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BUACHAILLE ETIVE MÖR.

G. R. Symmers.

The Cairngorm Club Journal.

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RECOLLECTIONS IN TRANQUILLITY.

BY A. W. CLARK.

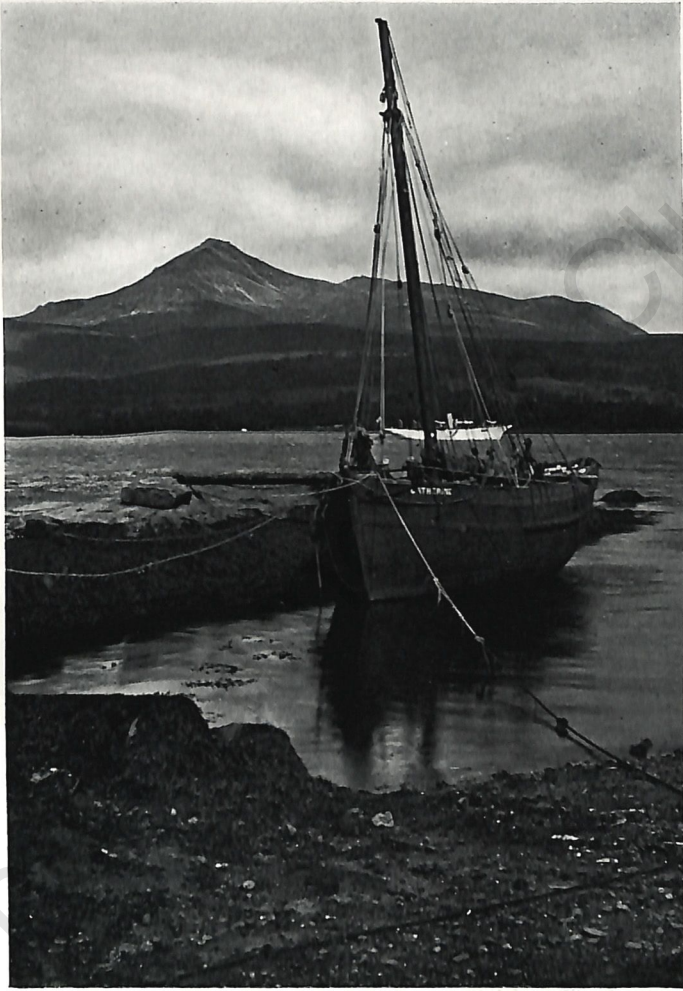
THERE were three of us, namely, the President, the Secretary and Treasurer, and the writer, who, not to be outshone, styled himself the Extra-ordinary Member. It was our custom to forgather on Thursday evening to discuss everything in general and the weather forecast in particular, for by Thursday evening our thoughts would be reconnoitring the possibility of a climb on the following Saturday. We constituted K.M.C., a totally unofficial and unregistered body—almost an unrecognised body, save that on one occasion we achieved the distinction, unsought, of featuring in the *S.M.C.J.* One Easter, at Corrou Bothy, stocked as for a siege with victuals and coal, we, in the purely Biblical sense, took in and ministered to an utterly exhausted member of that Club, who gratefully acknowledged his good luck and our quite ordinary services in the next issue of the journal. But that is another story.

The fireplace in the den is a thing to marvel at, recalling that in the common-room of Gwydyr Ucha, one of the North Wales chain of hostels, with its brave motto, "*nec tumet, nec timet*" (so aptly rendered, "he has neither swelled head nor cold feet"!). None of your miserly narrow gratelings whose capacity is limited to one lump of coal at a time, but a wide open-hearted generous hearth and at the side a coal-box of ample proportions. Little wonder, then, that

our sessions were wont to be protracted, and not infrequently one member would discover that he was uttering pearls of great wisdom before a somnolent House. The discovery was not made readily, for the club would be no more than constituted when the room would rapidly assume almost solid properties and everything would be seen, if at all, through a blue haze of tobacco smoke, "as imponderable as colour and tenuous as twilight."

We had been discussing the attitude of those climbers who confine their attention to one particular group of mountains to the virtual exclusion of all others, however attractive they may be, whether for diversity of rock structure or for novelty of problem, and we agreed *nem. con.* that such an insular outlook could not be defended. "Take, for example, the experience of Messrs Sansom and Herford," piped up the President, winging his words from a point almost due west of the footstool, which occupied a central position in front of the fireplace. "It is on record that these two gentlemen once planned a climbing holiday in the Alps, contracted midway a particularly virulent kind of nostalgia, and returned home to finish their holiday at Wastdale Head. Now, it may be that as rock climbers they did not take kindly to 'the incomparable treasures of the snow,' but is it not wise to remember the virtue of the maxim, 'Nothing too much'?" (the President is a Hellenist), "a maxim which is as applicable to a seven-course dinner as to indulgence in one's favourite peaks? In my opinion, such men are on a par, in the realm of literature, with those who limit their reading to the products of one individual author. Let us consider a Gallovidian who has read nothing but S. R. Crockett. What does such a one know of the realms of gold? How can he. . . ."

Already, alas! the fire had won and one member at least was losing the thread of the argument, basking in that delicious buoyancy as the ship of consciousness slips her moorings for the glamorous half-world of memories and dreams! Already we are across in spell-binding Arran and are chatting with the cottagers of Corrie as, pipe in mouth, they fill the doorways of their whitewashed abodes.



BRODICK BAY AND GOATFELL

H. C. Dugan

In the bay basking sharks hoist and lower their sails, and farther out steamers of all sizes, ships of peace and men-o'-war, ply the firth. In imagination we stand on the summit of Goatfell as Q.S.T.S. "Queen Mary" steams down the Clyde on her maiden voyage. No finer viewpoint could be selected. On that great day, in the words of the agreeable saying of Japanese climbers, "may our six senses be pure and may the weather on the honourable mountain be fine!"

Arran has that quality of diminutiveness that evokes the possessive instinct and induces a proprietary sensation in those who love her. From most of her higher mountains the whole island can be embraced in one sweeping glance, affording a perfect example of Montague's thesis in possibly the finest chapter of "The Right Place." There he argues in favour of that magnitude in a country which can be grasped and comprehended by the eye. "I have already," a troubled American said when the Philippines were delivered into his hands, "more country than I can love." On this basis, it is easy to understand the affection Arran inspires when it is remembered that the perimeter is only 56 miles, a stout day's march, the record for which is believed to be just under twelve hours! Moreover, Arran has contrived to remain unspotted from the more blatant aspects of modern civilisation, boasting neither cinema, nor railway, nor slums, nor—trespass notices!

Our magic carpet has taken us to Glen Sannox, considered by many competent judges to be second only to Glen Sligachan. It is dominated by the impressive and shapely mass of Cir Mhor, Arran's finest individual mountain. The deer love the east end of this glen and frequently they wend their way from the Corrie of the White-water into the Punch Bowl, thence across to Sannox and over the shoulder of Suidhe Fhearghais to North Glen Sannox. Yonder unsightly abomination, a conspicuous piece of unloveliness at the east gate of the Glen, is the superstructure of the commercially profitable barytes mine which is extending its vandal tentacles ever farther afield. If we were dictator we should, for one thing, appoint a

Permanent Commission of Fine Glens, solely and specifically to prevent such destruction of natural beauty. There remains the consoling thought that this eyesore is not visible from the upper glen, being hidden by the uncurved flank of Cioch na h'oighe.

It was a perfect Monday morning in September and we had come to the end of a strenuous week-end, with Corrie as our base. Surely it was a gross sin against the light of opportunity to idle away our last forenoon? So up Cioch na h'oighe we went, ascending by the well-defined crack which cuts across the east-facing slabs. Rich indeed was the harvest of the eye we reaped, but it must not be forgotten that the transport authorities give no consideration to the week-ender from the mainland, but compel him to bid Corrie good-bye by 2 P.M. Not much time then to measure the yield which our summit lavished on us. Let us return via the Punch Bowl—yes, by the first gully that sweeps down from the ridge just behind the peak. It is gravelly, with loose boulders at frequent intervals, but this state of affairs soon gives way to a slope of increasing angle. Thus we were forced out of the gully to our right, where at last it dawned on us that we had really gone and done it this time and that there was no way down save at the ruthless despatch of the Law of Gravity, truly a grave outlook! Fortunately there was heather (yes, we know that vegetation holds are to be eschewed, but they have a place, *faute de mieux!*), which provided the necessary anchorage against precipitation, and after a superlatively careful and laborious re-ascent we once more stood on the summit one and a half hours after we had left it! Readers of F. S. Smythe will recall that it was not a slip of his own or an accident to a friend which instilled into him “the fear of the hills which is the beginning of wisdom” but a hapless sheep which was offered up in vicarious atonement for his youthful crimes. Lucky is he who early learns the lesson of the simple end exacted by Gravity, “the simplest, the most elemental of Nature’s forces.”

Near the head of Glen Sannox we come into line with the Witch’s Step Gully, which, from below or from the

Saddle, appears to enjoy perpendicularity but is really at a moderate angle save perhaps for the last 100 feet. Here the gully is split in twain by an obtruding rocky rib. Both branches are floored with detritus and the angle, together with water action, has seen to it that nothing projects to provide holds, not even on their walls. The right-hand branch is the better, but the most satisfactory route is by the rib, which is stable at least, and, in comparison, reliable, so far as Arran rock can be termed reliable.

The mass of Cir Mhor stands between the two Saddles and the north-east face provides a broad field for rock scrambling. It was on a day in May that the President and the writer essayed one of the gullies, since recognised as Gully B. We had sauntered up the glen without rope or any definite objective and, spotting a likely thing, we had irresponsibly decided to follow it up. Everything went uninterrupted until the President, who played leader *ex officio*, reached an overhang which would admit of no turning. At this juncture he reached out to test the adhesibility of a sizable projection, whereby No. 2 was put in serious jeopardy for a few palpitating seconds. By chance he was widely stanced, but it was a dismaying experience to follow the bounding descent of the all-too-easily detached projection, as, passing narrowly between his legs, it made for the slabby course of the Sannox Burn! Arran is an admirable training ground for rock as much of it is utterly unreliable!

If there is one quality more than any other associated with reminiscences and dreams, both diurnal and nocturnal, it is their inconsequence. To find oneself now step-cutting up the snow slopes of Ben Ime, the monarch of the Arrochar Alps, far from coming as a surprise, seemed the most natural thing in the world. We could report progress since that red-poker Thursday evening, the evening of the Branding of the Communal Ice Axe. On that occasion the writer had the honourable privilege of impressing well and truly the letters K.M.C. on the shaft of the club's first axe, heedless of the possibility of upsetting its balance or of weakening the finely grained shaft! Now on Ben Ime each member

was axe-equipped. Seldom, as on that February day, can there have been on its summit such a fine display of snow ferns, but something was to happen which was to blot out for a time the recollection of the beauty of winter's foliage.

Starting from Butterbridge at the east end of Glen Kinglas, we plodded on through soft snow and in surprisingly warm air to the col between Ben Ime and Ben Chorrnach. The mystery of the extraordinary mildness was soon explained, for, on reaching the col, we were faced with an east wind blowing up the Coiregrogain, the coldest east wind it has ever been our misfortune to experience. Its frigidity can be judged from the fact that the fingers of two of the party suffered from frostbite in consequence of the day's, or rather the wind's, activities. Much time was misspent renewing our youth as we glissaded wantonly on a short and safe slope near the cairn. The gathering dusk, so early on a midwinter day, bade us straightway begin the descent to Arrochar, via Allt Coiregrogain and Glen Loin.

Ice-glazed rocks gave us pause and somewhat sobered our exuberant spirits, but on coming to the top of a magnificent sweep of hard-frozen snow we succumbed simultaneously to the imperative need for haste and the exhilarating call of a glissade. The Secretary and Treasurer, however, wise beyond his years, elected to descend *ventre à terre*, while the other two members made a sitting double of it and started off together down what proved to be a slope of 500 feet. The fairway was not free of obstructive nodules, as one had supposed from above, and we had not accelerated for more than 50 feet when we parted unceremoniously and an ice-axe shot out incontinently from our rapidly disintegrating partnership. The whole episode lasted probably only a few seconds, but to the foolhardy protagonists time was not the essence of the contract, and the chief concern in the mind of one of them was to remain absolutely relaxed throughout. Down, down, down! What an exhilarating feeling, particularly since we had started off feet first and now were literally heading for the unknown. (Let us confess it. The slope was absolutely new to us!) One vividly remembers being hurled into mid-air from contact with the

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ARRAN FROM CRAIGIE HILL

D. Deans

1. Beinn Nuis.

3. Goatfell.

5. Mullach Buidhe.

7. Cioch na h'oighe.

2. Beinn Tarsuinn.

4. N. Goatfell.

6. Caisteal Abhail.

8. Suidhe Fhcarghas.

bulge of a snow-covered boulder, which stood athwart the course, and landing some yards down again to continue the merry prank as long as might be. Stop at last we did to our immense surprise, just where the angle eased off to form a platform, on which much soft snow had collected, to add greatly to our comfort and the sole spectator's relief! Two things stand out, however, in the recollection of the Ben Ime glissade: first, by some inexplicable wizardry, the writer's rucksack now suspended itself by both straps from the same (right) shoulder! Mercifully, he had not engaged a waist belt! And then the maxim, "Never glissade on a slope you have not climbed."

