

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

was held in the Café, Aberdeen, on 28th February—
OUR FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING Mr. Alexander Copland, ex-Chairman, presiding. The Treasurer's statement showed a balance at the credit of the Club of £37 2s. 2d. Office-bearers for 1893-94 were elected as follows:—*President*, The Right Hon.

James Bryce, D.C.L., M.P.; *Vice-Presidents*, Alexander Cruickshank, LL.D., and Rev. Robert Lippe; *Chairman*, Rev. Professor George Cameron, D.D.; *Secretary*, Alex. Inkson M'Connachie; *Treasurer*, T. R. Gillies; *Committee*—Robert Anderson, Alexander Copland, Robert Harvey, W. J. Jamieson, Charles M'Hardy, Alexander Macphail, John M'Gregor, William Porter, John Roy, LL.D., Charles Ruxton, Rev. A. M. Scott, and Rev. Robert Semple.

The following excursions were fixed for the current season:—Spring—Hill of Fare and Barmekin; Summer—(1) Beinn a' Ghlo and (2) the Benchinnans; Autumn—Bennachie.

The Committee's Report suggested the publication of a Club Journal, a matter which was referred back with powers. The Committee thereafter resolved on a Journal, and the Secretary was appointed Editor. It will be issued, meantime, twice a year—on 1st July and 1st January.

Mr. Charles Ruxton, the retiring Chairman, who wrote apologising for his absence, was thanked for his services during the past two years.

The following gentlemen have been admitted members since the annual meeting:—James C. Barnett, Robert Aitken, G. M. F. Foggo, W. Milne Gibson, William Anderson, Harry A. Holmes, Ranald R. Macdonald, Thomas Milne, M.D., W. A. MacKenzie.

formed the Spring Excursion of the Club on 1st May.

BARMEKIN HILL The party, which numbered 40, drove from Aberdeen, proceeding by the Skene road and through the policies of Dunecht to Culfossie, Echt, whence a footpath leads to the top of the Barmekin (899). The Barmekin is a densely-wooded hill, a conspicuous feature in the landscape of the district, but there is an open space at the summit, on which there are remains of an ancient fortification, generally (but without any hitherto ascertained authority) called a Danish Camp. There are five walls and three outer ditches; the innermost enclosure (at the summit) is 300 feet in diameter, and contains about an acre of ground. From this enclosure there is an extensive view, including the Lochs of Skene and Park, the lower Grampians—Cairn-mon-Earn, Kerloch, Clochnaben, Mount Battock, and Mount Keen—Lochnagar, Beinn a' Bhuid, and Ben Avon (thickly coated with snow on the day of the excursion), the Buck of the Cabrach, Morven, Bennachie, &c., with, of course, the Hill of Fare

adjoining. Five new members were admitted on the top of the Barmekin, and Mr. Jaakoff Prelooker, a Russian exile (late head master of the Government School, Odessa, and founder of the New Israel "movement" in Russia), was admitted an honorary member—the first of the class. The party descended on the south-east side, and made for the village of Echt, where luncheon was served. They then drove to the Birks of Cullerlie, on the south-east side of the Hill of Fare, and ascended the Hill. The Hill of Fare is a long, low wide hill, extending from Echt to Learney, the circumference of its base being computed at 18 miles. It has a number of tops, the highest being 1545 feet. A central ravine, in which the burn of Corrichie rises, and through which it flows, is the site of the battle of Corrichie, fought between the Earls of Huntly and Moray in 1562.

The point first made for was Queen Mary's Chair, a niche in the face of a granitic mass overlooking the battle-field; and then the party divided, some making for the Meikle Tap (1179), others for Greymore (1291), and others ascending the ravine between Greymore and Blackyuds (1422). The views from the various summits reached were practically identical with the view from the Barmekin. Re-uniting at the base of the Hill, on the Midmar side, the party made a hurried inspection of Midmar Castle, having shortly before that encountered a smart shower of rain, the only (and a quite insignificant) drawback to a delightful outing. The excursion was finished by a rapid walk to Echt, and, after tea, the party drove back to Aberdeen by the Echt road. Mr. Alexander Copland was the Chairman of the day, and furnished historical and descriptive accounts of the Barmekin, the battle of Corrichie, &c.—ROBERT ANDERSON.

