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 given me for lunch!"

All Communications in connection with the *Journal* should be addressed
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Contributions for the next number should arrive before 30th April 1938.

Macdonald Comden
 Louis Rander



T. Train

GLEN AVON, FROM ETCHACHAN

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CHIPS FROM THE HIGH TOPS.

BY HUGH D. WELSH.

“ I must be rising and I must be going
On the roads of magic that stretch afar,
By the random rivers so finely flowing
And under the restless star.
I must be roving on the roads of glory,
So I'll up and shoe me with red-deer hide.
For youth must be learning the ancient story—
Let the wearied oldsters bide.”

THESE words of Neil Munro have set a-throb the chords of recollection, and the vibrations have stirred anew pictures and dreams stored away in the treasure chest of the mind. All through the long winter the urge to set foot again on the great hills wherein one derives such lasting benefit had to be responded to, but now that the cheering signs of spring are around us everywhere, the craving to be up where there is freedom from the petty annoyances of this workaday world demands satisfaction. We often thought in the dismal days of what the summer would have to offer in the corries and ridges, and lived over again days of ease or days of vigour, and opened the windows of our mind and looked down the long vistas of sunlit or clouded happenings shared in the days that have slipped past all too quickly. We saw again the great corries emptying themselves of mist, and heard the sound of roaring waters; we battled against the wrestle of the gale, the lash of driving rain and stinging

snow; we sensed the comforting feel of rock and scree and heather, and the chill welcome of icy slopes. The recollections of all the beautiful things to be found there were gems to be taken out and polished when one was out of sorts or depressed. And we found them very good.

In the symphony I have built up since the great hills drew me into their hearts there are many themes, and I find it difficult indeed to disentangle what might be worth listening to. At a comparatively early age I was initiated into the delights of upper Deeside by my father who loved our great hills. In these days we, as a family, holidayed near Ballater, and I had to be content with the lesser hills there. During these delightful days we were close to nature, and readily absorbed all that was given us in the way of legends and nature lore. In such a manner was my love for the hills created and encouraged.

My acquaintance with the higher masses began in 1904. For several years an older brother was my companion, and for a season or two we persuaded one friend or another to share in our ventures. We spent a fortnight each year during the month of July in the Cairngorms, and had ample opportunity for exploring thoroughly most of the great corries, and making ourselves familiar with places seldom visited by the ordinary climber. Not only did we camp in the glens or on the broad slopes of the hills, but our little tent housed us for two or three nights at a time on all the summits of the group, including the eastern massif, as well as Lochnagar. Added to all these are the isolated days snatched at intervals during the past three or four years, climbing alone or as a member of Club excursions. Not the least lasting are the memories of two recent periods of solitary scrambling among the grim corries and ridges of the Cuillin in autumn.

Most people prefer to go to the hills at a time when weather conditions are more or less bright and dry; yet nothing helps more to give a certain mysterious charm to the mountains than an occasional ramble through their recesses in bad weather: it is only a half-hearted lover of their scenery who would pray for a constant succession of clear skies.

“ There is much comfort in high hills,
and a great easing of the heart.
We look upon them, and our nature fills
with loftier images from their life apart.
They set our feet on curves of freedom bent
to snap the circles of our discontent.”

It is a far cry back to 1904, but I still have vivid recollections of my introduction to the corries and broad summits of the Cairngorms. It was a wet July, but in spite of that our spirits were by no means damped. On the contrary, what we saw and heard encouraged us to return. In those far-off days a rucksack was a luxury, and our packs consisted of solid slabs of goods and chattels done up in American cloth and carried on our backs by a Heath Robinsonish arrangement of straps. I groan even now when I think of it! We did quite a lot, especially at the head of the Loch Avon corrie. What mist-sodden days we had rummaging among the Féith Buidhe rock slabs, or about the rocky faces and buttresses that are such a feature of this great corrie in which the Shelter Stone lies. Seldom did we feel the kindly warmth of sunlight or see blue sky; but what an entrancing time it was. Few people, I think, realise what a storehouse of beautiful things this loch cradle is. There are unexpected patches and ledges on the rock faces thickly covered with a great variety of flowering plants; cushions of vivid mosses; patterns of delicate lichens. There is the thrill on discovering little pockets of cairngorm stones in the rocks or boulders, and the digging with the hands into accumulations of sand and gravel in the icy-cold streams in the hope of securing good crystals. Of animal life there is a surprising abundance. As a rule the average climber is troubled by midges and flies, but there is an amazing variety of little things that creep and fly, as well as the larger animals. An occasional eagle may be seen; oyster catchers may be watched pottering about the banks of the stream hurrying through the rough ground to Loch Avon, and the wailing of the curlew, like the cry of a lost soul, comes plaintively on the wind. At night, one's senses are soothed by the incessant sound of waters; the loneliness becomes

intimate. The little gusts of wind bring an undercurrent of speech; the gurgle and roar of water seem to hush at times, as if to listen themselves to voices hailing, full of warning or of recognition, at some great distance behind or within their own muttering. Or there may be nights of roaring wind or lashing rain, when the nerves are taut, when one expects the straining canvas to be torn away, the plaything of the rollicking fiends that whoop and raven down the corries.

Memories of such wild nights and days crowd upon one another and jostle for recognition, and one or two are picked out for closer recollection. One night in July 1907 was a memorable experience. Our little tent had been set up a few yards from the summit cairn on Braeriach; and climbers familiar with this elevated plateau will know how little shelter there is. Our first night was very comfortable, but the second was the very opposite. The day had been dull and boisterous, and after an interesting day round Loch Einich three of us settled in for the night. Before midnight the wind rose to a roaring gale which wrenched and wrestled with our frail habitation. The canvas strained and flapped with loud reports, and every minute we expected it to be ripped to ribbons and carried off. The two short tent-poles bent and creaked, and we held on to them to prevent them snapping. One of us crawled out, blinded by flying sand, to place stones all round to keep the little tent down. Gradually the wind died, and a calm morning showed us the whole summit plateau under a scintillating covering of snow and ice crystals 2 inches deep, and the tent frozen hard!

There was a day, too, when Coire Etchachan was filled with stinging lances of chill rain, with the thunderous roar of the swollen stream adding to the shriek of the wind as it swooped down from the upper corrie. John Stuart Blackie must have experienced such a day when he wrote :

“ Here brew ship-foundering storms their force divine,
Here gush the fountains of wild-flooding rivers;
Here the strong thunder frames the bolt that shivers
The giant strength of the old twisted pine.”



BEN AVON

W. J. Middleton

Another thrilling day calls with an insistent voice. I had been exploring in Harta Coire, under the cold shadow of Sgùrr na h-Uamha in the Black Cuillin in Skye, and had come out along the scree below the grim rocks of Sgùrr nan Gilleán. Mist had come down unnoticed and a boisterous south-westerly wind sprung up. Sudden whipping rain caused me to shelter for a considerable time under a huge boulder, and from there I watched the grey curtains of water sweeping down Glen Sligachan gradually obscuring the outlines of the hill masses. My intention had been to cross the long ridge coming down from Sgùrr nan Gilleán and terminating in the bold outcrop Nead na h-Iolair, but this was now out of the question, as darkness was coming on and I had to get down to Sligachan before the light failed. A minute or two after leaving my shelter I was soaked through, and dropped down to the river, intending to cross it and pick up the path on the other side at the foot of Marsco. The passage of the swollen stream was a ticklish problem, but, after being swept off my feet into a deep pool, I was able to drag myself out by the long heather on the opposite bank. No doubt I was a sorry spectacle, but I saw the funny aspect of it, and knelt in the sodden heather and had a good laugh. My squelching progress down the glen was enlivened by bursts of song and whistling, for I had had a great day, and there was comfort ahead.

The crossing of the Etchachan burn in brown spate, with the water waist-high, was an experience my brother and I enjoyed in 1908. The previous day we had left our tent on the summit of Cairngorm and come down to Braemar for provisions. A stormy night kept us in the village, but the morning broke fair, and when we passed Derry, Donald Fraser and Mackintosh of Luibeg were having a game of golf among the ancient firs. Heavy rain came on while we were crossing the swollen Glas Allt, and we had some misgivings about the crossing of the stream at the foot of Coire Etchachan. No helpful boulders were visible; we were wet anyway, and plunged in at the usual ford. The pressure of water tugging at our waists was very trying;

stones were rattling against our legs ; but by dint of cautious movement, hand in hand, shouting to one another, we got safely across. Never shall I forget the awe-inspiring sight of the stream as it came down from the Loch in what appeared to be one huge waterfall. Its roar was deafening, and we frequently stood in voiceless wonder at such an amazing spectacle. Huge waves washed out of the Loch from a curtain of mist, and when we crossed to the crest above Loch Avon, there ascended to us the hoarse shout of waters let loose. The sight of the Féith Buidhe coming down the rocks was terrifying, but we had to cross through a chaos of leaping water in order to ascend Cairngorm by Coire Raibeirt. After two or three attempts our persistence was rewarded, and it was two exhausted people who arrived safely at the tent at the summit. It is said the Deil's aye kind to his ain, but such an experience is worth going through, because it makes one appreciate in a peculiar way man's puny efforts when battling against the forces of nature.

Summer-time bad weather is quite a different thing from that to be met with during the short days of winter, and my few bouts with the snow-laden numbing gales have been shared by a few Club members during the past three years on the occasion of excursions to Lochnagar. Of these I need say little, except that although at the time the sensations were not too comfortable, the recollections give one a great sense of satisfaction of having fought more or less successfully against a bitter gale, carrying with it stinging hail or snow which numbed the senses. One can live over again the toilsome progress in soft, powdery, knee or waist-deep snow, or the plodding through a more or less wet, compacted covering. One even has opportunity for watching the formation of cornices, or of ever-changing wreaths, on whose smooth contours the wind carves out the most beautiful flutings, curves, and miniature cornices. And, after all, it is a great adventure.

But there is not always bad weather in our great hills, and I can still conjure up pictures of many days and nights of great beauty, comfort, and healing. There have been days when the hills have dimmed in the quivering heat haze,

and the rocks have been almost too hot to touch. In the glens there has been the drowsy hum of bees and other insects and the cheerful whirr of grasshoppers in the grass. A scarcely perceptible breeze, warm, and laden with the scent of heather and fir, has gently stirred the parched vegetation, and done little to give a sense of coolness. The bare, stony hilltops are quivering in the heat, and the solitude is peopled with strange fancies.

After a spell of such days the evenings become cool, and then it is that one glimpses what is perhaps the most soul-stirring wonder of the high tops. Members of the Club who took part in the all-night excursion to Bynack More in June 1936 may perhaps recollect the humbling pageant of colour and peacefulness presented to us on that occasion. It will always be a gem of beauty to me. We came up from Nethy Bridge in the evening. The sun sank in a blaze of gold and orange, while the hills and glens darkened to myriad shades of blues and purple. All night long the northern sky glowed with a golden radiance, and the hills of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness were sharply outlined against the glory. Slowly the radiance crept eastwards; the colours brightened to shades of primrose yellow and emerald; the sun rose blindingly over the sea; the great hill masses near us, slumbering overnight, cold and remote under their patchwork of snow, were warmed by the increasing rosy glow; the filmy shadows slipped downwards to the glens; there was a sigh of awakening, and a stirring, and it was a new day.

Of the many nights spent at Loch Etchachan one in particular is deeply graved in my mind. Our little tent was pitched a few yards from the loch edge, and we sat at the opening looking across the calm water towards Cairngorm. A thin crescent moon was set high above the Ben Macdhui snowfields and mirrored in the dark water. The sky was cloudless, and glowed with delicate shades of emerald, lavender, orange, and yellow, fading away as night deepened. A slowly moving girdle of rosy-grey cloud wisped silently across the dark mass of Cairngorm. The silence was oppressive, yet soothing, and we could almost feel the pulse of mother earth.

Sunrises welcomed from a summit above a sea of gently moving cloud are wonders that are lasting in their impressions. With our little tent perched near the summit cairns of all the Cairngorm giants we had the good fortune to witness many instances of the ever-wonderful day-birth. And they are not readily forgotten.

Most climbers are not too keen to spend much time in the company of mist or cloud, but I can assure them that a spell of it is a great education. One July my brother and I spent almost eleven days above 3,000 feet on Ben Macdhuì and Cairngorm and literally lived in the clouds. Our tent sheltered us for three nights on the rough gravel a few yards from the cairn on Ben Macdhuì, and during the whole period of our stay the mist, or rather cloud, was so dense that daylight was very dim. Everything was clammy with moisture, and there seemed to be a constant rustle and whisper coming from the rocks and gravel. During the long dim days we spent in this ghostly region we did not see another human being, but it was an experience that enabled us to acquire a peculiar familiarity with this barren area. Our camp was set up here and there on the great plateau between Ben Macdhuì and Cairngorm, never very far from water, but during the day we wandered about fully occupied with observing and noting the thousand and one features generally overlooked by the ordinary visitor. In a subconscious way landmarks were noted and remembered, for compasses were never used, and we seemed to find our way about without apparent effort. Had the fairies a hand in it? On several occasions this subconscious guidance has been very valuable, but I am quite unable to describe or point out to people the particular features which act as pointers.

A day on a great mountain mass in thick mist is not a day lost, even though a view from the summit is not obtained. Too many climbers ascend the hills with the object of either getting to the top or obtaining a good view from the summit cairn. To my mind that is not the proper spirit in which to approach these high places. The attainment of the summit is, of course, very laudable, and there is naturally great satisfaction when a good view is the reward of endeavour.



LOCH AVON

W. A. Ewen

Nevertheless, great enjoyment can be, and is, experienced by wandering on a hill in thick mist, because one has to notice objects more particularly, take more time, and see things that are generally overlooked. And so, such a day is a great educator.

One hears great tales of spectral figures and strange sounds away up there in the corries, but while it has not been my good fortune actually to see such beings as may haunt the solitudes, I have heard sufficient to convince me that such do exist. Friends and others are sceptical, but the experience has been too frequent to be ignored. Not only have footsteps been heard in various places but voices have been distinct. In places, too, I have a strong sensation of somebody being beside me, and my brother had the same feeling. We have listened to the most beautiful music and singing, so clear that individual voices or instruments could be picked out unconsciously. Such strains were exquisitely sweet and soothing, and we became so accustomed to them that we did not become alarmed. At first it was rather startling to hear it in such places, but any apprehension was calmed by the wistful sweetness. The tantalising feature was that though the sounds were clear and distinct we could never pick up the air or rhythm. We thought at first that all these sounds were created by the wind in the rocks and precipices, by falling water, and so on, but they came to us where such concrete features were far away. The strange thing was that friends we had with us did not hear them.

Localities, or definite places, are often associated with some happenings grave or gay, and the mere mention of names stirs up recollections of some incidents. To me, round the Shelter Stone cluster such a multitude of happenings of personal experience that selection is difficult. On July 6, 1907, this haven of refuge was the scene of perhaps the first "At Home" ever held there. Three of us were in residence, and before leaving town had sent out a number of invitations to this function, and even had a printed menu! It was a day of roaring wind, lashing rain, and wild waters, but three of our guests turned up.

It was here, also, in July 1905, that I first met our

President, a tired little kilted boy with a dirty tear-stained face. There was a night, too, in 1906, when seventeen people, in various attitudes of repose, more or less endeavoured to woo sleep. But the tales are legion! At a certain turn in the track high above Loch Etchachan will come out of the mist a voice saying, "Excuse me, but do you know your way about here?" So spoke a young man who had been wandering for two or three hours, quite lost, not even knowing what part of the mountain he was on. The summit cairn of Ben Macdhui will always have the figures of two young men I guided over to Rothiemurchus in a chill mist in July 1910. Fresh snow covered the summit plateau, icicles plastered the cairn, yet these two men stripped to the waist and rubbed one another down with embrocation to keep out the cold. Round Corrour Bothy hovers the figure of old Charlie Robertson, a keeper of the old school, a type now unfortunately fast disappearing. What happy memories I have of nights spent with him in the firelight—old Charlie in his big chair, and us squatted on the floor listening to his tales, with the wind shaking the little house and drawing sparks up the chimney. How we liked to listen to him telling of the cloud-burst on the Devil's Point that just missed the bothy; the legends, creepy stories of ghosts and fairies; for, like ourselves, he had heard strange things away up there. Derry Lodge will always be synonymous with Donald Fraser, the recollection of whose never-failing kindness and hospitality, amplified by his wife and daughter, still warms the heart. In almost every square mile of this vast storehouse of precious things there is some feature or other that is linked up with some happening of memory.

We have in our great hills a wonderful heritage, and should endeavour to make the best use of it. To me, climbing is a search for beauty. Somewhere or other I read that beauty is as necessary to a man as food and drink; spiritually he cannot exist without it. And I think I have found it so. The hills are beautiful in their purity, in their simplicity, and in their freedom; they bring repose and contentment. Released from physical considerations the mind is rested in the splendours around, the vision sees in the luminous

vistas, the delicate subtle blending of colours, the bold shadows, and the slow passage of galleon-like clouds, the work of a Divine hand.

These, then, are random "Chips from the High Tops," gathered upon many days of wandering among the corries and broad summits of the great hills that crowd about the "infant rill of Highland Dee." If they have interested you, I am glad; if not, well, they have given me great pleasure in their recollection.

