

THE Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY

ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHIE.

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LOCH AN EILEIN.

THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

Vol. II.

JULY, 1897.

No. 9.

THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL SCENERY.

AN ADDRESS

Delivered by The Right Hon. JAMES BRYCE, D.C.L., M.P., President of the Club, to the Members, on 8th June, 1897.

MR. BRYCE, who was cordially received, expressed his regret that, although his visits to Aberdeen had several times fallen within a few days of the date of one of the excursions of the Club, it had never yet been possible for him, having regard to other engagements already made, to be present and accompany the Club. He was glad, therefore, to have this opportunity of endeavouring in some small way to acquit himself of the obligations which he undertook in becoming their President, and of assuring them of the very warm sympathy which he had always felt, and, he hoped, would always feel, in the objects and prosperity of the Club. When he considered how he was to fulfil the promise made to give an address to the Club on some subject falling within the scope of its action, it appeared to him that he could not do better than ask them to consider a subject which had occasionally flitted across the minds of most people, but which had been, so far as he knew, very little seriously discussed in this country—that is the question of what is the worth of natural scenery, in what the elements that make scenery worth preserving consist, and what steps can be taken to preserve it. Mr. Bryce remarked that what he was to say must be of a tentative character, and if, after he had concluded, any one would do him the

favour to express his views either of consent or dissent from the propositions he should submit he should be grateful, desiring as he did that the whole matter should receive a fuller treatment than it had yet received, and believing that in the multitude of counsellors upon this subject, especially as it had been hitherto so little discussed, there was likely to be wisdom and resource—(applause).

Remarking, then, that a subject of this kind was well suited to a Club like that, Mr. Bryce noted that the feeling of admiration of natural scenery had grown of late years. The conscious interest in, or love for, the beauties of nature was perhaps not much more than 120 years old. It was rather interesting to notice how it began with poetry in the later half of the last century. It began most distinctly, perhaps, with a Scottish poet, James Thomson, and became a more and more prominent feature in the illustrious poets of the generation that wound up the last century and opened this one. There were strong evidences of it in Cowper, it inspired in the fullest measure the poetry of Coleridge and Wordsworth, and some of their younger contemporaries, notably Keats and Shelley, and from that time until now had gone on widening the circle of its influence. Yet it must not be supposed that those who lived before that time were ignorant of or insensible to the beauties of nature; it was rather that they enjoyed without pausing to consider and meditate what it was they were enjoying, and wherein the roots of their enjoyment lay. One could hardly fail in the literature of the ancient world and of the Middle Ages to be struck with the feeling there was for nature, the exactness of the poetical descriptions, the accuracy of the epithets the poets employed, and the way in which many of them dwelt lovingly upon the features which struck them in nature. Noting, by way of illustration, how these things appeared in the 104th Psalm, and in the poems of Homer and Theocritus, among the Greeks, as in those of Lucretius, Catullus, and, above all, of Virgil, Mr. Bryce reminded his audience of how Mr. Stopford Brooke finds in the Celtic poets very striking passages indicating a true and abiding admiration of nature, and argues that it is largely to the

Scottish poets that English poetry owes its supremacy in modern literature, so far as this particular point is concerned. He (Mr. Bryce) might add that in the few extant lays of St. Columba, whose anniversary was being at that moment so worthily celebrated, there were evidences of a feeling for nature, as true and deep as they could find in any modern bard. He took it as undoubted, however, that the love of scenery and conscious interest in its beauty is now much more widely diffused than it used to be, and thought it not wonderful, when the conditions of modern life are taken into account, that this love, and the necessity, therefore, of preserving in nature that which gives us joy, should be more widely felt than it ever had been before. In proceeding to deal with this subject, he did not think it necessary to discuss with a Club like that the question of whether natural beauty was worth preserving, because it was for the very reason that they were fond of nature that they had formed themselves into a Society to explore the mountains and valleys. And he did not know that, even if he were to argue it out, he should succeed in establishing to a demonstration what the pleasure that nature gives consists in, or what it is worth. It must be felt, but was not easy to prove to those who did not feel it. It was felt, no doubt, by a minority of mankind, for he supposed that the greater number of their fellow citizens did not yet realise the pleasure that was to be had from nature. In travelling by steamboat or coach through parts of the Scottish Highlands, he had often observed that out of the whole number of tourists there were a good many who were quite ready to go into ecstasies when they reached a place which the guide-book indicated as having a beautiful view, who were perfectly indifferent to equally beautiful views that had not been mentioned in the book—(laughter). And as showing the curious views of natural beauty that even intelligent people sometimes hold, he told of an old friend of his in Strathearn, a bit of a geologist, who held that before the fall of our first parents there were only gentle undulations and soft acclivities in nature, corres-

ponding to the state of man's happiness and innocence; and that the degradation of the Fall was typified by the harsh lines, the rugged rocks and steep mountains which then appeared upon the scene—(laughter). When one had to prove, therefore, wherein the pleasure in natural scenery consists, each of us must be content with telling that he himself felt it, that the poets had felt it, and that the great majority of the most cultivated and educated people had now come to feel it. They could not prove to a man who had no ear for music that music gives pleasure, nor prove to a man who had no taste for pictures that pictures are beautiful things, although in the case of pictures, there was the advantage that by telling such a person that a certain picture cost £20,000, they would no doubt lead him to think there was some value in it—(laughter). The next question was—Who are the enemies that threaten natural scenery, against whom it had to be preserved? It had to be preserved chiefly against three classes of enemies—advertisers, commercial companies, and railways. These were not the only enemies, but he singled them out as being good instances, and perhaps the most conspicuous. Advertisements had really become a horrible nuisance in our time. They were a nuisance even in our towns, for many of the advertisements in towns were so ugly and revolting as to be a positive defacement of walls and wooden structures, and in this connection he noted that there had been annually brought into the House of Commons during the last few years a bill intended to give local authorities power to put advertisements under control—a bill, however, which had not yet been able to obtain the chance of being debated. However, there was one form of advertisement from which we did not suffer in Scotland—at least to so considerable an extent—and that was the advertisement in the form of large painted boards stuck upon poles in the prettiest pastures and along the banks of rivers, and bordering upon the roads and railways that lead out of large towns, and particularly in the neighbourhood of London—advertisements usually of quack medicines. The practice was still worse in America,

because there they had taken to painting the names of medicines on the rocks and trees in the finest scenery they possessed. They had lately removed these from the Niagara Falls, but the rocks there used to be entirely covered by advertisements of painkillers, liver pills, and things of that sort—(laughter). Things were not so bad as that in this country, although they were bad enough, and the abuses of advertising had become an offence to good taste and propriety against which the public ought to set their faces. He had sometimes thought that if the consumers of the articles thus advertised were to combine in a resolution not to buy what was obtruded on them in this way it might produce some effect on the minds of the advertisers, but as the things advertised were mostly quack remedies, and as these were not largely consumed by members of such a Club as that and by persons who travelled to enjoy scenery—(laughter, and hear, hear)—he feared that that course was impracticable as a solution of the difficulty. He hoped that, although they had not made much progress so far with legislation in this matter, they should be successful before long in getting their bill carried through, and perhaps be able to persuade some local authority to make use of it—(applause). He came next to commercial companies. There had not been a great many of them that had as yet attacked natural scenery, but one had done so on such a large scale and in such an audacious way that it ought to be taken as an instance to ponder over. It was the case of the Aluminium Company, which had destroyed the Falls of Foyers. That was, he believed, the highest, and it was certainly the most beautiful and striking waterfall for its height and for its surroundings in the United Kingdom. This Company purchased a large piece of land there from the proprietor, and had constructed a tunnel, which diverted the water of the stream above the Falls, and was used to drive turbine wheels in connection with the manufacture of aluminium, leaving, except after heavy rains, only a trickle to come over the precipice. The great body of the water had been turned into the tunnel. Well, the advantage of

having secured this water-power might perhaps be measured by one or two per cent. in the Company's dividends. But what was it that this Company had done? It had taken a perfectly unique piece of scenery, the most striking of all British waterfalls, and had absolutely destroyed it by taking away the water—for, although in the newspaper correspondence the Company had stated that they were not destroying the waterfall, because they were not touching the rocks, yet it took water to make a waterfall, and in this case, though the rocks remained, the water had been diverted. All this the Company had done merely for the sake of adding a little to its dividend. The Company could equally well, though no doubt with the prospect of a somewhat smaller profit, have planted its works somewhere else. The place was not convenient for the clay used in the manufacture, for it had to be brought from a distance, he believed from Ireland; the industry was not going to give much employment to the people of the district, because the Company was to bring the work-people from other parts of the country, and therefore there would not be a compensating advantage to any considerable extent to the population of the district. Even Parliament was unable to step in to arrest the mischief. The Company had somehow got hold of the County Council of Inverness, who ought to have known better; it had bought the land, and did not require to go to Parliament for powers, and Parliament had no means whatever to prevent the destruction of this unique and wonderfully beautiful piece of scenery. There ought to be, he contended, some means of preserving for the nation as a whole a thing in which the nation as a whole had an interest, and which was part of the inheritance the nation had received and wished to hand on. He put it to them that, when a thing like this destruction of the Falls of Foyers happened, there should be some means by which they could prevent a Company from sacrificing a national possession for the sake of a small addition to the dividends of its shareholders—(applause). Mr. Bryce went on to discuss the other case of the railway to the top of Snowdon, the highest mountain south of the Tweed. Here, again

the land taken unfortunately belonged to one proprietor, and the railway company purchased, by private bargain, the right of making the railway, and was not, therefore, under the necessity of going to Parliament for a bill, so that neither Parliament nor the Board of Trade had power to stop the scheme. That also was a case in which the State ought to have had a voice, where a fine piece of scenery ought not to be defaced and irreparably injured by a railway without the public having an opportunity of interfering.

There were a certain number of cases in which the scenery was injured by the putting up of buildings in unsuitable sites and places; but there, again, it was difficult to see how a public authority could interfere. But still there were some cases where the building put up was so singularly ugly and inappropriate that one would think it would be a kindness to everybody, and even, perhaps, to the proprietor, to prevent him from putting it up. He saw a most glaring case of that kind three months ago on the top of the Bozrah or citadel hill of Carthage—one of the most beautiful and historically famous sites in the whole world. On the top of that hill an Archbishop—Cardinal Lavigerie—had erected one of the least handsome churches he (Mr. Bryce) had ever the misfortune to see. That was an extreme instance, but he believed many of his audience would remember buildings which have been set up in places of natural beauty that are, to say the least of it, singularly unbecoming. But the railways were, perhaps, their most frequent enemy. There had been a great deal of controversy as to the influence of railways upon scenery, and this part of the subject had been, perhaps, canvassed more than any other, because there had occurred several discussions in Parliament when attempts had been made to stop railways on the ground that they were going to injure scenery. He would begin the consideration of the point by admitting that railways do not always injure scenery. The scenery, for instance, of the inland parts of Buchan, in the neighbourhood of Maud Junction, and in the Hinterland of Fraserburgh and Peterhead, would not be seriously injured by any railway—(laughter)—in fact, he was not sure that more railways

would not improve it. Pointing also to the London and North Western Railway, as adding a noble element of life to the landscape in the district from Lichfield to London, Mr. Bryce further admitted that there are many cases in which even if a railway does injure scenery one must be content to bear with the railway, because of the gain in other respects. To say exactly when the scenery had to give way was, of course, difficult, depending as it did on a person's esteem of the commercial or political objects to be gained by the railway, and also on his esteem of the value of the scenery. He would take a very familiar instance—the railway which runs up the valley of the Reuss, under the St. Gothard Pass, and down Val Levantina, the Italian valley which extends to Lago Maggiore. Here there were two extremely beautiful valleys, that on the Swiss side and that on the Italian side. Both of these valleys had suffered from the making of the railway. On the south side there was a lovely stream coming over in admirable cascades. These were the points where the famous corkscrew tunnels had been made and where immense quantities of loose rubbish had been thrown down, destroying the charm of the cascades. But this valley was the cheapest and most direct line by which South Germany and Switzerland could be connected with North Italy. It would have been more costly and more difficult to make the railway on almost any other line, and any line that could have been chosen would have injured the scenery more or less. No one, therefore, he thought, would argue that because the scenery would have suffered the St. Gothard railway should not have been made. They must acquiesce in it for the greater benefits the construction of the railway brought. He thought, however, that a little more pains might have been taken to spare some of the more beautiful points. But he had to call attention to the fact that there were a great number of cases where railways did harm without giving any compensating advantage. These were mostly cases where the scenery was on so small and delicate a scale that the railway became itself a potent factor in it, and there were cases where the charm of the scenery consisted very

much in its [pure wildness, and in the bold or graceful character of the lines. For instance, the effect of irregular cliffs, with broken faces and masses of tumbled rocks below them, would be destroyed by the construction of a straight railway embankment. And, in a third class of cases, there were instances where the beauty consists in an exquisite and refined combination of various elements of picturesque beauty, such, for instance, as a river with pretty little runs, and pools between the runs, curving in sweeps round a meadow with thickets hanging over or trees dipping into the stream, and little vistas opening up through the wood showing glimpses of hills beyond. Where they had scenery like that, a line of railroad, with its embankments, bridges, and tunnels, its two or four straight parallel lines of iron running across the ground, entirely destroyed the charm which these soft, delicate lines, which these fields and meadows, and the curvings of the stream possess while they are left to themselves, and an element was intruded which destroyed the beauty of form, and which also destroyed what might be called the associations of simplicity and silence and spontaneity. Unfortunately it was very often through valleys of that kind that railways had been made or were being projected. For instance, he had referred just now to Wordsworth's house at Ambleside. The scenery there, as in most parts of the Lake country, was on a small scale, and of so finished and delicate a character that it would receive irreparable injury by the construction of a railway. And this was also the case with the valley of upper Strathearn. This railway, which was lately under discussion in the House of Commons, was proposed to be made from the village of Comrie, in Strathearn, along the shores of the river Earn, and then along the shores of the loch as far as Lochearnhead. From Comrie to St. Fillans was nearly six miles, and the scenery of the valley was just of the kind he had been describing. It was something like the valley of the Dee, on a smaller scale, and with mountains of bolder and more rugged forms, its winding stream running here under woods and there through meadows. If the railway cut through these woods

and followed the course of the stream, the charm of the valley and woods and meadows would be gone. After the railway reached Loch Earn, it was proposed by the present line to run along the north side of the loch. On the north side of the loch there was a steep hill, 600 or 800 feet high, covered with copsewood, of the same kind as was seen on the shores of many Scottish lochs. The hill was so steep and the copsewood so wild and natural that if a railway were made at a height of 200 or 300 feet above the loch, it would make one long, broad, straight score across the face of the hill, and would injure the wild grace which the steep hill, with rocks rising here and there and the natural copsewood clothing the slopes, now possesses. He did not say that the loch would not still be a beautiful loch, but a great deal of what now makes its beauty would be gone. If a railway was wanted at all, it would be quite possible, and much better, so far as he had been able to ascertain, to make it on the other side of the loch. The same observations might be made about the margins of Scottish lakes. A railway was often made to take its course along the very edge of a lake, because that gave it a level run, but sometimes the margins of the lakes were just the most beautiful parts. He could think of nothing more beautiful than many parts of the margin of Loch Lomond. After giving a description of the margin of Loch Lomond, Mr. Bryce said he was afraid that the West Highland Railway must have injured the picturesqueness of the northern part of the loch, though he had not seen it since the line was made. A curious feature, he said, of these destructions was that when the original charm was gone people going through afterwards could never realise what the charm had been before. The other day he was discussing the Strathearn Railway with a very distinguished professional man. This gentleman pooh-poohed the whole thing, and said he did not understand what people made such a fuss about. He said—Look at the Pass of Killiecrankie, a railway runs through there, and the Pass of Killiecrankie is none the worse. But this eminent man admitted that he was never in the Pass of Killie-

crankie before the railway was made. Those who had been in the Pass of Killiecrankie before the railway was made would bear him (Mr. Bryce) out in saying that it was then one of the most exquisite pieces of scenery to be found anywhere in the world. He did not think there was anything else quite equal to it even in Scotland, and if there was nothing in Scotland, then he submitted that there was nothing on the Continent of Europe like it, because in that particular kind of scenery the Scottish Highlands had no peer. He remembered how he had been amazed—

