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ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHIE.

CONTENTS.

Hill-Climbing in Skye.....	Professor Adamson, LL.D.
Mountain Measurements.....	J. C. Barnett.
(II.—Air-Pressure Instruments.)	
Away to the Hills! Away!.....	—
The Flowering Plants and Fern- Allies of the Cairngorms.....	Professor Trail, M.D., &c.
The Club at Ben Alder .....	John Clarke, M.A.
The Brimmond Hill .....	Alex. Copland.
The Cairngorm Mountains.....	Alex. Inkson M'Connochie.
(I.—The Eastern Cairngorms.)	

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES:

Kerloch—Lost on Cairngorm—Fatal Accident on Snowdon—Cairngorm Lantern  
Slides—Michel de Bernoff—Alpine Accidents in 1894—Reviews.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

The Brimmond Hill.      The Eastern Cairngorms (6).

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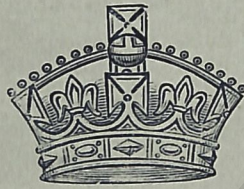
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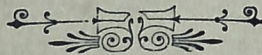
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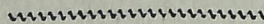


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GENTLEMEN ARE BOARDED DURING THE SEASON.

THE  
Cairngorm Club Journal.

Vol. I.

JANUARY, 1895.

No. 4.

HILL-CLIMBING IN SKYE.

BY PROFESSOR ADAMSON, LL.D.

THE pastime of mountain-climbing, as cultivated within the boundaries of our own island, is of fairly recent date. There are yet among the living those whose names are recorded as the first to ascend the prominent heights which originally attracted the attention of the climber. It is in truth only within the last dozen years that this form of exercise has taken such dimensions as to rank among the recognised modes of physical sport, and to gather round itself a literary record. Stimulated, perhaps, in the first instance by its predecessor, Alpine-climbing, mountaineering in Britain has now achieved an independent existence, has its own increasing band of votaries, has its journals, and is now in a fair way to have its handbooks. Season after season sees an increased number of youngsters and oldsters gathering in the familiar resorts, still all too few, where the sport can be enjoyed in its utmost perfection. There is a climbing jargon, and a tiresome climbing talk, and, as in all other forms of physical enjoyment to which the British mind has given itself, a thirst for "records", "first ascents", and "new ways", which bids fair soon to leave no corner of the narrow field unexplored.

An amusement which has so definitely established itself might afford to ignore all pertinacious criticism or demands for justification, and might shelter itself under the fair plea that in its case, as in the case of other forms of physical enjoyment, it is difficult or impossible to convey to the out-

sider any impression that would correspond to the experience of those who love it, and that would render the pursuit of it intelligible. The cultivated foreigner has often put on record his total failure to comprehend the eagerness of actors or spectators in a vigorous game of cricket or football. The non-golfer—who is about to vanish from the face of the earth—finds it hard to appreciate the keenness of enjoyment to be derived from trying, with what seem ingeniously awkward instruments, to knock a little ball into a little hole in the ground. Our ancestors, who looked at hills with positive aversion and loathing, could hardly enter into the feelings of their descendants to whom the rugged mountains are things of beauty, and who cannot obtain too close and intimate an acquaintance with them; and such ancestors have many descendants. Yet one might fairly urge for mountain-climbing that it is not in one but in many conditions, and in the combination of them, that the secret of its fascination is to be found. The mere delight of physical exercise is one condition—and a good day's climbing is about as hard work as a day with pick and shovel—but it cannot be taken in isolation; no climber wants simply to fatigue himself. There is a large infusion of that "spirited" element which is never long absent from our active relation to nature; there is a positive satisfaction in overcoming obstacles. But, apart from all that, independent even to some extent of an accompaniment which may be had without the climbing—the natural beauty of the surroundings—it has to be said that only through the experience of climbing is it possible to realise fully and to enjoy thoroughly the impression which the grandeur of the lonely and rugged mountain cliffs makes upon the mind. One needs to be close at hand, in the very heart of the great shattered masses of a real mountain, to appreciate fully what they mean for us.

"Useless and dangerous" are the hard terms with which the amusement is too often condemned. Hardly "useless", for the sport has its educative side, not only in regard to taste, but also to morals. There is much good discipline in climbing. "Know thyself" is an early and an excellent moral

precept, and nowhere does it apply more forcibly than in the work of climbing. "Dangerous" the amusement may be made, if carelessly and rashly undertaken. But in our own country, where there have not to be reckoned with the many incalculable elements of peril from weather that constitute the real source of danger in climbing on the larger scale, the risks run are more imaginary than real. A man may run much more risk in walking down a crowded street in town than in climbing a gully. As yet the record of mountaineering in Britain is singularly free from all that would justify the condemnation of it as dangerous. The accidents which are on record have not, for the most part, occurred in climbing. Where there have been accidents in climbing, it would appear that the ordinary and well-understood precautions, in the absence of which climbing is wholly unjustifiable, had been neglected.

For the full enjoyment of mountain-climbing there is requisite a certain co-relation between the mountains to be climbed and the headquarters of the climber. In this respect it can hardly be said that Scotland, considering its abundance of mountain material, is well equipped. The Lake district, and in particular the Wastdale portion of it, is almost ideally satisfactory. The best hills, with an immense quantity of varied and excellent climbing—Pillar Mountain, with its famous Rock and its appendages, Great Gable, with Needle, several fine *arêtes*, and a precipitous face amply stocked with gullies, Scawfell, with a plethora of climbing opportunities—are clustered round the Wastdale Inn and within easy reach of it. North Wales, again, has its Pen-y-gwryd Inn, from which Crib Goch, the ridges of Snowdon, and the fine mountain range of the Glyders are of easy access. For practical, or climbing, purposes, these two districts, Snowdon and the English Lakes, exhaust the material south of the Border. In Scotland, it is certainly true that two of the best quarters are excellently supplied. Skye, which so far as climbing is concerned is *facile princeps* in Scotland at least, has the admirable inn at Sligachan, from which a large section of the Coolin Hills can be managed, and it is possible, I believe, to make such

arrangements, through the excellent and most helpful proprietor of that inn, for the more outlying and perhaps grander section to be undertaken with equal comfort. Arran, which in smaller compass offers a very fair amount of excellent rock-climbing, somewhat resembling what is to be had in Skye, has in the hotel at Corrie a first-rate headquarters for the climber. But there must be an immense quantity of good climbing ground from which one is debarred by the brute factor of distance from the centre of operations. The Cairngorms, *e.g.*, contain much that looks like good field for climbing. There is a fine rocky face extending from Cairngorm to Creag na Leacainn; the head of Glen Avon has good things in it; and the whole eastern face of Braeriach and Cairn Toul, from the Garachorry to the Devil's Point, is, I suppose, practically unexplored by the climber, and looks as if it might give him occupation for a week. Yet most of this is out of reach for want of some fairly near headquarters. The Shelter Stone does not deserve more than its title.

Perhaps it is by reason of these difficulties that, on the whole, and without ignoring the enthusiasm and admirable work of Scottish clubmen, one must think that there is a less general interest taken in mountain climbing in Scotland than in England. The pastime does not seem to have taken hold to the same extent of the Scottish youth. In this observation I may be in error, for I have not had many opportunities of judging, and perhaps I am building too much on the isolated experience of Skye. Although climbers were not unknown at the Sligachan Inn, they were not numerous, and they were not predominately Scottish. There were no evidences of such periodical aggregations of the climbing fraternity as take place at Wastdale and throughout the Lake district. Yet, nowhere in Great Britain is the pastime to be enjoyed under such perfect conditions as in Skye, good weather being postulated. From the excellent centre of operations, the inn at Sligachan, the climber has within easy reach—that is, within a moderate day's walk—a range and variety of climbing unequalled elsewhere. The character of the rock

lends itself to climbing. The rough, firm surface of the slabs renders possible ascents at an angle which, under less favourable conditions, would be impracticable or intolerably difficult. There is almost every possible grade of difficulty to be selected, and every ascent is "remunerative" in the fullest sense; that is, it affords ample sense of exercise and conquest of obstacles, and the result is worth having on its own account. It is impossible to imagine any kind of walking more exhilarating than that along the sharp ridges of the Coolin Hills. All around, and close at hand, are towering peaks, deep corries, and shattered edges of marvellous rock. From these the eye travels to the broad expanse of sea glittering in the sun, broken into many a sinuous arm, and studded with islands. The picture is closed and completed by the endless prospect of the blue mountain tops of the mainland and the Hebrides, a billowy mass of hills amid which distinct recognition of the isolated mountain forms gradually becomes impossible.

From Sligachan the climbing ground divides naturally into three main sections—(1) Sgurr nan Gillean with its ridges and appendages, Sgur-na-h-Uamha and the Bhas-teir; (2) the peaks and ridges surrounding the head of Coire na Creiche, beginning with Bruach na Frithe and extending to Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh; and (3) Blath Bheinn (Blaven). On Sgurr nan Gillean much has been done, and doubtless much yet remains to be done. Of the recognised climbs the best in many ways is the ascent by the Pinnacle Route along the north-east spur, an ascent excellently described in the second number of this Journal. The western ridge to Bhas-teir is also an admirable climb, giving a considerable variety of work, and there is good climbing to be had by proceeding along the long south-eastern ridge connecting the top of Sgurr nan Gillean with its characteristically shaped appendage Sgur-na-h-Uamha. The ascent of this latter peak, the cone projecting into Harta Corrie, if made from the Corrie, is hard. At least we found it so, when selecting for path the right hand of two deep gullies seen from the Corrie about half-way up the peak.

If the ridge from Bruach na Frithe be followed faithfully all the way round the head of Coire na Creiche, there is perhaps more than can be managed comfortably in an ordinary day. But it breaks into portions which can be allotted to separate expeditions, and it may interest future visitors to the locality to have a brief description of what is to be encountered on these. From Bruach na Frithe the main ridge to be followed is exceedingly interesting and presents for some time no great difficulty. There is a considerable dip, and some small pinnacles to be got over which lead gradually on to what has been in view all along the ridge, the first of two higher peaks with a rather sharp cleft between them. These peaks, I understand, are to be known as Bidein Druim nan Ramh, Druim nan Ramh itself being the long, rather less elevated ridge going off from them on the left hand, and forming part of the rocky walls of Lota Corrie and Harta Corrie. The first and lower of the peaks, taken from either side of the ridge, that is, either coming from or going to Bruach na Frithe, presents no difficulty; and I may say that nothing but trouble is to be gained by avoiding the top of the ridge. On one occasion, coming up Bruach na Frithe by the sloping ridge on the side of Coire na Creiche, we thought time might be gained by breaking off before the final ascent to Bruach na Frithe, and traversing the side of the cliffs to Bidein. Time was not gained, and the climb proved hard and unpleasing.

The ascent from the first peak to the second is harder, and has to be accomplished by keeping slightly to the right hand at the final portion. The ascent is more easy to make than the descent, when the walk is made in the reverse direction. The difficulty in ascending is seen. When descending, it is not at once apparent from the top of the peak, which is a small superficies, how the thing is to be managed. It is necessary to let one's self down over the edge on the left corner of the top plateau before the remainder of the way becomes visible. If the rocks were wet, or if it were misty and dark, the climb would not be easy.



The descent from the second peak to the cleft on the ridge, a cleft which, from a peculiar rock in it, is, I imagine, that named on the Ordnance maps Bealach an Clach Mhor, is somewhat sharp, and of it also it is to be said that the climb is easier when taken in the reverse direction. From the cleft, the walk may be continued, homewards or onwards, in a variety of directions. Turning to the left, and skirting the base of the peak descended, we may take on to the long ridge of Druim nan Ramh, which has some remarkable and exercising pinnacles upon it, and the first main section of which terminates in an abrupt, shattered, precipitous rock face, on which, at the close of a day, we did not feel inclined to try our fortunes. It looked impracticable, and we decided that it must be so. Looking from below, after we had rounded the base of this wall, we thought the descent might have been made by the shattered edge on the Coruisk side. The descent towards Harta Corrie may be made by one or other of several chimneys leading on to the lower storey of the hillside. From experience I recommend that the climber proceed a good distance along Druim nan Ramh before taking down. He will thus avoid the watery slabs visible from the top of Harta Corrie. They are tiresome to get over, and, I think, more dangerous, or, at least, more suggestive of danger, than even much steeper rock.

If a more direct return to Sligachan is desired, the narrow and excessively stony gully to the right (Coire na Creiche) side of the cleft may be descended. At the foot of it a rather indefinitely marked track strikes away along the side of the slope of Bruach na Frithe, and leads into the better marked path from Sligachan to Glen Brittle at the highest point reached before the descent into Coire na Creiche.

If the ridge be continued, there is a sharp ascent from the cleft. Two or three steps up, on the left hand of the exact edge, lead on to a sloping slab, which has to be crossed. There is no particular difficulty in effecting this, either ascending or descending, but in the latter case it looks less practicable; and when the rock is wet, as it too often is, the

rope is advisable, at all events, in descending. From the slab upwards is fairly straight forward. The climber is now on the ridge of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh,\* and may complete his survey of that member of the group by traversing its four fine peaks. There is good climbing on them all, but nothing to call for special remark; and, indeed, as a rule, the descriptions of the ascent of these Skye peaks have a certain monotony. Perhaps it is that as yet only the more obvious climbs have been made, and that the minute description of special difficulties and ways of accomplishing them, with which Lake district climbing has familiarised one, must wait until the ground has been more thoroughly traversed.

Sgurr a' Mhadaidh may be reached either as thus described, or from Coire na Creiche by ascending either side of the short ridge which separates the head of the Corrie into two, or by the fine shattered ridge of Sgurr Thuilm, the southern boundary of the Corrie. We found the climb from the corner at which the latter joins the main ridge very good as a mode of beginning the traverse of the peaks of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh in the reverse direction. When the ridge of Sgurr Thuilm is reached it leads straight on, and by a fine *arête* to a peak, which, from the presence of a tin box en-

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\* The minute topography of the Coolins is only in its infancy, and the Ordnance map is very confusing in regard to the peaks just referred to. My friend Professor Weiss and I spent some time in trying to clear up the topography of the Bealach an Clach Mhor, and I insert here part of a note we entered in the Climbing Book at Sligachan. "The southern or third pinnacle, separated from the main ridge by the natural arch described by Mr. Pilkington (probably the Bealach an Clach Mhor of the Ordnance Survey), is practically the highest point of the ridge projecting into Coire na Creiche. In Mr. Pilkington's revised map of the Coolins, this ridge is not joined to the southern or any of the peaks of the main ridge, on account of the name of the mountain occupying the space. In the diagrammatic view by Mr. Gibson, however (*Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*), this ridge, the middle prong, is connected to the central peak, which is obviously incorrect". This southern peak, then, must be regarded as one of Bidein Druim nan Ramh. The four peaks of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh lie further south along the main ridge. I am not able to reconcile our observation of this quarter with the list of successive summits and dips given by Dr. Collie (*S. M. C. J.*, Jan. 1893).

closing cards, we thought must be regarded as the highest of the four heads.

Blaven, which stands apart from the main group of the Coolin Hills, is an impressive hill from whatsoever point it is viewed. It towers up majestically when the approach to the island is made from the north by sea. From Loch Slapin it presents a wonderfully fine serrated top, and the long, steep, rocky face it presents to Glen Sligachan is seen to great advantage either from Druim na Eidhne (Drumhain) or on the walk to Camasunary. In its structure Blaven seems to combine features of the Coolins proper with those of the very dissimilar hills so curiously located by the side of them. Its rock is not so firm and uniform. Every now and again in climbing one comes upon a seam of more friable broken stuff, which affords by no means such excellent footing as the grey black slabs of the adjacent peaks. Possibly the hill has special interest for the geologist.

The most direct route to the top of Blaven is by the huge, perpendicular-looking cleft running from top to bottom of the long side facing Drumhain. The lower portion of this cleft, perhaps two-thirds of the whole height, is a succession of waterfalls, some of which, whether water is there or not, seem impracticable. The general angle of ascent is very steep, and the frequent necessity of climbing out to the cliffs on the side of these waterfalls makes the labour excessive. They may be avoided by keeping out on the main slope near the edge of the cleft, but even then the ascent is tiresome. The upper portion of the cleft is a long stone shoot, with smooth rock sides, up which the "going" is certainly possible, but as certainly tedious and irritating. The cleft ought to be kept for descending, and there is indeed another reason for recommending that Blaven should not be ascended from this side. The approach to the finest portion of the mountain, from the climber's point of view, the huge rocky protuberance on its north-east spur, called Clach Glas, is not so well made from the main bulk as by ascending the ridge itself on which Clach Glas is situated, or by following the spur which runs off from Garbh Bheinn and joins Marsco.

Clach Glas is a very fine mass of rock, in full view from the inn at Sligachan, and resembling, as one might fancifully imagine, a gigantic figure with a long robe drawn up around its ears. Perhaps it hardly deserves its local reputation as a supremely difficult piece of rock climbing. In its case, as in the case of some other of the Skye peaks, the appearance is worse than the reality. We approached it from the hollow made by the sweep of the ridge from Blaven round towards Marsco. Turning into this hollow some six miles up the valley from the Sligachan Inn at a small wooden hut, we first ascended, keeping to the right hand, a long stretch of steep heathery ground which gradually led into the rounded, rocky ravine or corrie forming the portion of the hollow more immediately under the ridge of Clach Glas. From this corrie two fairly well marked gullies lead upwards. The left hand one proved unexpectedly hard, and we were glad to get out of it on to the edge of the main slope. From this point we aimed straight for the edge of Clach Glas on our left hand. The rocks looked more formidable than they proved to be in reality, and there was no trouble in getting to the top except from the need of extra care when the more friable and insecure seams were encountered. From the top of Clach Glas we continued the ridge to the summit of Blaven. The sharpest of several descents met on this ridge was the first, that from the peak of Clach Glas itself. We chose the descent by the right hand of the edge, which leads to a point a little below the level of the ridge to be reached. It seemed to us, after reaching the ridge, that the descent to the left would have been at least equally practicable and more direct. But as we did not put this to the test of experiment the idea may be only a case of the frequent illusion that the road on the other side of the valley is the better. The rocks on the ridge and on Blaven itself are much more broken up and "weathered" than is the case on the Coolin range.

Blaven may not, perhaps, deserve to be placed in the first rank for climbing purposes, but its claims are strong

on other grounds. It is a most imposing hill in appearance; its stretching ridge affords admirable walking; and from no other hill is a finer view of the characteristic excellences of Skye scenery to be obtained. The sole objection to it is the length of the rough walk that has to be undertaken in order to bring it within reach.



## MOUNTAIN MEASUREMENTS.

### II.—AIR-PRESSURE INSTRUMENTS.

BY J. C. BARNETT.

IN the year 1745 Torricelli performed his famous experiment that led to the construction of the mercurial barometer. He took a glass tube, 33 inches long, closed one end of it, and then filled it with mercury. Having placed his thumb on the open end, he inverted the tube so that that end was placed below the surface of the mercury contained in an open vessel, and then removed his thumb. He noted that the mercury in the tube fell until 30 inches of mercury remained supported above the level of the mercury in the vessel. Pascal proved the truth of the experiment that same year, and affirmed that the mercury in the tube was supported by the downward pressure of the air, and that, in fact, the weight of the mercury in the tube was exactly equal to the weight of a column of air of the same diameter, but reaching upward to the top of the air ocean. Six years later, Perrier noticed that the height of the mercurial column depended on the state of the weather. In 1665, Boyle proposed it as an instrument for determining the heights of mountains, and now, in the hands of our engineering surveyors, it proves to be a most valuable instrument indeed, especially when its results are checked by the hypsometer.

The mountain barometer is an ordinary cistern barometer, supported on a tripod, with a screw adjustment by which the mercury in the cistern can be raised or lowered to the zero point of an attached scale. The height of the column of mercury is read from this scale by a vernier giving the true height to the third decimal place. Above the cistern is an attached thermometer, which indicates the temperature of the mercury, and an unattached thermometer is also required to denote the temperature of the surrounding air.

To determine differences of level two of each of these

instruments are required, one set to make observations at the lower station and the other to make observations at the upper. These observations must be made with the utmost exactness and with the greatest care. The unattached thermometers should be kept in the shade, and both thermometers and barometer should be read rapidly and without breathing upon them, as the heat of the body would soon communicate itself to the instruments and vitiate the results. If only approximate correctness be required, note the heights of the barometer at the two stations, and then the following proportion will give the difference of level:—

Sum of barometric heights : diff. of heights :: 52,000 ft.  
Thus, if the reading at the lower station was 29·922 inches, and at the upper 28·185, then the proportion would be:—

$$58·107 : 1·737 :: 52,000 : 1,554 \text{ feet.}$$

This is Sir John Leslie's method. In barometric observations where exactness is of importance, two corrections require to be made, one for the depression of the mercury in the barometer tube due to capillary attraction, and the other for temperature, which not only expands the mercury itself, but the tube in which it is contained and even the scale by which the height of the column is measured. No really reliable results can be obtained when the temperature is neglected. Sir John Leslie advises the addition of one ten-thousandth part of the height calculated for each degree of temperature above 32°.

A very simple rule has been given by Sir Henry James, R.E., to the officers of the engineers for taking meteorological observations and deducing heights therefrom:—

*If from the simultaneous readings of the barometers in inches, and the attached and detached thermometers in degrees, it is required to determine the difference of level of the two stations.*

Then to the tabular number corresponding to the mean of the two barometers add the sum of the detached thermometers and multiply the sum thus found by the difference between the barometric readings. From this subtract  $2\frac{1}{2}$

times the difference between the attached thermometers, and the result will be the difference of level expressed in feet.

