

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

ON 6th May between seventy and eighty members and UPPER GLEN friends attended the Spring Outing of the Club, which MUICK AND was one of the most successful and pleasant of the BROAD CAIRN. lesser excursions with which the season is usually commenced and terminated. The weather was bright and warm. The places, which the courteous permission of Dr. Profeit, Her Majesty's Commissioner, had rendered it possible to visit, were quite out of the beaten track and new ground to the great majority of those present, whilst arrangements had been made to suit members who wished to vary their route or to make the Club Excursion the *finale* of a "Saturday to Monday" holiday. The main body left by the first Deeside train for Ballater, where a string of brakes and



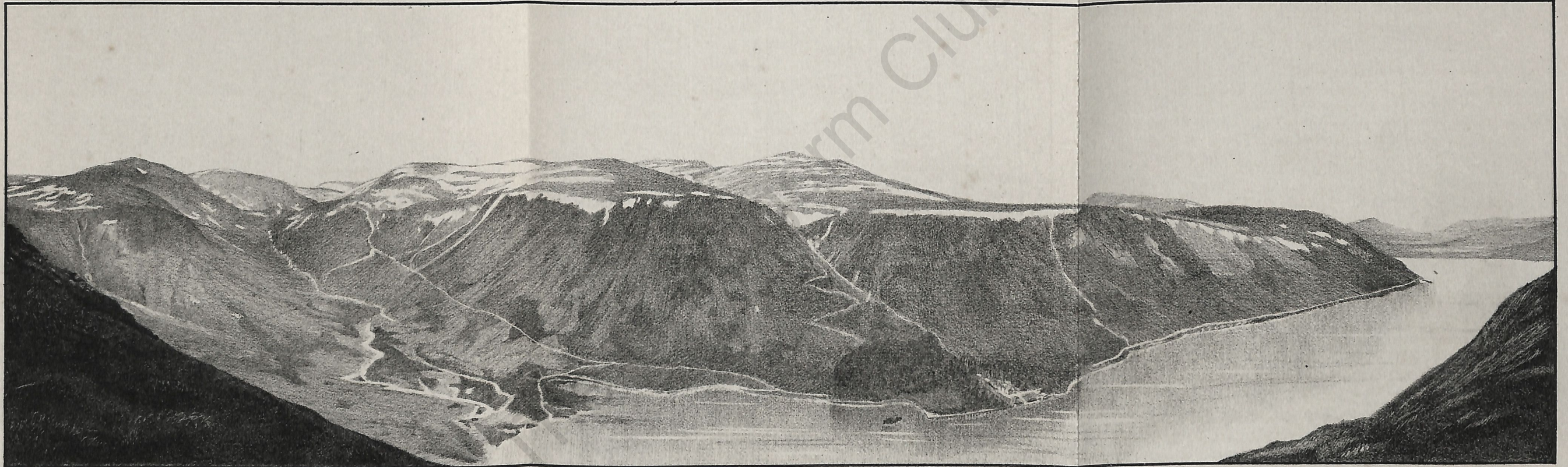
ALLTNAGIUBHSAICH LODGE.

waggonettes was marshalled by Sluievannachie, ready for the twelve-mile drive to Glasallt Shiel near the head of Loch Muick. At Ballater the party was reinforced by a contingent of members who had spent the week-end at Pannanich. Driving through Ballater and across the bridge and passing Braichlie, the south Deeside Road was followed across the Muick to where, near the site of the old Castle of Knock, a private road diverges to the left towards Birkhall and along the north side of Glen Muick. After a short halt at the Falls of Muick, the journey was resumed to Inschnabobart, where the Chairman of the Club and several others, who had come across from Inver, joined the party. After passing Alltnagiubhsaich Lodge and along the north shore of Loch

Broad Cairn.

Lochnagar.

Conachraig Hill.



Glasalt Shiel.

PANORAMIC VIEW LOOKING ACROSS LOCH MUICK.