" . . . and I am perfectly convinced that we ought to pay far more attention than we do to the complementary and more difficult art of climbing down." It was the voice of the Secretary and Treasurer. Along what tortuous labyrinths the discussion had roved we knew not. Sufficient for us that the meteorological experts, whose motto seems always to be "safety first," had forecast fair periods generally—but with local showers! Is it to be Arrochar then as was suggested a couple of hours ago?

Saturday's programme settled, the club anthem is chanted pianissimo (the hour is late and the landlady is a light sleeper). Another Thursday has come and gone, yielding promise of an active Saturday on the high hills. Surely, in the words of the unknown sixteenth-century climber who scratched his philosophy in Greek on a rock on the Niesen, "The love of Mountains is best."

FERLA MHOR.

THE mist creeps slowly round Beinn Mheadhoin,
Whips o'er the grand old Ben,
Steals down the stream of silver fame,
Like a thief in the night,
From the Larig glen.

The Grey Man walks in his misty shroud,
Mocks at the toil of men,
Glides o'er the tops with a ghostly sigh,
And slips, with a hiss,
To the Larig glen.

In the silent dawn they found him dead,
High on a spur of the Ben—
Heard but the sound of a mocking laugh,
Borne on the wind
From the Larig glen.

THE SPECTRE OF BEN AVON.

BY THE LATE D. D. MCPHERSON.

THE Tayside Stragglers, as our select party of five has been facetiously named, are modest, painfully modest. Though we have a fair record of achievement to our credit, only on one occasion—our November visit to the Shelter Stone—have our doings been chronicled. The fact is that, while we are forward hill-men, we are naturally shy and retiring as plains-men and shrink from publicity in any shape or form. Unfortunately for us, our reserve is being misconstrued. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, our friends, bless them, are expressing grave doubts about our exploits, and hint at something resembling a nineteenth hole to account for, as they put it, the varied tales we spin on our return. They are firmly convinced, for instance, that the Spectre, which one of our number chanced to descry on Ben Avon one misty April morning, cannot possibly be seen, as we aver, on jelly sandwiches and thermos tea. Faced with such incredulity what can we do but become waggish in turn and make-believe that we really are lads of the village? Suppose we try to protest by asserting that four of us are strict teetotalers, or that the Skipper's emergency flask, although carried every trip for years, has not yet been broached. Can you imagine the howls of derision that would arise?—sufficient almost to startle the deer in their fastnesses or the ptarmigan on the high tops. A peaceful life lies not in that direction. Like Brer Fox, we lie low and say nothing, but we propose—subject to editorial acceptance—to write up a few of our experiences, and as an introductory effort the tale of the aforementioned spectre should make a good beginning. First of all meet our worthy party; there is Father, our heavyweight champion, big, hearty, and helpful; his pockets bulge with black-balls and he is ready to go anywhere; the Press, our runner-up, a downright

get-on-with-the-job companion, difficult to keep at home over week-ends; the Court, a stocky canny Scot of the bulldog breed, who always gets there, though generally at the last moment; the Bar, lithe, alert, and seldom still, when equipped for the hills stuffs everything into innumerable and spacious pockets and then looks formidable; lastly, the Skipper, our long-limbed lightweight and planner of trips—usually accused of underestimating distances—never seen without his pipe and prismatic, and is known to enjoy Father's black-balls. And now to our story.

A year ago last April on the very Sunday morning when, by the decree of an all-wise Government, all clocks are put forward one hour, we were blissfully asleep in the Arms of Invercauld at Braemar, depending on the chamber-maid calling us at 6 A.M., summer-time. Alas for the vanity of human wishes, the maiden overslept and we slumbered on undisturbed. When reality did dawn on us all was bustle and hurry. It was a bad start, but worse was to follow. At breakfast we found that the weather-clerk was altogether ignoring the advent of summer-time and had already sprinkled everything outside with the stuff that is seasonable at Christmas-tide. The mist was down and snow fell steadily—a more unpromising morning for the hills could scarcely be imagined. We had come, however, as the show-bills have it, "at enormous expense" to perform our celebrated hill-stunt and were not lightly to be deferred therefrom by any of J.P.'s merry pranks. "On with the dance," we cried. No time was lost, breakfast was hurried through, sandwiches and thermos flasks were thrust into haversacks, coats and sticks collected, and, without standing on the order of our going, we bundled into the hotel car and set off for Loch Builg almost one hour late.

Dark was the swift-flowing Dee, dismal the droop of the pines as our bus swished along the whited roadway—a cheerless, uninviting scene outside, but inside the car was jovial summer of banter and joke. Up on the moor above Crathie conditions improved somewhat; the snow ceased, the atmosphere cleared a little, but the higher hills had conscientious objections to Sunday tramping and refused to

encourage us in any way by showing themselves. In the narrows beyond Corndavon, where we had to stop to remove boulders from the road, an eagle overhead caused some excitement which the Skipper sternly repressed as the car rocked ominously, though when the great bird swooped down with the speed of a thunderbolt he was as keen to be in at the death as the others, but intervening rising ground prevented our witnessing the strike. Shortly after we pulled up at Builg Lodge, a bare low building set on the desolate slopes of Carn Dearg and commanding a dreary wilderness of moorland and lochans. While preparing for the way, the mist rolled down and snow began again. The track played hide-and-seek with us until a compass bearing indicated its position, and after a sharp little scramble we struck it. Drift made the going heavy over the shoulder of Carn Dearg, but a self-imposed task is pleasant when the heart is in it. About a mile and a half from the lodge the track ended abruptly in the middle of the moor. Opportunely the mist lifted long enough to give us a line on a stalker's track winding up a spur of Ben Avon, and we cut over the moor for it. The real work of the day then began. The ascent was anything but graceful, and can best be described as an advance made by a series of floundering and slips. Up in the grassy corrie of the Allt Phouple deep snow made progress somewhat slow, and as we moved onwards each man took his own route through the maze of drift until we were almost at the rigging, then as the mist closed in we converged on a small outcrop of rock. Father was pleased with our progress, and by way of recompense issued a black-ball ration to the troops. We halted while the Skipper consulted the bearings pencilled on the margin of his map, and set his compass, then guided thereby we made for Clach Choutsaich. After our arduous work the comparatively level upper reaches of the mountain with snow only ankle-deep was a very welcome relief. Despite dense mist we made good headway. The first sight of our objective gave us the impression of a towering crag a long distance off, but allowing for mist exaggeration of height and distance we were not surprised when about a score of paces brought

us to its base and revealed the tor in its true proportions, less imposing certainly than first imagined, but still majestic enough in its grisly setting. It recalled the legend of Malcolm Canmore's encounter with the babies, the founders of the strong unruly race of Deeside Coutts, who were all but exterminated by their mortal enemies, the Allans, at Clach Choutsaich. Whether this is the actual battle-ground or not is of little consequence; the stone is there, the name is there, therefore let us take the story as it comes nor be too critical. While musing on the long ago the mist again cleared, and while the Press "snapped" the Stone, the Skipper took the bearing of a much more impressive tor about a quarter of a mile away. Although our friend and enemy, mist, enveloped us before we got there, an easy walk took us to the Mullach, as we called this tor for short, but our introduction to it was somewhat uncanny. As the tor loomed over us we were conscious of a large animal crouching at its base. Its head was on the ground and its ears were laid back, it had a lean and hungry look, and it seemed to be lying there preparing to spring. For a moment an eerie feeling crept over us, then laughing at our folly we wallowed knee-deep through soft drift and came to rest around a rock so shaped and snow-marked as to resemble a crouching boar. Cold and uncomfortable it was at the "Boar's Head" with seating accommodation in the form of ice-coated boulders, thus we lunched standing, making merry, as I have already indicated, on jelly sandwiches and thermos tea. To avoid any accusation of romancing we secured a snap taken on the spot under very unfavourable conditions by our legal friend, the Bar, as proof acceptable in any court that we were not "seein' things at night."

The charms of our "Inn" were not such as to detain us and before long we left our dumb friend, the Boar, to his everlasting vigil and made for the Slochd Mor side of the mountain, getting a glimpse *en route* of the Avon glen in the distance. The Slochd at any time gives the impression of mystery, but this day the writhing mist in the shadow-filled void with nothing visible beyond made one feel as if one stood on the very brink of eternity. Instinctively

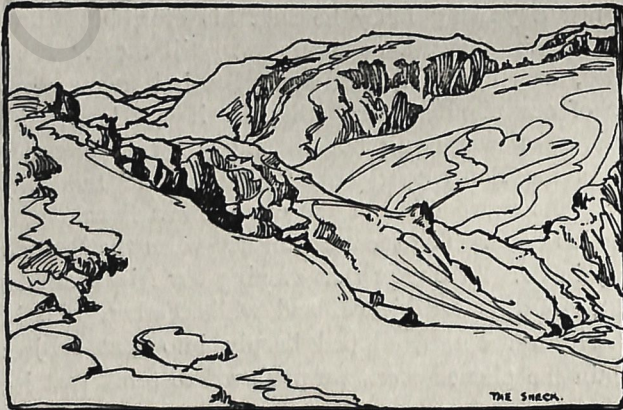
we drew back and Fitzgerald's lines seemed to flash before us:

“ There is a door to which there is no key,
There is a veil past which I cannot see.”

But we must keep our moralisings for another occasion. Sufficient it is to have glimpsed the eeriness of the scene. Following the edge of the Slochd we made our way to the summit tor of Ben Avon, the Leabaidh an Daimh Bhuidhe, the couch of the yellow stag, to find that the stag had long ago crossed the Great Divide. Drift lay deeply all round the tor. And now comes the climax to our tale. We did not know the actual facts until the evening, but that cannot affect their incorporation into the body of our story. Snow was falling slightly, the mist was down, but the sun was endeavouring to break through at the time. To immortalise the occasion the news was broken to us gently that the Bar was to “endeavour” to snap the party at the tor. We protested, but protests were of no avail, so reluctantly we lined up, put on our nicest Sunday smirks, and hoped for the best. The Bar was in front with the camera, moving about to get us centred, when suddenly behind him appeared a shadowy figure. It was of medium height, and its head, encased in a cowl, was downwards bent in meditative attitude. Our friend on the flank to whom this apparition appeared was startled. Thinking it was just a passing fancy he shut his eyes, but when he looked again the strange figure was still there. It stood quietly, swaying gently, and seemed to imitate every movement of our photographer, otherwise it was lost in itself, oblivious of everything but the thought that preoccupied it. As the Bar rapped out, “Steady all,” the swaying ceased, the sharp click of the camera was heard, and the deed was done. The spectre vanished when the Bar moved to rejoin us. At dinner that evening our friend diffidently told us of this experience, and while Father, who is an authority on optics, dipped deeply into that subject to explain the phenomenon, we preferred to think that it was a case of the Spectre of the Brocken or at least a close relative. The sun had turned the mist into a reflective

surface, and our friend had been at the particular angle to catch the reflection of the Bar, who for head-dress that day wore a close-fitting waterproof hat, and his attitude while taking the picture corresponded with that of the vision.

After leaving the summit we made for the Sneck, and before we arrived there the sky cleared as if by magic, and for the rest of the day we climbed and walked in brilliant sunshine, up by the remote and wonderful Garbh Choire to the Priest's Knoll on to the north top of Beinn a' Bhuid by way of Corrie nan Clach, overhung with huge snow cornices. The long high-level walk to the South Top, with the glorious panorama of the corried giants of the Cairngorm range, from the Bynack on the right to Beinn Bhrotain on the left, cheered our hearts and was a continuous feast for eye and mind, yielding a rich harvest of impressions. The easy descent down the Snowy Corrie to the Gairn, the long trail down the now peaceful Slugain with its lovely vista of Lochnagar, the ferry across the Dee, and the short road walk back to our hotel in Braemar completed a day in which each hour was sixty minutes full of good comradeship, of difficulties faced and conquered, of pleasure without alloy, brimful of glorious life.



"THE SNECK."



LOCHNAGAR FROM INVERCAULD

H. C. Dugan

SHADOW BUTTRESS B: LOCHNAGAR.

BY W. A. EWEN.

SHADOW BUTTRESS B rises between the Giant's Head gullies and the Douglas-Gibson. It merges almost unobtrusively with the left-hand wall of the Douglas Gully, at the mouth of which the climb commences. The wall is steep and unbroken for 300 feet; thereafter the average angle is easier and the climbing less exhilarating. It was first visited by Raeburn, Mackay, and Goggs in 1902, but the route chosen by this party ended at 250 feet in an overhang, which, apparently, could neither be surmounted nor circumvented. It is probable that Raeburn was misled by appearances and made his attempt on the left side of the buttress, where a series of chimneys, on the verge of the Polyphemus Gully, are inviting enough of aspect to lure the climber on.

Our preliminary survey was rather scamped, Symmers having but a few hours at his disposal. Having ascertained only that the upper section would present no great difficulty, Symmers dashed off to keep an appointment in York. Trains, apparently, do not discriminate between railway engineers and ordinary mortals! At a later date the inadequate nature of our examination was brought home to us. Starting up the left-hand side, where the buttress appears least steep, we were welcomed by a wide chimney, apparently innocuous. It was perhaps fortunate that we did not get beyond the gently smiling jaws; having convinced each other that neither of us was feeling particularly well and that both of us were considerably below form, we retired! More is worth a good retreat than a foolish abiding! In the meantime we would cast around for a less innocent looking start and attempt to rejoin our line of chimneys by a traverse back above the initial fraud. Eventually we reached a sort of platform, about 100 feet above the

scree; there moss and loose rock abounded, and a vast amount of original excavation in search of the belay *par excellence* resulted in the discovery of a snail. Truth compels me to admit that our efforts to scale the cliff were meeting with no greater success! We descended in heavy rain and again examined the buttress, paying more attention to the right-hand side. Careful scrutiny showed that the key to the problem was a hanging chimney, which abuts abruptly on the wall of the Douglas. This chimney would take us past the overhang which had stopped Raeburn, and we concluded that our best chance of success lay in forcing a way up the Douglas Wall, in spite of its not very promising appearance.