BEN AVON ON NEW-YEAR'S DAY. THE local mountaineering season was opened on New-Year's Day by a quartette making the ascent of Ben Avon from Inchrory. The previous evening was not without sign of a change in the weather—to the bad, and the bright, clear day which had been anticipated turned out otherwise. The start was made at 8'45, the aneroid marking 28'8, the thermometer, 28. The route selected was by Meall na Gainimh (2989), one of the minor summits of Ben Avon. The surface was quite white, there being a good deal of fresh snow, with here and there hard snow slopes. The top of the Meall was reached at 9'45, when the temperature was found to have fallen to 17. The region of mist was now entered, nothing being visible at the distance of fifty yards. An abortive attempt was made on Clach Bhan, and, as time pressed, the onward route was quickly resumed, a good deal of time being necessarily lost in walking by compass. The denseness of the mist will be better understood when it is mentioned that Clach a' Chuitseich—and it is no trifle—was passed unobserved. The summit (3843) was reached at 12'30, the aneroid marking 26'05, the thermometer 13. The anemometer showed that the

velocity of the wind was 22 miles an hour (force 4, Beaufort's scale). In these circumstances, the stay at the cairn was as short as possible. The Sneck was made for—unsuccessfully; it was originally intended to ascend Beinn a' Bhuird as well. The connecting link, however, proved the missing link in the mist; but as only two of the party were armed with axes, it was perhaps as prudent to leave it alone. Turning now to the southward along the ridge of Carn Eas, and crossing the intervening "Saddle", the cairn of Creag na Dala Moire (3189) was passed, and the descent made, by slopes measuring from 35° to 40°, to the head of Glen Gairn. The bottom of the glen reached, the mist was left behind. A course by the south-west shoulder of Creag na Dala Bige and the path on the east side of Glas Allt was now taken, and so, passing Invercauld House, Inver Inn was reached at seven o'clock. Lochnagar was ascended next day *via* Glen Gelder.—Abridged from *The Scotsman*.

A PARTY of cyclists, who had fixed their headquarters at BEN AVON Colquhonia, Strathdon, devoted one of their holidays IN MAY. to an ascent of Ben Avon, *via* Allt an t-Sluichd. The first stage was accomplished on our "safeties", the machines being left at Delnadamph. The weather was so unpromising that half a dozen friends, who were passed at Cock Bridge, decided, in spite of previous arrangements, not to join in the ascent.

Inchroy was passed at 12·10, Glen Avon being entered as the weather improved. But at Inverloin (12·45) biting showers of hail gave a foretaste of what would likely be met higher up. The site of Slochd Bridge was reached at 1·20, and lunch discussed, the Meikle Slock being picturesquely lined with snow. Forging the Avon was no easy matter, for it was icy cold and the stones slippery. Once fairly into the Slock—there is a path for about two miles from the bridge—the showers of hail were not so disagreeable as in the glen, the wind being now in rear. The Sneck was reached in detachments—one section descending to the bottom of the Slock, and climbing on to the Sneck at the east end (a rather stiff bit of work); the other keeping higher up and rounding the top of the corrie, and so coming on to the Sneck. Unstable boulders, with snow in the interstices, made progress here very slow.

Once on the Sneck the full force of the storm was encountered, the wind, laden with ice pellets, blowing in a hurricane, while snow and hail came whirling up the Slock, threatening to send us into Glen Quoich. An occasional short respite was taken by setting our alpenstocks in the snow, and turning our backs to the whirlwind.

The cairn was reached at five o'clock, but there was, of course, no view, owing to the storm. Despite the intense cold, several of the rocky excrescences were visited. The quantity of new snow on the summit was surprising; great wreaths were found at the back of the tors, several of them from 10 to 20 feet in depth. Lower down more

than one of the party plumped into holes through snow up to the waist. Ptarmigan were the only living things seen.

The original intention was to descend over Meall na Gaimeimh, but it being late, a course was set by Da Dhruim Lom, striking the Avon at Caol Ghleann (6.40). After a descent of about 500 feet from the summit, we found ourselves below the storm, which still raged above. Our appearance was wintry enough—clothed, as it were, with crusted ice and snow, which we got rid of only as Glen Avon was entered. Delnadamph was reached at 8.30, and Colquhonie shortly after 10 o'clock.—JOHN A. M'HARDY.

