

The following members have been admitted to the Club since last Annual Meeting :—

- E. W. Watt, 33 Carlton Place, Aberdeen.
 G. A. Smith, Solicitor, Aberdeen.
 James Ellis, Rubislaw Den South, Aberdeen.
 Dr. J. Crombie, 4 Golden Square, Aberdeen.
 J. W. Henderson, 55 Westburn Road, Aberdeen.
 Miss Tarbet, Dalhousie Terrace, Perth Road, Dundee.
 Dr. J. L. M'Intyre, Abbotsville, Cults, Aberdeen.
 J. C. Duffus, 11 Queen's Gardens, Aberdeen.
 Charles Diack, County Buildings, Aberdeen.
 Macgregor Skene, Avondow, Milltimber, Aberdeen.
 Dr. A. W. Gibb, 1 Belvidere Street, Aberdeen.
 Dr. Ian Struthers Stewart, 13 Castle Terrace, Edinburgh.
 J. M'Coss, 127 Union Street, Aberdeen.

REVIEWS.

THE CHARM OF THE HILLS. By Seton Gordon, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U. (London: Cassell & Company, Ltd.—10/6 net.)—Mr. Seton Gordon's personal knowledge of Scottish mountains, particularly those of the Cairngorm range, and his faculty for writing about them attractively, have been demonstrated in the columns of the *C.C.J.*, as well as elsewhere; and the pleasure of welcoming this creditable addition to mountaineering literature is enhanced by the fact that it emanates from an esteemed contributor. The work, in one sense, can hardly be deemed new, for it consists of a selection from the many articles which Mr. Gordon has contributed to various papers and magazines during the past few years. But it serves to bring into view, more effectively than the separate articles possibly could do, Mr. Gordon's qualities as a mountaineer and observer, and the large amount of good, solid, and valuable work he has accomplished. For Mr. Gordon is no climber of mountains merely in response to the "charm of the hills" which he himself feels so intensely, or for the sole purpose of penning graphic descriptions of the views obtainable from their summits. He is a student of the wild life of the mountains—of the haunts and habits of the eagle and the osprey, the ptarmigan and the snow bunting, the deer and the grouse; and many of his charming nature studies are incorporated in his new volume. These studies were made at all hours and amid all the vicissitudes of Cairngorm climate: Mr. Gordon has traversed the Larig at the dead of night and photographed the snow bunting before six o'clock in the morning; he has been overtaken by blizzards and "scoficed" with heat. The result of his indefatigable labours is that we have a series of sketches of birds and animals (birds particularly) of an almost unique kind, obtained close at hand. Mr. Gordon has penetrated to several eyries of the golden

eagle, for instance, and has learned some curious things about the monarch of birds, such as that he is not alarmed by the human voice, and is able to make rapid progress against a strong head wind with hardly a movement of his wings. Characteristics of other denizens of the high ranges have been perceived and noted by this acute and accurate observer; and the book rapidly passes from accounts of mountain ascents to detailed descriptions of the birds and animals seen or to be seen—a transition that somehow seems perfectly natural, and is at any rate cheerfully acquiesced in by the reader, so fascinating is the narrative. A series of minor nature sketches at the end depicts “The Year on the Hill”—the progress of the seasons as marked by the nesting of birds and the rearing of the young, the appearance and disappearance of snow, etc. The admirable illustrations from photographs by the author, of which there are no fewer than eighty-four, constitute a special feature of a singularly attractive volume. It is to be regretted that a little more revision was not exercised, many of the articles—not unnaturally, in their original form—conveying identical information. That Ben Muich Dhui is the second highest mountain in Scotland is repeated we know not how often, just as is the intimation that the pools of Dee must not be confounded with the Wells of Dee.

R. A.

WALKS ROUND ABERDEEN. By Robert Anderson.—Every mountaineer knows that the pleasure of any big expedition is marred unless he is absolutely fit. To keep in this condition frequent “tramps” are essential. Should any member of the Club lack encouragement to take these tramps in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen this excellent publication certainly provides that encouragement.

The walks described are twelve in number, but many interesting variations of the twelve principal walks are suggested. Any one who does these walks and takes Mr. Anderson's book with him will find matter of interest at every turn. He will have that ideal companion who, while full of most interesting topographical information, is quite unbiassed as to the route to be taken. It is a book no member of the Club should be without.

THE October number of the S.M.C. Journal maintains the usual high standard of that publication. The frontispiece is a fine engraving of Coire Lagan, Skye. Mr. and Mrs. Douglas continue their THE SCOTTISH account of the “Islands of Loch Awe,” and Dr. W. MOUNTAINEER. Inglis Clark contributes an interesting and beautifully illustrated account of an expedition along the ridge Aonach ING CLUB Eagach (the notched hill), in Glencoe. The number JOURNAL, OCTOBER, 1912. contains an interesting account of some strenuous work in Ardgour, and a member of the Cairngorm Club—Mr. Henry Alexander, Junior—has a very good article dealing with an account by the Hon. Mrs. Murray Anst of her visit to the Scottish Highlands in the eighteenth century. There is a short account of the opening of the Cairngorm Club's Bridge over the Allt na Beinne Moire.

