

OUTLYING NOOKS OF CAIRNGORM.—No. V.

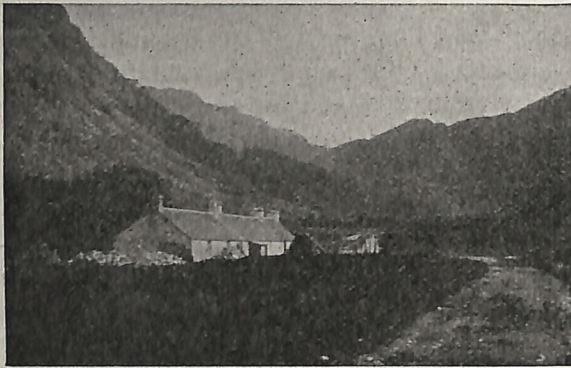
BY THE REV. WILLIAM FORSYTH, D.D.

FOXES have always been found on Cairngorm.

ARCHIE'S They had their dens in the rocks and corries,
CAIRN. and from there, like the caterans, they made
their raids on the flocks and fields below.

There are several references in the Court Books of the Regality of Grant to the destruction of foxes. In 1706 it is "Statut and ordained that each person who killed a fox should receive 20s. Scots and the skin", but some years afterwards this was considerably increased. (See *C.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 211.) After Courts of Regality had ceased to exist, a Fox-hunter was appointed, who was paid a certain sum for his services, to which each tenant contributed. The last of the fox-hunters in Abernethy was John Fraser, Drum, who died in 1865. On one occasion Fraser was complained of as negligent. Some days after he appeared at Mr. Forsyth's, the Dell, accompanied by his pack, fox-hounds, lurchers, and terriers, and adorned with fox tails all over—fox tails sticking out from his coat pockets, fox tails hanging from his waistcoat, fox tails decorating his bonnet! Such an argument was irresistible. The Garbh-choire was a great haunt of foxes. When driven from this, the fox crossed by Coire na Spreidhe to Bynac. Then when driven from Bynac, it took refuge at Caochan-na-saobhaidh, above the Glas-allt, where there was an impregnable den. It is said that a certain preacher, who had been grieved by the hard-heartedness of his people, said that it was as hard to get the devil out of T—— as to drive the fox from the Garbh Allt. Some eighty years ago, two men, Archibald Fyfe and Alexander Fraser, commonly called "Foxie Fraser", were watching a fox-den at Glai-bhothain, a deep ravine near Stac na h-Iolaire. Fyfe's gun slipped from his hand, and in his endeavour to recover it,

pulling it up the bank, it went off, and he was mortally wounded. There was some suspicion of foul play. It was said that the men were rivals in love, and otherwise, and that Fraser would have been glad to have had Fyfe out of his way. But the wounded man survived long enough to declare that his comrade was not to blame, and that the shot had been entirely accidental. The gun that had caused the death was held to be unlucky, and it was cast into Loch-ghobhlach, a little loch between Allt-bheithir and Sleighich. The cairn marks where the fatal accident took place. Another accident happened at Sron a' Chano. Two of the Smiths of Rynuie were out in search of ptarmigan. The one was going along the top, and the other at the foot of the cliff. Lewis, the one at the top, somehow missed his footing, and fell down the steep precipice, opposite Allt a' Choire Dheirg, and was killed. The names of the burns running into the Nethy from the east may be given. First is *Allt a' Choire Dheirg*, from the Barns of Bynac; next is *Allt a' Choire Dhuibh*, from a spring at the foot of Bynac; next is *Dubh Allt Mhor*, from the west side of Carn-riagach; next, *Dhubh Allt Beag*, from Lag-na-laoigh; next, *Lairg-laoigh* and *Stron-choir*, with its two branches, *Bheur-mhor* and *Bheur-bheag*; next, *Luirg* and *Allt-bheithir*, from Slugan-damh-dhuibh. The hill between is Carn-dire-larig.



ACHRIABHACH, GLEN NEVIS.