"Take them, O heart,
the joy of comrades and the thrill of strife.
Who has the hills for friend
has a good-speed to end
his path of lonely life,
and wings of golden memory to depart:
take them for love, true heart."

A DAY ON THE GLACIER DES BOSSONS.

By E. W. S.

" WELL, as soon as we get settled I'm going to look for a guide to do Mont Blanc." " You can go. No Mont Blanc for me!" This in sight of the Aiguille d'Argentière, the Glacier d'Argentière, the Mer de Glace and, far in the distance, the white dome of Mont Blanc itself. It was too much for us newcomers. The Chamonix Valley is the most astounding sight to eyes accustomed to the grimness only of the Garbh Choire or the " steep frowning glories." Up, up to the very sky piled trees on fields, rocks on trees, snow on rocks, with monstrous tongues of ice reaching down from the snow-field even through the trees. Days in the lower Alps had not yet accustomed us to the giants, and this sudden entry into the grandeur of Haute Savoie left us dismayed.

After dinner, however, when the first feeling of awe had worn off, a new enthusiasm was abroad, and the prospect of our first day with a real Alpine guide and the possible realisation of anticipated thrills was the new note.

We spent the morning in Chamonix, where glaciers act as back curtains to every street scene, the French version of holiday-making and holiday-makers giving us constant interest and amusement. We purchased a few souvenirs and lots of glacier cream, then back through a thunder pelt to the Pension Belvedere to our appointment with the member of the Corps des Guides. Our hostess at the Pension was the interpreter, the guide being a tried climbing companion of her husband. He was doubtful of the possibility of a climb to Mont Blanc, especially as our time was limited to one complete day; and indeed we did not look a very promising party of climbers, but something might be done. A look at our climbing boots, meantime stowed away in the back of the car, lit a slight spark of hope, and then our

enthusiasm caught up on the guide. In a few minutes it was arranged—4 o'clock that evening by the railway to the Chalet Hotel, and, if it were fine, 2 A.M. from there for the Glacier des Bossons.

The start was not auspicious. A thunderstorm was raging as we set off up the Téléférique Aiguille du Midi—Mont Blanc—and by the time we arrived at the hotel, in reality a fine specimen of Alpine hut, the rain was in torrents. Hutcheon was in his element, thrilling in anticipation of known joys. Alas, I at least was far from keeping him company. The *salle à manger* was not a cheery place. A gramophone—one of the pre-war models with a monstrous horn—was wheezing out French tunes. The hut-keeper's family of daughters of school age were dancing; the wind was blowing through a broken window in the vestibule; but the smell from the kitchen was promising.

Two tables were laid—one with the most marvellous array of wine bottles, the other, obviously ours, with rather better cutlery and crockery. Who would be occupying the first table? This was answered for us as the young dancers took their places, apparently each opposite her particular bottle.

Dinner in company with our guide was a cheery affair after all; a bottle of wine, sweet and sparkling, procured by Hutcheon from the Pension, gave the feeling of funk a fright—temporarily at least. Off early to bed—Norman to sleep like a log, I to listen to the wind souging and wonder what 1 A.M. would bring. Midnight, and still the rain battered on the roof. "Well, if it is raining at 1 o'clock, what a sleep I'll have!" Brrr!! The guide's alarm! "Très bien, messieurs." A slow drawing on of stockings and climbing boots, then downstairs to the smell of coffee, and any feeling of funk had completely gone.

The glacier lanterns were lit, and off we went—the guide, then Hutcheon, while I, being the proud possessor of an Alpine lantern (relic of a midnight excursion on Lochnagar), was third, and Norman brought up the rear. It was a beautiful starlit morning. Our path at first zigzagged over Alpine-covered slopes, then over several tongues of snow, and so

on to the moraine of the Glacier des Bossons. At times the guide would cut a step on a glazed boulder or outcrop of rock, but otherwise it was just a case of kicking steps. After about an hour we roped up, for we were apparently approaching a badly crevassed part. We did not realise this fully until our return, for in the half-light and the rays of our lanterns we could see little more than the next step, but as the guide was leading that meant a carefully chosen route, for he seemed to know the glacier most intimately.

After about two hours' going, the first glimpse of day was seen in the sky. Soon we were abreast the Grands Mulets. Here at the foot of the rocks was a busy scene, dozens of climbers putting on crampons, hauling at ropes, and, early morning though it was, chatting merrily. Our guide left us to climb to the hut to get a balaclava, for the morning was cold and, as we ascended, getting colder. The climbers were a party of Chasseur Cadets on a training excursion. When the guide rejoined us we set off up a steep snow slope at a steady pace. The sky was getting a paler blue and the stars less brilliant. Our track lay up the glacier, over a stretch of snow-covered ice, here and there crevassed, and leading up first to ice walls which glistened and sparkled in the half light. On the left the rocks of the Grands Mulets, and on the right the rock ridge which separates the upper reaches of the Glacier des Bossons from its neighbour, de Taconnaz. Now, the sun must have been rising in the east, for it suddenly illuminated the rocky pinnacles of the Aiguille du Midi and the Aiguille du Gôûter, making them into a more fanciful lighting scheme than has ever been evolved by an electrician. Time stood still; no feeling was possible; the pace was rhythmic, the going easy, the air like wine—and such a sunrise!

Our party led for a long time, the guide kicking steps with an ease and precision delightful to watch. Then he waited, lit a cigarette, and let the leading rope of our fellow-climbers pass us, so that he could follow their steps. We were thankful for the rest, but were to regret it later. Now the sun was riding high, and the altitude starting to tell,

for this was the first time Norman and I had been over 12,000 feet, but with it all we kept up a steady pace. The glacier cream which smeared our faces was running off my helmet and stuck to my lips. Soon we were legging it up the slope leading to the Grand Plateau. The summit appeared in the distance, but, alas, waving a gigantic plume of blown snow. The Chasseurs were making good going up the gentle slopes of the Grand Plateau, and Mont Blanc seemed to be conquered. The guide, seeing me hitch my rucksack, told us that about a mile away was the Caban Vallot, where we could leave our rucksacks whilst we made for the summit.

The Chasseurs ahead seemed to be stopped—were they resting? The guide stopped, looked at the flying banner of snow and ice particles, and said, “Mauvais.” Even yet we didn’t see our not standing on that dome. The wind was certainly increasing, but we had often experienced worse on Ben Macdhui. But surely the Chasseurs are turning! Now our guide got really gloomy. Still, after a pause, he would kick on up the last slopes before the Caban; then when we got to the edge of the plateau, over which the Chasseurs were now making good going, but downhill, the force of the wind made it necessary for us to thrust our ice-axes deep into the snow and hang on to them, while the guide contemplated. Here at last we found our shortcomings in the way of language. We couldn’t help in the decision. Amongst ourselves we saw no reason for not going on, and at least we would have liked to explore the Caban; but no, the plume was not only on the hill, it was in the guide’s mind, and finally, within a thousand feet of the summit and with only the Bosses du Dromadaire to traverse, he gave it up. Once the decision was made—and it had to be a one-man decision, for we couldn’t discuss it with the guide, nor could we refuse to respect his decision—we simply turned round, and in a few minutes had given up the altitude that had been won in an hour, and with this our hope of rounding up our first tour of the Alps by standing on the highest point in them. We estimated that we had reached 14,300 feet. Disappointment clouded our outlook on the way down and detracted from what otherwise would have been a glorious

view. The heat of day was now being felt. The tracks down churned up by the Chausseurs made the going simply laborious, and we were very glad to reach the rock of the Grands Mulets. This again was a busy spot. It is reached from the glacier by climbing on to a rib of rock ending in a small Aiguille, near the summit of which is the hut. The route up is supplied with an iron hand-rail. The interior of the hut itself was anything but attractive. Our Chausseur friends had turned the small *salle à manger* into a barrack-room. However, with the usual French hospitality, they made room for the visitors. We were supplied with a pot of miserable tea, but, strangely, had no appetite, so that the only part of the lunch (supplied by the hostess of the Pension Belvedere) that we touched was a tin of sourish greengages.

Leaving the hut behind, the most interesting and thrilling part of the journey commenced. We had covered the ground from the Chalet Hotel in the starlight, now we were to cross the lower reaches of the Glacier des Bossons in broad daylight, the snow softened to the consistency of sticky white toffee. We had to make detours to avoid crevasse after crevasse, snow bridges had to be crossed, and, worst of all, what looked like rather deep footprints, such as we leave on the Ballochbuie slopes leading to Lochnagar, pitted the surface of the glacier—a horrible pot-hole type of crevasse.

The view, when we could find freedom of thought to look at it, was magnificent. The Valley of Chamonix stretched before us, with the little town lying at the foot of the Aiguille Rouges, and the glacier stream over the nose of des Bossons seeming to climb uphill. The Chausseurs had left the hut before us, and it was a very dilapidated track we followed. Eventually the guide suggested unroping, but Norman and I preferred to stay put.

Then on across the moraine to where, turning a corner, we could see the Chalet Hotel, and, better still, we could see Malcolm taking it easily across the boulders and ice to meet us. About a mile below the Chalet Hotel the glacier ends in a dirty-looking stream, and down the side of this runs the Téléférique, which carries you over what we knew

would have been a hard slog over beds of Alpenrose and grassy slopes.

Malcolm had spent the morning with his eye glued to the telescope (supplied by the thoughtful Maitre d'Hotel) at Pension Belvedere. He had seen the flying pennant of snow, and knew from his knowledgeable host that, although it was a gloriously clear morning, with that pennant flying it was unlikely that we would reach the summit of Mont Blanc.

Next morning from the Sallanches road we looked again on the Bosses du Dromadaire and the summit dome; Mont Blanc had hauled down the flag.



A CROWDED DAY IN THE CAIRNGORMS.

BY "LUI BEG."

WE knew that it was indeed a fortunate thing that, before reaching Braemar, we should have at least three hours to rest ourselves. Each of us entertained a decided feeling of lassitude, for this gloriously bright sunny morning was the first of January 1937. Bundling into a carriage with barely a minute to spare, each selected a corner and settled with a sigh of relief for a pleasant forty winks. However, the wonderful conditions denied us such, and for practically the whole journey to Ballater we sat drinking in the glories of Deeside under the wintry sun. Arriving there, the feeling of misery with which we started out was practically dispelled, and we eagerly looked forward to our tramp to Corrou, which we hoped to reach before sundown, if possible. After a cold, disagreeable wait, we started on the last part of our journey to Braemar by bus. As we sped on we began to cast anxious eyes towards the sky where ugly grey clouds were beginning to bank up. As Lochnagar came into view we noticed blankets of snow drifting past the eastern corrie, and by the time we reached Braemar it was snowing quite heavily, although of a sleety nature. Swinging our rucksacks on our backs, we started for our first halt, Corriemulzie, reaching there an hour after leaving Braemar. A stop of ten minutes and an orange and then off to the Linn. We agreed that once there the backbone of the journey would be broken. It is a long, monotonous tramp to the enthusiast with a hefty pack.

The Linn of Dee was reached two hours ten minutes after leaving Braemar. Here we decided to have something to eat, and after changing into our climbing boots we came out of the wood into the heavy snow en route for Derry Lodge. On the way there we met with our first spot of trouble. The snow, being very soft at that time, repeatedly

caked on the soles of our boots. Despite this we reached Derry Lodge exactly an hour after leaving the Linn. This was very good going considering the conditions and our heavy packs. The snow, which had fallen heavily up to this point, showed not the least signs of abating and we began to doubt whether we would reach Corroul before dark, which, at this time of year, would fall about 4 p.m. It is no mean feat locating the bothy in pitch darkness. Nor had we overlooked the probability of a blizzard blowing, which would place us in a very difficult position. After a stop of twenty minutes, we sped off from the Lodge in snow falling as hard as ever and with the knowledge that only an hour of daylight remained. On we went in silence until we sat down on the boulders at the Lui Beg bridge. Casting our eyes skywards, we observed the stars peeping through the grey snow clouds, heralding the possibility of a frosty but pleasant evening. This encouraged us considerably and we set off to tackle the steep slope which leads round Càrn a' Mhaim. Under normal conditions the stretches of wet, peaty earth between the boulders can be observed and avoided. But, at intervals, we went through the snow, slipped on the wet surface of the peat, and fell with considerable force. After much resting, and with tempers frayed, we at last reached the top, a good deal behind schedule. Although three of us felt quite fresh, our fourth member had found it extremely trying and complained bitterly of a tired feeling from the waist downwards. We, however, scoffed at this (later we were to learn our folly), and after giving him a little spirits we made on our way.

The snow was quite powdery owing to the severe frost, which enabled us to make good headway. At this time I was in front, thinking, as any healthy man would, of supper, when I was rudely brought back to my surroundings by a shout to stop. Hurrying back I found our tired friend sitting on a snow-covered boulder. When we asked him, not too kindly, what was wrong, he said that he felt very miserable, that his legs were weak, and that he had a sickly feeling in the pit of the stomach. On looking back, we see now that our next move was the most thoughtless probably

that we have ever made. Instead of retreating the 2 miles to Lui Beg, we urged our unfortunate companion on to Corrou. We gave him more spirits, which probably did him no good, I took up the van, the other two the rear, and off we trudged. However, experience teaches fools, much more does it instruct wise men. On we went, our friend blundering in the rear. Finally, he sat down and refused to budge. This placed us in a quandary but, eventually, we decided that one should carry his pack while the other two should lend him as much bodily aid as possible. In this fashion we were able to make slow headway to a point where the Devil's Point rears his rocky face above the slopes of Càrn a' Mhaim. This proved the final stage of the exhausted man's endurance.

The realisation that we were in a very drastic situation was brought home to us, and it was decided that two should make for Corrou for assistance while the other remained to look after our companion. During the next half-hour he was compelled by reason of the force and bitterness of the wind to lie, spread-eagle fashion, over his companion to shelter him. With the inactivity and the temperature apparently well below freezing, his spirits were indeed lightened when, on hearing voices, he looked up and discovered his two friends bearing down on him with all speed. It was impossible, they declared, to get to Corrou owing to heavy drifts having formed at the end of the Lairig, of such dimensions that the possibility of getting through with our burdens was very slight. This left us no alternative but to return the 3 miles to Lui Beg—an almost impossible task it seemed to us, as we stood there in the snow, but we succeeded. Five hours after turning back we struggled into Lui Beg, sore, tired, and proud. Having done all that we could for our friend, we walked over to Derry, where we had permission to stay.

At 9.30 P.M., while preparing a much-needed meal and conversing generally on the events of the day, we were suddenly confronted by a young man in a very distressed condition, who stood surveying us for at least twenty seconds before he spoke. He then told us that he had left his friend



R. L. Mitchell

WESTWARD FROM CNAPAN NAITHREACHEAN

exhausted in the Lairig an Laoigh seven miles away, and implored us to go to his aid. It would have been almost as credible had he also told us that an elephant with wings was flying about the summit of Ben Macdhui. It seemed to us that everybody was going mad in the Cairngorms; everything going wrong; nothing going right. We took him over to Lui Beg, where he collapsed, and here it was arranged that after we had had some sleep we should go out with Mr Ian Grant, of Lui Beg, and two ghillies to search for the exhausted man. After only an hour and a half of blissful slumber, we were awakened, none too gently, and on going outside found the three men and a pony awaiting us. In more normal circumstances we three would undoubtedly have enjoyed the tramp up Glen Derry, with the moon blinking spasmodically through the snow clouds. As it was, we practically slept as we walked. Occasionally we rode on the pony, but an icy wind curtailed these ever-welcome respites to periods of ten minutes or thereby, after which one was forced to get down and trot alongside to regain the heat. At the end of the glen one of our original party turned back, having decided that he had reached the end of his tether.

Making good headway we passed Coire Etchachan, and having negotiated the slight rise to the Lairig an Laoigh, we became aware of a decided change in the elements. In contrast to the calm of Glen Derry we were faced with a bitterly cold wind from the north. At intervals, when the gale ceased whipping the snow up in clouds, we caught signs of the Dubh Lochan, 3 miles off. On reaching there we turned back and, in extended order, searched diligently on either side of the stream which flows eventually into the lochan. This necessitated a trio of unfortunate men fording the burn, a bitter experience. With not a boulder protruding in midstream, they simply had to jump in knee-deep and get across as fast as possible. Five minutes later they were hanging with icicles from the knees downwards, their feet resenting this treatment to the end of the journey. The snow, which at intervals was blown from the ground by the force of the gale into the form of a mist, proved a considerable

drawback. One was then forced to stop, sometimes quite a lengthy period, until the next man could be seen. Back at the start of the pass we met again, and not a sign of the missing man was to be seen. By way of a final effort, Grant and a ghillie decided to go back for a short distance while we and the pony took shelter behind a boulder. After retracing their steps for about half a mile, they were about to return when Grant observed the arm of the missing man beckoning from behind a boulder. His friend had, the previous afternoon, packed him into a sleeping bag and, placing another over him, had left him thus to get help. And that was how he was discovered at 5.30 the following morning. Half an hour later we were heading back for Lui Beg Cottage satisfied with the result. Arriving there at 9 A.M., we were delighted to see our other exhausted friend waiting at the door, apparently fully recovered. After a meal, we staggered over to Derry, feeling that everybody felt fighting fit except ourselves. There we crept into our sleeping bags for a two hours' rest before once more striking the road to Braemar and thus home.

