach and so back through the Slugan to the car. A halt was called at Ballater for tea, and Aberdeen was reached shortly before 10 o'clock.

—J. A. P.

NOTES.

Mr. A. LESLIE HAY, M.A., LL.B., has been appointed Secretary and Treasurer of the Club, in succession to Mr. John A. Nicol, D.C.M., M.A., B.L., Advocate.

WE regret to record the deaths of two veteran members of the Club.

Last December Mr. John Wallace died at the age of 76. He had led a busy life and given much public service, in the Aberdeen Town Council and in the Volunteers. He was a "Wet Review" veteran. He joined the Club in 1892. Five years his junior as a member, Mr. George Mackenzie, Advocate, passed away a few weeks ago.

THE Aberdeen District Committee of the Scottish Youth Hostels Association have issued a special appeal to the members of the Cairngorm Club "to show their sympathy with a movement which, like theirs, appreciates the open air, and seeks to encourage the younger generation, who could ill afford to move about otherwise, to find health and recreation in increased knowledge of the countryside." In spring, three hostels were opened in Aberdeenshire—at Ballater, Inverernan, and Birness. At each there is a resident warden, and experience has already shown that there is a real demand for the facilities provided. The appeal now is for better equipment of these hostels, and the provision of another "somewhere in Deeside or near the Cairngorms." The S.Y.H.A. deserve all the encouragement we can give. Contributions should be sent to Mr. Barclay Watt, C.A., Treasurer of the Aberdeen Branch, 4 Bon-Accord Crescent, Aberdeen.

A MOST interesting and instructive Countryside Exhibition was held in Aberdeen this summer, under the auspices of the Association for the Preservation of Rural Scotland, with the co-operation of the Deeside Field Club and other organizations. In connection with this a series of most appropriate lectures was given, and there was an excellent symposium on the subject of litter. Mr. Kenneth Ferguson, organizing secretary of the A.P.R.S., was a severe critic of the new Glencoe road. This "Brooklands" that the engineers have blasted out of the heart of Glencoe, he said, is a barbarism; for who requires such a race track, with an almost uniform gradient of 1 in 25, and miles of straight, from Tyndrum to Ballachulish—there to peter out under the supercilious gaze of the ferryman, demanding our cash to cross the clear waters of Loch Leven, or else to proceed a score of miles round

the head of the Loch in the smoke of the aluminium works? Mountaineers may give one answer to this question and the growing army of motorists another. In regard to litter, Lady Aberdeen, who presided at the symposium, emphasized the need for educating the young. The exhibition has served a most useful purpose in drawing attention to many evils that afflict the countryside, and suggesting simple methods of curing or averting them.

WHAT is claimed to be the world's mountain walking record has been established in the Lake District by Mr. Robert Graham of Keswick. Starting from Keswick Town Hall at 10 o'clock on Sunday morning, June 12, he climbed Skiddaw by the ordinary route. Then, descending into Skiddaw Forest, Great Calva was surmounted on the way over Saddleback, whence the descent was made to Threlkeld and so up to Wanthwaite Pike, to begin the long stretch over the various Dodds of Helvellyn. These were all taken in order over the summit to Dollywaggon Pike, Fairfield, and Seat Sandal to Dunmail Raise. After a short halt here the central Lakeland mountains were climbed and crossed in the following order:—First, Steel Fell was scaled, and so over Calf Crag, High White Stones, High Raise, Sergeant Man, Harrison Stickle, Pike o' Stickle, Rossett Pike, Hanging Knotts, Bowfell, Esk Pike, and Great End to the Cairn on Scawfell Pike, the highest mountain of England. By Mickledoor and Broad Stand Scawfell was gained, and so Mr. Graham went down to Wastdale, where a 20 minutes' halt was made. Then Yewbarrow was tackled, and so on over Red Pike, Steeple, Pillar mountain, Kirk Fell, Great and Green Gable and Brandreth, to Honister Hause. Darkness made the final section trying, but Dale Head was climbed, and by Hindscarth, Robinson, and High Snab, the Vale of Newlands was finally gained, near Mill Dam Inn, at eight minutes short of midnight. The four and a half miles to Keswick were covered in good time, and at 12.39 a.m. Mr. Graham passed the Keswick Town Hall. Mr. Graham, it is interesting to note, is a non-smoker, a teetotaller, and practically a vegetarian. The height climbed was 30,000 feet.

REVIEWS.

