

REVIEWS.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH ARBORICULTURAL SOCIETY,
July, 1916—Glenmore is the gateway to Cairngorm, so to speak, to those
ascending the mountain from the Aviemore region, and

GLENMORE the fine forest of Scotch fir spreading around Loch
FOREST. Morlich and up the sides of the adjacent hills, and the
lower slopes of Cairngorm itself, constitutes an attractive
stretch of scenery familiar to all hillmen. One learns with regret that the
forest is about to be felled—if, indeed, the dire work has not been begun
already; though the regret is chastened by the reflection that the felling is
for distinctly national purposes. In view of the impending destruction, Mr.
Peter Leslie, the Lecturer in Forestry at the Aberdeen University, has con-
tributed an interesting paper on “The History of Glenmore Forest” to the
Scottish Arboricultural Society’s “Transactions.” What there is of precise
history of the forest is contained chiefly in the “Statistical Accounts,” from
which Mr. Leslie quotes freely, as was inevitable in the circumstances. But
there is a romantic side to the history, associated with the floating of timber
from Glenmore and adjoining forests down the Spey and several of its
tributaries. Some account of this daring and often dangerous business was
given by the late Dr. Forsyth of Abernethy in his work, “In the Shadow
of Cairngorm”; and a well-informed article on the “picturesque industry”
of “Wood-Floating on the Spey” appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* a little
over a year ago. Dr. Forsyth had also something to say of the Glenmore
district generally in a chapter in his book titled “The Story of a
Highland Glen.”

Little more than a century ago Glenmore Forest was cut down and the
timber floated down the Spey. The wood was sent partly to Hull and
to the King’s dockyards at Deptford and Woolwich, while a great ship-
building business was started at Garmouth and at Kingston, at the mouth
of the Spey. A plank from the forest (5 ft. 5 ins. in width at the butt
end, and 4 ft. 4 ins. at the top) is still preserved at Gordon Castle,
having been presented in 1806 to the Duke of Gordon of the day by Mr.
William Osborne of Hull, who, along with a Mr. Dodsworth of York,
had purchased the forest. An inscription on a brass plate records that the
purchase was made in 1783, and that the whole of the forest was cut down
in the space of 22 years, there having been built during that time, “where
never vessel was built before,” 47 ships of upwards of 19,000 tons burden.
“The largest of them” (the inscription runs), “of 1,050 tons, and three
others but little inferior in size, are now in the service of His Majesty
and the Honble. East India Company.” The largest masts were 60 feet
in length. The ships built of the wood from the forest, though wholly of
pine, were thought by good judges to be equal to those of New England
oak. Some of the natives of the glen resented the destruction of the forest

and the consequential intrusion of the Sassenach, and a Gaelic bard denounced both bitterly in a passage which Dr. Forsyth translates as follows—

“Yonder’s the little glen, kingly and sweet, haunt of the full-grown harts,
 My curse on the hands of men that have robbed it of its glory.
 Now, instead of the song of birds and the murmur of the deer in the thicket,
 Our ears are stunned by the crash of falling trees and the clamours of the Sassenach.”

The forest soon re-seeded itself, however, young wood springing up and growing slowly till the trees reached the age of twelve; and then shooting up rapidly. “Here and there at considerable distances,” says Mr. Leslie, “there are large, scraggy, and isolated trees, but all over the forest there are patches of the ‘young’ forest, often several acres in extent, where the trees are growing closely together. Here they have produced long straight clean stems about 50 to 70 feet in height.” These striking dimensions are attained despite the altitude of the forest, for the woods extend from Loch Morlich up the sides of the adjoining mountains in all directions, to elevations ranging from 1,100 to 1,400 feet. Now, for a second time, the forest is doomed. It has been sold by the Duke of Richmond and Gordon to the Home-Growing Timber Committee on behalf of the Government; and the timber is to be manufactured on the ground into sleepers for our strategic railways at the front, pit-props for our mines, and trench-wood and boarding for hutments—we share Mr. Leslie’s feeling that it seems a pity, considering the traditions of the forest, that it should be put to such common uses. National needs probably compel the sacrifice; and we must just submit. It is gratifying, however, to learn that the noble proprietor has made it a condition of the sale that a certain proportion of trees per acre be left standing so as to secure the natural re-seeding and re-growth of this picturesque forest.