## MEAN READING OF BAROMETERS.

Inches.	·0	·1	·2	·3	·4	·5	·6	·7	·8	·9
25	1004·9	999·9	995·0	990·1	985·3	980·5	975·8	971·1	966·5	961·9
26	857·4	952·9	948·4	944·0	939·7	935·4	931·1	926·9	922·8	918·6
27	914·5	910·5	906·5	902·5	908·6	894·7	890·8	887·0	883·3	879·5
28	875·8	872·1	868·5	864·9	861·3	857·8	854·3	850·8	847·4	844·0
29	840·6	837·2	833·9	830·6	827·3	824·1	820·9	817·7	814·5	811·4
30	808·3	805·2	802·1	799·0	796·0	793·0	790·0	787·0	784·1	781·2

Let the readings be as follows:—

Barometers.	Attached Thermometers.	Detached Thermometers.
At base, - - 29·922	52°	48°
At summit, - 28·185	34°	32°
2) 58·107	Diff., 18°	Sum, 80°
Mean, - - 29·053		

To 80 add 848 (the number corresponding to mean height) = 928, which multiply by 1·737 (the difference between the barometric readings) = 1612, and from this deduct 45 ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  times the difference between the attached thermometers) = 1567 feet = height of the mountain.

Another simple, and approximately accurate, rule for ascertaining the relative elevation of two stations is to multiply by 900 the difference in barometrical readings between them and reckon the product as feet. In the above instance the height would be:—

$$1\cdot737 \times 900 = 1563\cdot3 \text{ feet.}$$

The use of the hypsometer in conjunction with the mountain barometer has already been referred to. This is an instrument for determining very exactly the boiling point of a liquid. It consists of a very sensitive and strong thermometer, large enough to be graduated so as to show the tenth of a degree, and a vessel containing water which can be boiled by a spirit lamp placed beneath. The bulb of the



thermometer is placed in the steam rising from the boiling water, and thus is bathed in pure vapour whatever may be the kind of the water employed.

As the boiling point of any liquid depends on the pressure of the air, and as the pressure of the air diminishes as we ascend, it is clear that the boiling point will furnish an indication of the height above sea level. It has been found by experiment that the boiling point is lowered  $1^{\circ}$  by an ascent of 519 feet, but we have to ascend to more than twice that distance to cause a fall of two degrees. A very simple and marvellously accurate rule of thumb for determining the elevation from a knowledge of the boiling point may be thus stated:—If at sea level the boiling point is  $212^{\circ}$  Fah., what is the elevation of a station where water boils at  $209^{\circ}$  Fah.? Here the boiling point is lowered  $3^{\circ}$ . Multiply 519 feet by 3 and add the square of 3 =  $1557 + 9 = 1566$  feet.

Before leaving the subject of mountain measurements by calculations based on variations of air pressure, one cannot omit a reference to the aneroid barometer, which, owing to its convenient size and portability, has become so extensively used of late. Its mechanism consists of a hollow metal cylinder with thin corrugated sides, which contract or expand according to the pressure of the atmosphere, the air within having been previously exhausted by the air-pump. The motions of the sides act upon levers, which in turn act upon a roller which moves an index. The instrument is graduated experimentally, as it cannot measure pressure absolutely, but can only afford indications relatively to a mercurial barometer. Aneroids are compensated for temperature, and are very sensitive, but do not preserve their accuracy owing to rust, or the alteration of the force of their springs. It is, therefore, advisable to frequently compare aneroids with standard barometers.

AWAY TO THE HILLS! AWAY!

TUNE—"Blue Bonnets over the Border".

I.

THOUGH the moon's on the loch, and the mist's on the hill,  
Though the great giant Bens be enshrouded in snow,  
Though the eagles be screaming and maidens be dreaming,  
Buckle ye, brave hearts; like men, bundle and go.

Tramp! Tramp! Cameron, M'Connochie,  
Tried "Cairngorm Boys", tramp it in order;  
Tramp! Tramp! Copland and Anderson—  
Keep up the name this side of the border!

II.

Then away to the hills with your long-swinging strides,  
Away to the glens, be it rain, shine, or sleet;  
Climb o'er the frowning crags, with well-filled luncheon bags,  
Rememb'ring the race is not aye to the fleet!

Tramp! Tramp! Brown, Scott, and Henderson,  
Tried "Cairngorm Boys", tramp it in order;  
Tramp! Tramp! Semple, Gillies, Rose, Trail—  
Keep up the name this side of the border!

III.

And when dark clouds are spread; thunders right overhead,  
When ye look down on the steep-sided corrie;  
Think of the wild, weird scene, gazed at through glitt'ring  
sheen—

Thrilling the heart with its grandeur and glory!

Tramp! Tramp! Harvey and Adamson,  
Tried "Cairngorm Boys", tramp it in order;  
Tramp! Tramp! M'Hardy and Ruxton—  
Keep up the name this side of the border!

## THE FLOWERING PLANTS AND FERN-ALLIES OF THE CAIRNGORMS.

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THE late Mr. John Roy, LL.D., contributed various lists of plants to separate monographs on the mountains of the Cairngorm region. These it was his intention to combine, and possibly to extend into a more general list to appear in this Journal; but his death prevented him from putting his intention into execution. I have pleasure in complying with the request that has been made to me that I should carry out the design, though I cannot lay claim to the same familiarity with the botany of the region that Dr. Roy possessed.

The flora of our mountains is chiefly composed of two very different groups of plants. The one consists of kinds that grow more or less plentifully on heaths and moorlands, or on grassy meadows, from the sea-level to a considerable height on the mountains, or that may even reach their summits. The other includes kinds that are confined to high altitudes, or that, if found at lower levels, are restricted to the banks of rivers, such as the Dee, the Spey, and their upper tributaries, by which seeds, or, less often, uprooted plants, are carried down to the spots on which the plants are found in the lowlands. A good many plants are more or less intermediate between these groups, inclining towards the one or the other. A few show the remarkable peculiarity of growing at comparatively high altitudes on the mountains and also on rocky sea coasts, but not in the intermediate districts. As examples may be named, the Rose-root Stonecrop (*Sedum Rhodiola*), which grows in various localities from 2500 feet upwards, and also near the Bullers of Buchan on the coast; the Purple Mountain Saxifrage (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*), not scarce on the higher hills, and again occurring on rocks at Aberdour on the coast; and the Common Thrift (*Armeria maritima*).

Possibly such peculiarities of distribution may be explained by the plants in both localities finding the competition with other plants for food and space less severe in their favourite haunts than elsewhere.

The characteristic Arctic or Alpine plants of our highlands, *i.e.*, those that are confined (except along the banks of rivers) to high altitudes on the mountains, have long exercised a great fascination over botanists, and have been the prizes sought in many a long and weary tramp; but most of them are limited in their distribution, and must be sought for in their chosen habitats. Not a few are far too rare to fall under the eye of any but the most experienced in the search for them, and the search leads one at times into situations where a slip or any want of care might lead to disastrous results. Few that have looked for our Alpine plants can fail to recall experiences more pleasant to look back on than to pass through, and of which the herbarium brings back lively recollections. Most of the more characteristic Alpine species grow in the higher corries on broken ledges of rock, especially where the soil is kept moist, though not actually wet, by trickling water. They are, however, peculiar in their distribution, certain localities being very rich in such plants, while others that appear at first sight more suited to them are very unproductive. A good example of such apparent capriciousness is afforded by Little Craigandal (Creag na Dala Bige), on which, at from 2400 to 2800 feet above the sea level, on a rather bare slope with broken rocks, there is an exceptionally rich Alpine flora, richer than on any similar area of the higher Cairngorms. The Alpine plants prefer corries or slopes that face the north, or from north-east to north-west. Direct exposure to the south seems to make the slopes too dry. Some species of more general occurrence grow on the bare hill tops, either on the drier places or wherever a moister soil or marshy depression occurs.

Any account of the botany of the Cairngorm district would be very defective unless it included, in addition to the Alpine plants, a notice of the species that, while often plentiful on lowland moors and meadows, form a very con-

spicuous part of the vegetation of the mountains also. Often, indeed, by far the most conspicuous part of the latter vegetation consists of such plants, several of which reach greater altitudes on our Scottish mountains than do most of the Alpine plants themselves. Some of these plants of wide range show no recognisable difference between examples from the upper limits and those from the lowlands, except, possibly, less vigorous growth, due to poorer soil and to exposure. As examples may be mentioned the Blaeberry (*Vaccinium Myrtillus*) and the Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*). Others show well-marked forms or varieties in the upper part of their range, e.g., the Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*), of which the form from high elevations differs so much as to receive a name as a variety (*minor*). The higher Cairngorm mountains cannot be called rich in the more strictly Alpine plants, especially if compared with the Lochnagar group, among which Glen Callater, Canlochan, and Clova have for many years been noted for the richness of their Alpine flora. In the subjoined enumeration are included several plants that do not form a part of the mountain flora, but that occur in the sub-Alpine or lowland portions of the district, especially in the valley of the Spey, and that are of interest from either their limited distribution or some other cause. None of the weeds confined to cultivated soil is mentioned, nor the common lowland plants that do not rise high enough to be noteworthy in the mountain vegetation, except a few that are included to call attention to their limits of altitude. The more characteristic Alpine and upland plants have their botanical names printed in more conspicuous type, e.g., **Thalictrum alpinum**, L. The altitudes given for the various species are not necessarily those at which they have been found on the Cairngorm mountains, but are those at which the species have been observed in Braemar or in neighbouring districts. They serve to indicate the altitudes at which the plants may be looked for.

In the preparation of this list, I have made use of all the information I could obtain, including Professor Dickie's "Botanist's Guide to the Counties of Aberdeen, Banff, and

Kincairdine", Dr. Roy's lists already referred to, and articles in the *Journal of Botany*, the *Scottish Naturalist*, and elsewhere, by various botanists.

- Thalictrum alpinum**, L. Alpine Meadow Rue. Widely distributed, though not abundant, and easily overlooked; between 1600 and 3000 feet.
- Ranunculus Flammula**, L. Lesser Spear-wort. Frequent in marshy places up to 2500 feet; often passing into the creeping form on the shores of lochs and shallow pools. *R. petiolaris* (Marshall), a recently-defined form, is recorded by Mr. G. C. Druce from the stony margin of Loch Morlich.
- R. acris**, L. Meadow Crowfoot or Buttercup. On grassy places up to nearly 3000 feet; at higher altitudes the variety *pumilus* (Wahl.), occurs, but near Castleton, in the valley of the Dee, it is usually the variety *Boraeanus* (Jord.).
- Caltha palustris**, L. Marsh Marigold. Along streams up to 3500 feet, passing into the form *minor* at upper altitudes.
- C. radicans**, Forst. Is recorded by Mr. G. C. Druce from near Loch Morlich. It is a very local and rare plant.
- Trollius europæus**, L. Globe Flower. Rises to over 3000 feet above the sea, and occurs here and there in the district.
- Nuphar minimum**, Sm. (*N. pumilum*, Sm.) Small Yellow Waterlily. Grows in two or three of the lochs on Speyside.
- Arabis petraea**, Lam. Alpine Rock Cress. On most of the Cairngorm mountains up to 3000 feet, and extending downwards along the streams nearly to the sea level. The variety *hispida*, D.C., has been met with on Cairngorm.
- Draba rupestris**, R. Br. Rock Whitlow Grass. On Cairngorm at about 3000 feet.
- Subularia aquatica**, L. Awl-wort. In Loch Avon and Loch Morlich, and probably in other lochs of the Cairngorms.
- Cochlearia officinalis**, L., *alpina* Grufb. Alpine Scourvy Grass. Not uncommon, though local, at high altitudes on several of the mountains.
- Viola palustris**, L. Marsh Violet. Not uncommon in marshy hollows up to 4000 feet, flowering in early summer.
- Viola lutea**, Huds. Mountain Violet. This large-flowered violet replaces on the mountains, from 1500 to 2600 feet, the common Heart's-ease or Pansy Violet of the lowlands, but it also extends downwards to 400 feet above the sea level. Its flowers are yellow or purple.
- Polygala vulgaris**, L. Milkwort. Is common in most natural pastures from the sea level up to over 2500 feet, usually as the form *serpyllacea*, Weihe, at the higher elevations. Its flowers show a wide range of colour, from white to deep blue and to deep red, with a great variety of intermediate shades.
- Silene acaulis**, L. Moss Campion. Forming moss-like cushions, covered

- during summer with its bright red flowers. It is common on most mountains from about 2200 to 4300 feet.
- Lychnis diurna*, Sibth. Red Campion. In shady places from sea level up to 3500 feet, but local.
- Cerastium*. Mouse-ear Chickweeds. This genus includes a considerable number of species in our flora. They are so much alike as to render their recognition as species no easy task. Certain forms—*C. arcticum*, Lange, *C. alpinum*, L., *C. trigynum*, Vill.—are confined to high altitudes, 1500 to 4000 feet above sea level, where they may be found on most of the Cairngorms. Others—*C. glomeratum*, Thuill., *C. triviale*, Link,—range from the sea level to about 3000 feet above it. *C. triviale*, var. *alpestre*, Lindb., has been found in Glen Eunach.
- Stellaria uliginosa*, Murr. Bog Stitchwort. Occurs from the sea level up to nearly 3000 feet. It frequently forms a part of the green masses of vegetation so common beside streams or around their sources.
- Sagina Linnæi*, Presl. Alpine Pearl-wort. On wet rocks and near streams over 2000 feet, on all the Cairngorms, though not common. It is very inconspicuous, and may be confounded with *S. procumbens*, L., a far more abundant plant, which occurs from the sea level to near 3000 feet.
- S. alpina*, Don. Is recorded by Mr. Druce, as found by himself on steep cliffs in Coire an t-Sneachda, and near the waterfall which enters Glen Avon from Ben Muich Dhui. (It was found by Don on the summit of Ben Nevis, and had not again been found by anyone in Britain.)
- Sagina Boydii*, B. White. Is a peculiar plant found by Mr. W. B. Boyd in Braemar (on Ben Avon?). The description and figure are contained in the *Journal of Botany* for August, 1892.
- Montia fontana*, L. Water Blinks. Usually forms a considerable part of the green cushions of vegetation around springs and beside small streams from the sea level up to 3300 feet, in one or other of its varieties—*minor* (Gmel.) and *rivularis* (Gmel.)
- Hypericum pulchrum*, L. Small Upright St. John's Wort. Common on moorlands up to 2000 feet.
- Linum catharticum*, L. Purging Flax. Common, though rather inconspicuous, on moors and natural pastures up to 1700 feet.
- Geranium sylvaticum*, L. Wood Crane's Bill. Up to 3200 feet. It occurs on Ben Muich Dhui and others of the Cairngorms, but is local though rather common in the lower districts of Deeside.
- Oxalis Acetosella*, L. Wood Sorrel. Among rocks up nearly to 4000 feet. In the lower districts, to the sea level, it is more common in woods. It produces conspicuous but rather barren flowers in spring and early summer, followed in later summer and autumn by inconspicuous flowers that remain very small and do not open, but that give origin to well-developed fruits. When ripe the fruits burst suddenly, and each seed is shot out of an elastic outer coat.
- Genista anglica*, L. Petty Whin. Growing among heather on moors from sea level to 2200 feet, often abundantly.

- (*Ulex europæus*, L. Common Whin. Though not extending to the Cairngorms in Braemar this plant may be mentioned to request that its upper limits both in Braemar and on Speyside should be accurately noted.)
- Cytisus scoparius*, Link. Common Broom. Its upper limits should be noted, and its habit of growth near the limits. A procumbent form grows at a pretty high elevation on Beinn a' Bhuid.
- Lotus corniculatus*, L. Common Bird's-foot Trefoil. Is abundant in most natural pastures from the sea level upwards. It has been noted at almost 2000 feet above the sea.
- Astragalus alpinus*, L. Alpine Milk-vetch. Is plentiful on Little Craigan-dal at about 2200 feet elevation.
- Lathyrus macrorrhizus*, Wimm. Tuberos Bitter-vetch,—with its variety *tenuifolius*,—frequent in pastures from sea level to 2300 feet.
- Rubus Chamæmorus*, L. Cloudberry or Avron. On all the Cairngorms ; often in great abundance on moist heaths, from 2000 to 3800 feet above the sea.
- Dryas octopetala*, L. White Dryas. Here and there on all the Cairngorms between 2400 and 2800 feet elevation.
- Geum rivale*, L. Water Avens. Here and there on moist rocks and beside streams from sea level up to 2500 feet or higher.
- Potentilla rubens*, Vill. (*P. maculata*, Pourr.). Orange Alpine Cinquefoil. In natural pastures here and there from 1300 to 2600 feet.
- P. Tormentilla*, L. Tormentil. Plentiful in natural pastures from the coast upwards, to over 3000 feet altitude. It occurs at 3300 feet on Beinn a' Bhuid.
- P. Comarum*, Nestl. Marsh Cinquefoil. Plentiful in marshes from the sea level. Its upper limits should be noted, as it has not been recorded much above 1400 feet in this district.
- P. Sibbaldi*, Hall f. Sibbaldia. From 1600 to over 4000 feet above the sea, often in great plenty. The inconspicuous greenish-yellow flowers are easily overlooked.
- Alchemilla vulgaris*, L. Ascends from sea level to nearly 3000 feet above the sea, showing at least three varieties.
- A. alpina*, L. Alpine Lady's Mantle. Is one of the most plentiful plants in the sward on our mountains, from about 600 feet above the sea upwards ; and it reaches an altitude of more than 4000 feet. It is usually to be found among shingle beside the Dee almost to Aberdeen, the produce of seeds carried down the river from the hills.
- Rosa*. The wild roses should scarcely be included among the plants of the Cairngorms, though occurring in the glens up to 1200 or 1400 feet. Their upper limits should be noted.
- Pyrus Aucuparia*, Gærtn. Rowan or Mountain Ash. Is not rare among broken cliffs up to over 2000 feet.
- Saxifraga*. This genus is perhaps the richest in characteristically Alpine plants in our native flora in proportion to its extent, most of our species being especially Alpine in distribution here. Several of these occur on the Cairngorms.
- S. oppositifolia*, L. Purple Mountain Saxifrage. Is abundant on most of



the mountains from about 2200 to over 3000 feet. Its moss-like clumps of leafy stems are covered in May with dark purplish red flowers. It grows also on the sea-coast at Aberdour in the north of Aberdeenshire.

- S. nivalls**, L. Alpine Clustered Saxifrage. Is one of the rarest Alpines in this district, occurring on damp rocks between 2400 and 2800 feet of altitude. Dr. Roy notes it in his Braeriach and Cairn Toul list.
- S. stellaris**, L. Starry Saxifrage. Is one of the most common of mountain plants; its little starry flowers gleaming in almost every moist spot by the waysides, up to over 4000 feet. It occurs as low as 1000 feet; but becomes abundant only at a few hundred feet above that level.
- S. aizoides**, L. Yellow Mountain Saxifrage. May be met with along the rivers from 50 feet above the sea; and in marshy places, from about 600 to over 3000 feet, it is often abundant, flowering in summer.
- S. rivularis**, L. Brook Saxifrage. Is rare and local, on moist rocks at over 3000 feet elevation. It has been found on Cairn Toul.
- S. cæspitosa**, L. Tufted Alpine Saxifrage. Found in 1830, "at the base of the precipice (east side of Beinn a' Bhuidr)" by Mr. M'Nab, and in the same year "by Dr. M. Barry, on Ben Avon". Dr. Roy gives the latter locality as "on the west side of Slochd Mor, half-way up the cliffs".
- S. sponhemica**, Gmel. Has been gathered by Mr. Druce in Glen Eunach.
- S. hypnoides**, L. Mossy Saxifrage. May be looked for on moist rocks. It is not rare about the Break-neck Fall in Glen Callater.
- Chrysosplenium alternifolium*, L. Alternate-leaved Golden Saxifrage. Beside streams, very local. It has been found in Glen Eunach. (It grows at Corriemulzie.)
- C. oppositifolium*, L. Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage. Common beside streams, from sea level to a considerable elevation. Its upper limit should be noted.
- Parnassia palustris*, L. Grass of Parnassus. In marshes, but local, up to 2700 feet, flowering in autumn.
- Sedum Rhodiola**, D.C. Rose-root Saxifrage. On moist broken cliffs on all the mountains, though local. It grows also on sea-coast cliffs in Buchan.
- Drosera*. Sundews. This genus is represented by two species, *D. rotundifolia*, L., Round-leaved Sundew, and *D. anglica*, Huds., Long-leaved Sundew. Both occur on damp or marshy moors, not unfrequently in plenty, in the lowlands among bog mosses, and reach an elevation of about 2000 feet. *D. rotundifolia* is the more widespread. *D. anglica* is recorded from the bases of Ben Muich Dhui and of Beinn a' Bhuidr. The form *obovata*, M. and K., is not uncommon in a small marsh near Boat of Garten.
- Callitriche*. Water Starworts. The species of this rather inconspicuous genus should be looked for in the mountain lochs.
- Epilobium*. Willow Herbs. This genus contains several species that greatly resemble one another. (*E. angustifolium*, L., reaches 3200 feet on Lochnagar, but I have no note of it from the Cairngorms.) *E.*

- montanum*, L., Mountain w.H., is plentiful on banks and waste ground, and *E. obscurum*, Schreb., and *E. palustre*, L., Marsh w.H., in marshy places, all three up to nearly 2000 feet.
- E. alsinefolium**, Vill.—Chickweed-leaved w.H.—and **E. alpinum**, L.—Alpine w.H.—are small alpine species, the latter the wider in range of altitude (1300 to 3800 feet), but both occurring beside springs and rivulets on all the Cairngorms.
- Meum Athamanticum*, Jacq. Highland Micken or Bald Money. Occurs in pastures in the glens of Braemar up to 1500 feet.
- Angelica sylvestris*, L. Wild Angelica. In damp pastures and on moist rocks up to 3200 feet.
- Cornus suecica**, L. Dwarf Cornel. In moist slopes and hollows on all the Cairngorms up to nearly 3000 feet.
- Galium boreale*, L. Northern Bedstraw. Along streams up to 2500 feet.
- G. verum*, L. Lady's Bedstraw. Common on dry banks up to 1800 feet.
- G. saxatile*, L. Smooth Heath Bedstraw. Common in dry places up to 4000 feet.
- G. palustre*, L. Marsh Bedstraw. In damp or marshy places up to nearly 2000 feet; usually common.
- Scabiosa succisa*, L. Devil's-bit Scabious. Common on heaths and in pastures, reaching 2800 feet above the sea level.
- Solidago Virgaurea*, L. Golden Rod. The variety *cambrica* occurs in the lower glens.
- Bellis perennis*, L. Common Daisy. Up to 2500 feet. Note upper limits.
- Erigeron alpinum**, L. Alpine Flea Bane. Rare on moist rocks at from 2400 to nearly 3000 feet. It has been found on all the Cairngorms.
- Antennaria dioica*, R. Br. Mountain Everlasting. Common on most heaths up to over 2000 feet.
- Gnaphalium sylvaticum*, L. Highland Cudweed. Plentiful in some pastures and on heaths, up to nearly 2000 feet.
- (**G. norvegicum**, Gunn. Often regarded as a variety of the last, occurs on Lochnagar, and may be looked for on broken cliffs of the Cairngorms.)
- G. supinum**, L. Dwarf Cudweed. Is one of the most common plants on bare mountain slopes from 1400 feet to over 4000.
- Achillea Ptarmica*, L. Sneezewort Yarrow. } In pastures up to  
*A. Millefolium*, L. Common Yarrow. } about 1500 feet. The  
*Chrysanthemum Leucanthemum*, L. Ox-eye Daisy. } upper limits of each  
*Matricaria inodora*, L. Scentless Feverfew. } should be noted.
- Senecio Jacobaea*, L.—Ragwort—may be met with, usually in drier pastures, up to 2000 feet; and *S. aquaticus* (Huds.)—Marsh Ragwort—among marsh vegetation and by streams in the lower parts of the glens.
- Carduus* and *Cnicus*. These genera, comprising the various thistles, are much less abundant than in the lowlands, and are confined to the lower glens. *Cnicus palustris*, Willd., the Marsh Thistle, ascends to about 2000 feet; and *C. heterophyllus*, L., Melancholy Plume Thistle, to 3200 feet on Lochnagar.
- Saussurea alpina**, D.C. Alpine Saussurea. Grows on moist ledges of cliffs,

at from 2200 feet upwards to nearly 4000 feet on the Cairngorms, including Little Craigandal.