“ Its loveliness with wonder and delight
Froze the swift soul ”—

at the exquisite beauty and richness of the scene when he first wandered slowly through it in 1857. He had twice traversed Killiecrankie on foot since the railway was made, and it was not in the least the same place. He knew that the Highland Railway Company laid themselves out for giving to passengers opportunities for seeing the scenery. They had even provided coupé carriages with glass at both ends. But the tourists who had a rapid glimpse of the fall of the Garry from their coupé, did not really see the Pass of Killiecrankie, still less could they form any idea of what it had once been. He submitted, therefore, that where a railway went through scenery of the particular types he had tried to describe, it would necessarily injure the scenery, and unless it could be shown that great benefit was to be derived from the railway they should oppose it. But it was said that not to make the railway was to keep the masses from seeing good scenery. Well, he was sure they all earnestly desired that all classes of people, down to the very poorest, should have the opportunity of seeing the scenery of their country. But there was a great difference between taking people to scenery and taking them through scenery. He was heartily in favour of making railways to the points where the finest scenery begins, but, unless some clear necessity could be proved or great advantage gained, they should not carry the railway further than those points. They should give people every possible access to scenery, but they should not at the same time spoil the scenery, and

deprive the people of the opportunity of really seeing it to advantage. They had to bear in mind that they could not see scenery properly from the railway. For one thing, the point of view was always changing; the landscape was never the same for one minute. If the passenger came to a spot where there was an exquisite combination of wood and water in the foreground and mountain and peak behind, the kind of thing an artist would like to make a picture of, the moment after he had grasped it, and before he could enjoy it, he was a quarter of a mile away. The dust and soot-flakes came into his eyes, he had to crane his neck, and at the very moment when he was perhaps enjoying the best view, he was engulfed in a cutting or plunged into the black depths of a tunnel. After having travelled many thousands of miles by rail through mountains, he had been convinced that it was really very little use to try to enjoy any scenery of the finer kind from a railway train.

Discussing what steps should be taken to preserve Scottish landscapes, Mr. Bryce said he wished we had more regular means of raising opposition in Parliament as regarded railways. It depended really very much upon how many members they had been able to speak to beforehand or upon what members happened to be in the House of Commons when the discussion came on. He wished they had something like the clause he succeeded in getting introduced into the Light Railways Bill last year, which provides that where any one objects to the construction of a light railway on the ground that it will injure any building of historical interest or any fine piece of natural scenery, the Board of Trade and the Light Railways Commissioners shall be required to hear and consider the objections. And, speaking of light railways, he thought it was very much to be desired that they should be made along the roads. It was a great deal cheaper, and as the line of the road was already laid out, and seldom interfered much with the scenery, the light railway would not injure the scenery if put along the road. He had travelled on light railways, made along public roads, through beautiful valleys in France and Italy, and they did not seem to interfere with

the scenery in any way. In a case like that of Foyers, they had no means of preventing a commercial company from destroying the most beautiful scenery. He thought a Department of State should be constituted whose duty it would be to protect three classes of articles—buildings or sites of great historical interest, ancient buildings of exceptional beauty and architectural interest, and striking and remarkable pieces of natural scenery. The principle had been recognised in the Act for the preservation of ancient monuments, which provides that certain prehistoric monuments should not be destroyed by their possessors in virtue of their right of property, but being placed under the protection of the State could never be hereafter interfered with. He should like to see that principle very much extended, and to see a Department of State established which might be called a Department of Taste, constituted of an official and a Council of persons chosen from the public, and representative of the most enlightened opinion, with the view of protecting these three classes of objects in the interests of the public. It might be argued that they would thus be giving a wide discretion to that Department—which might sometimes interfere where it should not and sometimes refuse to interfere where it should. But that was true of all discretionary powers, and he put it forward as being at any rate better than the total want of protection which we have at present. There ought, moreover, to be everywhere societies for the preservation of all those things in which the public had an interest. They wanted to develop the idea of what was national property in the true sense of the word. He included under that term not only scenes of great natural beauty, but also historic scenes and places where very remarkable incidents in our history have occurred. There should be in every district of the country a local society which would undertake to protect all these things, and also public rights in such matters as footpaths and ancient rights of way. There was an excellent Society in Edinburgh, but it should be seconded and supported by local societies in all parts of the country. They must feel that in this matter they

would succeed only if they could enlist public opinion. They must try and diffuse a feeling of the value of natural beauty. He fully believed that the appreciation of such beauty was increasing every year; but what he feared was that by the time when it had so grown as to command sufficient power it would have come too late. A great deal that was infinitely valuable might be lost before public opinion has become sufficiently enlightened to feel the necessity of preserving it. There was no city in the country that would not willingly possess to-day buildings which were destroyed without a thought thirty or forty or fifty years ago. In these matters they ought to consider those who were to come after them. They ought to feel that they were trustees of the world they had received, with the duty of handing it on, if possible, better, and certainly not worse, than they received it. Perhaps they should go a little further, and reconsider their ideals, and ask themselves whether the ideals of national welfare and happiness that people had fifty years ago were now the true ones. The world was getting too full. Instead of making it any fuller, he should be very glad to see the population not increase further, and he would much rather have a really bright and enjoyable life for those who lived in the planet than see the planet overcrowded any more. There were places, no doubt, where there was still room, but in our country there was no longer much room, and in Western Europe altogether there was not very much room, and it was far more important to give a really happy, enjoyable life, full of the best pleasure, to the mass of the people, and to raise them in the social scale, than to have a larger population, and a greatly increased product of commodities, which would further swell the population. We had now-a-days abundance of rapid transport, but it was more important that we should consider where we were going, and what we were doing, and what use we were making of the facilities for locomotion and communication which science has placed in our hands than merely to hurry about from spot to spot in the restless way we do. If it was our duty to consider those who come after us, it was not less

our duty to take thought for the preservation of those beauties of natural scenery which the Creator had bestowed upon us, and, feeling in that as in other things that we are trustees, to recognise that we shall best consult the future of the race by endeavouring to conserve for them as much as possible of this priceless source of the purest pleasures—(loud applause).

Mr. Bryce, in reply to a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. Alexander Copland, ex-Chairman, and seconded by Mr. Alexander Walker, LL.D., said he was glad Mr. Copland had called attention to the question of river pollution, which was a most important branch of the subject, and to which he ought to have referred. It was a subject with which there was the greatest difficulty in dealing, on account of the pecuniary interests involved, but he was persuaded it was one in which the general welfare was very largely concerned, and if they could get public opinion distinctly expressed upon it, they should succeed in rescuing some of their rivers from the pollution which was completely destroying their charm. It was also a question of importance to anglers, who were a numerous body, and from the time of Isaak Walton known as a very harmless and estimable body of men—(laughter). A great deal might be done for public health, as well as for the fuller enjoyment of rural scenery, if the pollution of rivers was more strictly prohibited. In the neighbourhood of very large towns the mischief had gone so far that it could not be now easily removed, but the Dee, coming down to within a short distance of Aberdeen as an untainted river, might with a little care and forethought be kept pure; and he hoped they would always desire to preserve the beauty, both of the sparkling stream and of the lovely valley which it traverses—(applause).

TWO DAYS AND A NIGHT IN ROTHLEMURCHUS AND THE CAIRNGORMS.

ABOUT twenty years ago we first crossed the great divide between Strath Dee and Strath Spey by the Learg Ghruamach. It happened in this way. While spending a holiday at Braemar we had occasion to go to Inverness in the month of July. The barometer was high and steady, and the weather clear, bright, and exceptionally warm. It occurred to us that "the Larig" offered a more direct and shorter route to the Highland capital than the circumbendibus by coach and rail to Aberdeen and from thence *via* Mulben to Inverness. Accordingly, we sent our portmanteau by the circuitous route, and arranged to tramp to Aviemore and join the Highland train there.

Driving to Derry Lodge on a fine bright day we turned our back on civilization, and proceeded by Glen Luibeg to prospect the—at that time to us—new country, and to extend our topographical knowledge by traversing this famous defile through the Cairngorms. The scenery has been so often and so well described that we can say nothing novel about it. Of course, we were impressed by the mountain barrier interposed by lofty Beinn Bhrotain, and the snow upon its broad bosom; the solitude and beauty of Glen Geusachan—its treeless, green-expanse watered and softened by its meandering stream, contrasted with the stern ruggedness in which this picture of pastoral quiet and beauty is framed. Then the stupendous conical mass of glistening granite protruded from Cairn Toul, named "Bodindevill", or "Bod-an-diaouil", by the ancient bare-footed "wylde, scurrilous people", described by Sir James Balfour, "amongst wych", he says, "ther is bot small feare and knowledge of God", arrested attention and wonderment. At all events, the "wylde, scurrilous people" seemed to have been also impressed with the tremendous features of

the Devil's Point, and named it accordingly. Then, on our right hand—fit *vis-a-vis* to Bod-an-diaouil—the jagged, impending precipices of Carn a' Mhaim towered above us as we skirted their base while threading the somewhat roughly macadamised footpath leading to the Larig by Glen Dee. The Dee, in many a curve, ran sparkling and softly murmuring on our left, and the air was musical by the ceaseless hum of invisible insect life, diversified occasionally by the bugle solo of some vagrant forest bee, or the sweeping chirp of the grasshopper. The air quivered in steaming vibration, and a thousand rills tinkled down the mountain sides. By-and-bye Glen Garbh-coire opened to the left displaying its magnificent corries, walled by the precipices of Cairn Toul and Braeriach. On a bright, hot day these natural features are delightful and exhilarating. In stifling mist or rainy downpour, your murmuring river and tinkling rills become unbearable nuisances. The sun, the great magician, whose touch turns every object to gold, changes the picture at his will. No wonder he was worshipped.

In due time we reached the stony, glacial mounds which environ the popular Wells of Dee, and lunched there. Resolved to return by this route, we formed a *cache* under a large stone, where a vigorous growth of *Polypodium Alpestre* around it effectually concealed a big *vasculum* containing provisions for refreshment on our way back. Resuming our journey through the wind-swept desolation of the Pass—in which cool winds blow be the day ever so warm—we soon reached the watershed and began the descent in the direction of the Spey. Here grim granitic desolation and waste are strewn in all directions. Here is the Learg Ghruamach, the gloomy, the frowning, the sullen, the forbidding. Even the running stream from time to time hides itself, disappears under ground, and deserts you as you descend, and stern sterility reigns around. In winter no road this way—the drift swirls piling wreaths and shrouds for the hapless wayfarer. What is the Witches' blasted heath compared with the riven sides of the Larig Ghru? But, as we proceeded, suddenly a far-off glimpse of

the green valley of the Spey in sunny radiance broke through the gloom, and the birch-clad Craigellachie and the column-crowned brow of Kinrara, diverted the attention from the black jagged precipices of Creag na Leacainn. Down the sides of the ice and stream-ploughed ravine, and on the slopes on either side, the advanced stragglers of the forest also began to appear, and soon volumed and vast Rothiemurchus forest spread out its battalions of dark pine on the low ground. Beyond shone out cultivated fields and pasture land breaking in upon the dark green of the wide pine forest, and the Spey, with many a wind and turn, glistened in the sunshine. In daylight, the footpath down the pass cannot be mistaken or left without energy and exertion, as the sloping mountain sides on either hand attain considerable height, and there is no inducement to diverge. There was, however, no Scottish Rights of Way direction post to guide us when we reached the termination of the footpath on a forest road, and, in place of turning to the left, we took to the right and went wrong. After some time, we reached the bank of the river Luineag in the neighbourhood, as we afterwards learned, of the Rothiemurchus mineral well. Neither ford nor bridge, however, could we see, and as the afternoon was wearing on, anxious thoughts began to arise whether we should be in time for the Inverness train at Aviemore. At this juncture, two men were observed at some distance from the opposite bank of the stream walking westwards, suggesting that they were upon a public road. So resolved, at all hazards, to ascertain our bearings, we stood not upon the ceremony of disrobing, but went right through the river Sandy Mac Ara fashion. The heat of the day justified this procedure, but on reaching the opposite bank we were disgusted by the view of a foot-bridge a short distance up the river where we could have crossed dry-shod. By the time we reached Aviemore our nether garments were presentably dry, but not so dry as the wearer of them. On a broiling hot day, on a long walk by a mountain pass, liquidation is craved through the waste occasioned by perspiration and evaporation, and no reasonable temperance man would

object to or forbid bacterial antidote among mountain water. Nature, however, craves for variety, and we found it possible to tire of grog. Accordingly, we had resolved, on reaching the hotel at Aviemore, to solace ourselves, and slock our importunate thirst with a pint or two—we thought we could manage two—of thirst-assuaging porter. But when we reached the neighbourhood of the railway station no trace of any house of entertainment for man or beast was to be found. The inn had improperly been sold and applied to a different purpose than that for which it was built, and the license-restricting justices of the district had, by their tyrannical policy, effectually prevented the thirsty stranger from having a glass of beer. They say cold tea is an admirable specific for thirst, but who sells cold tea? Local option! Yes, here was an object lesson on its wisdom. The “merchant” could only supply treacle and ginger beer, and a malign providence induced us to choose the latter. We were not long in discovering our mistake, and resorted to the water tap at the station to cool our coppers—where, just in the nick of time, the Highland train came up, found us, and carried us off, otherwise we must have drunk till we died of hydro-stomachus.