We are indebted to Mr. Leslie for the photograph of one of the giant pines on the shores of Loch Morlich which is reproduced in this number of the *Journal*.

R. A.

ENGLISH LANDSCAPE: an Anthology. Compiled by Maurice Baring. Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press.—The exquisite charms of

English landscape have been lauded in verse no less exquisite by many English poets, and all lovers of both will welcome this little book. Though a mere duodecimo, it nevertheless comprises no fewer than 50 poems which extol the beauties of English scenery as beheld under the differing aspects of Nature and of the seasons, or which express the feelings aroused in the poetic and imaginative mind by their contemplation. The collection is in its way a surprising feat of memory, for Captain Baring made it while serving at the front, and tells us in a brief prefatory note that the book was “compiled without the help of libraries, out of

reach of books and bookshops." Not all the selections are so easily memorised as Gray's *Elegy*: to reproduce from recollection Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis," for instance, and throw off at ease passages from Crabbe and Cowper, the two Brownings, Robert Bridges, A. C. Benson, and so many others, partakes well-nigh of the marvellous. What probably originated as a mental relaxation of life in the trenches and in rest billets now assumes the form of an admirable little anthology, serviceable to all of us by recalling some of the very best things that have been written in praise of the natural features of our own dear land. The collection is fairly representative, alike of the particular characteristics of English scenery and of the poetical utterances in which they have found delineation. "England, thy beauties are tame and domestic," sang a poet (who, we note, is not quoted from), and it is the serene and peaceful aspects of English scenery that are chiefly depicted—the quiet dales and "elmy fields," the woods and gardens, summer dawn and twilight calm. But the sterner aspects are not neglected, and quotations from Wordsworth and Coleridge do ample justice to mountain scenery. An anthology is very largely an individual thing, and to cite omissions is always easy—so much do personal tastes vary. It seems curious, however, that there are no selections from Sir Walter Scott or Robert Louis Stevenson, or from John Stuart Blaikie or Principal Shairp—but then we must remember, perhaps, that the little work is confined to "English" landscape.

R. A.

MOUNTAINEERING is being strongly developed in America, to judge from a "Bulletin of the Associated Clubs of North America" which has been sent us from New York, and receipt of which we have pleasure in acknowledging. The Councillors of the American MOUNTAINEER-ALPINE CLUB recently organised a Bureau of Mountaineering CLUBS. ing Clubs for the advancement of their common aims, these being, briefly, the exploration of mountain regions, the making ascents of leading peaks, and co-operating with geographic boards in mapping and naming the country. The Bulletin is the initial publication of the Bureau, and it gives statistics of the leading clubs and societies. Some of the figures are calculated to astound clubs like our own which make comparatively little headway. The Sierra Club of California, for instance, has a membership of 1822 and the Appalachian Mountain Club of Boston a roll of 1796, while clubs in Colorado and Washington also number their members by the hundreds. Altogether, the various American clubs have a total membership of about 7000. May they all flourish and continue to spread the zest for mountaineering!

THE June issue of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* was most noticeable for its reduced size—doubtless due to so many members of the Club being engaged on military service or on duties connected with the war. It consisted of 34 pages—very much below the customary allotment; and it contained only three articles apart from an account of the Club's Easter meet and some notes, and but one of these was a mountaineering article proper—an admirable appreciation of mist

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effects on mountains by Mr. A. Ernest Maylard, based on many personal observations. Mr. Alfred Harker concluded his series of interesting papers, "On Some Old Maps," to which we have referred in previous notices of the *Journal*; and Mr. Gilbert Thomson wrote on "The Winter's Weather"—that of the winter of 1915-16—which, as he truly says, was "somewhat out of the ordinary," and "provided us with some striking extremes."