*Hieracium*. Hawkweeds. This genus includes a very large number of named forms; but few botanists could undertake to distinguish the "species" with confidence from one another. They are peculiarly mountain plants, and a considerable number have been recorded from the Cairngorm mountains by specialists who have studied them. A list of all the forms known to Mr. F. J. Hanbury (the leading authority on the genus in Britain) to occur in Braemar is contained in the *Scottish Naturalist* for October, 1891, pp. 183-84; but a good many others have been put on record since that date by himself and by the Rev. Messrs. Linton and E. S. Marshall.

*Leontodon autumnalis*, L. Autumnal Hawkbit. Abundant in pastures from the coast upwards, reaching almost 3000 feet on Ben MuichDhui.

*Taraxacum officinale*, Web. Dandelion. Plentiful in many places, the variety *palustre*, D.C., reaching 4000 feet elevation.

*Lobelia Dortmanna*, L. Water Lobelia—which occurs in several of the lowland lochs on Deeside and in Loch Callater, should be looked for in shallow water along the edges of Loch Eunach and the other highland lochs in the Cairngorms. It occurs in several of the lochs in the Speyside part of the district up to Loch an Eilein.

*Campanula rotundifolia*, L. Common Hainbell or Bluebell. Plentiful in natural pastures and on heaths from the coast upwards, reaching an elevation of 3000 feet. On the hills it often bears only one flower on each stem.

*Vaccinium Oxycoccos*, L. Marsh Whortleberry or True Cranberry. Very local, in mossy bogs up to 2000 feet. Mentioned in Dr. Roy's list for Braeriach and Cairn Toul, but with (?). Found in Coire Etchan, Ben Muich Dhui.

*V. vitis-idaea*, L. Red Whortleberry or Cranberry. Plentiful on most heaths from 200 to over 3000 feet altitude. This plant yields most of the "cranberries" gathered in Scotland.

*V. uliginosum*, L. Bog Whortleberry. Very local, in bogs, at altitudes of from about 1800 to 3500 feet in this district, in marked contrast to its abundance down nearly to the sea level in the west of Scotland. Noted in Dr. Roy's list for Braeriach and Cairn Toul.

*V. Myrtillus*, L. Blaeberry. Is one of the most widely diffused and plentiful of our heath plants, ranging from the coast to near the summit of Ben Muich Dhui.

*Arctostaphylos Uva-ursi*, L. Red Bear-berry. Plentiful on many inland moors from about 200 to 2500 feet elevation.

*Calluna Erica*, D.C. Common Ling—"Cat Heather"—of this district. Is our most abundant heath up to about 2800 or 3000 feet, but from this elevation it thins out, and does not appear to pass 3300 feet, marking the upper limit of Mr. H. C. Watson's Mid-Arctic zone of vegetation on our mountains.

*Erica Tetralix*, L. Cross-leaved Heath. Common on swampy moors up to 2000 feet, but not passing 2100 feet usually, thus marking the lower limit of the Mid-Arctic zone.

- E. cinerea*, L. Fine-leaved Heath, or "Purple Bell Heather". Abundant on most dry moors up to about 2000 feet.
- Loiseleuria procumbens*, Desv. Trailing Azalea. Scarcely occurring below 2100 feet, but abundant on dry gravelly places on most hills up to 3500 feet.
- Pyrola secunda*, L. Serrated Winter-green. Local, from 100 up to 2000 feet, in woods and on shady rocks; occasionally met with in the district, e.g., on Little Craigandal.
- P. media*, Swartz. Intermediate Winter-green. Almost from the coast to upwards of 2000 feet above the sea, in woods and on moors; common, but somewhat local; occurring in a good many places, e.g., near Linn of Quoich, Linn of Dee, &c.
- P. minor*, L. Less plentiful than *P. media*, but occurs in the valley of Dee, e.g., north of Castleton.
- Armeria maritima*, Willd. Sea Pink. Here and there on the higher mountains, as well as on the sea coast, showing great differences in the hairiness of the calyx, as noted by Dr. Dickie. The variety *planifolia*, Syme, has been found on Derry Cairngorm and on Little Craigandal.
- Primula vulgaris*, L.—Primrose—is plentiful; and *P. veris*, L.—Cowslip—is common in places, though somewhat local; both of them from the coast, up to 1500 feet elevation.
- Lysimachia nemorum*, L. Wood Loosestrife. Is widespread, and often plentiful in moist, shady places from the coast to nearly 2000 feet.
- (*Trientalis Europæa*, L. Chickweed Winter-green. Common on many heaths in the district from the coast upwards. I have no notes about its occurrence among the Cairngorms, but it probably occurs on them, as it has been found at 3000 feet on Lochnagar. It flowers in May and June.)
- Gentiana campestris*, L. Field Gentian. Common in many natural pastures from the coast up to nearly 2000 feet.
- Menyanthes trifoliata*, L. Buckbean or Bogbean. In marshy pools up to about 1500 feet. Its upper limits should be noted.
- Digitalis purpurea*, L. Foxglove. On waste and rocky slopes up to 1800 feet. Its upper limits should be noted.
- Veronica serpyllifolia*, L. Thyme-leaved Speedwell. Occurs in pastures and on grassy heaths up to over 3000 feet; and the variety *humifusa* (Dickson) is frequent on all the higher mountains.
- V. alpina*, L. Alpine Speedwell. Is found in damp pastures and on moist ledges on all the Cairngorms from 2000 to 3000 feet.
- V. officinalis*, L.—Common Speedwell—and *V. Chamædryis*, L.—Germander Speedwell—both common in natural pastures, from the sea level upwards; reach 2000 feet. The former has been found with hairless leaves at about 1700 feet altitude on the Cairngorms.
- Euphrasia officinalis*, L. Common Eyebright. Is very plentiful in pastures and on moors, growing from the coast up to over 3500 feet. On poor soils and in exposed situations it often is very slender, with small flowers, which vary from nearly white to dark purplish red. [A curious Eyebright, *E. paludosa* (Towns.), has been found on marshy

ground near Castleton, and may occur in the Cairngorm district. It comes nearest the form *gracilis* (Fries).]

*Pedicularis palustris*, L.—Marsh Lousewort—and *P. sylvatica*, L.—Pasture Lousewort—are plentiful on many moors of the kinds indicated by the names of the plants up to 2000 feet. *P. palustris* has been found at 2800 feet above Glen Callater.

*Rhinanthus Crista-galli*, L. Yellow Rattle. On most moors and pasture lands up to 1400 feet, or probably higher.

*Melampyrum pratense*, L. Common Yellow Cow-wheat. Local, but occurring in woods, and less often on moors, up to about 3000 feet. (Found striped in Coire na Ciche of Beinn a' Bhuid. —A.C.)

The five plants last mentioned draw part of their food from neighbouring plants (specially from grasses) by means of suckers produced on the roots of the parasites, and pushed into the roots with which they are in contact.

*Utricularia*. Bladderwort. This genus includes in this district three species, all living in water, usually in marshy pools, and easily recognised by the small bladders produced on their leaves. *U. intermedia*, Hayne, is noted in Dr. Roy's list for Braeriach and Cairn Toul, and by Mr. Druce for Loch Mallachie, on Speyside. *U. vulgaris*, L., has been found in Loch Callater. Both these species and *U. minor*, L., should be looked for in suitable situations upon the Cairngorms.

*Pinguicula vulgaris*, L. Common Butterwort. Is one of our most common "fly-catchers", growing in moist places from the coast up to nearly 3000 feet elevation.

*Thymus Serpyllum*, L. Wild Thyme; and } In dry pastures up to 2000 feet.  
*Prunella vulgaris*, L. Self-heal.

*Littorella juncea*, Bergius (*L. lacustris*, L.). Plantain Shoreweed. Grows along the margins of pools and lochs, either under water or on the moist shores. In both situations it frequently forms so close a vegetation as to resemble a grassy sward. It occurs, somewhat locally, from the sea level up to 1650 feet elevation.

*Polygonum viviparum*, L. Viviparous Alpine Bistort. In natural pastures almost from the sea level to over 2500 feet: widely distributed. Many of the flowers are replaced by reproductive bulbils usually.

*Oxyria digyna*, Hill. Mountain Sorrel. Abundant on moist rocks in many places up nearly to 4000 feet elevation. It occurs on shingle along the Dee nearly to Aberdeen.

*Rumex*. The true Docks do not reach any great elevation, indeed they can scarcely be ranked as Cairngorm plants; but they are mentioned here to ask for notes of the elevations reached by them. The species are hard to distinguish. Specimens should show ripe fruit and one or two lower leaves.

*R. Acetosa*, L.—Common Sorrel—and *R. Acetosella*, L.—Sheep's Sorrel. In pastures up to high altitudes. Accurate observations of the limits attained by each are desirable.

*Mercurialis perennis*, L. Dog Mercury. Grows from the coast to over

1700 feet above the sea, usually under the shade of trees, but sometimes on broken slopes.

(*Urtica dioica*, L. Common Nettle. I have no mention of the occurrence of this plant on the Cairngorms; but include it to ask that, if met with, a note be made of whether it appears to be native, or might probably have been introduced by man or by sheep. Wherever I have seen it among the hills, its occurrence has been reconcileable with its introduction by man, directly or indirectly.)

*Myrica Gale*, L. Bog Myrtle. Grows on marshy heaths and in bogs from the coast up to considerable altitudes, e.g., in Glen Avon, often abundantly. Its upper limit should be noted.

*Betula alba*, L. Common Birch. Nearly up to 2000 feet, but small and bush-like towards its limits. (Both *B. glutinosa*, Fr., and *B. verrucosa*, Ehrh., are found in the district.)

*B. nana*, L. Dwarf Birch. Local, between 1600 and 2100 feet, on Beinn a' Bhuidr, on both the Craigandals, and in Glen Avon. It is noted by Dr. Roy in his list for Braeriach and Cairn Toul. Where it grows near the common birch intermediate forms should be looked for.

(*B. intermedia*, Thomas. Has been found in Glen Callater.) Professor Babington suspects that a *Betula*, found by himself "on Ben Avon, Braemar, in 1842", in barren condition, may be *B. humilis*, Schrk.

*Salix*. Willows and Sallows. This genus, like *Hieracium*, contains many forms that task the skill of trained botanists to distinguish them. Several of the species are among the more characteristic of our Alpine plants, and these alone will be referred to at present.

*S. nigricans*, Smith—Dark-leaved Willow—and *S. phylicifolia*, L.—Tea-leaved Willow. May be looked for along streams—the former up to nearly 3000 and the latter to over 2000 feet.

*S. lapponum*, L. Downy Mountain Willow. On moist, broken cliffs, at from 2000 to 3500 feet, on most of the Cairngorms.

*S. Myrsinites*, L. Small Tree Willow. On Little Craigandal, and in Dr. Roy's list for Braeriach and Cairn Toul. It is recorded by Mr. Druce as not uncommon on the south side of Glen Eunach.

*S. herbacea*, L. Least Willow. On broken ledges and gravelly slopes from 2000 feet to the tops of the mountains, reaching the summit of Ben Muich Dhui. Its leaves are often loaded with the berry-like galls of a sawfly. (Other Alpine willows, viz., *S. lanata*, L., Woolly Broad-leaved Willow, and *S. reticulata*, L., Reticulated Willow, are found in Glen Callater, though not yet on record from the Cairngorms. They should be looked for on the latter mountains.)

*Populus tremula*, L. Aspen. Up to 1600 feet.

*Empetrum nigrum*, L. Crowberry. A common plant on most heaths, and also in natural pastures from the coast to over 4000 feet elevation.

*Quercus Robur*, L., Oak, and *Corylus Avellana*, L., Hazel. Occur in the glens up to about 1500 feet elevation. I have no sufficient notes to determine the respective altitudes in the Cairngorms reached by the two forms included under *Q. Robur*.

The Orchids are poorly represented in the mountain flora. *Malaxis paludosa*, Sw., Bog Orchis, has been found in a bog near Linn of Dee, and near Boat of Garten. *Orchis maculata*, L., the Spotted Orchis, is common on dry heaths, ranging from the coast to 3000 feet of altitude. *Listera cordata*, R. Br., Heart-leaved Tway Blade, grows among tall heather up to 1700 feet. *Habenaria Conopsea*, Benth., and *H. albida*, R. Br., occur in short natural pastures up to nearly 2000 feet, *e.g.*, at the base of Ben Muich Dhui; and *H. viridis*, R. Br., Frog Orchis, in similar pastures and on rocky ledges up to 3300 feet. The last three orchids are easily overlooked owing to their small size and inconspicuous habit.

*Narthecium ossifragum*, Huds. Bog Asphodel. Adorns the wet moors and bogs with its spikes of yellow flowers up to 3200 feet.

*Tofieldia palustris*, Huds. Scottish Asphodel. Local, and confined to marshy spots, from about 1500 to 2600 feet. It has been found on all the Cairngorms. It is so inconspicuous as to be easily overlooked.

*Juncus*. The true Rushes are abundant in most marshy localities, alike on moors and by streams, as well as on the ledges of wet rocks.

*J. effusus*, L., and *J. conglomeratus*, L. Occur up to about 2000 feet; *J. lampocarpus*, Ehrh., *J. supinus*, Moench., and *J. squarrosus*, L., to 2500 feet, but all of these species are plentiful in the lowlands also.

*Juncus alpinus*, Villars. Discovered as a British plant by Dr. F. B. White in Perthshire in 1887; has since been recorded by Mr. G. C. Druce from Glen Eunach. It might readily be passed as a form of *J. lampocarpus*. Despite its name, it does not appear to be a peculiarly Alpine plant.

*J. trifidus*, L. Trifid Rush. Is a characteristically Alpine plant, growing freely in gravelly places from 2000 feet up to the summits of the highest mountains.

*J. triglumis*, L. Three-flowered Rush. This small species is local, though not scarce in various localities, especially on moist rocks, from about 2000 to 2500 feet.

*Luzula*. The Wood Rushes are usually found in drier pastures, occurring frequently on the mountains. *L. maxima*, D.C., reaches 2500 feet, and *L. campestris*, D.C., and *L. multiflora*, Lej., rise to about 3000 feet altitude; but all range from the coast upwards.

*L. arcuata*, Wahl.—Curved Mountain Wood-rush—and *L. spicata*, D.C.—Spiked Mountain Wood-rush—are peculiarly Alpine plants, the former scarce passing below 3700 feet of elevation, and the latter seldom below 2000 feet, while both extend to the summit of even Ben Muich Dhui. *L. arcuata* is by far the more local of the two, but is much more abundant on the Cairngorm mountains than elsewhere in Scotland, though rather scarce on Ben Avon and on Beinn a' Bhuid.

*Sparganium affine*, Schnizl. Floating Bur-reed. Grows in boggy pools at the foot of Ben Muich Dhui, and on Speyside.

*S. minimum*, Fr., is recorded by Mr. Druce from Loch Mallachie on Speyside.

*Potamogeton*. Pondweeds. The water-weeds of this genus should be looked for in the lochs and pools of the Cairngorms. *P. polygonifolius*, Pour., grows in the small pools on swampy moors up to nearly 2000 feet.

*Scirpus caespitosus*, L. "Deer's Hair Grass". Forms a very conspicuous share in the vegetation of peaty heaths, to which its russet-coloured stems and leaves often give the appearance from which it derives its popular name. It ranges from the coast to 3500 feet of elevation.

*Eriophorum vaginatum*, L.—Hare Tail Cotton Grass—and *E. angustifolium*, Roth—Narrow-leaved Cotton Grass—are very conspicuous on most damp moors during summer, when their cottony fruiting heads are fully formed. *E. vaginatum* is the more local, but extends from 100 to 2500 feet above the sea. *E. angustifolium* ranges from the coast to 3500 feet.

*Rhynchospora alba*, Vahl. White Beak-rush. Has been recorded from the base of Beinn a' Bhuird and Ben Avon by Mr. R. Mackay. I have not seen examples from the Cairngorms.

*Carex*. Sedges. These form a very considerable part of our Alpine flora, the species being numerous, though their slender grass-like habit renders them inconspicuous. Several species extend upwards from the lowlands to high elevations on the mountains. Among these are:—*C. dioica*, L., to 2500 feet; *C. pulicaris*, L., to 2000 feet; *C. echinata*, Murray, to about 2500 feet; *C. curta*, Good., to 3500 feet; *C. Goodenowii*, J. Gay, to over 2000 feet; *C. flacca*, Schreb., to about 2000 feet; *C. limosa*, L., on marshy ground near Loch Mallachie; *C. pallescens*, L., to nearly 2000 feet; *C. panicea*, L., to nearly 4000 feet; *C. flava*, L., to 2000 feet; *C. filiformis*, L., rare, beside Lochs Mallachie and Gahmna; *C. vesicaria*, L., near Doune, Speyside; and *C. rostrata*, Stokes, to 3000 feet—all in marshy places; and *C. pilulifera*, L., and *C. binervis*, Smith, to over 3000 feet on drier moors.

Other species, of greater interest to us at present, are quite Alpine in their distribution, or nearly so. These are as follows:—*C. pauciflora*, Lightf., on moors from about 800 to 2000 feet above the sea; var. *alpicola*, Wahl., of *C. curta* occurs on the higher mountains; *C. lagopina*, Wahl., is very local, but occurs on dripping rocks on Cairn Toul, and it is included in Dr. Roy's list of Ben Muich Dhui and Cairngorm plants, and is recorded by Mr. Druce as "abundant over a limited range in one of the Cairngorm corries"—it grows at about 3500 feet of elevation. *C. atrata*, L., not plentiful, but widespread among the Cairngorms, from 2400 feet upwards; *C. rigida*, Good., in Alpine pastures up to the mountain summits; *C. aquatilis*, Wahl., in swampy bogs up to nearly 3000 feet; *C. rariflora*, Smith, rare on Cairngorm, in marsh, at a high elevation; *C. vaginata*, Tausch, in marshes and on moist ledges at 2500 to 3500 feet on all the Cairngorms—it much resembles *C. panicea*; *C. capillaris*, L., from wet ledges at 1800 to



2500 feet on Little Craigandal ; it is also in Dr. Roy's list of Braeriach and Cairn Toul plants..

The true grasses that form a part of the Cairngorm flora comprise a considerable number that extend upwards from the lowlands, even from the sea level. Along with these are truly Alpine species, confined within a limited range on the upper portions of the mountains.

Among the widely-distributed grasses that are sufficiently abundant in the mountain flora to be worth naming here are the following species :—*Anthoxanthum odoratum*, L., Vernal Grass ; *Agrostis vulgaris*, With., Fine Bent Grass (with a dwarf form known as *pumila*, the fruits in which are replaced by small masses of the dark spores of a fungus) ; *Deschampsia caespitosa*, Beauv., Tufted Hair Grass, often as the variety *brevifolia* (Parnell), and not seldom with the inflorescence bearing leafy buds instead of flowers or fruits ; *D. flexuosa*, Trin., Waved Hair Grass, the form *montana* (Huds.), occurring at the higher altitudes ; *D. discolor*, R. and S. (*Aira uliginosa*, Weihe), on the borders of lochs, from about 200 to over 1000 feet above the sea level ; *Sieglingia decumbens*, Bernh., Heath Grass ; *Molinia coerulea*, Moench, Purple Molinia, varying much in size, branching, and colour ; *Melica nutans*, L., Mountain Melic Grass, below 2000 feet ; *Briza media*, L., Quaking Grass, on the lower moors ; *Poa pratensis*, L., Smooth-stalked Meadow Grass, especially as the dwarf form *subcaerulea* (Smith) ; *P. nemoralis*, L., var. *Parnellii*, (Bab.), local, to 1400 feet ; *Glyceria fluitans*, B.Br., Floating Meadow Grass, in still pools of the streams ; *Festuca ovina*, L., Sheep's Fescue Grass, to the highest summits, and very often with a dense mass of leafy buds replacing the flowers, especially at the higher altitudes. Several of the above reach or pass 3500 feet above the sea ; but they cannot be fairly called Alpine plants, being equally common in the lowlands, except in the varietal forms named.