In due time, or, as customary, a short time after it, we reached the capital of the Highlands. It was the week of the wool fair. That ancient and curious annual gathering—where neither hoof of sheep nor fleece of wool appears—was supposed to endure for three or four days and a night, but by the hurry and pressure of modern business ways and methods, as well as the influence of the railway, it is being curtailed in time, and shorn of its former Celtic glory. The Gaelic Society had its annual meeting on the Thursday evening of the fair, when Gaelic speeches were made, Gaelic songs were sung by pretty Highland maidens, and Highland reels and sword dances danced to the delight of the partakers therein and the wonder and edification of the stranger. The late Professor Blackie was seldom absent, and although, when sometimes “chief”, he inappropriately spoke in English, his contributions to the fun were always welcomed and enjoyed. But Inverness during the week of

the wool fair is no place for the tourist or the stranger, unless on business. The town annually assumes the condition of a beleaguered city, and eatables, drinkables, and house accommodation become subject to ransom charges. Rarely is there much business done until the afternoon of Friday, after the "ordinaries". Every house of entertainment has its "ordinary" on that day. Prior to that time, seller and buyer have been assiduously trying to feel each other's pulses. On Friday, however, as we have said, when the shades of evening begin to fall, the capacious rooms of the Caledonian get crowded, and in an atmosphere thick with rolling clouds of tobacco smoke, and the odours of whisky, the ice thaws, and bargain-making goes on in a loud babel of tongues, calls for waiters, and hand-claps and shouts of concluded bargains. This goes on all through the night, for Forbes Mackenzie is dethroned and rules not here, and the business is not concluded and tranquillity restored until long after the sun has announced by his presence that it is to-morrow morning. One who has seen the big room of the Caledonian on the Friday night of the wool fair in July, can understand and credit the tradition of the "sleepy market" held during the night in former times in the month of June at Christ's Kirk of Kennethmont.

We left Inverness on our return journey by the late train of Friday evening, and reached Aviemore after midnight. The night was warm and calm. A full moon in a lovely sky smiled serenely on Cairngorm without being disturbed by that mountain, for it lay swathed in a gauzy coverlet of mist, causing no inconvenience to Luna, notwithstanding the poetic assertion of the author of the "Queen's Wake", and an exaggerated historical account that "the famous hill called "Kairne Gorum" is four miles high". The Ettrick Shepherd must surely have read and believed that account when he penned the lines—

"Mid wastes that dern and dreary lie,
 One mountain rears his mighty form ;
 Disturbs the moon in passing by,
 And smiles above the thunder storm".

We got a pressing invitation to spend the night under the

roof of a friend at Invereshie, but the beauty of the night tempted us to tramp the Larig by moonlight, and alone. We reckoned that daylight was only a few hours off, and we had not at that time heard about the demons that frequent Rothiemurchus forest, such as the "Bodach-an-Dun", the red-handed "Ly Erg", and "Maag Moulach" with her hairy left hand. Had we known of those nocturnal visitants, we would have gone to Invereshie. We thanked and bade adieu to our friend at Aviemore, and, crossing the river, made what we intended as a bee line for the Pass. The solitude would have surfeited Zimmerman and a good many of his relations. Not a sound broke the solemn silence of the forest. It was the hour "when churchyards yawn and graves give up their dead". In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the thud of hoofs upon the soft ground made us, like Lizzie of Halloween celebrity, jump laverock height, but, happily, the disturbance was caused neither by the deil, nor Rothiemurchus demon, but probably by a small herd of deer startled by our unexpected appearance. At length we reached a forest road which afforded good footing, but keeping upon it too far to the east, we missed the footpath for the Pass, and thereby largely augmented our toil. Conscious of our blunder, we took what we intended to be a line sure to bring us to the Pass and the footpath; but moonlight is deceptive, and a conspicuous guiding post not being then planted as now, we could not hit it. However, the footing was exceptionally dry, and we kept moving uphill in what we considered to be the direction of the Larig, accompanied by a troop of flies who ought to have been sleeping, in place of titilating and annoying us with their untimely attentions. The quacking of ducks on our left indicated the location of some small tarn or forest pool, and that the birds were in comfortable circumstances. By-and-bye we surmounted the grassy ridge of a shallow, circular hollow, across which ran a path or deer track, when right in front, not three yards off, our way was suddenly barred by what, in the dim light, seemed to be a wolfish form or an apparition, big, gaunt, tawny. A cold rill suddenly

trickled down our back at this unexpected encounter, and you could have knocked us down with a feather. Courage is a mechanical virtue, and requires assiduous practice, cultivation, and support—

“ Wi’ tippenny we fear nae evil,
Wi’ usquabagh we’d face the deevil”.

Being somewhat out of training at the time, we could have turned and fled. Did not the Great Frederick perform an unexpected reverse movement from his first battle—Mollwitz—and, in fact, bolt from the battlefield, and had he not to be ridden after for many miles to be told that his army had won the battle, and to bring him back? If we had followed the example of this great captain we could have pleaded precedent. Remember, this was our first encounter with the form of a wolf, bodied or disembodied, except in a menagerie, only we reflected that, before we could have run six yards, the animal might have had a mouthful of our breeches. So we stood our ground armed with an umbrella, and the creature, timeously realizing that he had a desperate character to deal with, like a sensible beast, chose the better part of valour, and deliberately diverged to the right over the ridge and disappeared. Subsequent reflection inclined us to the belief that it was a big fox and not a wolf, escaped from some travelling menagerie, that we encountered. The astonishment at our meeting was evidently mutual, and, “who’d have thought of seeing you”, no doubt was the language that each would have used, had we been able to give it utterance. Probably Reynard was on his way to the pool where the ducks were quacking.

Soon after this incident, we emerged from the forest, and, as day was dawning, we reached the small tarn on the Castle Hill, called Lochan Dubh a’ Chadha. Being somewhat pumped out by the sultriness of the night and our long walk, we sat down here to refresh, but found the water soft, warm, and vapid. The cloud lay white on Cairngorm, but in the north-east the sky was foretelling the rising of the sun. For thousands and tens of thousands of years new days have been created, and we think nothing of their

repetition. Here, on a lonely mountain side, you are compelled to feel what an insignificant atom you are in the universe, and what, even to you, a hitch in the daily arrangement would mean. Starting again, we held onwards and upwards, and neared the cloud which lay draping closely the bosom of the mountain. We expected that we were in the neighbourhood of Creag na Leacainn, and soon found that we were in the bottom of a large corrie, out of which rushed three hinds, disturbed by our presence. They ran past us down hill. That indicated no road in front; and so it was, for, so far as we could see, we were surrounded by perpendicular crags, enclosing dazzling snow wreaths in their black rifts, and having a little loch in the west corner of the corrie. It became obvious that we could not reach the Larig that way. We were in the Coire an Lochain, and knew it not. Puzzled and looking upwards, while considering what course we should next take, there slowly appeared a revelation out of the hitherto impenetrable mist cloud above us. Far aloft, there began to protrude a vast mass of rock, black, savagely jagged, impending destruction. The spectacle was appalling. The rock appeared suspended in the air. It formed the apex of the encircling precipice, the wall of which was shrouded below by the slowly-moving impenetrable vapour. The precipices encircling the corries on the north front of Cairngorm, when displayed in the sunlight, form a majestic spectacle, but do not suggest the terrific. When shrouded by vapour you see but part, leaving the mind to suggest what is mysteriously hid. Soon the influence of the sun rolled up the curtaining cloud and revealed Cairngorm in its morning glory, and by the Fiacail a' Choire Chais we made for the summit of the mountain. Here we lighted on an adventurous frog, suggesting that human bipeds have not a monopoly of enterprise. Also, although Hogg poetically affirmed that the bugle of the forest bee was never sounded here, we found on the green carpets of moss campion, blazing in purple blossom, myriads of a small, thick-bodied, Arctic moth, tumbling and fluttering around in evident enjoyment of their brief period of existence. Arrived at

the summit about 8 a.m., we sought the Marquis's Well, prepared tea, and breakfasted under the shade of our umbrella, expanded to keep off the intense heat and persistent flies, which crowded its dome, revelling in an Alnaschar feast of essence of *alpaca*. Hope they enjoyed it! After breakfast and a rest, we leisurely strolled towards Ben Muich Dhui. That July Saturday was a day to be remembered for its intense heat. Several deaths from sun-stroke occurred in Scotland on that day. We descended from Ben Muich Dhui by Coire Mor, and recovered our *vasculum* intact. The water in the Pools of Dee tempted us by its cool, clear, refreshing invitation. It was just the depth for a comfortable swim. There were no Sanitary Inspectors about with their fads and fancies. Freedom ever abides among the Cairngorms; so we disrobed and enjoyed a delightful plunge. The flies accompanied us, but would not wet their feet. We put their persistency to the test by diving and keeping under water as long as possible, but, although they would not dive, they waited for our returning poll, and so soon as it emerged they were ready to shampoo it again. We have said that Freedom abides in Glen Dee, and so it does in Glen Derry. Man among the hills inclines to revert to his primeval condition, and, weather permitting, to dispense with shoddy. As an example, a friend coming down Glen Derry unexpectedly encountered, on a warm afternoon, a youthful party, *en route* for the Shelter Stone, walking divested of trousers, their attire consisting of shoes and stockings, shirt, Albanian fashion, fluttering in the breeze, waistcoat, and cap; a cool, sensible, and picturesque, though unusual, rig-out for a Highland glen on a hot day. Situation and circumstances admit of material difference in such as well as other matters, but we would not advise anyone to call upon his banker in such light attire when about to negotiate a cash credit. Even a Highland regiment seen for the first time causes a sensation, especially among ladies.

In due time, we traversed Glen Dee, turned into Glen Luibeg, and found a conveyance waiting for us at the Derry; and that night we slept without rocking. We have never

had other than pleasant memories of this outing. We would, with pleasure, do it again, were the years we have lived since then rolled back, and the vigour of former times restored. To the younger members of the Club we say, go and do likewise. They will, besides other advantages from such an outing, in the poetic language of *Punch*,

“Drink the heather’s fragrance round their feet,
In draughts wherewith wild Nature strengthens Man”!

D. O.



THE CAIRN, CAIRN TOUL.

BEN AIGAN.

BY ROBERT ANDERSON.

WHERE is Ben Aigan? was a question commonly asked when this hill was selected for the spring outing of the Club. The query was pardonable; and probably the severely correct reply—by those able to give it—that Ben Aigan is situated in the parish of Boharm, only incited the further query, But where is Boharm? Topographically, Boharm would have to be defined as a parish in the west of Banffshire, bounded on the north by Bellie, on the east by Keith and Botriphnie, on the south by Mortlach, on the south-west by Aberlour, and on the west by Rothes. A better idea of its location may be conveyed, however, by saying that it extends along the right bank of the Spey from the railway bridge (Great North) at Craigellachie (though the Fiddich is really the boundary), to some distance beyond the railway bridge (Highland) at Boat of Bridge. It thus embraces one of the most picturesque sections of the river, that between Arndilly and Aikenway, while it is faced on the Morayshire side by the haughs of Dandaleith and Dundurcas, included in the familiar couplet—

“ Dipple, Dundurcas, Dandaleith, and Dalvey
Are the four bonniest haughs on the run of the Spey ”.*

What has just been given as the location of Boharm is really the site of Ben Aigan, which stands between the two bridges, the Spey flowing along its western base and washing a portion of its northern slopes. The remainder of the parish extends northward and eastward: hence its name, it is said—Bucharm or Boharm signifying in Gaelic “The bow round the hill”. This derivation, however, has

* This is the most common form of the couplet, but there are variants. Dr. Longmuir, in his “Speyside”, gives the second line as—“Are the four fairest farms on the banks of the Spey”.

not passed unchallenged, and the word Boharm is credited with quite another meaning. Ben Aigan itself is said to mean "The hill of the clefts or notches"; and this is a good description of it from most points of view. It is not by any means a distinctive hill—a hill, that is, possessing special and individual features. In height, it is comparatively insignificant—it is only 1544 feet high; and, moreover, it is dominated and dwarfed by the proximity of Ben Rinnes, which is not only much higher, but much more picturesque. Like many another hill, Ben Aigan is characterised more by bulk than height. This is most noticeable from the neighbourhood of Orton station, on the Highland Railway, the formation of the hill being more observable there, perhaps, than elsewhere; from the Craigellachie side, the bulkiness of the hill is disguised by the woods that cover the slopes that ascend from Arndilly. It is plainly revealed, however, whenever—and from whatever point—the ascent is made, for the summit consists of a succession of broad, heathery plateaux, culminating in a small rounded top that is conspicuous in much of the country round owing to the distinctness of the track that leads up to it. For the following further description of Ben Aigan, I am indebted to Rev. Stephen Ree, minister of Boharm, who writes me—

"Ben Aigan has bulk enough to make a distinguished hill, but it has remained commonplace. In fact, it wants character. From whatever point of view it is seen, it has no impressiveness, nothing to arrest the attention, nothing to impress the memory. Its attempts at precipices or steep sides are failures, and, as a result, it is a rounded, characterless mass. So far as I am aware the hill has no history. No battle has been fought on its slopes, and no poet (beyond the most ephemeral local ones, everywhere born to blush unseen) has celebrated its praises. Only in the weather lore of the Spey valley is the hill noted.

'A mist on Benrinnes may wear awa';
A mist on Ben Aigan's sure to hae a fa'.

Or again—

'If Ben Aigan hae a cap,
Be sure you'll get a drap'.

It does not require any profound knowledge of scientific meteor-

ology to recognise that the results of the first saying depend upon the relative height of the hills, and that in these parts mist so near the earth's surface as the top of Ben Aigan generally portends rain".

But, if Ben Aigan be comparatively unimportant in itself, it at least commands from its summit a most extensive and varied view—charming and picturesque, too, comprising a long stretch of the Spey, the wide plain of the Laigh o' Moray, and the broad sweep of the Moray Firth. I have previously essayed to pourtray this view in some detail in an article* descriptive of an ascent of the hill on Saturday, 10th April, 1897: and I may here reproduce what I then wrote:—

"The day was fairly clear, and we had an extensive view, which embraced some of the Ross-shire hills, looming grandly out of the haze in the distance, their crests and ridges finely picked out in snow-lines; mayhap our view included Sutherlandshire and Caithness hills as well, but the intervening scene was too obscured to permit of certainty on that point. Near at hand, of course, is the valley of the Spey, well observable all the way down to Garmouth and Kingston, where the noble river, broken up by sandbanks and shoals, runs unpicturesquely into the sea. I never look on that inglorious termination of the 'thundering Spey' but I am reminded of Matthew Arnold's description of the Oxus—

'For many a league

The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles—
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere,
A foil'd circuitous wanderer—till at last
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.'

