

## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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was the hill climbed by the Club on the Autumn Holiday, MORVEN about thirty taking part in the excursion. The party drove from Dinnet Station, beginning the ascent from the eastern side. The drive was interrupted at Milton, that opportunity might be had of examining the Picts' house, found by Mr. Gauld, the tenant of the farm. In a most interesting manner Mr. Gauld gave the Club an account of its accidental discovery, and of the excavations he made before the old dwelling was exposed to view. This Picts' house is said to be one of the finest examples of its kind; but we concluded that one of the advantages of living at this late period of the world's history is, that we have vastly improved upon the air space and sanitary arrangements of the houses of our ancestors.

The weather, so potent a factor in the enjoyment of a day on the hills, was almost ideal. True, it was hot, and hill and heat combined proved too much for a few members of the party, who were content to "explore the valleys", and gaze in admiration at the hill-top they never climbed. They joined us later on at Ballater, and, but for the unmountaineer-like neatness of their appearance and costume, it might have been supposed they had "done" Morven.

On the way up, one of the climbers, who dated from the days when Byron was thought to be the greatest poet ever born, began to recite:

"When I roved a young Highlander o'er the dark heath,  
And climbed thy steep summit, O Morven, of snow——"

He got no further: the mention of "snow" to men and women who were dripping with perspiration was too much; the reciter was forcibly silenced.

The view from the cairn repaid all our exertions. There was a slight heat haze on the horizon, but, nevertheless, the view was practically uninterrupted. The smoke of the city we had left in the morning could be seen; comparatively near at hand were Bennachie, Tap o' Noth, and the Buck of the Cabrach. Mormond Hill, near Fraserburgh, and the Bin of Cullen could be easily distinguished. On the west rose Ben Avon and Beinn a' Bhuird, with the Central Cairngorms towering behind them. But, unquestionably, the view towards the south was the most magnificent; there we saw (once more to quote our Byronic friend) "the steep frowning glories of dark Lochnagar", and Mount Keen, with its beautiful cone-shaped top, standing out clear against the sky. The hills in view to the south-east were Mount Batoch, Clochnaben, Kerloch, and Cairn-mon-earn. A meeting was held before the descent began, and several members were initiated, with the



customary rites, and their names added to the ever-increasing roll of the Club.

Descending, some of the party made their way towards Ballater by the Burn of Tomnakiest, others by the Burn of Tullich ; but all met at Tullich Lodge to enjoy the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Reid.

The Club dined at the Invercauld Arms Hotel, under the chairmanship of Mr. Robert Anderson. Then home by rail—tired, but contented, for a better day and a better excursion there has seldom been in the annals of the Club.—A. MURRAY SCOTT, M.A.

SUPPLEMENTING the note on this subject in our last issue, JUBILEE it may be interesting to reproduce—and so, in a measure, BONFIRES. preserve—the report presented in July to the Diamond Jubilee Bonfire Committee by the hon. secretaries—Colonel Victor Milward, M.P., Canon Rawnsley, and Major Rasch, M.P. They reported that the Jubilee bonfires were an unqualified success. Not only were very large beacon fires erected, towards which generous donations of fuel and labour were given by landowners, farmers, and others, but the bonfires themselves became the centres of great attraction, and led to demonstrations of hearty loyalty ; thousands assembled round the fires, and in almost every case “ God Save the Queen ” was sung with great enthusiasm. The committee, in reply to requests, sent out hundreds of copies of a diagram and hints how to construct a bonfire, and there was no doubt that, owing to this and the previous experience of 1887, far better fires were obtained, with an immediate mass of flame, than on that occasion. The cost varied very largely ; in some cases upwards of £100 was spent upon the fire, while in others a large fire was constructed for a small sum, even as little as £4. It was very satisfactory that no accident of any kind occurred in the lighting or burning of the fires, and, as far as was known, no heather or furze was set on fire, as was the case in 1887. The only *contretemps* was the lighting of the Cleeve Cloud bonfire, for mischief, two or three days before Jubilee Day ; but after that most of the fires throughout the United Kingdom were watched. The total number of fires in England was 1,981, in Scotland 305, of which 53 were in Orkney and Shetland, in Ireland 93, in Wales 162, in the Channel Islands 6, and in France 1. The largest number of fires counted from any point was from the Mendip Hills, where more than 200 were seen, the fires in South Wales being especially beautiful. From Broadway, in Worcestershire, 142 were counted, and from many places from 70 to 100 were reported to have been seen.

was held on 14th December, 1897—the Chairman, Mr.

OUR NINTH Robert Anderson, presiding.