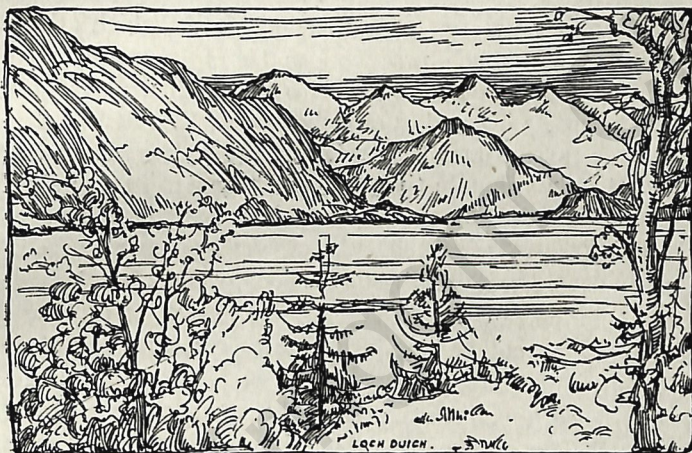
[It is with some diffidence that I add anything to the above. Experience is bought of errors, and in allowing the spirit of enterprise to outrun discretion, the writer's party broke but one rule. But it is the golden rule of the game, as deep in significance as it is wide in application, and happily more frequently operating than expressed. It is implied in all mountaineering literature, but never better expressed than by G. W. Young. *The game is played so as to secure the greatest happiness for the whole party.*

With the courageous admission that, in this case, the rule was broken, criticism must rest. The Corroul party were not without experience; the Lairig an Laoigh party had apparently little or none. The strength of the former party not only enabled it to get home without outside assistance, but further, to go to the rescue of the second party, who, in facing adverse conditions, knowing their weakness in numbers and experience, fairly courted disaster.

It may be of some import, too, to consider the value of the Corroul as a winter base. The old bothy, once humorously referred to among its visitors as The Hotel, is now more nearly a hovel. Its timbers have gradually disappeared as fuel, until little more than the roof remains. The gradual weathering of the roof and the more rapid internal denudation must shortly bring the Corroul to the verge of

ruin. As an emergency base its value may still be considerable; but to seek assistance there in mid-winter must always be to gamble on a slender chance.

We are greatly indebted to the writer for his very candid record, which, I believe, may have much greater value than the mere reiteration of precepts, however sound.—EDITOR.]



COMPASS AND MAP READING.

By D. P. LEVACK.

SKILL in map reading and the proper employment of compass and aneroid are matters in the education of a mountaineer which cannot be too strongly stressed, and in which a little instruction and much practice can be of immense value. From time to time situations arise in which a party finds itself absolutely isolated in circumstances where the accurate reading of a map and the proficient use of a compass will save not only valuable time but much anxiety, and indeed even the lives of the party. Apart from the factor of safety which a knowledge of this subject provides, many expeditions under adverse weather conditions would often become impossible, and for that reason a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction would be lost if the parties undertaking these expeditions had no knowledge of the fundamental principles of map reading and compass work. And the intelligent appreciation of a map, with the extraordinary amount of information contained in it, will add greatly to the interest and pleasure of any expedition.

* * * * *

For the purpose of this article, compasses may be divided into two classes, the needle compass and the card compass. The latter type is, of course, an offspring of the former and depends for its function upon a needle, usually placed out of sight under the card. Card compasses can again be divided into two main classes, those swinging freely on a pivot in a box or some form of casing, and those on which the whole card and its pivot are immersed in fluid, usually some form of oil.

Without going into any great detail, I think that most people with any experience at all will agree that the card compass is the one of choice for our purpose. The needle compass has the irritating habit of being very unstable, difficult

to hold steadily in the hand, and, in most cases, calibrated only with the cardinal points of the compass and one or two intermediates. The card compass, on the other hand, is a much steadier and more sober instrument, and lends itself to calibration in a number of ways. It may be marked by the major points of the compass alone, but frequently, and for many reasons most important, it is divided into degrees, and marked from 0 through 90, 180, 270, to 360. Any number of subdivisions may be marked. Not only may the card compass have one scale of degrees marked on it but a second one is often arranged, so that, by the use of a small prism and lens, on holding the compass up to the eye, the card can be observed through the prism and a very accurate reading in degrees may be made by means of a hair-line. If we wish to be very expensive we may buy such an instrument with an oil-immersed card, the object of this immersion of the card in oil being to render the movements of the card comparatively slow and steady, so that it does not wobble about in the hand, but quickly reaches its resting-place or orientation without having to be checked for over-swinging. A compass of this type is said to be dead-beat, and it is an extremely nice instrument to use under all circumstances.

What does a compass do? It gives an accurate indication of that direction which is known as Magnetic North. Most of us know this already, but it is surprising how many people are somewhat vague as to what magnetic north really is and how it differs from True North. Briefly, magnetic north is that region of the earth's surface towards which magnetic lines of force converge to form one pole of a magnetic field. This magnetic pole does not correspond exactly with the north end of the true axis of the earth. From the region in which the British Isles are situated, the magnetic pole is a little west of the true north pole. Compasses, therefore, in this area of the earth's surface will have a slightly west deviation, and obviously the farther west we travel the less and less will this deviation become, until along a certain longitude, where the true north pole and the magnetic north pole and ourselves come into line, there will be no deviation of the magnetic north. If we travel still

farther west of this longitude our magnetic deviation will again become greater and greater, but will be towards the east. I do not propose to go into any of the finer points with regard to the variation of the deviation at various points of the earth's surface, but would simply state that the angle between magnetic north and true north is known as the magnetic variation.

With modern maps, on each one of which this magnetic variation is clearly marked, there should be no difficulty whatever in setting the map, or orienting it, as it is called. Having grasped exactly what our compass is pointing to, it is a simple matter now to describe the position of any given point on the map in relation to this magnetic meridian. When we do so, we give what is called the bearing of the point. This bearing may be given in terms of the cardinal points of the compass and their subdivisions, but it is much more accurately described in degrees. Every bearing is described in degrees, measured clockwise from the direction of the needle of the compass, and, remembering that our compass needle points to the magnetic north, so we describe our bearing as a magnetic bearing. It is perfectly simple, of course, to convert the figures of our magnetic bearing into those of a true bearing, which would indicate the position of our point measured in degrees from the true north meridian. This calculation simply means the subtraction of the magnetic variation from the magnetic bearing, which therefore gives us our true bearing. For example, if we find the magnetic bearing of an object to be 20° , and we know the magnetic variation to be 17° , obviously the true bearing will be 3° . Under practically all circumstances, however, it is found possible to use the magnetic bearing alone, without having to bother correcting this bearing to a true bearing, but we shall see it is important to remember that we are using *magnetic* bearings, and not true bearings, after we have oriented or placed our map. How do we now find the bearing of any given point, by our compass, from the position in which we are standing? With a needle compass, this can be done by laying it on a flat surface and drawing a line along the direction in which the needle points. From the

centre of our compass we now draw another line towards the point of our observation. Then by means of a protractor we simply measure the angle between these two lines. Note that it is not necessary to indicate whether the object is north, south, east, or west, as our bearing is always measured from the north, clockwise round the compass. If we do this we need never be confused by the cardinal points and their various subdivisions. These points, of course, have their equivalent in degrees. Thus if our magnetic variation is 17° , it is quite obvious that east will be 17° plus 90° , south will be 17° plus 180° , west 17° plus 270° , and so on.

In the taking of the bearing of a visible object, the prismatic compass is the instrument of choice, because one is able, simply by pointing the compass, held in the correct manner, at the object observed, to read directly from the compass card the exact number of degrees of the bearing. This renders the procedure not only very simple but very accurate. Those interested should try this out for themselves with a prismatic compass.

Having now grasped clearly the exact meaning of the bearing of an objective from a given point, and the way in which this bearing is arrived at, and how it is expressed in degrees, there is not very much else to worry about. There is one point, however, which is of some interest and which may be of some importance, and that is the finding of what is called the back-bearing of any particular objective. This back-bearing is in effect the bearing of the particular point at which we are from the point whose bearing we take originally. The usefulness of being able to calculate quickly a back-bearing may arise in circumstances where, between the time of taking a bearing and arriving at the point at which we are aiming, the visibility becomes *nil*, so that we cannot see the place we originally set out from. It is perfectly simple to calculate a back-bearing and about-turn and proceed in the direction of the back-bearing to the point from which we started.

With regard to the particular choice of a compass in walking during thick weather, there is no doubt that the card compass is by far the best instrument to use. It can

be held in the hand, and by means of a movable cover on which a mark is fixed we can set our bearing accurately, lock the movable cover, and then proceed along the line of march, checking our direction as often as we please. With a needle compass, and with some of the cheaper forms of the card compass, such a procedure is not possible, and from that point of view alone the properly designed card compass is well worth the extra cost.

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ANEROID BAROMETER.—These instruments vary in price, accuracy, and size to an extraordinary degree. The type most frequently used and most convenient for all practical purposes is the small pocket instrument, accurately calibrated and of good quality, marked in thousands of feet, with suitable small subdivisions and with a movable dial or pointer. Naturally, the wider the range of heights which the instrument will measure the less accurate will be the readings, and in this country an instrument which will read up to 5,000 feet will obviously cover all possible heights in the hills. Elsewhere, of course, one would require an instrument recording greater heights. By means of an aneroid one can calculate how many feet has been ascended or descended in a given time, and in thick weather, in making a long ascent, the information may be valuable in indicating whether or not the end of the climb is near, at the same time making it possible to estimate the time likely to elapse before the climb is finished. The aneroid is also useful in making a long traverse round a mountain, for it will indicate whether one is making an unnecessary ascent or descent in the course of the traverse. This is particularly useful in thick weather on an unbroken slope without any particular features. Apart from these points the aneroid can be used as a pocket weather-glass in the camp or in the hotel. Because of the variation of the reading under various weather conditions a considerable error may creep into the readings, even during a relatively short day on the hills.

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All of us are more or less familiar with maps of one sort or



SUNSET OVER ARDGOUR

Hugh D. Welsh

another. A map is really a conventional picture in miniature of a particular part of the earth's surface. I say conventional, because in representing various formations of the earth's surface certain conventional signs and methods are used. Some of these we may touch upon a little later. There are certain important things about a map which one *must* know before it is of any use trying to read it. The first thing one must know is the scale of the map. The scale of the map indicates the distance on the earth's surface represented by a given distance on the map. Such a scale is usually expressed in terms of so many units of length on the earth's surface to a certain unit of length on the map surface. For example, a map may have a scale of 1 inch to 10 miles, or 1 inch to 1 mile. In whatever way the scale is expressed it is always clearly indicated in all modern maps. It may be indicated in another way, namely as a fraction, the numerator representing the unit of length on the map, and the denominator the units of length on the earth's surface. This method is not common in ordinary maps, and I do not think we need consider it at all. The representative fraction, as it is called, so produced, does not convey in any popular manner the size of the map. For instance, a map of 1 inch to 1 mile has a representative fraction of $1/63,360$, the latter figure being the number of inches in a mile. The most usual scales of maps employed in walking and mountaineering are the $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to the mile, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to the mile, and 1 inch to the mile. Very occasionally an Ordnance map of 6 inches to the mile may be used for accurate work. There are various excellent map-makers in this country, but there is no doubt that for our purpose in climbing mountains, the Ordnance Survey Map, with a scale of 1 inch to 1 mile, is by far the most useful and accurate.

We have seen how the scale of the map represents distance on the earth's surface, but the map must also represent height, so that by looking at it we can see at a glance what are the high parts of the country and what are the low parts. This is most important from our point of view, but does not appear in the average cheap motoring map, where heights do not interest the user. Height on a map may be represented by

various methods, and is frequently represented by a combination of two methods, the use of contour lines and colours. The contour lines of a map represent imaginary lines on the surface of the earth joining all points at the same height above the mean sea-level. Depending upon the size of the map, we may have lines representing levels at intervals of 100, 200, 250 feet, and so on. In the Ordnance Survey 1-inch map the contour lines are drawn to represent levels at intervals of 250 feet, with intermediate lines for the intervening levels of 50 feet. Thus by studying the formation of the contour lines we can get a very accurate idea of the character of the ground which the map represents. It is obvious that when the contour lines are close together we must be dealing with a steep slope, and when they are widely spaced out the ground is less steep. Also by observing that the contour lines are grouped together in a particular region between two areas where they are widely spaced, we can tell quite definitely that we are dealing with a bulging-out formation of the ground or butress, as opposed to a hollowed-out portion of ground or corrie. Contour lines alone, however, make a map very flat-looking and relatively uninteresting, and almost invariably they are combined with colouring to give a more vivid impression of the surface of the ground. This is perhaps best seen in the $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch Bartholomew's map, where a certain range of colours is employed to represent various levels. We are all perfectly familiar with the green colour representing low-lying ground, and the dark-brown colour representing the higher mountain tops, with, appropriately enough, pure white to represent levels about 4,000 feet. In certain of the Ordnance Survey maps the system of colouring is dispensed with, and a form of shading employed, commonly called "hachuring," where the sloping ground is shaded by closely drawn lines which run down the slopes in the direction in which water would flow. In the latest map of the Cairngorms (1935) these three methods of representing height are so combined as to give an immediate appearance of relief—a beautiful production.

The two features in a map which we have just discussed,

namely the scale and the method of representing heights, are the most important. I need not go into any detail with regard to other conventional signs which are perfectly familiar to most of us, and which may be studied on any map from the table of signs which is nearly always printed at the bottom. All our maps are printed so that the top of the map is north and the bottom south, and the right and left sides are east and west respectively, but in every map, usually on the right-hand side, there is the conventional sign of the north and south meridian, together with a second line representing the magnetic meridian, with the angle between them marked in degrees and minutes, and a note indicating the annual variation of this angle and the year in which the map was produced. From our point of view the magnetic meridian line is important because by it we set or orient the map correctly.

(The foregoing is the substance of a paper read to the Club on February 22, 1937, by Dr Levack. The third section of his paper, which dealt with the use of map and compass together, is here replaced with the rather fuller dissertation which follows.)

“ DEAD RECKONING.”

BY G. R. SYMMERS.

It is highly desirable that everyone who goes in for hill walking should be familiar with the art of route finding. By this it is meant that they should be capable of making their way from place to place by map and compass whatever the weather is like. To acquire this art, the first step is to become thoroughly familiar with the handling and working of a compass, and the second to be able to read a map correctly. In this article I do not intend to touch on the question of how to manage a compass nor yet on how to read a map. It is assumed, then, that you, reader, are either familiar with both these subjects, or that, since you first picked up this *Journal*, you have made yourself familiar with them. The subject, therefore, of this essay is the application of the compass and the map to your adventures amongst the high hills.

I have said that it is highly desirable for everyone who tramps on the hills to acquire this art of finding their way about, but I would go one stage further in the case of those, either self-appointed or elected by common consent, who lead a party. To such this knowledge is essential. Nobody has any right to take on the responsibility of leading a party without this knowledge and some experience of its application, particularly during the winter months when weather conditions are so fickle and variable.

Some of you will probably say, “ Yes, that’s all very well, but how are we to acquire this art if we never have a chance of putting it into practice ? ” There are two ways in which this difficulty can be overcome. Firstly, you may be acquainted with someone able to initiate you by taking you

out with him and explaining what he is doing. Secondly, and I think this is the better method as it inspires self-confidence, you can work up the practice yourself. In what follows I hope to give you some help on the subject.

It should be stressed as a fundament at this point that during any climbing expedition you should be able at any time to take out your map, indicate a particular spot on it and say, "We are here." It is simply looking for trouble to let bad weather or mist overtake you without knowing your precise location on the map. Unless you know your exact position when the guiding landmarks are blotted out by mist or snow your compass and map are almost useless. This, of course, results from the fact that "dead reckoning" depends for its accuracy on the following provisions: the location of the point from which you are starting, the direction or bearing of the point you wish to attain from your starting-point and its distance from that point. If you don't know where you are, then you cannot obtain from the map any of the factors you require.

Now, how can practice in this art be acquired so that it can be put into operation when the need arises? I would suggest that this can be easily and most enjoyably carried out as an adjunct to Saturday afternoon or Sunday walks. The first thing to find out is how many paces you take to cover a mile and how long you take to do it. Find out from the map how far it is between two easily recognisable points on either side of a moorland tract and then walk from one place to the other, counting your paces on the way and also noting the length of time you take to cover the distance. The number of paces and the time taken, each divided by the number of miles traversed, are the two figures you require. Do this over a few different types of upland country, some undulating, some uphill, some downhill, some in heather, some in grass, and some with boulders. Each walk should be from 3 to 4 miles in length so as to get a reasonable average result and cut down the effect of mistakes in counting. After you have carried out some expeditions in snow and obtained a similar set of figures,

then you can reasonably assume that by counting or by looking at a watch you will be able to say how far you have travelled from a known point under almost any conditions. As a practical example of the use of this data, suppose that to reach a certain point you have to traverse a map distance of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and that you know it takes twenty-six minutes and 2,200 paces to walk 1 mile over this type of country. You may therefore assume with reasonable accuracy that after having counted 3,300 paces, and thirty-nine minutes having elapsed since starting, you have travelled $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Consequently, in mist or when visibility is bad, at the end of that period you should be on the look-out for the object you have been heading for, and if you have been walking in the proper direction you should be very close to it.