Muick, the drive ended at the Glasallt Shiel. Starting onwards by the path leading to the Dubh Loch, and accompanied by Mr. Campbell, the Queen's forester at the Shiel (who, despite his years, was as light-footed and wiry as anyone present), the party struck across Allt an Dubh Loch, some distance below the loch from which it tumbles, and were soon negotiating a stiff and by no means easy climb up the rocky flank of Broad Cairn. At the top they were re-inforced by several members who had walked up from Milton of Clova by Bachnagairn. The usual meeting was held with the customary ceremonies for the admission of new members. The view—especially of the Cairngorms, the higher peaks of which were still almost entirely covered with snow—quite repaid the trouble of the climb, although a slight haze somewhat interfered with the distinctness of the more distant points. A newspaper article published in 1893 thus describes the view :

“The top is rocky and almost comes to a point, the cone shape being very apparent. ‘Broad’ is a corruption, and has no reference to breadth, the root of the term being found in ‘Braemar’ and ‘Breadalbane’. ‘Broad Cairn’ would thus signify ‘the cairn of the hilly country’. The view was good, though the atmospheric conditions were not perfect. To the east there were Mount Keen, Mount Battock, and Clochnaben ; to the south Driesh and Mayar, dividing Glen Doll from Glen Prosen, with Craig Rennet overhanging the former glen ; and in the far distance the West Lomond of Fife was visible. Westward there were Cairn Bannoch, Carn an Tuirc, Tolmount, Tom Buidhe, Cairn na Glasha, and Glass Maol ; the Ben Urns at the head of Glen Ey ; and a multitude of lesser dignitaries. North-westward there were Ben Avon, Beinn a’ Bhuidr, and the central mass of the Cairngorms. To the north Lochnagar was, of course, a prominent mass, but the highest point is here invisible, the summits seen being Little Pap, Cuidhe Crom, Cac Carn Mor, and the two Cairn Taggarts. The sea was observed in the neighbourhood of Montrose. Close at hand was the plateau of the Capel Mounth, as well as a bit of Loch Muick, with Bennachie in the distance. Loch Esk, a little over a mile south, is a convenient point from which to ‘box the compass’. The West Lomond was seen between it and Mayar, the latter mountain, however, obstructing the view of the East Lomond. Mayar is a grassy, symmetrically shaped hill, with a distinctly marked summit (3043). Driesh, though a little higher (3105), is indebted to its fine corries for its picturesque appearance. It forms a continuous ridge with Mayar”.

The party returned to the Dubh Loch path and so back to the Glasallt. Some of the elderly and of the less energetic members found, at lower levels, less arduous exercise than that offered by Broad Cairn. The Dubh Loch, with its frowning precipices fringed with piled-up boulders, was visited, and the Glasallt Falls. The ordinary tourist does not often have an opportunity of seeing either of these. The surroundings of the Dubh Loch, especially on the side next Broad Cairn where there is a wall of solid rock 800 feet in height, are as grand and impressive as any Highland loch can boast. The Glasallt Falls, consisting of a torrent pouring down in an almost perpendicular stream upwards of a hundred feet in height above a shorter cascade, are also well worth a visit, and command a very fine view of Loch Muick and the Glasallt Shiel six hundred feet below. Several members followed the track across Lochnagar to its junction with the path from Glen Gelder to Allnagiubhsaich Lodge, rejoining the party at the latter place on the return journey. Others gave themselves to investigating the entomology and

botany of the glen. No new discoveries were made, but quite a wealth of specimens of moths and butterflies were found on the wing, as well as larvæ and pupæ. The botanical members were agreed that the season was almost a record one for the earliness in flowering of sub-alpine plants in this not particularly early locality. The return drive was by the same route as that taken in the morning, and after enjoying a well-earned and well-served dinner, under the presidency of Mr. Anderson, the Chairman of the Club, at the Invercauld Arms Hotel, the members left Ballater for Aberdeen at 7.15.—T. R. GILLIES.