The truly Alpine grasses in the flora of the Cairngorms are few and not conspicuous. They require to be looked for in their chosen habitats—on ledges of wet rocks or along the small valleys of the rivulets. They are :—*Alopecurus alpinus*, Smith, Alpine Fox-tail, at from 2400 to 3500 feet, recorded from Braeriach, Ben Muich Dhui, and head of Glen Avon ; *Phleum alpinum*, L., Alpine Cat's-tail, in marshy places, from 2400 to 3500 feet, on all the Cairngorms ; *Deschampsia alpina*, R. and S., Smooth Alpine Hair Grass, on moist rocks at 3000 to 4100 feet, and *Poa alpina*, L., Alpine Meadow Grass, at from 2400 to nearly 4000 feet, on all the Cairngorms, often viviparous, or with leaf buds replacing flowers.

*Juniperus communis*, L., Common Juniper, is frequent up to over 2000 feet ; *J. nana* (Willd.), Dwarf Juniper, at Pools of Dee, also near Loch Avon and on Cairngorm.

*Pinus sylvestris*, L. Scotch Fir. This tree may reach an elevation of over 2000 feet in specially favourable situations ; but it seldom occurs above 1500 feet.

A considerable number of Ferns extend their range from the lowlands well up on the mountains; but certain others are Alpine in their distribution, not, or scarcely, passing into the lowlands. *Pteris aquilina*, L., Bracken, is peculiarly interesting, as it ceases in this part of Scotland at from 1600 to 1900 feet above the sea, practically the limit of cultivation. It has been taken by Mr. H. C. Watson as marking the limits of the Upper Agrarian zone. The more interesting of the ferns of the Cairngorms, from 2000 feet above the sea upwards, are as follows:—*Cryptogramme crispa*, R. Br., Parsley Fern, local on stony slopes, on Cairn Toul up to 3900 feet, and Beinn a' Bhuid and near Loch Avon; *Asplenium viride*, Huds., Green Lanceolate Spleenwort—from 1100 to 2500 feet, in Dr. Roy's list for Braeriach and Cairn Toul; *Athyrium alpestre*, Milde, Alpine Polypody, on all the Cairngorms, on stony slopes and in fissures of rocks from 2200 feet upwards; *A. flexile*, Syme, a rare and local Alpine species, has been gathered by Mr. G. C. Druce "on the Cairngorms, the precise locality, for obvious reasons", being withheld, but he notes it elsewhere as towards the head of Glen Avon; *Polystichum Lonchitis*, Roth, Holly Fern, among stones and in crevices of rocks on Cairn Toul and Cairngorm and in Glen Eunach; *Lastrea Oreopteris*, Presl., Heath Shield Fern, frequently abundant up to over 2000 feet; *Phegopteris Dryopteris*, Fée, Oak Fern, and *P. polypodioides*, Fée, Beech Fern, from the coast upwards to Ben Muich Dhui, on waste banks, among stones, &c.

*Lycopodium*. All the Club-mosses met with in this district of Scotland ascend far up on the mountains.

*Lycopodium Selago*, L. Fir Club-moss. On moist heaths from almost the sea level to the summits of the highest mountains.

*L. annotinum*, L. Interrupted Club-moss. From 1000 to 2600 feet, on heaths on all the Cairngorms.

*L. clavatum*, L. Common Club-moss. Is frequent in many places on heaths up to 2000 feet.

*L. alpinum*, L. Savine-leaved Club-moss. From 200 to 3500 feet, on heaths and mountain pastures, often very abundant.

*Selaginella selaginoides*, Gray. Less Alpine Club-moss. On most swampy heaths from the sea level to over 3000 feet.

*Isoetes lacustris*, L. European Quill-wort. Is included in Dr. Roy's list for Braeriach and Cairn Toul. It, and other species of *Isoetes*, should be looked for in the lochs among the Cairngorms.

*Equisetum*. Horsetails. Of this genus little need be said with regard to the Cairngorm flora, though *E. sylvaticum*, L., *E. limosum*, L., and *E. palustre*, L., extend to over 2000 feet, and *E. pratense*, Ehrh., is found on Little Craigandal.

## THE CLUB AT BEN ALDER.

BY JOHN CLARKE, M.A.

MANY a time and oft, standing on the Cairngorms or the western summits of the Mounth, have we longingly gazed at the great mountain mass in Badenoch, which, crushing Loch Ericht in its embrace, forms the back-bone of Scotland where two great counties meet. There Ben Alder reigns supreme—though little more than first among his equals—and with an apparently careless impartiality sends his waters on the one hand to the Atlantic, on the other to the North Sea. The Minister of Elgin, writing in the Appendix to “Pennant’s Tour in Scotland”, “imagined” from this fact that Ben Alder was the highest mountain in the country! But in those days a few hundred feet more or less on a highland hill were of little account; our forefathers probably as little foresaw the formation of mountaineering clubs as the invention of the telephone.

The Loch Ericht Hotel, Dalwhinnie, was the headquarters of the Club on 9th, 10th, and 11th July last. All the party reached Dalwhinnie on the 9th, some *via* Craighellachie, others *via* Stanley. The afternoon and evening of the day were spent very pleasantly, if not quite according to the official programme. The rain had come down—well, copiously, as it generally does in the Highlands, and, much to the regret of eager hearts, Meall na Cuaich and Carn na Caim had to be abandoned, and even as we stood by the loch on the morning of the 10th the outlook was none of the brightest. A pall of mist, uniform if not dense, shrouded the hills, broken occasionally by a gleam of light affording for the moment a ray of hope, but soon again condensed into rain, which brought discomfort to body and discouragement to mind.

Loch Ericht, of which a glimpse may be had from the train a little south of Dalwhinnie Station, is a noble loch surrounded by mountains of no less grandeur. It is 1153 feet above sea level, some 15 miles in length, and from half-

a-mile to a mile in breadth. It is almost straight, but still with so much of curve as to prevent anything like monotony, the general trend being north-north-east to south-south-west, or, roughly speaking, north and south. The west side is covered for some miles at the upper end with young fir woods, the lower end being steep and barren, and indeed occupied by the mass of Ben Alder and its outliers. The east side consists of steep slopes and screes varied with stretches of rough pasturage, and clothed at parts all along its course with wood which looks of natural growth, mostly birch. The loch itself is famous for its fishing, and in particular is a noted haunt of the *salmo ferox*. A fine specimen of this variety, scaling 10 lbs., had been caught by one of the hotel boatmen on the afternoon of the Club's arrival. The fish, which had been captured by trolling with the natural minnow, afforded splendid sport, requiring three-quarters of an hour to land him. In the course of his "play" he had twice leapt six feet out of the water. There is ample testimony that he formed an excellent dish.

But it is time to arrange for the start, for it was necessary "to make history". By natural selection one of the boats at disposal was appropriated by the smokers and the other by the non-smokers, each party having the assistance of a professional boatman. The row down the loch is no joke for men who are not in training for this sort of work. The programme was to row to Alder Bay, a distance of about 12 miles, and to make the ascent of Ben Alder from the south side, starting at Benalder Cottage. The smokers being supposed to be the weaker brethren were despatched first, having all the advantages of the heavier crew and the longer oars, as well as the larger boat! They gave an admirable lead to their comrades, and kept their distance fully until Alder Bay was reached at 11.55 a.m. The most notable sights on the voyage were Lochericht Lodge, beautifully situated at the extremity of the pine wood referred to, and Coire na h-Iolaire, a very rugged and imposing gap on the side of Beinn Bheoil (3333), the summit of Ben Alder lying immediately over the loch.

A halt of a few minutes was made at Benalder Cottage, where the non-smokers were submitted to a good deal of chaff on the result of the row down. More serious objects were to partake of the keeper's kindly hospitality and to examine the slab, reputed to be an ancient tombstone, found some years ago in a moss in the vicinity. The inscription, of which there was no opportunity of getting a *fac-simile*, seems to have been originally a rude representation of MEMENTO MORI (REMEMBER DEATH), ANNO DOMINI, 515. If it ever read 1515, the first figure has now been obliterated. Whether the stone is ancient and the inscription genuine must be left to experts to decide.

By 12:20 we were fairly *en route* by Allt a' Bhealaich Bhreabaich, due north until the watershed is reached, where a turn to the left (west) is made at right angles, and thence almost straight to the top. A short distance up the burn is "Prince Charlie's Cave", where, after Culloden, the Pretender is said to have found refuge for a fortnight prior to his escape to France. It is an exceedingly rude shelter, consisting of several large boulders tilted up at various angles, and affording the most scanty accommodation. It is divided into an upper and a lower shelter, which have been fancifully designated kitchen and bedroom. In some respects, the identification of it as the ill-starred Prince's hiding place seems very probable. It affords an excellent outlook, is inaccessible, and is one of the most unlikely places in the kingdom for prince or peasant to abide in.

Pursuing the upward track, the party in due course gained the *col* which separates the glen of the Uisge Aulder from the basin of Loch a' Bhealaich-Bheithe. At this point the edge of the mist was reached. The view up had been chiefly the retrospect toward Loch Rannoch and Rannoch Moor. The route at this point turns sharply to the left, and follows the burn, which here comes into view, past the snowfields on the east side of the mountain, and so to the top. It is at first exceedingly steep and the ground rough and stony, but the upper part consists of gentle undulations over which the walking is very easy and pleasant. The first of the snowfields is of very peculiar interest: from its

sides or corners descend two burns, one the Allt a' Bhealaich Bhreabaich, which joins the Uisge Aulder, draining into Loch Ericht, and so by the Tay into the German Ocean; the other, Allt a' Bhealaich-bheithe, descends to Loch a' Bhealaich-Bheithe, thence to Loch Pattack, thence by the Pattack, Loch Laggan, the Spean, and the Lochy to the Atlantic.

The summit of the mountain is flat and very extensive, and somewhat resembles Braeriach; the whole plateau is over 3500 feet above sea level. The east side is precipitous, and great care must be taken in mist to hold a course, sufficiently to the left, if the ascent is made, as in this case, from the south. As the party crossed the undulating ground leading to the summit, splendid views were obtained of these precipices and their rocky corries (Garbh-choire and Garbh-choire Beag), in which the snow lay to a great depth. Close to the rock the radiation of the heat had eaten it away, showing a depth of some 15 feet. As the summit was neared, the mist cleared away, and though the distant view was still obscured, there were magnificent glimpses of the masses of the nearer mountains, and of Loch a' Bhealaich-Bheithe and Loch Pattack in the foreground, while away to the south-east rose the cone of Schichallion.

The cairn (3757) reached, a meeting of the Club was duly constituted, under the presidency of our genial chairman, Professor Cameron, D.D., who, in a few well-chosen remarks, congratulated the Club on the accomplishment of the projected excursion in the face of untoward circumstances. Thereafter, one of the party was duly admitted a member, and a vote of thanks passed to Sir John W. Ramsden for the facilities granted by him for the occasion.

The descent was made by Coire Gleadhrach Beag to the Bealach Dubh. Starting about 3.30, the descent to the path in the Bealach was rapidly accomplished. The views of the hills that form the Bealach Dubh, including Ben Alder itself with its great rock fissures, were very fine. The most striking is Sgor Iutharna, a ridge descending from Geal-charn (3688) on the east. This Sgor, seen from a distance, either sideways, or projected against the hills

behind, presents no unusual feature. But seen from close below, it is really a most remarkable object. It rises almost precipitously on either side from a narrow base and comes to an edge like the blade of a knife. It was dubbed "the razor edge": its ascent looks stiffish, but would certainly be an undertaking of great interest.

Following the route laid down on the O.S. map, the party found itself in due time on the margin of Loch Pattack, but on the wrong side of Allt a' Chaoil-reidhe (Culrea), and without a bridge. The stream was in spate, and from 8 to 10 feet deep at places. There was nothing for it but to ford it; which accomplished in safety, Loch-ericht Lodge was soon reached, and the boats found waiting. They had moved up in the meantime, and the row home was now only about five miles. The non-smokers got first aboard and launched, at once establishing a strong lead. The loch was beautifully calm and smooth, and Ben Alder stood out clear in the western sky, affording a delightful retrospect. Its rock-corrie'd sides, still plentifully splashed with snow on the east, north, and north-west, made an imposing picture—especially when contrasted with the comparative tameness of the ascent from Alder Bay—and indicated the north, by Leth-chas an Fharaidh, on the ridge between Bealach Dubh and Bealach Bheithe, as *the* upward route. A spurt of a mile widened the gap between the boats, and the smokers, who were evidently demoralised, failed to make any impression on the position of the leader. The landing-place was reached a few minutes before nine, the smokers being a good second, some 500 yards behind. It was now their turn to submit to the chaff, which was very abundant. Thus ended the Loch Ericht regatta, honours being easy. The feelings of the combatants for several days thereafter testified to the reality and severity of the struggle.

The slight hardships of the day were soon forgotten in the comfortable repast awaiting our return to the hotel. Everything had not turned out quite as planned, but new and unexpected sources of enjoyment had emerged as compensation. Dalwhinnie is an excellent centre for hill-

climbing, while the proximity of the Truim and Loch Ericht provides an alternative recreation should the elements prove unfavourable for mountaineering. The hotel is comfortable, and, let it be added, the charges very moderate.

Those of us who could afford the time spent the forenoon of the 11th in exploring the neighbourhood of Dalwhinnie, which is quite charming: Ben Alder in all his majesty was clear and distinct, and in other directions the views were extensive and varied. By mid-day the Club had resolved itself into its elements, each engrossed with his individual plans and interests, and the Club's summer excursion for 1894 had passed into a sweet reminiscence—perhaps a pleasure to be one day renewed.



## THE BRIMMOND HILL.

BY ALEXANDER COPLAND.

“Come hither, ye townsmen, soot-besoiled,  
Who cower in dingy nooks”.

—*Blackie.*

IN ancient times, when the perambulation of the outer Marches of the Freedom Lands of the Burgh of Aberdeen was associated with the Wapinschaw, and its observance was enforced by legislative and ecclesiastical authority, the frequent fulfilment of the obligation rendered any invitation to the Brimmond Hill superfluous. For the Brimmond Hill is situated within the boundary of the Freedom Lands, and forms part of the ancient Royal Forest of Stocket, granted by Charter, along with the Burgh, to the citizens of Aberdeen by good King Robert I. (the Bruis). The King, however, was by all accounts, and notably by this transaction, a cautious, prudent man. He did not entirely quit his grip of the forest, for he reserved the right of hunting and the growing timber; and, as over-lord, he conditioned that the Burgh should pay him a yearly Feu-duty of £213 6s. 8d. Scots, a considerable sum in those days. Every citizen, therefore, in the olden time was familiar with the Brimmond Hill. The citizens had liberty to cast peats there, in the free moss, and many of them were douped free burgesses under its shadow, but, now-a-days, since coal has taken the place of peat, except for “reestin” fires and distillery purposes, some citizens, we are sorry to say, are as ignorant of the locality of the Brimmond Hill as they are of the latitude and longitude of Burriaboolagha. They do not take that patriotic interest in the patrimony of the town that the Paisley weaver took in the property of the nation, for when he visited the Channel Fleet, he politely left a message for the absent admiral, that one of his “owners” had been on board inspecting the flag-ship! To those, therefore, whether soot-besoiled or not, who have never set foot on the Brimmond Hill, we offer heartily the

above invitation, and, in addition, our services as guide, philosopher, and friend. As to our qualifications, if having witnessed four Ridings of the Marches, and having taken part in one, will be accepted as evidence of fitness, we shall endeavour to produce "minister's lines", certifying the same, if that is wanted. We do not, however, propose to ride to the hill, except so far by railway, as we are doubtful whether we could keep a seat on horseback as siccar as the dapper little gentleman of the press who was complimented at the "Ridin'" of 1840, by being told that he stuck to his saddle as if glued to it—the envious suggested, by bumbees' wax. No, we propose to train to Buxburn, whence, by the kirk road, the Brimmond Hill is only some  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles distant. Of the various routes to the hill, this is the shortest, and the most easily attainable, by reason of the suburban train service. You may, of course, attack the mountain from the south and west sides by the aid of the Echt and Cluny coaches, but the train we have found most convenient.

Having de-trained at Buxburn, we take the Inverurie road and cross the Bucks Burn by a substantial stone bridge, which, we believe, was built by George Davidson of Pettens, burgess, Abredonensis, who, having no encumbrance—which means a wife and bairns—and being of a devout and benevolent spirit, biggit brigs, kirks, and kirk-yard dykes "at his ovin expenses", as a stone tablet to his immortal memory, built into the dyke of Futtie Kirkyard, proclaims to the present, as to the past, and will do to future generations. Mr. Davidson was moved to the building of this bridge, it is said, by seeing a fellow-creature drowned when attempting to ford the burn in flood. Looking at the ordinary size of this streamlet in summer you would not suppose the burn capable of committing such an atrocity, but let us explain to you that the Denburn, a sister brook, which rises south-east of Brimmond, about half a mile from the source of the Bucks Burn, and runs townwards at the back of the swelling ridge you see on our left hand, has several times, within living memory, done the same thing when a boiling, roaring, turbid stream was rolling through and below the Auld Bow Brig at the Green. Yea, even

since that burn was covered up by the railway, it was given in evidence by a scavenger, a witness in an action for compensation for damage by injury to mercantile property by flooding from the burn, that the flood brought down kail-runts, trees, bushes, neeps, causey-stanes, a woman and other combustibles! Mark the appropriate use of the word "combustible" as applied to woman!

A little beyond Bucks Burn Bridge, a road strikes off to the left, at the entrance to which is a direction-post bearing that the Kirk of Newhills is  $1\frac{3}{8}$  miles distant, and you cannot fail to recognise the kirk and Brimmond Hill from this point, or a little further on this road, as there our elaborate sketch of the kirk and hill was made. It may not be uninteresting at this stage to give a short account of this kirk and parish—especially the parish—which bears a name as singularly inappropriate as the teetotaler who calls himself a "temperance reformer", or the picturesque mounds of quarry *debris* we lately passed by train, called the Dancing Cairns. We have never yet met a fellow-creature who could truthfully declare that in any ecstatic moment he had seen these cairns "reeling". Yet give a dog a bad name, they say, and you may hang him. So with Dancing Cairns. That name long ago stopped the use of stones from that quarry for the North Pier owing, it was said, to their unstable tendencies. So much so, indeed, that a local poet wrote of them:—

"Our pier can neither firmly stand,  
Nor sober habits learn;  
For why? The stones that it compose  
Are all from Dancing Cairn".

In Popish times, before the dawn of the Reformation, there was no parish of Newhills. The district now comprehended in that parish (which was created in 1666) previously formed part of the large parish of Saint Machar, whose Parish Kirk or Cathedral was, and is, located in Old Aberdeen, where its two venerable towers still point heavenwards in grand serenity, and are daily kissed at evening-tide by the sinking western sun. The church, however, did not leave the remote outlying districts of the parish

destitute of religious rites and observances. These were provided for by chaplainries. At the Chappel of the Virgin Mary, near Craigharr, or Stoneywood, such provision was made for the faithful in this quarter, and at this chappel, it is recorded, "is a well reckoned medicinall, whither crowds flock about the beginning of May. It's said to be good for the stomach and for cleansing and curing any ulcerous tumours on any part of the body when bathed with it". This well was, and is, located in the old kirkyard of Stoneywood, and fortunately its virtues were not entirely destroyed by the Reformation. It is true that within the enclosure in front of the comparatively modern kirk of Newhills, as you will see in passing, there has been planted or sunk a common-looking iron pump, which may be serviceable for watering horses, but no one has hitherto been bold enough to assert that the water from that pump is good for tumours, or the stomach, or ulcerous sores, nor has anyone proposed that it should be flocked to about the beginning of May. It is obviously difficult to manufacture tradition of "medicinall virtue" in connection with mere pump water. Whereas, at the ivy-mantled Well of the Virgin in Stoneywood kirkyard, a maiden lady, who died within living memory, and whose name and history can be given, for many, many years brewed her tea and sold her ale—for she kept an alehouse and sold exquisite twopenny—from the water from this virtuous well. And here let it be noted that, although in 1793 there were three alehouses in the parish, the minister states "the people were distinguished for sobriety and temperance, and for their regular and decent attendance upon divine worship". Kirsty—the maiden lady referred to—found from experience that this water hadnae its marrow for maskin' tea. This fact will, no doubt, appear incredible to those who nowadays run daft and frighten people about germs, and microbes, and bacilli in everything we eat and drink. Certes, there are animalculæ—living creatures—in everything but guid Scotch whisky, for as much as it is miscalled by people who pretend they never taste it, yet keep a bottle "libelled" "Poison for rats", which the rats never get a chance of

tasting. But Kirsty's experience of the virtue of the water from the Virgin's Well is fortunately not exceptional. We have heard of a fountain in Bath, the waters of which were found to have miraculous curative efficacy, and it was much flocked to by fashionable people of both sexes, until some inquisitive, meddling person discovered and published abroad that its waters also were filtered through a graveyard, after which its popularity rapidly declined.

After the Reformation, Mr. George Davidson, before mentioned, impressed with the inconvenience which distance from the parish kirk subjected the people to in this remote part of the parish, acquired and mortgaged the lands of Capelhills, Kingshill, or Kepplehills—part of the ancient forest and Burgh lands—extending to five ploughs, or about 700 acres Scots, for the maintenance of a minister in this district, and he also built a small Chapel of Ease in 1663, the ruins whereof—the east gable, and some portions of the side walls—draped by ivy, you observe as we pass the auld kirkyard on our way to the hill. After Mr. Davidson's death, application was made to the Lords Commissioners for planting kirks (in 1666) for a disjunction of this district from the parish of St. Machar, and for its erection into a parish by itself; and as my lords were not asked for any endowment, and as all parties were agreed, the application was granted, the new parish was created, and was christened the astounding name of Newhills! Now, the material of which the hills in the parish are composed is granite, which surely no one will assert is a new formation like concrete or adamant stone. What, therefore, possessed the minister and people to adopt such an unsuitable name for the parish goodness knows—for several ministers give diverse accounts of it—but their doing so seriously injured the previously received standard of antiquity—"as auld as the hills"—which never since has had the same solidity and meaning attached to it.