The Laigh o' Moray extends westward from the Spey valley, and beyond is the coast of the Moray Firth, Lossiemouth and the Covesea Lighthouse distinctly observable. Of towns and villages visible—not all from the summit, but certainly from one point or

* "Ben Aigan", in the *Daily Free Press*, 29th April, 1897.

other at or near the top—may be mentioned Fochabers, Rothes, Huntly, Duftown, Craigellachie, Aberlour, and Archiestown; while the hills include such familiar Aberdeenshire friends as Ben-nachie, the Tap o' Noth, and the Buck of the Cabrach. Fronting us to the south is Ben Rinnes; always picturesque, owing to its pleasing contour and its crowns of 'Scurrans', it was doubly picturesque on this occasion, being completely shrouded in snow. Beyond it snow-covered ridges rose in profusion; and, beginning with the Cromdale Hills, we descended in succession Ben Avon, Cairngorm, and—unless we were very much mistaken—Ben Muich Dhui. Half an hour was pleasantly employed in noting these topographical features, in observing the windings of the Spey, and in admiring the beautiful setting of wooded slopes and fertile valleys through which the river here runs”.

The description could be amplified, of course. I have been severely taken to task, for instance, for not descanting on the romantic gorge of the Fiddich, the picturesque windings of which are distinctly traceable from Ben Aigan—from the side rather than the top, however; and I have also been reminded that I made no mention of Kininvie, Buchrumb, Balvenie Castle, and the Convals, on the one side; of Gordon Castle, Innes House, and other places on the other side. I can only attribute these and other omissions and shortcomings to my attempting a generalisation rather than a particularisation, to my selecting leading features and not descending to details.*

The ascent of Ben Aigan can be made from various points and in different directions. I have, myself, gone up from Balnacoul, on the Craigellachie side (on the day after Christmas, by the way, but a delightful day for all that, though a slight snowstorm was encountered on the top), and from Sheriffhaugh, on the Orton side. By either route, the ascent is very easy, and can be accomplished within an hour without the slightest difficulty; moreover, it does not much matter though you lose or stray from the track on either side—indeed, so many tracks present them-

* See, for some particulars of the view and the hill itself, article on "Craigellachie" [by Mr. George Watt] in *Aberdeen Evening Express*, 15th August, 1895.

selves at Balnacoul that the chances are all in favour of your taking a wrong one. Supposing the start to be made from Orton station, a mile has to be traversed to reach Boat of Bridge, or "Boat o' Brig" as it is locally called. The curious conjunction in this name of two modes of crossing a stream is supposed to be due to the fact that an ancient bridge across the Spey at this spot having fallen into decay, it was replaced by a ferry-boat, which came to be designated "the boat of the bridge". The bridge—referred to in old charters as the "Pons de Spe"—is said to have been the first, and for many years—"many ages", one writer hath it—the only bridge that spanned the Spey; its original erection, indeed, has been ascribed to the Romans in their progress under Severus, though no trace of its existence is really found till the beginning of the thirteenth century. Adjacent to the bridge, and on the Boharm side of the river, there was a religious establishment called the Hospital of St. Nicholas at the Bridge of Spey. It was founded in the beginning of the thirteenth century by Muriel de Polloc, heiress of Rothes, who mortified the lands of Inverorkel (the Orkel is now known as the Burn of Mulben) "to God, and the Blessed Mary, and St. Nicholas", "in pure alms, for the maintenance of a house for the reception of poor passengers" (or pilgrims), and it was further endowed by the influence of the famous Bishop Andrew of Moray. The endowments for the maintenance of both Bridge and Hospital were all alienated before 1530 to cadets of the family of Leslie of Rothes; and the Hospital was soon thereafter allowed to fall into ruins, the Bridge also being neglected till finally swept away by some of the floods so characteristic of the Spey. The present suspension bridge was erected soon after the floods of 1829, and in making the approach to it the ruins of the Hospital buildings—a considerable extent of which still remained—were cleared away.*

* See the Old and New Statistical Accounts, Shaw's "History of the Province of Moray", Leslie's "Survey of Moray", and a paper by Rev. Mr. Ree recently read to the Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society.

From Boat of Bridge, another mile has to be walked till the base of the hill is reached at the farm of Sheriffhaugh, pleasantly situated on the edge of the ravine down which flows the Allt Daley. The hill can, as already mentioned, be readily ascended from this point; but to those geologically inclined a more attractive ascent will be found by a cleft or gorge further westward—a fissure very distinctly observable from Boat of Bridge. Of the geological features of this gorge, Mr. James Lawrence, Keith, has furnished me with the following account:—

“The road is rather rough, but most interesting. The work of denudation is continually going on here, aided by frosts, snows, freshets, and storms. This work of Nature is more perceptible in winter than in summer. When a thaw comes on after a long and severe snowstorm, there is a mighty rush of water from the water-shed on the higher parts of the hill, and this, with the snow melting and the frost loosening its hold on the rock and debris on the west side of the ravine, brings down tons of broken fragments of rock. In summer, the way through this cleft is tolerably dry, and the toilsomeness of the journey may be considerably lightened by breaking and picking up fragments of rock on which will be found imprinted most beautiful branching, moss-like appearances. These markings were long mistaken for fossil vegetation, but are now recognised as strictly inorganic and of chemical origin, and are known, in geological terms, as ‘dendritic markings’. How these beautiful tree and moss-like branchings are produced in the laboratory of Nature may not be correctly understood, but some geologists are of opinion that, under certain chemical conditions, the markings are developed by intense frost, just as various floral designs are developed on window-panes by frost, with this difference—that, owing to chemical ingredients and other conditions, they become permanent when developed on stone in the fissures of the rock. Be this as it may, the markings are things of natural beauty well worth picking up and placing in a case of natural curiosities. Indeed, a number of flowered fragments of rock from this cleft of Ben Aigan put together with cement makes what may be termed a beautiful geological bouquet that is deserving of preservation”.

There is not much more to be said about Ben Aigan. A number of years ago, a band of hematite was discovered on

one of its slopes, but the proprietor refused to allow it to be worked—on the ground, so the story goes, that an iron mine would be destructive of the neighbouring amenities; much more probably, however, because the hematite was not of a very superior quality, or could not be worked at a profit. At any rate—and let us be thankful for it—something has here been done, accidentally or otherwise, for the preservation of natural scenery. Ben Aigan has been saved from having its sides scarred and desecrated by incongruous and unsightly “workings”; the solitude of its moorland plateaux and the charm of the view from its summit are disturbed only by the occasional screech of a pee-wit, or the guttural burr of a grouse—sounds that but harmonise with the scene. At the southern base of the hill, near a hamlet rejoicing in the rather comical name of Maggie-knockater, are the ruins of Galwal or Gauldwell Castle—the ancient Castle of Bucharm, the seat of a branch of the family of De Moravia, the ancestors of the Morays of Abercairney and the Dukes of Atholl. One must perhaps be cautious in the matter of recommendations or suggestions, for the right-of-way over Ben Aigan is at present in dispute,* but there is an exceedingly beautiful walk from Balnacoul round the base of the hill by Tommanachty to Craigellachie—a walk on which the Secretary of the Club and I lighted more by luck than good management on a preliminary investigation of the route to be followed on the Club’s excursion.

In taking leave of Ben Aigan and Boharm, it may be mentioned that Archibald Forbes, the celebrated war correspondent, hails from the district, his father having been the parish minister—the author, indeed, of the account of the parish furnished to the New Statistical Account,

* Interdict against trespassing on the hill was granted on 4th March, 1897, in an action in the Banff Sheriff Court at the instance of Captain Spicer, the shooting tenant of Arndilly, against James Grant, carpenter, Craigellachie. Proceedings in this case (which presented several features of exceptional interest) will be found reported in the *Banffshire Journal*, 22nd December, 1896, and the *Daily Free Press*, 11th January, 1897, and in other issues of these newspapers while the lawsuit was going on.

which has been largely drawn upon in the preparation of this article. The parish is abundantly referred to in "The Folks o' Carglen" and other sketches by Alexander Gordon—also a native of the parish—Ben Aigan being thinly disguised as "Ben Ulen".* Other sons of the parish have earned distinction in the world, and reference may be made in particular to the family of Mr. John Benton, the tenant of Sheriffhaugh, a farm that lies at the foot of the ascent of Ben Aigan by one of the routes described. All Mr. Benton's sons have had ability. The eldest was first bursar at King's College, Aberdeen, in 1856, and entered the Indian Civil Service, from which he recently retired. Another son distinguished himself at Cooper's Hill College, and is now in the Royal Engineers in India. A third is an extensive sheep farmer in Texas. A few more families of this calibre on the slopes or in the nooks of Ben Aigan would probably have brought the hill itself into more public notice.

* See "The Folks o' Carglen, or Life in the North", by Alexander Gordon (Fisher Unwin, 1891); "Northward Ho! Stories of Carglen", by Alexander Gordon (1894); and "A Light o' Carglen", by Alexander Gordon, in *Macmillan's Magazine*, June, 1892. In this last, Archibald Forbes is alluded to as "A former minister's son, he who had made 'siccan a name up in Lunnon as a newspaper chiel'. . . . A real carl of geniwis, but whether limb o' Sahtan or freak o' nature, God kens".

A BALLAD FOR BONFIRE BUILDERS

ON THE 22ND OF JUNE, 1897.

TRADITION tells how, long ago,
We lived in fear of many a foe,
Who crossed the Border, sword in hand,
And scattered death throughout the land ;
Or cruised from Scandinavian viks,
And gave us many savage kicks ;
Or sallied out from France and Spain,
To deck the land with heaps of slain.
Romans, Normans, Danes, and Dutch,
They vexed our ancestors so much,
Well may we wot that these poor men
Thought life was not worth living then.

In circumstances such as these
Our sires were often ill at ease,
With neither telegraph nor post
To tell of an invading host,
Nor special correspondents glib
To furnish articles ad lib.
Upon the movements of the foe,
Where he would land and whither go.

Though minus Morse and Semaphore,
One art they had in days of yore—
The art of signalling full well,
Across the land from fell to fell.
The warning sped from north to south,
From eye to eye and mouth to mouth,
Whene'er the beacons blazed on high
They knew the foe was hovering by.

But now we live in happier days,
And warlike fires no longer blaze ;
We lay us down and safely rest,
With Pax Britannica we're blest,
The subjects of a gracious Queen,
Whose foes are few and far between.
When fires now blaze from hill to hill
They scatter beams of warm goodwill,
Their flames light up a happy land,
With peace and plenty hand in hand.

Then let them flare from fell to fell,
That Britain's sons may live to tell
To children's children what we mean
By blessing our illustrious Queen,
And lighting up the sixtieth page
Of our thrice-blest Victorian Age.

But beacon-building, how to start
This ancient all but vanished art,
Has puzzled lots of learned folk
Whose work begins and ends in smoke.
We think ourselves too civilised
To study arts that once were prized
By ancestors with painted skins
And many other wicked sins.

Perchance some savages still live
Who could a few instructions give
How to produce a brilliant blaze,
With little reek and dazzling rays—
Bonfires of diverse shapes and styles,
Sprinkled across the British Isles,
From wild Land's End to John o' Groats.
Hark, Britons! to my savage notes!

To build a bonfire beacon good,
Beg, buy, or borrow heaps of wood.
If you're a man of any soul,
Don't think of using lumps of coal.
That fuel, far too civilised,
Should be for bonfires quite despised.
For why? It burns with too much smoke,
More heat than light, and lots of coke.
A fire that only glows and smokes
Is not a bonfire, but a hoax.

Well-creasoted sleepers old
By railway companies are sold
At fifteen shillings for the ton;
When split for fuel, they're *AL*
Old tar, flour, oil, or rosin casks
Should be given free to him who asks
By public-minded Gasworks Boards,
Or manufacturers from their hoards.
Rejected timber, boards, and beams,
Crates, and creels, crammed full with reams
Of bright prospectuses of mines,
Produce a fuel that combines

Windy combustion cheap and strong
 With brilliance bright but not too long.
 Where towns and railways don't exist
 Pray, never let the chance be missed
 Of foraging the nearest wood
 For dry, old timber no more good,
 And branches needing to be lopped,
 Or hedges rooted out or cropped.
 The farmers in the month of June
 (Unless hay harvest comes too soon)
 Count this the slackest time of year,
 And thus their horse and carts are clear
 To fetch the fuel we have got,
 And take it to the very spot.

In upland districts, bare and bold
 With nought but peat and heather old,
 Where Caledonia's loyal sons
 Are standing ready to their guns,
 To serve their Queen in war or peace,
 Let them strip off the mountain fleece,
 Shear the long heather, cast the peat,
 Lay it to dry in bundles neat.
 Let peats be cut in pieces long,
 And heather bunched in faggots strong.
 If weather should the process mar,
 A keg or two of liquid tar,
 Thin sprinkled o'er the dampest part,
 Will help the blaze to make a start.

When thus the fuel is prepared,
 At hand, well dried, and amply aired,
 It's now our duty to reflect
 How best our bonfire to erect,
 So that it will upon Queen's night
 Produce least smoke and greatest light,
 For two whole hours its brilliance keep,
 Then die down to a listless heap
 That won't make sparks, cause fear or harm
 To house or heather, wood, or farm.
 Select a spot of solid ground,
 And draw a circle twelve yards round.
 Get three poles of sufficient strength,
 Fifteen or twenty feet in length,
 The smallest ends together tie,
 Then stand them up, the tips on high,
 And feet apart a yard or more.
 This tripod forms the hollow core,

The heart and skeleton combined
In bonfires properly designed.

Now, take the heaviest of the wood
Lay it around like cart wheel rude,
With spokes that run from nave to rim
And slits between like portholes grim
To let the air draw in below.
The next course round and round should go
Across the first like broken felloes
So that the ports will act like bellows,
Produce a steady inward draught
And clear combustion fore and aft.
And so mount upwards to the top,
Build on materials till they stop.
Aim high if you would hit the mark,
Keep soaring skywards, like the lark.
If empty barrels are at hand
Just set them on their ends to stand ;
Knock out their bottoms with an axe,
They'll blaze like unswept chimney stacks.
Should wood be scarce but peat galore,
You still should have a hollow core,
With heather faggots round and round,
And radial trenches in the ground,
To let air in and upwards climb
As in a kiln for burning lime.
With faggots dry and bricks of peat
Such fires make plenty flames and heat.
If rightly built they'll brightly glow,
And to the last their colours show.
When stores of stronger fuel stop,
Pile brushwood on the very top.
Ere leaving off put in a wisp
Of straw or shavings thin and crisp,
So that the fire won't fail to catch
When time arrives to strike the match.

And now I'm nearly done my lilt.
Mind, every bonfire must be built
By Tuesday, 22nd June.
Begin at once, you're not too soon.
But, hark ! At last you'll make a botch
Unless you set a man to watch.
It's happened oft in days of yore
With beacons built some days before
That bold bad bipeds struck a light,
And set them off the previous night,

So that all the preparation
 Ended up in hot vexation.

When all is ready, not till then—
 TEN THIRTY, SCOTLAND; ENGLAND
 TEN!—

Strike up the anthem loud and grand,
 And strike the matches o'er the land,
 Light all the bonfires near the top,
 They'll blaze like torches till they stop,
 Consume their smoke, make grand display,
 And all the trouble well repay.

