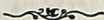


## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.



A RETROSPECT of the past mountaineering season affords sad reading. Never in the history of the Alps have disaster and death been so frequent on these mountains. The official figures give the total number of accidents as 148, and the victims at 196, of whom 136 were killed outright and 60 more or less gravely hurt. These figures constitute a record, beating last year's total of 124 fatalities. The passion for collecting flowers, such as edelweiss and rare Alpine plants, which generally grow in inaccessible and dangerous places, is stated to be the chief cause of accidents. The desire to break and create records by climbing virgin peaks, reputed to be inaccessible, and to make an ascent in a few minutes less than it has ever been done previously, comes second on the list of causes. These are the principal reasons given by the statisticians, but it would not be difficult to add half-a-dozen others, commencing with foolhardiness and want of proper training.

CAN any information be given as to this bird nesting on Lochnagar? I had no word of this, and was accordingly rather surprised and much interested to find three pairs haunting the highest summit, Cac Carn Beag (3786 feet), on 7th July, 1903. They kept going in and out of a crevice in a crag near the north-east end of the high precipices which encircle the great Corrie. The spot could not be got at, but it was well seen in the brilliant sunshine of one of the finest summer days I have ever experienced on our Scottish hills. The birds were under observation for about an hour, and it can scarcely be doubted that they were nesting. There can be few, if any, other breeding places of this species in the British Isles over 3700 feet above sea-level, and I should be glad to hear if it is established—*i.e.*, known for some time. Swifts are abundant in Braemar in the summer, nesting in the village.—HUGH BOYD WATT.

THE gulls which breed at Loch nan Eun are of the species *Larus canus*. I make the elevation about 2550 feet. About 150 birds were seen there on 11th July, 1903. It is something of a puzzle how such a large colony makes its living—there must be a severe struggle for existence in such high quarters. I found about six pairs of these gulls nesting at a still

higher elevation this summer, viz., at the Sandy Loch, Coire Lochan an Eoin, Lochnagar, at about 2600 feet. Two young birds were on the water on 7th July, unable to fly. This pointed to retarded nesting, as compared with lower situations. This summer there was also a pair of Common Gulls, with young, on the lochans at the south end of Loch Builg (1586 feet) on 13th July. I was informed that this was the first time they had nested there. In connection with these observations, it may be recalled that all that Mac-Gillivray knew of this species in Braemar was a report of its having been seen at Crathie (see "Natural History of Deeside and Braemar", 1855, p. 409). Considerable numbers frequented the Dee at Braemar this summer. Mr. George Sim, in his newly published "Vertebrate Fauna of 'Dee'" (1903, p. 183), knows it as a hill-nesting species. Its relative, the Blackheaded Gull, is the common species nesting in inland places.—HUGH BOYD WATT.

INTELLIGENCE was received at Portree on Monday night that a gentleman visitor at the Sligachan Hotel was missing on Sgurr nan Gillean. Although the search parties had

FATALITY ON  
SGURR NAN GILLEAN. been making every effort to discover his whereabouts, no trace of him was found until 11.30 a.m. yesterday, when his body was found in a gully at the foot of the hill. The unfortunate gentleman was Mr. Malcolm Allen (25), of 26 Highbury Quadrant, London. He had arrived at Sligachan Hotel only last Saturday in company with a friend. On Monday, both gentlemen essayed the ascent of Sgurr nan Gillean without the assistance of a guide. The weather was favourable for the purpose, and both were experienced mountaineers. When nearing the summit of the mountain, Mr. Allen, feeling rather tired, decided not to proceed any further, and informed his companion that, after a short rest, he would return to the hotel. His friend, having reached the top, returned to the hotel, when, to his dismay, he found that Mr. Allen had not put in an appearance. The worst fears as to Mr. Allen's safety were not then entertained, as it was thought that he had lost his way in a thick fog that had in the meantime enveloped the mountain. Search parties were, however, immediately organised, and carried on the search in relays throughout Tuesday. Although these were led by experienced guides, no trace of the missing man was discovered until yesterday. The body was examined by a medical gentleman, who formed one of the search party, who gave it as his opinion that the cause of death was compound fracture of the skull; death had been instantaneous.—*Aberdeen Free Press.*

