

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1921—BRAEMAR.

THE article in the present number, "I will lift up mine eyes . . .," written by an American gentleman who was a guest of the Chairman, describes in effect the New Year's Meet. We may supplement it, however, by the following more precise description of the ascent of Ben Muich Dhui which was contributed to the local newspapers:—

The weather in the early morning was intensely cold, and promised a very fine day, and this turned out to be the case. The party went up Glen Lui Beg and on to the long shoulder of the hill dipping into that glen. There was very little snow low down. The ground was frozen hard, and this, with the absence of wind and cloud, made the conditions almost perfect for climbing. When the summit plateau was reached, it was found to be one vast snow-field, and in the blazing sunshine the glare from the snow was rather troublesome; those who possessed snow-glasses here found them very serviceable. Just before the cairn was reached a thin veil of mist settled down on the summit of the mountain, but there was no difficulty in finding the well-known cairn of stones although it was completely plastered over with snow and ice. Even here there was no wind, and one could bask in the sun with the greatest pleasure.

After a short stay at the summit, the party moved downwards to the cliffs at the head of Glen Lui, and shortly after the cairn had been left the thin mist cleared away on the top, but remained in the hollow above Loch Etchachan. As the party moved down a ridge, the sun was to their right, and it cast thin shadows on to the mist in the hollow on their left. The conditions were therefore ideal for seeing the spectre of the Brocken. In a few minutes a very good representation of the spectre was witnessed by all the members of the party. Two of the party had already seen the spectre some years ago in Skye. The appearance presented by the Brocken spectre is that, as the observer looks at his shadow cast upon the mist below him, he becomes aware of a rainbow, or coloured halo, surrounding his shadow.

A very good example of a fog bow was also seen. Very shortly afterwards the mist closed down again, and the party hurried downwards in order to get off the hill before the short day ended, as they wished to climb also Cairngorm of Derry, and continue along the ridge down to Derry Lodge, which was reached just as

darkness fell at 5 p.m. The time taken from Derry Lodge to the summit and back to the Lodge was $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours. It is probably many years since Ben Muich Dhui has been climbed so early in January, and under such perfect conditions.

EASTER MEET, 1921—BRAEMAR.

THE Easter Meet was held at Braemar, from Friday, 25th March, to Monday, the 28th. The following members were present:—Dr. J. R. Levack (Chairman), H. Alexander, W. Garden, D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, J. McCoss, G. McIntyre, Dr. J. L. McIntyre, A. P. Milne, E. Reid, C. P. Robb, M. J. Robb, J. Watt, and A. M. Williamson; and as guests—Messrs. Douglas, Herd and Mackintosh—a total of seventeen, of whom no fewer than eight are also members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club.

This was a fair turn-out, but it represents less than 10 per cent. of the members. It is a pity that so few can see their way to attend these meets, which, besides being most enjoyable, enable the members to become better acquainted with each other. No doubt many find it difficult to get off for the entire period. A single day is better than nothing, however. No one has ever been sorry he came to a meet, and it is certain that the members are greatly invigorated on their return to town. The Chairman will tell you that a day on the high hills has the tonic value of at least a week's ordinary holiday. Members need not be afraid of tackling Lochnagar or Ben Muich Dui straight from their everyday work; they will not return in the evening dead beat, but at most just comfortably tired.

The meet opened on Friday in favourable weather. G. McIntyre, Mackintosh, Milne, Watt, and Williamson drove to Allt-naguibsaich to ascend Lochnagar, while Garden, McCoss and Robb motored to Loch Callater to climb one of the gullies in Corrie Kander. The Lochnagar party ascended by the Black Spout, which was in only fair condition, the snow being rather soft. A snow climb lasting some two hours was obtained, however, after which the party reached Braemar by the Sandy Loch and Garbh Allt. The Loch Kander party found much less snow than usual in the corrie, but obtained a climb in one of the main gullies. After visiting the summit of Carn Turk, where some distant hills were identified by laying out the map at the cairn, a descent was made by a fairly steep gully situated in the right hand entrance to the corrie. This climb occupied an hour and a half, including a scramble on a small buttress which was resorted to as the gully lower down resolved itself into a waterfall.

Alexander journeyed by the 10.10 train, reaching Braemar *via* Glen Beg, Loch Phadruig, and the Loch Callater road. The Chairman, with Messrs. Douglas and Herd, arrived by car in the

afternoon. On the second day the first arrival was Dr. McIntyre, who had walked from the Spital of Glenshee. Later on, D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, and Reid arrived on motor cycles, followed by C. P. Robb, who had been fishing.

