

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

THE past summer was an exceedingly capricious one, with an excessive and quite unusual amount of rain. June in particular was very wet.

On Lower Deeside there were heavy showers on twenty days, giving a total rainfall for the month of 4.37 ins.—

THE LINNS IN FLOOD. quite a phenomenal figure, the records for the seven preceding years being respectively 1.31, .84, 2.07, 2.24, 1.97, .68, and 1.24 ins. The Braemar district was somewhat

more fortunate, but it had a "downpour" in the first week of July. Rain fell heavily on the afternoon of Tuesday the 4th, and continued to fall all night and throughout the following day. Thursday was fairly dry, but in the evening there was a thunderstorm in the region beyond the Linn of Dee, and later at Braemar the rain "came down in torrents" and continued for 36 hours. The rivers were all greatly swollen in consequence; and on the Saturday morning it occurred to a visitor to Braemar—a member of the Club, we believe—to mount his bicycle and sally forth to see what like the Linns were. He furnished a graphic and interesting account to the *Free Press* of the 10th, the chief points of which deserve to be reproduced, constituting as they do an exceptional and in a way unique record. At the Linn of Corriemulzie he found that "the familiar picture was gone, and instead an unusually grand spectacle was presented, the rock over which the water descends being covered completely from side to side, with no bare portion in the middle." The volume of water at the bridge of Ey suggested that the Colonel's Bed would be well worth visiting, but the temptation was resisted and the journey to the Linn of Dee was continued. "Here," wrote our observer, "one is usually impressed by the blackness of the water, and the slow, silent swirl of the pools. To-day all was changed. The channel was full of raging waters, across which no one, even the most foolhardy, could have dared to leap. In the pools at the lower part of the Linn there was a cauldron of seething brown. The noise was deafening, and the sight one not soon to be forgotten." Returning to Braemar by the road on the north side of the Dee, the observer noted that the fine curved rush of the Lui above the bridge "was at its best"; and of the Quoich he said—"The Linn of Quoich was, if anything, more impressive than the Linn of Dee. I had visited the Quoich in the beginning of the week and the change was most remarkable. The volume of water was mightily increased; no Punch Bowl was to be seen; and below the bridge the water was boiling with exceeding violence." From here onward the negotiation of the bicycle was attended with difficulty, many parts of the road being under water owing to an enormous back-flow from the river. Ultimately, the cycle with its rider had to be transferred to the higher road leading to the Aberarder road, the south Deeside road being reached near the Invercauld bridge. Here was presented the final spectacle of the day. "The view of the Dee from the old Invercauld

bridge is at all times striking. Between the two bridges there is a fine sweep of the river, and below the old bridge the water is much broken by rocks. With the river in full flood as it was to-day, the spectacle was truly magnificent." The correspondent was amply justified when, in concluding his story, he describes his round as "a memorable morning's tour." He is to be congratulated upon so speedily and so vividly delineating his impressions of the rare scenes he witnessed.

A WORK on "Our Western Hills" was favourably reviewed in the first volume of the *C.C.J.* (pp. 109-10); one of the tops there included is Ballagioch. In Aberdeenshire, say, its height (1084 feet),

BALLAGIOCH would not be of much account, but in Renfrewshire any HILL. hill whose altitude requires four figures to express it is regarded as a veritable Cairngorm! Nevertheless, Ballagioch has much to recommend it to Glasgow hillmen; the round to which this note refers can be accomplished comfortably in six hours, and the time will be well spent. We took train on the last Monday of May to Clarkston, passing through a district looking its greenest and its best; then had a motor run to the charming little village of Eaglesham. Thence there is a walk—it cannot be called a climb—of about three miles. As we have entered the Covenanters' country, it is well to take a look into the kirkyard of Eaglesham *en passant*; as we proceed we shall hear the whaup (curlew), a bird which they had reason to dislike; lapwings were naturally more numerous, and during the day we several times made the acquaintance of corn-crakes. The walk from Eaglesham is by a lonely road; there are scarcely any houses, and sheep are much in evidence. The author of "Our Western Hills" saw a couple of larks fighting as he neared the hill top; we were more fortunate, for we noticed two lapwings at a pleasant flirtation.