THE CORONER for West Cumberland held an inquest yesterday at Wasdale on Stanley Ridsdale (23), London, bank clerk; Richard Broadrick (31), Master at Fettes College, Edinburgh; DISASTER ON Henry L. Jupp (29), bank clerk; and A. E. W. SCAWFELL. Garrett, clerk at the Guardian Assurance Office, who were killed on Scawfell on Monday. The evidence showed that several parties started from Ritson's Hotel, Wasdale

Head, to explore the wild and grand scenery on the famous mountain. William Edward Webb, of Highgate, London, who was with another party, left his bag on Rake's Progress, and, on returning for it, in the descent his party found Mr. Ridsdale, terribly injured, but alive, at the bottom of a deep ghyll, his comrades being dead. They were roped, and the rope was intact, Mr. Garrett being first, Mr. Broadrick second, Mr. Ridsdale third, and Mr. Jupp fourth. Mr. Ridsdale said, "I have broken both my legs and my back. Go and look after the other chaps". He said they had been climbing nearly five hours when the fall occurred. Presumably one of the party slipped and dragged his friends with him in a vertical fall among the boulders below—a probable distance of 300 or 400 feet. When told his companions were dead, Ridsdale asked, "Cannot you resuscitate them?" Help arrived from the hotel five hours afterwards, Mr. Webb sitting alone in the dark with the sufferer until 10 p.m., when Ridsdale was placed in a hurdle. In the descent the two lanterns were extinguished, and, for the next two or three miles, the party had to literally grope their way over dangerous rocks and loose stones with Ridsdale, who suffered great agony. Twice a mountain torrent was crossed, and a gap was broken in a huge wall to expedite the descent, but about an hour after the start the unhappy sufferer passed away, notwithstanding the close attention of two doctors. It was daylight before the rescuers returned to the hotel. The bodies of Broadrick, Jupp, and Garrett were brought down next day. Broadrick, who stood six feet three in height, became tired in the ascent, and just before the accident changed place with Garrett in the lead. The rope was 160 feet long, each man having about 40 feet. The exact cause of the accident can never be known, but the impression prevails in the dale that the wind, which was strong, fitful, and gusty, had something to do with the disaster, although Mr. Webb does not think so. The deceased were all expert climbers. One at least was not recognised, his skull being crushed down on his chin. Another had a broken neck, while all the bodies were limp and distorted out of all shape. The Coroner, in summing up, said in recent years the climbing of dangerous places seemed to have obtained a strange fascination for people, and it was difficult to understand what pleasure they derived from it. This was a pure accident, and nobody was to blame. A verdict of accidental death was returned.—*Aberdeen Free Press*, 24th September, 1903.

THE August number of the *Strand Magazine* had an article on "The First Ascent of Mount Bryce". "Mount Bryce" is in the Canadian Rocky Mountains, and projects westward from the continental watershed. It was named in 1898 after MOUNT BRYCE. Mr. James Bryce, M.P. for South Aberdeen, who was then President of the Alpine Club. The writer of the article—Rev. James Outram—is also connected with Aberdeen. He is the eldest son of Sir Francis Outram, Bart., his mother being the eldest daughter of the late Mr. Patrick Davidson of Inchmarlo.

ACCORDING to a newspaper paragraph which appeared early in July, two Glasgow gentlemen, Messrs. Inglis and Innes, traversed the Larig, from the Aberdeenshire side to Aviemore, trundling their bicycles with them. Leaving Derry Lodge at 2 a.m., the travellers accomplished the difficult journey in 16 hours, the rate of progression in the Pass being about one mile per hour. The bicycles had to be carried for miles.