In what goes before I have outlined two methods of determining distance travelled, one method based on time and the other on counting the number of paces made. Both have their advantages and devotees. The time method, the one which I myself practise, suffers from the disadvantage that calculations have to be made at every halt, otherwise it is much less unwieldy, because a mechanism is provided to do your counting and this releases your attention for other matters.

So far we have been dealing with the side of "dead reckoning," which corresponds in the case of navigation to the log. In fact, the methods applied in "dead reckoning" as we are dealing with it here are merely a simplified version of those used in navigation at sea. Avoiding a digression, however inviting it may be, we must now consider the question of direction. The necessity of being able to steer a good course is as important as is the ability to know when one has travelled the distance one desires. Again, practice in this art can be obtained under normal conditions, and can very well be had in conjunction with the experiments made to obtain the other data with which I have already dealt. Let us consider a typical expedition of this nature. For this purpose, let us assume that you are going to walk from a point A on one side of a moorland, say the Hill of

Fare, to another point B on the far side of it. The expedition is to be carried out in fine weather so that there is no danger of getting lost or of falling over any cliffs on the way, but to add interest to the walk you must make believe that there is a thick mist shrouding the country and that it is impossible to see more than 20 yards. To perfect this illusion you must resist the temptation of looking for point B and heading for it when you approach, but rather continue on your course as if you were unable to locate its position. If a point B can be chosen so that it is concealed from your path of approach so much the better, because the tendency to cheat in such small matters is inherent in most men—and, just possibly, women!

Your equipment for purposes of route finding should consist of a 1-inch Ordnance map of the district, a scale divided into inches and tenths, a watch, and, preferably, a liquid compass marked in degrees. The advantage of the liquid type over the ordinary needle instrument is that it is not nearly so sensitive to vibration and can be held and read in the hand while walking, whereas stops have to be made every time the other kind is examined. By an inspection of the map it is possible to determine the bearing of your objective point B from point A with reference to true north, that is to say, in relation to a line running parallel to the side of the Ordnance sheet. To this angle or bearing add the magnetic variation for the year in which you are making the journey. Then scale the distance from A to B on the map. All this preliminary information can be worked out at home with the aid of a protractor until proficiency is attained, after which it can all be done outside. Now assume that you are ready to start from point A. Hold the compass with a mark on the case on the side remote from your body pointing directly in front of you; if your instrument has a lid with a window and a hair line on it, open the lid and point the hair line straight in front of you. Then turn yourself round until the bearing you obtained from the map, as indicated on the rotating disc of the compass, coincides with the mark on the case of the instrument. This indicates the direction in which you have to move. Look

at your watch and, if you have already been experimenting, then estimate the time required to reach B. Once launched on your course, you have to go up hill and down dale, through or over everything encountered on the line between A and B. If you like you can count your paces, but it is rather wearisome and subject to big mistakes. Look at your compass frequently, as you must keep that mark on the case opposite the correct bearing figure on the floating disc. If you find that you have wandered a bit to one side of your course, then try to make a compensating correction by going a similar way on the other side. After doing this, because you should then be back on your correct path, you keep pushing along in the proper direction again. If you traverse the side slope of a hill, it is necessary to watch your instrument very carefully to avoid the attraction of gravity on the straightness of your course. When you have travelled the estimated length of time by watch take stock of your immediate surroundings and determine the value of the error you have incurred by these methods. On the other hand, if you are finding out the length of time or the number of paces required in moving from A to B, then it will be necessary to continue until on a level or at right angles to your objective. In any case, it should be possible with care and a little practice to arrive after walking 2 miles from your starting-point within a circle of 200 yards diameter with your objective point at its centre. That is to say, at the end of a 2-mile walk you should be within 100 yards of the point for which you have been heading. On a shorter course your possible error should naturally be proportionately smaller and on a longer distance greater.

By carrying out experiments of this nature and finding with what degree of certainty he arrives very close to his objective, the beginner gains confidence, and will know what to do when he is overtaken by bad visibility on the hills. He should then know how to extricate his party, and will derive a great deal of pleasure in so doing. In fact, he will probably soon be climbing in misty weather just for the pure fun of navigating himself from place to place. That



GLENCOE PEAKS—SUNRISE

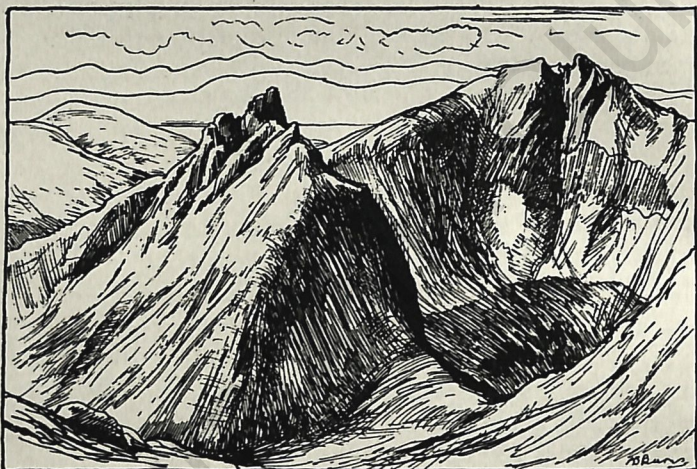
Hugh D. Welsh

it has this effect I know from experience. It so warps one's sense of proportion that for a time, while one is mastering the details of the art, one longs for mist, and is dissatisfied with sun and frost and distant views.

Before I finish this long discourse I should just like to add one or two hints on “dead reckoning” in its application to walking amongst the high tops. It is often better to pick up an intermediate point or several intermediate points, thereby setting two or more courses, rather than to steer one very long line between two remote stations. In this way the error which may be incurred by walking a long way in a slightly wrong direction is reduced. Again, advantage should be taken of the help provided by such natural features as the edges of corries, and on the west coast of Scotland by the lines of sharply defined ridges. With regard to the former, care should be exercised in walking along them in the winter, when they are often heavily corniced and the lip extremely difficult to see in blowing snow or thick mist. Particular vigilance is necessary when a high wind is blowing snow into the corrie at right angles to the line of the edge, because these are the conditions favourable to the formation of a new and soft cornice, the lip of which is not the safest of places to walk. Further, once a leader is appointed amongst the members of a party, then when he decides on a certain course of action it is the obligation of that party of climbers to fall in with his wishes, to help him when he *asks* for assistance, but never to impede him either with advice, conversation, or mutiny.

Hippocrates has said, “Walking should be rapid in winter and slow in summer, unless it be under a burning heat. Fleshy people should walk faster, thin people slower. . . . Fat people who wish to become thin should always fast when they undertake exertion and take their food while they are panting and before they have cooled, drinking beforehand diluted wine that is not very cold.” The Father of Medicine gives a lot of useful advice which can no doubt be applied in many cases, but the whole point of this article is an attempt to show that a Saturday afternoon walk in

summer or a Sunday outing in winter can be turned into something more than a mere "constitutional"; it can become a mild mental exercise, an application of common sense to walking.



Cir Mhor and Caisteal Abhaist, Arran.

PEAKS AND PASTURES.

BY R. L. MITCHELL.

AMONGST the excursions arranged for the students of the agricultural department of the Swiss Technical High School in Zürich, to which I was lucky enough to be invited, was one to the region south of the St Gotthard. While the main object was to examine the agricultural practices of the lower slopes, opportunity was taken to visit the high alps and summit ridges in the neighbourhood. The party, comprising some twenty students and three foreign *Mitarbeiter* and led, occasionally, by three professors, travelled regally by reserved third-class coach and at a very advantageous rate from Zürich to Göschenen by the early morning express to Milan, then by a local train through the St Gotthard Tunnel to Airolo. The trip from Lucerne, along the lake and up the Reuss valley to Göschenen, proved as interesting as a train journey can be, especially in its later stages, with its bird's-eye views of the villages on the hill-spurs, and, near Wassen, the corkscrew tunnel whose exit is 100 feet above the entrance. And, a few miles farther on, a section of the hillside is traversed at three different levels by the railway—twice in a southerly direction and once northerly. But, at this stage, the line has serpented so often that one refuses to believe the evidence of the compass.

So, having made good use of the half-hour's wait at Göschenen by partaking of the soup course of our lunch, we eventually reached Italian-speaking Switzerland at Airolo. Our first concern was to complete lunch, but we found that first of all our programme included the ascent of 1,000 feet to Nante, a tiny village at the upper limit of cultivation, where one of the professors ran a small croft. Our headquarters for the night were to be here—the main party accommodated on straw mattresses in the now disused school-room and the privileged guests in the loft of the professor's house.

Situated in the Valle Levantina, the upper section of the Ticino valley, at a height of 4,678 feet, Nante loses the last of the winter's snows only in May, and in the short season potatoes and similar crops are grown to augment the products of Alpine dairying. Examination of the processes employed, under the guidance of the "potato professor," as our leader was greeted in Italian by the villagers, occupied the remainder of the day, there being included a short excursion to the Alpe Piscium, a cleared terrace high above the village to which, in summer, part of the village herd is taken. These alps, level stretches of rough pasture on the hill-flanks, vary in size from a few yards across to a mile or more, each generally with its hut for milking and cheese-making. Their location is easily determined, for the metallic clanging of the cow-bells can be heard from afar.

From the pine-clad slopes above the village an excellent impression was obtained of the Levantina valley. Southwards down the valley, road, railway, and river cross and re-cross on their way towards the plains of North Italy. But above Airolo they part company, the Ticino reaching back westwards to Val Bedretto and its headwaters, the railway disappearing abruptly into the hillside, and the road zigzagging upwards towards the St Gotthard Pass and Andermatt. This part of the route from the south presents the first difficult obstacle to any intruder, and is heavily fortified—evidence of entrenchments being visible all over the hill-face above Airolo, whilst signs of practice were to be found on the slopes which we traversed above Nante, reminding us that even in these apparently safe and peaceable surrounds war might suddenly be upon us.

The difficulties of a bilingual, or still more of a trilingual, country were emphasised that evening when the party adjourned to the village inn. Rumour amongst the students has it that, on a previous visit, the German-speaking professor ordered, as was his wont, a *dreier* of wine. The lady of the house, whose German stretched as far as *eins*, *zwei*, *drei*, supplied three litres, ten times the appropriate amount, much to the delight of the audience and consternation of the recipient. The fate of the Chianti is not recorded,

but, in any case, the care with which the victim had his order interpreted on this occasion lent support to the rumour.

The hostess has a further official duty, that of tolling the village bell, and at 4.30 next morning she wakened us thus in good time for our day's excursion. The plan was to make our way to the head of the Sassello Pass, a mountain track connecting the Ticino valley with the neighbouring Maggia valley, noting on the way the changes in vegetation and so on. I am afraid, however, that after the first hour or so this side of the trip was practically forgotten and it had degenerated into something very like a Club excursion, even to the advance guard, the stragglers, and those who rested while the others bagged another top!

The Sassello Pass route leads from Airolo, or from Piota, farther down the valley, by way of the extensive Alpe Prato, over the sharp ridge connecting Pizzo Sassello to Sambuco at a height of 7,700 feet, then even more steeply down through Alpe Sassello to Corte and the Maggia valley. The track continues beyond Corte down to Fusio, where the road from Locarno and the south comes to an end. By half-past five we were on our way along the rough path through the pines above the cultivated slopes. After a mile or so eastwards down the valley we struck uphill, and finally emerged from the trees into the clearing of Alpe Prato. At this point we left the usual route, which led directly across the alp towards the lowest point of the ridge, and made a detour to inspect a small corrie loch lying to our left at the foot of the cliffs at that part of the ridge. Passing through a series of terraces we reached the loch at about 8 o'clock. Even at this hour some members of the party felt inclined to bathe, as the June sun was already beating down mercilessly and the shade temperature well over 70°. Wiser counsels prevailed as far as bathing was concerned, for the water itself was ice cold, and even yet some lingering snow-fields on the steep-shaded screes reached down to the water's edge.

Our route now led back to the main path over an extensive field of firm snow, down which the unintentional descent for a few yards of one member of the party caused some

amusement. The path had now become little more than a scramble over large boulders, and so we ascended the last thousand feet or so to arrive panting at the pass level. The ridge itself was quite sharp, with in places a narrow slightly sloping ledge, but generally falling away more steeply to the south than to the north, whence we had come. Finding what shade we could behind the huge blocks of rock, we consumed some of our provisions for the day.

The more energetic members now set off to climb from the pass level at 7,700 feet to the summit of Pizzo Sassello (8,300 feet) about half a mile to the west. The first part of the ascent was over boulders, followed by a scramble up an inclined face of rotten rock, with loose soil and mosses in the cracks—easily climbed but just steep enough to demand care in places. The panorama from the top repaid the energy expended, even in the intense heat (by midday the temperature had reached 80° in the shade). Still before noon, the heat haze was not too far developed, although the distance had not the same crystal clarity of the early morning, and a far dark mass of cloud was threatening on the horizon.

The whole horizon was a tumbled mass of peaks, and only the most outstanding could be picked out. To the north lay the St Gotthard group, and, while Airolo was hidden in the depths of the valley, the road was clearly visible, zigzagging up the pass towards the hospice. Four thousand five hundred feet right below us, a little farther down the valley, the twin villages of Valle and Madrano, situated where the Canaria meets the Levantina, appeared as specks on the valley floor. Above them stretched the reclaimed terrace-like slopes reaching up into the pine forests, which in turn stopped short on attaining the upper tree limit, leaving the apparently desolate boulder-strewn upper ridges. The snow-capped Rheinwaldhorn was outstanding, south of which the distant view was interrupted by the mass of Sambuco, 300 feet higher than Sassello and 3 miles distant. To the west lay a whole array of scarcely distinguishable summits, while near at hand the impressive valley of the Maggia emerged from the Cristallina Alps. Far in the distance a symmetrical snow-covered cone appeared

right above the valley, probably the Finsteraarhorn, the nearest of the Bernese Alps.

The descent to the pass level safely accomplished, we flanked the east face of the peak, over the boulders once again, then by mixed country to the loch above the Alpe Ravina. Here the party enjoyed a bathe, the temperature of the water being slightly higher than that of the loch previously visited, although here, too, large snow-fields still lay near at hand. All enjoyed the bathe except one professor, for the bearer of his rucksack, with his bathing attire, had strayed on the descent and was nowhere to be found. A brief halt and we were on our way down the final slopes to Nante, where the lost bathing costume awaited us. By a lucky chance the custodian, quite new to the district and rather shortsighted, had made a direct descent to Nante by practically the only feasible route when he might just as easily have finished in an adjoining valley.

Nante to Airolo was accomplished in good time even for a Swiss descent, for the doctrine, at least in the groups with which I was associated, was slow up and fast down. For the last hour thunder had been rumbling and the clouds banking up. As we reached Airolo the rain started—a real Alpine thunderstorm with an hour's torrential rain. It cleared up to a cool, clear summer evening for our trip down the Reuss valley and beside the several lakes on the way to Zürich.

A HILL WALK.

BY W. MALCOLM.

EXAMINING the 1-inch Ordnance map for a convenient hill walk west of the Cryne Corse Mounth, which had become somewhat familiar to the writer, a track was noticed starting near the Brig of Bogendreep and leading over to Auchinblae.

Leaving town by 9.30 bus for Strachan, the road was followed to the Brig. The track is shown as starting on the east side of the Brig and about 100 feet above it, but taking the line of least resistance the cart track was followed from the bridge. In 200 or 300 yards along this track, and where it starts to descend to the river, a gate on the left (the second gate from the bridge) was crossed and a pleasant rising path followed through the wood to a fence at the south end of the wood. Here the track became indistinct, but rising gradually in a south-east direction another fence is crossed, and a distinct track followed on the uphill side of this fence. Leading round the base of the Craig of Dalfro there is no difficulty in following this till it crosses the stream between the Craig of Dalfro and Hare Hill. Just before reaching this stream the track to Pitreadie is seen striking off on the left. The other side of the stream the track (shown on map) leading round the base of Hare Hill was not detected, nor could it be seen on the hillside in front, but an indistinct track appeared to lead upwards to Hare Hill. This was followed, and soon became a slight track between shooting butts. At the highest butt (about 900 feet) the track vanished, but a few yards to the east a cut path was found. This led without difficulty almost to the summit of Hare Hill and then stopped abruptly. A visit to the Cairn was made, and from this point a track could be seen leading from the vicinity of the Dye up the Builg Burn. From the Cairn a S.S.E. course was followed through the rough to meet this track,

which was followed without difficulty to where it crosses the burn. From here to the Col the track appeared indistinct but the route fairly obvious. This was not followed, but a direct ascent made to the top of Tipperweir (1,440 feet), from which the track leading down to the Bervie water can be seen quite clearly. Tipperweir was descended in an easterly direction to the track, which was then followed through a pretty glen on the east side of the stream to the first farm at Corsebauld. From here the bus route between Auchinblae and Stonehaven can be reached by road in $1\frac{1}{8}$ miles. Total distance from Strachan, $9\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

For those bound for Auchinblae and who dislike road tramping, cross the foot-bridge over the Bervie water just before Corsebauld, and 50 feet up the hillside a grass track is found leading to Tippetty. A road turns down to Tippetty, but leave this on the left and follow a slight track across the field by the fence. Cross a small watercourse and continue by the fence over the rising ground till the school comes in sight. The road can then be followed past Glenfarquhar Lodge till Auchinblae is seen, then, if the state of cultivation in the fields permits, avoid the road and take a straight line for Auchinblae. Total distance, Strachan to Auchinblae, about 11 miles.