THE Chairman of the Club (Mr. Robert Anderson), AN EXCURSION while on a holiday in London last year, was invited to IN SURREY. accompany an excursion of the Saturday Field Club which had been specially arranged in compliment to him. The excursion—to Leith Hill, Surrey—took place on Saturday, 19th October. Mr. Anderson, who had been staying at Reigate over the Friday night, walked to Dorking (six miles) early on Saturday morning, and joined the members of the Field Club there, accompanying them in the train to Holmwood, whence the party walked to Leith Hill. This is the highest hill in the south of England, its natural elevation of 965 feet being increased to 1000 by the erection of a tower 35 feet high. From the summit of the tower may be had (according to a little Description purchased at its base) "one of the most magnificent and extensive views in existence, commanding several hundred miles; towns, churches, and the most conspicuous objects being distinctly visible in many counties, including those of Surrey, Sussex, Hants, Berks, Oxford, Bucks, Herts, Middlesex, Essex, and Kent, and, by the aid of a glass, Wiltshire—a circuit of 200 miles". The party returned to Dorking by a circuitous route, along woodland paths and through lanes, and, before returning to town, dined at the White Horse Inn, under the genial presidency of Mr. Tom Nanson, the President of the Field Club. During his stay in London, Mr. Anderson had several other walks in the vicinity of the metropolis—from Dorking to Golsham, from Maidenhead to Cookham, and from Wendover to Tring; this last in the near neighbourhood of the Chiltern Hills. A "Cairngormer" misses the hills and mountains of the north, but rural England has beauties of its own.

BRAERIACH, Sgoran Dubh, Carn Ban, and the lesser GEOLOGICAL hills that rise above the lower part of Glen Feshie, NOTE.—THE form the western extension of the great mass of igneous WESTERN rock known as the Cairngorm granite. CAIRNGORMS. This rock varies little in character, and in the mountains above-named is similar in appearance and composition to the granite of Ben Muich Dhui, Cairngorm, and Ben Avon.

The crags of Coire Odhar at the head of Glen Eunach are composed of metamorphic rock—a fine-grained flaggy gneiss or mica-schist. The

boundary between this rock and the granite runs S.S.W. from Coire Odhar across the plateau of the Moine Mhor to Allt Garbhlach; and then, turning to the N.W., crosses the western slopes of Meall Dubhachaidh to the alluvial flats of the Feshie above Achlean.

The difference in character between the two rocks is well seen in the precipices on the south side of Allt Garbhlach, where for some distance the upper part of the cliff is gneiss and the lower granite.

The glacial phenomena seen in these mountains are very striking. Each of the high corries on the north side of Braeriach has its independent system of lateral and terminal moraines; and the long flat-topped gravel terraces in Glen Eunach, due to the action of water as well as ice, will attract the attention of the most casual observer. A fine series of moraines is also to be seen on the plateau round Lochan nan Chapan (the lochan of the hillocks).—L.W.H.

A PARTY who visited the Western Cairngorms in the BRAERIACH last days of May found the snow still present in huge IN MAY. quantities, on the more sheltered gullies in the corries of Braeriach. The forbidding cliffs which abut on the Garchary were accessible at many points by means of the snow, and would have afforded many excellent climbs—the snow being peculiarly hard and firm, with here and there a suspicion of ice. The snow was in capital condition for standing glissades on the easier slopes, a state rather infrequent on Scottish mountains.

As several writers on the Cairngorms have referred to GOATS ON THE this subject the following experience may be interesting:—On 2nd September last I was one of four CAIRNGORMS. visitors to the Shelter Stone, on leaving which, at 4:15 p.m., we proceeded by Coire Domhain. When not much more than half-way up we saw a flock of eight goats at the foot of the crags on the south-west side of the burn. Taking alarm at our approach, they made for the top of the corrie. I endeavoured to catch up with them, but though unsuccessful had a close view. My companions informed me that one of the kids had actually been cut off, for it crossed the corrie behind me and in front of them.—C. G. CASH.

THE Highlands of Scotland are the decayed stumps of How mountain teeth. When you see old mountain stumps MOUNTAINS of this sort lying about a continent you may be sure, ARE MADE. said Professor Bonney at the Royal Institution yesterday, that they mark territory of extreme old age.

Once upon a time the Scottish Highlands were part of a vast chain of mountains separating the Arctic Sea from the Atlantic. The present Scandinavian ranges, the Irish and Welsh mountains, those of the Ardennes, the Vosges, Auvergne, and Peninsular Spain, are of the same date, and represent the mountainous peaks of a dead and gone continent, which pushed its frontiers right out into the Atlantic ages before those modern productions the Alps were ever thought about.

