

## REVIEWS.

“**ABERDEENSHIRE**,” by Alexander Mackie, M.A. (Cambridge : University Press—1/6).—This is one of the volumes of the series of Cambridge County Geographies, in which geography is presented in a fashion as attractive as it is novel; and probably **NEW GEOGRAPHY** Aberdeenshire has, within the compass of 200 pages, **OF** never before been delineated so comprehensively, or in **ABERDEENSHIRE.** such a fascinating style. The little work might be compared with a typographical sketch of “Aberdeen and the North-East of Scotland,” published in 1877, which covers much the same ground; but the comparison is all in favour of the new production, to which the other—valuable and useful though it is, and by no means to be despised—is mere “dry-as-dust.”

Mr. Mackie has the happy faculty of irradiating any topic he tackles, and making it entertaining; and in his hands Aberdeenshire is rendered exceedingly interesting. To illuminative descriptions of the natural features and general characteristics of the shire he adds accounts of the geology and the flora and fauna, the river valleys and the coast line, the weather and the climate. Then he deals with the industries of the county, dwelling naturally on the development of agriculture, and showing how important a factor the turnip has been in that development—an instance of the apposite illustrations by which Mr. Mackie elucidates his subject. The history of the country is next handled—to compress it into eight pages is a veritable *tour de force*; and this is supplemented by an account of the antiquities—stone circles, sculptured stones, &c. Finally, in four admirable sections replete with information, Mr. Mackie describes in succession the ecclesiastical, castellated, municipal, and domestic architecture of the county. This is somewhat of a new feature in a “geography,” but it shows the wide range of the topics which Mr. Mackie utilises for instruction.

Those of us who have had, slowly and at odd times, to acquire a tittle or the information conveyed in this little work, may well envy the pupils of to-day, who have the opportunity of imbibing it as part of their ordinary lessons; but we need be none the less grateful for a handy manual by which we may profit quite as well as the youngsters. The admirable letterpress is supplemented by about 80 illustrations, but though there are views of Ballater and Braemar, and even Inverey, and of Loch Avon and Ben Muich Dhui, Loch Muick, and Loch Callater, there is no picture of Lochnagar, notwithstanding that Mr. Mackie says, and says correctly—“Its contour lines, which are somewhat more sharply curved than is usual in the Deeside hills, and the well-balanced distribution of its great mass make it easily recognised from a wide distance. This partly explains the pre-eminence which notwithstanding its inferiority of height it undoubtedly possesses.”—R.A.

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“THE FOOTPATH WAY: An Anthology for Walkers,” with an Introduction by Hilaire Belloc. (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd.—2/6).—This

is a little volume of “elegant extracts” from writers who have extolled walking, and preached something like a gospel of pedestrianism. It is on much the same lines as SELECTIONS FOR PEDESTRIANS. “The Voice of the Mountains” and Mr. Quiller Couch’s “The Pilgrims’ Way,” noticed in the preceding volume of the *C.C.J.*, only that, with the single exception of Walt Whitman’s “Song of the Open Road,” the selections are in prose, and are of much greater length. To many mountaineers several of the articles and papers here reproduced must be familiar, such as Hazlitt’s “On Going a Journey,” R. L. Stevenson’s “Walking Tours,” and Leslie Stephen’s “In Praise of Walking,” and some of the fraternity, no doubt, have already made the acquaintance of “Walking, and the Wild,” by H. D. Thoreau, and “The Exhilarations of the Road,” by John Burroughs. Very varied are the eulogies on walking paid by the writers named, and not all of us, perhaps, view the pastime in the exalted fashion which they favour. Thoreau, for instance, could discover “a sort of harmony” between the capabilities of the landscape within the limits of an afternoon walk and the three score years and ten of human life; and according to Burroughs, “all the shining angels accompany the man who goes afoot, while all the dark spirits are ever looking out for a chance to ride.” Walkers with practical aims before them may not always have their minds attuned to high sentiments like these, and may possibly prefer the narratives of walks and descriptions of scenery culled from the pages of Scott, Dickens, De Quincey, and George Borrow, and, not least, Dr. John Bown’s delightful paper on “Minchmoor.” The volume, in a way, is suited to every taste, and readers, while they will find abundance of reflection and rhapsody, will encounter also much observation of a discriminating nature, charmingly expressed.—R.A.