MEALL A'
BHUACHAILLE,
CAIRNGORM,
CAIPLICH, AND
BEN BYNAC

were tackled from Speyside by a few members of the Cairngorm Club in the end of February. The first day was devoted to glen work and the ascent of the "Meall", which, as it is only 2654 feet in height, and in the immediate neighbourhood of Cairngorm, is generally ignored by the giants of the Club. The ascent is a mere trifle, as, Rebhoan reached, there are only about 1350 feet to be surmounted. The view, however, is not one to be despised, for, in addition to the Cairngorms from Ben Bynac to Sgòran Dubh, a large extent of Strathspey, with numerous lochs, is at one's feet. A big cairn marks the top. The southern shoulder, Creag Loisgte, forms, with Creag nan Gall (of Mam Suim), the beautiful narrow gorge at the head of Glen More, known as the Pass of Rebhoan or the Thieves' Pass.

Next day Cairngorm was ascended *via* Rieaonachan, the day being bright and clear at the start. Before the summit was reached, however, the clouds were upon the party, and apparently on Loch Morlich also, but, as was afterwards ascertained, Glen More was quite clear the whole day. Above 2500 feet the mountain was more or less covered with snow, but the summit was practically swept bare, only a very thin icy covering being left. At the cairn one could see such a short distance, and the weather was so threatening, that a contemplated visit to Ben Muich Dhui was given up. The descent was made by the east side, looking down on the Nethy, along to Stac na h-Iolaire (the Eagle's Cliff), the southern side of Mam Suim (2394). Below the 3000 feet line, the mountaineers were once more in sunshine; and at the foot the thermometer was at 72°, whereas on the top it reached only 32°! Ripe bear-berries were found in abundance on Mam Suim.

The third day Donside was made for *via* Learg an Laoigh and Glen Avon. The Nethy was left at the pony bridge above Loch a' Gharbh-choire at 9 a.m., the "Learg" there being pretty free of snow, but in a short time the path was entirely obscured. The opportunity was taken of ascending Caiplich (3574) and Ben Bynac on the west side of the path. Concerning these two (?) mountains Mr. H. T. Munro says:—"Caiplich is the highest point of Ben Bynac. The 3296 point of the latter, marked on the one-inch map, is merely a shoulder

running up to Caiplich". A seemingly reasonable statement, yet the writer has heard the natives speak of "the two Bynacs". The ascent was rather stiff, the whole Ben being almost covered with deep snow—a striking contrast to Cairngorm on the other side of the Nethy. The ascent up Caiplich was by a rocky "knife edge" leading directly to the cairn, a considerable one with a stick. A great many snow buntings were seen on Ben Bynac, and not a few tracks of the fox with ptarmigan side by side. The view from the summit is very extensive—from the mountains on the further side of the Moray Firth to Bennachie. The following tops may also be named:—Beinn Mheadhoin, Ben Muich Dhui, Cairngorm, Mam Suim and Meall a' Bhuachaille, and Ben Rinnes, while the Ben Avon group was a grand sight. The Dubh Lochan, Lochs Garten and Mallachie are readily picked out, and the greater part of the Feith Buidhe between Ben Muich Dhui and Cairngorm is also visible. The south side of Ben Bynac is studded with lumps of rock known as the "Barns" and the "Little Barns", somewhat after the manner of Ben Avon. *The* incident of the present journey was the approach to one of these "Barns" in mist. It had just been decided to descend towards the Allt Dearg, which enters the Avon near the point where the path to Inchroy commences, when, walking along the unbroken snow, a gigantic black object appeared to be approaching the party! The snow, driven by the wind, surrounded the huge rock, leaving a "moat"-like space at the foot of this mountain excrescence. This gave an opportunity of observing the depth of the snow, which was here estimated at from 25 to 30 feet.