Three huge rivers descended from the northern heights of this lost Atlantis, and brought down as freight most of the land of England as we know it to-day. Sunshine, frost, wind, hail, and rain have gnawed away at these tremendous mountain ranges for incalculable ages and reduced them to pigmies. Central Europe was a vast sea studded with islands in the great reptile age, when the cheerful ichthyosaurus paddled about as lord of creation—giant volcanoes belched forth molten lava like a row of beacons along the Atlantic coast of Scotland and Ireland. The ages crept on. Land and sea fought incessantly for the mastery, and finally, after a period of mist which the geologist cannot peer into, we find Nature ringing up the curtain on the birth of the Alps. The very newest mountains of Europe are the Alps, the Apennines, the Pyrenees, and the Carpathians. They are still fairly well in the vigour of manhood; that you can tell from their towering height, although the file of Nature has already scraped enough off them to level up many of the richest gardens of Europe. If you ask Professor Bonney or any other geologist how he comes by all this prehistoric history, he will tell you that it is written in unmistakable characters in the Book of Rocks. There are whole chapters of this book missing, many pages are blotted and torn, and the earliest leaves, including the title-page, are quite undecipherable. But there is enough left to give us a vivid picture of the great panorama of Nature as a whole, just as clearly as if we had the time machine of Mr. Wells working backwards. Perhaps the most interesting process which has been at work moulding the wrinkled front of Earth throughout the ages is that of mountain building. Our globe of fiery matter is always cooling and always shrinking as it cools. The hardened crust upon which we have our being tries to shrink too, like the skin of a withering apple, and the result is much the same—puckerings and crumplings which we call mountain ranges for ever pushing their way up, only to be planed down again by the resistless wear and tear of frost and rain. If you could cut a long slice through the great Alpine chain and expose the strata to view there you would trace the foldings and crumplings that have thrown the ancient sea bed heavenwards into the regions of eternal snow.—*The Daily Graphic*, May 28th, 1896.

THE following members have been admitted since
 NEW MEMBERS. the publication of the List:—Mr. Robert C. Jackson,
 Mr. James D. Mackie, Mr. William Yule, Mr.
 Archibald Aitken, Mr. Robert Aitken, Jr., Rev. William Borland,
 Mr. A. M. Munro, Mr. George T. Lynam, Mrs. Gillies, Mr. James
 Reid, Mr. Thomas Jamieson, Mr. Peter Crombie, Mr. Charles Gordon,
 Yost, Miss Nellie Aitken, Mr. Thomas Hector, Captain Pirie, M.P.,
 and Mr. David A. Farquhar.

The Club is again indebted to Mr. J. G. Murray for several Sketches, and to Mr. W. A. Hawes for permission to reproduce several photographs—especially the Panoramic View across Loch Muick.

REVIEWS.

ALPINE NOTES AND THE CLIMBING FOOT by George Wherry, a member of the Alpine Club, and surgeon to Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge (Cambridge: Macmillan & Bowes), is a title that naturally excites a feeling of anticipation that, even in these latter days, someone has something new to say on that well-worn topic, the Alps. He must be a daring writer, as well as a fearless and "eccentric" climber to challenge comparison with the giants who already hold the field. Dr. Wherry does not court this comparison, for in his preface he disarms criticism by stating that his "notes" were mostly written in pencil in the railway carriage on his way home from his annual holiday in the Alps.

The "notes" are the kind of memoranda a man might make when scenes and incidents are fresh in his mind, wherewith he might in after years help himself to recall his days of toil and pleasure on Alpine heights, and, to a certain extent, they may serve to recall similar delights to a mountaineering public. That is the most that may be claimed for them, and they can scarcely be looked upon as a serious contribution to Alpine literature. The writer gives "notes" on five seasons' work in the Alps, during which he did most of the good climbs from the usual centres. In telling his story Dr. Wherry unaccountably works backwards from 1895 to 1891—a method which seems to have no advantages, but considerable drawbacks.