Passing the schoolhouse, beside the auld kirkyard, we come in sight of some targets planted on the bosom of the hill, and, peradventure, may find a squad of shooters in the moss, ping, pinging away at the targets with ammunition

liberally supplied, and as liberally used. To get out of range we have to diverge to the left, and to seek the summit of the mountain by way of a small farm called Watchmanbrae, of which more hereafter. We are now upon the hill. In 1817 the Ordnance surveyors selected it for a station, and this is their description of it:—"Brimmond or Bremen Station is about six miles north-west of New Aberdeen, and about one mile west of Newhills Kirk, and is situated on a low heathy mountain, cultivated to within three-fourths of a mile of the top on its south side". The recorded "bearings" from this station, taken by the 3 feet theodolite of the Board of Ordnance, on 17th June, 1817, are given as follows:—

Mount Battock	-	51°	4'	38"·31	Overhill	-	-	-	220°	31'	35"·83
Buck of the Cabrach	106	34	44	·57	Layton	-	-	-	226	40	45·30
Knock Hill	-	-	145	3 31·73	Tarbathy	-	-	-	246	34	24·71
Mormond	-	-	194	22 32·98	Blue Hill	-	-	-	322	1	11·99
Hill of Dudwick	-	202	49	27·81							

As the physical features and location of the Brimmond Hill may profitably employ and exercise the faculties of those who desire to attain thereunto, so the modern name of this "low heathy mountain" may furnish fodder for the philologist. John Spalding wrote the name "Brymman" in 1624; the Town-Clerk wrote it "Brymmound" in 1627. In Macfarlane's "Geographical Collections", 1725, it is given "Bruman *alias* Druman". In Kennedy's "Annals" we have it "Brimond" in the account of the Riding of the Marches in 1698, and in the Ordnance Map of the present day it is called "Brimmond". The residents upon and around the hill call it as frequently "Drumin" as "Brumin". One suggestion made to the writer was that the name of the hill may be derived from the Celtic words "Druim" a ridge, and "Moine", peats or moss. No doubt the ridge and peats or moss were conspicuous features in the olden time, and while the ridge continues as of yore, the moss is to some extent still in evidence. Yet, if these features furnished the name, it would have appeared something like Druim-na-Moine. Robertson, however, states that the English prefix "Drummen" is from the Gaelic "Druim", meaning a

ridge, and is found all over Scotland. "Bruman or Druman" of Macfarlane may attach therefore only to the ridge. A friend, who is an accomplished Celtic scholar, apparently inclines to that derivation. He writes "Brai'-dhruimin—the brae of the little back or hill ridge. I suppose the *d* of *druimin* being aspirated (dh), was rendered almost silent, the two r's having combined—run together—squeezing out the unaccented vowels *ai*. If this conjecture is right, it would explain how there was any doubt about the proper form of the name, which is given Brimmond or Drummond. Further, this derivation suits the accent, which is a most important point. The final *d* has no meaning any more than it has at the tail of the name Macdonald"! Heigho! why was the Tower of Babel allowed to be built? and why should Providence be again provoked by Eiffel and Watkin Towers?

## THE VIEW FROM BRIMMOND HILL.

This low heathy mountain, having a summit 870 feet above sea level, with no overtopping hill for miles around, affords a standpoint, on a clear day, for an extensive and varied view. The writer had such a view on the spring holiday of 1894. The weather was that of April—sunshine and showers—smiles and tears—but there was always some point in the panorama bathed in sunlight, while it was interesting to watch the rain clouds marching on, rank after rank, watering the braird and young fresh green grass, or veiling for a brief space the slopes and summits of the distant hills. There were several pic-nic parties on the hill that day, and a troop of children were busy at the bottom of the north-east slope gleefully blazing the whins, and soot-besoiling their clean frocks and pinafores among the burnt whincows. Their happy shouts and laughter drowned the song of the lark and the peevish plaint of the peewit. Arcadia for a brief space was restored. On that day we commenced, by command of our secretary, the outline of the view from Brimmond Hill, which accompanies this paper; and long before its completion we fervently wished our feet in Nicol Jarvie's boots, with hot water in them, when

we undertook such a job. How often have we gone to this hill expecting a grand view of Beinn a' Bhuid and his neighbours, and found them shrouded in gloom, with their auld cloaks about them? How often have Mount Keen and Lochnagar declined interviews, and even "Bell Rinnes" turned cold and coy? In despair, one day we were tempted to lift the veil of futurity, and get our fortune read at a gipsy camp in the moss at the foot of the hill, where William Anderson's "gryte army of horss and foot" was smored, but two ferocious dogs intervened, and frustrated our rash intention. The sketch is the product of many painful efforts. It is intended to be accurate, but in so far as it differs from nature, we should like that any deficiency be attributed to nature rather than to the painstaking artist.

Taking, then, that outline in hand, the gentle reader will be so good as look eastwards, where he or she will have a sea horizon of something like 36 miles in distance—if the day is clear. Turning a little southwards, if the smoke of the Silver City prevent not, will be discerned, at (1), the tower at the point of the Breakwater, the Breakwater itself, and the North Pier, forming a small triangle, across which, at (2), the magnificent new tower of Marischal College rises high. Then still further to the right and southwards, at (3), Girdleness and its lighthouse, about seven miles distant in a straight line. South of that, at (4), the high land forming the south side of the Bay of Nigg is seen. We are now upon the eastern extremity of "The Mounth", or, in modern nomenclature, the Grampian Hills, where, at (5), is the nipple of Baron's Cairn. A little to the westward, and in the foreground, the five semi-circular fronts of Harper's Ironworks are conspicuous objects, looking like a small encampment, and if Mr. Routledge's massive moral sanatorium in their neighbourhood were lime-washed, like the jail of Inverness it might be deemed ornamental by the people of Torry. The Kirk of Nigg has to be diligently sought for, as the surrounding wood and the higher ground beyond interfere with its visibility from this standpoint. At (6), the high ground towards the Cove shows the tall chimney of a farm steading and other buildings. Farther



round westwards, at S.E., the Loch of Loirston, nestling among the woods at its north and south-east sides, gleams in the sunshine. Then, in the lower mid-distance to the north-west of the loch, the woods of Tollohill are indicated at (8); while up again on the ridge (9) marks our old acquaintance the Blue Hill. At (10), the ground dips towards Ardoe or Ardoch, and in the gap in the far distance the high ground about Portlethen with the kirk and farm buildings, &c., thereon, about 9 miles distant, are distinctly seen. Still westwards (11) marks the late Mr. Boswell's monument on the Hill of Auchlee, and (12) the Kirk of Cookney; here the sea horizon terminates. Westwards from this point to due S., and onwards to (13) Cairn-mon-earn, the train of the "Mounth" extends in a long, flattish ridge, topped occasionally by the dim outlines of distant hill ranges. We are now getting among the outliers of our Scottish Alps. Cairn-mon-earn is enchained to Kerloch (14) by a range of hills from 1100 to 1200 feet high, the chief of which are Mongour, Monluth, and Shillofad. In the gap bounded westwards by Kerloch the hills at the head of Cowie Water stretch across the vista in the distance. Then about S.W., at (15), we have in the distance in the next gap between Kerloch and Clochnaben (16) the distant outlines of the Cairn o' Mount Hills and the hills farther away, rising, ridge upon ridge, beyond the river North Esk. At (17) we have Mount Shade on the north-east of Clochnaben, and (18) and (19) give us Scolty and its continuation by the Hill of Goauch westwards. Due S.W., we have (20) the fine conical summit of Mount Battock, with (21) its *confrère*, the Peter Hill, at the eastern boundary of the Forest of Birse. Westwards from the Peter Hill the Forest of Birse Hills (22) lead on to the Braid Cairn (23) and the Hare Cairn (25), surmounting and overtopping both of which the shapely cone of Mount Keen, upwards of 30 miles distant, is easily discerned at (24). In the foreground we have the long dark range of the Hill of Fare (27) cutting off the views of the Panannich Hills and "dark Lochnagar", but not entirely, for see, peering over the ridge of the Hill of Fare, the faint outline of the Cac Carn Beag (26) with a bit

of the mountain in the neighbourhood of the Ladder. Descending from the ridge of the Hill of Fare westwards, at (28) we reach the Barmekin of Echt, and in the nearer foreground, eastwards of it, the Hill of Keir, which, with the Westhill of Skene and the woods of Easter Skene, hide from our view the Loch of Skene. These physical but picturesque obstructions are to be deplored, for a sight of the Loch of Skene seems to be a *sine qua non* to the sightseer on Brimmond. We can only indicate the locality of the loch, and explain that, like Aberdeen from Morven, it cannot be seen because it is not in sight. Content yourselves with the Loch of Loirston (7) and the Bishop's Loch (anciently Loch Goul) of Parkhill (57), both of which can be seen sparkling like silvered mirrors on a bright day. At (29) we have, nearly 50 miles away, Beinn a' Bhuird with its massive, extended, lofty, rocky crest and mantle of snow, and, at (30), Morven presents his ample and stately outline in front of Ben Avon, which, at (32), snow-lad and ermined by jutting rocks at 45 miles distance, impresses the spectator with its calm, stern sublimity as he gazes on its north-east shoulder sweeping downwards to Glen Avon. In front, and closing up the vista, is the range of mountains midway between Glen Gairn and Strathdon, N.W. of Morven, rising successively in Meikle Sgroilleach (2432), Allt a' Bhreabadair Hill (2456), and Mullachdubh (2129). Returning to the lower foreground on the left and beyond the Barmekin, we have the Hill of Mortlich (31), near Aboyne, and on the right-hand side of the Barmekin, at (33), Craiglich and the range of the Corse Hills. Then due west, at (34), we reach the Hill and Forest of Corrennie, with, at (35), peering over a depression on the sky-line, the rising moon-shaped summit of Sockaugh of Leochel-Cushnie, the highest hill between Dee and Don east of Morven. Sweeping round northwards to the beautiful wide strath between Corrennie (Tillyfourie) and Cairn William, through which the line of the Alford Valley Railway is formed, we see stretching across the end of the far distant vista a nearer and a far more distant terrace of hills. The far distant (36) is the lofty mountain range west of Glen Nocht

and Glen Bucket, comprising the Socach (2356), Carn Liath (2398), Carn Mor (2636), Letterach (2583), &c. The nearer ridge (37) is that of the Callievar Hills, which dip to the Don at Brux. Keeping still northwards, we reach, at (38), Tillyfourie Hill, the southern flank of Cairn William, and (41) indicates the latter mountain. Over the sky-line of Cairn William the Buck of the Cabrach (39) asserts his presence at 30 miles distance, and just in front of the Buck the semi-circular dome of Lord Arthur's Cairn (40) 23 miles away, is distinctly visible. Lord Arthur's Cairn is on the left bank of the Don in Tullynessle, right opposite to Callievar's wooded summit. At (42) the Hill of Pitfichie indicates the location of Paradise, and, crossing the Don there, we are upon Bennachie. You must, however, if the day is ordinarily clear, see topping the sky-line of Bennachie, a little northwards of Pitfichie, the outline of Ben Rinnes, at (43), upwards of 40 miles away. Then, still along the ridge of Bennachie, (44) gives us the Tap o' Noth, whose cone invites hearty recognition. Along the rolling ridge of Bennachie by the Watch and Oxen Craigs, at (45), we reach the Mither Tap, and, at (46), the well-wooded side of Millstone Hill, in darkest green, contrasts with the brown heath of the higher Ben. Then, in the north-west, at (47), (48), and (49), we scan the range comprising the Hills of Foudland, Skares, and Tillymorgan, celebrated for the weight, solidity, and staying properties of their thick, heavy slates. This native product is now supplanted by the light material shipped from Port Dinorwic and Ballachulish. Our horizon now becomes somewhat flat until it is broken, at (50), by the fine rounded outline of the Knock Hill, 35 miles away. A gentleman who has had exceptional opportunities of clear and distinct views from Brimmond assures us that with a powerful glass he has seen the sea and the Caithness Hills in this direction, and the Isle of May in the south-east. We have looked in vain for both, but then our opportunities have not been exceptionally good. Resuming our circum-bendibus, (51) brings us to the finely-wooded Hill of Tyrebagger. At (52), between it and (53) Dyce Quarries, we have visited the Standing Stones of Dyce, a fairly complete

and most interesting Druidical circle. Away north by east (54) indicates the Hill of Mormond, eastwards of which, in the far distance, Sterling Hill can be descried, and southwards down to (55) Collieston, the sands of Forvie, and the mouth of the Ythan, a wide stretch of the land of Buchan is spread out, while the extensive fertile, champaign country of Formartine in the nearer distance is streaked by woodlands and cultivated fields. Coming along the sand dunes bordering the sea coast, at (56), the white houses of the Coastguard Station at Belhelvie are projected against the sea, and in the middle distance, at (57), the Bishop's Loch shimmers among the woods of Parkhill. Still further round Tarbathy (58), the south-eastmost of the gravel mounds known as the Hills of Fife in Belhelvie, rises on a swelling green hillock above and beyond the woods of Scotston and Denmore. At (59), we reach the mouth of the Don, a little south of which the western towers of Saint Machar's Cathedral (60) and the wooded hill of Tillydrone are seen. The swelling contour line of the Spital and Gallowhill shows on its edge, projected against the sky, besides other objects, the pillars of the large new gasometer there erected. This completes our boxing of the compass. The village of Dyce on the wide plain north-east of Dyce Quarries, the paper-works of Stoneywood and Mugiemoos, the course of the Don eastwards therefrom, and the villages of Auchmill and Woodside are so close at hand and so easily distinguishable as to need no pointing out.

It may be of interest to state that besides the natural uses of mountains, the Brimmond Hill was, from its altitude, selected in the olden time as the site of a beacon. The following minute of the Town Council of Aberdeen bears upon that matter:—

*“22nd August, 1627.—The quhilk day Mr. Thomas Johnstoun, Baillie Alexander Jaffray, and Mr. Alexander Jaffray, and David Adye, ar appointed be the Councell to go to the Hill of Brymmond, within the friedom of this burgh, and thair to mark and designe the most commodious pairt for setting up of ane fyir bitt to give notice to the countrie people of the approtcheing of foran enemies, as lykwayes to consider quhat pairt about the toune is most fitting for anye uther fyir bitt, and best ansuerable and most conspicuous to give show and*

warning to the keipar of the fyir bitt on the said Hill of Brymmound, and ordaines the foirnamed persones to report thair diligence to the Councell, &c., &c."

Which remit these "sponsible" persones duly fulfilled, and reported that they "went to the said Hill of Brymmound, and thair designed and marked the most conspicuous pairt for the fyir bitt, and causit gadder and erect a large cairn of stones on the top of the hill, and set up the 'fyir bitt'", and they further recommended the "gavill" of St. Ninian's Chapel on the Castle Hill, which from 1566 did duty as a lighthouse by upholding a "gryt bowat" or lamp, as a suitable place for giving notice to the keipar on Brymmound. Though there is still on Brimmondside a small farm called Watchmanbrae, as we have already indicated, and the civic arrangement of the "fyir bitt" was made in 1627, few of the people in the immediate neighbourhood are aware of the meaning of the name of that croft. It was here that the keeper of the "fyir bitt" lived, and whence, in less than ten minutes, he could reach the summit of the hill to show his answering blaze. This croft was for a good many years occupied by the gravedigger of Newhills, and so it was suggested to the writer that the name Watchmanbrae was given to the croft, because the sexton, who protected recently-interred bodies from the resurrectionists, lived there!

Although there are tumuli scattered over the north-eastern verge of the hill, where there is a rich growth of grass and whins, there is no distinct record of battle in that quarter among ordinary combatants. Yet the historic glory of the hill would have been incomplete had it been utterly dissociated from the pomp and circumstance of martial gatherings. Fortunate it is that John Spalding, the careful and precise clerk of the Consistorial Court of the Diocese of Aberdeen, has put on record the following veracious account of what was seen upon Brimmond Hill about eight o'clock on the morning of the 12th February, 1643:—

"William Anderson, tennent in Crabstoun, told me [John Spalding] he saw ane gryte army as appeirit to him, both of hors and foot, about 8 houris in the morning, being misty, and visiblie contynewit till sone rising, syne vaneishit away in his sicht, with noyes, into ane moiss hard besyde . . . Quhilkis visionis the people thocht to be prodigious tokenis".

And well they might. But one would like to know what William Andersone was about the night before, and whether he beddi't. However, this army was got rid of after a fashion which fairly puts Captain Bobadil's method of destruction entirely out of court—smored in a "moiss with noyes"! There is no question about the moss. One writer tells us there was a vast deal of mosses scattered up and down through the parish. He further remarks that the parish was "miserably divided with mountains". Out upon him! what would he have had! A country as flat as a bannock!

The unimproved summit of Brimmond Hill extends about a mile from east to west, and rather more than a mile and a quarter from south to north. In the upper part of the hill the vegetation is short heath, grasses, and carices, with, in hollows among stones, ferns and stunted whins. Lower down, along the hillside, the heather thrives better, gets more vigorous, the whins become more assertive, and with the broom, also a luxuriant grower, flower gorgeous when in full bloom. Interspersed among the prevalent vegetation in the lower reaches is a plentiful variety of sub-alpine plants. The toiler on his holiday can here stretch himself on a fragrant blooming bed of heather, whence, at his ease, he can gaze upwards at the soft silent floating clouds, bask in the sunshine, and be fanned by the soft summer wind. If he takes interest in the "Common Good", with the aid of the small map prefixed to Cadenhead's excellent sketch of "The Territorial History of the Burgh of Aberdeen", he will, from Brimmond, be able to trace most of the lands of Garden or Kepplehills, Shedocksley, Tulloch, Kingswells, Foresterhill, Woodside, Kingshill, Bog-fairly, Rubislaw, and Hazelhead, feued by the town in 1556-7, for an annual sum of £263 6s. 8d. Scots, or £21 18s 10½d. sterling. (The fishings on the Dee from the Bridge downwards, and on the Don, from the cruives seawards, also went for an annual feu-duty of £329 3s. 4d. Scots, or £27 8s. 7½d. sterling.) These lands were all included in the Forest of Stocket. According to Mr. Munro in his carefully-compiled account of the Common Good, the annual

feu-duties from lands and fishings parted with by the Town amount to only some £70 sterling in all, whereas in 1888 the annual revenue which the properties represent amounted to not less than £40,000.

One of these properties, that of Kingswells, deserves more than mere mention on account of the Jaffray connection. One of the Jaffrays named in the Town Council minute of 22nd August, 1627, was the Laird of Kingswells, the father of the more celebrated Provost Jaffray of the days of the Commonwealth, a man held in high estimation by the Lord Protector, who played a prominent part in national as well as in local politics. The elder Jaffray was a shrewd, money-making man, opulent in his day, but "not being of the old blood of the toun", as Spalding explained, his promotion to the Provost's chair gave offence to certain amiable people, who took their revenge and manifested their feelings in a somewhat unusual fashion. "Mony lichtleit both the man and the electioun", writes Spalding, "not being of the old blood of the toun, but the oy of ane baxter, and, thairfoir, wes set down in the prouestis deas before his incuming (ane bakin pye) to sermon. This wes done diuers tymes, but he miskenit all and neuer querellit the samen". The Provost, though a somewhat determined and passionate man, took no notice of the damp, soft bombs, although, no doubt, the Charles Maydon of that time felt and looked unutterable things at this civic insult.

This property of Kingwells affords at the present day an example, now somewhat rare, of the system of leasing and managing landed property in this country a century ago. In 1788 the then proprietor of Kingswells, also an Alexander Jaffray, was in business and resided in Dublin, and he had a son of the same name also resident there. The lands of Kingswells were let in that year to William Black of Cloghill for sixty years, with the privilege of naming within three months before or after the expiry of the sixty years a life upon the duration of which the tenancy of the lands should continue. The lessee had right to sub-let, and also to assign the lease. A life was named at the time re-

quired, which still endures, and so the lease of Kingswells, upwards of 100 years old, is still running on. Besides that, there is this peculiarity. The owners of the property, the trustees of the late Dr. Francis Edmond, are sub-tenants of and pay rent to the lessees, who continue to pay the same rent as they did more than sixty years ago, and will do till the termination of the lease. The late Dr. Edmond acquired the property from Miss Jaffray, who resided in Old Aberdeen, and was the last of the Jaffrays. The lease referred to specially provided that the old Quaker burying-ground upon the property "should not be converted to the uses of agriculture and farming, but be sacredly preserved in its present condition for the sole purposes of interment as heretofore". And sacredly it is preserved to this day.

There is an abundant supply of excellent water on all the farms upon or around the Hill of Brimmond. On the north-east side, from the farm of Esseyhillock to that of Watchmanbrae, there are seven wells—a well to each farm and one to spare. No less than five burns take their rise on the hill or on its flanks, viz.:—Bucks Burn, at Denhead of Cloghill; the Denburn on Kingswells, within half a mile of the Bucks Burn; the Brodiach Burn, on south-west side of Brimmond; the Littlemill Burn, near the farm of Wineford; and the Goughburn, on the north-east of the hill.