IN one of the chapters of his "Life of Gladstone", Mr. Morley supplies "little pictures" of Mr. Gladstone's life as Minister-in-Attendance at Balmoral in 1863, gathered from letters to Mrs. Gladstone. In one letter, Mr. Gladstone says—"This place is on the whole very beautiful and satisfactory; and Deeside at large has lost for me none of its charms, with its black-green fir and grey rock, and its boundless ranges of heather still almost in full bloom". In another he records—"Walked 24½ miles. Found it rather too much for my stiffening limbs. My day of long stretches is, I think, gone by". He was then 53. He subsequently mentions having "a fine hill walk of over three hours" and a nineteen mile walk to Lochnagar, which was very wet. "The Queen", he writes, "sent me a message not to go up Lochnagar (top) if there was mist; and mist there was, with rain to boot. I find the resemblance to Snowdon rather striking. It is 3800 feet; we went up about 3300". He ascended Lochnagar again six days afterwards—"Our party drove to Loch Muick, and then went up, some of us on ponies, some walking. I walked it all, and am not in the least tired, but quite ready, if there were need, to set out for it again. We saw towards the north as far as Caithness. I could not do all that the others did in looking down the precipices, but I managed a little. We had a very steep side to come down, covered with snow and very slippery; I was put to it, and had to come very slow, but Lord C. Fitzroy, like a good Samaritan, kept me company. The day (October 6) was as lovely (after frost and snow on the night) as anything could be, and the whole is voted a great success". Ten years later, however, he walked from Derry Lodge to Kingussie, 33 miles. "Think", he wrote to his daughter Mary, "of my walking a good three and thirty miles last Monday, some of it the roughest ground I ever passed".

ACCOMPANIED by three noted Italian guides and a topographer, Dr. and Mrs. Bullock Workman spent the summer months in exploring the portion of the Himalayas lying to the west and south-west of the Hunza Nagar Valley, and on August 12 last they surpassed the world's record for high climbing for their respective sexes. Mrs. Workman herself held the previous record for women by her ascent in 1899 of Koser Gunga, a peak of the Karahoram Mountains, 21,000 feet high, and the record for men was

the ascent of the highest peak of the Andes, Aconcagua, 23,083 feet. The main camp for the party was pitched at the head of the Chogo Loongma glacier, from whence a high snow peak was approached by successive stages. The final night's camp was fixed at an elevation of 19,355 feet, and steps were cut out a thousand feet higher for the next day's work. Starting at 3 a.m., Dr. and Mrs. Bullock Workman and guides ascended the final cone of the first peak over steep ice-slants rising at an angle of 65 degrees, and they reached the summit, 21,770 feet in four hours. The peak was found to be connected by a ridge with two higher ones, the first of which was scaled by noon. Its altitude is 22,563 feet, or more than 1500 feet higher than Mrs. Bullock Workman's own previous record. Dr. Bullock Workman and two guides went on to attack the second peak, and though time did not permit of their reaching the top, 24,486 feet, they gained an altitude of 23,394 feet, or 111 feet beyond the previous world's record. The party reached their camp at 7 p.m., after 15 hours' walking. Their work for the past season includes the first exploration of four large glaciers and ascents of five new peaks and snow passes varying in height from 17,000 feet to 19,000 feet.

I SPENT the last fortnight of July (1903) at Aviemore, and had ideal weather, not one really bad day during the whole time. I found an exceptional amount of snow on the hills, all the north-facing corries showing patches. The greatest amount was in Coire an Lochain of Braeriach, and the corrie of the same name on Cairngorm.

CAIRN TOUL IN  
JULY.