The route makes a pleasant hill walk, and may be combined with the ascent of Hill of Gothie and Goyle Hill, although the "going" between Tipperweir and Hill of Gothie did not appear too good.

Perhaps some reader better acquainted with this walk will answer the following points:—

1. What is the best way of reaching the start of the track at Brig of Bogendreep?
2. Whence comes the cut path found at the highest shooting butt?
3. Is there a track as shown on 1-inch map round the base of Hare Hill?

[On Bartholomew's $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch sheet Hare Hill is called Bawd Hill. The track shown on the 1-inch map round the base of Hare Hill can be seen indistinctly from the base of the hill to the south. It is good in

parts and easily visible, but some sections have become overgrown with deep heather. It appears to have run round the base, losing height as it turned east, until it reached the Builg Burn. There is a small wooden bridge over the Builg about three-quarters of a mile from the Dye, and possibly the old path connected with this bridge, although at the moment there is no sign of the path near the bridge itself.—J. S. C.]



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THE SOUTHERN CUILLIN FROM SGÙRR DEARG.

1. Sgùrr Dubh Mòr.
2. Sgùrr Mhic Coinnich.
3. Sgùrr Dubh na da Bheinn.

4. Sgùrr Thearlaich
Alasdair Stone Shoot.
5. Sgùrr Alasdair.

6. Sgùrr nan Eag.
7. Sgùrr Sgumain.
8. Sron na Ciche.

9. The Cioch.

G. R. Symmers

THE ROAD TO GLEN BRITTLE.

BY W. A. EWEN.

IT happened only a year or two ago in Portree Post Office. We were wiring for accommodation at Glen Brittle in mid-afternoon and had prepaid the reply. "It will take some *hours* to come back; perhaps to-morrow morning," we were told. We must have looked surprised, for the girl added, "You see, it has to go on a horse." And that was how I came first to hear of the road to Glen Brittle and of its water splashes; and I shall always retain that picture of a telegraph messenger, mounted on a horse, ambling slowly down the long road to Rhudunan.

But far be it from me to criticise the postal arrangements at Rhudunan. The telephone has now arrived—"Rhudunan 1," says Mrs Chisholm—and the postman calls, weather permitting, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I collided with him in the door of the post office on the morning of one of his visits. Rubicund, round-faced, and smiling, he rummaged in the bottom of his bag and remarked, "I think this is your toothbrush." And so it was. And who would wish for efficiency greater than that? One could imagine him, seated in the postal gig, watching various parcels disintegrate (oh! the road to Glen Brittle) and playing a variation of Kim's Game with a number of articles and memorising the parcels to which they belonged. To this careful gentleman, therefore, we entrusted our heavy luggage so that we might travel the lighter on the high road to Glen Brittle. There cannot be much wrong with the postal facilities when even Symmers's rucksack is passed as a parcel not exceeding 11 lbs. weight.

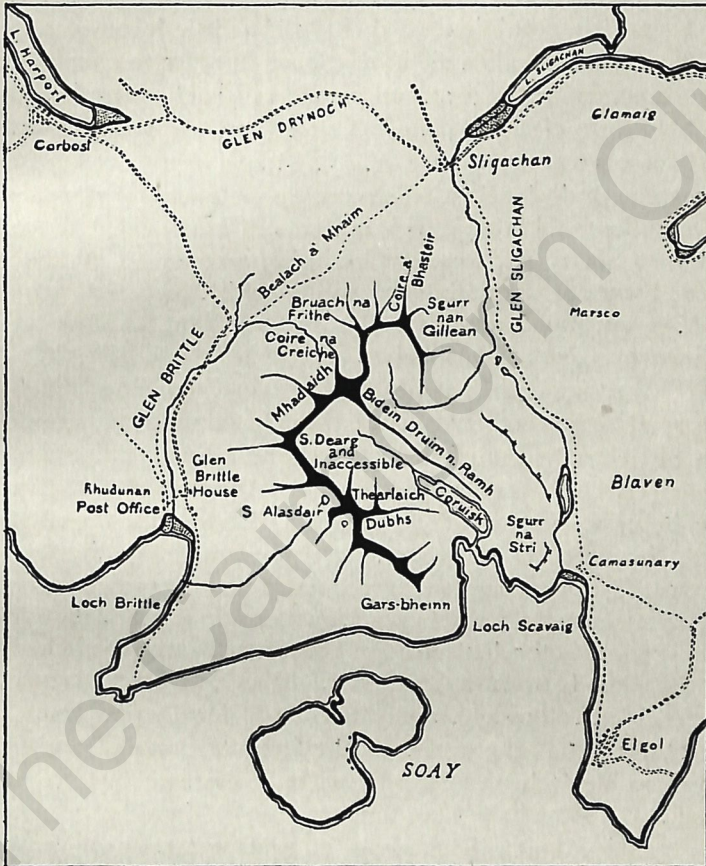
Our immediate objective was to reach Glen Brittle by the Cuillin ridge. But we had also laid plans for an attempt on the ridge walk from Garsbheinn to Sgùrr nan Gilleann, an ambitious programme since only one of the party had

previous acquaintance with the ridge, and only the southern half of it at that. By taking the high road we achieved two further objects, in exploring an unknown area, particularly the Bhasteir Tooth, and in laying a cache of food at the Bealach nan Lice. It was August and late in the year for such an attempt, so we provisioned a tent in Glen Sligachan lest we should descend late to a silent and already overcrowded hotel. As the tent was to be left for a week we took every precaution against wind and water, pitching it on a knoll in an exposed position but safe from the rising tide of the Sligachan.

Our departure next morning was speeded by the advent of a plague of midges—Glen Sligachan midges, vicious, voracious, giants of their kind. Avoiding the dark depths of the Bhasteir Gorge, we ascended Coire a' Bhasteir to the Bealach nan Lice, and came face to face with Naismith's route to the Tooth, a route classed with the hard side of the Inaccessible, and the Thearlaich-Dubh gap, the three most interesting problems on the ridge. But neither of the others is comparable with Naismith's from the point of view of exposure and possibly also of difficulty. We found it difficult from a Sligachan start, and as we left it, wondered how much harder we might find it at the end of the ridge day. I had overlooked the fact that Symmers was being introduced to the ridge at its hardest point until he asked whether there were much of this sort of thing on the ridge "walk." But south to Bidein the ridge offers no difficulties, and we elected to leave it before that point in order to visit Coire na Creiche, the pleasantest road to Glen Brittle. And eventually we arrived at Glen Brittle House to await the day and the weather.

Having put in several weeks of almost continuous climbing, it was assumed that no special training would be necessary for the attempt on the ridge, and for a day or two we were very lazy, presenting something of a problem to the other guests, who observed that we climbed not neither did we fish. But we made one necessary excursion to the Bealach Coire na Banachdich, where we proposed to cache a supply of food and water. Having selected a promising

route, I assumed that Symmers would follow after filling the water-bottle. Half an hour later there was no sign of him, and the route was becoming difficult. A long traverse across the cliff failed to locate the supporting column (which, at the point I had reached, was what I required most), and



the face route was abandoned in favour of easy chimneys. It transpired that Symmers had stolen up an easy little scree gully and was sitting on the col eating chocolate; and the reason for this evasion was simply that he was following a trickle of water and would not fill the bottle until the last possible moment. It rained next day, and a visit to Sron

na Ciche was called off; but the day was nevertheless interesting for its encounter with a French couple who had no English. Interesting because we had so little French! That evening they departed for Coruisk in conditions so promising that we decided to make the attempt next day.

We had planned to start for Garsbheinn at 4 A.M., but at 4 A.M. it was raining. I thought it a little inconsiderate of Symmers to awaken me at that hour in order to announce such a commonplace; and to parade in his climbing boots, looking for a clearance, was definitely provocative of wrath. (I have a great regard for A. W. Moore, whose action in "reluctantly" leaving one morning without Whympier—because he wouldn't get up—might well have added something to Mr Young's code of climbing manners!) At five, then, Symmers not seeing eye to eye with Moore, we were picking our way across the bog in the half light, *en route* for the weary screes of Garsbheinn.

It was very calm. Night lingered in Coire Lagan, but the sombre grey of the sea was faintly suffused with rose. We carried only a minimum of food and a light Alpine line for roping into the gap and off the Inaccessible, and in two hours we were on the summit of Garsbheinn, the start of the long road to Sligachan. I felt more amiably disposed towards Symmers and even reconciled to the project now that the screes of Garsbheinn were below us. And below the screes was the little tent of the French couple, pitched on the shore between us and Soay. The Outer Isles steamer passed, siren blowing, and after that, for eleven hours, we observed nothing, not even the famous view of Coruisk from the Bealach na Glaic Mhor, only the rock under our noses. Thirst assailed us almost at once, but Sgùrr nan Eag provided occasional pools of rain water, warm and vapid, and inadequate even in quantity. Rain and mist hindered us on Sgùrr Dubh na Da Bheinn, where minutes were lost and the rope jammed on the south wall of the Thearlaich gap. We were behind schedule at Sgùrr Alasdair, but the round of Coire Lagan was familiar ground and we were only minutes behind at the Inaccessible.

On Sgùrr Dearg I advanced the opinion that the worst



W. A. Ewen

LOCH CORUIK

was behind us. Far from it; the Cuillin ridge only begins with Sgùrr a' Mhadaidh and Bidein, which go on and on and up and down *ad infinitum*. The steep southern faces presented little difficulty, but the long, slabby descents, on which route finding was often a process of trial and error, cost us time, precious minutes stolen from our infrequent halts. Resolutely we passed Coire na Creiche, the last road back, and looked forward to a change to purely pedestrian effort over Bruach na Frithe. Thirst was still a major problem and, in the absence of rain pools, Symmers moistened his tongue on a wet slab. But cautiously, I imagine, as our finger-tips were now tender from contact with the gabbro! The minor tops on the way to Bruach na Frithe provided easy going, and one or two remarkable gaps, narrow enough to permit of jumping across. From the summit of Bruach na Frithe we saw the familiar sight of cloud boiling up from the Atlantic, and resolution faltered. The weather seemed about to displace our absorbing interest in time. It is seldom that I take much arithmetical interest in these things, but the importance of the time factor on this journey may be gauged from a note I made here—Sgùrr a' Fionn Choire, 6.7½ P.M.! We rested at our second food cache on the Bealach nan Lice for half an hour, less interested in the immediate problem of the Tooth than in the refreshment provided. But the latter failed to restore our flagging spirits, and when the clouds swept over Bruach na Frithe and the first drops of rain fell, resolution broke.

The lateness of the hour and the rapidly approaching bad weather relieved either of the necessity of confessing that he would not care to lead Naismith's! It was already evident on Bruach na Frithe, and before it, that time and light would defeat the full realisation of our hopes. And, perhaps, in giving little previous thought to the exploration of Sgùrr nan Gillean (which neither had climbed), we treated that mountain a little lightly. We had begun to realise that its problems, although possibly comparatively easy, might prove difficult to unravel in mist and darkness. And so it came to pass that we descended again to Glen Sligachan by the Bhasteir Corrie. The light failed and

the rain came, and the wisdom of our choice was emphasised by every crack of the wildly flapping canvas and the more distant roar of the wind among the crags.

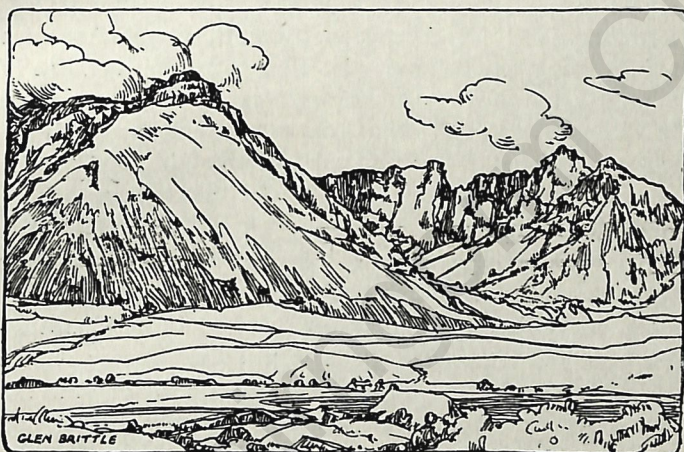
The camp, in ordinary circumstances, we would not have regarded as a comfortable one. As a result of standing unattended for a week, everything was wet, wholly or in part. But, after supping from a most unusual combination of tinned foods, we caterpillared into wet sleeping-bags and were asleep. And not the wildest winds of the Cuillin, not even the uneasy conjunction of tinned raspberries with sardines and chocolate (in that order!) could disturb our rest. In his notes, which I saw later, Symmers wrote, "Sodden oblivion"! Late next morning we awoke to a half-gale, wrestled with sodden canvas, and descended upon Sligachan in search of breakfast. At Sligachan, breakfast was off—a somewhat scandalised maid allowing that we might, with an (apparently great) effort on her part, have high tea. For high tea she achieved bacon and egg and toast with marmalade, so we were left wondering at what dark hour this amazing daily metamorphosis occurred! It is not our custom to suffer under the blight of gentility for a longer period than is necessary; accordingly, breakfast over, we set out again for Glen Brittle on foot. There was put, indeed, a tentative suggestion regarding a return to Glen Brittle over the Cuillin ridge. I imagine, however, that this was merely another example of the "heavy-footed facetiousness" so typical of climbers, to which one of our reviewers refers elsewhere! The pedestrian route by the Bealach a' Mhaim was nevertheless enjoyable, with its views into Coire na Creiche on the one hand, and out over Loch Harport on the other. The waterfalls and the colourful Fairy Pools in Coire na Creiche held our interest for a time, and Symmers was almost tempted to bathe. It will always be a matter for regret with me that I did not obtain for the *Journal* a picture of Symmers bathing in the Fairy Pool! And, in due course, we came to the highway, after the Stone Shoot, the most remarkable scree in Skye. It appears to have no permanent surface to speak of—apart from a few aged boulders by which old acquaintances mark their pro-



W. A. Ewen

COIRE LAGAN

gress along the glen. It is never very decisively, and without doubt, a road, and at last inconsiderately loses itself in a field. It has no historical associations that I know of, but it has echoed to the feet of many now famous men. It is impassable to charabancs and to low-slung cars; it has no virtues but one—it is the road to Glen Brittle.



In Memoriam.

ALEXANDER SIMPSON.

By the death of Mr Alexander Simpson, of the Aberdeen Savings Bank, on February 28, 1937, the Club lost one of its most enthusiastic members. It is several years since Mr Simpson attended the Club excursions, for lately he had been compelled to husband his strength. He became a member of the Club in 1900, and for thirty years took an active part in all its proceedings.

We who have climbed many hills with him have memories of his spare figure as he tramped over the heather, discoursing on his many climbs, often arguing the point in his characteristic fashion. He seemed to have penetrated every remote glen in Scotland, for, with his brother as companion in his young days, he had scoured the Highlands on bicycle, carrying his machine over rough passes, difficult even without such encumbrance. The hill experience thus gained made him a valuable member of Committee, and he became a Vice-President in 1928.

On the occasion of his retiral from the Savings Bank in November 1934, many tributes were paid to Mr Simpson in his voluntary capacity as friend and adviser to many needy folk. His activities in musical circles are remembered with gratitude in Aberdeen. The Cairngorm Club naturally turned to him year after year for their musical programmes on the occasion of the Annual Dinner.

Like many another man who has "breasted the blows of circumstance," Mr Simpson was not long spared to reap the reward of his striving. His reward lies in the memory he has left of a seeker after beauty, in music, in nature, in the great wide open spaces.

JAMES SCRIMGEOUR.

THE late James Scrimgeour, B.L., who died on July 18, 1935, was educated at Dundee High School and Edinburgh University. His working life was spent as a solicitor in Dundee.

His connection with the Cairngorm Club was fortuitous in origin. Happening to arrive at the Invercauld Arms in December 1929 while the Club was holding its New Year Meet, he so enjoyed the company that he straightway knocked and it was opened to him. Thereafter till his death he remained a member. Residence in Fife prevented his attendance at the ordinary summer outings at the Club, but the writer well remembers the pleasure with which he looked forward to such of the New Year's Meets as he could get to and the gusto with which he enjoyed both the daily and nightly activities there.

Various articles contributed by him and other members of a little group of Dundee men to the *Cairngorm Club Journal* and similar papers bear witness to the fact that though he took to the hills later in life than is now the fashion, many of his happiest days were spent among them.

ETHEL O. ALEXANDER.

By the sudden and untimely death of Ethel O. Alexander at the age of 19, the Club has lost one of its younger members. A few years before she joined the Junior Section she spent a holiday in Arran, and it was while scrambling on the hills of that delectable isle that she became a lover of mountains.

Some will recall the brilliant day in July when she climbed Bennachie, testing proudly the adhesive qualities of the nails of her first (and last) pair of climbing boots on the summit tors; others that tropical day when a party tramped the Lairig, calling at Corroun on the way; others again Pinnacle Gully and the Black Spout, Lochnagar. She was present at the Club's excursion to the Brown Cow Hill, Strathdon, where her obvious enjoyment and happy

spirits added to the good cheer of the party. In September, only a fortnight before she died, she climbed Ben Lomond. By participating also in the social evenings, she availed herself of all aspects of the Club's efforts to bring together those who are alike in their enthusiasm for the "mountain-eering art."