Thus Britain's face will sparkle o'er
 With brilliancy unknown before
 As if the spangled sky drew near
 And sweetly kissed our country dear,
 Leaving some diamonds glittering still
 As marks of peace and warm goodwill.
 Then let them blaze from fell to fell,
 That all who see may live to tell
 To children's children what we mean
 Whene'er we sing

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

HENRY M. CADELL.

THE MOUNTAINS OF SCOTLAND OVER 2000 FEET.—No. II.

I.—THE CAIRNGORMS (*Continued*).

Section III.—*Eastern Cairngorms.*

(1) BEINN A' BHUIRD, &C.

O. S. SHEET.		NAME.	HEIGHT	POSITION.	PARISH.	NOTES.
6 inch.	1 in.					
Ab. 77, Ba. 48	65	Beinn a' Bhuid, N. Top	3924	N. Lat. 57° 5' 12", W. Long. 3° 29' 52" 6½ m. E. by N. of Ben Muich Dhui -	Crathie-Braemar—Kirk- michael	Lies on the Aberdeen-Banff county march. O.S. omits the words "North Top" and "South Top" respectively.
Aberdeen 88	"	" " " S. Top	3860	1¼ m. S. of Beinn a' Bhuid, N. Top -	Crathie-Braemar	
Ab. 78, Ba. 49	"	Cnap a' Chleirich - -	3811	1 m. E. by N. of Beinn a' Bhuid, N. Top	Crathie-Braemar—Kirk- michael	Lies on the Aberdeen-Banff county march. 6 in. prints name ¾ m. S.
Banff 49	75	Stob an t-Sluichd - -	3621	1 5/6 m. N.E. of Beinn a' Bhuid, N. Top	Kirkmichael	
"	"	Carn nam Mult - - -	2750	½ m. E. of Stob an t-Sluichd - - -	"	Overlooking W. side of Meikle Slochd (Slochd Mor).
Banff 48	"	Meall a' Choimhthionail	2500	2¼ m. N. by E. of Beinn a' Bhuid, N. Top	"	
Banff 46	"	The Bruach - - -	2338	3¼ m. N.N.E. of Beinn a' Bhuid, N. Top	"	
Banff 45	"	Sròn na Bruaich - - -	2250	¾ m. W. by N. of The Bruach - - -	"	
Banff 48	"	Cnap Leum an Easaich	3000	1¼ m. N.N.W. of Beinn a' Bhuid, N. Top	"	
"	"	Carn an t-Sionnach -	2250	1¼ m. N. of previous top - - - -	"	
Ab. 77, Ba. 48	65 &	Beinn a' Chaorruinn -	3553	2 11/12 m. W. by N. of Beinn a' Bhuid, N. Top	Crathie-Braemar—Kirk- michael	Lies on the Aberdeen-Banff county march.
"	75	Beinn a' Chaorruinn Bheag	3326	¾ m. E. by N. of Beinn a' Chaorruinn	"	" "
Aberdeen 88	65	Beinn Bhreac - - - -	3051	2¾ m. S.S.E. of Beinn a' Chaorruinn -	Crathie-Braemar	
"	"	" " " W. Top	3000	¼ m. N.W. by N. of Beinn Bhreac -	"	
"	"	Craig Derry - - - -	2750	1¼ m. N.W. of Beinn Bhreac - - -	"	
"	"	Meall na Guaille - - -	2550	1¼ m. S. by E. of Beinn Bhreac - - -	"	1 in. misspells this name "Guaille "
Aberdeen 97	"	Creag a' Bhùilg - - - -	2190	2 5/6 m. S.E. of Meall na Guaille - -	"	
Aberdeen 88	"	Bruach Mhor - - - -	3000	¾ m. S. by E. of Beinn a' Bhuid, S. Top	"	
"	"	An Diollaid - - - -	2250	1¼ m. S.W. of Beinn a' Bhuid, S. Top -	"	
"	"	A Chloch - - - -	3000	¼ m. E.N.E. of Beinn a' Bhuid, S. Top	"	
"	"	Carn Fiacan - - - -	2500	1 m. S.E. by E. of Beinn a' Bhuid, S. Top	"	

(2) BEN AVON, &c.

O. S. SHEET.		NAME.	HEIGHT	POSITION.	PARISH.	NOTES.
6 inch.	1 in.					
Banff 49	75	Ben Avon - - - -	3843	N. Lat. 57° 5' 58", W. Long. 3° 25' 58" 2 7/12 m. E.N.E. of Belnn a' Bhuidr, N. Top	Crathie-Braemar—Kirk- michael	Lies on the Aberdeen-Banff county march. The summit is a rock known as Clach an t-Saighdeir.
"	"	Sron na h-Iolaire - -	2500	5/6 m. N. by W. of Ben Avon - -	Kirkmichael	Overlooking E. side of Meikle Slochd (Slochd Mor).
"	"	Stob Dubh Bruach an Fhurain	3250	1 m. N. by E. of Ben Avon - - -	"	
Banff 46	"	Da Druimh Lom - - -	2644	2 m. N. by E. of Ben Avon - - -	"	
Banff 49	"	Mullach Lochan nan Gabhar	3662	3/4 m. E.N.E. of Ben Avon - - -	"	
Ab. 78, Ba. 49	"	Clach a' Chuitseich - -	3605	3/4 m. E. of Ben Avon - - - -	Crathie-Braemar—Kirk- michael	Lies on the Aberdeen-Banff county march. Known also as Invercauld's Stables.
Banff 49	"	Big Brae - - - -	3000	2 m. N.E. by E. of Ben Avon - - -	Kirkmichael	
"	"	West Meur Gorm Craig	3354	1/4 m. W. by N. of Big Brae - - -	"	
"	"	East Meur Gorm Craig	3075	1/4 m. N. of Big Brae - - - -	"	
Banff 46	"	Meall na Gaineimh - -	2989	1 1/12 m. N.N.E. of Big Brae - - -	"	Clach Bhan lies 1/2 m. W.N.W.
"	"	Little Meall na Gaineimh	2250	1/2 m. N.E. by N. of Meall na Gaineimh	"	
"	"	Carn Fiaclach - - - -	2040	1/2 m. N. of Little Meall na Gaineimh	"	
Ab. 78, Ba. 49	"	Stuc Gharbh Mhor - - -	3625	1 1/12 m. E. of Ben Avon - - - -	Crathie-Braemar—Kirk- michael	Lies on the Aberdeen-Banff county march. O.S. and C.C. maps print name too far S.
"	"	Carn Tiekveiver - - -	2425	1 1/4 m. E. by N. of Stuc Gharbh Mhor	"	Lies on the Aberdeen-Banff county march.
"	"	Carn Dearg - - - -	2532	1/4 m. N.E. of Carn Tiekveiver - - -	"	" "
Aberdeen 78	65	Stob Dubh an Eas Bhig	3000	1 1/4 m. S.S.E. of Ben Avon - - - -	Crathie-Braemar	
"	"	Stuc Gharbh Bheag - -	2500	5/6 m. E.S.E. of Stob Dubh an Eas Bhig	"	
"	"	Carn Eas, N. Top - - -	3556	1 1/4 m. S. by W. of Ben Avon - - -	"	O.S. omits the words "North Top" and "South Top" respectively.
Aberdeen 89	"	" S. Top - - - -	3189	3/4 m. S.E. by S. of Carn Eas, N. Top -	"	
Aberdeen 78	"	Carn Allt an Aiteil - -	3000	1 m. E. of Carn Eas, N. Top - - -	"	"
Aberdeen 89	"	Creag na Dala Moire - -	2750	1/2 m. E. of Carn Eas, S. Top - - -	"	"The Meikle Craigandal".
"	"	Carn na h-Uamha Dubhe	2500	3/4 m. S.W. of Carn Eas, S. Top - - -	"	
"	"	Carn Liath - - - -	2321	2 m. E. by S. of Carn Eas, S. Top -	"	"
"	"	Creag na Dala Bige - -	2250	1 m. W.N.W. of Carn Liath - - -	"	"The Little Craigandal".
"	"	Meikle Elrick - - - -	3317	1 1/4 m. S.S.W. of Carn Liath - - -	"	
"	"	Meall Glassail Mor - -	2250	1 1/4 m. S.W. of Carn Liath - - -	"	
"	"	Meall Glassail Beag - -	2250	1/2 m. N. of Meall Glassail Mor - -	"	

BEN AVON, &c.—Continued.

O. S. SHEET.		NAME.	HEIGHT	POSITION.	PARISH.	NOTES.
6 inch.	1 in.					
Aberdeen 89	65	Meal an t-Slugain - -	2250	2½ m. W.S.W. of Carn Liath - - -	Crathie-Braemar	
"	"	Carn na Craobhche Seilich	2250	½ m. N. of Meall an t-Slugain - - -	"	
"	"	Meall Dorch - - - -	2250	¾ m. E. by S. of Meall an Slugain - -	"	
"	"	Carn na Drochaidhe -	2681	¾ m. S.W. of Carn Liath - - - -	"	
"	"	Clais à Chait - - - -	2000	¾ m. E. by S. of Carn na Drochaidhe	"	
"	"	Carn na Criche - - - -	2250	1¼ m. W.N.W. of Carn na Drochaidhe	"	
Aberdeen 88	"	Carn Elrig Mor - - - -	2068	2 m. W. of Carn na Drochaidhe - -	"	
Aberdeen 89	"	Meall Gorm - - - -	2029	1 m. S.E. by S. of Carn Liath - - -	"	
"	"	Craig Leek - - - -	2085	1 m. S. of Meall Gorm - - - -	"	

II.—EAST OF LOCH BULG, BETWEEN DEE AND DON.

(1) SOUTH OF THE GAIRN.

O. S. SHEET.		NAME.	HEIGHT	POSITION.	PARISH	NOTES.
6 inch.	1 in.					
Aberdeen 78	65	Culardoch - - - -	2953	2 m. N.E. by E. of Carn Liath - - -	Crathie-Braemar	
"	"	Little Culardoch - - -	2250	1 m. N. of Culardoch - - - -	"	
"	"	Meall a Chúl-uillt - - -	2366	¾ m. N.W. by N. of Culardoch - - -	"	
Aberdeen 79	"	Tom Breac - - - -	2275	2 m. E.N.E. of Culardoch - - - -	"	
Aberdeen 90	"	Bad nan Cuileag - - -	2250	1¾ m. S.E. by E. of Culardoch - - -	"	
"	"	Carn Moine an Tighearn	2000	¾ m. E. by S. of Bad nan Cuileag	"	
"	"	Bad nan Dearcag - - -	2000	1¼ m. S.E. by S. of Culardoch - - -	"	
"	"	Geallaig Hill - - - -	2439	6¼ m. E. of Culardoch - - - -	"	
"	"	" W. Top - - - -	2170	¾ m. W. by S. of Geallaig Hill - - -	"	

(2) NORTH OF THE GAIRN.

O. S. SHEET.		NAME.	HEIGHT	POSITION.	PARISH.	NOTES.
6 inch.	1 in.					
Aberdeen 79	75	Brown Cow Hill - - -	2698	$\frac{3}{4}$ m. E. by N. of Big Brae - - -	Crathie - Braemar - Strathdon	
"	"	Cairn Sawvie - - - -	2000	$1\frac{1}{2}$ m. S.W. by S. of Brown Cow Hill	Crathie-Braemar	Lies on the Aberdeen-Banff county march.
Aberdeen 78	"	Càrn Uilie - - - - -	2233	2 m. W. of Brown Cow Hill - - -	Crathie-Braemar—Kirk- michael	
Aberdeen 67	"	Meikle Geal Charn - -	2633	2 m. W. by N. of Brown Cow Hill -	Crathie-Braemar—Kirk- michael—Strathdon	" "
"	"	Little Geal Charn - -	2323	$\frac{1}{2}$ m. N.W. of Meikle Geal Charn -	Kirkmichael—Strathdon	" "
"	"	Carn Cuilchathaidh - -	2382	$\frac{3}{4}$ m. N.E. by N. of Little Geal Charn	Strathdon	" "
Aberdeen 68	"	Carn Leitir na Cloiche -	2282	$\frac{1}{2}$ m. N.E. by E. of Carn Cuilchathaidh	"	" "
"	"	Sron Muice - - - - -	2303	$1\frac{1}{2}$ m. N.W. by W. of Brown Cow Hill	"	" "
"	"	Sron Dubh - - - - -	2000	1 m. N.W. by W. of Brown Cow Hill	"	" "
"	"	Druim a' Chaochain Odhair	2000	$\frac{1}{2}$ m. N.N.W. of Brown Cow Hill -	"	" "
"	"	Uisge Each - - - - -	2217	$1\frac{1}{2}$ m. N.N.W. of Brown Cow Hill -	"	Clach a' Chouttsaich lies $\frac{1}{2}$ m. to the S.E.
"	"	Càrn Oighreag - - - -	2310	$1\frac{3}{4}$ m. N.N.E. of Brown Cow Hill -	"	
"	"	Càrn na Leitire - - -	2105	$\frac{3}{4}$ m. W. of Carn Oighreag - - -	"	" "
"	"	Camock Hill - - - - -	2219	$2\frac{1}{2}$ m. E. by N. of Brown Cow Hill -	Strathdon—Glenmuick- Tullich-Glegairn	" "
"	"	Carn Meadhonach - -	2026	$\frac{3}{4}$ m. N.W. by N. of Camock Hill -	Strathdon	" "
"	"	Carn Leac Saidheir - -	2292	$\frac{3}{4}$ m. N.N.E. of Camock Hill - - -	"	" "
"	"	The Ca - - - - -	2205	$\frac{5}{6}$ m. E. by N. of Camock Hill - -	"	" "
Aberdeen 79	"	Tom a' Chatha - - - -	2000	$\frac{5}{6}$ m. S.E. of Camock Hill - - -	Glenmuick-Tullich-Glen- gairn	" "
"	"	Càrn a' Bhacain - - -	2442	$1\frac{1}{2}$ m. E. by S. of Camock Hill - - -	Strathdon—Glenmuick- Tullich-Glegairn	" "
"	"	Craig of Tulloch - - -	2000	$1\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. by W. of Carn a' Bhacain -	Glenmuick-Tullich-Glen- gairn	" "
Aberdeen 69	"	Meikle Sgroilleach Hill	2432	$1\frac{3}{4}$ m. N.E. by E. of Carn a' Bhacain -	Strathdon—Glenmuick- Tullich-Glegairn	" "
Aberdeen 80	"	Tom Dubh - - - - -	2000	$\frac{3}{4}$ m. S.S.W. of Meikle Sgroilleach Hill	Glenmuick-Tullich-Glen- gairn	" "
Aberdeen 69	"	Carn Fiaclach - - - -	2276	$\frac{1}{2}$ m. W. by S. of Meikle Sgroilleach Hill	Strathdon—Glenmuick- Tullich-Glegairn	" "

NORTH OF THE GAIRN—Continued.