Around the head of Loch Avon were immense snowfields; that side of Ben Muich Dhui, in fact, showed more white than black. The whole of the west side of Coire Domhain was also buried in a deep wreath of snow. The Garbh Coire, of course, had its usual plentiful supply, the Dee tunnelling its way through the snow for about 50 yards. The morning of the 29th was rather dull and unpromising. The mist was also low down; but I determined to make the best of it. In company with a friend, I passed Coylum Bridge at 7, and walked up Glen Eunach to the Loch bothy. The familiar notice-board at the entrance to the glen has now been removed, and replaced by another—a more generous one—which grants to the visitor the use of the private paths, and permission to explore the mountains and glens of the forest any time throughout the year, except during the shooting season—12th August to 13th October. Similar boards are erected at different parts of the forest of Rothiemurchus. By the time we reached Loch Eunach the morning had not improved much, and as we climbed the Coire Dhondail path rain came on. Soon the mist closed in, and the rain became heavier, so we lay down behind a big stone for nearly three-quarters of an hour. It was bright sunshine when we reached the top of the corrie, although the mist was not very far off. Our course was now south-eastwards, in the direction of Monadh Mor, where, on this fine piece of ground, drained by the head-streams of the Eidart, we

spent the whole forenoon. The place was swarming with deer, and it was nearly 2 o'clock before we thought of moving. Our original programme—Monadh Mor and Beinn Bhrotain—was then out of the question, so we proceeded by Allt Linneach up the slopes of the Angel's Peak. Numerous deer were also seen here, and at one place we found the stream tunnelling under the snow for about a hundred yards. On the summit we met with a cold north wind and driving clouds of mist, but the peeps into the "depths" were very fine. We continued our walk to Cairn Toul, and, on crossing the head of Glen Geusachan, we observed a magnificent herd of deer, 185 stags, moving slowly downwards. The faces of Monadh Mor and Beinn Bhrotain opposite also showed a good deal of snow. When ascending the remaining distance of Cairn Toul, we had fifteen minutes clear view southward—a good view, all the noteworthy tops being recognised, even as far as the Lomonds in Fife. But when the summit was reached (3.45) we were again in gloom, a gloom which never lifted. We left the cairn at 4 o'clock, and descended into Glen Dee, a very steep and treacherous route, and one which requires a good deal of care, as all the blocks covering the slope are loose and sitting on edge, merely waiting the least touch to send them thundering down the slope. The glen was reached at the junction of the two head-streams of the Dee (1976), the mist having stuck close to us all the way. We crossed both streams, and got on to the path at 5.45, just as rain came on once more. Then came the walk to Aviemore; and what a walk it was, through the Larig Ghru, in thick mist and gathering night, against a strong, cold wind, and rain in torrents. The very deer stood in wonderment at seeing human figures on such a night; but we stuck to it manfully, passed the Pools of Dee at 6.10, Aultdrue at 8, and reached home at 9.—W. BARCLAY.

THE 1903 Summer Excursion of the Club was made to Ben Lomond, *via* Aberfoyle. The main party left Aberdeen for "the clachan" on the afternoon of 17th July, making the Bailie Nicol BEN LOMOND. Jarvie Hotel their headquarters. An early start was made the following morning, driving by the north side of Loch Ard to the neighbourhood of Loch Dhu, the tail-piece of Loch Chon. Thence an excellent path crosses the ridge to Gleann Dubh. A halt was enjoyed at Stuc a' Bhuic, one of the two houses at the head of that glen—Comer is the other—and the milk supply considerably reduced. The ascent was then made by the left bank of Allt Mor. An hour was spent on the summit, and the superb view enjoyed—the trigonometrical points are given at page 165 in Vol. I. of the *Journal*—Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine being seen to particular advantage. The horizon was wonderfully clear, except to the southward. A message was found on the top from several of the members who had travelled *via* Glasgow, and so made the climb from Rowardennan. The descent was made by the same route, most of the members returning to Aberdeen the same evening, but two or three remained over the week-end and paid a visit to Ben A'an and Loch Katrine.

