

THE FATALITY ON BRAERIACH.

DIARY OF THE CLIMB.

THE story of the double fatality which took place in the Cairngorms at the New Year, may now be completed, for the body of the second climber was found on the 25th of March, and all the facts as far as they will ever be known, are now available. A narrative was given in the January issue of the *Cairngorm Club Journal* recording the accident. It will be enough to recall that on Monday, 2nd January, two visitors from Perth came upon a young man lying in an unconscious condition near the lower bothy in Glen Einich, who died in a short time without recovering consciousness. He was identified as Thomas Baird of the Geology Department of Glasgow University, and it was learned that he and a Glasgow medical student, Hugh Barrie, had arrived at Aviemore on Wednesday, the 28th of December, and spent the night in an empty house near Whitewell in Røthiemurchus and had set out early on the Thursday morning, leaving word that they would not be back again until the Sunday evening. Search for the missing man was made on various days in January, so far as the weather permitted, on the slopes of Braeriach overlooking Glen Einich but without result, and parties from Braemar also visited the Corrou bothy at the foot of Cairn Toul, the supposition being that Baird and Barrie had crossed the Lairig Ghru and had spent the week-end there. Nothing was found at the Corrou to either support or disprove this.

On the last Sunday of March a search party again visited Glen Einich and Barrie's body was found near the upper bothy, lying in a peat bog between the bothy and the foot of Loch Einich. It was conveyed down the glen and buried near Whitewell at a spot commanding an impressive view of the Cairngorms, thus carry-

ing out, as far as possible, the wish expressed by Barrie in the remarkable poem which he wrote last summer.

The position where Barrie's body was discovered did not of itself throw any light upon the course of events, but some time previously one of the search parties had found the two rucksacks belonging to the men lying on the slope of Braeriach at about the 2,500 ft. level, and this and Baird's diary, which was found, made clear that the two climbers had spent the week-end at the Corrou and had been crossing to Glen Einich. The diary stated that they went through the Lairig Ghru on the Thursday and climbed the Devil's Point on the Friday. The entry for the Saturday is not very explicit but suggests that they may have climbed Cairn Toul. There is no entry for the Sunday.

The circumstances attending the fatality were extensively reviewed by Professor J. W. Gregory, Mr. Baird's chief at Glasgow University, in an article in the *Glasgow Herald* on 30th March. The weather on the Sunday was fine to begin with but broke down in the afternoon, a blizzard coming on when the men were probably still upon the hill. Professor Gregory is inclined to think from the position in which the rucksacks were found and from the fact that the ice-axe carried by one of the party is still missing, that they had slipped when descending the very steep slopes from the Einich Cairn of Braeriach to Glen Einich and became separated in the blizzard and darkness. Barrie had finally collapsed near the upper bothy while Baird had made his way down the glen to within a short distance of the lower bothy where he had collapsed. Possibly he had seen a light in the bothy because it was learned afterwards that a party of walkers spent the Sunday night in the bothy and left on the Monday morning little dreaming that a man was lying in the snow a few hundred yards away. Baird may have been making a last effort to reach the lower bothy when he broke down.

[To the Editor of *The Cairngorm Journal*].

DEAR SIR.—Regarding the New Year fatality, may I point out that neither Baird nor Barrie was concerned in the Rectorial kidnapping. This was the work of Findlay and Stewart, both of whom are now doctors and keen climbers. Baird and Barrie had climbed in the Cairngorms however. I knew all four (indeed Baird and Barrie and I were going to start a University climbing club in January, 1928).

HUMANITY DEPARTMENT,
THE UNIVERSITY,
GLASGOW, *February, 1928.*

I am,
Yours sincerely,
RONALD BURN.

U.S. MOUNTAINEERING ACCIDENT.

THE New York correspondent of *The Times* gives a graphic account of the fate of an inexperienced climber. Six Dartmouth students, he says, started out from the college at Hanover, New Hampshire, on Wednesday, November 28, to climb Mount Washington during the Thanksgiving Day holiday. They were all experienced climbers but one, a freshman named Herbert J. Young, of St. Louis, who had never been up a mountain before. On the following Sunday night five of the six returned to Hanover with the body of Young. All of them were in a pitiable condition, and two had had their feet frozen. The party had climbed to the top of Carter Notch on Thanksgiving Day (November 29) and next morning they set out for the Appalachian Club hut at the Lake of Clouds, far above the timberline of the mountain. The hut was still a mile away when Young complained of feeling weak. With a gale raging, his companions decided it was wiser to try and reach the base station three miles below than to push on to the hut. But before they reached the timber they were caught in a heavy snowstorm. Young pleaded to be allowed to sleep, but they dragged him along as well as they could. Progress, however, was so alarmingly slow that two of the party, Allen and Fairchild, decided to go ahead to the base and get a toboggan to bring Young in on, while the others remained with him to keep him awake. They left at 1 a.m. on Saturday, and, after a heroic struggle through the snow, reached the base cabin, only to find no toboggan. It was late on Saturday afternoon before they got back to the party on the mountain. Young was then unconscious. The five students carried and dragged him down the mountain, and some time during the journey he died. When they did not know.