ANNUAL The following were appointed office-bearers and mem-  
MEETING bers of committee :—President, The Right Hon. James Bryce, D.C.L., M.P. ; Vice-Presidents, Alexander Copland, and Rev. Robert Lippe, LL.D. ; Chairman, Rev. Robert Semple ;



Secretary, A. I. M'Connochie, C.A., 74 Union Street, Aberdeen ; Treasurer, T. R. Gillies, Advocate, 181A Union Street, Aberdeen ; Committee, Robert Anderson, Professor Cameron, D.D., John Gordon, M.D., Robert Harvey, John M'Gregor, Charles M'Hardy, J. A. M'Hardy, M.A., William Porter, J.P., James A. Ross, and Rev. A. Murray Scott, M.A.

The excursions for the current year were fixed as follows : Spring Holiday—Benleuch ; Summer Holiday—Ben Wyvis ; Autumn Holiday—Bennachie.

On the motion of Mr. Alexander Copland, seconded by Professor Cameron, Mr. Robert Anderson was thanked for the excellent manner in which he had discharged the duties of the Chair during the past three years.

The following new members have been admitted :—Messrs. George Mackenzie, W. J. Middleton, George Hutcheson, jun., J. R. Leslie Grey, Edred M. Corner, B.A., B.Sc., James Taggart, M.A., Rev. R. J. Sibbald, George Wood, and Rev. Arthur Cadenhead ; Mrs. Andrew Stott, and Mrs. A. I. M'Connochie. Mr. J. R. Findlay of Aberlour has been elected an Honorary Member.

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## REVIEWS.

MODERN MOUNTAINEERING is the title of an interesting article in the *Edinburgh Review* for July last. The article is mainly devoted to a notice of four recent works on mountain travel and exploration—E. A. Fitzgerald's "Climbs in the New Zealand Alps", Sir William Martin Conway's "The Alps from End to End", Sir John Lubbock's "Scenery of Switzerland", and Douglas W. Freshfield's "Exploration of the Caucasus". The following hints on how to write successfully on mountain climbing may be reproduced :—"Few writers on travel possess the nice discrimination, sense of proportion, and variety of literary method needful for conspicuous success. Thus it comes about that their pages are flooded with a superabundance of detail. The petty discomforts and insignificant hardships incidental to travel, which may serve as topics of conversation over the camp fire, are not worth reproduction. The efficiency of the commissariat department, the incompetence of the native engaged to indicate a local track or carry a load, the excellence of the long-deferred meal, all seem matters of profound importance at the time to the mountaineer ; but they have no interest to the reader, and, indeed, would have none to the writer did he not perceive an opportunity of lightening his narrative by dilating, often at considerable length, on such topics. . . . To avoid monotony, and to impress the reader with a sense of constantly varying effects, such as are inevitably un-



folded to the observant person on the mountains, requires literary skill of no mean order. Local colour has to be suggested by very unobtrusive touches. The writer must always be in sympathy with his environment; as keen to appreciate the snow mountain that closes in and gives the distinctive character to the landscape, as viewed from the valley, as to admire the valley, with its suggestion of human interest, viewed through the soft distant haze from the mountain top. He must be able to admire scenery from the point of view of the painter, the sculptor, and the physicist alike. Colour, gradation, form, modelling, should alike appeal to him. Then no valley walk can be merely a weary trudge, and the mountain will be something better than an exercise ground for the display of gymnastic skill. Meanwhile, his intelligence must ever be on the alert to note nature in its relation to man".

SOME "tips" as to spending a holiday at Loch Maree are given in an article—"A Highland Holiday—with Certain HINTS"—by Mrs. Fyvie Mayo, in the August number of *Travel*, which was awarded the twenty-five guineas prize for an illustrated article, the illustrations being from sketches by the author. Beyond the "tips", however, the article is not of much account. Ascents of Slioch and Beinn Eighe were made by the author and her party; but it is very evident that they were amateurs in mountain-climbing.

is the title of an interesting article by George Bird GRINNELL in the "Sportsman's Number" of *Harper's Weekly* (2nd October, 1897). Mountain-climbing in AMERICA". America, according to this article, is as yet practised by very few, but the constantly increasing interest of Americans in outdoor sports makes it certain that within a few years' time this will be one of the most popular forms of outdoor work. The climber in America has the widest range of choice as to the character of mountain work—rock-work in the Rocky Mountains, and great snow cones and glaciers in Oregon and Washington, and on the coast of British Columbia. There are already several mountaineering clubs in existence, chief among them being the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Oregon Alpine Club.

AN article on Strathspey appeared in the August number of *Chambers's Journal*, but it really contained nothing new regarding the valley of the Spey. It opened well with the affirmation that "In all broad Scotland there is no region more inspired with the romance of the past, and more instinct with the beauty of the present, than that which is collectively, but somewhat vaguely, called Strathspey". A perusal of the article, however, only too clearly reveals the writer's indebtedness to Dr. Longmuir's "Speyside", and Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's "Moray Floods".