The October number, we were glad to see, reverted to the usual proportions of the *Journal*. Mr. James A. Parker contributed an interesting account of a climb of Craig Maskeldie, which rises imposingly at the entrance to Glen Unich, about a mile and a half west from the head of Loch Lee. The Craig was reached on this occasion by walking from the Spital of Muick, the return journey being by way of the Mounth path and crossing the watershed between the Tanner and the Pollagach. "Some Western Hills" is descriptive of climbs in the Glenmoidart and Morar region; and Mr. Walter A. Smith furnishes a few notes on such Scottish hill passes and drove roads as he knows—a subject, by the way, to which contributions might well be made by others, as knowledge of these drove roads is fast vanishing. Mr. Smith, for instance, desiderates particulars of the Monega Pass, from the head of Glen Isla over to a point in Glen Clunie, about eight miles south of Braemar. This is said to be the highest pass in Scotland, the crossing being over 2900 feet.

THE *Cyclists' Touring Club Gazette* for September last had an interesting article by Professor J. W. Gregory, of Glasgow, entitled "By General

Wade's Road over Corneyairack." It should be read in

THE CONJUNCTION with the account of a crossing of the Pass by
CORRYARRICK Messrs. Kellas and Kyd in No. 44 of the *C.C.J.* and with
PASS. a similar account by Mr. A. B. Noble in the *Scottish*

Mountaineering Journal for October 1915, as, while there

is an inevitable similarity in all three descriptions, there is considerable variety in the experiences of the several narrators and particularly in the observations they made. The very name of the Pass, for example, is spelt differently by each of them. Professor Gregory essayed to "do" the Pass on a bicycle, but started exceedingly doubtful as to whether he should not have to carry the bicycle more than it would carry him. His worst fears must have been realised, for Wade's famous military road over the Pass is now so sadly neglected as to be ill-adapted for cycles. The traverses or zig-zags are overgrown with heather and strewn with stones; besides, when the Professor crossed it was raining heavily, "and in places the road would have been more accurately described as Wade's River or Wade's Aqueduct." One purpose of Professor Gregory's visit to Corryarrick was to determine why this great corrie fronts the south, so contrary to the generality of Scottish corries, which face north or north-east. Whether or not the accomplished geologist ascertained the reason for the "one remarkable geographical feature" of Corryarrick, he failed to communicate it to the readers of his article.

"A MAN'S mind has a lot to do with the appreciation of scenery." The remark, which has a very large measure of truth in it, occurred quite unexpectedly, and almost with startling effect, in one of the

THE instalments of the sensational war-time story, "Green-APPRECIATION mantle," recently contributed by Mr. John Buchan to OF SCENERY. *Land and Water*. The author landed his hero in Constantinople on a day so vile that the famous capital had lost all its charm—the beauties of the Golden Horn were veiled in rain clouds, the "romance of the East" was nowhere visible, and perambulation of the streets was as disagreeable and depressing as is that of London on a wet day. But everything was changed next morning. The wind had veered to the south, there was a blue sky over Asia, "and what had seemed the day before the dingiest of cities now took on a strange beauty, the beauty of unexpected horizons and tongues of grey water winding below cypress-studded shores." There is, of course, nothing very wonderful in the sudden transition of feeling thus indicated. Our impressions of scenery are often determined by the weather conditions of the moment, or by our own physical and mental state or our momentary environment. The fact, however, is often overlooked, and Mr. Buchan has rendered a service in recalling us to a sense of the influences thus exercised.

MESSRS. W. JOLLY & SONS have sent us a tastefully-executed reprint from the "Scottish Ecclesiological Society's Transactions" of a paper on "The Church of Kaisariani in Attica," by the Rev. J. Arnott Hamilton, M.A. The paper bears as a sub-title "A GRECIAN LANDSCAPE. Study in Byzantine Art"—a subject hardly within the scope of a mountaineering journal; but the author evidently possesses the faculty of describing landscape effectively. He thus presents the scene from the church, which stands on the slopes of Mount Hymettus, 600 feet above sea-level:—

"If we lift our eyes from the ground close by to the distant hills we see the dusty land transformed with a strange and unexpected beauty and a blend of colours, pale, delicate, almost ethereal, evolved from this barren Attic plain. The crests of the hills in the distance—Aegaleus and Pentelicus—stand out with extraordinary distinctness of outline in the clear air of the south; yet there rests upon them that faint, almost imperceptible haze which lends such a touch of enchantment to the scenery of Greece. From the distant hills stretches the long plain, beautiful in the pale brown delicacy of its colour, and here and there stand out from it the deep green cypress groves and plantations of pine, all the more striking to the eye from the rareness of trees in this unfertile land."