THE *Spectator* of October 26, in a notice of Mr. W. A. B. Coolidge's "Alpine Studies," says—"Mountaineers will value not least the chapter on his dog Tchingel, who climbed for many years with her master. She liked red wine, but took later to weak tea, and howled for pure joy. The ice used to cut her paws, but she refused to wear leather shoes. Apart from numerous passes and smaller peaks, she ascended the Aletschhorn, Grand Combin, Monte Rosa, Eiger, Jungfrau, Mönch, Finsteraarhorn, Wetterhorn, and Mont Blanc. She died of old age in Surrey in 1879, after a mountaineering career which would have done credit to most men."

"THE PHYSICAL GEOLOGY OF THE DEE VALLEY," by Alexander Bremner, M.A., B.Sc. (Aberdeen: University Press).—The Aberdeen Natural History and Antiquarian Society contemplates the publication of a Survey of the Natural History and Antiquities of the Valley of the Dee, the work, when completed, to occupy four volumes, dealing respectively with the geology, zoology, botany, and antiquities of the area formerly the watershed of the river. It is purposed, however, to publish separately, from time to time, the various papers which (presumably as lectures to the Society originally), will eventually constitute the work; and the first paper to make its appearance is Mr. Bremner's on the physical geology of the region—a paper, we are told, which is the result of years of patient investigation in the field. Mr. Bremner deals very fully with the geological features of Deeside, specifically treating of the probable age and origin of the valley, the relation between the course of the river and its tributaries, the effects of ice on the physical features of the district, the scenic effects due to the nature of the rocks, and so on. Though essentially a scientific exposition of a rather abstruse subject, there is much in the paper to interest even those who are apt to regard Deeside merely as "a playground"—a health and holiday resort. Mountaineers, in particular, who are in the habit of roaming about the sources of the Dee will find much information calculated to give an added zest to their wanderings. Mr. Bremner, for example, discourses on the rapid fall of the Dee, and explains how its gradient is affected by the rock-barriers it encounters, stating—what may not be generally known—that the deep channel eroded in the solid rock near Dinnet is the most typical rock-gorge in the whole course of the Dee. He also explains how the Feshie has wormed its way back into the gathering ground of the Geldie, and drawn off to the Spey the upper section of the stream which originally flowed into the Dee. He further regards it as probable that the Eidart once was tributary to the original Geldie—the Feshie-Geldie, he calls it—and sent its waters down to the North Sea by way of the Dee; and altogether he regards it as "likely that 69 square miles of territory have been filched from the upper basin of the Dee." Mr. Bremner finds it difficult to account for the Linn of Dee. "At the present waterfall, if waterfall it can be called," he says, "we do not find hard and soft rocks in juxtaposition, so that the ordinary *raison d'être* does not apply.

But just where the gorge below the linn opens out we find a small dyke, apparently of lamprophyre. The lamprophyre offered much greater resistance to erosion and weathering than the adjoining rock, and the dyke at one time probably formed the lip of a waterfall. A pot-hole was excavated on its down-stream side. Deprived of support by the removal of rock on that side, it would, from its narrowness, be readily taken down, and the river would commence to cut its way back into the moine schists above." It may also be noted that Mr. Bremner discredits the supposition that in Loch Kinnord we have the remnant of a once larger lake gradually drained by the removal of its retaining barrier—a view stoutly maintained by the late Rev. J. G. Michie in his book on "Loch Kinnord." R. A.

"BEAUTIFUL LAKELAND," by Ashley P. Abraham (Keswick: G. P. Abraham).—The beauties of the English Lake district are here presented to us in 32 full-page monogravure illustrations by Mr. G. P. Abraham, and those who are familiar with Mr. Abraham's ENGLISH LAKE photographic work—and what mountaineer is not—need DISTRICT. no assurance as to the excellence of the pictures. Mr.

Ashley Abraham furnishes a running commentary on the pictures, which amounts practically to a guide to the district, divided into chapters dealing respectively with Windermere and Ambleside, Grasmere and Rydal, Thirlmere and Derwentwater, Ullswater and Helvellyn, and so on. He writes enthusiastically, but his enthusiasm, perfectly warranted as it is, does not lead him to undue excess. He is candid enough, for example, to admit that Keswick is not remarkable for beauty, while of Ullswater he says, and says correctly, "seeming paradox" though it may appear, that it is "at once the finest and the tamest of all the lakes," this because it consists of three distinct reaches of varying quality. Mr. Abraham claims for the Lake district that it "contains more natural beauty, more literary associations, and more diversity of charm than any other similar area on the whole of the earth's surface"—a bold claim, but one not likely to be challenged, and certainly not to be upset. Wordsworth's name, of course, is imperishably associated with the region, but Mr. Abraham maintains that the poet Gray "was the real discoverer of Lakeland. He was the first person of note to visit it, which he did in 1767, and his writings and descriptions of the scenery did much to make it known to the outside world." R. A.