O. S. SHEET.		NAME.	HEIGHT	POSITION.	PARISH.	NOTES.
6 inch.	1 in.					
Aberdeen 69	75	Carndubh - - - -	2000	$\frac{3}{4}$ m. N.W. by W. of Meikle Sgroilleach Hill	Strathdon	
"	"	Cairnagour Hill - - -	2329	$\frac{1}{2}$ m. E. by N. of Meikle Sgroilleach Hill	Strathdon—Glenmuick-Tullich-Glengairn	
Aberdeen 80	"	Garbh Shron - - - -	2000	$\frac{5}{6}$ m. S.E. of Meikle Sgroilleach Hill	Glenmuick-Tullich-Glengairn	
Aberdeen 69	"	Allt a Bhreabadair Hill	2456	$1\frac{1}{4}$ m. E. of Meikle Sgroilleach Hill -	Strathdon—Glenmuick-Tullich-Glengairn	
"	"	Moine a' Ghobhainn Hill	2250	$\frac{1}{2}$ m. N. of Allt a' Bhreabadair Hill	Strathdon	
"	"	Mullachdubh - - - -	2129	$1\frac{1}{2}$ m. E. by N. of Allt a' Bhreabadair Hill	Strathdon—Glenmuick-Tullich-Glengairn	
"	"	Rocks of Gleneilpy - -	2000	$\frac{3}{4}$ m. S.S.W. of Mullachdubh - - -	Strathdon—Glenmuick-Tullich-Glengairn	
Aberdeen 80	"	Morven - - - - -	2862	$2\frac{3}{4}$ m. E.S.E. of Allt a' Bhreabadair Hill	Logie Coldstone—Glenmuick-Tullich-Glengairn	Is 5 m. N. of Ballater Railway Station.
Aberdeen 70	76	Sockaugh - - - - -	2032	8 m. E.N.E. of Morven - - - - -	Leochel and Cushnie—Tarlard and Migvie	

C. G. CASH, F.R.S.G.S.

THE CLUB AND THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

THE Club having resolved to manifest its loyalty and attachment to our beloved Sovereign, who for sixty years has by universal assent sustained with graciousness and dignity the high station which she fills, and has performed with marked ability and prudence the duties pertaining to the ruler of the vast empire over which she reigns, deputed to a sub-committee to make the necessary arrangements for joining in the national rejoicings on this auspicious occasion, by illuminating on the night of Tuesday, 22nd June, the summits of three of the more conspicuous mountains which surround her much loved Highland Home. The points selected for irradiation, were Ben Muich Dhui, Cairngorm, and Lochnagar; and the members of the Club honoured with the duty of performing this labour of love were, for the respective summits named, Mr. Copland, first chairman of the Club; the Secretary, Mr. M'Connochie; and Mr. John A. M'Hardy, M.A. The necessary preparations were duly made, but here, as in other instances, "the best laid schemes of men, like those of mice, went a-gley". Most unfortunately the weather, which could not be controlled, turned out very differently from the weather on the night of the Jubilee in 1887, when the originators of the Club illuminated at midnight the summit of Ben Muich Dhui, to the astonishment of spectators on the summit of Lochnagar and elsewhere, as described in the interesting narrative by the Rev. Mr. Lippe, in the Club's Journal, July, 1893.

The following programme, drawn up by Mr. Copland, will be of general interest in the circumstances of such a unique celebration:—

CAIRNGORM CLUB.

PROGRAMME FOR FIREWORKS—22ND JUNE, 1897.

Rockets.—The rockets will be fired from stakes driven into the ground so as to stand steady. The stakes to be about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches square, and 6 feet long, and pointed at one end for driving into the ground. Two stakes for each station planted about six yards apart. The stakes

will stand about five feet above ground, and have two staples each, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet apart, into which the stick of the rocket will be placed for firing. These staples must admit of free movement of the rocket stick upwards. The rocket sticks will be attached to the rockets by the arrangement provided on the side of the rocket, and will be tied tight by a bit of twine, so as to fasten the stick securely to the rocket. The rockets are fired by lighting the point of the blue match-paper of the lower end of the rocket, which, when in position, points downwards—the conical end of the rocket pointing upwards.

Coloured Fires.—These are in 1 lb. tins. The contents of a tin or half a tin, as may be found suitable, will be strewn about a quarter or half an inch thick in a broad line or otherwise on a wooden board or flat stone, and then fired by igniting it. Match-paper will be provided for this purpose, as well as for lighting the rockets.

Order of Firing.—Rockets will be in position before 10:30 p.m., and precisely at that hour a rocket will be fired from each station. Immediately thereafter coloured red fire will be shown, then green fire, and at 10:35 rockets from each station, then coloured fire and rockets alternately so long as the fireworks permit, so as to exhaust the supply by 11 p.m.

The following are the reports of the several sections:—

I.—BEN MUICH DHUI.

This section left Aberdeen by the 10:10 a.m. train on Monday, 21st June, for Braemar, conveying the ammunition, and left at Ballater, under proper custody, the illuminants for Lochnagar. The day was fine and promising, although a strong wind blowing from westwards made heavy work for cyclists on the road to Braemar, and several times blew the head-gear from passengers on the coach. Noted the bonfires erected within sight on the route from Ballater to Braemar. Nothing else remarkable except that opposite to the "Lion's Face" the passengers had to dismount from the coach and clear the way by breaking off the upper branches of a birch tree which had been blown down by the gale, and lay across the road, barring the passage of the coach. Found, on arrival at Braemar, that a variety of functions had been arranged within a few days to celebrate the Jubilee there—namely, the inauguration of a fine granite memorial fountain, procession and fêtes to children, fireworks provided by the liberality of Lords Cairns and Vane Tempest, the exhibition for the first time of the electric

light at the Castletown, and not one, but two balls!—which were, according to all human experience, morally certain to attract the youth and the beauty of the district of both sexes, and to diminish our promised array of torch bearers to the summit of Ben Muich Dhui. We had written to the foresters at Glen Derry, directing the provision of two hill ponies to carry the ammunition, some firewood, and a kettle for toddy-making, up the mountain to the Sappers' House; but they, relying upon promises made before the balls, &c., were projected, suggested that the army of volunteers which they relied upon would traverse the snows of Ben Muich Dhui after the fashion of General Skobolieff when he scaled the Balkans and bivouacked among the snows on their summits, thereby rendering the provision of the ponies unnecessary. Fortunately for Skobolieff, no balls interfered with his arrangements, and consequently he suffered not from desertion. Our expedition, therefore, had its work cut out for it, but, weather permitting, we resolved to accomplish its purpose. This resolution was fortified by the unexpected arrival of two stalwart volunteers, who had crossed the Clova mountains, camping at night among the heather—the Messrs. Orr from Brechin, who evidently had not heard of the balls. We kept that information from them. Tuesday morning broke bright, clear, and beautiful—exceptionally so. At four a.m. the sky was a cerulean dome, clear of clouds, and continued so till about six o'clock. The pines on Sgor Dubh waved effulgent in the morning sunlight, and contributed to the promise of a glorious day, with a serene close.

Alas! alas! the sou' wester which the day before blew down birch trees from Craigs Cluny and Chonnich, blocking the coach road and promising to clear the air for Tuesday's illuminations, had overdone its work. The gale, too strong and long continued, brought from the Atlantic legions of rain-bearing and turgid mist-clouds, the advance guard of which, by eight a.m., were rolling in from Glen Geusachan, creeping along the bosoms of Carn a' Mhaim and Carn Crom, and sprawling over the ridge beyond Beinn Bhreac. This caused anxiety, but the sun, being still strong, gave hope

that, as the day advanced, the vapour would be drawn upwards. After breakfast, the Messrs. Orr, who were desirous to spend the day on Ben Muich Dhui, in order to see as much of it as possible, went off, carrying the ammunition for Cairngorm. They were instructed to leave it at the Sappers' House, protected from the weather, so that it could be got there at eight o'clock, by which time it was arranged the Cairngorm contingent would join the Ben Muich Dhui section. The Messrs. Orr performed their duty faithfully and well. They were at the Sappers' House by six o'clock, and remained until after ten o'clock, sheltering themselves as well as they could from the rain and mist on the lee side of one of the walls of the ruined building, but during the whole time they were there they neither saw human face nor heard sound of human voice. They reported dense mist and rain during the whole time of their stay, and the summit of the mountain never clear. About 9 a.m. two English gentlemen (Messrs. Waters and Handcock), who had cycled from Braemar to Glen Luibeg, and were resolved to ascend the mountain at all hazards, to sing the National Anthem on its top, got directions for their route, by Glen Luibeg and the Sron Riach of Ben Muich Dhui. They returned 'twixt five and six o'clock in the evening, drenched, yet hearty, and delighted with the performance of their duty. Their audience was invisible, but we believe not unappreciative. These gentlemen reported having entered the mist before they were half up the mountain, and they continued the ascent feeling their way, but never seeing ten yards before them. They got down again—a more difficult feat—by retracing the footsteps they had made in the snow during the ascent.

The Ben Muich Dhui section had arranged to start for the summit at one o'clock, but at that time the aspect of the weather made it prudent to defer. Hour after hour hope told a flattering tale by an occasional rift in the rolling mist-clouds which kept pouring into Glen Luibeg from Beinn Bhrotain and Carn Mor, upon the bosoms of Carn a' Mhaim and Carn Crom, where they twined and wreathed and rolled, hugging these mountains, as if loth to leave

them in their drifting course north-eastwards. The deer had come trooping down the hill-sides in the early forenoon to the low grounds—a bad weather sign—and not until well through the afternoon did we again get a glimpse of Carn Mor's fields of snow—only a glimpse, blotted out again by massive rolling cloud columns and the swish of rain. As the evening advanced, the sky lightened in the north-east beyond Beinn Bhreac, suggesting clearer weather in that direction, as well as eastwards, where a break in the clouds showed the much desired blue for a time. Away south-east also the sky above Morrone, and the high hill range between Glen Cluny and Glen Ey, lightened, suggesting that the Lochnagar section were under favourable conditions for their bonfire and firework display. As for us, the mist clouds continued to roll in over Beinn Bhrotain and Carn Mor, and we had, perforce, to resign ourselves to the inevitable. At 10:30 p.m., however, we sent up a rocket from Glen Luibeg, and burnt some coloured fires in testimony that, although defeated and frustrated in our purpose by the abominably disloyal weather, we continued unsubdued. The Messrs. Orr, who went to the summit of Ben Muich Dhui by the Loch Etchachan route, as already mentioned, returned with their unexhausted ammunition about two o'clock in the morning. They intended to make some sketches during the day, but the mist and rain prevented the production of paper, and the mist was so continuous and close that they never got sight of the party from Cairngorm.

The reporter desires to place upon record his grateful acknowledgment of the assistance given by Mr. M'Intosh, forester at Glen Luibeg, in the untoward circumstances in which he unexpectedly found himself on reaching Glen Derry, and without whose willing aid, and that of the Messrs. Orr, it would not have been possible for him to accomplish the programme of the Club, even had the weather become favourable for doing so.

ALEX. COPLAND.

II.—CAIRNGORM.

This party had a lively time, with varied experiences. At first Cairngorm was threatened with a crowd of Clubmen, but as the day drew near apology followed apology, till on the 21st only two supporters appeared at Aviemore to assist the Secretary in carrying out the official programme. At one time difficulty was anticipated in housing the celebrants in Rothiemurchus, but with such a reduction in the party the question of quarters was easily solved. Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Robertson, at the Dell, showed no small hospitality to the Club.

The 22nd opened well—too well! At one o'clock Cairngorm was a beautiful sight; at seven its three great corries were quite clear of mist, and dazzlingly white with snow patches. On Braeriach, however, the clouds—and beautiful clouds they were—possessed the summit, to which, indeed, they pertinaciously clung the whole day. Ben Muich Dhui was not quite clear, but at least inspired hope, and as the little party of three started from Coylum Bridge at eight o'clock the prospect was more than fair.

The Marquis of Zetland had facilitated matters for the Club, and his foresters, under Mr. Hector M'Kenzie, promptly carried out all instructions. Re-inforced by a party of four from Glenmore Lodge, the first considerable halt was made at the upper bridge of Allt Mor, where the rocket stakes were prepared. These were taken from the bridge itself; but it is proper to mention that the necessary material for a new structure was in position, and probably "the Queen's Bridge", as we then and there named it, already spans the brattling mountain burn. The day being so pleasant, and there being several hours to spare, the party sauntered rather than climbed to the top. Looking backwards, the telescope revealed a party of three ladies and a gentleman; later, these were passed by four gentlemen, who had no idea of taking things leisurely. The latter, indeed, took a mean advantage of the "official" climbers, getting ahead of them as they made a halt for the first lunch, which was partaken

of at a pleasant spring considerably to the left of the usual line of ascent.

As the last stage of the climb was being tackled, a suggestion was made that the Marquis's Well should first be visited. The divergence was accordingly made, but there was no Well to be seen; nothing but a great field of snow. Mr. M'Kenzie was not long, however, in ascertaining its precise position in spite of the five feet of snow which covered the familiar landmarks. Hitherto the hillmen were in excellent spirits—now waterproofs came into requisition, and Ben Bynac retired from view. The ladies' party was in possession of the cairn; the other had made the descent even more hurriedly than they had performed the ascent. The stakes fixed, we drank to Her Majesty's health, and sang "God save the Queen"; thereafter we entertained the ladies with a Gaelic song of the usual number of verses. As they said adieu, we took note of their mountain equipment, especially boots; some of our lady members will find it to their advantage to write us for particulars.

A solemn council was now held. Ben Muich Dhui was only occasionally in view, and the chances of the veteran venturing its ascent under such circumstances were considered to be extremely small—indeed, the weather on the Braemar side appeared to be stormy in the extreme, so much so that Mr. M'Kenzie strongly urged the party to abandon the idea. We determined, however, to keep our appointment, the more especially as the two "supporters" were anxious to visit the Shelter Stone, and cross over to the Ben under what they were pleased to call "such excellent auspices". A plunge was accordingly made into Coire Raibert, the upper part of which was covered with snow, while the lower was soaked with water—a description applicable to most of the corries visited later in the day. The Shelter Stone was first made for, and one of the grandest sights of the day was the view of Loch Avon looming below—a picture which left a good deal to the imagination. Considerable difficulty was experienced in crossing Garbh Uisge, which, with so much snow, was in

great flood. The mighty torrents and gigantic waterfalls that dashed over the crags at the upper end of the Dairy-maid's Field were most impressive; the force with which they sprang and leaped is easier imagined than described. The ascent, after another lunch at the Shelter Stone, was made by the right bank of the "Rough Water", so as to afford the best view of that torrent, as well as to avoid the necessity of crossing. A heavy drizzle was now experienced; the wind became a hurricane; the mist played hide and seek—but always contrived to conceal more than it revealed. The burn was followed all the way to its sources—enormous fields of unbroken snow—and the cairn of Ben Muich Dhui reached at 7:30. At that hour the weather conditions were somewhat improved, but the improvement was only temporary. A meeting of the Club, according to time-immemorial custom, was now held, the Secretary, on the motion of Mr. Alexander Esslemont, presiding. There could be no doubt of the qualifications of Mr. James Boyne, and he was accordingly admitted unanimously. The Club was literally not "strong" enough to vigorously carry out a certain little ceremony, so the newly-admitted member escaped easily. Two gentlemen, Messrs. Handcock and Waters, had evidently made the ascent earlier in the day and had left a record of their feat, in which only evil was spoken of the weather. We marvelled that they had brought no message for us, but never thought on visiting the Sappers' House, which was only occasionally in view.