THE following verses, which appeared in *Punch* on July 26th, apply primarily to deer-stalking, but as they must appeal to mountaineers as well, their reproduction is justified:—

BALLADE  
OF THE  
FOREST.

Fra Cruachan tae Aberdeen  
The hinds ’ll move their calves soon  
Up frae the bracken’s bonnie green  
To yon blue heights that float aboon;  
Nae snaws the tops an’ corries croon;  
Craggs whaur the eagle lifts his kills  
Blink i’ the gowden efternoon;  
It’s summer noo in a’ the hills!

The heather sleeps frae morn till e’en  
Braw in her reed-an’-purple goon;  
Sax weeks it wants or stags be clean  
An’ gang wi’ thickenin’ manes an’ broun,  
Waitin’ the cauld October moon  
When a’ the roarin brae-face fills—  
Ye’ve heard yon wild, wanchancy tune?  
It’s summer noo in a’ the hills!



Yet blows a soupin' breeze an' keen ;  
 We're wearit for it whiles in toun,  
 An' I wad be whaur I hae been  
 In Autumn's blast or heats o' June  
 Upon the quiet forest groun'  
 Friens wi' the sun, or shoor that chills,  
 Watchin' the beasts gang up an' doon ;  
 It's summer noo in a' the hills !

## ENVOY.

Mountains o' deer, ye ca' a loon  
 Fra streets an' sic-like stoury ills  
 Wi' thankfu' heart and easy shoon ;  
 It's summer noo in a' the hills !

JOURNAL OF THE FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB, No. 5.—This number, the second of Vol. 2, contains a variety of articles interesting to mountaineers everywhere, although the Club directs its operations to the English Lake District. It is only to be expected, therefore, that attention should primarily be devoted to such subjects as "Climbing in the Buttermere Valley," "Fell-Walking at Buttermere," and "The Rock-Climber's plants of Lakeland." There is a paper, however, on "The Coolin From End to End," dealing with the one day's traverse of the whole of the Coolin ridge in Skye, which one of the plucky pair who performed it describes in the October number of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*. The excellent photographic reproductions are a feature: that of Rannoch Moor is by no means one of the best, but it conveys none the less an adequate impression of the expanse and dreariness of the scene in winter.

IN commenting on the issue of the index to our first six Volumes which appeared in No. 36 of *C.C.J.*; the Editor of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* anticipated pleasure in comparing our index with the forthcoming one of that journal. The comparison can now be made as the long looked for publication is before us, and we take the opportunity of expressing our deep sense of admiration for the manner in which the work has been done. It fills a closely printed volume of some 300 pages, and forms a complete, yet simple, guide to the *Journal*, from which information on practically every hill in Scotland can be obtained. It is not without considerable pride that we observe that the Index has been compiled by our two Club-members—Mr. William Garden and Mr. James A. Parker—and their fellow-members would take this opportunity of expressing, not only their admiration for the great skill with which the work has been undertaken, but also their very hearty thanks for such a ready reference to the literature of our Scottish Mountains.