"SCRAMBLES AMONGST THE ALPS," by Edward Whymper (Thomas Nelson & Sons).—The addition of Mr. Whymper's well-known work to Nelson's shilling series of reprints brings within easy reach a book that should be read and studied by every mountaineer. Not only is it interesting as an account of numerous Alpine ascents, and positively charming in some of the descriptions of the views obtained, but its chief attraction lies in the record of patience and perseverance, and of that combination of caution and endurance so essential in mountain climbing that is fraught with danger. "Those who

would, but cannot, stand upon the highest Alps," wrote Mr. Whymper, "may console themselves with the knowledge that they do not usually yield the views that make the strongest and most permanent impressions." Many of us are obliged to be content with an occasional ascent of mountains of much lesser height nearer home, but we may learn a great deal, nevertheless, from Mr. Whymper's experiences and observations. Not the least valuable lesson to be gained, perhaps, is that of fortitude under circumstances of discouragement. The ascent of the Matterhorn was only accomplished by Mr. Whymper after half-a-dozen attempts had failed. Each successive failure but intensified his determination to return and "lay siege to the mountain until one or the other was vanquished."

Some sentences from Mr. Whymper's concluding remarks in eulogy (or defence) of mountaineering may be quoted—

"I have not made myself either an advocate or an apologist for mountaineering, nor do I now intend to usurp the functions of a moralist; but my task would have been ill performed if it had been concluded without one reference to the more serious lessons of the mountaineer. We glory in the physical regeneration which is the product of our exertions; we exult over the grandeur of the scenes that are brought before our eyes, the splendours of sunrise and sunset, and the beauties of hill, dale, lake, wood, and waterfall; but we value more highly the development of manliness, of the evolution, under combat with difficulties, of those noble qualities of human nature—courage, patience, endurance, and fortitude.

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"The recollections of past pleasures cannot be effaced. Even now, as I write, they crowd up before me. First comes an endless series of pictures, magnificent in form, effect, and colour. I see the great peaks, with clouded tops, seeming to mount up for ever and ever; I hear the music of the distant herds, the peasant's jodel, and the solemn church bells, and I scent the fragrant breath of the pines; and after these have passed away another train of thoughts succeeds—of those who have been upright, brave, and true; of kind hearts and bold deeds; and of courtesies received from stranger hands, trifles in themselves, but expressive of the good will towards men which is the essence of charity."

R. A.

A MEMBER writes—I lately came across, among some newspaper cuttings, an article on "Glen Ey and 'The Mountains of Hell'," which appeared in the *Aberdeen Free Press* on 18th August, 1906. The

"THE MOUNTAINS OF HELL" mountains that bear this rather odious title are at the head of Glen Ey, their proper names being Beinn Iutharn Mhor (3424 feet), and Beinn Iutharn Bheag (3011 feet), the Gaelic for, respectively, the big and the little mountain of hell. The writer was evidently at a loss for the origin of such a disagreeable appellation. "The Mountains of Hell," he wrote, "are probably as much entitled to their peculiar name as are the 'Mountains of the Moon' in Central Africa. The Gaels were adepts in nomenclature, and where some pronounced natural feature was not apparent, a historical or other incident was enough

to suggest a name which remained when the circumstances were utterly forgotten. There is nothing in the appearance of the Ben Uarns—to give the popular spelling and pronunciation—suggestive of the lower regions, but all the same they are very interesting, though grassy mountains. Their height alone renders them worthy of notice, while their situation gives them peculiar claims on the hill-climbing fraternity. On the march between Aberdeen and Perthshire, Mar and Atholl, they are excellently situated for a magnificent prospect—a view, however, which comparatively few mountaineers have the pleasure of enjoying. The southern and western slopes of the big Ben Uarn are in the forest of Fealar, an important section of the royal forest of Atholl, and few deer-stalkers seek to render their mountain recesses popular. The Aberdeenshire approach, Glen Ey, is also a *mare clausum*, except indeed to the Colonel's Bed, and few care to brave the hill watchers or negotiate for special permission with unnecessary restrictions and pecuniary obligations." Speaking more particularly of the view from the summit of Ben Uarn Mor, he added—"It is one of the finest in the Central Highlands, for no sooner has the keen observer picked out some noted and distant mountain on the horizon than another claims attention—and another, till at last even the experts in such matters will have difficulty in placing many of the faint forms in the far distance. There is nothing more dreary to read than a catalogue of mountains as seen from a given point, so no list is given here, but as an indication of its possible length it may be stated that two hours at least is necessary for the complete identification of the extraordinary prospect." Some correspondence followed in the columns of the *Free Press*, and also in *Scottish Notes and Queries*, as to the meaning of "The Mountains of Hell," or the origin of the term, but no satisfactory explanation was forthcoming. An article on "The Ben Uarns" by Mr. John Ritchie, LL.B., appeared in the *C. C. J.*, July, 1902 (Vol. IV.) The mountains formed the objective of the summer excursion of the Club, 1906, and were also visited and climbed in a blizzard at the Easter Meet, 1911.