Some weeks later Symmers (who had spent the interval exercising his adhesive ability on Almscliff and his ingenuity on railway bridges) arrived in Ballater bent on making the ascent of Shadow Buttress B. The attempt was further delayed on account of my being off colour, literally and metaphorically! Fortunately, Symmers was in good enough form to require nothing of his companion, apart from coiling up the rope neatly. So, once again, we stood below Shadow Buttress and worked out a route via a series of ledges and ledglets which, with an occasional hiatus, led to the hanging chimney. The route would be scarcely practicable but for the very useful belays, placed for once exactly where they are most required.

The first is some 80 feet from the scree, and is reached by a conspicuous slab just at the entrance to the Douglas Gully. The slab is climbed on its edge until the holds give out, at which point a traverse across the green chimney on the left brings the first platform within reach. The first belay serves a dual purpose, acting also as foothold for the next movement round an awkward corner to the right. Twenty feet of open chimney follow to the next belay, and here Nature is bountiful; there are two bollards. But what she gives with one hand she takes back with the other. At the lower, there is little to stand on; at the upper, it is possible to stand and even to sit, but after occupying the position for half an hour and trying all the normal postures,

I was unable to decide what one really ought to do here! At this point a long traverse is made to the right, and Symmers, who was exploring it, was, for the most part, out of sight. He was taking a long time and was obviously having difficulty, audible difficulty, but he eventually returned in a most extraordinary hurry. I gathered that he had touched a boulder above the route and had found that it moved: "It's as big as a bell tent," he added. (The boulder is rather smaller than a very small bivvy!) This traverse is certainly the hardest part of the climb, and is most difficult at its farther end.

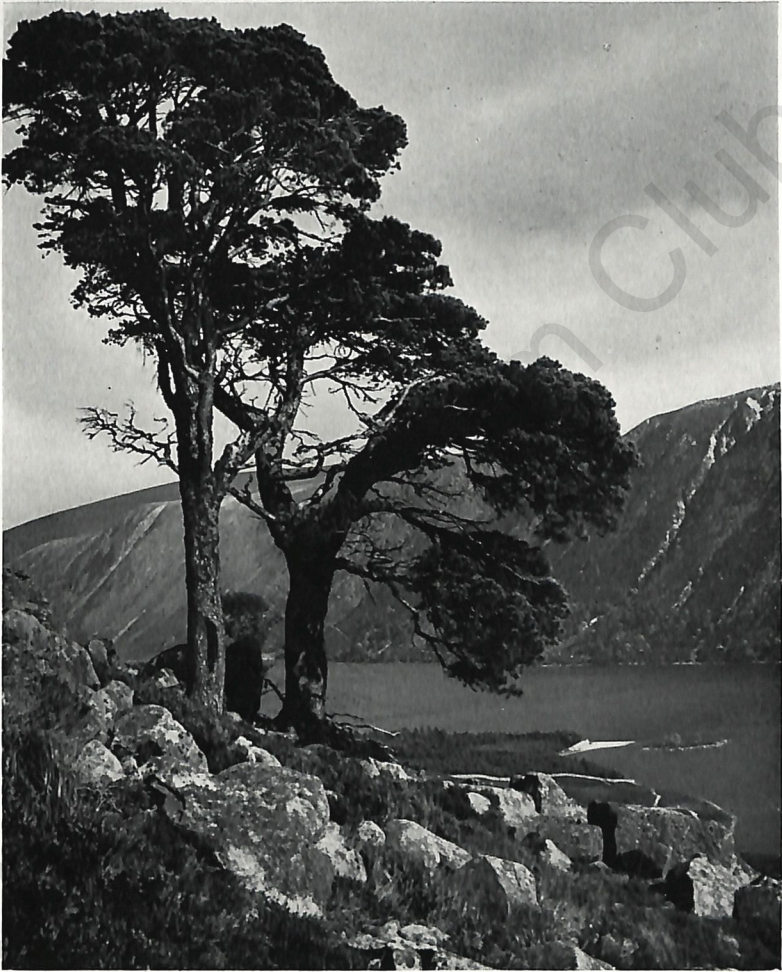
Standing on a small triangular foothold, which projects bracket-like from the wall, it is a very long stretch to the next hold, a step in a short steep chimney quite 6 feet away. An intermediate minute scratch accommodates one nail, but not mine! I am averse to pinning my faith to a nearly vertical wall with one nail. On the step are small but well-chiselled holds—fingertip holds—but sufficient to ensure that the hands will not slip while making what is virtually (saving Symmers' speculative nail support) a swing across. The chimney leads to a very narrow ledge, with a barely satisfactory belay, at which the leader should bring on number two from the second bollard. The leader is not in a position to be of any assistance to the second man; the difficult part of the climb is this horizontal traverse. Symmers looked rather anxious as he explained the exiguity of his perch, and I thought of Mr Finch's theory, "that it is easier for the dog to wag the tail than vice versa," and wondered! A modified form of combined tactics may be necessary to surmount a 10-foot wall with widely spaced holds. The exposure is considerable. But the central one of the three chimneys above is comparatively easy, depending, of course, on the length of limb to be accommodated therein. Symmers felt that there was too much of him and too little of chimney. Two more chimneys follow, side by side, the one on the left hand being probably the easier. We were now at the commencement of the hanging chimney, the key to the ascent. And the issue was still in some doubt, for, although not steep, the chimney looked, and

was, rotten. Much loose material was removed, but its ascent still requires care.

The transition from steep rock wall to broken buttress is abrupt and may be remarked from almost any viewpoint. The real difficulties being past, we rested some considerable time on the second platform and constructed a small cairn. I am doubtful both regarding its utility and its chance of survival; it is a serious business and requires the generalship of an M.Inst.C.E. at least to obtain really classic results! Now, there is one on the western seaboard of Lewis . . . but we should be getting on. The second platform is altogether a delectable spot and commands a fine view of the corrie; and we had the comfortable knowledge that the upper buttress was nowhere very difficult. Indeed, we had, most unfairly, already attacked from the rear, having made two exploratory descents to try to locate Raeburn's overhang. Above the second platform we could, save at an occasional step, move together, and this section occupied very little time.

Bearing to the left, a short, steep crack will be located: several small wedged stones facilitate the ascent and the belay is satisfactory. Broken ground leads to a large pinnacle, backed by a steep wall, which appears to be a formidable obstacle. The weak spot is immediately behind the pinnacle, the neck of which may be reached by either of the flanking chimneys: the route on the left is the more sporting. The summit boulders of the pinnacle and some of the rock in the vicinity should be handled judiciously.

Beyond the pinnacle there is little but easy scrambling until the final steep section is reached. Some interesting corners and chimneys are encountered, none rising to the level of difficult. The final pitch overhangs, but is easily passed on the left. We were greeted at the top by a small party, mostly amateur photographers and cinematographers, who, anxious that the record should be as complete and as inaccurate as possible, prevailed upon us to repeat the ascent of the last 50 feet. Conceiving it our duty to acquiesce, we thereupon performed the first ascent of Shadow B . . . for the fourth time!



LOCH MUICK

H. C. Dugan

BRAEMAR OF OLD:

Extracts from a Highland Diary.

(The following extracts are taken from a longer paper on the Diary of Angus McIntosh, by Mr A. G. Cumming, of Braemar, to whom we are much indebted.)

MR ANGUS MCINTOSH was born at Balnellan, Braemar, on August 1, 1788. At the time of this diary he lived in Glen Cluny and had three separate occupations, each of which he plied for several months in the year. About December 1 he opened his school in Glen Cluny, where there were then many families; in spring he was employed as road surface-man by the Invercauld Estate, his beat extending from the Castletown of Braemar to the Spital of Glenshee. About the third week of July his services were transferred to the game watching for some ten weeks. In October he returned to the roads, and in December commenced school again.

Mr Cumming records that the diarist's activities extended to "gardening, bridge, house and dyke building, paving, house-thatching, sheep-shearing, etc." He kept a daily weather report from 1846 to 1873, a register of marriages and deaths in Braemar for many years, and a diary, which gives not only something of the mellow atmosphere of last century but reveals also much of the grand old character, Angus McIntosh.

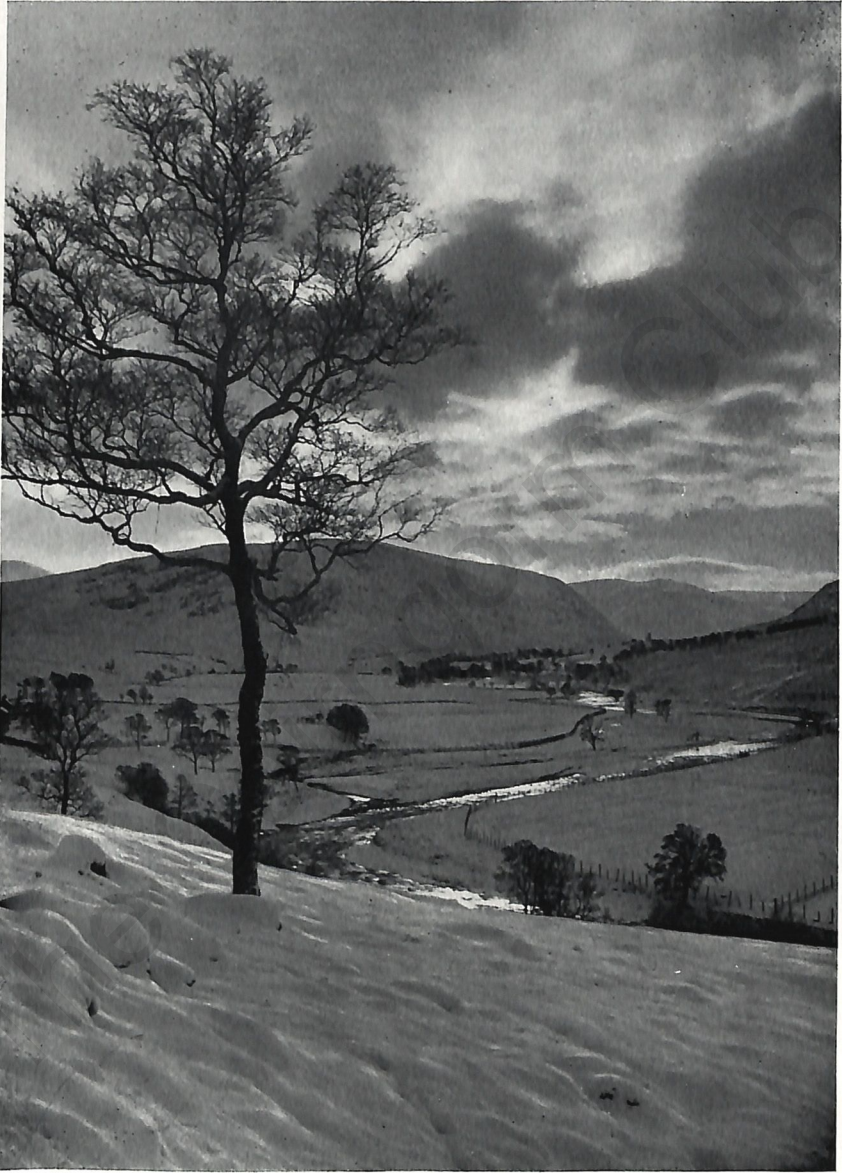
His weather report may, in view of recent comment on the disappearance of the Scottish snow-beds,* be of particular interest. These reports may not have been compiled with

* Various authorities, John Hill Burton in 1864 and Mr Seton Gordon in more recent years, have stated that one or two of the snow-beds in the Cairngorms have never been known to disappear entirely. This until 1933; for recent notes on their disappearance, see *C.C.J.*, Vol. XIII., No. 75, and *S.M.C.J.*, Vol. XX., No. 119.

the scientific exactitude of a meteorological office, but if we are occasionally surprised by almost incredible figures, we are bound at the same time to admit that, in the case of the more gossipy entries, the diarist shows the most exemplary restraint! Mr McIntosh's remarks on the severer storms of his time are therefore given in the original diary form, without comment; the second part is devoted to passing events of local interest.

The One Inch Ordnance Survey Map of the Cairngorms shows most of the Glen Cluny place-names mentioned in the diary.

- 1846—Sept. 29. (*First entry.*) Home 17 loads of peats, formerly 10.
 1847—Dec. 18. Unprecedented flood in Cluny.
 1851—Feb. 15. This is the mildest week for the season ever seen in this Grampian climate. No snow to be seen.
 Mar. 4. This has been the finest winter known for many years. Communication across the Cairnwell has not been interfered with up to this date. This is a circumstance unprecedented in the memory of the oldest inhabitants, say Robert Macdonald, now aged 84 years, and Charles McIntosh, now aged 86 years.
 Apr. 26. Snow falling heavily.
 „ 28. Furious with drifting snow. Wind north.
 „ 30. Very stormy all day. All communication is shut. The snow is over 2 feet deep at my door. Drifts 12 feet deep on the Cairnwell.
 1853—Feb. 18. A quiet day; still snow falls. Snow commenced to fall on the 8th current and has fallen to a good extent each day since, with a strong north wind. The carriers all stopped, the mails all but stopped. Provisions are exhausted; my fuel is done. I look forward with awful forebodings on seeing my crook cut in three to light the fire and dissolve my frozen fingers. This is serious.
 „ 19. Snow still falling.
 „ 25. The storm continues unabated.
 „ 26. This is extraordinary.
 Mar. 2. The snow round my humble home is from 6 to 18 feet deep.
 Apr. 1. No outdoor work can be done owing to so much snow.
 „ 16. The great quantity of snow on the low ground is fast disappearing.
 May 12. Vegetation has not moved yet.