Striking the head of the Glen Avon path at 12.45, the downward trudge along the snow-filled track was commenced at 1 p.m., Inchroy being reached at 6 o'clock. The walk, though pretty stiff and long, was by no means wearisome, the variety of scenery, especially on the south (right) side of the glen, preventing monotony. The first halt was at Findouran Lodge, a little shooting-box used only in "the season", which lies on the left bank of the Avon at a height of 1920 feet. Two small burns there enter the Avon, the upper Caochan Craobh a' Chuimeneich, the lower Feith an Dobhrain, from which latter the building derives its name. Findouran is comparatively new, and so does not appear on the O. S. maps, but its exact position is in the north angle formed by Feith an Dobhrain with the Avon. The two streamlets named and the situation of the lodge will be recognised on the one-inch map by the figures "1920". The best part of the glen lies below Findouran, but the river abounds in picturesque bits between the loch and this point, numerous burns contributing to the beauty of the scene. Stob an t-Sluichd (3621) appears to advantage on the south side, here looking a little conical peak with round, warty-like rocks behind. Then, with the Meikle Slock between, comes Ben Avon himself in all his crowned dignity—visible also on the railway journey between Nethy Bridge and Boat of Garten. Next comes (on the south) Caol Ghleann,

and a "narrow glen" it is. The uppermost fir trees in Glen Avon are to be seen opposite its mouth. Shortly after passing Caol Ghleann the pony track crosses the river. On the north side is Inverloin at the mouth of Glen Loin, with marks of old houses of sheep-farm days. Then comes the Linn of Avon, where the river rushes between narrow rocks, only to have another struggle ere Inchrory can be passed. Crossing the Builg Burn near its confluence with the Avon, a short ascent was made, passing Inchrory and Lagganauld, so as to change from the watershed of the Spey to the Don. But darkness began to fall, overtaking the party before the Donside road—such as it is—was well entered on. The Don and its tributaries appeared to be mixed up with the road, which, where not overflowed by some burn or other, was quite covered with snow. Then bog succeeded bog, and the party were very glad to accept the shelter of a shepherd's house for the night and give up all thoughts of Cock Bridge and its comfortable inn. Next day Ballater was reached *via* the head of the Don, Glen Builg, and Glen Gairn. In the former glen a fierce snow storm had to be faced, while the latter was full of snow till near Rinloan. Loch Builg was covered with ice, and the road at the head of the loch was impassable for even pedestrians.—W. CRUICKSHANK.

were ascended in the first week of April by a small party of hillmen from Aberdeen. The ascent of the former was made by Glen Eunach, and the pony path on the east side of Loch Eunach. Sgòran Dubh looked exceedingly grand, the summits being quite white, and the rocky side presented to the loch beautifully snow-marked. The burns crossed by the pony path were full of snow, and at the head of the corrie, where the track is rather steep, the snow was so forbidding as to compel us to take the bare face of the mountain at an angle of sometimes over 50°, an avalanche of stones saluting us on the right. The great plateau was duly reached, and found to be completely covered with hard snow. The "infant Dee", where it tumbles down the Fuar Garbh-choire—the Dee Corrie, as it is sometimes called—was invisible; as also was the cairn. The *only* indication of the latter was a swelling in the snow. The snow cornices overhanging the corries were a pretty sight, great breaks frequently occurring, with icicles forming at the fractures. The view, considering the late hour (5 p.m.) the summit was reached, was extensive, but none of the mountains visible seemed to be so snow-clad as the Cairngorms. The descent was made by the narrow ridge between Coire an Lochain and Coire Ruadh.

The ascent of Cairngorm was made by Rieaonachan, from which it occupied about two hours. We observed that where the track forks (about 1500 feet) a little above the foot-bridge over the Allt Mor, two direction posts have been put up. One points out "Path to Cairngorm", while the other is marked "Private Path through Forest—Please Don't Trespass". We commend both to the attention of mountaineers, and would suggest another post or two a little further up, as one is apt to

go too far to the east unless careful attention is paid to the route. Very little snow was found on the north side of Cairngorm, except in the corries, which were looking picturesque enough. The summit was quite bare, but towards Loch Avon and Ben Muich Dhui the snow was almost without a break. Large numbers of ptarmigan were seen, evidently pairing, as well as a couple of snow buntings similarly engaged. The southern face was descended as far as the lower end of Loch Avon could be seen. It was free of ice, only there appeared to be a little at the outlet forcing its way to the river. Loch Etchachan was covered with ice, as also were Lochan nan Cnapan, Lochan Uaine (of Cairn Toul) and Loch Coire an Lochain. Last year snow never completely left Coire an t-Sneachda of Cairngorm. The descent was made by Ciste Mhairearaid and the Marquis's Well, the latter, however, invisible. Large numbers of stags were seen on the lower grounds, some of them with only one horn, many with none. In the evenings we were entertained by the cries of several varieties of birds, including the heron and the owl; in the early morning flocks of black-cock broke the stillness by their peculiar cries when fighting with one another. Considerable stretches of heather, both in deer forests and grouse moors, were being burned; in particular there were many black patches on Cairngorm. As we descended late in the evening, distant fires could be seen eastward and northward, having a brilliant appearance in the darkness.