It was a glorious day; the sky blue, with many clouds dazzlingly white, which a slight breeze did not seem to affect. We saw no heather in these parts, only rough pasture, and so saw no grouse. The prospect from the flat summit, which a party of five resigned to us, was exceedingly pleasant; there was even something to say for the great smoke which represented Glasgow, for it did not succeed in altogether concealing the Campsie Fells! Quite a long catalogue could be made of hills visible; the most striking were Ben Lomond and Goatfell. In the north an apparently continuous line of mountains across the country, some of them snow-clad, shut us out from the Highlands. Ailsa Craig must be mentioned, owing to the rather majestic appearance which it presented from our coign of vantage.

We made the descent to the westward, and so landed at the lower end of Bennan Loch, where the big colony of gulls on the islet gave us no small entertainment. Lochs, dams, and reservoirs seemed to be numerous wherever we went, the most of them turned to commercial or domestic use. With no blooming heather nor any trees to brighten them up, they looked rather dull from a northern point of view. Passing the birthplace of Robert Pollok, the author of "The Course of Time," at Muirhouse, and the very handsome and artistic monument to his memory, erected where two roads meet, we walked on through Newton Mearns to Whitecraigs

Station. As there was no train in waiting, however, we strolled on to Rouken Glen, and were picked up by a tram car going *via* Giffnock to Glasgow. We had had a good time and an excellent lunch on Ballagioch, and the bill for the day was so small that it is not worth mentioning.—A. I. M.

REV. RONALD BURN, in the course of a letter to the Editor praising the excellent article by Professor Watson on "Some Place-Names in the Cairngorm Region" in No. 46 of the *C.C.J.*, incidentally

CAIRNTOUL. offers another derivation of "Cairntoul." The Professor etymologised it as "Carn an t-sabhail," Barn-cairn. Mr.

Burn writes—Now, (1) the keeper at Ruighaiteachan, in Glen Feshie, who "has plenty Gaelic," told me some years ago that this word is "Carn toll," *i.e.*, the hill of the hole, and added in proof that "toll" was always locally sounded "towl"; (2) the barns on this hill are conspicuous by their absence, whereas the hole is very conspicuous from the top of Lochnagar and many other places. It is *the* feature of this hill. Milne (whom, with many other similar books, the article led me to try) gets near this—so near and yet so far—for he derives "toul" from "toll," but explains it by the hollow in which Lochan Uaine lies!

A TOUCHING little monument has been placed in Abernethy forest. It is a stone of white granite and stands on a slight knoll near by the road or track that runs from Rynettin to Rebhoan. The inscription,

A MEMORIAL carved in letters in relief, is as follows:—

AMONG	In remembrance of
THE HILLS.	James Hamilton Maxwell
	who loved these hills
	Killed in the trenches
	near Ypres, 22nd May, 1915,
	Aged 22.

The soldier thus commemorated was the son of an Edinburgh family who have for a number of years visited Nethy Bridge every summer. He had often wandered over the hills and he knew them well. The spot where the memorial stands commands a wide and noble prospect over the great open spaces of the forest and up towards the majestic masses of Cairngorm and Ben Bynac.

To the *Free Press* of 18th July last Mr. George G. Jenkins, C.E., contributed an interesting article descriptive of an excellent view of the Deeside hills obtainable from the near neighbourhood of Aberdeen. The

HILL VIEW	view-point is at the edge of the Kincorth woods, a little to
NEAR	the east of the Bridge of Dee, at the edge of the slopes
ABERDEEN.	known as the Covenanters' Faulds, where part of the troops
	of the Covenanters, under the Marquis of Montrose, en-
	camped prior to the battle of the Bridge of Dee in 1639. The higher hill-
	tops visible include Clochnaben, Mount Battock, Peter Hill, the Braid Cairn,
	"together with the Gathering Cairn ridge, a bold spur whereof to the north
	almost blots out the finely-pointed summit of Mount Keen, and finally the
	long high ridge of Lochnagar, standing out in all its glory, especially if
	covered with snow." As a guide to the minor hill-tops that may be seen,