INTEREST in the somewhat novel contest of ascending Ben Nevis against time was revived yesterday, when a race took place from the Post Office at Fort-William to the

ASCENDING BEN NEVIS summit of the mountain and back. Three

"AGAINST TIME". competitors took part in the race, viz.:—  
Ewan MacKenzie, Blar-mae-Hfoldach, Fort-

William; Hugh Kennedy, Achnacarry; and Robert Dobson, a member of the Maryhill Harriers. The day, while somewhat sultry, was otherwise an ideal one for the exploit, and large crowds of people assembled to witness both the start and the finish of the mountain race. At 12.30 the competitors were started at the Post Office, and the three kept pretty well together till the base of the mountain was reached, where, owing to the narrowness of the path, single file had to be resorted to. Up to the half-way station, MacKenzie and Kennedy were not far separated, but at this point the former put on a spurt and soon outdistanced his companion, Dobson meanwhile being well in the rear. The previous best record for the double journey has for some time been held by MacDonald, of Leith, his time being 2 hours 18 minutes, and many surmises were indulged in as to the prospect of this record being beaten. MacKenzie reached the goal almost in eight minutes less than the time occupied by MacDonald. His different times were:—Ascent, 1 hour 27 minutes; descent, 43 minutes 6 4-5 seconds; total, 2 hours 10 minutes 6 4-5 seconds. Kennedy, who arrived second, took 2 hours 20 minutes 21 3-5 seconds. Both these competitors, although toil-stained by their arduous performance, were quite fit, and, after a bath and a rub down, appeared none the worse for the exploit. Dobson retired at an early stage of the race, having found hill-climbing entirely different work to the cross country running to which he is accustomed. The prizes consisted of a gold medal, several pieces of silver plate, &c., and these were presented in the evening. To the uninitiated such an accomplishment may not appear to be of much moment, but when it is borne in mind that the distance covered is equivalent to 15 miles, and that the average gradient on the mountain is about 1 in 5, some idea of the nature of the feat will be apparent. To cover the above distance on the flat in the time MacKenzie took would be no mean performance, but when it is a case of avoiding boulders, bogs, and ravines, and piloting one's way through mist, the value of the performance is greatly enhanced. MacKenzie, who is about thirty years of age, is in the employment of the Scottish Meteorological Society as road-man on Ben Nevis. He is over six feet in height, of robust constitution, and from the nature of his calling he was in first-class training for the climb.—*Scotsman*, 29th September, 1903.

THE Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Club was held on 22nd December, 1903—the Chairman, Mr. Robert Harvey, presiding. The

following were appointed Office-bearers and

OUR FIFTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING. Members of Committee:—President, The Right Hon. James Bryce, D.C.L., LL.D., M.P.; Vice-Presidents, Alexander Copland and Robert

Anderson; Chairman, John M'Gregor; Secretary, A. I. M'Connochie, C.A., 115 Union Street, Aberdeen; Treasurer, T. R. Gillies, advocate, 181A Union Street, Aberdeen; Committee—John Clarke, John Croll, George Duncan, J. A. Hadden, Robert Harvey, William Porter, James A. Ross, Rev. Robert Semple, James Smith, and John Wallace. Mr. Harvey was thanked for his conduct in the chair during his term of office.

The Spring Excursion was fixed for Coyles of Muick; the Summer for Sgoran Dubh and Braeriach. It was resolved to have a Saturday afternoon excursion to Cairn-mon-earn on 16th April; the question of other such excursions being remitted to the Committee.

The following new members have been admitted:—W. M. M'Pherson, John H. Will, William Davidson, J. D. W. Stewart, and H. Stewart.

## REVIEWS.

"THE VERTEBRATE FAUNA OF 'DEE'", by George Sim, A.L.S., has just been published by D. Wyllie & Son, Aberdeen (price 12s. 6d.).

THE  
VERTEBRATE  
FAUNA OF "DEE".