It is when the reader comes to the chapter on "The Climbing Foot" that he naturally looks for the main purpose of the book, but here it is to be feared most will meet with woeful disappointment, for which, in this case, the preface has not prepared him. Dr. Wherry has observed what every amateur of any experience has noticed that a Swiss guide is able to go "face forward, and whole-footed up a slope, while the amateur following, and coming to the steep part cannot plant his whole foot upon the slope, but has to go on his toes, or else turn sideways". From this he goes on to remark that, "it seems possible that the angle made by the foot with the leg, may be more acute in the guide who has climbed from childhood, and that in the case of the guide's feet there may be some structural difference, both hereditary and acquired, actually permitting more freedom of movement at the ankle-joint which neither muscular action nor power of balance could ever give to the amateur". Dr. Wherry then starts out on a scientific search for the "climbing foot", and finds it forthwith in infants, but, unfortunately, we do not now live in the "arboreal" period, and children have a habit of learning to walk, and the "climbing foot" soon disappears, nor does it emerge again even where it is most expected, for, according to the author's finding, the angle made by the foot with the leg in the case of the guide differs in no degree from that made by

the experienced amateur in like circumstances. We should certainly have felt happier if, as a result of all his experiments and investigations, Dr. Wherry had discovered the existence of the "climbing foot". Instead the reader has to accept the mysterious quality of "balance", the possession of which explains the wonderful surefootedness and power of endurance of the experienced guide, and from the Alps the writer flies off to the pampas with a long quotation from Darwin about the wonderful power of horsemanship possessed by the Gauchos. Most of this dilatation upon so called "balance" seems to us to savour of "padding" when the whole secret of the special skill of the Swiss guide may be found in his life-long and constant training, which has perfected all the different groups of muscles which are called into play in climbing, and completely attuned them to the work demanded from them. Every branch of sport illustrates in a similar way the value of training.

The chapter "On Accidents", which concludes the book, adds nothing to what has already been written on the subject, and likewise contains a good deal of irrelevant matter.

A SIXPENNY pamphlet, containing 48 widely-printed THE SCOTTISH pages, can hardly be expected to deal exhaustively MOUNTAINS. with the Scottish Mountains: one rather admires the courage of the author, Mr. W. J. Millar, C.E., in even attempting their enumeration, far less their description, in that space. The difficulty is got over by grouping the mountains in regions and giving the briefest and baldest account of the various ranges. Our Cairngorms are allotted just sixteen lines of description, and the same number of lines as to how to reach them. Though defined as an "interesting group of mountains", the district in which they lie is said to be "more out of the way for the ordinary tourist than the greater part of our other fields for mountaineering". The value of which remark is sufficiently gauged by the suggestion that the ascent of Lochnagar is best accomplished (from Braemar) by ponies, "as, unless for good walkers, the distance is too great to be done on foot"! The pamphlet is published by William Hodge & Co., Glasgow.

CLIMBING IN THE BRITISH ISLES: THIS is the second volume of the series (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., price 3/6), and is a hand-book which the climber in these parts can ill do without. Wales (written by Mr. W. P. Haskett *Wales and Ireland*. Smith) very properly has the greater part of the volume devoted to it, but Ireland (written by Mr. H. C. Hart) receives due attention. It is not very plain, however, why both are combined in one Index.

Ireland does not claim "such arenas for cliff-climbing as the Lake District, or the Cuchullins in Skye", but is not without mountain attractions. Many readers will no doubt be surprised to learn that "Macgillieuddy's Reeks can hardly be appreciated in less than a week's

exploration. Even after three weeks spent amongst them, we have wished for more. Donegal alone requires lengthened attention, and there a much longer period will be profitably spent".

The illustrations are both numerous and good.

MR. WILLIAM BLACK'S latest novel, "Briseis", is WILLIAM BLACK partly devoted to Deeside. Its opening incident, ON DEESIDE. indeed—on the very first page, in fact—occurs on Scolty Hill, Banchory, very thinly-disguised as Scoulter Hill, Sanchory; and we are presented with an exceedingly graphic word-picture of the "spacious and varied panorama" observable from the summit—"The fertile pastures of Glen Dye—the outskirts of Glen Tana Forest—the vast, undulating billows of the Grampians, shining here and darkened there with sunlight and velvet shadow; while on the remote horizon-line rose the peaks of Loch-Na-Garr, the snow on them of a dim and burnished gold through the distant haze". Crathes Castle is also introduced as Grantly Castle, the ancestral seat of the hero; but very soon the scene of the story is shifted to Glen Skean—very obviously Glen Spean—and then to London, and Deeside is not revisited by the characters. The book may be commended for study in "descriptive" writing.