Mr. Jenkins supplemented his article by a clever little diagram, on which several lines radiated from the point of observation, and numerous hills were indicated with their height and distance away. Altogether (though Mr. Jenkins did not mention this) 27 hill-tops were indicated, the range of view extending to 44 miles. The article had some pertinent remarks on the limitation of view produced by the curvature of the earth, and also a piece of good advice to young mountaineers about the way to correctly identify one's surroundings from a hill top.

It now appears that it is a mountain in Jasper Park and not Mount Robson (see p. 173) that has been named "Mount Cavell" by the Geographic

Board of Canada, to commemorate the heroic nurse, "MOUNT Edith Cavell, who was executed by the Germans in CAVELL." Belgium for harbouring Allied soldiers and helping them to escape. Jasper Park is in the province of Alberta, and Mount Cavell is about 15 miles south of the town of Jasper, the headquarters of the Park, and a few miles west of the Athabaska River. It is situated nearly 15 miles east of Mount Geikie, which preserves the name of the illustrious geologist.

SURPRISING developments in the practice of war have been witnessed in the course of the present European conflict, and not the least striking novelties

have been those exhibited in mountain warfare, particularly as conducted in the Italian Alps. Among the most remarkable of these novelties has been the introduction of heavy artillery to places which in former campaigns would have been deemed inaccessible. "One finds oneself," wrote a correspondent of the *Times*, "under the fire of 12 in. howitzers from the other side of mountains 10,000 ft. high, and it is an extraordinary experience to find Italian heavy howitzers sheltering behind precipices rising sheer up several thousand feet, and fighting with Austrain guns 10 miles distant and beyond one, if not two high ranges of hills"—the direction of fire being given by telephone from observing stations on the highest peaks. The Austrians, according to this authority, concealed some of their heavy artillery in caverns or rock galleries, the men serving the guns being thus secure against shrapnel and also unobservable to airmen. On the Italian side, batteries were mounted at an elevation of about 9,000 ft., each gun weighing 11 tons, the carriage 5 tons, and the platform 30 tons. The employment of siege guns of this character at such stupendous heights necessitated the construction of mountain roads; and once the roads were constructed—and in the art of mountain road-making the Italians are said to be supreme—"handy little steam tractors made light of dragging the heaviest guns up the steepest gradients." The roads were supplemented by "filovia," or air railways on chains, by which guns were swung up to high peaks.

Hardly less astounding were some of the feats of the Alpini, as the Italian soldiers specially engaged in mountain warfare are called. In the attack on Mount Cimone, for instance, two companies of Alpini scaled the face of the mountain on rope ladders, arriving one by one under its overhanging brow, beneath which they squatted, holding on somehow to the

rock for seven long hours, the enemy meanwhile, perfectly aware of their presence, bombarding them from the edge with hand grenades and stones. Then began—to quote another correspondent of the *Times*—“such a battle as our prosaic age has seldom witnessed.” “A line of men, which started on the summit of Cimone and ran down by rope-ladders to the Italian positions, formed a chain of battle. Those lower down, in a slow, rhythmic motion which witnesses describe as always harmonious, passed to those higher up bombs and stones, which were as surely and steadily hurled on to the Austrian positions. When a man fell the line moved up one. That was all. The Alpini worked with disconcerting tranquillity. Enemy bombs which fell on them without exploding were quietly handed on to have a better effect on the return trip.” There were other sensational features attendant on this mountain warfare. Avalanches at times would sweep many of the combatants away; and one particularly ghastly incident occurred. Over 600 Austrians lost their lives in an engagement on Monte Nero. They fell in the snow, which covered them; but one morning in summer, when the snow had melted, they reappeared in strange attitudes, frozen hard and lifelike, giving an Italian garrison in the neighbourhood “their first fright.”