GLEN CLUNY, BRAEMAR

H. C. Dugan

Braemar of Old: Extracts from a Highland Diary. 21

- 1854—Jan. 13. Snow has fallen less or more every day this year.
Feb. 11. Wind veered south-west, giving us one fair clear day.
,, 12. Snow falling again in good earnest.
,, 14. Was at Castletown to-day, walking through deep snow.
Was overtaken by a severe snowstorm and compelled to lodge overnight with A. Fleming. Average depth of snow 4 feet and still falling.
- 1855—Mar. 30. March has been severe without much snow. The frost has continued without any abatement for twenty weeks; rivers covered over. Snow to a good depth all winter.
May 14. Snow continues to fall every day with severe frost overnight.
- 1856—Feb. 29. Has been a fine winter; the mildest February ever seen in this Grampian glen.
July 7. Cold culminated last night in a severe snowstorm.
- 1858— March comes upon us in the same temper as Sir Colin Campbell came upon the mutineers at Cawnpore, with a storm drifting furiously.
- 1859—Feb. 8. A heavy fall of snow to-day. Our glen has a vast majestic appearance. The snow is general, about 18 inches deep—not a black speck to be seen as far as the eye can reach.
- 1860—Feb. 22. We have now had eighteen weeks of snow and severe frost; we are all but shut up; communication cut off by deep snow.
March comes in on us with the old tune, wind and snow, with severe frost.
- 1861—Jan. 11. To-day is the severest frost ever seen in Glen Cluny.
- 1864—Feb. 4. Snow commenced to fall.
,, 12. This is the most furious day we have had for years past, wind and sleet causing much damage to private property, hay and corn stacks overturned, houses denuded of their covering, window frames broken, etc.
- (A selection of miscellaneous entries.)
- 1850—Mar. 6. Some busy engineers on the hill road (*i.e.*, Cairnwell).
,, 8. Closed school to-day. I hope we have progressed to meet expectations in the proper quarter.
,, 18. Engineers pass down, having finished survey of road.
- 1851—July 22. Catherine and Miss Gruer to Lochnagar by Loch Callater, there joined by Miss McCrostie.
- 1852—Mar. 17. My small seminary at Allt-mhait was visited by the Rev. Mr Mitchell, Braemar. It was indeed refreshing to see the little ones vying with each other in their different branches and drew an eulogium from the clergyman on their several progress.

- 1852—Oct. 27. We have been disturbed by poachers, which put all our energy in motion. We only got clear of them on the afternoon of the 26th. That night I was in Corrie-vaich, exposed to the rigour of furious elements. But for the kind exertions of my friend, Archibald MacMaster, I had lain in that wild desert until life had fled from this poor mortal body.
- Nov. 8. I marched off with stirks from Invercauld for Rochallie; stopped overnight at the Spital. Started Tuesday morning, reached Rochallie 2 P.M., delivered my charge to Mr Ramsay, turned my face to the Highlands, reached Spital 6.30 P.M., Allt-mhait 9 P.M., having travelled 42 miles in 12 hours, including dinner and the slow process of driving eight stirks 16 miles at the rate of 2 miles per hour.
- „ 29. This is the wedding day at Strone. So away goes the shepherd with his bride—he full of thought, she full of pride.
- 1853—June 22. Mr McLagan and party fishing on Loch-na-nain, I with them. Thirty-seven trouts. (Presumably Loch nan Eun.)
- Sept. 15. This is the day of the Braemar Gathering, a fine day. Sir Charles Forbes of Newe was at the Gathering with 150 men of the Lonach Society, in full Highland dress.
- 1856—Mar. 17. A dool day for Braemar: William Gruer sails to-day from Glasgow for America. (Various others are named about this time.)
- 1857—Apr. 28. This is Grocer McGregor's wedding day.
- May 13. On Monday, the 13th day of May, Donald McArthur, Schoolmaster, Castletown of Braemar, absconded, leaving his wife and family destitute, drink and debt the cause thereof. He leaves Braemar minus a teacher, a Session Clerk, a Registrar and an elder, a four-fold office vacant by the desertion of one man. (Another dool day for Braemar?)
- Sept. 15. John Gruer left here for America; still they go.
- 1861— The new road is to be made along our quiet glen.
- 1862—Apr. 9. The bothys at Allt-mhait are again occupied by the navvies, making the new road through the quiet Glen Cluny.
- July 11. This day the country is up searching for Admiral Johns, who has been two days and nights on a shelf of the rocks at the Breakneck Falls, Glen Callater, without food or shelter. He was found and extracted from his perilous situation and borne to Glencallater lodge. He was much exhausted but mentally sound. He was upwards of 80 years of age.



WINTER'S GLORY, GLEN CLUNY

H. C. Dugan

- 1863—Aug. 15. On August 15, 1863, the new road from Castletown of Braemar to the top of the Cairnwell was finished. The navvies leave the bothys at Shanspital bridge.
- Nov. 2. The Misses Farquharson were here to-day white-washing a black house.
- 1864—Aug. 15. I came by an accident. (Nothing added.)
- Sept. 1. The Ordnance Survey camp left here.
- 1867—Mar. 6. Far from old custom, Shrove Tuesday has passed unheeded in Glen Cluny.
- 1868—Feb. 25. This is Shrove Tuesday. It was kept in the good old style at Allt-mhait, what with eating, drinking, music, vocal and instrumental, dancing, etc., the lone folk of the lone glen of Cluny enjoyed themselves to a late hour. The night was fair and pleasant for the home-going.
- 1869—Oct. 16. To-day the Queen's Despatch was upset on the Cairnwell and smashed. The driver, in relieving the horse, lost his hat and gloves. Placing the mails on horse-back, he fought his way through drifting snow, reached here more like death than life. After an hour's doctoring he was able to continue his way to Balmoral.
- 1872—Aug. 1. To-day I enter my 85th year, a weary pilgrim indeed.
- 1873—Jan. 19. Stayed at Coldrach over Sunday. The journey to and from Braemar too long for me.
- Mar. 5. Left off teaching at Newbigging, having been there a fortnight.
- „ 8. I left Newbigging for home. Day clear and fair after a fall of snow. Travelling in snow all the way. (*Last entry.*)

His daughter adds:

- 1873—Mar. 25. Died at Glen Cluny Lodge, Angus McIntosh, aged 84 years.

[The diary spelling of Glen Cluny and other place names is retained.]

IN MEMORIAM: H. B.

By "GRETA ROWELL."

THOU who did'st love the mountain's lofty peaks,
Their rugged summits clad in dazzling white,
The sound of running water o'er the fells,
The mountain torrents sheathed in sparkling ice ;
Rest, rest in peace : Thou hast thy dearest wish.
No trim churchyard shall claim thy whitening bones,
Nor gloomy bier encase them from the wind
Nor hide them in the dark imprisoning earth.
The wheeling gulls shall sing thy requiem
There where the deepest snows enwrap thee round
And shrouding mists enfold thee from above.
There shalt thou feel the gentle lash of rain,
And snows shall fall on thee as lightly warm
As angel forms that lulled thy spirit, worn
With buffeting in rain and mist and snow,
And bore it to the Eternal Hills of God.
Thou hast the " windswept boulder " for thy bier,
The foaming torrent chants thy dirge anew
As o'er the rocky ridge it falls in spate ;
The mournful stags re-echo it to the fells ;
The distant valley hears it, in the wind
That sweeps in tumult toward the noisy town
Whose hum and turmoil drown its lingering sound.
Brave heart, that wrestled dauntless to the end.
The tremulous dawn exults to greet thee, there
Where a few pale, lingering stars their vigil keep
Around thy lonely corpse, since sundown set
A glow upon thy still, unruffled brow.
The gentle night wind fans thy still, cold cheeks
And whispers, " Weary traveller, rest in peace ! "

ACCOUNT OF A "GLORY" SEEN ON MORVEN.

BY W. M. ALEXANDER.

THE following is an account of a glory which I saw along with a companion one afternoon on Morven five years ago. The phenomenon, which is so called when the colours are really bright, is one of the most curious spectacles which the hills have to offer; and it appears that a really good show of bright colours is a definitely rare occurrence.

We stood one afternoon in early summer about two hours before sunset upon the projecting rocks which those who know Morven will remember, not far from the top looking down on the Howe of Cromar. It was a day of broken clouds and cold showers with intermittent sunshine. The mist, where we stood, being blown away for the time, each of us saw his own shadow on the bank of mist to the eastward, with a beautiful display of rainbow colours around it. These colours were in circles, centred in the head of the shadow. There are two main features of this spectacle which stand out in one's recollection. For one thing, there was the brilliant show of concentric rainbows round the shadow. For another, the very striking fact that there was nothing on the cloud except your own shadow and glory; that of your companion, although he stood within easy speaking distance on the hill, say 10 to 20 yards off, was not visible. He, in turn, saw his own shadow and glory but not yours. In the absence of those notes which I should have made at the time and didn't, I make a rough drawing of the glory as we saw it. As a matter of fact, the sketch is untrue. The person depicted is to be imagined as having a private view of his own glory; it is invisible to every one else. The centre of the rings of prismatic colours is the head of the shadow. The first prominent red band we saw was, I think, in a circle with radius head to waist; from there outwards the colours formed a series of successive rainbows, or spectra, which became rapidly fainter the farther out they were from the figure. It is these rainbow circles which make

the glory; without them, I take it, the shadow is a Brocken spectre.



A description of a Brocken spectre seen on Brimmond was written a few years ago in these pages (*C.C.J.*, IX., 94). J. A. Parker, the writer of that account, says that the shadow was circled by colours; indeed, one would suppose that the shadow must always be accompanied by some sort of halo, however faint, because it is only on a plane surface, like a wall, that a plain shadow could be seen; a cloud surface can never be like that. It would seem to follow that the brightness and distribution of the colour rings must depend upon the position of the masses of small drops which are between the eye of the observer and the solid parts of the cloud which takes the shadow. As I remember it, the shadow appears to be behind the colours.

How often do glories occur, and what are the chances of seeing them? Every one would wish to see so notable a spectacle, and if seen once there is still greater wish to see it again. Upon this point, the chances of seeing it in the Scottish hills, there are definite data available in the records of the Ben Nevis Observatory made during the time when

that institution was working. During the years 1883 to 1898 the observers on Ben Nevis top recorded in their log-book 172 glories, of which 8 were lunar. This gives an average of about 12 per annum; or taking the year round, gives a 1 in 30 chance to hill-climbers of seeing it on any given day. As at least half the possible displays are within an hour or two of sunrise, the chance is, for the ordinary hill climber, less than 1 in 60. Moreover, as it appears that ice crystals give definitely better effects than rain-water crystals, there would seem to be better chances of seeing it well in the colder months of the year.

Ben Nevis Observatory recorded one case where there were no fewer than five separate spectra in the glory. This seems to be the maximum on record. The red of the spectrum is at the outside of the ring. Here are the particulars of a four-ringed glory seen in 1887 on Ben Nevis. (1) (Centre of shadow) yellowish red. (2) Bad blue, white, yellow, red. (3) Dark blue, green, yellow, red. (4) Faint green, faint red. Some attempts have been made to photograph glories which have been moderately successful. In these cases the camera takes the place of the observer's head and photographs its own glory.

When you start to look into the literature on this subject you find to begin with that it is beset with a perfect thicket of loose terminology, mostly drawn from literary, artistic, and quasi-religious quarters. Thus you will find a series of words like aura, aureole, corona, nimbus, and, lastly, glory; all of these refer to one or many of phenomena of this kind. Modern meteorologists separate these terms and use them as labels for distinct things. The word glory, now used for the spectacle here referred to, seems to be French in origin. At least, the "New English Dictionary" quotes Sir T. Browne: "Radiant halos, which, after the French expression, are usually termed the glory"; but this refers to the light round a saint's head.

Now the latter, the saint's halo, calls for a passing remark. In its standard form it is a ridiculous thing like a soup plate poised on nothing above the person's head. But that thing surely is only a late and highly conventionalised form of something more genuine. And if one remembers the

primitive Italian paintings correctly, there was an earlier kind of halo for the saints and one which very closely resembled the glory as seen on Morven or anywhere else. These paintings show a big affair like a Japanese umbrella behind the holy man, with circles of bright colours centred in the man's head and reaching down to the back of his waist. In fact, they show a design which could only have been copied from the glory as seen in Nature. After their time the painter of religious subjects went indoors and cultivated a fertile imagination. Hence it came about that words like aureole, nimbus, halo, and glory all came to refer most usually to the thing above a saint's head. Meteorologists, having to do with practical things—although cloud images are, after all, rather less substantial than holy pictures—classify the glory, the natural one, as a form of corona; the latter in turn is one of the anthelia, the phenomena occurring at the opposite side from the sun.

