

## NOTES.

The *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, in a friendly notice of our last number, said Mr. John Clarke, in his article on "The Mountains in Literature," had omitted one suggestive allusion, expressed in Sir William

SIR WILLIAM Watson's desire to be

WATSON                    Among the moody mountains where they stand

ON                         Awed by the thought of their own majesty—

MOUNTAINS. "the feeling aroused by mountains in one who is only feeling his way into touch with nature." There is a very

obvious answer of course. Mr. Clarke was dealing with past writers, the "classical" exponents in literature of the beauty and glory of the mountains. To have extended his survey to modern authors would have taken him too far afield: had he cited Sir William Watson, he would have been bound to cull "suggestive allusions" from many other contemporary poets. We cannot help thinking, moreover, that had Mr. Clarke quoted from Sir William Watson, he would have selected much more appropriate and expressive passages than the one chosen by the *Journal* writer. Exception might be taken, indeed, to the interpretation put by the critic upon the lines he himself quoted. They occur in a sonnet entitled "In City Pent," which expresses the delight of escaping from "the world's pursuit and Care's access" to the mountains, the sea, and the forest, and reveals a full appreciation of nature and not merely "feeling the way into touch" with it. Elsewhere in his works, at any rate, Sir William Watson abundantly demonstrates his susceptibility to natural scenery and his faculty for describing it felicitously, notably in "Wordsworth's Grave" and in the lines on the burial-place of Matthew Arnold, in which he makes the discriminating criticism of Arnold—that

Though with skill

He sang of beck and tarn and ghyll,

The deep, authentic mountain-thrill

Ne'er shook his page!

This "authentic mountain-thrill" is distinctly preceptible in his own "Lakeland Once More"—

Mere under mountains lone, like a moat under lowering ramparts;

Garrulous petulant beck, sinister laughterless tarn;

Haunt of the vagabond feet of my fancy for ever reverting,

Haunt of this vagabond heart, Cumbrian valleys and fells;

You that enchant all ears with the manifold tones of silence,

You that around me, in youth, magical filaments wove;

You were my earliest passion, and when shall its fealty falter?

Ah, when Helvellyn is low! ah, when Winander is dry!

The feeling for nature here so manifestly exhibited rises to a higher strain in "The Mountain Rapture" in the volume titled "New Poems"—

Contentment have I known in lowlands green,  
 A quiet heart by mead and lisp'ing rill,  
 But joy was with me on the cloven hill,  
 And in the pass where strife of gods hath been ;—  
 Remembrance of that ecstasy terrene  
 Whence leapt the cataracts ; an eternised thrill,  
 Coeval with the paroxysm that still  
 Writhes on the countenance of the seared ravine.  
 These peaks that out of Earth's great passions rose,  
 Wearing the script of rage, the graven pang,  
 The adamantine legend of her throes,—  
 These are her lyric transports ! thus she sang,  
 With wild improvisation,—thus, with clang,  
 Of fiery heavings, throbb'd into repose.

R. A.

It is difficult to say what part of the western shore of the famed Loch Eck presents the most beauties ; perhaps it is Bernice Glen. Guarded on the south side by Beinn Mhor (2433 feet) and on the  
 BEINN BHEAG. north by Beinn Bheag (2029 feet), its hills, picturesquely tree-clad along the loch, seem particularly green, while numerous crags are prominent on their slopes. The sturdy larches and firs near the foot of the glen are succeeded by alders, birches, and rowans, alders especially persistently following up the smaller burns. Near the loch shore holly trees are plentiful ; on the descent we found many of them (in August) with great clusters of red berries, while on some twigs there was at the same time green ripening for Christmas—a proof of the mildness of the climate.

Bernice Glen may be regarded rather as a long corrie than a glen ; seen from the other side of the loch it is a distinctive cleft between the mountains. Sheep are masters of the position, but a few Highland cattle graze on the slopes and an occasional red deer wanders thus far to the "low country." There were also some cows and their followers, "put out to grass" for the season and there left to their own resources. The ascent from Bernice is short and steep, the loch standing at only 67 feet above sea level.