Here was one of brilliant academic gifts, on the threshold of a career of increasing usefulness. She will be remembered for her unassuming ways, her delight in the simple pleasures of life, and her moral and intellectual integrity.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

THE Forty-eighth Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Caledonian Hotel, Aberdeen, on November 28, 1936, Dr D. P. Levack, President, in the chair.

The accounts for the year to October 31 were read and approved.
Office-bearers were elected as follows:—

Hon. President—Professor J. Norman Collie.

President—Dr David P. Levack.

Vice-Presidents—Messrs E. Birnie Reid and Hugh D. Welsh.

Hon. Editor—Mr William A. Ewen.

Hon. Librarian—Mr James A. Parker.

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

THE ANNUAL DINNER.

THE Forty-eighth Annual Dinner of the Club was held in the Caledonian Hotel on the evening of Saturday, November 28, 1936. The President was in the Chair, and some ninety-six members and their friends made the evening as enjoyable as ever. In his speech proposing the toast of the Club, the President made reference to the various excursions and expeditions of the past year, and spoke of the continued high level of the membership, and the sound financial state of the Club's affairs. He announced that, through Mr Yunnies, the most generous promise of a sum of £50 had been made by an anonymous friend of the Club, for the purpose of starting a fund for the building of a Club Hut somewhere in the Cairngorms. In expressing the gratitude of the members, the President asked Mr Yunnies to convey to their unknown friend the warm appreciation of this most unexpected and generous offer.

Following a racy speech by Mr E. Birnie Reid, proposing the health of the guests, Colonel David Rorie made a characteristic reply, in which he gave more than one instance of personal experience in climbing, illustrating these events by the dry humour and pointed remarks and the delightful expression of wit which has made his after-dinner speeches famous.

At the end of the Dinner, Miss Dugan gave a short lecture, illustrated by a number of magnificent lantern slides from the collection of the late Mr Dugan.

The President, in introducing Miss Dugan, said that he felt sure the members of the Club would be delighted to hear her again and to see many of the pictures which the Club had enjoyed so much on the occasion of her previous addresses.

Miss Dugan charmed every one by the delightful manner in which she presented the pictures and by the ease of description which she employed throughout the lecture.

A very hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Miss Dugan, who was thanked most warmly on behalf of the Club by Mr Duff.

In the course of the evening a most enjoyable programme of songs was contributed by Mr Bertie J. Grant, the music being played once more by Mr A. C. Simpson.—D. P. L.

SUMMER EXCURSIONS, 1936.

TILLYFOURIE TO TORPHINS—JUNE 6, 1936.

A PARTY of twelve members and guests left Aberdeen by bus at 1.45 P.M., arriving at Tillyfourie at 2.50 P.M. (via Kemnay). We then proceeded through the wood on the south side of the road, through which quite a good track led over the White Hill. Crossing a deep heather stretch on the moor, we went over the Green Hill, where we arrived at 4 P.M. Remaining on the hill too long, we decided to cut part of our programme and make straight for Torphins.

After a tour of a number of farms, we arrived at Tornaveen School and on to the main Tarland road. Mr Angus secured for us permission to proceed by the private road to Findiack House, from which we reached the main Torphins road via the Beltie Bridge. Here we walked what Mr Griffith is pleased to call $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, but I have grave fears that he was sleep-walking for at least 8 miles. Tea was very welcome at the Learney Arms, and Aberdeen was reached at 9 P.M.—E. J. H.

LAIRIG AN LAOIGH—JUNE 20 TO 21, 1936.

A PARTY of twenty-three members and sixteen guests, leaving Aberdeen by the 1.20 P.M. excursion train on Saturday, June 20, set out at 5.10 P.M. from Nethybridge, by way of Forest Lodge, to the first rendezvous of the expedition at Ryvoan bothie. Here there was ample time, for those who wished to make it, for a visit to the Green Loch, before the departure of the whole party up the gradual, easy rise to the summit of Ben Bynack, which the rear-guard reached by 11 P.M. Here Miss Archibald, Messrs Cardno, Train, and Lawson left the main party and visited A' Chòinneach, and spent about two hours at Loch Avon. In the morning they climbed

Beinn Mheadhoin, and, while the others descended by Coire Etchachan, Lawson continued over Derry Cairngorm to Glen Derry.

The main party found twilight well past by the time they reached the Barns of Bynack, and it was decided to bivouac on this site until light returned. Ample "bedroom" accommodation was to be found under the Barns and, since a glorious night sky promised that running water would certainly not be laid on in each room, the party settled down to enjoy such comfortable conditions as one could ever hope for above the 3,000-foot contour. One great miracle falls to be recorded: Mrs Hendry magically evoked not the spirit but the physical presence of bacon and eggs, enough to feed the whole party, and, kindling a new and friendlier evening star, distilled unbelievable fragrances into the night wind. After an hour's rest the party decided to split again, Mrs Hendry and E. W. Smith leaving the Barns about 1 P.M. and traversing A' Chòinneach to the Avon. They continued to the Shelter Stone and descended by Coire Etchachan. Miss Hoggarth and Miss Jackson did not stop at the Barns but carried on down the Lairig an Laoigh.

The main party left the Barns at 2.10 A.M. and remained on A' Chòinneach to see the sun rise at 4 A.M., a most glorious experience, as the pink light of dawn sank slowly down the snow-flecked slopes of Ben Macdhui, leaving the hollow of Loch Avon still full of darkness. A scramble down a steep heather-covered slope led to a ford over the Avon, whence a well-marked track soon took us to the head of the Lairig an Laoigh, which we reached at 6.10 A.M. The walk down Glen Derry showed the hills at their summer best, the low sun throwing up all the detail of the rock structure in Coire Etchachan to perfection. Groups reached Derry Lodge from 7.30 to 9 A.M., and here found that as many as wished it could be taken down to the Linn of Dee in a private car, which operated a sort of "shuttle" service, through the great kindness of the friend of the Club who drove it. The whole party assembled at Linn of Dee, where a bus waited to take members to breakfast at the Invercauld Hotel. After one of the memorable Invercauld breakfasts, a specially chartered bus took on those of the party who did not wish to stay longer in Braemar, arriving in Aberdeen about 2 P.M. The whole expedition was carried through under splendid conditions of weather, and for several guests present who had no previous experience of the higher Cairngorms it was an ideal introduction to the pleasure of all-night hill walking.—H. D. G.

COCK BRIDGE, STRATHDON—JULY 5, 1936.

Present.—Misses E. O. Alexander, L. W. Archibald, M. Daniel, E. Davidson, N. Y. Dick, M. W. Johnston, E. Rodger, H. Ross, C. H. Wisely; Messrs H. D. Griffith, J. MacHardy, R. O. Mackay, A. S.

Middleton, R. L. Mitchell, H. D. Welsh. *Guests*.—Mrs J. M. Griffiths, Misses F. R. Mitchell, C. Sheekey; Messrs M. D. Deane, J. D. Easson, R. Mitchell.

A company of twenty-one were given a cheery send-off by Mrs A. W. Hendry at 8.45 A.M. at Queen's Cross on a gloriously fine morning. The run up to Cock Bridge via Alford, Kildrummy, and Bellabeg was much enjoyed because of the delightful scenery on all sides. Here and there the bell heather spread a rich carpet, and the numerous companies of graceful birches in the great stretches of luxuriant bracken hinted at a rich autumn pageant.

The day's efforts began with the examination of the ruins of Corgarff Castle, set at the foot of Càrn Oighreag, and overlooking the confluence of the Allt a' Choilich with the Don, keeping a watch on the old military road over the Lecht to Tomintoul and the north.

Here Daniel, Rodger, Easson, MacHardy, and Middleton left for Inchrorry, via Delnadamp Lodge, and the hills on the north side of the Don. From Lagganauld, Càrn Bad a' Ghuail was climbed and a north-easterly direction was kept along the ridge, the following tops being surmounted on the way, Craig Veann, Druim na Cuaich, Tolm Buirich, Càrn Ealasaid, and Beinn a' Chruinnich. Specially fine was the view westwards to the Cairngorm group. A descent was made to the Lecht road at its highest point, 2,090 feet, and the highway followed to Allargue Hotel.

The remainder kept up the long heathery stretch of Càrn Oighreag (2,310 feet) to the accompaniment of two or three showers of fine drizzle. The short descent to the col on the other side leading to the rise of the Brown Cow Hill was rewarded by the finding of extensive patches of the true Cranberry (*Oxycoccus palustris*), whose tiny red flowers with reflexed petals dotted the surface of sphagnum. Other patches were noted elsewhere during the day. The summit cairn on the broad back of the Brown Cow (2,721 feet) called for a long halt, and enjoyment of the extensive and entrancing panorama. So far, the going was heavy on account of the yielding nature of the sphagnum underlying the heather, and the sun was very hot. Aversns, or Cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus*), was exceedingly plentiful all over and showed promise of a rich harvest of fruit. Hares were raised in large numbers. One kept so close to its form that the whole party gathered round a few feet from it, and it was not until it was almost touched that it sprang away, only to halt again a few yards off.

The view from the Brown Cow was very satisfying. Most striking was the graceful massif of Lochnagar lifting its glistening rocks above wooded foot-hills into a blue sky thronged with slowly moving white clouds. Here and there a snow patch dazzled and cloud shadows crept across the long, hot ridges. Northwards Tolm Buirich and Càrn Ealasaid slumbered in the heat and, beyond their tops, the hills of Ross peeped mistily blue. East, the winding Don, and a tumbled maze



R. L. Mitchell

"LOOK WHAT THEY'VE GIVEN ME FOR LUNCH!"

of brown hills, with blue Morven and the distant peak of Benachie overtopping all. Across the face of Culardoch to the south could be seen the old drove road from Loch Builg to the Dee, now long disused.

From the Brown Cow, a descent was made westward to Càrn Ulie and along to Meikle Geal Charn (2,633 feet), from which an impressive view was obtained of the wave-broken surface of Loch Builg. Between Meikle and Little Geal Charn the unusual spectacle of a small herd of deer leaping the 6-foot march fence from a standing take-off was witnessed. Here, too, in the deep moss hags at the head of Meoir Veannaich, a fine rich mahogany-coloured fox was disturbed. A descent on the north side of Little Geal Charn to the 2,000-foot contour led the party to the Well of Don, the first water crossed or sampled during the day. The descent to the Don was made by the Corrie of Culchavie and Càrn Leitir na Cloiche. Two miles of hot, dusty road led to Allargue Hotel, where the Secretary, W. Garden, and J. A. Parker welcomed the party.

So ended the programme of official excursions for the year. Those who had attended most, if not all, of the official outings were satisfied with what they had done and seen, and were looking forward with keenness to the programme for 1937.—H. D. W.

THE NEW YEAR MEET.

ON New Year's Day a party of nineteen set out to climb Lochnagar from the Ballochbuie. The ascent through the forest proved very delightful, but on reaching the upper limit of the trees it was soon obvious that the weather was likely to be fairly severe, as an extremely strong wind was blowing from the south-west, rising to gale force at times, and driving clouds of frozen snow across the open ground. Shortly after emerging from the upper limits of the forest, two members decided to retrace their steps, and some little time later, at about 3,000 feet, seven others decided not to go on. The remainder of the party continued the ascent, but ten only reached the summit. There the weather conditions were extremely severe, and it was impossible to see very far in the blinding drift, and without very much delay these members retraced their steps. In the meantime five other members, who had tackled the mountain from Callater, found that they were aided in their ascent by the gale, but were quite unable to face into it on attempting to make the return journey, and they too descended by the north side of the hill through the Ballochbuie. In spite of the severe weather the day's expedition was thoroughly enjoyed by every one.

Another party of six attempted to climb Ben Macdhui, four managed to struggle up to the top of the Sròn Riach, while two contented themselves by climbing into Coire Lochan Uaine. This expedition also found the weather conditions extremely severe, with drifting frozen

snow and a strong gale, and it was almost impossible to see except in the immediate neighbourhood of the party. In the lower parts of the valley it was found that the drifts were gathering, rapidly making the going extremely arduous, while near the top of the ridge it was quite obvious that the crossing of the plateau to the summit would have been a very uncomfortable and almost impossible feat.

Four other members proceeded up Glen Clunie and climbed the lesser height of Sgòr Mòr. They also met the severe weather, but bagged their peak, and had the satisfaction of knowing that they were amongst the few select who had achieved the object of their expedition.

Two other members contented themselves with a vigorous walk round by the Linn of Dee. They declared that they, of course, enjoyed themselves better than any other of the expeditions.

Three members who did not climb did excellent service in providing transport for some of the Lochnagar party.

On Saturday a party proceeded to Beinn Bhreac and had a pleasant walk over the plateau to Beinn a' Chaorruinn on firm snow but in indifferent weather. A party of seven motored to Derry Lodge and, in heavy sleet and rain, attempted to ascend Ben Macdhuì by the Sròn Riach ridge. A strong head wind, together with sodden, deep snow in the glen, added to the general discomfort, and although the snow conditions on the exposed ridge improved, progress against the gale was slow, and when the ice-glazed rocks at the top of the ridge were reached, it was generally agreed that continuance was out of the question. During the descent the weather cleared and here and there the snow-covered hills were lit by the declining sun.

On the 3rd a party of eight went to the Cairnwell, where Parker declared that the wind was too strong and that he would have to go straight back to the car. Without further explanation, Parker lead the way to Càrn Aosda. Bothwell, Drysdale, and Miss Anderson motored to the Baddoch, climbed Sòcach Mòr, proceeded to An Sòcach, and descended to the col between the latter and Beinn Iutharn Beag, returning down the glen. Hutcheon, Dyer, and Smith climbed the left-hand gully in Corrie Kander and came home over Càrn an Tuirc. Mitchell, Welsh, Misses Hay and Dick ascended Càrn na Moine by the Allt Cristie Mor, coming down on the Glen Dee side at Inverey. It was a mild day, the long heather was fairly dry, and the view of the snow-clad Cairngorms carrying considerable cloud was very fine.

Some forty-two members attended the Meet.

D. P. L. and H. D. W.

LOCHNAGAR—FEBRUARY 21, 1937.

Present.—Mrs E. J. Hendry, Mrs A. W. Garrow, Misses H. Mearns, M. Daniel, E. Davidson, W. Hay, D. L. Johnson, M. Brown, M. J. S. Lawson; Messrs F. C. Garrow, R. L. Mitchell, R. T. Medd, I. C.

Ritchie, J. E. Bothwell, W. M. Duff, D. P. Levack, E. W. Smith, J. MacHardy, R. Bain, R. H. Calvert, R. Reid, A. Howie, W. Lawson, A. S. Middleton, H. D. Welsh. *Guests*.—Messrs P. O. Leggat, W. S. Veitch, G. Lorimer, G. Dinnie.

The first snow-climbing excursion on Lochnagar for 1937 took place on Sunday, February 21, when a company of twenty-nine members and guests enjoyed a successful expedition. Leaving Aberdeen at 8 A.M. in ideal weather, two buses conveyed the party up Glen Muick in the hope that snow conditions would permit the conveyances reaching Spittal of Muick. Linn of Muick Cottage, just below the Falls, was the highest point that could be reached with safety, and here the party crossed the river by means of the foot-bridge below the house, and in hot sunshine trudged up the 3 miles of snow-covered road to Allt-na-giubhsaich in intermittent light snow showers. All round, the hills were heavily covered, sparkingly beautiful against a bright blue sky. Beyond the plantation at Allt-na-giubhsaich the snow was deep, and a strong westerly wind swept clouds of fine, dry powdery snow off the surface. The extensive cornices along the course of the Allt-na-giubhsaich Burn were extraordinarily fine, lit up as they were by the sun shining through the smoke of the wind-blown snow. From the col below the Fox's Well the ascent was made right into the wind, to a great extent on a hard icy surface, interrupted now and again by stretches of powdery drifts into which one sank deeply. Most of the time little of the party could be made out owing to the snow-cloud enveloping them. Below the Well, which was invisible, five of the party retraced their steps, and the remainder, backs to the stiff gale, consumed a cold lunch on the crest just below the col between Meikle Pap and Cuidhe Crom. The view from this point across the smoking slopes, across to Allt-na-giubhsaich and beyond, was very beautiful, the deeply covered hill masses brilliantly sunlit and set against a blue sky flecked lightly with delicate clouds.

The majority of the party under Dr Levack laboriously climbed the steep icy slope of the Ladder to the crest, where, curiously enough, it was milder and less wind-swept. The main corrie was filled by a cloud of fine snow blown off the summit plateau, and nothing was to be seen below. The going was almost entirely over a hard surface, but thick wind-carried snow powder obscured the view in all directions. In due course the summit rocks on Cac Càrn Beag were reached, and these were found to be beautifully patterned by icicles, and icy flowers, plumes, and feathers. The enormous cornices on the cliff edge were revealed from time to time, and great care had to be exercised.

The rest of the party who did not ascend to the summit descended a little into the main corrie and were rewarded by an impressive view of the ice-covered loch, with the heavily plastered cliffs soaring up into the snow-cloud. They climbed up Meikle Pap, from the summit of which, in a stiff gale, an extensive view was obtained.

The descent to Allt-na-giubhsaich was uneventful, the speed being increased by glissades down the Ladder.

Ballater was reached about 6.45 P.M., and a substantial tea, with the traditional bacon and eggs, consumed in the delightfully warm and homely dining-room of the Loirston Hotel. The run to Aberdeen was made in good time, the arrival there being about 10 P.M.—H. D. W.