We took a stroll one evening to Coylum Bridge, to settle by observation the disputed point as to the relative size of the Bennie and the Luineag, which there meet and form the Druiè. Something, we found, could be said for each, so a residenter who happened to be on the spot was appealed to. His reply left the problem unsolved:—"He would be a clever man who could tell that; sometimes it's the one, sometimes the other". The bridge over the Bennie, by the way, just below Aultdrue, is in a very dangerous state, especially in the dark.—W. A. HAWES.

THE forenoon of a recent holiday found two clubmen admiring the Falls of Tarf from the Bedford Memorial Bridge. One of the first thoughts to strike an observer is:—What a grand sight here when the Tarf is in flood, or when, after a thaw, ice-blocks are hurled down with a noise that is heard at a distance of several miles.

Proceeding along the steep, high cliffs that guard the Falls right and left, the Upper Falls, of whose existence we, like most others, were ignorant, came into view. Half an hour enjoyably spent in this neighbourhood suggested a further advance along Tarfside, one of the most unfrequented glens in the Highlands. The "Water" is over 11 miles in length, and rises near the head streams of the Bruar. Owing to its remoteness it is seldom visited. Trout are numerous, two or three rising to every cast, and, though small, a basket of over 50 lbs. is not unfrequently made. A short distance above the Falls the character of the Tarf changes, the rocky gorge giving place to a strath-like glen, the river having a broad, shallow channel—broader in many parts than the

Dee above Invercauld—which it is steadily widening by eating into the low grass-clad banks. The middle portion of the glen is the best feeding ground for deer in the immense forest of Athole, the grazing by the stream being excellent, and deer are therefore numerous. The Duke of Athole has a shooting both picturesquely situated on the south bank at the confluence of the Feith Uaine Mhor.

The day's outing ultimately resolved itself into an ascent of An Sgarsoch (3300) and Carn an Fhidleir (3276). The left bank of the Tarf was kept till near the mouth of the Allt a' Ghlas Choire, the forkings of which are at an altitude of 2350 feet. Here a considerable halt was made admiring our surroundings, as well as the great snow patches which still ornamented the head of the grassy corrie, and watching with our telescopes the motions of a herd of stags which alternately fed and looked at us, slightly changing their ground, but evidently somewhat averse to crossing snow. The top of Sgarsoch was easily reached from the forkings, grass and heather—much more of the former than the latter—clothing the slopes, which are at a moderate angle. Then the summit is little more than a plain, with a prominent cairn erected to mark its centre. Thus the hill itself does not specially appeal to the mountaineer, lacking, as it does, both "form and comeliness", but the view from the top is a revelation. The excellent situation of Sgarsoch, on the Aberdeen and Perth county march (between the Geldie and the Tarf, with the great mountain masses of the Cairngorms in the immediate north, and the grand group of Beinn a' Ghlo to the southward), renders it one of the best coigns of vantage for a mountain prospect in the north. The list of distant hills is a very long one, embracing most of the higher well-known summits of the Highlands, which even more than an hour's stay at the cairn was insufficient to completely identify. But, however grand the distant prospect, it was the nearer mountains that were most impressive. Beinn a' Ghlo, triple-peaked, looked particularly imposing, but the Benchninnans did not show to advantage—Lochnagar even having but a poorish appearance. The view of the Cairngorms was what most delighted us. They lay due north, so near that we could readily pick out each summit without the aid of the glass. The whole was in line, from Càrn Bàn to Ben Avon, the only important summit invisible being Cairngorm itself. Commencing at the west, we had before us Càrn Bàn; Sgòran Dubh, the rocky face of which above Loch Eunach was quite apparent—and which appears to be worthy of more attention than yet paid it by the Club; the gorge of the Eidart; Braeriach, with the tops of the corries Dee-wards; Sgòr an Lochan Uaine (Angel's Peak); Cairn Toul, looking precipitous towards Glen Dee; Beinn Bhrotain; Beinn Muich Dhui, appearing quite monarch-like with the top of the precipice above Lochan Uaine; Beinn Mheadhoin, with its "warts" that so considerably help in its identification; Carn a' Mhaim, with Derry Cairngorm behind; Beinn a' Bhuird and the peaks of Ben Avon. More to the eastward Morven stood alone and imposing.