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 THE SCOTTISH  
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 CLUB JOURNAL  
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WRITING on "Mountaineering as a Sport for Soldiers" in "Leinsters' Magazine," Mr. L. S. Amery remarks that, quite apart from the question of warfare in mountain countries, climbing affords a training for soldiering in general which no other sport can equal. In no other sport, except in big-game shooting, are the conditions so near those of active campaigning. The long days, the early starts—often soon after midnight—the frequent bivouacs, the importance of supply and transport, all reproduce the features of war which bulk so much larger in the soldier's experience than the occasional interludes of battle. Every mountaineer is an expert—or fancies himself one—on the question of supplies. No mountaineer would have dreamt of supplying an army with 4lb. tins of preserved meat, as the War Office did in South Africa. There can be few better tests of the essential qualities of leadership than a really critical moment on a mountain, declares Mr. Amery—"Climbing has its value for the soldier as a training in dealing with danger, a better training in that respect than most sports can afford. The risks incidental to climbing are often ludicrously exaggerated. A week of hot weather is regularly attended in this country by a harvest of bathing fatalities almost as large as the Alpine death-roll in a whole month. Of the accidents which do happen in the mountains, the great majority are not really accidents at all, but the almost inevitable consequences of ignorance or gross carelessness; only a very small proportion represent the real dangers inseparable from serious climbing. In any case, it is not the actual danger incurred, but the surmounting and avoiding of danger by the use of skill and judgment, that gives climbing its fascination and its value. The delight of the mountaineer is not in the prospect of sudden death, but in the subconscious sense of absolute security and mastery over nature with which he traverses places where the ignorant and inexperienced would meet with certain disaster. No mountaineer gratuitously exposes himself to the chance of an accident, any more than a soldier seeks unnecessary opportunities for getting shot."

"DEESIDE," painted by William Smith, Junr., described by Robert Anderson. Adam and Charles Black, London: Price, 7/6 net.

It was with very real pleasure that we read this, the "DEESIDE" latest addition to the series of Beautiful Books issued by Messrs. Black. The valley of the Royal Dee bulks so largely in the life of most members of our club that it is specially pleasing to us that the task of writing this volume should have been entrusted to Robert Anderson, one of the vice presidents, and an original member of our club. Mr. Anderson has drawn from his extensive historical knowledge of Deeside, and has produced a fascinating volume. The river is traced from the grizzly cliffs of Braeriach, where it rises, through Glen Dee to Braemar, and on by Balmoral to the villages of the valley, till it loses itself in the ample waters of the North Sea. In dealing with the head waters of the river, Mr. Anderson is specially delightful. He tells us of the days when the Larig Ghru was used as a means of intercommunication between



rapid Spey and the Royal Dee, "but now," he says, "the pass is seldom traversed except by ghillies and foresters, or by pedestrians ambitious to add the feat of 'doing' it to their 'record.'" Mr. Anderson's definition of a "forest" on page 15, will correct a misconception which exists in the minds of many.

The chapter on Braemar is specially interesting and the Author deals in a masterly manner with the historical incidents of this village and draws attention to the fact that the ancient forest of Mar, was a favourite hunting-ground of the early Scottish kings. The prominent part taken by the Earl of Mar in the Jacobite risings is also fully dealt with. The chapter on Balmoral gives a very full and entertaining account of the doings of Royalty since Queen Victoria and Prince Consort first visited Deeside in 1842. Abergeldie Castle and Strathgirnock and the many stirring incidents connected with both, are graphically described and fresh interest is cast round these romantic spots. The river is traced through Ballater on by placid Cambus O' May to the softer scenes around Aboyne and Kincardine O' Neil.

The Castles of Crathes and Drum and all the historical incidents connected with them are treated in a charming way. At last the river and our story end at Aberdeen which is dealt with in a short but fresh description. Its University, its Commerce and "School" of Aberdeen painters are each touched upon. The illustrations of "Deeside" are the work of William Smith, Junior, a member of the Aberdeen "School" of painters, of whom Aberdonians are justly proud, Mr. Smith has caught the spirit of the scenes he paints. Every illustration is a perfect picture and it would be futile to point out any outstanding one. We have a preference for the "Queen's View" between Braemar and Inverey, perhaps partly because this particular scene has been associated with so many happy pilgrimages to the Cairngorms, but every view from Braeriach to Torry is excellent, and the entire volume is a credit to all parties concerned in its compilation and publication.

J. G. K.