The cairn was left in a reflective mood. There an enthusiastic band of mountaineers had celebrated the 1887 Jubilee, under Mr. Copland's leadership; death has removed one of us, William Anderson, a man whom to know was to love. But while the past claimed more than a passing thought, the present demanded most careful consideration, for thick mist made the return journey to Cairngorm no easy matter. Let us be truthful—we actually lost ourselves for a little, a circumstance for which the leader was solely responsible; but without much loss of time we descended by the route we had reached the summit. We turned our backs on the cairn—and also on the Sappers'

House, which was then in view—at 8.15, running along the long snow slope of the Garbh Uisge. Garbh Uisge Beag was leaped a short distance above its confluence with the larger stream; next the Feith Buidhe Burn was crossed, not without difficulty; and Coire Domhain was as artfully negotiated as possible. The name (“the deep corrie”) is particularly appropriate, but on this occasion the youngest member of the Club voiced the feelings of his companions when he expressed a wish that it had been made less inconveniently deep.

Cairngorm now began to show its cone, much to our chagrin in the circumstances. At 10.30 it was quite clear, and had a well-defined outline, for at least fifteen minutes, to the valley of the Spey. There was nothing to be done but to count the bonfires visible; they were forty all told, not including a brilliant display of fireworks in the direction of the Moray Firth. There was apparently a rivalry to be first ablaze; one or two anticipated the hour by ten minutes. But while the mountain top was clear, the strath was in many parts covered with long banks of mist; the neighbourhood of Kingussie seemed practically a blank. The finest bonfire effect was observed where the light struggled for visibility under thick cloud-mantles of mist.

The descent to Glenmore Lodge was made as rapidly as possible; had not Mrs. M'Kenzie very thoughtfully invited us to supper? Then came the tramp to Coylum in the early hours of the morning.

ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHE.

III.—LOCHNAGAR.

The official party (numbering eleven) left Ballater at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, arriving at Alltnagiubhsaich Lodge at 7.30. Another section, under the leadership of Mr. William Brown, had already arrived there, and another contingent afterwards found their way up the Glen on bicycles, so that altogether about twenty members of the Club were on Lochnagar to take part in the celebrations. The weather was dull, but half-way up the hill there was promise of

a beautiful evening, and that the mist would clear away. It did so for a time, but ultimately the promise was not fulfilled, for the mist closed down, and never lifted again.

The summit was reached at ten o'clock, and there the Clubmen found their number augmented by a considerable gathering of people from the surrounding district—including Mr. Campbell, Glasallt Shiel; Mr. Cameron, Alltnagiubhsaich Lodge; and Mr. M'Intosh, Garmaddie, the foresters, who had, by order of Her Majesty, placed a bonfire in readiness for the party's arrival.

Everything was put in order without loss of time for the Club's display, and punctually at 10:30 the first rocket gave the signal for the illuminations to commence. This was answered by the reports of two cannon placed some distance down the mountain-side by Mr. Cameron. The bonfire was then fired, and soon the whole cairn was a blaze of light, a picturesque effect being added to the scene by the coloured lights placed at various points by the members. Three cheers were then given for Her Majesty, and the whole company joined heartily in singing "God save the Queen". It was stated by the foresters present that such a splendid "show" had never been seen on the top of Lochnagar. It was unfortunate, however, that the view was circumscribed by the mist, the only other light to be seen being in Glen Callater.

At midnight a meeting of the Club was held, under the presidency of Mr. John A. M'Hardy, when the following gentlemen were admitted members with the usual ceremony:—Mr. Arthur Brown, Mr. Robert Cumming, Mr. John Duff, Mr. James A. Hadden, Mr. James Henderson, Mr. Lachlan Mackinnon, Yost, Mr. Alex. L. Miller, Mr. George A. Simpson, and Mr. Donald Sinclair.

It may be here mentioned that two ladies, the Misses Campbell from Glasallt Shiel, were present during the whole proceedings.

The descent was begun at 12:30 a.m., Ballater being reached at 3:30. The members thoroughly enjoyed their midnight outing.

JOHN A. M'HARDY, M.A.

A NIGHT ASCENT OF SNOWDON.

OUR party of seven had spent a glorious July afternoon at Bettws-y-Coed, and, when driving back late in the evening to our inn at Pen-y-pass, we decided to ascend Snowdon that night, in the hope of seeing the sun rise. Having dined late, that is, after 10 p.m., we rested awhile, and at 1 a.m. started our journey. One lady rode on pony-back, with a boy as nominal guide, and the rest of us walked. We needed no "guide", as I knew the mountain well, but the boy was to bring back the pony, and as he was in training as a guide, it was thought that he might get a useful lesson. The route we followed, the famous Capel Curig one, is by far the finest one on the mountain, and is the one of which Mr. Fleming gave a somewhat alarmist account in the January, 1894, number of the Journal. It enters the great Cwm Dyli, the finest cwm, or corrie, of the mountain, and gets well into the heart of the mountain before much of ascent is made. Passing the lochlet of Teyrn, the track reaches Llyn Llydaw, of which so fine a picture was given in connection with Mr. Fleming's paper. An embankment crosses this lake near its northern end, and during a dry season it is possible to cross the lake on a line of stones on this. Should the stones be submerged, the lake can be waded or rounded; either end is practicable. The crossing of the lake in the intense quiet and half-light of the early morning was very impressive. I reached the lake a little ahead of my party, and had the full effect of the loveliness and absolute stillness.

Beyond Llydaw the track rises somewhat, and reaches the inner corrie. In this lies the smaller lake Glaslyn, from the west of which shoots up the great precipice of Clogwyn-y-Garnedd. This is, perhaps, the finest mountain view around Snowdon, and one great feature of it is that it can be so easily reached. A vehicle can be driven to the margin of the lake. From this point the path is rougher and

steeper, following the famous zig-zags, of which so much has been made by timid tourists. As a matter of sober fact, the track is absolutely safe, free from all difficulty, and quite well marked, and no one at all able to walk uphill need hesitate to go by that route. When we ascended it in the dim morning twilight, with clouds gathering on the peaks and crags, our boy could not keep the track, so I led the way up. We reached the summit shortly after 4 a.m., but saw no sunrise. A wonderful procession of clouds, forming in the wind that blew up from Cardigan Bay, occupied our attention for more than an hour. It was interesting to see the cloud develop in the air as soon as it struck the cold mountain surface; it was as though every jutting crag smoked cloud.

Broad daylight having arrived, and our poor bodies being numbed with cold, we dismissed our boy with the horse and its lady rider, and the remaining six of us started the descent to Beddgelert. On this route is another much-talked-of "dangerous" place, the Bwlch-y-Maen, which Mr. Fleming describes as "razor-like in sharpness". I had heard various accounts of this from different visitors, and we looked forward with much interest to seeing it. When I halted and announced "Ladies and gentlemen, this is the spot", my companions laughed incredulously. We were on a ridge which, for a few yards, was as narrow as nine feet; on either side the descent was very steep, though not precipitous; and, except during a heavy cross wind, there was nothing to suggest the idea of danger. Anyway, we crossed it with dancing, so little did we feel of fear, and I may say that one of the ladies had not been on any mountain before that holiday. Now, if Mr. Fleming wishes to harrow up the souls of his fellow Cairngormers with a "razor-like" ridge, let him try to describe adequately the ridge between Crib-y-Ddysgyl and Crib Coch. At its worst this is some nine *inches* wide, consists of rotten, splintered rock, and is, I think, unwalkable; add to that, that on the north side is a sheer drop of some hundreds of feet, and on the south a very steep slope, and then it is permissible to dilate on difficulty and danger.

But, of course, none but skilled mountaineers should go to such places.

Snowdon has its lengthening death-roll resulting from such adventures, but the only case of death of an ordinary tourist that I know of occurred in the grazing lands to the south of the mountain, where a visitor, who had lost his way in a mist, died of exhaustion almost within sight of a coaching road. The lesson to be learned from that sad fact is to carry on every expedition an abundant lunch, a good map, and a compass.

Well, to conclude our journey. We reached the Bedd-gelert road all right, and followed it in pouring rain past the Pitt's Head Rock to the Lewellyn Hotel. Here, in a fireless coffee room, we breakfasted off inferior chops, and when our vehicle arrived drove along the beautiful Nant Gwynant, still in rain, to our own inn.



THE CRAGS, COIRE AN SPUT DHEIRG, BEN MUICH DHUI.

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

THE following are brief notes of a walking and climbing
IN GLENISLA, excursion from Edinburgh to Braemar and back, on
MAR, AND 16-20 April, 1897.

ATHOLE. The party—three in number—left Edinburgh on the morning of the 16th for Alyth. The real start was made from Alyth about 3. The route was right up Glenisla, except that, to save distance, the short track was taken, keeping to the westward of Kirkton of Glenisla, instead of going through it. The weather was fine, and the walk altogether enjoyable. Nightfall found us at the head of the glen, when most comfortable quarters were secured.

On the 17th, a start was made between 8 and 9 o'clock. The route taken was by the track which runs across the summit of Monega Hill (2917). The summit, where it flanks Canlochan glen, was deeply corniced, and the sides, though not precipitous, are steep enough and high enough to afford a very fine view as one looks over and down to the bottom of the glen below. Leaving the summit of Monega, and striking north-westwards, the next point was the Glas Maol (3502). The snow was unbroken and apparently deep, but not carrying, and the going was comparatively heavy. A wide expanse of country was spread out to the south, but northward the prospect was not so clear. But, at anyrate, most of the readers of these pages are much more familiar with the various peaks than the writer can pretend to be, so any attempt at enumeration may be spared. The plan of campaign was to keep the ridge, and, accordingly, steps were now bent towards Cairn na Glasha (3484). Approaching that top, the gully to the north-west was a very fine sight, with its deep ravine slopes and heavy snow cornice. The next top, Carn an Tuirc (3340), has no cairn, so far as could be seen, and it certainly does not deserve one. It raises in a very marked manner the question—what is a separate peak? Except, indeed, that, in common with many others hereabouts, it has no peak at all, nor anything approaching one. The descent was now made on Loch Callater, the level of which was struck near the cottage at the north-west end of the loch, and something like an hour and a half later found us at Braemar.

For the 18th, the idea had been Ben Avon and Beinn a' Bhuird, by Glen Sluggan. But the plans were altered, and the Dee crossed somewhat above the village, an approach was made by Glen Quoich, and the south top of Beinn a' Bhuird was attacked. The snow was agreeably hard, and the top (3860) was reached without difficulty, except a very high wind and drifting snow and hail. But once on the top, the wind was encountered in even greater strength, and the mist

came down to shut out everything. A regular blizzard blew, with benumbing effect. The north top was, of course, nowhere to be seen, and after crouching behind the cairn for about 20 minutes in the hope that the conditions would improve, it was reluctantly resolved to abandon the other top, and also Ben Avon, and to beat a retreat. The return was made by the Quoich, and the Dee was crossed by one of the bridges which at this season are open to all. The sleeping-place was Inverey.

On the 19th an early start was made (6 a.m.). The route taken was right up Glen Ey. For seven miles or so there is more or less of a road, though it cannot be said that much trouble has been taken as regards bridges. Two considerable streams have to be forded. Where the glen turns towards the west, the scene becomes very weird and deserted-looking, especially on a dull, misty, drizzling morning—now raining, now snowing—which was our experience. Once past Alltandhar Shieling the order is—go as you please and keep right if you can. Beinn Iutharn Mhor (3424) and Beinn Iutharn Bheag (3011) form a grand gateway at the very head of the glen. Through this opening, and up the low ridge to the S.E., we are again on the snow, and when the ridge is gained, the sight of the loch marked in the Ordnance map gives assurance that the right track has been kept. The next difficulty is to find Glas Thulachan, which is to be to-day's climb. But by the aid of map and compass the right direction is kept, and the top is reached at last (3445). The next objective is the An Lochain burn, and, in the prevailing conditions, a constant reference to the compass is for some distance necessary, in order to avoid adding to the fatigues of what was found to be in itself a sufficiently heavy day. At length Beinn a' Ghlo is made out, and one knows then where one is. The Tilt was forded at 12:30 at its junction with the Lochain, and Blair Athole was reached in due course. Altogether it was a most enjoyable expedition, barring the loss of the other Cairngorm summits, and the unfavourable weather on the last day.—JOHN BURNS.

THE spring excursion of the Club this year was to this BEN AIGAN. Banffshire eminence (which is fully described elsewhere), and took place on 3rd May. The general inclemency of the spring probably accounted for the small attendance, the party numbering only 23. The day, however, was fine, and the outing was voted a great success. The ascent was made from Orton station by way of Sheriffhaugh and the cleft with the "dendritic markings" referred to in the article, Mr. Lawrence, who joined the party at Keith, discovering several interesting specimens, which he freely distributed. On the summit the party were met by Mr. A. R. Stuart of Inverfiddich, Mr. W. M'Combie Stewart, St. Helen's, Craigellachie; Mr. A. Murison, banker, Aberlour; Mr. Macpherson, schoolmaster, Aberlour; and several other gentlemen. The descent was made to

Balnacoul, and profuse hospitality was tendered the party by Mr. A. R. Stuart at Birchbank, and by Mr. M'Combie Stewart at St. Helen's. Dinner took place in the Craigellachie Hotel in the evening—Mr. Robert Anderson, chairman of the Club, presiding, Dr. Cameron being croupier. Mr. Lawrence has favoured us with the following notes regarding the railway journey from Keith to Orton:—Shortly after leaving Keith station, the valley of Boharm is reached, the lands of Auchlunkart lying on the south side of the railway line, the property on the north side belonging to the Seafield family. In early times, the bottom of the valley had been one great swamp or lake, from Bridgend, near Keith, to where Mulben station now is. In the course of ages, the growth of vegetation in the lake had dried up the water, and formed what, in later times, was known as

“ The Big Moss o' Mulben,
Where tappit stanes stand up like men ”

—these “tappit stanes” being large white blocks of quartzite which had been deposited during the ice age. This long stretch of valley or moss still forms a sort of natural watershed, and is partly drained to the east into the river Isla, and to the west by the Mulben Burn into the Spey. This burn, which drains not only the west end of the moss, but the north end of the Ben Aigan valley, was formerly called Orkil, and the lands on its banks were called Inverorkil. Leaving Mulben station, the railway line proceeds down through the glen of Inverorkil, cuttings for the line exposing the various strata. There are, first, the Ben Aigan quartzites; and then, about half-way down the glen, a small volcanic dyke, which can be distinctly traced on both sides of the cutting. Landed at Orton station, the Spey—by those proceeding to Ben Aigan—is re-crossed at Boat o' Brig, a place of historic interest; and the parish of Boharm, which is here reached, has also a most interesting history.