On Saturday morning the company of twelve motored to Derry Lodge for the ascent of Ben Muich Dhui. The Luibeg route was decided upon, and the party set off from the lodge at 9.15. Snow fell gently most of the time during the ascent, although, later on, there were glimpses of sunshine. A following wind lent its assistance during the climb up the shoulder from the burn. At 3,000 feet the ground was becoming frost-bound, and soon the snow became thicker while the wind rose, with the result that visibility diminished considerably. The cornice snow was utilised for portions of the climb by the edge of the Corrie Lochan Uaine. It was found necessary to take careful bearings for the cairn, and to check the distance by pacing. These measures were entirely successful, the party striking the summit exactly. Numerous ice-sheets were found on the plateau and the cold was intense, so much so that icicles were found on moustaches, and eyebrows were white. The severity of the conditions may be judged from the fact that, when the eggs provided for lunch were opened shortly afterwards, they were found to have a film of ice inside the shells. A very short stay, indeed, was made at the cairn, and at 12.30 the party set off on the descent. The weather soon cleared sufficiently to afford some views of the neighbouring hills. Later, views were obtained of Ben Rinnes and Bennachie. Gullies in the corrie of the Red Spout were examined from the top, and were seen to offer some half-dozen splendid snow climbs, some of which appeared to be tough propositions. Glissading was at first spoiled by new snow, but a little was available towards the saddle approaching Derry Cairngorm. Here, there was a parting of the ways, seven members going down the glen while the remainder elected to cross Derry Cairngorm and reach Derry Lodge by the shoulder of Carn Crom. The smaller party got a few photographs of the gullies and buttresses on the Ben. Snow came on heavily about 4 o'clock, so that on the return to Derry Lodge the scenery was entirely changed, being quite wintry in aspect. Apart from one member who made the low level descent in record time, the Derry Cairngorm party arrived first, at 4.40.

On Saturday night it was provisionally arranged to go to the Angel's Peak next day, as some of the members intended to try a new snow climb, but early on Sunday morning it was snowing heavily and the excursion was cancelled. Morrone was considered the only suitable hill in the prevailing weather, and was ascended by a party of fifteen in decidedly wintry conditions. On the summit a regular blizzard was raging, and the cold approached that on

Ben Muich Dhui. During the descent the snow ceased and the sun came out occasionally, so that conditions were quite pleasant on the lower slopes.

After lunch there were heavy snow showers, but towards three o'clock the weather improved again, and a good many of the members visited Creag Choinnich, chiefly in order to see a little rock-climbing. Mackintosh climbed up to the right of the wet slabs in the quarry and threw down a rope, when Dr. McIntyre and several other members ascended. On the rock at the top of the hill one or two difficult climbs were accomplished by Mackintosh and J. W. Levack. The corrie on the Glas Maol with its fresh snow was greatly admired from the cairn.

After tea on Sunday, the first batch of members, four in number, left for Aberdeen. On Monday those who remained—namely, Alexander, Douglas, Herd, D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, Mackintosh and McIntyre—went to Beinn a' Bhuid. The snow which had fallen on the previous day was melting rapidly, with the result that conditions for walking were wet and disagreeable. The party drove to Invercauld House and walked up the Slugan and Quoich Glens to the Dubh Lochan Corrie, with the intention of climbing a snow and rock gully in the buttress between it and the corrie to the north. Sleet and mist combined made the conditions most unpleasant, and the climb was abandoned when the party was some way up the gully. The return to Braemar was by the same route, but the snow had now turned into slush and the path from the corrie by the east bank of the Quoich was sopping. This party returned to Aberdeen on Tuesday morning. Alexander made a detour on the way; leaving the motor bus near the Gairn, he crossed the Polquhollick Bridge and walked up to Girnoc and climbed Creag Phiobaidh. He reached Ballater by Birkhall in easy time to catch the afternoon train. This member recommends another pleasant variation for walkers returning from Braemar—to leave the bus at Crathie and walk down the south side of the river, reaching Ballater by going over Creag Ghiubhais.

The meet was entirely successful and was very enjoyable, the break in the weather notwithstanding. Everybody found headquarters at the Invercauld most comfortable in every way, and the Secretary's arrangements for the meet were as usual thorough and complete.

MARSHALL J. ROBB.

SPRING HOLIDAY EXCURSION, 1921—BENNACHIE.

A NUMBER of the members of the Club participated in an excursion to Bennachie on the Aberdeen spring holiday, 2nd May. The party journeyed to Pitcaple by the 9.45 a.m. train. They ascended the

Mither Tap first and then Oxencraig, after which they proceeded to the Hermit's Seat. From the Hermit's Seat they descended to Oyne, whence they returned by train to Aberdeen. It was raining when the party left Aberdeen, and when on the hillside a number of snow showers were experienced, with the result that in the forenoon no very good distance views were possible. In the afternoon it cleared somewhat and the company were able to obtain a view of the Deeside hills, Morven, Ben Rinnes, Ben Aigan, the Tap o' Noth, and the Buck of the Cabrach. While on the hillside the Aberdeen company were joined by a party, including several ladies, from Blairdaff, who had faced a strong north wind in order to climb the hill. In spite of the miserable weather a most enjoyable outing was experienced.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON EXCURSION, 1921—KERLOCH.

A PARTY of over 20 members of the Club climbed Kerloch on the afternoon of Saturday, 25th June, driving out from Aberdeen in a char-a-banc. A halt was made at Moss-side Strachan, and the hill ascended, the route taken being along side the Curran Burn. From the summit, one half of the party returned northward to Kirkton of Strachan, and rejoined the char-a-banc, travelling in it to the Feughside Inn. The other half of the party descended by the west side of the hill, and after crossing the Water of Dye, reached the Cairn o' Mounth road, and walked on to the Feughside Inn. The two parties reunited at the Inn, where tea was served. The afternoon was very warm, but none the less the excursion was greatly enjoyed.