Beinn Bhreac, a minor summit, is first tackled ; thence one proceeds between rather imposing rocky knolls to the small cairn which marks the summit of Beinn Bheag. The water view has particular attractions, having Loch Long on the east and Loch Fyne on the west. A procession of cloud shadows on the hills to the eastward was one of the features of the view ; earlier in the day these hills had two distinct bands of mist which gradually disappeared into film-like tags. A few plump hares were seen ; we amused ourselves by watching the attitude of a rabbit which for five minutes looked steadily in one direction unmindful of all else ; it suggested the appearance of a certain Cinema notoriety. A big patch of flowering thistles received much attention from bees ; on one we observed a bee and a fly close together moving about. Would the former make an end of the fly when

they should actually come in contact? No, indeed; the bee ignored its presence. The descent was made directly towards the loch, and gave us some anxiety for our four-footed companion, so steep was it in some parts. Only once, however, did "Demon" require to be taken in hand. Bracken flourishes only too well on these slopes, and is often a hindrance to the hill-climber, but all the same there is much fine pasture. The loch reached, the bee and fly incident was recalled, but the end this time was tragedy. A species of daddy-long-legs skimmed over the water, at last all but touching it; a hungry and watchful trout did the rest—A. I. M.

THE visitor to Stirling should not leave the City of the Rock without devoting a day to Sheriff Muir, an excursion which will add materially to the pleasant recollections of his sojourn. Let the muir road SHERIFF MUIR. be entered either from Logie Church or from the Great North road short of Bridge of Allan, no matter which; even the hillman who rarely has a good word to say of public roads for walking will be delighted with the ancient and (in parts) somewhat neglected thoroughfare leading through the battlefield. At the start, Dumyat, that prominent western summit of the Ochils, engages no little attention; by and by one remarks that the northern slopes of the Ochils are as unpretending as the front to the Forth is bold and picturesque. The northern side is pastoral; there "shepherd lads on sunny knowes blaw the blythe fuisse," but the home-made "fuisse" is not to be heard now, or even seen in a museum! We were not particularly fortunate in our observations of animal life; numerous lapwings and wild bees were the outstanding features. At the outset there was "a fly in the ointment," for on the lower ground and where the road was tree-lined there was a veritable plague of flies clustering tenaciously around us. But on the open muir—and the muirland extends for miles in length and breadth—"the wind on the heath, brother," left them behind; then one enjoyed life to the full, the while recalling Borrow and his gipsy.

After thus wandering for hours, a jug of milk from the uppermost farm served instead of Omar's "flask of wine," as accompaniment to our simple lunch, after which there was no resisting a stroll to the top of Pendreichmuir Hill, a very minor summit of the Ochils. Small game for a Cairngormer, some may say; but a hillman's pleasure is not measured by altitude alone. This top is well defined by a long boulder that, ages ago, had there parted company with its conveyance. The view need not be minutely detailed, but mention must be made of Ben Lomond, the Gargunnoch Hills, Craigforth, Stirling Castle, and the Wallace Monument. The memorial erected on the site of the battle of Sheriff Muir is a wonderful conception, and that is all that need be said about it here. The descent to Bridge of Allan had at last to be made, the densely-wooded glen of the Wharry Burn plainly indicating the route for us. It recalled another Ochil glen which we had explored the previous week—that of Alva on the south side—and though much inferior to it, yet is a long gorge not to be missed when one visits Bridge of Allan or the battle-field.—A. I. M.

THE following record of good walking was chronicled in the *Aberdeen Daily Journal* of 13th September:—"Two young cadets on leave, carrying

GOOD WALKING. packs weighing 12 lbs. each, accomplished a smart piece of walking on Tuesday of this week [the 10th]. Leaving Avie- more at 5 a.m., they crossed the Cairngorm Club Bridge at 6 a.m., passed the Linn of Dee at 1 p.m., and reached Braemar at 2.15 p.m., the distance covered being 28½ miles. The Làirig was heavy and very wet under foot."

SOME tourists who reached the top of Ben Nevis in September reported that the Observatory on the summit is rapidly falling into a ruinous state.

VANDALS ON BEN NEVIS. The doors and windows have been damaged, and some of the woodwork has been ruthlessly torn away, evidently to make fires. Through openings thus made, rain and snow have found an entrance, and damp and decay are fast destroying the interior of the apartments.