Special equipment, as may readily be imagined, is required for campaigning in these altitudes, where so much snow and ice are encountered. “The Alpini,” we were told, “wear a good hob-nailed boot for ordinary service, but for work on the ice the heel of the boot is taken off, and an iron clamp with ice nails substituted. For mountaineering feats they often use the ‘*scarpe da gatto*,’ or cat shoes, made of string soles with felt uppers, which are more lasting than the Pyrenean straw sandals. The ‘*gavetta*’ or mess tin of the Alpini is very practical. It is the same shape as ours, but a little deeper, and has a reserve of spirit at the base and a spirit lamp, enabling the Alpini to make coffee or heat their wine. They use racquets or skis on the snow, and carry either the alpenstock or the ice-axe.”

THE most prominent feature in connection with the military service now being rendered by Members of the Club is, of course, the lamentable loss of Captains Gillies and Lyon, Lieutenant Meff, and
 THE CLUB Private Ian McLaren, killed in action or who died
 AND MILITARY from wounds received in action: they are more particularly referred to in the “In Memoriam” article in
 SERVICE. this number. The following additional members of the Club have now “joined up.”:—

Alexander Emslie Smith, Jun.—Lieutenant, Territorial Force Reserve.

James McCoss—Corporal, North Scottish R. G. A.

William Barclay, L. D.S.—R. G. A.

Among promotions gazetted since our last issue were those of Captain Charles Reid, Gordon Highlanders, to be temporary Major; Lieutenant A. M. Johnston, Gordon Highlanders, to be Captain; and Lieutenant James Ellis, Gordon Highlanders, to be temporary Captain. Major Reid was wounded a second time in July last.

THE twenty-eighth annual meeting of the Club was held at 14 Golden Square, Aberdeen, on 15th December, 1916—Mr. T. R. Gillies, advocate, Chairman of the Club, presiding.

ANNUAL MEETING. On the motion of Mr. John Clarke, seconded by Mr. Robert Anderson, the following resolution was un-animously adopted :—

“This meeting of the Cairngorm Club desires to record its sense of the loss the Club has sustained by the death of its Secretary, Captain J. B. Gillies. Captain Gillies, from the outset, won the confidence and esteem of the Club by his energy, capacity, and courtesy. His time was bestowed upon the Club's interests ungrudgingly and with a hearty goodwill that made it a pleasure to come in contact with him. In organising and conducting excursions, in editing the Club *Journal*, and in the discharge of his duties as Treasurer, he rendered excellent service : he has crowned a career of much promise by the supreme sacrifice of his life for his country.

“The Club begs respectfully to offer its heartfelt sympathy to his father, so long and intimately associated with its management, and, through him, to his mother and wife. It is with a sense of personal loss that the members unite in their tribute to Captain Gillies' worth, and their admiration of his heroic devotion to duty.”

The Chairman, on behalf of the other relatives and himself, thanked the members for their expressions of sympathy.

In accordance with the policy agreed upon at recent annual meetings, of allowing the management of the Club's affairs to remain undisturbed during the continuance of the war, the Chairman and other office-bearers (except the Secretary and Treasurer), along with the Committee, were re-elected, it being arranged that meanwhile the duties of Secretary and Treasurer shall be discharged by the firm of Messrs. T. & J. Gillies. The accounts for the year 1916, showing a credit balance of £37 15s. 7d., were submitted and approved. It was agreed, as formerly, to leave in the hands of the Committee the determination of arranging a programme of excursions should such be warranted by any change in the position of national affairs.

Some conversation ensued as to the condition of the Allt-na-Beinne bridge, in connection with which it transpired that a balance of £8 odds still remained of the fund for its construction ; and a remit was made to Mr. J. A. Parker to have the bridge repainted out of this balance and of any contributions that may be received for the purpose.

Intimation was made of the receipt of £1 10/-, contributed by the late Mr. C. M. Lawrence and five friends towards the construction of a bridge across the Eidart.

The membership, it was reported, now stands at 140, having been reduced by the five deaths recorded elsewhere and the resignations of Mr. W. B. Brown and Mr. John Robertson.