THIS is the title of an article in the May number of WALKING: *The Country House*, by "A. G. Howard"—a trans- A LOST ART. position of a name that many members of the Club could readily resolve into its proper form, Howard A. Gray, now of the *Daily Post*, Birmingham. The article is pleasantly—not to say jocularly—written; and repeated mention is made of walks in the Cairngorms. Of walking as an art, especially as compared with cycling, the article says—"The cyclist misses a great deal, in addition to having chosen the less health-giving pastime. In the cultivation of sound lungs and broad shoulders the pedestrian has no rival. He gets all the delightful smell of the country, which the cyclist cannot catch whizzing along in a swift atmospheric current: He gets all the pretty detail of woods and fields and ditches and animal life, of which the wheelman has only a blur. Then it is obvious that the man on his feet can turn aside and see the corners of Nature, and, perhaps finest of all, is the subtle and always exquisite pleasure of feeling the proud independence of having covered the ground by one's own unaided locomotion. The walking man is the most self-contained man of all".

AN article under this heading appeared in the London BITS OF *Echo* of 2nd April, which contained some wonderful WILD BRITAIN. distortions of Cairngorm names. The Larig Ghru and Glen Lui were doubled up into a fearsome compound—"Loui-More-Beg"; and the writer, in his walk down Glen Tilt, discovered some entirely new places—"the corries of Cairn Gelly and Ben Abou". The article contained "descriptive sketches" almost as distorted as the names. Here, for instance, is a truly wonderful

account of "Loui-More-Beg":—"Perhaps the loneliest and most desolate of all walks in the Highlands is that from the summit of Ben Macdhui in the Cairn Gorm on the way towards Braemar. For several miles it is a scene of weird desolation. Neither beast, bird, nor insect is to be seen or heard. Beneath a dark precipice on the left is a lonely tarn, of inky blackness. Not a dimple breaks the glass-like surface, scarcely a blade of grass is visible; nothing but here and there a tuft of stunted heather. It is too bleak and stormy for even the Scottish fir. The few puny specimens that struggled for dear life, perhaps half-a-century ago, are bleached with the winter storms, and white as ivory. Lower down the slope we come to an indigenous forest of this magnificent tree. Their huge crimson-barked boles are crowned with dense flakes of dark green foliage. The elegant roebuck has his home here, and one startles the capercaillie from its roosting-place in the branches. On the opposite slope, less than a century ago, was the vast forest of Rothiemurchus. High up on the shoulders of the mountain the ptarmigan finds its home, its plumage admirably harmonising with the heather and scanty herbage in summer, and changing to snow-white in winter".

IN the "Thorough Guide Series" (London: Dulau and SCOTLAND. Co.), by Mr. M. J. B. Baddeley, B.A., though not written for mountaineers, is nevertheless an invaluable book for them. Indeed "Baddeley" gives in convenient form hill information and maps which cannot, as yet, be obtained elsewhere in such a handy shape. Till such time as mountaineering Journals overtake all Scotland—a work of years!—"Baddeley" will be continually referred to by hill-men. As a tourist's guide the work is invaluable; local information and routes are tersely and conveniently put. The maps (Bartholomew's) are numerous and worth the cost of the book. There are three volumes—Part I., Edinburgh, Glasgow, and the Highlands (8th Ed., 1895); Part II., The Northern Highlands (5th Ed., 1894); and Part III., The Lowlands (3rd Ed., 1894).

The author is to be congratulated on the general accuracy of his statements. It is, of course, impossible in such a work to ensure absolute correctness, but we believe, from having checked not a few routes, that the tourist will have little to complain of on that score. Such information as is given both as to the pronunciation and the height of Bennachie need not, however, be repeated in the next edition; there is no inn at Pitcaple; and the Buck of Cabrach is only a hill—not "a famous deer-forest".