This volume fills up the blank, left by arrangement, in the Harvie-Brown—Buckley Series of Scottish Faunas, and is, of course, destined to become the standard work for the North-East of Scotland. Mr. Sim may be said to have given a lifetime to his subject, and he now shows his competency to deal, in formal order, with the intricacies and subtleties of the Fauna of the district which he has made peculiarly his own. The mountaineer will find much to interest him in the Fauna of "Dee"; without some knowledge of Natural History, hill-climbing is robbed of half its charms.

"MOORS, CRAGS, AND CAVES OF THE HIGH PEAK AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD" is the title of a handsomely-got-up, illustrated book just published by John Heywood, Manchester (price 6s.

MOORS, CRAGS, AND CAVES. net). The author is our contributor, Mr. Ernest A. Baker, M.A., whose acquaintance with the Peak

District is excelled by none, and he has the advantage of being able to make his descriptions interesting to others than expert climbers. Scotland need not grudge Derbyshire its Moors and Crags, but when it comes to a question of Caves, that English county shows the utter poverty of Scotland in underground climbing. "Right in the centre of England, midway between Sheffield and Manchester, at the threshold of the world's most populous cluster of manufacturing towns, there lies this broad area of wild country, as lone and untamed as any south of Cheviot". Peakland culminates in Kinder Scout, which in a number of places rises above the 2000 feet level, where now and again tourists and keepers do not see things in the same light. Winter climbs are apparently much in



favour in the Peak District. Cave-work has attained to the dignity of being recognised as a sport. The exploration of caves has its own peculiar fascinations, discomforts, and dangers, and therefore can never lack devotees. "First, of course, must be put the beauty and sublimity that lie concealed in the subterranean darkness. . . . A stream on the surface of the ground is a beautiful, or may be a grand object; but put the same stream in a deep cavern, or a stream that is not half so big and powerful, and the impression it makes on the senses of those who see and hear it, is incomparably greater. . . . Then there is the zest of possible discovery."

THAT the literary praise of walking is not extinct may be gathered from the following passage by a modern writer, Halliwell Sutcliffe, in "A Bachelor in Arcady":—"Your walker is  
 A MODERN VIEW. always a sociable fellow; he has the freemasonry of one who takes men and weather as he finds them, and he will talk—by stream, or highway, or in the cosy, firelit tavern-room—for as long as you need his company. He can be happy alone, content with company; he carries in his knapsack a flask, a bit of cheese and bread, a stray addition to his toilet, and with these he can start out and know himself the rarest thing in the world of men—a freeman. He has had no freedom of the city granted him, but a more honourable privilege, and one seldom gained—the freedom of the country—has long since been conceded to him. Consider how few fetters he carries of the sort we willingly put on under the name of worldly prosperity; he has left his house behind him, and has no care of gear; he can climb with the sun, and take his bite and sup at noon by some cool moorland stream, and afterwards move downward till the gloaming light warns him that the sun and he must go to bed. He may be far from house or inn; what matters it? If the night be fair, he will take the stars for roof; if wet, there is rarely a hill slope so forlorn but it has a byre of some sort dotted here and there. He is free in his very carelessness as to his lodging-place, and the men who are tied by the needs of blankets and a roof seem little short of serfs to our Freed-Man of the country".

THE portion of the Scottish Mountaineering Club Guide Book appearing in the September number of that Club's *Journal* is devoted to the Central Cairngorms. It extends over 40  
 GUIDE TO THE pages, and is very exhaustive and correct. Due  
 CAIRNGORMS. acknowledgment is made that a great deal of the information given about the view from the summit of Ben Muich Dhui has been got from "the very admirable and unique series of articles dealing with the subject" [in the *C.C.J.*] "and tables prepared by Mr. Alexander Copland, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Cairngorm Club. Mr. Copland has, after countless disappointments, owing to weather conditions, and consequently with untiring energy and great labour, made complete sketch maps of the horizon from Ben Muich Dhui, for which all interested in the mountains of Scotland must ever be indebted to him".