The weather was glorious as the ascent had been made, but on the summit it was not so pleasant as to allow one to enjoy the prospect in comfort. There the thermometer stood at 38°, but a southerly wind blew that made it feel liker 32°, which was the minimum that day on Ben Nevis; in Aberdeen at the same hour the reading was 54°. Occasional runs had to be taken to keep up the circulation. The Geldie Burn was at our feet, with Geldie Lodge in the upper angle formed by that stream with the Allt Coire an t-Seilich, which rises near the top of Sgarsoch. The Lodge, however, cannot be seen from the cairn. At one time a cattle market was held on Sgarsoch, and a right of way exists from the Falls of Tarf direct to Glen Feshie by the east shoulder of Sgarsoch.

Carn an Fhidleir (the Fiddler's Cairn) was too near us—some two miles to the westward—to be left unclimbed. But a big cut, 1200 feet deep, divides the two summits, so that it is not altogether a walk over. Yet 55 minutes sufficed from cairn to cairn, and that with no attempt to “make a record”. Both hills are very much alike, grass abounding. One striking feature was that, while deer were much in evidence, little else, if indeed anything was to be seen with life. The view from Carn an Fhidleir was essentially the same as that from An Sgarsoch. The only differences were that, being now more to the eastward of us, the Cairngorms were not so well seen—though the view of them was really excellent—while the Feshie, both up and down, was much better seen. The great bend of that river as it seems to seek the Geldie was particularly noticeable, approaching so near it, with the intervening ground so low and flat, that it is evident little effort would be required to send the Feshie to the Dee. This course might be considered by the Aberdeen Incorporation when finally driven to earth for a larger supply of water. It might be cheaper than bottling up Loch Muick or Loch Callater! The flat, foggy summit, though a noted one, as there three counties meet (Aberdeen, Inverness, and Perth), is not distinguished by such a cairn as one would naturally expect. Beinn Dearg (3304), the monarch mountain of the west side of Glen Tilt, as Carn nan Gabhar (3671) of Beinn a' Ghlo commands the east side, appealed to us, and we would fain have made for it, but the rather leisurely manner in which we had done our day's mountaineering forbade. With the telescope we could discern the tree roots in the lower end of Loch Mark (misnamed, with its burn and glen, *Mhair* in the O.S. maps), which lies at its north-east foot.

Two streamlets rise in the hollow between Sgarsoch and Carn an Fhidleir, one flowing northwards to the Geldie, the other southwards to the Tarf. Both have the same name, Allt a' Chaorruinn (the Rowan Tree Burn). We made for the Tarf in a much less dignified manner than we had hitherto indulged in. Down the now treeless burn at something like a scamper; yet had we kept exactly by its course we perhaps had been there still, for it has “as many crooks as Don”. Consequently we cut across them, leaping from bank to bank, and

startling the troutlets that swarmed in the burn. It required but little imagination to clothe the grassy banks with the rowan trees that had at some remote period given name to the burn, for here and there sections showed the old roots of trees that had perished and left no successors. As we got lower down the glories of evening were on us, and the mist, summoned from some unseen cloudy hold, silently filled the corries and glens. By and by a snug one-roomed shieling received us, where, with well-lined knapsacks, the night passed as pleasantly as any son of the mountains could have desired.

was attempted on 12th March by Mr. J. H. Gibson and the writer, by a snow-gully in the east corner of the big corrie. We got to the head of this gully, which runs to within 100 feet of the top, but were stopped there by a sheer wall of smooth rock. On our left was a sloping slab some ten feet high, covered with rotten ice, leading on to the face of the cliffs, showing beyond a possible, though an exceedingly difficult, way to the top. These 10 feet might have "gone", but with only two men on the rope we decided it prudent not to attempt it.