It so happens that we have an account of a glory seen on Ben Macdhui a hundred years ago. It is an account which gives a very accurate description of the spectacle, and it was written by Professor Robert Jameson of Edinburgh University, who visited Braemar in 1830. It is as follows:—

We had turned towards the east and the sun shone on our backs, when we saw a very bright rainbow described on the mist before us. The bow, of beautiful distinct prismatic colours, formed about two-thirds of a circle, the extremities of which appeared to rest on a lower portion of the mountain. In the centre of this incomplete circle there was described a luminous disc, surrounded by the prismatic colours displayed in concentric rings. On the disc itself each of the party (three in number), as they stood at about fifty yards apart, saw his own figure most distinctly delineated, although those of the other two were invisible to him. The representation appeared of the natural size, and the outline of the whole person of the spectator was most correctly portrayed. To prove that the shadow seen by each individual was that of himself, we resorted to various gestures such as waving our hats, flapping our plaids, etc., all which motions were exactly followed by the airy figure. We then collected together and stood as close to one another as possible, when each could see three shadows on the disc; his own, as distinctly as before, while those of his two companions were but faintly discernible. As the autumnal day was fast declining, and we had a long walk before us to Braemar, we were forced to hurry down the rugged sides of Loch Etichan, and, being consequently soon enveloped in the mist, we lost

sight of the atmospheric phenomenon, but not until it had been distinctly visible to us for about a quarter of an hour.

There speaks the good old nineteenth-century scientist. He may not have known so much about things as people do now, but he had a zest for the open air which his scientific successors largely lack. Thus if you look up some of the modern books about light, optics, or meteorology in the hope of finding some information about glories and other phenomena of that kind you will be disappointed. You will find that the modern scientific writer is not interested in these spectacles as such. His interests are mainly in mathematics, which he hands out in large helpings to those who want it.

About the only serviceable book which I have found on the subject of these optical phenoma is by an Austrian named Pernter; and from him I learn what follows. We are to regard the shadow as a normal shadow on a cloud and the prismatic colours as arising from the light reflected from the cloud, or rather from the refraction of the light so reflected. The fact that an observer sees his own image, and its glory, and no other person's image or glory, is explained, according to that writer, by the absence of a reflecting surface that is common to more than one observer, the cloud surface which makes the reflection being a different one for each. Theoretically, if the cloud were far enough away, it should be possible for all shadows to be seen on it—that is, if it formed a flat surface like a sheet. Pernter's book says that the first instance of the glory to be recorded was observed in Peru in 1735 by a French explorer. That record tells of the astonishment with which each member of the party saw himself adorned with coloured rings upon a cloud from which all his companions were excluded. And that French explorer was the first to establish what is now accepted, that, in the case of glories, it is icedrops rather than raindrops which produce the prismatic colours.

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Professor Jameson; quoted in *Spalding Club. Misc.*, Vol. II., pref.

BELOW THE SNOW LINE.

BY T. CAMPBELL.

"*Bénissez chaque jour le Seigneur,*" ran the words above our chalet door. Three days had passed since our arrival at Gryon in the Vaudese Alps, and the evening of the third day passed out in rain. We retired early, with hope somewhat deferred, yet springing eternal, perhaps not so devout as our portal legend might suggest: I knowing that, as for two nights past, an outsize and elusive cricket would chirp in all parts of my room, and that, with the dawn, the drowse-dispelling tinkle of a goat's bell under my window would not do much to mitigate the breakfast-table strain. Came the dawn, however, and with it the mists had lifted, giving promise of a good day. The higher peaks were already bathed in the rosy splendour of early morning, and by 7 A.M. we were on our way. Pierre, a young student from the University of Geneva, had the love of mountains in his soul, and he told me with confident pleasure that, ere the summer had gone, he would have done *tous les quatre mille*. Our objective on this occasion was not quite 4,000 metres, but was not far short of it—La Dent de Morcles, rearing its rugged head away in the distance beyond the Muveran. On our left the Massif des Diablerets was clear-cut against the sunrise, while on the distant right rose the five delicate peaks of the Dents du Midi.

Our path led us through meadows and pinewoods, and the morning air was keen. The eternal tinkling of cattle and goat-bells was everywhere—a most pleasant sound when carried from afar on the evening air, but not quite so soothing close under one's window in the early hours. A peculiar feature anent these cows: I was told that all in the canton de Vaud were dun and white, in Freiburg, black and white, corresponding to the cantonal flag and the shutters of the principal chalets. Whether this be true

I know not, but I never discovered how the greens and blues of other cantons affected the bovine pigmentation! We were delayed for some minutes by an unfriendly he-goat which stood in our path and attacked us when we made a detour. This delay was made up for by running, only to be followed by our friend, but he tired first; for the moment, however, we felt sorry, in retrospect, for Mary and her little follower, but considering the size and odour of ours, we deemed ourselves the more unfortunate.

Leaving the last of the scattered pines, we steadily climbed through the grass zone, where grew in profusion campanulas and deep-blue gentians and others whose names I knew not. Far ahead we sighted a party, and within an hour we had overtaken them—half a dozen men and women, with whom we exchanged the greetings of the day. On learning that we intended to pick the coveted edelweiss, they begged us to leave some for them: *Il y en a pour tout le monde*. Their accent betrayed their Germanic origin. We left them labouring on, admiring the fortitude of two of the women, who obviously had not successfully benefited at any time from a slimming course, and who, for the next few hours, would have to bear the burden and heat of the day.

Midday, with a temperature of 50° C., found us on a level boulder-strewn tract, where we threw down our sacks to rest. The shadow of a great rock in a weary land gave us a welcome respite from the glare. A peak near at hand tempted us from our lethargy and we bethought us to climb it before lunch. Concealing our sacks under some loose boulders, we set off. The climb was steep and monotonous until a few stones began to hurtle past us, and, cursing the clumsiness of some one higher up, we lay flat until the avalanche ceased. On looking up we descried against the skyline the heads of two chamois, which seemed to resent our approach. Knowing the danger we had just escaped and the wisdom of these creatures, we hastily retreated to fortify ourselves against the long climb of the afternoon. The place where we had left our rucksacks was well marked, and on nearing we were amazed to see half a dozen enormous grey rats crawling about the rocks. Without more ado we

sent them into hiding with a few well-directed stones. The contents of our sacks were untouched. What puzzled us most of all was how these creatures, to all appearances bloated and well fed, contrived to exist in a wilderness of rock. By this time the party we had passed had arrived and were preparing a meal which, to us, looked sumptuous. We were contenting ourselves with *pâté de foie gras*, dry bread, and wine, while they were serving round plates of delicious soup. Experiencing all the thwarted delight of the "Bisto Kids," we joined them for conversation. They told us that they were Dutch, and we disclosed our respective nationalities. The word *Ecossais* worked a miracle. "*Ecossais!* Then come and have a plate of soup with us." It appeared that two of them had spent the previous summer in Oban and knew Glencoe, Bidean, and Buachaille Etive! After half an hour of home-sick talk we parted with a long farewell, *à l'année prochaine*.

Not a breath of wind, a deep blue sky, and a torrid sun. The ascent was now fairly steep and the path zigzag, quite uninteresting. At last we came to a slope of scree, very steep, which gave us pause. The slope went down 1,000 feet and after that— With infinite care, Pierre leading, we crossed the odd thirty yards, and once across on the safe rock I threw myself down utterly relaxed. A second later a strange hissing sound startled my right ear, and, with a shout of "*Gare à toi!*" Pierre lashed with his stick at two ugly snakes which were darting thin forked tongues at my unsuspecting head. These happenings of the last ten minutes were ample excuse for broaching the flask of Haig's which I had packed away three days before. From now on to the cabane the track continued in the same zigzag monotony. By eight o'clock we were there, to be greeted by a lone Swiss soldier, who set things in order for us for the night. The fee would be one franc per head per night, payable on leaving. Half an hour later we were joined by a bearded Vaudese peasant and his two sons who had climbed from a different angle. Their accent had that charming purity and ease reminiscent of Provence. Pierre had by this time proved his ability in the making of

a huge *omelette aux champignons*, which latter we had gathered on the way. This we seasoned with a cup of hot wine. When darkness fell we went outside to view the Rhone valley: twinkling lights everywhere, as if the starry sky were mirrored far below. On Mont Blanc, "whose dwelling is the light of setting suns," it was not yet night. And so to bed. For a time I lay awake because of the rustlings of rats and mice in the hay quite near us, but the next moment of consciousness I had was the old peasant wakening us to a breakfast of honeyed rolls and *café au lait*.

A steep ascent of one hour found us at the summit, with the sun already above the horizon. The view was really impressive, and would beggar any description. No vegetation, no bird life, no breath of wind—only one lone bee hovering and humming over a stone. The descent was easy—a jog-trot to the cabane. Here the solitary watcher was awaiting us, and to show him our honesty we doubled the fee and let him sample Haig's for the first time! He was very friendly. We were to descend to the village of Dailly, which we could see, as we thought, quite near the plain. In due course we struck a good road, which we followed, and which led to the entrance of the Fort de Dailly, heavily guarded with barbed wire. An imposing notice warned us against entering, but we felt sure that that way lay the village. Innocently we carried on through what seemed to be a deserted camp, until we were stopped by two frankly astonished bakers who had just finished their day's work. Suffice to say that we were told in no mild way to scam, and that right speedily, with terse threats of courts martial and firing squads. Our first taste of Continental militarism. We succeeded, however, in being directed to Dailly village, which we reached at high noon. Here an excellent lunch awaited us and our Buick in which we were to finish the descent and our journey back to Gryon.

We left at three, with the western sky a deep slate colour and the east as fair as the morning. On first gear we zigzagged ninety-eight times before reaching the first-class road running along the side of the Rhone. The first big rain-drops were falling and thunder was growling not far away.

Soon the storm was overhead and the lightning flashing with alarming nearness and frequency. I have always felt an inward disquiet during bad storms, but the nonchalance of the Swiss consoled me utterly. But when rounding a bend a dark red flash swept directly across our path a few yards away. Every one ducked instinctively, and the driver, a veteran of frontier service in peace and war, jammed the car to a standstill. With this flash there was no thunder. Somewhat shaken we drove on.

Home at last in drenching rain. A hot bath, then supper. The storm was renewing itself. With every flash the electric lights of the chalet dimmed. After supper we adjourned for a game of cards, during which the lights went out altogether. Turned off at the village main, we were told. The old-world gleam of candles saw us to bed once more *pour bénir le Seigneur*.



DERRY TREES.

A SOLITARY TRAMP.

BY JAMES ALEXANDER.

“φερομεν ἐξ ὀρέων
ἔλικα γεότομον.”—EURIPIDES.

THIS is the tale of a tenderfoot in the Cairngorms. The most humiliating feature of the trip was the discovery of his true status. While the main plan succeeded, our confident mountaineer shed much of his confidence in the process and added to his great respect for the heroes of the game. The trip started by boat from London to Aberdeen, and at 6 P.M. on a fine July evening our trumper started from Braemar. It was a Friday. On his back was his house for the next day or two. The outfit was quite economical in weight, but the proportion of books to food, in terms of consumption, was probably about ten to one. The motor road was bad going, but the scenery of Deeside amply repaid the effort. The first snow showed on Beinn Bhrotain. At the Linn of Dee our pilgrim had his first check. It appeared to him that every second tree bore a notice forbidding fires. A little way up the Lui Beg he decided to take a chance, but before the fire could be got under way some large threatening drops fell. He hurriedly donned his ground-sheet, and decided to carry on after a hasty repast, washed down with the water intended for tea. This was a false alarm, however, and after a mile or two, with the mist closing in, camp was made just off the road. The mist was of the drizzly kind, and the Lui Beg sang its quiet song away on the left. The effort to use the ground-sheet and blanket without getting unduly wet did not conduce to sound sleep, and in the grey of a thick morning the journey was resumed and Derry Lodge passed. A board proclaimed that there lay the Larig Ghru. Visibility was down to about 100 yards, but the burn failed not. A halt by the

wooden footbridge for rest and refreshment, and then on to the foot of Ben Macdhui. Hitherto the burn had been guide, now the gradient took up the job. Lochan Uaine looked its best. This day Dubh Lochan would have been a fitter title, the encircling rocks, especially to the north, looking dark and forbidding. At the level end was a wall of mist, and the whole was a picture to enthral any hill-lover. Farther on he crossed a field of huge granite boulders, such as he had not encountered since the ascent of the middle peak of the Rivals in North Wales. Now ensued the search for the top, which, in the time-honoured way, seemed to recede the farther he advanced. Soon appeared a roofless stone hut and then the cairn. Blessed moment! Past struggles and future labours were ignored. An elaborate indicator, placed there by the Club, named most of the principal hills in Scotland; but, alas, no fair prospect lay before his eyes. A pebble would have reached the bounds of vision. It was close on noon, and an hour showed no improvement in the conditions, so—on to the Shelter Stone.

The map showed this famous spot to be not more than two miles away. Allowing for the hard going, let us say three hours. Actually it took thirty hours. And this is where the Cairngorms claimed their meed of respect. Our tenderfoot's memory holds two outstanding pictures of that afternoon's adventure. One, never to be forgotten, was the golden eagle sitting on a square, mist-encircled rock. Possibly the advent of the lord of creation interrupted his digestion; possibly he was only prospecting for an addition to his meal; whatever the reason, he spread his huge wings and disappeared in the mist, only to alight a few minutes later and resume his meditation. The intruder was ignored and pursued his devious path. Subsequent research and much study of photographs seem to point to the top of the Shelter Stone precipice as the scene of this encounter. The second picture was also in this neighbourhood. The course of one precipitous burn, after traversing a flat floor of red granite, seemed to slide right off the mountain and into the mist. This looked tricky going for a pair of iron-studded boots, minus any adventitious aid in the descent; so, once

more, the wanderer retraced his steps. Among the rocks, here and there, lay melting patches of snow.