LOCHNAGAR—MARCH 7, 1937.

Present.—Misses L. M. Murray, M. Daniel, E. Rodger, W. Hay, C. H. Wisely, E. J. Christie, M. Hoggarth; Messrs W. Malcolm, E. W. Smith, R. Reid, R. L. Mitchell, W. M. Duff, H. D. Welsh.
Guest.—P. Johnston.

The second winter excursion to Lochnagar took place in exceptionally good weather conditions. The party departed from Queen's Cross soon after 8 A.M. to a chorus of blackbirds and thrushes, under a lightly clouded blue sky and, even at that hour, warm sunshine. Beyond Banchory the landscape was heavily snow-covered, and beyond Ballater, where the snow was very deep, the road was just passable for a single line of traffic, the cuttings in the drifts emphasising the severity of the conditions. Through the courtesy of H.M. the King, permission had been given the Club to go through the Royal Forest. The bus was left at the Danzig Shiel Bridge, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles below Braemar. Here the Ballochbuie Forest was entered, and the heavily snow-laden firs presented a wonderful spectacle. Deer were down in great numbers round the Lodge. The going through the trees, once the snow-ploughed road was left, was very heavy indeed, owing to the dry powdery nature of the snow, and for practically the whole way to the upper tree-line at about 1,800 feet, the party ploughed through snow which was seldom below the knees and was in places waist-deep. The surface was crisp, and sparkled and scintillated in the strong sunshine; there was no breeze. Above the tree-line the snow hardened, and in places there was hard ice, polished by wind action. Progress had been extremely slow, and it was seen that there was no time to attempt the summit of Lochnagar. Not to be denied a summit, an ascent was made of Cnapan Nathraichean (2,703 feet)—or Càrn Fiaclan on the older maps—on the north side of the Blacksheil Burn. Here there was a slight icy breeze, and a halt was called at the ice-flower covered rocks. The snow-covered panorama presented was astonishingly extensive and clear. In particular the north and north-west view was one to be long remembered. Every one of the Cairngorm group was sharply defined, so much so that the shadows cast by the enormous cornices were clearly visible. From Morven in the east to Beinn a' Ghlo in the west, the whole multitude of mountains and hills was a sight seldom seen at this time. Of Lochnagar itself little was to be seen on account of cloud and snow showers. The northern

corrie and the Stuic buttress occasionally showed themselves. The descent was made by way of the upward track, and Braemar was reached about 6 P.M.—H. D. W.

LOCHNAGAR—MARCH 21, 1937.

Present.—Misses W. Hay, L. M. Murray, E. L. Davidson, D. L. Johnson; Messrs R. L. Mitchell, R. Bain, R. P. Yunnice, E. W. Smith, N. Dyer, R. H. Calvert, H. D. Welsh. *Guests.*—Miss N. Norrie; Messrs I. K. M. Esslemont, H. T. Martin, E. B. Davies.

Good weather again favoured the third excursion to Lochnagar, which was still under a very heavy snow covering. The route was by Danzig Shiel and the Ballochbuie Forest, but a new line of ascent was taken. The path to the Falls of Garbh Allt was followed, and the stream crossed by the bridge at the falls. A long slant through the forest was made to the south-east high up above the Allt Lochan nan Eun, the upper tree limit being reached near the junction of this stream and the Blacksheil Burn. Up to this point the snow was compacted to a great extent under a good icy crust, so that the going was much easier and more rapid than on the previous excursion. The heavier members of the party sank knee-deep in places. The gully of the Blacksheil was completely snow-filled, except at one point of about 30 yards. The steep slope of Meall an Tionail had to be negotiated carefully owing to the hard, icy nature of the snow, and ice-axes came into operation frequently. The boulders on the upper slopes were almost completely covered, and the final ascent of the north-west buttress, leading to the culminating rocks of Lochnagar, called for care. The whole way up from the upper tree limit was ideal for climbing owing to the crisp, icy nature of the deep snow. The Indicator was reached just four hours after the party had left the bus. The summit rocks and Indicator, buried under a great mass of ice-flowers and plumes, presented a remarkable spectacle. The view was wide and distant, but storm cloud and heavy snow showers blotted out the Cairngorm giants. The Lochnagar corrie precipices were magnificently beautiful and crowned with heavy cornices. The northern corrie was drifted up with wreaths of great depth, and the Stuic Buttress, heavily corniced, was an outstanding object. Mist came out of the north soon after the party gathered at the summit, and a blizzard swept over. Glissading added greatly to the rapidity of the descent, which was made into the Blacksheil Corrie where the peat hags were levelled over with crisp snow. The stream was crossed at the same point as on the ascent, and the upward track followed through the forest to the Falls of Garbh Allt. The bus was reached again after an absence of six and a half hours. Arrival at Aberdeen at 9 P.M. closed what was one of the most enjoyable and successful visits to Lochnagar during the winter season.—H. D. W.

THE EASTER MEET, GLENCOE, 1937.

No information regarding the Easter Meet at Ballachulish has so far reached me, although an effort on my part to stir up lethargic contributors produced the reply that the weather was wonderful! In Aberdeenshire the roads were snow-bound and conditions Arctic, so that the few who did attend may be reckoned fortunate. Apparently, however, the remarkable weather enjoyed reduced those attending to such a state of prostration that no report of their activities, if any, is available for the *Journal*.

Robert, the devil who sits by my elbow when contributors are more difficult than usual, insists that information of the party's activities is not really necessary to the writing of a note on the Easter Meet. Deaf to my denial, he continues that anyone gifted with a little imagination and a map of the district could write up a satisfactory account of the affair, particularly as the weather conditions were those prevailing on the Ordnance Map. I take it that what Robert means is that members interested to know what may have been done at the Meet should consult the 1-inch Ordnance Map, Sheet (Scotland) 54.

While shifting the responsibility for this beggarly account of empty sentences to the shoulders of the elusive Robert, the imp reminds me that a number of members are displeased with the average Meet report, on the grounds that "the jungle of names—mountains and men—is as uninteresting as the procession of a's and b's in a binomial expansion." Craftily he urges me to present this account of the Easter Meet as specially written for their benefit, and draws my attention to the at once obvious fact that it contains no names, neither of mountains nor of men (although Robert is, apparently, of the male persuasion!). They should skip the other Meet reports, therefore, these having been written for the less critical, and possibly larger, section of our community. They, at least, will appreciate that this policy of omitting all names is the first step towards the abolition of the *Journal* and the editorial demise. (I refuse to divulge Robert's opinion upon that!)

The poor attendance at the Meet may have been largely the result of road and weather conditions, but the new venture in running a Spring Holiday Meet may also have played a part. And it will be well to bear in mind, for future occasions, that this was the second consecutive Easter at Glencoe.—W. A. E.

SPRING HOLIDAY MEET—APRIL 30 TO MAY 4, 1937.

THIS meet, held at Braemar, was a new departure in the annals of the Club, and had been arranged specially in place of the one-day excursion as hitherto. The attendance was somewhat disappointing, but what was lacking in numbers was counterbalanced by enthusiasm. The

weather was ideal, conditions underfoot were excellent, and these, coupled with the magnificence of the snow-covered mountains, provided one of the most successful and enjoyable meets in the records of the Club.

Saturday saw Messrs Carle, Mitchell, Parker, and Welsh on Càrn a' Mhaim and Ben Macdhui, making the ascent by Luibeg. The descent was made by Coire Etchachan and Glen Derry, with a side-step to Coire Sputan Dearg. Snow was extensive both as regards area and depth and in excellent condition; weather conditions were perfect and the panoramas were magnificently impressive. The streams could only be crossed by snow bridges, so swollen were they, and the wreck of the upper Derry foot-bridge compelled the party to plough their way through long heather among peaty knolls in the fir forest to Derry Lodge. However, the spectacle of the Derry Burn in turbulent spate compensated for any discomfort experienced.

The President and Mrs Levack had arrived during the afternoon, as had also Misses E. Davidson, L. Murray, N. Norrie, E. Rodger, and Mr R. H. Calvert, and were at dinner when the climbers returned.

Sunday was another glorious day. H. D. Welsh returned to Càrn a' Mhaim and Ben Macdhui with Misses Murray and Rodger and Mr Calvert, who were making their first ascent of these two mountains. As a point from which to obtain an impressive view of the Cairngorms, Càrn a' Mhaim is hard to beat, and we would urge members to make the ascent of this seldom visited mountain. Perched as one is on the edge of the deep ditch of Glen Dee and looking across to the steeply rising faces of Beinn Bhrotain, The Devil's Point, Cairn Toul, and Braeriach, one obtains a peculiar sense of height and depth seldom realised elsewhere in the group. Not only is the ridge of Càrn a' Mhaim a unique viewpoint, it is the only one of its kind in the Cairngorms, and though nowhere difficult, is narrow enough to be exhilarating.

Messrs Levack, Parker, Mitchell, and Carle, with Misses Norrie and Davidson, set out for Glas Maol.

Leaving the cars at the summit, the party divided. Four members climbed Meall Odhar (3,019 feet) and Glas Maol (3,502 feet) by the usual route up the boundary fence. There was very little snow, and the patches remaining were wet and rapidly melting away. A moderate amount of snow still remained about the top of the shallow corrie on the north-west side of Glas Maol, but the cornice had broken away in most places. What remained gave an indication of the extraordinary amount of snow which must have been present during the height of winter. From the summit plateau, which was clear of snow, the party went eastwards over the mountain, and gained the track of the Monega Pass as it runs south from the back of the Cairn of Claise. The track runs a little east behind Glas Maol, and then again swings south on the western shoulder of Monega Hill (2,917 feet). Leaving the track, the party made for the cairn of Monega Hill, from which a magnificent view can be got of the Glen Isla, Caenlochan Glen, and Canness Glen.

Returning from this point, instead of ascending Glas Maol, a wide detour was made, traversing the back of the mountain towards the south-west, and the party came out on the ridge south of Glas Maol, making for Creag Leacach (3,238 feet). Here one member decided to break off, and he returned by a fairly direct route to the cars. The other three members continued the traverse of the ridge and finished on the summit of Carn Ait (2,828 feet) before making the very steep descent to the road, three-quarters of a mile below the Devil's Elbow. This last short bit of road proved very trying in the heat and with the constant stream of cars passing up and down.

Two other members climbed the Cairnwell (3,059 feet) by a more or less direct route from the road. From there they made a circle towards the west and north round by Loch Vrotachan and so back to the Cairnwell road, walking in towards Braemar until they were overtaken by the cars with the rest of the party.

Monday broke misty but cleared up, with the promise of another good day. Parker did a solitary climb of four tops lying between Glen Dee and Glen Lui to the south of Luibeg—Sgòr Mòr (2,666 feet), Càrn Mor (2,057 feet), Sgòr Dubh (2,429 feet), and Càrn an'lc Duibhe (2,062 feet). The remainder, joined by J. S. Cardno, went through the Ballochbuie Forest by way of the Falls of Garbh Allt to the Blacksheil Burn, which was crossed about 2,250 feet by a snow bridge. Meall an Tionail was rounded on the west side, and here Cardno, Mitchell, Calvert, and Miss Murray broke off for the Stuic Buttress. The remainder, E. Rodger, E. Davidson, Carle, and Welsh, kept on to the summit of Cac Càrn Beag. All agreed to meet on the summit, but owing to the intense cold the second party found half an hour's wait long enough and descended to the Garbh Allt. The Stuic party were prevented from completing the ascent to the crest by their inexperience and general conditions and returned in their tracks without incident. The whole party gathered at the Garbh Allt at 4.30 and returned to Braemar.

Not the least enjoyable feature of the meet was the social aspect. These few days together enabled members to get to know one another and interchange ideas and experiences. The suggested Club hut was built over and over again, furnished and provisioned, and various sites suggested, discussed, and discarded! The subscription list, compiled by the Honorary Librarian, was a marvel of engineering and ingenuity, and one wished it were true!—H. D. W.

CARNFERG—MAY 22, 1937.

Members.—Misses E. L. Davidson, F. R. Mitchell, M. D. Hoggarth, R. K. Jackson, E. J. Christie, E. Rodger, M. C. Donaldson, A. M. Donaldson, M. Johnstone, W. Hay, C. H. Wisely; Mrs J. M. Griffith;

Messrs W. Mackay, R. H. Calvert, A. W. Carle, R. Mitchell, M. Smith, H. D. Griffith, T. Train, H. D. Welsh. *Guests*.—Misses A. Sinclair, J. Thomson, M. D. F. Scatterty.

A party of twenty-three journeyed to Aboyne in brilliant sunshine, crossed the river by the suspension bridge, and took the road to the Fungle on the west side of Birsemore Hill. The fir woods, through which the path wound, were beautiful in the strong sunlight, and particular notice was taken of the abundance of lavender wood sorrel among the heather. Aloft, the breeze came through the tree-tops like the roar of distant surf. At Rest and be Thankful, a short halt was called to enjoy the view through the trees towards Aboyne. Soon the woods were left behind and a rough track followed through the heather on the open hill slope. The ascent to the summit of Carnferg (1,724 feet) over a gradual rise on short heather did not take long, but the view was disappointing owing to haze, though Morven, Lochnagar, and other hills carrying considerable snow could just be made out. A small herd of deer on the sky-line of Duchery Beg to the west added to the interest. As several members had to return to town by train leaving Aboyne soon after 8 P.M., instead of dropping down to Glencat and so to Ballogie and Marywell by the Burn of Cattie, or by Balfour to Birse, a line by way of the gathering ground of the Burn of Birse was followed. A short scramble among heathery moraines at the head of the burn took the party out on a road through the fir wood round Brackloch Craig, and so down to the road from Birse to Aboyne. A further walk of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles completed the excursion, which occupied about four and a half hours.—H. D. W.

WHITE BRIDGE EXCURSION—MAY 30, 1937.

Members.—Mrs E. J. Hendry, Mrs J. Angus, Misses M. Scatterty, F. R. Mitchell, E. Rodger, L. Murray, E. Davidson, W. Hay, E. J. Christie, E. Christie, C. H. Wisely, R. K. Jackson, N. D. Milne, M. W. Johnston, M. D. Hoggarth, M. Daniel, and D. L. Johnson; Messrs R. Mitchell, R. O. Mackay, A. S. Middleton, W. Malcolm, R. L. Mitchell, J. S. Cardno, E. W. Smith, H. D. Griffith, J. Angus, H. D. Welsh. *Guests*.—Misses M. Lawson, D. C. I. Wood, J. I. Stuart, M. Knox, M. Harper; Messrs I. K. M. Esslemont, G. Lorimer, J. C. Leask, H. T. Martin.

By hired and private cars and push-bike, the company gathered at the White Bridge shortly before 10 o'clock. The conditions were all that could be desired—bright sunshine, a blue sky with fleets of racing clouds casting shadows on the brilliantly lit snow-patched masses, and dry ground underfoot. The programme was a heavy one—Càrn Cloich-mhuilinn, Beinn Bhrotain, Monadh Mòr, Cairn Toul, and Devil's Point—and very few of the company had previous knowledge of the

ground. One contingent kept to the west side of the Dee and the other section, following the Lairig path, crossed the river at a point just under a minor top of Càrn Cloich-mhuilinn. The well-known scarcity of places where the Dee can be crossed dry-shod was amply demonstrated, and some of the male members adopted the role of St Christopher in getting several of the ladies across. The party soon divided, and those with a good turn of speed, sound wind, and a reluctance to halt long at any point made rapid headway, and it was only now and again that the rest could make them out in the far distance.

Càrn Cloich-mhuilinn presented no difficulty, but it was decidedly cold on top, in spite of the brilliant sun: the ascent to Beinn Bhrotain was relieved by a climb up a long, steep staircase of snow, and it was a surprise to walk across the extensive grassy expanse below the summit, an area which perhaps explains the suggested meaning of the name—"the hill of the fattening"—indicating that when cattle were pastured on it in the old days they fed well. The short descent to the col at the foot of Monadh Mòr was interesting on account of the terraced formation of the weathered rocks and boulders. The ascent to Monadh Mòr proved less steep than it appeared, and the long back of the hill, rocky and stony, was relieved by a lengthy cornice of snow which eased the going considerably. Passing Loch nan Stuirteag, a long, steep, stony ascent led to Cairn Toul and thence round the crest of the Soldier's Corrie to the steeply sided Devil's Point.

It was only those blessed with speed and cursed with a decided aversion to halts who completed the round. The Tigers descended to Corrou and returned by the Lairig path. The remainder, who preferred to climb slowly and comfortably, descended into Glen Geusachan by the stream from Loch nan Stuirteag, a considerable portion of which ran through a striking snow tunnel. Glen Geusachan, especially at its upper end, is not exactly a place where one can hurry, on account of the maze of moraines and peat hags with buried fir roots and stumps. Apart from that, the general appearance of the glen has features of immense interest, especially the great rock faces that frown down from Beinn Bhrotain and Devil's Point on either hand, and invites one to linger. Particularly awe-inspiring was the havoc wrought on Beinn Bhrotain two years ago by a cloud-burst. The enormous channels gouged out of the face, and the acres of gravel and boulders spread out fanwise in the Glen floor, demonstrated in no uncertain manner the power of uncontrolled water.