On our right, we might have got out on the rock wall of the gully, but this was over some steep, ice-covered blocks, and we could not tell what was beyond. The result of a slip from either of these ways would have been more than serious. We therefore gave it up, and descended face inwards by the same way as we had come, using our old steps, and reaching the foot of the gully in safety. The time in the gully occupied $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours— $2\frac{1}{2}$ going up and 1 in descent.

Skirting the foot of the cliffs, we ascended to Cac Carn Beag by the snow gully, known locally as the "Black Spout". This ascent we found exceedingly simple, and there ought to be no difficulty to those properly equipped for winter climbing in ascending it at any season of the year. It took us thirty minutes to reach the top, by the left hand branch which comes out at the cairn of Cac Carn Beag. Steps were kicked all the way up, but of course we had our axes ready to anchor in the event of a slip. Without them, and once started, we would have glissaded all the way to the foot.

In the first gully all the steps were cut by Gibson, and no one, without a long training at step-cutting could have cut such a staircase of steps as was required in the ascent of this gully. I have not given up hope of eventually ascending this gully, and I am looking forward to some day returning with a strong party and again tackling him.—
WILLIAM DOUGLAS.

is the title of a neat little brochure of some 40 pages
"FROM by Mr. F. Davie, recently published by Mr. J. D.
ELGIN TO Yeadon, 62 High Street, Elgin (price 6d.). A good
BEN MUICH view of the Shelter Stone is given as a frontispiece. It
DHUI" seems there is an Elgin Cairngorm Club, for "the
author dedicates this little production to the Elgin
Cairngorm Club. He had, last summer, desired to be admitted a

member of this club, but was informed that his application could not be entertained till he had first climbed the mountains of Cairngorm and Ben Muich Dhui and published an account of his journey". These conditions of membership should make *the* Cairngorm Club revise its rules! Mr. Davie's essay-piece will certainly be found interesting from a certain stand-point, but it does not pretend to make the ascent easier in any way to candidates qualifying for membership. Indeed, except to "old Parliamentary hands", the route is rather obscured than otherwise. The Cairngorm flies were found to be particularly numerous and voracious, and the "excursion wasted many a precious hour hunting for these delusions (Cairngorm stones)". The top of Cairngorm reached (6 p.m.), Ben Muich Dhui was made for, but abandoned, and the Shelter Stone descended on. Here "the Moray loons"—there were seven of them—found two mountaineers already in possession, so the accommodation was scarcely equal to expectation, apart from certain natural drawbacks there that some of us are not unfamiliar with. An early start was made for Ben Muich Dhui—"The call to breakfast sounded at 3 a.m. The excursion breakfasted in the open air all save one, whose appetite was not equal to the opportunity. . . . We soon reached Loch Etchachan, where the excursion made a great mistake. It took the wrong side of the loch, the side next Ben Muich Dhui", and the result was almost disastrous. "Yet, on and on we wandered, until we passed entirely round the lake, and there appeared no passage leading from that eternal valley, either back into this world or on to the next. . . . Yet, on we went, and round and round the lake we staggered, weary, hopeless, forlorn, till the rocks and the mist melted away, and we seemed to be wandering on the open hillside".

THE
OSPREY. MR. J. A. HARVIE-BROWN, F.R.S.E., F.Z.S., thus writes the Editor:—I visited the Ospreys' nest on Loch Morlich side one day in May last year. One bird only seen;

the nest complete but empty. I picked up a first primary feather at the foot of the tree *shot-shattered*, and the direction of the shot clearly traceable, scarring the fibre after cutting away a large piece. The shot must have then struck the bone close to the base of the first primary (right wing), causing extension of the muscle and the consequent casting of the quill. Shame it is!! If anyone has a stuffed Osprey look out for defective right wing. To conceal this the wing will probably be lightly tucked to the side, and Ospreys are usually stuffed showing extended wings. I am preparing a chronological history for the past 100 years of the Ospreys of Loch an Eilean. At the last Council meeting of the Zoological Society the Society's medals were awarded to the representatives of the Grants of Rothiemurchus and to Cameron of Lochiel for the past continuous protection afforded by these families to the Ospreys at Loch an Eilean and at Loch Arkaig. . . . If you have any influence will you also use it for their better preservation? I ask it in the interest of the birds, of which there are now only *three regularly occupied* eyries in all Scotland.