Five o'clock found a badly disillusioned enthusiast philosophically looking for a home. Wood and water are regarded as camping necessities. Of water there was a glut. Very good water, too, but you feel at such times that the Sahara would be a pleasant change. Wood did not exist, so tea seemed as far off as ever. Shelter was scant, and was provided by a small overhanging boulder which had obligingly turned its back to the wind and the drizzle. Many long hours of daylight remained, so to pass the time building operations were commenced. All that could be done was to keep the rain out as far as possible. The ground-sheet and blanket were wanted for bed. Nothing remained to make a roof, so our explorer contented himself with building little walls at right angles to this private shelter stone. Then an unexpected difficulty appeared. There was a crack in the stone running back for some 2 feet and piercing the canopy. The water admitted was more annoying than uncomfortable, and defied all efforts at remedy. Stones placed to catch the rain and divert it, earth stuffed in the crack—nothing succeeded. Luckily the wind kept in the same quarter, and the rain was slight and driving, so that presently out came "Sergeant Grischa," and all was peace. The northern nights at this season are short, and it was late by town standards when the light began to fail. There was plenty of food for thought, but the thought that principally engaged the Scottish mind was the question of political boundary. When he had last ascertained his position with certainty, on the top, he was within about a mile of the meeting-place of Banff, Aberdeen, and Inverness. Now he liked to think that he was in his native county, the first, but on the hills all counties look alike. Such considerations, however, cannot worry one for long when there is nobody to argue with! A sluggish but fairly wide stream drifted past the door—save the mark—and search on the map showed that the supposed position of the camp was near the source of many streams; and the streams were as numerous as contour lines. A little distance away

was a pool which might pass for Lochan Buidhe, and then again might not.

Anyway, sleep put an end to all that. Next morning the weather was fairly clear, but the terrain was quite unrecognisable. On a neighbouring hill-side the mist lifted and fell, and nine patches of snow could be counted. It was Sunday, so he decided to take things comfortably and to have the tea he had almost dreamed of. Two candles reserved for the Shelter Stone were cunningly inserted in a crevice of the shelter and the cooker was put on to boil. Eventually it came to the boil and an excellent breakfast was appreciated to the full. The weather was still unsettled and did not promise well for steady progress. Crusoe in mind, he proceeded to lay the "blessed unction" of solitude to his soul. That friend of our young days might, if transposed in time, have said, "I am deprived of the society of my fellow-men"; and then after a few complaints would have answered himself: "But I am far from the rush of the East India Dock Road and the noise of all manner of engines and loud speakers. Among these loud speakers many walk on two legs and are not the least offensive kind. Here is no kindness and love of mankind, but here also are no unkindness and malice." With such thoughts, and not mentioning to himself the providence of God, he settled for the day. But he reckoned without the Cairngorms. Just as he had set his little world in order, the wind rose, blew heartily into his corner with eddies and hail! Our pilgrim did not hesitate, but hastily packed, and with a map and a few postcards purchased in Braemar commenced an intensive search for the Shelter Stone.

The sun showed for moments about midday, and as the hours passed and observation got keener he found what he already suspected, that he was going over the same ground again and again. Now, however, he profited by the experience. About five o'clock he followed the same stream for the second time, and the genie of the mountain decided that the game was up and elected to show the beauties of his domain. At one time the mist rolled away from the brae face over against Loch Avon and showed the two streams



MAM SODHAIL FROM CARN EIGE

F. C. Garrow

as lines of silver coming from the clouds of heaven and disappearing in the clouds of earth. At another the Shelter Stone precipice and part of Loch Avon lay dark below.

Now the road lay down Robert's corrie, and so to the goal, which was reached a mere twenty-seven hours behind schedule. Arrived at the east end of the stone, he saw, with mixed feelings, a man appear from the other end, quickly followed by another. Then he knew that the rôle of Crusoe was prematurely over. The new arrivals were Glasgow men and were good men and true. In time he forgave them their huge packs, especially when it came to the friendly barter necessary to produce a meal. He had to allow that there was something to say for a spirit stove. Talk flowed freely, and the chains of the town soon fell off all three. That night they slept together, and the last sounds they heard were the driving rain and the crack of the wind against the rocks.

Next morning was clearly more settled, and young Glasgow breasted the hill on the Ben Macdhui side, heading for the Corrour Bothy, and the lone trumper made for the Saddle of Cairngorm. The day was pleasant and sunny, and the Nethy kept pace, like a young Highlander, going to an uneventful career in the lowlands of Strathspey. Soon, too soon, the glamour of the hills departed, and the last miles to the road were hemmed in by foothills. Once the Nethy ran under its bed for about a quarter of a mile. One memory remains, a glass of milk, given in the traditional manner by a farmer's wife near Forest Lodge. With the milk our trumper resigned himself to a return to the twentieth century. The sole trophy of the trip was a small crystal about an inch long. There are more hills in the Cairngorms which, beholding the crystal, he beholds and aspires to climb. The hills can be cruel but they never fail to call their children nor their children to respond.

PAST EDITORS.

THE fact that the editorship has changed hands with this issue affords an occasion for a few remarks about those who have held this office in the Club. From its beginning the *Journal* has maintained a high standard, and the thanks of the Club are due, now as heretofore, to those members who have carried the periodical on. All these editors have, one after another, done the Club and its members very good service. The editing of a periodical of this kind has difficulties to contend with that the reader does not always appreciate when he sees the finished product in the shape of the *Journal*. Thanks to its editors, this *Journal* has come through fair weather and bad weather alike; and to-day it enjoys the cumulative results of their labours. Their names are as follows; and as there are not now a great many members of the Club who have known them all personally, we append a few explanatory remarks to their names.

1889-1910, ALEX. INKSON MCCONNOCHIE (six volumes).—First Secretary of the Club and Editor of the *Journal* for many years. Tall and athletic, he tramped all the hills of our district with perfect intimacy, and his knowledge extended over most of the Highlands. In the nineties of last century there was no more ardent hill-climber in Scotland, and he was one of the first men to climb the higher hills in winter. His qualities as a descriptive writer have been very frequently seen in the pages of the *Journal*, as well as in the series of books which have come from his pen.

1911-1912, JAMES G. KYD (two numbers).—One of the pioneers of ski-running in this country and a keen hill-climber.

1912-1914, JAMES B. GILLIES (five numbers).—An admirable Secretary of the Club and Editor. He fell in action in 1916.

1915-1923, ROBERT ANDERSON (three volumes).—All his life a hill-climber and trampler, no one had a more thorough knowledge of the north-east of Scotland, its hills and valleys. He wrote many articles in the *Journal*, and various writings from his active pen are well known, such as the revised edition of Pratt's "Buchan."

1924-1926, HENRY ALEXANDER (three numbers).—Besides contributions to the *Journal*, is the author of the standard Guide to the Cairngorms.

1927-1934, EDWARD W. WATT (two volumes).—While maintaining the character the *Journal* has had from the beginning, he has developed the *Journal* by the inclusion of numerous illustrations and, in particular, by securing full reports of the meetings and proceedings of the Club.

W. M. A.

In Memoriam.

WALTER A. SMITH.

THE death of Walter A. Smith at Potarch on October 25, 1934, removed from the list the name of one of the few remaining original members of the Club. Living in Edinburgh, he was in recent years unable to join to any great extent in the Club's activities. He was also an original member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club and of the Scottish Rights of Way Society, in whose work he took a long and active interest.

Although business kept him largely in the south—he was Secretary and, later, Manager of the English and Scottish Law Life Association—he spent much of his leisure among the southern hills, and was author of "The Pentland Hills: Their Paths and Passes" and of "The Hill Paths of Scotland."

A WEST COAST ITINERARY.

BY JAMES MACHARDY.

THE trip started on August 5, 1934, the party comprising Slessor, Miss Janet Patterson (Junior Section), Hamish, a veteran of thirteen summers, and the writer. The journey from Aberdeen via Deeside and the Larig to Aviemore is so familiar to readers that I need not linger over the description. We were rather amused, however, when, about half a mile from the Pools of Dee, we met a party of young men from the Midlands of England hauling their gear over the summit of the Larig—on wheelbarrows! Our destination, the admirably situated Youths' Hostel at Aviemore, was reached at 6.30 P.M.; the Scottish Youths' Hostel at Aviemore, with its fine sun parlour and spacious windows opening to a pine-scented hill-side, is superior to any I have seen elsewhere.

Our objective on Monday was Auchterawe via the Corrie-yairack Pass; the first stage was by bus and train to Laggan-bridge, leaving a farther distance of 28 miles, a walk comfortably within our powers. A young man, rich in the anecdote of the countryside, kept us interested in his tales as far as Glenshirra Lodge. Garvamore, General Wade's old barracks, grim and scarred, recalled the Highland antagonism to "the new road." The path zigzags up the hill-side in a series of hairpin bends, there being twelve traverses of some 80 yards at the foot and narrowing gradually as they near the summit. The stone buttresses at the corners, though now overgrown, are still visible and in a wonderful state of preservation. Heavy rain obscured the gorgeous panorama from the summit of the pass. But if mist spoiled the view it perhaps helped us to feel the romance and glamour of the road which General Wade and his Sassenach soldiers drove through a hostile country, and over which Prince Charlie, ironically enough, was to lead

the clans ten years later *en route* for Prestonpans. Descending to Glen Tarff, difficulty was experienced in finding the path as the ground is now marshy. It was discovered that the path does not here follow the stream but is to be found on the hill-side. The Hostel at Auchterawe was comfortable if not as compact as that at Aviemore.

Next morning it was still raining, and we decided that an easy day was due; of the alternative ways of reaching Buntait in Glen Urquhart, by bus or by boat, the latter, with the chance of seeing the "monster," appealed to us most. Loch Ness was not at its best, with a blustering wind blowing and the white horses running in Urquhart Bay. There I was jolted out of a day-dream by shouts of "The Monster," and a rush of passengers to the side of the ship. About a mile astern an indistinct shape, like an inverted boat, was making across the loch—no doubt the "creature" itself. The short bus journey to Buntait was enlivened by Gaelic songs and numerous deviations along by-roads to deliver parcels. The 7 miles' journey took two hours! The hostel here is small but comfortable, with a splendid view of the hills of Glen Affric and Glen Cannich.

Wednesday dawned bright and dry, and we were early away, with Alltbeath in Glen Affric as our objective. The road climbs steeply to over 700 feet, with extensive views of the mountains of Kintail ever ahead. That over the valley to Invercannich has always appealed to me as the perfect example of the peaceful Highland glen. To-day a pair of eagles were sailing overhead, mere specks in the blue, now swooping downwards, now soaring to continue their tireless wheeling. A halt at Comar House, where Prince Charlie spent a night after Culloden; I stayed there some years ago and remember that carved on the fireplace of my room were the initials and date, 17—R.C.—40. Roderick Chisholm, I learned, was out in the '45. But it is a name becoming exceedingly rare in the glen. We now climbed steadily for some 3 miles to the narrow passage of the Chisholm's Pass and so down to the pleasantly wooded country of Loch Beinn a' Mheadhoin and Loch Affric. The hills now began to close in on us and the sky became

overcast, but Alltbeath was reached before the rain fell. We were awakened early next morning by a child's soft Highland voice calling, "Your porridge is ready." The morning lived up to the promise of the previous evening, the hills being hardly discernible in the mist. West of Alltbeath the track is broken and boggy, and although the more southern Glen Lichd is the easier way, we passed into Kintail by the Bealach na Sgairne, a narrow rocky defile precipitous on both sides. This was at one time the main pass between Kintail and Inverness. The path now drops precipitately to Glen Choinneachain, and the scene is one of magnificent desolation. At Dorusduain we saw a tame stag feeding among cattle on the river bank. All was now plain sailing, round the head of Loch Duich to Ratagan, 1 mile from Shiel Bridge. At high tide only a narrow strip of road separates Ratagan Hostel from the water, and as the men's dormitory has several unglazed windows extending almost the whole length of the building, I felt that it could, on occasion, be just on the airy side!

From Ratagan we visited the Falls of Glomach, which have a sheer drop of 370 feet. Cautiously descending the rough track on the west side of the gorge we gained a point where, by lying stretched out with our heads overhanging the wall of the gorge, we were able to get a view of the entire fall.

Next day we visited Glen Lichd, and were here allowed to watch through a telescope a deer-stalking party on the opposite hill-side. I remarked at the time on this unusual behaviour in a keeper, and it only occurred to me later that he had been deliberately keeping us with him until the hunting party had got to where we were unlikely to disturb them. At Alltbeath we turned south and joined the Glen Moriston road about a mile east of Cluanie Inn. Twelve miles of metalled road to Shiel Bridge still stretched ahead of us—an exceptionally full day. We had tramped fully 39 miles through scenery unsurpassed in Great Britain and country brimful of historical interest, and had satisfied ourselves physically and æsthetically.