As every patriotic son of Bon-Accord ought to know the location of the "Douping Stane", we cannot leave the hill without pointing that out. Proceeding north-westwards on the summit of hill, we pass a small cairn of stones, which has been disturbed probably by the antiquarians who were recently burrowing in Elrick Hill for a robbers' cave two miles long in fundamental granite! Let us assure them that the letters K.C. on the iron dent fixed in the centre of this cairn do not indicate the sepulchre of the king of the ancient Britons—"Old King Cole"—for he was buried in Kyle. It is simply a march indicator of lands belonging to King's College. Looking north-westwards from the brow of the hill, we see the farm steading of Tulloch, and a road running westwards therefrom until it forms a junction with a road running northwards past the farm of Wineford on



the west flank of Brimmond. A little beyond the apex of the triangle formed by the junction of these roads in a bit of rough ground—"ane little moss"—reposes No. 31, the "aid to memory", a large boulder, the softness of which some amongst us still remember. Other stones have been used as "douping" stones at march ridings, for at these social gatherings there was in the olden time a good deal of conviviality, neighbourly feeling, and brotherly love. On such occasions there appears to have been a disposition to indulge in "douping" with unstinted liberality. In the good-natured confusion mistakes were no doubt made. But what did it matter, one stone was as good as another for the purpose.

From this point a good view of Elrick Hill is obtained, and one begins to understand that the complaint of the topographer that the parish is "miserably divided with mountains"—a complaint which no member of the Cairngorm Club could be expected to sympathise with—has some foundation. We consider the grievance endurable. The woodlands of Craibstone, and the ornamental belts on the sloping, undulating ground eastwards in the direction of the Goughburn, and the sheltering plantation in the neighbourhood of the Convalescent Home, established by Rev. Dr. Smith and his worthy lady, on a sunny knove in the vicinity of the crystal caller water of the Clashbog Well, richly variegated and beautify the landscape. The salubrity of the climate, brought about by draining and planting and cultivation of the soil, renders it somewhat difficult to understand worthy Mr. Brown's account of the rigors endured in his time. Writing in 1793, he says "the air is extremely sharp and piercing, and the most prevalent distemper—the rheumatism—is commonly attributed to the influence of the east wind, which blows here with unusual keenness". What would the good man say if he were now to wake up and see the cottage homes of his successor, Dr. Smith, cosily and comfortably smiling at rheumatism and the east wind, where the dwellers in dingy nooks, who have been drawn back from the gates of death, are strengthened and reinvigorated, and returned to the busy and industrial world until their appointed time?

# THE CAIRNGORM MOUNTAINS.

## I.—THE EASTERN CAIRNGORMS.

BY ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHIE.

“Hills of the roe and deer,  
Hills of the streamlets clear,  
I love ye well”.

THE Cairngorm Mountains are a great cluster in the long Grampian chain which, with various ramifications, stretches across Scotland. While authorities are not at one as to what should be included under the name “Grampian”, there is no dubiety as to the boundaries of its most important group, the Cairngorm Mountains.\* They are naturally divided into three sections—the Central, the Eastern, and the Western. The Learg Ghruamach separates the Central from the Western, and the Learg an Laoigh the Central from the Eastern. Beinn a' Bhuid (3924) and Ben Avon (3843) are the two principal summits in the latter division.†

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\* The Cairngorms comprehend an area of about 300 square miles of mountainous land in the centre of Scotland—the largest, and, for its extent, the highest on the mean above sea level in the British Isles. Occupying conterminous tracts in the highest parts of the Counties of Aberdeen, Inverness, and Banff, in the districts of Braemar, Badenoch, and Strathspey, the Cairngorms are bounded on the south by the Dee, westwards from Gleann an t-Slugain, and the Geldie; on the west by the Feshie from the Geldie to the Spey; on the north-west by the Spey between the Feshie and the Nethy; and on the east by the Learg an Laoigh to the Avon; thence, on the north, by the Avon to Inchrory; and thence, on the east, by Glen Bulg and the Bealach Dearg to the Dee.

† Mr. Lionel Hinxman, B.A., of the Geological Survey of Scotland, thus writes to the Editor on the geology of the district:—“Beinn a' Bhuid and Ben Avon form the eastern extremity of the great elevated plateau of granite that extends with a mean elevation of about 3800 feet for many miles along the borders of Aberdeen, Banff, and Inverness, and out of which the Cairngorm Mountains have been carved in the course of ages by the slow processes of denudation. Flanked on either side by the metamorphic schists and quartzites of the Highlands, the main mass of these mountains consists entirely of granite. The typical Cairngorm granite is flesh-coloured, coarse in grain, and composed chiefly of orthoclase felspar and glassy quartz, with a little black mica, varying in

Beinn a' Bhuid (the table mountain—so named from its flat summit) is mainly on the watershed of the Quoich in Aberdeenshire and the Avon in Banffshire. The summit is about seven miles, in an N.N.W. direction, from Castleton of Braemar, on the county march, in the parishes of Crathie-Braemar and Kirkmichael. Two cairns, about one and three-quarter miles apart, mark its great broad back, one at the North Top (the highest point) and the other at the South Top (3860). Ben Avon (the river mountain—perhaps from its numerous streamlets) is mainly on the watershed of the Gairn in Aberdeenshire and the Avon. The distance between it and Beinn a' Bhuid is a little over two and a half miles—the narrow connecting link is known as "The Sneek"—both mountains being in the same parishes. The principal dependencies of Beinn a' Bhuid are:—Cnap a' Chleirich (3811), Stob an t-Sluichd (3621), Beinn a' Chaorruinn (3553), Beinn a' Chaorruinn Bheag (3326), and Beinn Bhreac (3051); while Ben Avon includes Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar (3662), Stuc Gharbh Mhor (3625), Clach a' Chuitseich (3605), Carn Eas (3556), West Meur Gorm Craig (3354), East Meur Gorm Craig (3075), the two Craigandals, and Meall na Gainneimh (2989), with Clach Bhan (about 2800).

The Eastern Cairngorms, though comparatively *terra incognita*,\* may be ascended from any side, but the most

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amount, and sometimes altogether absent. The action of the atmosphere on the felspar causes the rock to disintegrate rapidly when exposed to the weather, while the more indestructible quartz grains falling apart go to make up the coarse sand which covers the hill-tops in many places. A striking feature of Ben Avon, as of many other granite hills, is the isolated tors that rise like great castles from the level summit. These represent harder portions of the rock which have to a certain degree resisted the wearing-down process. The rudely parallel, horizontal jointing, along which the rock most readily weathers, gives these tors the appearance of being built of Cyclopæan masonry".

\* "Ben Avon's jagged peaks of protruding granite, as seen over the intervening hills, form one of the most attractive glimpses of mountain scenery to be got from the neighbourhood of Castleton. But, we daresay, of the visitors there who have seen and admired its rugged beauty from the banks of the Cluny, not one in a thousand has managed to find his way to the summit".—"Our Tour", by Alexander Copland (1880).

convenient points are Loch Builg—which may be reached either by Glen Gairn, Glen Feardar, or Glen Builg; Tomin-toul and Upper Donside, *via* Inchrory; and Braemar, *via* Gleann an t-Slugain\* (the Queen's route). The direct ascent of Beinn a' Bhuid is made by the last route; while Ben Avon is most readily reached, from Ballater, *via* Loch Builg. Starting from Ballater, the Deeside road is left just beyond Bridge of Gairn, then up the Gairn all the way to Loch Builg, a total distance of 15 miles. Glen Gairn, with its broad rippling stream from Ben Avon, is typically Highland. Entering the glen its birch-clad slopes at once attract, juniper and bog myrtle also adding to its charms. Cultivation is confined to a narrow belt, sometimes contracting to vanishing point, at others laboriously broadening into crofts on the left bank. Glen Gairn has not forgotten its dedication to St. Mungo, while numerous thatch-covered houses are yet to be found. Its matrons and maidens are adepts at "a Scottish Washing", and if they have forgotten the art of making wine from the birches at their doors, they are still familiar with crotal. The "skirlin" curlew, the whistling plover, and the noisy oyster-catcher unite with the heath-cock in making the glen lively; while the sportsman might fill his bag from the road—where "cheepers" oft promenade. Sheep take the place of cows where the heather-covered soil refuses to be tickled into crop-bearing; but beyond the habitations of men the red deer claims possession. Last autumn a horn of a *Bos albifrons* was discovered in moss near Loch Builg at the root of a stump. It bears marks of fire; probably the animal had perished in one of the traditional forest fires.

Some few miles up Glen Gairn maps still show "Rinloan Inn"; but the inn has gone, as have the drovers from Speyside and Donside.† Above Rinloan, just before recrossing the Gairn, Daldownie, devoted to sheep, is passed; then

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\* Colloquially "Glen Sluggan", but formerly known as Glen Candlic; *cf.* Inverchandlic Cottage on the north side of the Dee almost opposite the confluence of the Cluny with the Dee.

† A "shoppie" has taken the place of the inn; here milk, &c. (occasionally a bed), may be had.

Corndavon Lodge, the uppermost permanently inhabited house, and the centre of a grouse moor, reposing in a tree-lined corrie at the foot of Brown Cow Hill, is reached. Thus approaching Ben Avon, a cursory glance gives one the idea of massiveness rather than picturesqueness. But gradually its merits dawn upon us, and the "mountain of the river" becomes a thing of beauty. Two of its huge "knots" or knobs of rock, marking the summit, are now particularly prominent. These are recognisable from distant points both on Spey and Dee, notably from the Blue Hill. Its north and south faces are much scarred by streamlets, in the upper corries of which snow often lingers beyond summer;\* while its eastern front is cut up by deep hollows with steep braes—Loch Builg and its pretty little glen the extreme boundary.

Loch Builg lies at an altitude of 1586 feet, and is just within the Banffshire boundary. Apparently it drains into the Builg Burn and so by the Avon to the Spey, but it is actually on the watershed *between* the Spey and the Dee, flowing to *both* these rivers—for the outlet northwards is insignificant, and, at times, is dried up altogether, while there is a perennial subterranean flow to the Gairn. A burn on Loch Brae, at the head of the loch, forks in spates, sending its waters down the Brae right and left—to the Dee and the Spey. There are no fewer than eight lochans at the south end of the loch, all within the Aberdeenshire border. The largest of these is called Lochan Ora (the golden lochlet) † and the next Lochan Feurach. The latter has a

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\* "There I saw Mount Benawne, with a furr'd mist upon his snowie head instead of a nightcap: for you must understand that the oldest man alive never saw but the snow on the top of divers of those hills, both in summer as well as in winter".—"The Pennyless Pilgrimage, or the Moneylesse Perambulation of John Taylor, *alias* the King's Majesties Water-Poet" (1618). ". . . . the hill of Glen Avon, which is a very high and rugged mountain; . . . and is so cold that snow is ever to be found in its hollows, which are many, even in the hottest summer".—"Don: A Poem" (Notes).

† Lochan Ora was at one time believed to contain gold. An enterprising Gael commenced operations with a view to drain the loch and so find the precious metal. But the guardian water-kelpie appeared, and the

bubbling spring at its north end—the subterranean flow from Loch Builg. Here it looks as though a few hours of a couple of spade-men would drain out all the water of the loch—a catastrophe which, according to popular belief, is provided against in the Invercauld title deeds!\* Loch Builg is about three-quarters of a mile in length, with a breadth of about a furlong. The slope on its west side is Loch Brae; on the east is Carn Ullie, a minor height of the Geal Charns from which issues the Don. It abounds in charr and trout, but is perhaps rather under-fished. Two tiny islets adorn the north end; wild birds, from geese downwards, are at times to be seen in the neighbourhood. Glen Builg, winding along, continually presents new views to the pedestrian. The Bealach Dearg—here now all but impassable for wheels†—runs through it; it is believed to be a portion of an old Roman road which extended from Glen Shee to Speyside. An old right-of-way, it leaves the Braemar turnpike at the churchyard, and passing between Culardoch (2953) and Carn Liath (2821) makes for the Gairn, which it crosses due south from Loch Builg. But a driving road more to the east has recently been provided by the proprietor. This new road branches from the Aberarder road in Glen Feardar and crosses the Gairn near the same point as the Bealach Dearg.

Loch Builg Cottage is on the estate of Invercauld, at the south end of the loch and directly at the foot of Carn Dearg (2538), marked on some old maps “Red Cairn”, one of the

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Highlander barely escaped with life! Another version has it that here “a bull’s skin full of gold was sunk by a man going to the wars. Some tried to drain the lochan (the marks may still be seen), but a red-capped apparition sent them to flight”.

\* Despite the county march, the south shore of the loch belongs to Invercauld, who pays a nominal rent to the Duke of Richmond and Gordon for the right to fish and have a boat on the loch. A tradition still lingers in the district that if the water should run out at the south end, instead of the north, the loch would belong to Invercauld. The position reminds one of the vagaries of the head-stream of the Don.

† “The Bealach Dearg’s the roughest road  
My weary feet hae ever trod”.

—John Milne’s “Poems in the Aberdeenshire Dialect”.

lesser eminences of Ben Avon. An unyielding deer fence and an upright forester separate the cottage from the Bealach, but an "Open Sesame" from Allt Dowrie gave the editorial party a few days' freedom of cottage and forest. Inchrory Lodge on the Avon, at the mouth of Glen Builg (about three miles distant), and Corndavon Lodge, nearly the same distance down the Gairn, are the nearest houses. The cottage is only in use during "the season". A thunder-storm, apparently issuing from the head of Glen Gairn, followed our arrival, but it soon passed away.\* Thereafter we had a pleasant row down the loch; a hunt for ferns in some of the little gorges that open into the glen; and a clamber to see the young Don. Then back to the cottage, finishing the day with an ascent of Carn Dearn, reached by a pony-path from the back of the cottage. From this summit, a great heather-clad slope, Big Brae, well named, faced us across Feith an Laoigh, a grassy hollow, with a stream, the main source of the Builg Burn. Carn Dearn is on the county march, and is continued westward by Carn Tiekeiver, a slightly lower eminence.

There are two routes from Loch Builg to the top of Ben Avon, one proceeding by Carn Dearn, the other by the Gairn and its chief tributary, Allt an Eas Mhoir, colloquially the Meikle Eas. Preference may be given to the ascent by Carn Dearn, descending in that case by Meikle Eas. Moreover, if one cares, after having negotiated Carn Dearn, a descent may be made to the Feith Burn, and the summit will be easily reached by its head streams. But he who will climb will make for the *col*—having crossed over, or along, Carns Dearn and Tiekiever; the path is continued by the left bank of Allt Phouple, ending at a height of 2800 feet, about 400 feet below the source of that burn. Once on the ridge the rocky humps, the Barns of Ben Avon, are found to be very numerous; very probably they have never been numbered, and certainly they have never all been named. As we ascend we pass by not a few,

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\* For a description of a thunder-storm on the Cairngorms as seen from Ben Avon, see "Deeside Tales", by Rev. J. G. Michie (1872).

some not particularly worthy of notice; but the pinnacles of Stuc Gharbh Mhor on the left attract attention, and the Stuc is seen to be appropriately named. Clach a' Chuitseich, however, excels its neighbours in bulk and height; it is on the county march, but Aberdeenshire claims the greater part of the rock. The Clach rises, or rather has been left standing, on a little plain. The origin of the name (Coutts's Stone) has been lost; the modern name is "Invercauld's Stables", from deer ponies being often taken there. Nearly a quarter of a mile to the north is another big "wart", the highest point of Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar. We made our way along the "Mullach" to the head of Caol Ghleann. Westward we had Stob an t-Sluichd; northward the Avon; and eastward, close at hand, Lochan nan Gabhar, beyond which are the Meur Gorm Craigs. The lochan is grandly situated at the north end of the "Mullach", almost encompassed by crags about 600 feet in height, while green patches on its north-western side add to its picturesqueness. Its confined situation, however, prevents its being much frequented by deer. It holds trout, but they are reported to be "soft". Last season a stag was shot just above the lochan, with the result that he fell to the bank, smashed beyond use. The Meur Gorm Craigs are long ridges with rocky outcrops; between them, at the head of Meur Gorm, the dividing stream, is a rock known as "The Man's Face" on account of its outline. North-east of the Craigs is Meall na Gaineimh with Clach Bhan—reserved for another day. There is an interesting rock between the head of Caol Ghleann and Coire Odhar, Clach Bun Ruadh-tair, but which foresters now expressively call "The Needles".

We turn our backs on Caol Ghleann with regret. Where it joins the Avon the name (the narrow glen) is appropriate; but it soon loses its significance. We wander from rock to rock, interested in the disintegration that is going on day by day, in which process innumerable "pot-holes" play an important part. A particular halt was made at Stob Dubh Bruach an Fhurain and Sron na h-Iolaire admired, while a low, artificial, stone enclosure—probably the remains of a



forester's "shelter"—rather puzzled us. But, presently, a great patch of snow in Garbh Choire, at the head of Allt an t-Sluichd, with numerous dark objects dotted over it, attracted our attention. The telescope revealed a big family party of hinds and calves. The day was warm and breezeless, and so the deer lolled with evident zest on the snow. Anon a few would get up, stretch their legs, and nibble at the snow; then one or two would walk off seeking the surrounding pasture, but soon returning to their fellows. Calves formed the bulk of the party, not a few hinds being followed by two or three calves of different years. At a very moderate computation over a thousand deer were seen at pretty close quarters in the course of the day. But at last we made for the summit rock; we had started at six o'clock and it was now eleven. This tor is called Clach an t-Saighdeir (the soldier's rock), and lies nearly three-quarters of a mile due west from Clach a' Chutseich. It is, like the latter, an enormous mass of weathered and fissured granite, with the Ordnance Survey cairn *above*; the rock of Cloch-naben—which, large though it is, would on Ben Avon be considered nothing remarkable—is, on the other hand, ignored in the height. Clach an t-Saighdeir can be easily climbed from the north side, but presents a precipitous front of about a hundred feet to the south. "Pot-holes" show themselves even here, and, in time, will complete the splitting up, in default of other natural causes, of this masonry of nature. Snow buntings flitted around it, caring little for our presence,\* and evidences were not wanting of recent visits of eagles and foxes. A couple of Snow buntings nested in a certain corrie of Beinn a' Bhuid in 1893; in which year also, in one day, was found on Ben Avon a Snow bunting's nest, as well as that of a Dotterel—a bird now exceedingly rare.

The first feeling on sitting down on the Clach of Ben Avon was one of intense satisfaction, for both the mountain and the prospect exceeded anticipation. The near view was charming, the distant magnificent and full of problems,

\* For an account of the finding of a Snow bunting's nest on Ben Avon, see "Annals of Scottish Natural History", Vol. II., page 181.

some of which were left unsolved. The prospect included :— The Cairnwell and Glen Ey hills, Beinn a' Ghlo, Farragon Hills (?), Beinn a' Bhuird, Beinn Bhrotain, Ben Muich Dhui, Braeriach, Beinn Mheadhoin, Cairngorm, Stob an t-Sluichd, Ben Bynac (with its Barns and Little Barns), Meall a' Bhuachaille, Strathspey, Glen Avon, Ben Rinnes, Corryhabbie Hill, Cook's Cairn, Buck, Tap o' Noth, Bennachie, Knock, Morven, Hill of Fare, Clochnaben, Mount Battock, Coyles of Muick, Mount Keen, Conachcraig Hill, Capel Mounth, Meikle Pap, Lochnagar, and Carn Liath.\* Ben Avon, like its big neighbour, has been called "broad-backed", but this term is scarcely applicable. True it has no sharp central ridge, but fairly steep ascents can easily be found by those who regard a mountain as otherwise uninteresting. The general appearance to the south, with which most are familiar, is much inferior to that on the north where "combs" or "fiacaills", crags and gorges, not to mention the Barns, amply redeem Ben Avon from any suspicion of mediocrity. Nor must it be forgotten that it was formerly famous for its "cairngorms", the Eastern Cairngorms producing larger specimens of these stones than Cairngorm itself.† In 1810, the Rev. Dr. George Skene Keith writes‡

\* "We saw the Moray Firth and the coast of Sutherland or Caithness, in which direction the atmosphere was clearest. . . . The Hill of Fare was also a distinct object, and Morven painfully so as there was no seeing over his broad back. . . . We took in the whole northern face of Lochnagar, and in the mid-distance the Castleton, Invercauld, and the green wooded valley of the Dee for miles. . . . To the west Beinn a' Bhuird shut out Cairn Toul, but did not prevent us from looking up Glen Avon to Ben Muich Dhui with its accustomed snowy mantle, on the Feith Buidhe above Loch Avon, nor Cairngorm and his gigantic associates, Ben Bynac and Beinn Mheadhoin".—"A Day on Ben Avon", by Alexander Copland.

† "The largest rock crystal ever found in Scotland is in the possession of Mr. Farquharson of Invercauld, and was found upon his estate in this county [Aberdeen]. It is nearly the size of a child's body at the age of four, and has a small crystal shot out from it. On Mr. Farquharson's estate have also been got amethysts and *aqua marines*, equal both in colour and hardness to the oriental".—"Scots Magazine" (1798). This stone was found by a Castleton woman, Effie Murray, on the top of Ben Avon in 1788. The weight is 49 lbs., the girth 26 ins., and the length 20 ins. It is said that Invercauld gave £40 for it.

‡ "Agriculture of Aberdeenshire".

that "several Scottish topazes and beryls" have been found both on Ben Avon and Beinn a' Bhuid; while in 1814 an artist-writer makes rather startling statements about the value of such stones.\* But in 1830 slightly more moderate language is used.† The Meikle Eas rises between Clach an t-Saighdeir and Clach a' Chutseich, within the lower fork of which may yet be seen the ruins of a building which was the temporary residence, about eighty years ago, of a party of "miners".‡ The mountaineer will frequently stumble across traces on the Eastern Cairngorms of "mining operations"—notably by the Meikle Eas, along which a track, stony enough in many places, leads to the path in Glen Gairn. By the burn-side, above the "miners' hut", there is a "Poachers' Cave" capable of sheltering about half-a-dozen men.

Starting for Beinn a' Bhuid, we soon find ourselves at the head of the Sneck, overlooking the Meikle Slochd on the right. A "big hollow" it undoubtedly is. There is nothing like it among the other Cairngorms, unless one can picture the gorge of Loch Avon without the loch, or better still, Loch Eunach, only the ravine is longer. The depth varies from 1000 to 1500 feet, and, drained by Allt an t-Sluichd, a north flowing tributary of the Avon, the length is about three miles. The Sneck, or Saddle, as such

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\* "Ben Avon has recently become famous for the beautiful crystals that have been discovered on it: on that part of the mountain which belongs to the Invercauld estate many precious stones of the beryl and topaz kind have been found; the value of one of these was estimated at £1000, and some others at £500 each".—"Scenery of the Grampian Mountains", by G. Fennell Robson.