SUPPLEMENTING the article on “Mount Battock and MOUNT Clochnaben” (Vol. I., pp. 138 *et seq.*), I may give some BATTOCK AND details of a walk by Mr. Charles I. Beattie and myself GLENDYE. on 27th March. Starting from Aboyne at 8.30 a.m., on the arrival of the first train from Aberdeen, we walked to the Forest of Birse by the “Fungle” road, and then to Mount Battock by the footpath described in the article mentioned, though large accumulations of snow rendered the latter part of this footpath very indeterminate. We encountered extensive patches of snow on Mount Battock itself; but, on the whole, we found walking across snow a much easier and more expeditious way of reaching the top than clambering over grass and heather. The view from the summit, with the far-off mountains covered and the lesser hills streaked with snow, was more than ordinarily picturesque; Edzell and Brechin, it should be mentioned, are plainly discernible—their omission

from the description of the view in the article is inexplicable. Striking down the south-eastern slope of Mount Battock, we made direct for Glendye, and, walking across the valley—encountering on the way some of the moss-haggs and peat-furrows that infest this region—we came on a track alongside the Water of Dye. This track soon broadens into a path (marked on the O.S. map), which leads to Glendye Lodge. It is a long walk to that spot, but the walk is relieved by occasional pretty “bits” of the Dye. From Bridge of Dye to Banchory, by Strachan, is another long walk; altogether, our day’s walk may be moderately computed at 26 miles. The following is the record of our time, the rate of walking all day being comparatively easy:—Leave Aboyne, 8:30 a.m.; arrive keeper’s house at Auld-dinnie, 9:20; Forest of Birse (Old Castle), 10:30; Path on White Hill, 11:0; Water of Aven, 12:0; Base of Mount Battock, 12:20 p.m.; Summit, 1:10. Leave Summit, 1:40; arrive at track, 2:40; halt till 3:0; arrive at Glendye Lodge, 4:40. Leave Bridge of Dye (after halt), 5:0; arrive at Bridge of Bogindreep, 6:0; Strachan, 6:20; Banchory, 7:20.

—ROBERT ANDERSON.

AN Aberdeen party of three reached Inver Inn on 1st
 BEN AVON May, with the view of ascending Ben Avon the follow-
 IN MAY. ing day. The weather was wretched, but a start was
 nevertheless made. Mist was in possession of mountain
 and glen; but a hurricane dispersed the clouds, and the prospect was, for
 a time, all that could be desired. Making our way up Glen Feardar, we
 left the old cart road a little beyond Auchtavan, and by and by struck
 a path which is marked with white-washed stones for the convenience
 of belated sportsmen. The Gairn crossed, we were favoured with
 frequent falls of snow. The climb was a continuous battle with the
 elements; near the top of the ridge the weather was quite blizzardous.

The Clach was, however, reached, but there was little to be seen—
 only an occasional glimpse of the snow-lined corries of Beinn a’ Bhuid.
 The great black pinnacles of Ben Avon stood out in excellent contrast
 to the surrounding snow. We enjoyed the storm effects despite our
 physical discomforts, leaving the cairn with a keener appreciation of
 the difficulties of winter mountaineering.—H. A. BARRY.

AT Easter this year my wife and I spent a few days in
 BRAERiach the Rothiemurchus Forest. In such a chilly spring it
 IN APRIL. was pleasant to hit upon a week of dry weather with
 abundant hot sunshine. For much of the time the
 wind was from the east, and keen; but that only made walking the
 easier and pleasanter.

On Easter Sunday we walked up Glen Eunach to the Loch Bothy.
 The view of the north face of the Cairngorms was very fine, and as we
 approached Braeriach, the appearance of its snow-covered ridges and
 corries was very tempting. We examined Coire Dhondail from below
 and thought it too difficult to attempt. But the well-known northern

ridge looked very possible. Just where it ran into the main mass of the mountain, the snow looked very smooth and glazed, as if it were ice. We wished to go on the mountain in the snow if possible, and I decided to examine the ridge at close quarters the next day, and see whether we had any chance of doing so.

Accordingly, the next morning I was at the lower bothy by half-past ten, and shortly after began ascending the ridge. I came to the snow at about the 2500 feet contour, and was well pleased to find it smooth and firm, giving an excellent surface to walk on. I sat awhile in the lee of a great stone, with my plaid wrapped round me, and watched a snow-flurry come hurtling across Coire an Lochain. When this ceased, I resumed my upward path, and was not long in reaching the narrow place between the two corries. In this ascent I experienced a curious phenomenon, new to me, and of great beauty. The edges of my plaid, of my knickers, of my gloved hand, &c., were bordered, at the moment of beginning any movement, by a two-inch band of brilliant violet light. I had but a short time to notice this, for another snow-flurry enveloped me, and it was necessary to walk warily, especially as I now approached the ice-looking snow. In order to facilitate my descent, I cut great crosses in the snow with the spike of my stick, thinking they would guide me along the middle of the ridge. I found the doubtful snow perfectly safe and easy to walk on; and, as it was only about mid-day, I decided to go some distance towards the summit and see what the snow was like on the great plateau. By this time all the higher ground was wrapt in a rather dense mist, driving across from the south-west. This made it difficult to see the way forward, and I foresaw that it would make it even more difficult to see the way back, as the top of the ridge might not readily be found, and the steep edges of the corries must be avoided. To simplify matters for my return, I drove my stick deeply into the snow at each step forward, and turned it like a pointsman's lever, thinking to make tracks that I could follow on my return. An ice-axe would have been a more suitable weapon. Thus progressing somewhat slowly and laboriously, I worked upwards, bearing to my left, and keeping as keen a look-out as the weather conditions permitted. Ere long I perceived the snow cornice overhanging the Garbh Coire, and I knew that I had not borne enough to the left. I turned sharply in that direction, having no desire to go near the cliff edge in the mist, which seemed getting denser.

Again, a little later, I saw another snow cornice, and recognised by the dimly seen outline that I was very near the summit. Just as I was about to rejoice over this, the air was filled with dense, driving snow. I saw at once that but a few minutes of this would cover up my tracks, and leave me in a somewhat uncomfortable plight, and so I turned and fled. But in a hundred yards I had no tracks to follow, fresh snow covered up all my painfully-made marks, and I was without guidance to the top of my ridge. Bearing away to the right, so as to

cut almost directly across the wind, I trotted down the slope till I felt it becoming less steep, and then peered carefully about till I saw a prominent black triangle of rock that I had noted as a fair "leading cairn". From this it was not difficult, even in the mist and driving snow, to find the top of the ridge; though it was very obvious that with a north-east wind blowing snow against one, it would have been impossible. At the top of the ridge I crouched behind a friendly rock and lunched, eating freely of ice feathers to quench thirst. Then I skated down the ridge, following my cross marks which were quite easy to see. In the lower parts of the snow I found softer places, and once went through. When I got home I found I had rather badly bruised and blistered my heels, probably with kicking footmarks. These prevented my going again on the mountain.

After my return I looked up the *C.C.J.* (vol. i., p. 189) and found there Dr. Gordon's account of an appearance of colour phenomena, also on Braeriach, similar to what I saw. I wrote a note on the matter to *Nature* of May 13th, and some interesting correspondence followed.

The phenomenon, is, in all probability, purely subjective. The retina, after receiving the impression of a certain colour—in my case the ruddy-brown of my clothing—perceives the complement of that colour when suddenly turned to the white snow. This has been utilised in the familiar advertisements of Beechbury's Soap, &c. One correspondent of *Nature* asserts that the phenomena is identical with "St. Elmos' fire". This is not in the least probable, as, for the production of such electrical phenomena, a perfectly dry and frosty atmosphere would be necessary, whereas while my experience lasted the air was not dry, and the falling snow clung to my plaid and melted on it.—
C. G. CASH.

BONFIRES were lighted on a large number of hills in
 JUBILEE Aberdeenshire and the north on the night of Jubilee
 BONFIRES Day, 22nd June. An exact enumeration of the hills
 on which this form of Jubilee rejoicing took place
 would be difficult, but mention of the following has been made in the newspapers:—Blue Hill, Clochendichter, Brimmond, Hill o' Fare, Cairn William, Cairnballoch, Syllavethie, Cushnie, Dunnideer, Tillymorgan, Tap o' Noth, Clashmach, Knock, Durn Hill, Cowhythe Hill, Bin Hill, Hill o' Doune (Banff), Balloch and Muldearie (Keith), Ben Rinnes, Ben Aigan, Ben Newe, Braigach (Strathdon), Tillypronie, Knock Hill (Blelack), Coyles of Muick, Craigowan and Craiglourighan (Balmoral), Craig Choinnich (Braemar), and Carr Hill (Mar Forest). Bennachie, Buck of the Cabrach, and Mormond are the three most conspicuous hills that were not utilised for this species of "demonstration", though many people climbed the first and the third to see the bonfires in the surrounding country, and there was some discharge of rockets. Buchan, comparatively hill-less though it be, made a fairly good show. There were

bonfires on the Hill of Ythsie, Hillhead (Methlick), Brucehill (New Deer), Hill of Knaven (Old Deer), Pitfour, Aikey Brae, Turlundie, (New Pitligo), and the Hill of Troup. There were three in the neighbourhood of Fraserburgh—on the Corbiehill, on the Hill of Rathen, and at Cairnbulg; but the parish of Longside apparently beat the record, for it had no fewer than four—on the Market Hill (near the village), the Hill of Rora, the Hill of Auchtydore, and at Inverquhomery. The pile on the Tap o' Noth is described as a "monster bonfire". The material used comprised 23 cart-loads of trees and a large supply of tar and paraffin, and "the fire was built on scientific principles". "Never", we are assured, "was such a blaze seen on the Tap, and it was seen from afar". The bonfire pile on the Knock Hill was an imposing structure of over 20 feet high and about 20 feet in diameter at the base, composed partly of empty tar barrels and partly of brushwood. Three tall trees, forming a tripod-stand about 17 feet high, had been first erected, and round these trees, in thorough workman-like fashion, the tar-barrels and brushwood had been splendidly worked in. A tar-barrel was placed in the centre, and petroleum was lavishly used to ensure a blaze. To the pile on the Bin Hill of Cullen 70 loads of materials had been contributed; while in the carrying of wood for the Ben Rinnes pile, no fewer than 50 men were one day engaged.

Some idea of the prevalence of bonfires on the night of the 22nd may be gained from the statements of the number of fires seen from various heights. From Mormond upwards of 50 are said to have been seen, and 56 from the Knock. Over 20 were visible from Ben Rinnes; and on Ben Aigan as many as 27 were counted "away to the north, east, and south". Forty were seen from the Hill of Cotburn, Turriff; and one observer declares that from the top of the Hill of Knocksoul, situated between the parishes of Leslie and Tullynessle, he counted over 100. Probably, however, the best "range" of bonfires was that with which spectators stationed on the Nelson Tower at Forres were favoured:—"Beacons were seen burning brightly from the lofty peak of Ben Wyvis in the west, the south Sutor of Cromarty and the Ord Hill of Caithness in the north, the Doorie Hill at Burghead, and the Bin Hill of Cullen on the east".

THE following members have been admitted since
NEW December last, in addition to those added at the
MEMBERS. Diamond Jubilee celebrations:—Messrs. Robert Connon,
Thomas H. Lillie, M.A., LL.B., and Alexander J. Smith.

REVIEWS.

THE following passage in the recently-published "Life of DR. JOWETT and Letters of Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol, ON Oxford", may be quoted :—"Lord Camperdown (then LOCHNAGAR, Lord Duncan), who was with Jowett at Braemar in 1862, tells how one Sunday there was spent. Jowett decided to climb Lochnagar, and fixed on Sunday for the expedition. Lord Duncan expected to start early, but Jowett insisted on going to the Kirk. No guide being found available on the Sabbath, they had to make their own way, and the shades of evening were falling ere they had descended far from the summit. Jowett got very tired with stumbling in and out of the peat hags, and his companion had to support him, while feeling apprehensive that they had lost the path. He would only take one sip from the spirit flask. At this point they heard the floundering of an animal, which for a moment they supposed to be a deer, but Lord Duncan went up to it and discovered that it was a pony with the saddle turned right round. He put the saddle straight, but Jowett would not mount. However, the pony, kept moving by Lord Duncan, led them to the keeper's lodge at Callater. There, the ground being smoother, Jowett consented to mount, and they got back safely. The fact was that J. M. Wilson, of Corpus, who was at Braemar at the time, had heard of the projected expedition, and had expressed himself rather doubtfully as to its success. He had started to follow them on the pony, but had given up the chase, and, leaving the creature to its fate, had descended on foot".

THIS is a remarkable volume by Mr. W. B. Blaikie, published by the Scottish ITINERARY OF PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD STUART—History Society. The work is of such a JULY, 1745--SEPTEMBER, 1746. nature that infinite pains was necessary in the collection of facts as well as considerable judgment in giving them proper expression. The author has not been found wanting in either; indeed, he has favoured Scottish historians with an indispensable book of reference, as well as enabled the general reader to get a good grasp of the Prince's wanderings through the Highlands. Reference is made to the Cairngorm Club Journal in connection with "Prince Charlie's Cave", and the Club's excursion to Ben Alder—the turning-point in the Prince's southward retreat after the Battle of Culloden. A ten-inch map of Scotland, accompanying the volume, contains much valuable information to the Highland student.

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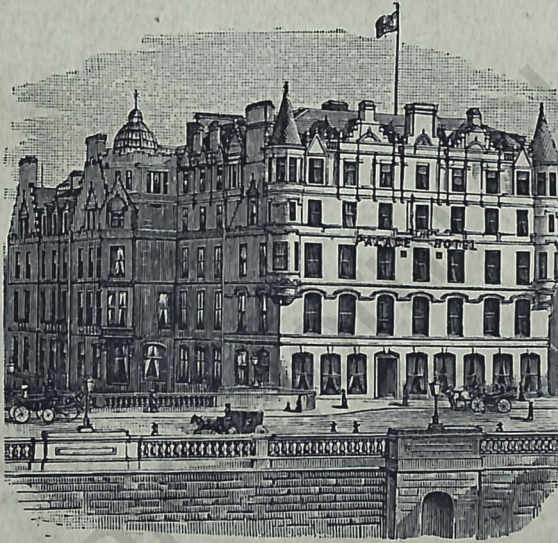
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