The Alpine Journal, No. 244, May, 1932. 10/6 net. Of special interest in this number is a translation of Paul Bauer's "Kangchenjunga, 1931: The Second Bavarian Attempt." This THE ALPINE is rightly described by the Editor as an "absorbing JOURNAL. narrative," and he adds "that for skill, endurance, cold-blooded courage, and especially for *judgment*, the expedition will stand as the classical model for all time." That is very high praise, and we believe that mountaineers generally will endorse it. The thrills of mountaineering are plentiful in this article, but they are no less prominent, if of different quality, in Mr. E. Noel Bowman's account of the ascent of the North Face of the Matterhorn by Franz and Toni Schmid, two young engineering students of Munich, both in the early twenties. What they did on Friday, July 31, and Saturday, August 1, 1931, was to solve one of the last great unsolved problems of the Alps—the North face of the Matterhorn. When we read of the rope, "frozen stiff like a steel hawser," of a boulder, on which Toni was standing, breaking clean away, leaving him clinging to a bulge of rock until his brother contrived to pull him up to fresh footholds, and of the extraordinary way in which they spent the night tied on to a sloping boss, with the lights of Zermatt more than 8,000 feet below, we can have some appreciation of what was accomplished. "There are some," says Mr. Bowman, "who will deprecate such ascents, but as regards the North Face of the Matterhorn it is, at any rate, not a case of a variation deviating from another line of ascent by a metre or two, but of an entirely new route on a hitherto unclimbed face. These young Germans are not of the 'record-breaking' type, as I am able to testify by reason of a prolonged conversation which I had with them at the dinner given in their honour by Dr. Seiler at the Hôtel Mont Cervin." This testimony is interesting, in view of the protest of a correspondent in No. 243 (*C.C.J.*, Vol. XIII, p. 57), and of Mr. Ling's paper in this number on "Accidents" and the discussion which followed. The numerous illustrations are up to the usual high standard, and specially valuable is the new Kangchenjunga map.

The Rucksack Club Journal, Vol. VII, No. 2, 1932. 4/- net. The opening article is an account of an ascent of the Lhonak Peak by Mr. W. Eversden—the fulfilment of an ambition to climb in the Himalayas, midst what Dr. Kellas has described as RUCKSACK "the most stupendous mountain barrier in the World." JOURNAL. Careful preparation and grit and determination brought success—"those few panting minutes on the summit—a reward how brief, yet how sufficing, for those weeks of hard endeavour." In "The Pillar Girdle," Mr. M. Linnell describes the

Girdle Traverse of Pillar, a notable rock-climbing achievement, containing "several very severe parts." A detailed description of the actual route is given, shown on excellent photographs. Mr. B. R. Goodfellow writes "On Mountain Photography," and his conclusions may be usefully compared with those in Mr. C. Reginald Ward's article on "Photographic Mountain Explorations" in our *Journal* (*C.C.J.*, Vol. XIII, p. 25). Another article, full of useful points, is that on "Club Huts," by Mr. V. J. R. Ashton. There are some pungent comments by the Editor on the attitude of *The Alpine Journal* towards "the proletariat," and, summing up the argument, he expresses the hope "that clumsiness rather than snobbery was at the bottom."

Cambridge Mountaineering, 1932. Cambridge: S. G. Marshall and Son. 2/6. This is the sequel—modestly described as "a little stepson at the end of a great family"—to

CAMBRIDGE *Oxford and Cambridge Mountaineering, 1928-MOUNTAINEERING.* 1929. The editor says that "a university mountaineering club is not expected to produce world-shaking first ascents, but to train mountaineers; and that in our humble opinion is best done by going up well-scratched climbs and enjoying them, even if they have been described once and for all by Whymper or Abraham, and then wandering about the world trying to find your own delectable mountains, which may be in the Arctic Circle or in the Equator or much nearer home." This is sound doctrine, and the varied budget of articles served up here shows that excellent results can be obtained. There is an account of the British Arctic Air Route Expedition to Greenland, 1930-31, by Mr. A. Stephenson, St. Catharine's, illustrated by a fine photograph of the view from Mount Forel. The summit of this peak was not quite attained, but much useful work was done, and the C.U.M.C. is to be congratulated on its share in a notable expedition. It will be remembered that Mr. Courtauld was snowed up in Ice Cap Station, where he had been left alone for four months, and when he was found, we get the matter-of-fact statement that he "was perfectly fit and was soon dug out." In "The Black Coolin," Mr. J. A. Ramsay advances the opinion that the Coolin is an ideal nursery for the uninitiated, for which he gives some quite good reasons. Among other articles we may note specially "A North Wales Bird Diary," by Mr. C. W. Benson.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, No. 113. April, 1932. 2/6 net. The principal articles in this issue deal with rock climbs in the Glencoe district, Stob Coire an Lochan, by J. H. B.