† "Ben Avon is at present reckoned the most productive, yielding the proprietor about £150 or £200 a year [from cairngorms]. The yield is said now to be nearly exhausted".—"Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal" (1830), p. 276; *vide* also "Wernerian Memoirs", Vol. III., pp. 117-8.

‡ Eight "miners" are said to have met their death from a disease contracted through drinking the gravelly water of the mountain burns. About the end of last century the workmen at Invercauld were in the habit of going to Ben Avon for a week at a time to dig for cairngorms. A James Abercrombie is said to have been fortunate enough to have found a stone valued at £40. The water of the Meikle Eas, by the way, is yet held in evil repute, though for "brose"-making purposes it is considered to possess excellent qualities!

mountain-links are frequently called, is sharp and well defined—a big drop of water may so fall on the rocky march as to be divided between the two counties! On the south side rises Glas Allt Mor, the easterly head stream of the Quoich, flanked on the east by the broad, steep slope of Carn Eas and on the west by Cnap a' Chleirich. But while rocks and stones characterise the great hollow on the north side,\* grass mostly abounds on the Aberdeenshire side. The Sneck is at an altitude of about 3200 feet, the descent from Beinn a' Bhuidr being about 700 feet and from Ben Avon 600 feet. In the six-inch map the name given to the gorge on the north side of the Sneck is Slochd an Araich, while in "Thomson's Atlas of Scotland" (1832) the name is Sloch Garich; now it is known as the Meikle Slochd. Stob an t-Sluichd, its north-west boundary, has a rocky ridge which, viewed from Glen Avon, well warrants the term "Stob", but which, seen from the neighbourhood of the Sneck, is not so descriptive. A lower parallel ridge, Carn nam Mult, faces Allt an t-Sluichd. The Stob is surmounted by a diminutive cairn, apparently not erected on the very highest point; the staff still remains. Descending to the Sneck from Ben Avon, the summit of Cnap a' Chleirich, culminating in a rocky peak, is prominently in view. Even as one ascends the Cnap it appears well defined—for a considerable flat separates it from its parent, Beinn a' Bhuidr. The peak is on the county march, and from this point, at least, the mountaineer begins to thoroughly realise the picturesque grandeur of Beinn a' Bhuidr, not unobserved by Macculloch† from the valley of the Dee. Avoiding a tempting divergence to the Stob,

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\* Tradition tells of a shepherdess who had a small "kail-yard" here. Eagles nested in the Slochd in 1893.

† "This mountain, as its name expresses, is a flat table; yet so broad and simple are its lines and its precipices, and so grand the long sweeping lines of the hills which support it, that it produces, with the valley, a landscape not less grand than the very different pyramidal composition in which Lochnagar is the principal object. At one point, where the two-arched Bridge of Dec becomes a main feature in the middle ground, the pictures are peculiarly complete and fine".—"The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland".

we hold a little to the left the better to peer into its two great corries, still well filled with snow in spite of the summer sun. The northerly one is Coire nan Clach, the next Coire an Dubh-lochain; while still more to the southward are two smaller corries, Coire na Ciche and Coire Buidhe. Coire an Dubh-lochain is separated from Coire na Ciche by a rocky prominence, appropriately named A Chioch, the breast. The water of Dubh Lochan (a lochlet in the second corrie) is sometimes of a deep blue colour, smooth as a mirror, and reflecting the sides of its embosoming corrie. A golden border of gravel on its west side tells another tale; often the water is dashed against its western rocky and almost perpendicular wall. This lochlet is about 330 yards in breadth and covers about 12 acres; it is the chief source of the Quoich. Its banks are plentifully margined with boulders. The outflowing burn soon expands into another lochlet, small, narrow, and irregular-shaped, Dubh Lochain, thereafter resuming its normal breadth. After a long look at the corries—the two largest are familiar to many of us from the Blue Hill—we make for the North Top. Such a cairn there, only about two feet in height, for such a mountain! It is from 100 to 110 yards north-west from the edge of the northerly lip of Coire nan Clach; a knowledge of this fact may be of service in mist. Standing on a great grassy, gravelly flat, it is very difficult to find in mist, and even at other times it may not be observed at once.\* One is apt to forget that Banffshire claims equal rights with Aberdeenshire in Beinn a' Bhuid, but the latter county embraces the more picturesque parts of the mountain. Within the Banffshire march, to the north-east of the cairn,

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\* Here three proprietors' lands meet—the Duke of Richmond and Gordon (Glen Avon), the Duke of Fife (Mar), and Farquharson of Invercauld. The Glen Avon boundary is the watershed of the Avon, while that between Mar and Invercauld is as follows:—The ridge from the North Top to the South Top and along to Bruach Mhor, thence across the Quoich, taking in to Mar the upper part of the wood known as the Beachan (part of the ancient Forest of Beachan) to Carn na Criche, thence along the watershed to the top of Carn na Drochaide, and thence in a straight line to the march between the farms of Allamore (Invercauld) and Allanaquoich (Mar) on the north side of the Dee.

in Lag Buidhe nam Damh, are the head streams of the Feith Ghuibhasachan Burn, a tributary of the Avon; to the north-west are the sources of Allt Coire Ruairidh, a tributary of Allt Cumhang na Coinnich.

Beinn a' Bhuid attracted the attention of Pennant\* in 1769; while both it and Ben Avon were ascended in 1810 by the Rev. Dr. Keith in his mountain-measuring excursion.† Robson presents us with a view of Beinn a' Bhuid "from an elevated station south of Invercauld".‡ The *doyen* of Scottish mountaineers, in the middle of the century, had not time, in his "Fortnight on Deeside", to make more than a passing reference to the Eastern Cairngorms.§ The Queen had just ascended Beinn a' Bhuid, *via* Invercauld and Glen Sluggan, before his arrival at Braemar.|| In 1819, 1830, and 1850, Professor Macgillivray,

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\* Having described Invercauld, he says that "naked summits (the highest is called Beinn a' Bhuid, under which is a small loch, which I was told had ice the latter end of July) of a surprising height succeed, many of them topped with perpetual snow. . . . Some of these hills are supposed to be the highest part of Great Britain".—"A Tour in Scotland"; 3rd Ed., 1774.

† The former he describes as "an immense mass, without beauty or fertility, extending about three miles in length, and almost flat on the top"; the latter he found "more interesting, having greater variety of surface".—"Agriculture of Aberdeenshire".

‡ "Scenery of the Grampian Mountains".

§ He says Beinn a' Bhuid and Ben Avon are "by no means difficult of ascent"; while the latter "derives its appellation from the number of streams which issue from it on every side".—"Autumnal Rambles Among the Scottish Mountains", by the Rev. Thomas Grierson (1851).

|| "We drove to Invercauld, about three-quarters of a mile beyond the house. . . . We then walked a little way, after which we mounted our ponies and began the ascent towards Beinn a' Bhuid. There is an excellent path, almost a narrow road, made up to within the last two miles and a half, which are very steep and rocky. The scenery is beautiful. We first rode up a very narrow, rocky, and precipitous glen, called the Sluggan. Some little distance after this the country opens widely before you, with Beinn a' Bhuid rising towards the left. . . . There is a very pretty little shooting-box, called Sluggan Lodge, which is half-way from Invercauld to the top of Beinn a' Bhuid. Below this is the Quoch, which we forded. The last bit of the real road is a long steep ascent on the brow of a hill. . . . The ascent, after the path ceases, is very stony; in fact, nothing but bare granite. Albert had walked

LL.D., visited the Eastern Cairngorms, and was particularly impressed with the scene from the top of Beinn a' Bhuid.\*

Beinn a' Bhuid is excellent vantage ground for observing Ben Muich Dhui and his fellows. The view of these and of Beinn a' Ghlo is particularly imposing. We jotted down the following as seen from the North Top:—The Cairnwell and Glen Ey Hills, Glas Thulachan, Carn an Rìgh, Beinn a' Ghlo, Carn Cloch Mhuiluin, Beinn Bhrotain, Monadh Mor, Devil's Point, Derry Cairngorm, Cairn Toul—finely peaked, Ben Muich Dhui, Braeriach, Loch Etchachan, Beinn Mheadhoin, Feith Buidhe, Cairngorm, Garbh Allt (Nethy), Ben Bynac, Cromdale Hills, Ben Rinnes, the Convals (?), Corryhabbie Hill, Cook's Cairn, Buck, Ben Avon, Morven, Hill of Fare, Mount Battock, Mount Keen, Meikle Pap, and Lochnagar.† The walk from the North to

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a great deal, and we ladies got off after it became more uneven, and when we were no longer very far from the top. We came upon a number of 'cairngorms', which we all began picking up, and found some very pretty ones. We sat down at a cairn and had our luncheon. . . . The view from the top was magnificent and most extensive".—"Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands". "Sluggan Lodge" is marked on the O.S. maps as "Ciach Lodge". The original building was erected by Lord Castlereagh about 50 years ago and stood higher up, facing Beinn a' Bhuid; the present lodge was built about 20 years ago.

\* "All around mountains appeared behind mountains, with their rocks, ridges, and valleys. A solemn stillness prevailed; nor was a living creature to be seen; the clouds rolled their dusky wreaths along the ridges".—"The Natural History of Deeside and Braemar" (1855).

† "Lochnagar appears in all its magnificent proportions. The valley of the Dee, and the noble mansion of Invercauld, with all its beautiful surroundings of diversified woodlands, intermingled clumps of birch and pine, its lawns and meadows, the winding Dee, Craigs Cluny and Coinnich, and the higher hills in the background—a picture of grandeur, magnificence, and beauty is spread before and around the beholder that cannot be surpassed, turn where he may. . . . But what shall we say of the Coire nan Clach and the Coire an Dubh-lochain, upon whose edges we stand, with their two little lakes—Dubh Lochan and Dubh Lochain—in their bosoms 800 feet below us? Simply this, if you wish to see corries in perfection, try Beinn a' Bhuid. Dubh Lochan rests at an elevation of 3080 feet. The ridge of precipice above and surrounding it stands at from 3800 to 3900 feet above sea level—a huge wall of serrated precipice scooped into the mountain culminating in the grand rocky pinnacle, A Chioch. These corries are wealthy fields for the botanist".—"Two Days and a Night in the Wilderness", by Alexander Copland.

the South Top is a pleasant one; nothing similar can be compared to it except a saunter on the plateau of Braeriach. On the right are the principal summits of the Cairngorms, on the left the model corries of Beinn a' Bhuid. How precipitous these corries are, falling, in many places, sheer away from the grassy edge of the great table-land along which we are proceeding! About the year 1820 a herd of thirty cattle, driven by a great storm from Glen Avon, fell down Coire an Dubh-lochain, and were, of course, killed. In walking southward the corries are hugged; their symmetrical shape, their snow-lined sides, and the blue lochlet, 800 feet below, are enchanting on a summer day. A little to the north of the South Top is a circle of stones which has puzzled not a few. This circle is known as "Lamont's Seat"; it is on the Duke of Fife's side of Beinn a' Bhuid, and was used as a look-out post by "watchers" in the Mar Forest. The South Top is to the west of Coire na Ciche, its cairn quite a contrast to the one just left, being a substantial structure with the remains of the staff. But then stones are plentiful in the neighbourhood. The view from it has its distinctive features, and is a very enjoyable one. The valley of the Dee is well seen, so is Invercauld House; a bit of the Glen Cluny road, appearing almost pure white; the Dubh Ghleann, the western boundary of Beinn a' Bhuid proper; Glen Lui; Glen Geldie; Glen Dee; Glen Lui Beg; Glen Derry; Sgor an Lochan Uaine (Angel's Peak)—now into view, but the highest part of Braeriach is lost; the tops of the Beinn a' Bhuid corries; and Ben Avon. Craigendinnie and Craigandaroch are also visible; at the foot of the latter may be seen Ballater and its church spire. The North and South Tops are not visible from each other.

A race across Ear-choire Sneachdach, with its broad white carpet; more carefully descending Coire na Ciche, for the angle is  $34^\circ$ ; a walk along Allt Coire na Ciche (still showing "remains of the ancient Caledonian Forest"), with many a backward glance at A Choich; fording the Quoich; and, hey, presto! a path. Successfully wrestling with a temptation to make for the Saddle between the two summits of Carn Eas\* (North Top, 3556, and South

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\* The name is slightly misplaced in the one-inch map.



Top, 3189), the shoulder of Carn na h-Uamha Duibhe, a dependency of the latter, is rounded. Thus, after a slight ascent, the source of the Gairn is reached, a good path accompanying the stream all the way to Loch Builg Cottage. Near the source of the Gairn, the ruins of the Black Shiel, one of the walls of which dates previous to the flood, are passed on the left. Thence there is entered, between "the two Craigandals",\* a great gorge, noticeable as one goes up Glen Gairn; here may be seen, at right angles to the river, a low stone dyke which, built for another purpose,† reminds one of the time when the glen was in possession of "bonnet lairds". Past the mouth of Allt an Aiteil, a burn which rises between the tops of Carn Eas, the Little and the Meikle Eas are successively forded. Larachs begin to abound by the mouth of the Little Eas, a stream which hurries down a cleft parallel to the Meikle Eas. Then across Allt Bad a' Mhonaidh, near which there is an old hut and a foot-bridge over the Gairn, the latter at the mouth of a stream to the west of Bealach Dearg; then fording Allt Phouple, the Cottage is reached, fifteen hours after leaving it.

Meall na Gainimh lies in the angle formed by Allt na Gainimh with the Avon, and is noticeable from distant points by the "wart" on its western shoulder. Allt na

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\* Creag na Dala Moire on the west and Creag na Dala Bige on the east—the former the precipitous side to the Gairn of Carn Eas, the latter part of Carn Liath. They are better known as, respectively, the Meikle and the Little Craigandal.

† This fence was probably built about the year 1816. Commencing on the north side of the Dee it crosses Meall Alvie, Craggan Rour, Creag a' Chait, and Carn Liath to the Gairn between the Craigandals, to prevent sheep from going west into the forest. The garrison at Braemar Castle assisted at the building of the dyke, for which each private received fourpence a day with meal and milk. The oldest stag's head in Invercauld House was killed in 1795 by John Bowman, forester. In those days, and down to about 1830, when venison was required foresters would have to go out sometimes *for days* before getting a shot. They used to lodge in a shiel at the mouth of Allt an da Choire Snechdach; this shiel is still known as the Foresters' Shiel, but only the *larach* remains. The sanctuary of the Invercauld Forest is the ground between Glen Sluggan and Glen Gairn, the east boundary being a line drawn north and south from the top of Carn Liath.

Gaineimh, in the lower part of its course, divides Meall an t-Seangain from Meall na Gaineimh, the former a flat, smooth, "lumpy" hill, probably owing its separate existence to the burn. Further south is Feith an Laoigh Burn, which, if uninteresting in the middle of its course, becomes a real Highland stream, rushing through a rocky ravine ere it receives the burn from Loch Builg. Meall na Gaineimh is best ascended from Inchrory or the lower end of Glen Builg. Its summit is flattish, small stones lying about. Clach Bhan (the woman's rock), part of the Meall, is situated a little to the north-west of the cairn, between the sources of the two easterly branches of the Caol Ghleann Burn. It is a great mass of rock about 400 feet long by 150 feet broad, with an average height of about 10 feet, and is almost honeycombed with "pot-holes", as described by Mr. Hinxman in the letter already mentioned.\* They are numerous also on other rocks in the vicinity, some of them shallow, others deep, but all round or oval-shaped. The most symmetrically formed are circular and of greater depth than diameter. A particular example measured 36 inches by 26 inches, and 20 inches deep. Near it were five perfectly formed specimens, not to mention others more indefinite in shape. Two of these are each 18 inches in diameter and 32 inches deep and open to the front, being on the edge of the rock; the other three are shallow. At another part is a particularly well-formed example, quite

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\* "On the top of Clach Bhan is to be seen a curious effect of 'sub-aerial' denudation, the flat surface of the rock being indented with numerous perfectly circular basins. They have at first sight a very artificial appearance, and remind one of the so-called 'cup-markings' found in some parts of Scotland. But a closer examination reveals their natural origin. Except in very dry weather they will be found to contain more or less water, and at the bottom a few loose grains or crystals of quartz. And it is these quartz grains, whirled round with the water by the furious winds that sweep over this elevated region, that have acted as graving-tools to produce these 'pot-holes'—exactly as the pot-holes in a mountain stream are formed by the whirling round of the pebbles which they contain. Similar rock-basins are found on the granite tors of Devon and Cornwall. The determining cause of each basin has doubtless been a natural depression in the rock in which the rain-water would be retained".

circular; the diameter is about three feet and the depth two feet. Around it are other six or seven of lesser sizes. "Lady" Fingal is fabled to have had a bath here; the water is clear and over six feet in depth, shut in on three sides by rocky walls—a capital place for a bath, once there! The first mention, apparently, of Clach Bhan is to be found in *The Statistical Account of Scotland* (1794),\* Robson following in 1814† and Smith in 1875. The latter shows‡ that the *Statistical* writer had been in error in using the expression "till of late" with regard to ladies' visits to this rock, journeys to which were also made by childless couples in the belief that the result would be favourable to the hopes of the barren wives. Even so late as 1860 a Strathspey writer§ says that Clach Bhan was "once, and sometimes even now, the resort of females in an interesting condition, to ensure them an auspicious hour". The particular part of the rock—which, according to one legend, was dropped from the apron of a giantess on her way to the Avon—affected by ladies is the pot-holes described as "open to the front". Many a festive scene also has been witnessed in this extreme corner of the Cairngorms, the pot-holes having been occasionally used for the making of Athole Brose.

Inchrory is seen to advantage from Meall na Gainneimh

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\* "In the face of it [Clach Bhan], two seats have been excavated, resembling that of an armed chair. Till of late this stone used to be visited by pregnant women, not only of this, but from distant countries, impressed with the superstitious idea that by sitting in these seats the pains of travail would become easy to them, and other obstetrical assistance rendered unnecessary".

† "According to tradition, one of these rocky protuberances, which . . . contains a pool of clear water, was used as a bath by the lady of Fingal; and from a supernatural power, thus supposed to be conferred upon it, the place became a temple where pregnant women resorted, to pay their vows to this Lucina of the Highlands".—"Scenery of the Grampian Mountains".

‡ "In the end of August, 1836, the writer witnessed the *chairing* of twelve full-bodied women, who had that morning come from Speyside, over 20 miles, to undergo the operation".—"A New History of Aberdeenshire".

§ "Lectures on the Mountains", by William Grant Stewart.

and Clach Bhan. The lodge is situated at the great bend of the Avon to the north, and is a plain building with a picturesque situation. The remotest permanently inhabited house in Glen Avon, it is eight miles above Tomintoul, and has the remains of an ancient graveyard close by. The Linn of Avon—where, with a slight fall, the river rushes through a cleft into a deep rocky gorge—is less than a mile up the stream from the lodge; here Fingal's wife, according to tradition, was drowned. The only house in Glen Avon, above Inchrory, is Findouran Lodge,\* which is used only in "the season". A pony path on the left bank of the Avon, commencing near the Learg an Laoigh† ford, connects it with Inchrory; there are paths on both sides of the river between Inverloin and Inchrory. Inchrory is believed to have derived its name from a Roderick Mackenzie, "Rory More", who, some three centuries ago, was wont to rest his cattle here on their southward journeys. In course of time it became "half farm-house, half hostel"; now it is the shooting-box of Glen Avon deer forest, with Lagganauuld, the forester's residence, in the immediate vicinity. Christopher North and the Ettrick Shepherd have made Glen Avon classic ground. It is a long glen, the Cairngorm portion even being considerable. It has taken five hours, with a little snow on the ground, from the Learg ford to Inchrory; while on a sultry summer day, handicapped by a heavy knapsack, an hour longer has been consumed.‡ One feature may here be referred to—the lowness of the hills on the left bank, below the Learg ford, compared to the great heights on the other side as far as Glen Bulg. Stob an t-Sluichd and Ben Avon appear to the best advantage along the glen, but Beinn a' Bhuid has a somewhat uninteresting appearance.

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\* Built since the O.S. maps were printed, it is situated on the left bank of the Avon near the figures "1920" on the one-inch map where two streamlets enter the Avon close together. It lies in the north-east angle formed by the lower, the burn from Feith an Dobhrain (of which "Findouran" is a corruption), with the Avon.

† The old drove road from Dee to Spey by Glen Lui, Glen Derry, the east side of Ben Bynac, and the Nethy.

‡ See "The Round Table Club", by James Brown, p. 17 (1873).

An English writer\* in the beginning of the century describes Glen Avon as "a desert place", "uncommonly cold" in winter, so much so that a heron "found the foot on which it had stood so frozen, when it had been sleeping, that in the morning it was not able to get away"! The sanctuary of the Glen Avon forest is on the left bank of the river between Feith Buidhe and Inchrory. Above Inchrory the Avon is crossed by five foot-bridges—Inchrory, Inverloin, Meikle Slochd, Feith Ghuibhasachan, and Beinn a' Chaorruinn.