Next morning we were going to Strome Ferry, but

decided to climb the Glenelg road first to see what is considered, by some competent judges, to be the finest view in Britain. The road climbs in sharp bends up the shoulder of Mam Ratagan, the last bend, which forms an ideal viewpoint, being reached in about half an hour. Looking back, the lofty, dignified mountains known as the Five Sisters of Kintail seemed to rise sheer from the placid waters of the loch. They form a group, the left guarded by Beinn Fhada, with the mighty Sgùrr Fhuaran on the right. Thin mists capped each peak, and a brilliant rainbow stretched from lovely Strath Croe clear across to Glen Shiel. In the foreground two yachts, gleaming white, swung easily at anchor, and far to the left Eilean Donan Castle rose stark from the tide. Reluctantly we descended the hill to Ratagan. Our way still led west along the shore of the loch to Totaig; where we had to wait some time for the ferry. Heavy rain fell for the remaining 8 miles of our journey—the dreariest miles we had yet encountered. An amusing situation arose at Strome; we found that none of us could blow the trumpet provided to summon the ferry from North Strome! Each in his turn blew his hardest; each tried blowing gently. Not a sound was produced, and we stood in the drenching rain looking helplessly at the boat across the loch. Finally a motorist was ferried across and we were soon drying in the hostel at North Strome.

After Kintail, Loch Carron was disappointing. The hills are of no great height, and we could discover nothing of historic interest. The following day we set off for Applecross in showery weather. The map shows a path leaving the road about a mile east of Strome and going north-west over the hills to Kishorn. This would have shortened our walk by some miles, but we were unable to locate it. We were determined to get off the main road, however, and went over the shoulder of Bad a' Chreamha, which, on the other side, dropped precipitously in a series of narrow shelves which had to be negotiated with care. Rejoining the road at Auchintraid, we saved a mile or two by wading the estuary of the Kishorn River. Crossing the seaweed was slippery work, and the river channel proved deeper and

muddier than we had anticipated. We had a few exciting moments before reaching the other bank. The road now climbs over low but interesting hills to Applecross; at times it is hemmed in by black precipices, which, with the mist, cheated us of the fine views of Skye on our left and of the wide brown moors of Applecross on the right. Soaked by the cold Atlantic mist, it was a rather bedraggled quartette that marched up to the door of the small hotel at Applecross. The inn was full to the door; rather hopelessly we turned away to knock at every likely door. Disappointed as the younger members must have been, not a murmur escaped them. After half a dozen refusals, most of which amounted to no more than a silent shake of the head, we espied a postman and appealed to him. His wife proved most hospitable. There we found two fellow-guests, an Edinburgh couple, whom we had already met at Ratagan. We compared receptions, and found that ours had been tropical—they had arrived on the Sabbath. Before they found a haven at the MacDonald's their appeals had been met with a stony silence and the door slowly but firmly closed in their faces.

It was still raining when we left on Tuesday morning, bound for Inver Alligin on Loch Torridon. A rough track on the right bank of the River Applecross leads to the head of Loch Shildaig. At the junction of the river with the Allt Coire Attadale the path divides into three branches. Instead of following the centre one, we, by some unaccountable lapse, turned up the Attadale burn, and only discovered our mistake on seeing the two lochans glimmering greenly through the mists of Coire Attadale. At the foot of Croicbheinn the path again divides, the right branch being a short cut which entails crossing the Amhuinn Dubh. In rainy weather this river is deep and dangerous, and we preferred the longer route. At Shildaig we hired a boatman to take us across the loch, and shortly our good craft was scraping the limpets off the rocks at Inver Alligin. It is difficult to decide whether the Ratagan or Inver Alligin Hostel has the better setting. Although the stately symmetry of the Five Sisters is lacking, the steep terraced forma-



A SNOW CLIMB ON LOCHNAGAR

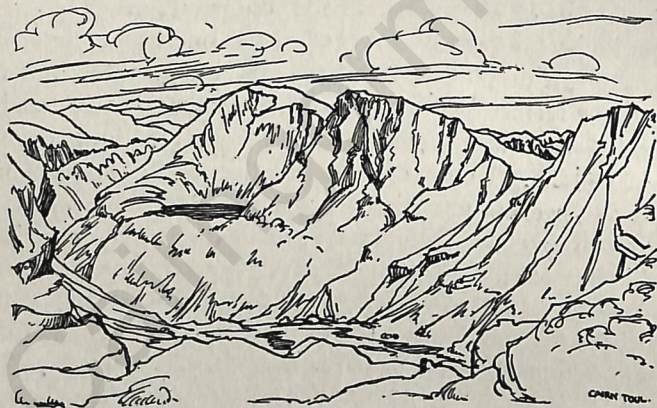
H. C. Dugan

tion of the Torridon Hills rivals anything on Loch Duich. During the night a tremendous thunderstorm roused the hostel, and there was a regular pyjama parade as people packed the windows and door to watch the spectacle.

On Wednesday we set out to climb Liathach, but we had not gone far when two of the party decided that it was a day for lying by the water-side. The summit was misty, but below the mist line we had a magnificent view of the Hebrides; words are inadequate to describe this, the most wonderful sight since we had set out. Next day the weather was again broken, and in thin drizzling rain we set out for Loch Maree via the Coire Mhic Nobuil Glen and the Bealach a' Chomhla, where even the foul weather could not minimise the grandeur of our surroundings. Torrential rain sent us off our course a little, the map peeling in strips from its backing despite every effort to keep it dry. Squelching through deep heather and crossing innumerable burns—the place seemed positively laced with them—we eventually found shelter and a short respite from the downpour at Poca Buidhe. Here, like the Israelites at the Feast of the Passover, we ate our frugal lunch standing. We were too wet to sit down! There were signs of the weather clearing, and before long the mists were streaming from the splintered pinnacles of Liathach. Instead of following the path to the Gairloch road we turned off to Lochan a' Chleirich, from which a short walk took us to the Slattadale woods. We walked into the hostel at Slattadale quite dry. This hostel, like so many others, is a cottage rented from the Forestry Commissioners, and is pleasantly situated on the shore of Loch Maree, which deserves all the flattering things that have been said about it.

Friday was our last hiking day—to Carn Dearg on the Gairloch—and sadness, inseparable, I suppose, from the last days of freedom, was noticeable in the demeanour of our young companions. From the shoulder of Creag Mhor Thollie, the view of the loch held us spellbound. The morning sun had transformed it into a huge plate of burnished silver on which some giant had scattered a handful of emeralds, and over it all a blue reflected light, reminiscent

of a scene in "Dear Brutus" with its "light that never was on sea or land," and the sudden apparition of "Old Lob" capering in the bracken would just have completed the picture! From here the path descends rapidly and joins the Gairloch—Poolewe road east of Loch Tollie. A little refreshment at the village of Poolewe set us off along the shore of Loch Ewe to Naust, from which a path crosses the moors to Strath on the Gairloch. This route is rather featureless, and the path at first is difficult to find. The hostel at Gairloch, Càrn Dearg House, was gifted by its former owner, and commands the finest view of the loch. Here our holiday ended, for early next morning the bus took us to Achnasheen and the railway.



CAIRN TOUL.

A NOVICE IN MOSS GHYLL.

By "UNST."

LATE in September, finding myself in Yorkshire and calling to mind that an old climbing companion was also resident in that county, I decided to call on him, with a view to persuading him to accompany me on any mountaineering expedition suitable to both. Arrived at his address, I was surprised and chagrined to find the bird flown. He had actually gone for a walk but was, with the collaboration of a third person, tracked down to a neighbouring house, where the ways and means of a trip to the Lakeland Hills were discussed.

The chief difficulty was transport. Neither S. nor I possessed a car, the main reason being a stubborn refusal to admit that such contraptions were necessary. My friend B., however, who had on this occasion been instrumental in conveying me some 40 miles to S.'s abode, was the owner of a Wolseley of ancient vintage, and, after a series of pretty broad hints, agreed to drive me to Wastdale Head on a given date, on the firm condition that he himself was not to be taken farther above sea-level than the Wolseley itself could proceed. He never climbed. Climbing, he said, did things to his stomach!

So far, so good: but the collection of both S. and myself by B. introduced complications. This is where the Novice appears. The Novice, a very keen and efficient motorist, owns a fast sports model, and had occasionally professed a faint liking for mountains to friend S. The fact that the Novice was very quickly persuaded not only to transport S. to Wastdale Head but also to accompany us on the gully climb (Moss Ghyll * had by this time been chosen) goes far to explain why S. usually leads the climbing parties he accompanies.

* Moss Ghyll gully; Scafell; "very difficult."

A description of the journey to Wastdale Head would be out of place, except to say that rain fell heavily the whole way, the Wolseley was a touring model, with additional ventilating shafts never intended by the makers. And the drive was about 70 miles longer than we expected, as we had fondly imagined, after studying a road map on which hills were not marked, that we could take the car from Seatoller to Wastdale Head, overlooking the fact that the massif of Scafell lies directly between these two places. When B. and I eventually arrived at our destination it was wet and windy midnight, S. and the Novice were sound asleep, and we decided, after consuming bread, cheese, and quite a quantity of beer, to follow their example.

Next day was fortunately fine. S., the Novice, and I set out for Moss Ghyll, leaving B. in the company of an overnight acquaintance, who proved to be a very competent authority on the Lake District, its topography, history, folk-lore, and people. The ascent to the foot of the Ghyll was made at a fair pace, and the Novice, if he were new to rock-climbing, was certainly very sound in wind and limb. Before roping up we paused to watch the last mists of morning, driven before the awakening sun, fade in wisps from the wide corrie, and to listen to the loud music of the tumbling streams, rising and falling on the wings of the wind.

We roped up, S. leading and the Novice third man. S. made short work of the initial cave pitch, which I avoided, shepherding the Novice over easy rocks on the left. I did not wish to introduce him to a very moist bit of back and knee work at the very outset of his rock-climbing career, and was also glad of an excuse to keep dry myself! The gully presented no real difficulty until Tennis Court Wall was reached. S. could make nothing of this, nor did combined tactics help to solve the difficulty. Then I tried the wall, discarding my boots—as I am wont to do in moments of stress—but failure was my only reward. Lack of foothold caused S. to lament that we had not brought rubbers, although it is doubtful whether on wet and slimy rock they would have

been of any assistance. If we had studied the literature of the climb more carefully before setting out, Tennis Court Wall might not have presented so formidable an obstacle. The footholds are far apart and difficult of access, necessitating a wide straddle. After a few more abortive attempts by each of us, S. took the alternative route, climbing to the roof of the cave, traversing along the wall, and turning the corner on to Tennis Court Ledge. His climbing at this point was pretty to watch.

To save time I came up the wall direct, using the rope judiciously as an extra handhold. The Novice, after unsuccessfully trying to follow my example, cheerfully decided to be pulled up. He was—*non sine pulvere!* The combined efforts of S. and myself did not prevent him from descending to his starting-point on three occasions, and there was general jubilation when at last, his face, purple with exertion but set in an unquenchable smile, hove in sight. Moderately difficult climbing took us to Collie's Step, and here the fun started. Neither S. nor I appreciated that the correct way to tackle this pitch is for the leader to bring the second man up to the chokestone before he, the leader, crosses the step. Consequently, while S. passed the chokestone I remained in the cave with the Novice, who was gazing thoughtfully at the leader's boots, the only visible part of his anatomy. A few minutes passed and I heard S.'s voice, "Come up now."

I passed the chokestone and scrutinised the step. It consists of a short traverse with the merest cracks for foothold and no handhold worth mentioning. S. was perched in an excellent belay some distance above. The weather had deteriorated; here we were out of the gully and exposed on the face in mist and a howling wind. I had another look at the step. It seemed very thin. I called to S., "I'll take my time over this." His reply was characteristic, "Hurry up. I'm getting — cold." The step, like all steps, loses most of its terrors when tackled with determination and properly nailed boots, but it certainly deserves the adjective "sensational," while the paucity of handhold calls for perfect balance. Soon I was in the belay, and S.

advanced to the amphitheatre, where he could stand erect on the scree.

I had fears for the Novice, and they were by no means groundless. The promising beginner undertaking a course like Moss Ghyll, even in the company of more or less experienced climbers, will be overcome by some of the technical difficulties encountered. He had met trouble at Tennis Court Wall. He would certainly meet it at Collie's Step.

"Come up," I shouted through the whirling mist.

"I can't," he replied frankly.

"Well, try!"

I was quite determined on my course of action. As soon as the Novice appeared round that chokestone he would be pulled bodily to the belay. It was an excellent belay, and in it I was firmly lodged. Not all the king's horses, reinforced by all the king's men, at the end of a length of good Alpine rope would pull me out of it.

I heard some indefinite scrambling noises and tightened my grip on the rope. Then came the sound of boot nails scraping on rock, followed by a horrible silence. Still, if he slipped the floor of the cave was just beneath; but I was puzzled as to his whereabouts.

"What's the matter?" I called.

"I'm really stuck this time," was the reply.

I relayed this information to S., who was at first inclined to be unsympathetic.

"He'll have to come up," was the verdict.

Five minutes passed, and it was obvious that the Novice, though cheerful to the last, was utterly pounded. The weather was no better, and I was getting thoroughly chilled at the belay. When we realised that the Novice would never pass the step unaided, S., displaying good leadership, unroped and descended to his assistance. The Novice apparently had jammed his rope between the chokestone and the wall of the gully and was suspended in mid-air. How S. extricated him I do not know, but extricate him he did and shepherded him past the chokestone. S. then returned to the amphitheatre, still unroped, and the Novice came up without further difficulty.