A CORRESPONDENT, writing to the *Aberdeen Free Press* on 5th September, mentioned that he had picked up at a bookstall a poem by Rev. George

LINES ON BENNACHIE. Meldrum, published in 1838. It is titled "Association, or the Progress of Feeling," and consists of a long poem in four books, running to 120 pages, and written in the style of Young's "Night Thoughts." The correspondent reproduced the following address to Benochie (as the poet spelled it):—

"Yon mountain far remote, that proudly rears  
Its lofty peak above the adjacent hills,  
Rising in grand proportion to the view,  
I loved to look on—at the peep of dawn,  
Glistening in the sun's earliest rays; at noon,  
When gaily changing into various hues;  
At eve, when fading into dusky shade.  
In manhood I delight in it; old age  
Could not efface my joy; when the cold earth  
Shall lie upon my breast, that mountain still  
Shall look upon my tomb, and o'er the sweet  
And fertile vale I loved thro' life so well!"

DURING the progress of the survey of the boundary between Alberta and British Columbia, a region containing some of the loftiest peaks in Canada

NAMING THE ROCKIES. was encountered not far north of the United States boundary. A number of these peaks have been named by the Geographical Board after Canadian and Allied Soldiers of distinction, and travellers

through the Rockies may now try to climb such heights as Mount Currie, Mount Turner, Mount Morrison, Mount Mercer, Mount Watson, and Mount Bishop. The genius of Sir Douglas Haig is commemorated in a peak 11,000 feet high, and the names of Marshals Foch, Joffre, and Petain are given to peaks of almost equal elevation. King Albert and Queen Elizabeth of Belgium are also remembered, as is, too, General Leman, the gallant defender of Liège.

THE thirtieth annual meeting of the Club was held at 14 Golden Square, Aberdeen, on 20th December, 1918—Mr. T. R. Gillies, Chairman of the Club, presiding. The Treasurers' accounts for the year 1918, shewing a credit balance of £33 16s. 2d., were submitted and approved, and it was agreed to invest the standing amount of life members' subscriptions (£16 6s.)

ANNUAL MEETING. in War Savings Certificates. The President and Vice-Presidents were re-elected; Dr. John R. Levack was elected Chairman; and the Council was re-elected, with the addition of Mr. James Rennie in place of Dr. Levack. Mr. John Clarke moved that the appointment of a Secretary be left in abeyance until the Club is fully constituted by the return of members at present on military service, and that Mr. T. R. Gillies be appointed Treasurer and to act also as Secretary *ad interim*. This was agreed to. On the motion of Mr. Gillies, Mr. Robert Anderson was specifically elected Editor of the Club's *Journal*, the view entertained being that, for the present at least, the editorship should not be combined with the secretaryship.

Dr. Levack, having taken the chair, moved that a vote of thanks be awarded to the retiring Chairman—Mr. T. R. Gillies—for his services during the past six years, and the motion was cordially agreed to. Mr. William Garden gave notice of a motion to the effect that three members of the Committee should retire annually, to be ineligible for election for a year. Some desultory conversation ensued as to the resumption of the Club's activities on the prospective conclusion of peace, a special "peace" excursion being suggested; and suggestions were also made as to carrying out an educational mountaineering propaganda by means of lectures with lantern illustrations. A general remit was made to the Chairman and the interim Secretary to consider these and other suggestions. Attention was also called to the erection of a bridge over the Eidart; and in this connection Mr. John Clarke moved that a remit be made to the Chairman and the interim Secretary to make representations to the Road Board in favour of the construction of the proposed road through Glen Feshie. This motion was agreed to.

The following were admitted members:—

Mr. Alexander Edward, bank agent, 21 Market Street, Aberdeen.

Mr. James Grant, 25 Albert Street, Alexandria, Dumbartonshire.

The following were admitted as associate members:—

Mrs. Garden, 23 Albyn Place, Aberdeen.

Mrs. Milne, Cressbrook, Queen's Road, Aberdeen.

J. Norman Milne, Cressbrook, Queen's Road, Aberdeen.

The membership of the Club now stands at 138.