Beinn Bhreac is the most south-westerly point of the Eastern Cairngorms over 3000 feet in height. Lying, however, between Dubh Ghleann and Glen Derry it is "on the road to nowhere", as far as mountaineers generally are concerned. Beinn Bhreac is led up to, from Glen Lui, by Meall na Guaille (misprinted Guaille in the one-inch map), a broad, monotonous slope reaching an altitude of 2550 feet. It is separated from Beinn Bhreac by the deep cut of Allt Lochan a' Bhata, the lochan itself somewhat marshy. Ascending the Meall from Glen Lui, the glen road will be left at the ford of Allt a' Mhadaidh, keeping that stream on the left. At first long heather renders the ascent tedious, but at last it becomes shorter, and, as the flat top is neared, quite dwarfed. A five-foot cairn (with staff) marks the highest point. Descending towards Allt a' Lochan Bhata, the Derry will be observed on the left and the Duglen Water on the right. Thence the ascent of Beinn Bhreac is very easy, being over hard ground. The top is marked by two cairns, the lower only at first visible. *The* cairn is about four feet in height, and has the remains of the staff. Westward from Beinn Bhreac is Allt Coire Bhoghadaire; which receives Allt na Beinne Brice on the east; this burn, as it enters the Derry a little below the upper foot-bridge, has some rather pretty waterfalls as artists have lately found out. A little to the north of the source of Allt Coire Bhoghadaire is flat-topped Craig Derry,

\* "Travels in Scotland", by Rev. James Hall (1807). Speaking of Enzie, he gravely says: "Of this district, I suppose, the clan Mac-enzie were the Aborigines".

worthy of mention here only for its name ; opposite it, on the other side of the glen, is Derry Cairngorm.

There are, of course, many other ways of traversing the Eastern Cairngorms than that described. Once for all, it may be remarked that the conscientious mountaineer respects the rights of others while insisting on his own ; he will therefore endeavour so to time his excursions and arrange his routes as to cause the minimum of annoyance to others. The excursions noted here were all made at such times as did not interfere with "sport". The tourist may, on occasion, content himself with a simple ascent of Ben Avon *via* Carn Dearg, descending by the Meikle Eas (or this may be reversed). The range may also be crossed from east to west, and Glen Derry reached (*via* Glas Allt) within ten hours (very moderate walking). Reversing this, the summits of Beinn a' Bhuid and Ben Avon have been crossed and Ballater reached, *via* Loch Builg and Rinloan, within thirteen hours. From Rinloan there is note of an ascent of Meall na Gainimh, Clach Bhan, and the top of Ben Avon and back in about eleven hours. In this instance the descent from the top to Rinloan (*via* the Meikle Eas) was accomplished in three hours and forty minutes. Starting from Aberarder at 6:10 a.m. for Carn Eas, Inverey was reached at 8:45 p.m. The descent was made by the Quoich and over Creag a' Bhuilg (2190) to Old Mar Lodge—an exceedingly pleasant day's outing. Driving from below Tomintoul, up the Avon—a very fine drive—Inchrory was left at noon, the Linn visited, and Clach Bhan ascended, whence the top of Ben Avon was made for. The party broke up at the Sneck, one portion descending the Meikle Slochd and reaching Inchrory at 7:0 ; the other visiting the top of Stob an t-Sluichd, passing the North Top of Beinn a' Bhuid in thick mist, and reaching Derry Lodge at 10:25. The descent from Beinn a' Bhuid was accomplished in rain and dense mist ; the original intention was to enter Glen Derry by Glas Allt, but frequent (and apparently trifling) divergences to avoid bogging made it necessary ultimately to go by Dubh Ghleann and Clais na Fearnna (where there is an excellent path) to Glen Lui. Another time, leaving

Loch Builg at 9:10, Meall na Gainimh and Clach Bhan were ascended, Lochan nan Gabhar visited, Ben Avon and Beinn a' Bhuid crossed, and Derry Lodge reached, *via* Dubh Ghleann, at 10:45. An excursion from the Shelter Stone was as follows:—Left Stone at 11:15 a.m.; top of Beinn a' Chaorruinn at 1:35; North Top of Beinn a' Bhuid at 3:45; waited an hour there for the mist to disperse—which it didn't; reached the Shelter Stone again at 10:0 p.m. Beinn a' Chaorruinn is the extreme north-westerly point of the Eastern Cairngorms, and may conveniently be ascended from the neighbourhood of Dubh Lochan in the Learg an Laoigh. The climb commences from the right bank of Allt an t-Seallaidh up red scree slopes, stones being exchanged for boulders as the summit is neared.\* Formerly Beinn a' Chaorruinn was much dug and delved for “cairngorms”. Three-quarters of a mile to the east of the top—which is on the Aberdeen-Banff march—Beinn a' Chaorruinn Bheag juts into Banffshire; it partakes of the character of its parent. South from these two tops is Moine Bhealaidh, a big moss, the birth-place of Glas Allt—a moss to be reckoned with when one ascends Beinn a' Bhuid from Glen Derry. This route is otherwise rather commonplace, and is only relieved by the backward views. On another occasion the top of Beinn a' Chaorruinn was put on the right, crossing Allt Cumhang na Coinnich and a slight track which connects Glen Avon with Dubh Ghleann. A passing visit was paid to an odd-shaped tarn-let which gives birth to the head stream, Allt Coire Ruaridh, of Allt an Dubh-ghlinne (locally the Duglen Water). The return route to the Shelter Stone was by Allt Cumhang na Coinnich and Glen Avon. The same upward route from the Shelter Stone was taken another year. Again beset by mist at the top; after a long weary wait the descent was made to Glen Quoich by the north-east side of Coire nan Clach. The Quoich Water has a winding course of about fourteen

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\* Sir Thomas Dick Lauder describes a ravine made by the flood of '29 on the north face of Beinn a' Chaorruinn which extends a mile in length, with a breadth of from 40 to 50 yards and of proportional depth.—“Account of the Great Floods of August, 1829, in the Province of Moray”.

miles through a very fine glen. At no part is the glen uninteresting; the stream is a lively one all along, having a descent of over 2000 feet. Moreover for some distance above its famous Falls—more picturesque some think than even the Linn of Dee—it rushes over rocky ledges and through narrow clefts. The pines and birches with which it is graced in the lower reaches add to its beauties; while many a noble fir, rotting where it fell, speaks of storms and hurricanes that have decimated the forest.\* Hurrying down the glen, passing on the left the track leading to Glen Gairn, a short distance further down a path from Glen Sluggan is entered, near where it crosses the Quoich on its way towards the South Top. But in this instance the right bank of the stream was made for, favoured by intermittent tracks till the Duglen Water is reached. These tracks mostly keep close by the stream, at other times they wind pleasantly through the trees. The Duglen Water is smaller than the Quoich, yet in some old maps the name Quoich is attached to it. Crossing the Duglen Water by a foot-bridge near its mouth, an old cart-track was struck leading to Old Mar Lodge over Creag a' Bhuilg. Leaving this track after half a mile or so, a foot-path was entered on which in a short time developed into a tolerable cart-track, the upper part of which is apparently seldom used. The Duglen Water crossed, larachs were numerous in Glen Quoich. From the Falls Allanaquoich was passed, then crossing the Dee by boat, Castleton of Braemar was reached.

The illustrations accompanying this article are from sketches presented to the Club by the artist, Mr. J. G. Murray, Glasgow and Stirling.

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\* “Glen Quoich is a long, romantic, winding valley, bounded by sloping mountains, whose declivities were formerly covered with wood; but, in 1695, a sawmill was built at the mouth of the glen; and the timber, yearly after, was cut down and sold to a great amount: one only now observes, amid the highest cliffs, those detached trees the workmen could not reach”.—“Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland” (1780), by the Rev. Chas. Cordiner. The sawmill celebrates its bi-centenary this year, but nevertheless trees seem as flourishing as ever. Pennant, writing of Dalmore (Old Mar Lodge), says:—“Single trees have been sold out of it for six guineas; they were from eighty to ninety feet high, without a lateral branch”. There are still many noble trees here.



## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

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THIS conspicuous Kincardineshire summit was the goal  
KERLOCH. of the Club's Autumnal Excursion on 24th September,  
1894. Although but 1747 feet high, Kerloch overtops  
every eminence to the east, and so commands wide prospects to south,  
east, and north. The Lammermuirs, seventy-five miles southward, are  
visible, and under favourable conditions it might perhaps be possible,  
over the pass between Morven and Ben Avon, to obtain a glimpse  
of the lofty and still more distant range which, north of Strath Farrar,  
bounds the counties of Inverness and Ross. Our party (which included  
several ladies) travelled by the 7:40 N.B. train from Aberdeen to  
Stonehaven, thence driving by the Slug road to Temple, a halt being  
made *en route* to visit the site of the Caledonian Camp at Raedykes.  
From Temple, three miles by the left bank of Cowie Water brought  
our carriages to Hobseat, a small shooting-box, where the hill walk  
began. Keeping by the left bank of the stream until it is crossed by  
the easterly track from Glenbervie to Strachan, half a mile of this  
path brought us to the watershed between Cowie and Dee, near to the  
spot where, as shown by a three-sided march stone (bearing the letters  
M, D, and S), three estates meet at a point, as well as three parishes—  
Glenbervie, Durris, and Strachan. A little farther on we crossed the  
Burn of Sheeoch, and, leaving North Dennetys (1208) on the left, we  
made straight for our goal, which we reached after an easy walk of  
three hours from Hobseat. The sky was bright and the near prospect  
clear. To the north the tops of Bennachie rose dark over the Hill of  
Fare, while Banchory and Strachan, with the stook-covered fields on  
Feughside, gave warmth and brightness to the foreground. South-  
wards was Auchinblae, with the Howe of the Mearns stretching to the  
sea. To the west the most prominent peak was the near Clochnaben,  
its rocky protuberance here seen at its summit rather than on its  
shoulder, Mount Battock appearing on the left, and the more distant  
Mount Keen close on the right. Lochnagar was hidden in haze, and  
the Cairngorms, with the possible exception of Ben Avon, were alike  
invisible. Ben Rinnes, Buck of Cabrach, and Tap o' Noth brought  
round the panorama to Bennachie again. Not the least striking scene  
was towards the City of Aberdeen, in the neighbourhood of which  
many lofty landmarks, from the lighthouse at Girdleness to the  
Mitchell Tower of Marischal College, were not hard to find with  
the unaided eye, while with telescope or binocular one could count the  
spires and even identify individual buildings nineteen miles away.

After half an hour on the top, and with a final glance at the  
odd little moss tarn which almost crowns Little Kerloch, we descended  
into the basin of the Builg Burn, fording that stream after a walk

of about two miles. Two miles more by Heatheryhaugh and Mainhaugh brought us to Bridge of Dye on the famous old Cairn o' Mount road. With the help of the carriages there waiting us, we soon left behind us the grounds of Glendye Lodge, forded the Burns of Brooky and Greendams; and, after driving along the most ticklish carriage road in the county, we found ourselves at Feughside Inn, our station at the Club's Mount Battock Excursion two years before. After an excellent dinner—our Chairman, Professor Cameron, presiding—we re-entered the carriages for Banchory, reaching Aberdeen a little before nine o'clock.—THOMAS KYD.

ON Wednesday, 8th August last, a party of ten (five of whom were ladies) left Grantown at 11:30 p.m. and CAIRNGORM. drove to Glenmore Lodge, which was reached about two o'clock next morning. The weather then was very pleasant, and all wraps, &c., were left behind when the start for the hill was made at 2:30. The cairn, however, was not reached till 9:0. Three hours were thereafter pleasantly spent in the vicinity, some of the party descending on Loch Avon. But about noon a sudden change came over the face of nature, and the young mountaineers found themselves enveloped in a dense mist. Consternation seized the pithless party, which soon became utterly bewildered; all sense of direction was lost—not one had had the forethought to bring either map or compass. Aimlessly wandering about they came on a snowfield, which, not observed in the ascent, completed their demoralisation. Suddenly they were faced by two Aberdonians, who also having made the ascent that day from Glen More, were now (1:30) on their way down. They, however, had but a slight knowledge of the titular peak of the Cairngorms, and were not by any means qualified guides in such a contingency. Spite of all efforts the combined party were not successful in putting the summit much behind them—they had walked in a circle, for 5:30 found them once more at the cairn. By this time the weather had changed still more to the bad—a heavy penetrating rain with a piercing wind had now to be faced. The ladies were but lightly clad, and their condition therefore can easily be imagined. The gentlemen literally parted their vests among them, but even then their condition was pitiable in the extreme. Lack of food added to their troubles, which were still further intensified when some of the ladies fainted, others lying down utterly helpless. A supreme effort was made to get down—down anywhere—and the two Aberdonians with one of the ladies and a gentleman finally left the others, reaching Glenmore Lodge about 8 p.m. Mr. Hector M'Kenzie, with another forester and the Grantown gentleman, at once proceeded to the assistance of the eight left on the hill. These were found "packed in a hole at the top of a burn" about 11:0, a little to the east of the cairn, at an altitude of about 3800 feet, in such a condition that but for the assistance thus rendered the result would have been fatal—Mr. M'Kenzie being "of the opinion that

the whole eight of them would have perished if they had not been found then". The night was a very dark one, and for that reason, as well as on account of the nature of the ground and the helplessness of the excursionists, it was not till 4.0 a.m. (Friday) that the first lot reached the lodge, the last (a lady) being carried there at seven o'clock. It was 3 p.m. (Friday) before she regained consciousness, everything being a blank to her from 2 p.m. the previous day. It would be difficult to imagine a more badly equipped or a more mismanaged hill excursion from start to finish than the above.—CHARLES M'HARDY.

FATAL  
ACCIDENT  
ON  
SNOWDON.

MR. JOHN MITCHELL, assistant editor of the "New English Dictionary", was killed on 30th August last while climbing the Capel Curig side of Snowdon. He was fond of climbing, and had experience in the Lake district and other parts. A party of eleven left Pen-y-gwryd about 11 a.m., and walked together to the foot

of Lliwydd. The deceased had expressed his intention to proceed up a gully in a slanting direction to the top of Lliwydd. According to one of the witnesses at the inquest, having reached the foot of Lliwydd, five of the party sat on the grass, and three others, including the witness, accompanied Mitchell for some 300 feet further. He invited them to accompany him, but all declined, owing to the precipitous state of the rock, and one of the party tried to dissuade him from attempting it himself. The deceased, however, made no answer, as he had clearly made up his mind to climb. He had no climbing apparatus except boots. He had reached a height of about 400 feet above where his friends stood when he was seen to slip. For some time previously he had been clearing the ground of moss, and endeavouring to get a good hold. He reached his hand towards a rock, which was almost overhanging, and lifted his foot in the same direction; but in consequence of losing his hold, or of a stone giving way under him, he slipped and fell on one side, and then the witness lost sight of him. As the result of the disturbance above the stones came down the gully. Finding that they could be of no assistance, as the place where the deceased lay was quite inaccessible, the witness and his friends proceeded to Pen-y-gwryd, by which time darkness had set in. None of the party had any doubt as to death being instantaneous, as the fall measured about 150 feet. The accident took place about five o'clock. Another witness stated that he watched the deceased's progress nearly the whole of the climb, the first part of which he covered without difficulty. When, however, he reached the gully he seemed to have stuck there, and in witness's opinion he could not have returned. He occasionally was obscured from view. The witness afterwards saw him fall along the gully some 50 feet. He came down head foremost, with his arms stretched outward and his feet in the air. The fall was such that the party were convinced that death was instantaneous, and owing to the mist it was deemed useless to try to recover the body that night. Information was given at Pen-y-

gwryd, and the Llanberis police were communicated with, arrangements being also made with the foreman of the Snowdon Mines, situated close by, for the formation of a search party on the following morning. A party of these men went up on Friday morning, and by means of ropes they, at the risk of endangering their own lives, passed down the body, which was afterwards conveyed to Llanberis.—

WILLIAM SMITH.

THE Aberdeenshire Amateur Photographic Society  
CAIRNGORM gave, on 28th November last, in the Music Hall Build-  
LANTERN ings, Aberdeen, a Limelight Exhibition, under the  
SLIDES. presidency of Professor Cameron, D.D., Chairman of  
the Cairngorm Club. One hundred and twenty ex-  
cellent slides were put on the screen illustrative of the Cairngorm  
district. The views were shown in the following order :—(1) Ballater  
to Glen Derry ; (2) Up Glen Avon ; (3) A Day in Glen More ; (4) An  
Excursion to Ben Bynac ; (5) Two Days on Cairngorm—Summer and  
Winter ; (6) Ben Muich Dhui ; (7) Cairn Toul ; (8) Braeriach.

MICHEL the famous Russian traveller, has accomplished extra-  
DE ordinary distances on foot, St. Petersburg to Paris  
BERNOFF, being little more than a stroll to him. Concerning  
boots he says :—“I always, when walking, wear loose  
Russia-leather greased boots, and, in lieu of socks or  
stockings, bands of linen wound round and round my feet. In bitterly  
cold weather I line my boots with pieces of newspapers, for nothing  
keeps one so warm”. As to eating and drinking he contends that “a  
pedestrian should take example of the birds, eat little and often. I  
find chocolate very sustaining ; of meat I take hardly any, but fruit I  
delight in, and milk is the best of all walking food. I neither smoke  
nor drink. When in Bavaria I was occasionally tempted to take  
a glass of good German beer, but it knocked me up utterly, and I soon  
had to give it up. Always walk on pure water or milk. I consider  
thirty miles a day a very fair average”.

Speaking of boots reminds us of boot-trees. Mr. W. J. Yapp, 200  
Sloane Street, London, S.W., has sent us a specimen pair of the “Pack-  
flat Boot-tree”. Its weight is under 10 ozs., and, made in aluminium  
and steel, the price is 10s. 6d. per pair. Practically it takes up no  
room ; its advantages to the mountaineer are obvious. The patent  
anticipates a somewhat similar idea which a member of the Club has  
had simmering in his mind for several years.

ALPINE A SWISS paper states that the number of accidents last  
ACCIDENTS season has been unusually large ; 52 was the total  
IN 1894. number of deaths, and the number of serious, but not  
fatal, accidents was 13 since the 1st July. In the  
Swiss Alps alone there were no fewer than 33 fatal  
accidents and 7 cases of injury. Four persons who essayed to climb the

mountains have not been heard of since, having probably fallen over some precipice, and can for a certainty be included in the list of dead. The mountains of Austria, Bavaria, Italy, and France each have their share in the fatal list.

## REVIEWS.

by Mr. W. P. Haskett Smith, illustrated by Mr. E. CLIMBING Carr (London: Longmans, Green, & Co. Price 3s. 6d.), IN THE is the first of a series, other two volumes—II. Wales BRITISH ISLES: and III. Scotland—being announced as in preparation.

*England*—Interest therefore in the present volume is increased by our anxiety in Scotland to know how “the land of the mountain” is likely to be treated. Vol. I. is a well turned-out production, its appearance being a credit to all concerned. The author writes as one thoroughly at home in his subject, addressing himself to “mountaineers” in the more restricted meaning of the word. England, however, must be pitied for the miserable shifts for “sport” Mr. Haskett Smith has often to find for his disciples. It is amusing to note the minuteness with which certain rocks are described, chalk cliffs even receiving notice. There must needs be a sad lack of balance when the proposed three volumes are completed, if Scotland is to be similarly dealt with.

The book is all index, and therefore presents a certain convenience for reference which would have been improved if the system had been adopted of placing sections of the main subjects under sub-headings. The author and artist are not always at one—to a foot—as to heights, but this is a small matter. The volume is still another evidence of the extraordinary progress mountaineering has been recently making, though “the dominant partner” is so deficient in climbing ground.

for September, 1894, commences with No. II. of THE SCOTTISH the Rise and Progress of Mountaineering in Scot- MOUNTAINEERING land, Thomas Pennant being treated of by Pro- CLUB JOURNAL fessor Veitch, who, alas, did not live to see his article in type. The Professor was President of the Club, and, eminent as a poet and essayist, his death has been generally regretted. The other articles are on Sgurr na Lapaich and Riabhachan, Beinn an Dothaidh, &c., Leagach, Scottish Mountain Botany, Ben Lomond, and the Divine Mysteries of the Oromaniacal Quest. The latter is a new and welcome departure in mountaineering articles; the quaint humour of its style is most refreshing.

by the Rev. James Paul (Brechin: D. H. Edwards), UP GLENESK, “is not a guide to Glenesk”, but that fact will not detract from its value to lovers of Highland glens generally and of the valley of the North Esk in particular. Opening

with "Glenesk in fact and legend", the neatly got-up little hand-book (though the printer has not confined himself to one paper-mill) treats of the glen from a historical, biographical, and poetical standpoint. Considerable selections from unpublished MSS. of Alexander Ross, author of "Helenore, or the Fortunate Shepherdess", are given.

is the title of the Guide to the West Highland Railway (London: Sir Joseph Clauston & Sons. Price, 2s.).

MOUNTAIN It is a handsome volume of 180 pages, with no less than

MOOR 230 illustrations from original drawings made on the

AND LOCH spot. Many of the illustrations are artistic gems, pictures that will delight the mountaineer, though the book has not been written for him. The opening of the railway from Glasgow to Fort-William affords great facilities to hillmen, and renders many mountains readily accessible that formerly required considerable time and pains to approach within climbing distance. The letterpress is very pleasant reading, as it quite lacks the ordinary guide-book style. The writer does not confine himself to the immediate vicinity of the railway, but diverges when sufficiently tempted, and the divergences will be found very agreeable. The price of the work is really nominal.

by Mr. John Mackintosh, LL.D. (Aberdeen: Taylor  
HISTORY OF and Henderson. Price, 3s. 6d.), is the latest addition  
THE VALLEY to the literature of the Royal Dee. Dr. Mackintosh is  
OF THE DEE, a proved writer of Scottish history, and the present  
volume, which treats of Deeside history "from the  
earliest times to the present day", is certain of a cordial reception. The writer states that "the widest region of the wildest scenery in Britain" is to be found "between Glen Feshie and Glen Quoich", a statement that Cairngormers will not feel disposed to dispute. He is one of the few writers who have grasped the position of the sources of the Dee; very properly ignoring the Pools, he credits Braeriach, Ben Muich Dhui, and Cairn Toul (in the order named), as giving birth to the Aberdeenshire river. But we are inclined to demur to the assertion that the golden eagle "is now rarely seen and seems to have ceased breeding" in the high solitudes of the Dee. The "History" is capitally printed, and is prefixed by a life-like portrait of the author.

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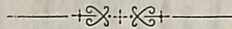
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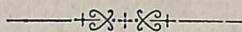
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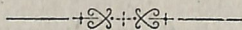
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