Of the three routes leading from the amphitheatre we chose the easiest, Collie's Exit. We roped up on the scree, and the Novice was warned against that reaction which, after a gruelling pitch, makes difficult rock seem easy, and which has, on occasion, led to fatal slips. Collie's Exit is fairly exposed, but the handholds are plentiful; the Novice discarded all advice about climbing on his feet and came up *au naturel*, applying most of his anatomy to the rock, but thoroughly enjoying the scramble. The weather improved, the angle lessened, and the climb petered out. Soon we were standing on the summit ridge in brilliant sunshine. It was difficult to persuade the Novice that his toils were ended. "Is that all," he kept repeating, and again, in doubtful tone, "Is that all?"

After walking to the summit cairn, taking some photographs, and admiring the view, we descended by an easy gully over some broken ground to the corrie, and raced home over a mountain path. B. returned home after an exhilarating hill walk in exultant mood and full of plans for a future visit.

I may climb many mountains in varying company and lead or be led on many expeditions, but I shall never, as long as I live, forget the Novice in Moss Ghyll.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

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

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

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

The membership at October 31 was 300.

Office-bearers were elected as follows:—

Hon. President—Professor J. Norman Collie.

President—Mr William Malcolm.

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

Hon. Editor—Mr William A. Ewen.

Hon. Librarian—Mr James A. Parker.

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

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

The Club Meets for 1935 were arranged as follows:—

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

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

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

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

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



SGÙRR NA LÀPAICH (ROSS)—THE SOUTH RIDGE

R. T. Sellar

THE ANNUAL DINNER.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NEW YEAR MEET—BRAEMAR, 1935.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

* Our contributor surely errs ?

THE INDOOR MEETS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LOCHNAGAR EXCURSION—FEBRUARY 3, 1935.

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

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

EXCURSION TO LOCHNAGAR—SUNDAY,
FEBRUARY 17, 1935.

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

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

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

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

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

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

EXCURSION TO LOCHNAGAR—SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 1935.

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

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



CLIMBING DAYS

H. C. Dugan

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

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

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

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

EXCURSION TO SOUTER HEAD.

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

2.45 P.M.—Archibald arrived.

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

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

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

2.51 P.M.—Dugan arrived.

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

THE EASTER MEET—1935.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MAY HOLIDAY EXCURSION—BEINN A' BHUIRD.

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

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

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

BEINN A' BHUIRD BY CLAIS FHEARNAIG.

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

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

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

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

RAEBURN'S GULLY: FIRST PITCH.

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

CORRESPONDENCE.

A WIND SHELTER ON THE SUMMIT OF BEN MACDHUI.

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

SIR,—I have read Mr Hutcheon's letter on the above subject, published in the last issue of your *Journal*, with interest and, I think, appreciation, having myself had only one fine day out of nine visits to the summit mentioned, but I would, nevertheless, like to disagree with his suggestions.

It would be a great pity if the sanctity of Ben Macdhuì, the highest and proudest of our Cairngorm Hills, was to be violated in the way Mr Hutcheon proposes. Surely the abuse of the immediate vicinities of the Corrou Bothy and of the Shelter Stone is sufficient warning as to the condition which the summit of Ben Macdhuì might be expected to assume in the event of the erection of such a shelter. As to the idea that further buildings of a similar nature be founded on the other principal peaks, I, for one, should be sorry to see the consequent russet of mouldering tin-can heaps spread like erysipelas from mountain top to mountain top. If your correspondent would improve the amenities of the district, I would suggest that he enlist the help of members of the Club and carry out annual scavenging expeditions to the Corrou Bothy and the Shelter Stone.

Further, if a wind shelter were built on the summit of Ben Macdhuì, there is a danger that ill-equipped parties, not realising the rigours of a winter's night on the high hills, might elect to camp out within its walls. That questionable adventures of this description are on the increase of recent years is common knowledge, and I should like to combat anything which might tend to encourage a spirit of recklessness based essentially on ignorance.—Yours, etc.,

G. R. SYMMERS.

NOTES.

CONTENTS and Title Pages for Vol. XIII., together with Index and List of Members, are issued with this number. Mr Parker has again very kindly prepared the Index.

I wish to thank the many who have rendered such willing assistance in the production of the *Journal*; while some of these do not appear as contributors, their advice and assistance has eased considerably the negotiation of an unknown course, more beset with hazard and bunker than may at first appear. There is still evident among members a regrettable tendency to leave writing to others; I should be prepared to believe that we harbour among our 300 some 280 abnormally silent men had I never attended a Club Meet! The paucity of contribution by the other sex was commented on by our right-hand man (who prefers to remain anonymous); there are factors, however, for which my friend's mathematical calculation makes no allowance!

We are indebted to Mr D. Deans, of Kilmarnock, for permission to reproduce his remarkable picture of Arran from Craigie Hill, Kilmarnock. Goatfell is 27 miles distant from this viewpoint, itself only 507 feet high. The photograph of the 1890 Summer Excursion was discovered in an attic, or wherever a photographer stores his mistakes and masterpieces, and very kindly presented by Mr J. Bisset, of Ballater. Into which category this falls is difficult to decide, but when it came to identifying the members present, it was found that a beard was certainly a mistake! Thanks to the good efforts of Mr Parker and others, it is possible to give a few names.

In the back row, on the extreme left, is the late Mr Porter, of Grandholm. In front, left to right, are: Messrs R. Harvey, Pres., 1902-1903; Alex. Copland, Pres., 1889-1890; T. R. Gillies, Pres., 1913-1918; the centre one of the remaining three in this row is the Rev. G. G. Cameron, who was President in 1893-1894. In front of him, seated, is Mr Alex. Inkson McConnochie, for many years Secretary of the Club and Editor of the *Journal*. Several other groups taken about this time are in existence; some of these may be published later. It may be mentioned that, although there were only sixteen members present at the Loch Eunach excursion of 1890, the Lochnagar and Mount Keen excursions of 1889 were apparently very popular, particularly the latter.

Our thanks are due also to Mr Thomas Train for the "tail-pieces" which he so willingly produced from his Cairngorm sketch-book, and to Mr Henry C. Dugan not only for providing the majority of the illustrations but also for the design on the cover. Readers will be interested to know that Mr Dugan's picture, "Winter's Glory," has been accepted at several important photographic exhibitions—the



THE CAIRNGORM CLUB - SUMMER EXCURSION 1890

THE CAIRNGORM CLUB AT LOCH EUNACH

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AN 1890 MEET

London Salon, The Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and elsewhere. After which it was turned down—at Aberdeen!

Communications intended for publication in the next number should be sent to the Honorary Editor, Mr W. A. Ewen, 21 Watson Street, Aberdeen, *as soon as possible* and not later than March 31, 1936. Late submission of matter entails extra work and expense to the Club and may delay publication of the *Journal*.

Members will do much to assist in the production of the *Journal* by supporting our advertisers and by mentioning the *Journal* as the source of their inquiries.

The following additions have been made to the Library:—

Irving, R. L. G., "The Romance of Mountaineering."

Abraham, G. D., "Modern Mountaineering."

Davies, Rev. J. S., "Dolomite Strongholds."

As we go to press, we learn, with the greatest regret, of the death of HENRY C. DUGAN. This news must have come as a grievous shock to those who accompanied him on very recent excursions; but a few weeks ago, he was giving his most willing and valuable assistance in the illustrating of this *Journal*. A memorial notice will appear in the next issue of the *Journal*.

REVIEWS.

The Alpine Journal, No. 249, November 1934.

The geographical range of the articles is, as always, very wide, and the volume constitutes not so much an Alpine record as a reference volume to recent exploration among the great mountain ranges of the world. Mr W. Rickmer Rickmers himself ranges "From Titlis to Bitlis," and although it transpires that he has never climbed the Titlis and has never reached Bitlis, he has an entertaining defence for his title. In Mr Rickmers' usual style the article touches lightly on nearly everything, save, possibly, actual climbing, which latter he leaves to the imagination of the reader, "who should be able to fill in the technical detail from his own experience"! "As a supreme test of literary ability," Mr Rickmers recommends "an essay which mentions neither mountains nor climbs and yet is deemed eminently suitable for *The Alpine Journal*."

Perhaps the most charmingly written account in this number is Miss Corning's "South Tyrol—or Thereabouts," one of the few purely Alpine papers. The majority of the papers treat of more remote regions—the Himalaya, Persia. Formosa, etc. There is an interesting account of the first ascent of Mount Foraker, Alaska, and a long paper on the Swiss Caucasus Expedition of 1933. Mr N. E. Odell, in a letter to the Editor, contributes some further observations on the ice-axe found on Mount Everest. A most interesting number, although less imposing than its predecessor.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, No. 118, November 1934; No. 119, April 1935.

No. 118 contains the first part of "Days That Are Past," in which Mr J. Gall Inglis describes changes in life and conditions in the Highlands since 1856. "A Climb on Ben Nevis" is the record of a new climb between the North-East Buttress and the Observatory Ridge—"a good 4." Mr J. H. B. Bell contributes an article on "The Rock Climbs of Dumyat in the Ochils"; we rejoice to see such an eminent authority reject the "true right" and "true left" humbug. The rock climbing interest is continued in "Some Recent Rock Climbs in Scotland," chief among those described being Rannoch Wall, Buachaille Etive, and the lower southern buttress of the Trident, Ben Nevis. Mr A. Harrison recounts the chapter of recent mountaineering accidents which have ended fatally and points a lesson. An amusing Ben Nevis diary and the usual notes, etc., make up a very interesting number.

No. 119 opens with the second part of "Days That Are Past"—Kyle Akin in 1882, an account of early Highland life that grows in

interest. J. A. Parker's "Curvature and Visibility" is as concise and as precise as might be expected from that writer. It will prove most useful in solving the frequently recurring problem whether one hill can be seen from another over an intervening third. The explanatory matter is made beautifully clear and simple; non-mathematicians need not embark on it with the same hesitation as did the writer of this note! Accompanying it is the largest diagram ever seen in a climbing journal—essential, of course, if the diagram is to be of real use. Another technical article by Mr Wedderburn explains fully the methods of roping down. The Rannoch Wall climb, mentioned above, is described rather more fully and is illustrated with two good photographs. Much more serious is Mr Roxburgh's "Mystery of the Tower Ridge" with its amazing disintegration of Ben Nevis. Quite the most amusing account of a climb we have ever read appeared in the *S.M.C.J.* some years ago; this is a good second.

The Rucksack Club Journal, Vol. VIII., No. 1.

We look forward with keen anticipation to the arrival of this *Journal*, and are never disappointed with the contents. Under the editorship of Mr J. H. Doughty it flourished exceeding well, and the present number is quite up to the standard of its predecessors. There are several articles and illustrations of Scottish interest—"Suilven," by the Editor, "Ski-ing at Home," by B. R. Goodfellow, and a note on Arran, etc. Club journals have frequently too much of too little interest to non-members, but *The Rucksack* is wide enough in its scope to avoid the inevitable "frozen out" feeling. Affability, indeed, would appear to be one of the qualifications for membership; we met a Rucksack man once on Ben Nevis, and although ourselves not shining examples of the tailor's art, we hesitated to believe that anything with such an eccentric exterior would dare venture into Fort William. Not until we were in conversation with him did we discover that he was a climber, with ideas on many things, particularly on climbing and on Club huts, and we left with the impression that the Rucksack Club would be a lively Club to belong to! You may pick up this *Journal* without being confronted with a long article on the 101 rock climbs on a small outcrop of rock somewhere in the middle of England.

The number opens with an ascent in Nigeria; there are no startling incidents, but Mr Wootton has, nevertheless, given a delightful description of travel in Nigeria. "Fear in the Night" is fiction, at least, we hope it is; if truth, it is the sensational confession of a murderer! It has a genuine "fear in the night" flavour. We liked "Suilven" as much as anything in the *Journal*, but we have not yet found the windy tops so banal as to be persuaded to follow Mr Forrester in his "Scratchings Underground"; still, the underworld seems to have unusual possibilities—" . . . a short stomach wriggle brought us into a high passage . . . which is mostly done ferretwise . . . and with difficulty negotiated a hairpin bend downhill. You can only go a

yard or two more as the passage gets too tight for human beings. . . .” Not a sport, apparently, for fat men nor for those who cannot accomplish the safe negotiation of a hairpin bend uphill and feet first! We can assure our readers that this is as good a four shillings’ worth as there is on the market.

Songs of Skye, selected and edited by B. H. Humble (*Æneas Mackay*, Stirling, 3s. 6d.), presents in short compass and in attractive form what is best and most appealing in the poetry of that island. The story of the Misty Isle down the ages is rendered in song, continuity being given by prose notes. The anthologist is usually guided in his choice by his æsthetic preferences, and Humble is no departure from this rule. The charm of an anthology is that we get glimpses of so many poets, and it is pleasant to know this little of one poet rather than wandering through the jungle of collected works. For the less energetic as well as the mountaineer, whether “folk of the blood or stranger,” this little volume will bring home strongly the magic of Skye.

The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol. L., Nos. 5 and 6; Vol. LI., Nos. 1 and 2.

The first of these contains an article which should appeal to our readers, “The Interpretation of Scottish Scenery,” by Mr John H. G. Lebon. “The Story of Arctic Voyages and Exploration,” while dealing mainly with voyages in the Polar Seas, also touches the adjoining mountain lands—Greenland, Spitsbergen, etc.

In Vol. LI., No. 1, readers will find two articles of interest, “On Watershed Migration and the Passes of the Lowther Hills” and “A Tribe of the Western Himalaya.”

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