The visibility during the whole day was remarkably good; only in the south-west was there any marring of the horizon. It would be difficult to enumerate what was most striking, but the vista from Càrn Cloich-mhuilinn up Glen Dee was a revelation; the glimpses down into Glen Geusachan between its high walls and the sweeping greenness of Glen Eidart and Glen Feshie were very beautiful. The western aspect of Devil's Point and Cairn Toul, so different from the appearance



ST CHRISTOPHER

On Tuesday fresh snow prevented an attempt on the Galenstock, so the day was spent in travelling down the Rhone valley, in perfect weather, to Martigny, and then over the Forclaz Col (4,950 feet) to Chamonix.

The latter pass, although not high, is not recommended for cars with a long wheel base. The road is only wide enough for one-way traffic, and the hairpin bends are very sharp.

On Wednesday afternoon Dyer, Hutcheon, and Smith, with a guide, ascended by cable rail to the hotel at the glacier station on the Aig du Midi and made an attempt on Mont Blanc (15,771 feet) on Thursday. Unfortunately, a cold wind on the summit ridge prevented the summit being reached.

On Friday a start was made for home down the Chamonix valley via Sallanches and Geneva, and the night spent at Orleans.

The next night Dieppe was reached, and on Sunday the crossing made from Boulogne to Folkestone, and on to Cambridge for the night.

Aberdeen was reached on Monday night.—W. M.

THE INDOOR MEETS.

ON Tuesday, January 26, 1937, Mr H. D. Welsh gave a most interesting talk and showed a very large number of lantern slides, taken over a period of many years and covering a wide area of mountains, including an expedition to Skye.

Mr Welsh's pictures were exceedingly good, and his very happy way of describing scenes and incidents without reference to notes appealed to every one in his audience, who accorded him a very hearty vote of thanks at the conclusion of his discourse.

The paper read by the President on February 22 is reproduced almost verbatim elsewhere in the *Journal*. The large and varied assortment of maps and diagrams to which Dr Levack made frequent reference it is not possible to reproduce here. Nor, of course, the little asides and counters by argumentative members of the audience. An instructive and enjoyable evening.

J. A. Parker took third trick at the wheel, and on Tuesday, March 23, circumnavigated Ireland—on the high level, of course. After a tricky bit of route finding among the lantern slides, Ireland was put precisely in its place, and Parker once again demonstrated his prodigious memory for topographical detail and for mountain heights. The slides presented were very carefully chosen to show the hills from different angles and frequently to include the point from which succeeding pictures were taken. The audience was duly appreciative of the very complete description thus presented.—D. P. L. and W. A. E.

NOTES.

THE late appearance of the *Journal* is due largely to the late submission of material ; there were other reasons of less moment and, in so far as the Editor was responsible, he offers his apologies. The annual appeal for contributions *at an early date* is reprinted in the hope that, eventually, someone may notice it.

In the present issue we are indebted to "Lui Beg" for his article, "A Crowded Day in the Cairngorms," and to Mr A. S. Burns for three tail-pieces; the other sketches are by our member, Mr T. Train.

Contributions for the next number should be submitted at the earliest moment, and not later than April 30, 1938. It is convenient, if not almost essential, to have the *Journal* published before the commencement of the holiday season.

The Librarian reports the following additions to the Library :—

"The Northern Highlands, S.M.C. Guide Book," by W. N. Ling and J. R. Corbett. 1936.

"The Highlands of Scotland," by H. Quigley and R. M. Adam. 1936.

"Scotland's Heritage of Beauty as affected by the Water Power Schemes." Issued by the Association for the Preservation of Rural Scotland. 1936.

"Record of Proceedings of Presentation of Portrait to Dr Henry Alexander." 1936.

"Scottish Youth Hostels Association Handbook," 1937.
The American Alpine Club Journal. 1936.

Particulars of other additions will be found in the Reviews pages.

LANTERN SLIDE COLLECTION.

AT a meeting of the Committee held on February 24, 1937, it was decided, on the motion of Mr Hugh D. Welsh, to form a collection of lantern slides.

Mr Welsh has given about 30 slides to start the collection, and Mr Hugh Dugan has contributed one slide of historical interest. It is hoped that other members will present slides. While the collection will deal specially with the Cairngorms, views of mountaineering interest in other parts of Scotland and elsewhere will be welcome. Should a satisfactory number of slides be received, arrangements will be made later as to conditions on which they will be lent to intending lecturers.

All communications regarding lantern slides should be sent to Mr J. A. Parker, 76 Rubislaw Den North, Aberdeen, who has kindly agreed to act as Custodian of Slides. Contributions of slides may be sent to him at the above address, or left at the Club Library, 18 Golden Square.

REVIEWS.

The Alpine Journal, No. 253 (November 1936).

Mount Everest still remains unconquered. The 1936 expedition was repulsed by the very worst weather, and it says a great deal for the able leadership of Mr Hugh Rutledge and the tried climbers who took part in the venture with him, that the enterprise was carried through without accident. Mr Rutledge opens the *Journal* with a most interesting paper, and it gives us more information to add to our somewhat scanty fund of knowledge relating to high altitude climbing.

Mr Claud Schuster, in his undulating discourse on whether the methods and climbs of the ultra-modern school of mountaineering are justifiable, gives us much food for thought. His outlook on the subject, even although he can scarcely be said to have arrived at any definite conclusions, is very wide and unbiased. With a wealth of apt quotation, his essay, "A May Fox and March Hares," presents the two sides of a fascinating question, and having done so, he leaves the reader to decide the answer for himself. If, however, one browses through this article in conjunction with the notes on "Accidents in 1936," one is almost certain to be struck with the anti-German attitude which runs through the number, erupting volcanic-like at various points. Surely the description of the disaster on the Eigerwand is one of the most terrible indictments ever penned in mountain literature, and its awfulness as a criticism depends largely on its obvious truth. "The Eiger had struck down three assailants and destroyed the fourth through cold, hunger, and exhaustion . . . desperadoes who, driven forward recklessly by irresponsible desire for notoriety, had fought to place in the temple of fame of their false gods the mightiest of Alpine faces. . . ." One is reminded of a Shakespearean tragedy.

Although this lashing criticism of the technique employed in modern mountaineering struck me as the outstanding character of this number, there is also a big selection of orthodox, well-written, and beautifully illustrated articles. Descriptions of mountains and countries ranging from Iceland to New Zealand and embracing both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. A. C. Roberts, in presenting his "Reminiscences of La Meije," produces a most readable essay. I like his story of the man who, having fallen into a crevasse, inquired of a member of the rescue party lowered down to him how many guides had come and what payment they expected. On hearing the answer, he produced another cigar, settled himself down and explained that he was quite happy where he was.

There is little that is dull in the pages of *The Alpine Journal*. Although the places described are often remote and unknown to the

average reader, still, by good writing, they are made familiar, and the action made to take place once more. When one picks up this Journal one expects good things, and so far as this number is concerned, they are provided.—G. R. S.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, No. 122 (November 1936); No. 123 (April 1937).

In No. 122 the second contribution on "Scottish Mountaineering and its Relation to Mountaineering Abroad" is made by G. G. Macphee, who deals more particularly with snow and ice conditions. "The Spell of Ben Lui" recalls the Tacitean dictum, *Ignotum pro magnifico est*. From being a votary, the writer graduates towards a more familiar attitude to this fine mountain, doubtful of the wisdom of tearing aside the veil which so often conceals the high tops from mortal eyes. Rock climbers will be attracted to John MacLennan's article on Beinn Mhor, South Uist, and to a racy account of a new climb on the Crowberry Wall, entitled "Agag's Groove," by A. C. D. Small. The activities of S.M.C. Abroad is possibly the most enjoyable section of a less interesting number than usual. The spirit of the J.M.C.S., which celebrated its tenth birthday at the New Year Meet, 1936, is reflected in the claim of a member to have started the J.M.C.S. (Pekin Branch), climbing in Upper Mongolia at week-ends!

Pride of place is given in No. 123 to the second half of "Benighted on the Moor of Rannoch," a lengthy but readable account of a chapter of accidents during a passage of that dreary waste of bog and loch. Geo. F. Todd concludes his description of the "North-west Renfrewshire Hills," the first part of which appeared in the previous number. If there is little to attract the climber, here is a happy running ground for skiers—if and when! In "Some Contrasts" G. A. Solly discourses empirically on Nights Out, Thunderstorms, and Food and Equipment Reserves. J. Gall Inglis has now reached 1882 in his charming series of retrospects, "Days that are Past," while the Editor has many wise things to say in "Initiative in Climbing." The considerable list of new climbs (including Eagle's Buttress, Lochnagar) gives evidence of the activity of the Club in this field. The photographs are good. Special mention must be made of B. H. Humble's "Sunset from A' Chioch," illustrative of his article, "High Coolin Dawn."—A. W. C.

The Rucksack Club Journal, Vol. VIII., No. 3, 1937.

This is a *Journal* which every one will enjoy reading. It has a style almost unique in climbing Journals, derived chiefly from the literary ability of its contributors and from the delightful vein of humour which comes to the surface at frequent intervals throughout the book. Quite different from the heavy-footed kind (*vide* G. W. Young—"the iron has

entered into his sole."—ED.) which so often clumps laboriously through a mountaineering periodical, the *Rucksack* brand sparkles and refreshes with its light but sure touch, and leads the reader irresistibly forward from one good thing to another. Not that the subject is treated flippantly; there are several admirable accounts of climbs, such as "Three Weeks in Lhonak" and "With the Bavarians," where full justice is done to accurate description.

The Rucksack Journal differs from, and to our mind improves upon, most other climbing Journals in that its appeal is to all classes of climbers and not merely to those enthusiasts whose lives are devoted to finding and conquering new spheres. The "Aiguille de Grépon" is written in such a graphic and intimate way that it could be read with pleasure by anyone, whether interested in climbing or not. "Of Bogs, Swamps and Quagmires" is a whimsical and humorous investigation of the lethal qualities of British bogs.

The *Journal* contains a warm and moving tribute to the memory of the late J. H. Doughty, who edited the *Journal* for eight years and whose genial personality did much to influence the tone of the present *Journal*. Long may it continue!—J. S. C.

The Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, Nos. 30 and 31 (Lakeland Number).

This *Journal*, which covers the years 1936 and 1937, has been devoted entirely to Lakeland subjects to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the first ascent of the Napes Needle. The first article, "The Jubilee Ascent of the Needle," describes how about three hundred members of the Club gathered to see W. P. Haskett-Smith repeat his feat of fifty years ago. The hero of this remarkable achievement himself contributes an interesting article, "Half a Century on the Fells," which is packed with reminiscences of first ascents and witty comments on climbing friends.

Many of the articles go back a long way in the history of climbing, and the authors include such veterans as C. F. Holland, H. M. Kelly, and A. P. Abraham. Kelly and J. H. Doughty are jointly responsible for a very comprehensive but compact history of Lakeland climbing, which shows how the history of British climbing is really summarised in the history of the Lake District climbers.

Although the Lakeland number lacks the variety of subject-matter, to which we have become accustomed in climbing Journals, it certainly gives varied information about the Lake District in very readable form. Besides the historical features already mentioned, there are articles on "Lakeland Bird Life," by Bentley Beetham, "The Fell Flora," by Gertrude Bell, and on "The Lake District Geology," by E. B. Johnston.

The photographs, sixty in number, are all good, and two or three indeed excellent.—J. S. C.

The Moray Mountaineering Club Journal, Vol. I., No. 2.

This number reflects abounding vitality and outstrips No. 1, particularly in the photographs. We note that qualifications for membership was an item on the agenda at the A.G.M. and have the impression that an essential prerequisite is to be imbued with that spirit of enthusiasm which so patently permeates the Club.

We remember John Ewen in his student days and read with interest a posthumous unfinished article from his pen, "March Climbing on Beinn Tarsuinn." He was the contemplative climber. "After the solitude of the mountain day," he wrote, "the sing-song round the communal teapot is as much an anti-climax as the bridge and tittle-tattle of the Highland hotel." William Marshall deals comprehensively with "Scottish Hill Mammals from Deer, Red and Roe, to the Shrew and the rare Pine Marten." Other articles are concerned with the "Tower Ridge," "Ben Nevis," "Photography on the High Hills" ("I fear," writes the contributor of this article, "a large percentage of camera users release the shutter and expect the camera to perform the brain work"), "Hills and the Poets," and "An Ascent of the Aladdin Buttress of Cairngorm," which should attract members. The Club was fortunate in having N. E. Odell as its guest, and a small party had the enviable experience of a day on Braeriach with him in February. Among their abiding impressions was "the care he exercised all the time." Verses there are both serious and gay. R. F. Stobart's "The Moray Mountaineer" and E. F.'s "Soliloquy" are in the true G. W. Young tradition. One question. Is An Teallach (of which there is a fine panorama in this number) better known in print as The Challichs? We do not like to see the Gaelic names of mountains anglicised.

The Grampian Club Journal, Vol. I., No. 1.

It gives me much pleasure to welcome this volume, the first effort of the Grampian Club and the latest addition of its kind to the mountaineering literature of Scotland. It breathes the very atmosphere of the Highlands, and to anyone who for a variety of reasons finds that access to the hills is becoming more difficult, it brings them many leagues nearer. After reading this *Journal* I feel that I have been out on the high hills for an hour or two and have kept company with kindred spirits. I cannot, however, say much in praise of the illustrations. In general, they neither show a high standard of art nor are they well reproduced. Further, the horizontal pictures are in my opinion bound into the book the wrong way round.

In "Early Club Memories," by C. Smith, and in J. F. Chapman's "The Home Glens," we are introduced to a novel treatment of the recounting of Club outings and meets. How refreshing it is to pick up this *Journal* and find that a third of it is not devoted to lists of unknown persons who, by the grace of Providence, defiled certain mountains by their presence on certain dates. The first of the above articles took

me back to the days when it was a discovery to find how comfortable rucksacks were and that "haversacks were a bother." What pitying self-contempt, mingled with a touch of sadness that it is a thing of the past, is found in the description—"a miscellaneous collection of caps, hats, walking-sticks, and raincoats completed our outfit." E. Maxwell and T. P. Winton open up the rock-climbing possibilities of Glen Clova. I look forward to a visit and to further lucid "guide book" work from their pens in the future. An essay on "Sikkim," by G. A. R. Spence, starts well, but the writer commits the error of finishing on an unnecessary anti-climax. "Aonach Dubh," by A. A. B. Marten, is made of the stuff of which mountain essays should be made. "In the intervening months imagination had transformed that spectacle of drifting mist puffs and soaring rocks to a mere playground for amateur pioneers. Reality quickly destroyed these fancies." To the initiated, how much is conveyed by these brief sentences! Besides being a real adventure story, this article points a moral to the aspiring rock climber. Its encouragement is: Go and try; don't wait for some one to show you the way. Try an easy way first.

I could, however, use up space indefinitely on this production—it is full of good things. It has set the editor and future editors a standard.

G. R. S

The Northern Highlands: Scottish Mountaineering Club Guide, by W. N. Ling and J. Rooke Corbett.

This revised edition replaces the 1932 Guide to the mountains north of the Dingwall-Skye railway. To the original has been added a chapter on the geology of the district, a note on Morven, and some remarks on rock climbs in the Torridon group and elsewhere. And the chapter on the Fannichs has been rewritten.

The plates are, for the most part, good; Lamond Howie's "An Teallach," A. E. Robertson's "Beinn Eighe," and Hugh Gardner's "Suilven" remarkably good. But the tones in several cases are so dull and uninteresting that few would be attracted to the hills by these representations alone. The double image of A'Mhaighdean gives most offence, but there are one or two others to mar a good collection. The more popular and accessible hills are well illustrated, but readers would have appreciated better views of the lesser-known peaks.

Indeed, taking everything into consideration, there does not seem to have been a great deal of justification for this revision. While a number of errors have been rectified, the new matter included is inconsiderable. Some use might have been made of Mr Wilding's note in *The Rucksack Club Journal*, Vol. VIII., No. 2, pp. 208-209, on Liathach, and of his pointed comment on the Fasarinen pinnacles route, "I wondered how many ascents had been made since the first one."

Naturally, the present guide compares rather unfavourably with the

recent revision of Ben Nevis, as it would with a revision, say, of Skye, where again much valuable new matter is available. Still, readers in search of new peaks to conquer will find here adequate hunting ground.

W. A. E.

In addition to the above, we acknowledge with thanks receipt of:—

“A Short Guide to the Slovene Alps (Jugo-Slavia),” by F. S. Copeland and M. Debelokova. (127 pp., 6 in. by 3 in. Price, 2s. 6d. Kleinmayr and Bamberg, Ljubiana. 1936.)

The American Alpine Journal, Vol. III, 1937, No. 1.

The Mountaineering Journal, March-May 1937.

The Scottish Ski Club Journal, 1936.

Cambridge Mountaineering, 1936.

The Scottish Geographical Magazine, Vol. 53, Nos. 1-3.

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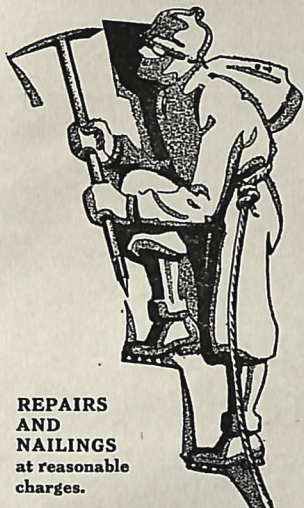
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