S.M.C. Bell, and Stob Coire nam Beith, by A. Harrison. There JOURNAL. is a long paper on "Aneroids and Munros," by J. R. Corbett, which is perhaps rather on the long side. There is a paper descriptive of a new method of forming a Middleman's

Knot by means of a separate length of rope attached to the main rope by a splice and a bowline. Personally we should not like to be attached to the main rope by the knot, or to be dependant on a middle man who was. The contributors of the article are evidently in ignorance of the papers on "Knots for Climbers," by Messrs. Wright and Magowan in Volume XL of *The Alpine Journal*. Mr. J. Y. Macdonald contributes a paper on "The Secondary Tower Ridge, Ben Nevis," and the number concludes with the usual Club Proceedings, Notes and Excursions, and the doings of the Junior Club. The J.M.C.S. appears to be thriving, and had an attendance of 48 at its New Year Meet at Crianlarich.

The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal, No. 20, 1932. 4/- net. An interesting and well-illustrated number. The principal article deals with ascents in the Adamello and Brenta Groups. THE Y.R.C. The other foreign articles relate to Saas Fee, Northern JOURNAL. Rhodesia, and The Giant Ice Cave of Austria, evidently a pretty complicated place. Mr. Riley contributes an appreciative article on the Cairngorms, and there is a very amusing article entitled "More about Nowt," by the late C. E. Benson. The activities of the Club underground are apparently still being actively pursued, and are described in four pages of letterpress.

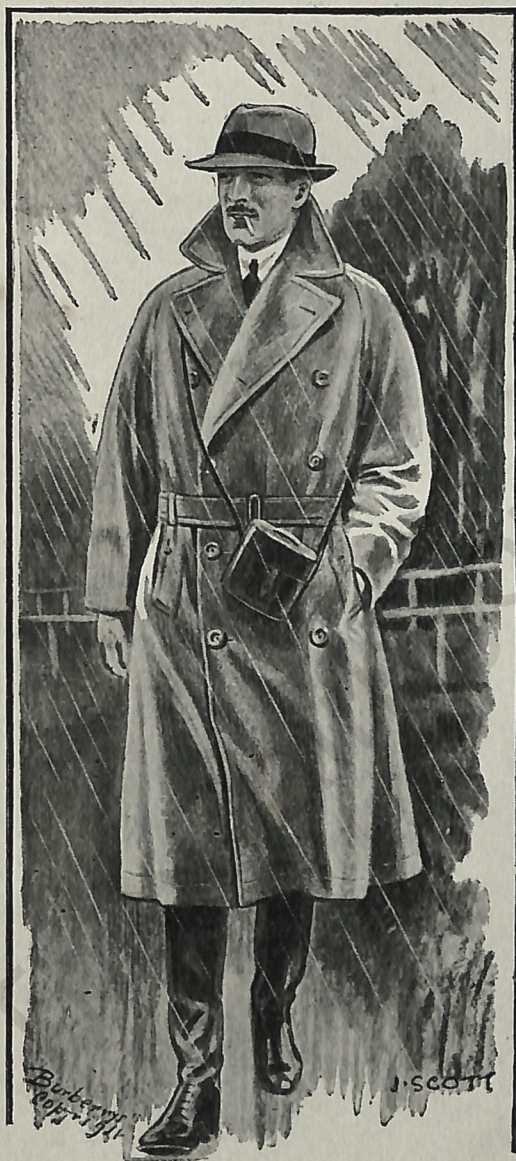
Scottish Ski Club Journal, 1932. 2/6. An attractive miscellany of articles and some excellent photographs make up this number.

It is full of interest and will appeal to all who want SKI CLUB to know about ski-ing. A strong effort was made JOURNAL. last winter to develop Braemar as a ski-ing resort.

"The preparations for winter sports," we are told, "made by the local committee were—for a first winter—very good. Bridges were thrown over the larger burns up the Cairnwell Valley to suit various expedition routes: all arrangements were made for hot coffee, etc., at many cottages: wire was lifted to form nursery slopes. Close to the village, curling and skating ponds were cleaned out and huts erected at each: a huge run was prepared: the services of a Swiss instructor were obtained to give lessons in ski-ing." Tribute is also paid to the excellent hotel preparations. The only trouble was the weather, though people from England were astonished to find a fall of three inches of snow lying for three days, when they had been doubtful of seeing any at all. The average temperature at 2,000 feet, at 8 a.m., between December 25 and February 1, was 36°, as compared with 30.8° the preceding year. If the temperature goes down, the ski-ing possibilities of Braemar are great, and it is to be hoped one warm winter will not discourage the local people.

The Scottish Ramblers' Year Book, 1932 (6d.), edited by Tom S. Hall, is correctly described as a collection of THE RAMBLERS' ANNUAL. useful information for wayfarers. Scottish topics are very fully dealt with, and the book is also a guide to the youth movements of Europe.

WE have received the first four numbers of Vol. XLVIII of *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*. Of special interest to MAPS. mountaineers is Mr. John Mathieson's article on "The New One-inch to a Mile Ordnance Survey Map (Popular Edition)." Many improvements have been introduced, notably in the contours. Mr. Mathieson also calls attention to the new edition of the Cairngorm Map. We fully endorse his well-deserved praise.



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