

THE Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY

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The Cairngorm Club.

RULES.

I.—The Club shall be called “THE CAIRNGORM CLUB”.

II.—The objects of the Club shall be: (1) to encourage mountain climbing in Scotland, with special reference to the Cairngorm group of mountains; (2) to procure and impart scientific, topographical, and historical information about the Scottish mountains, their superficial physical features, minerals, rocks, plants, animals, meteorology, ancient and modern public routes giving access to and across them, and the meaning of their local place names, literature, and legendary, or folk-lore; (3) to consider the right of access to Scottish mountains, and to adopt such measures in regard thereto as the Club may deem advisable; and (4) to issue a Journal or such other publications as may be considered advantageous to the Club.

III.—Candidates for admission as members of the Club must have ascended at least 3000 feet above the sea level on a Scottish mountain.

IV.—The management of the Club shall be vested in a Committee, consisting of ten members, in addition to the following Office-Bearers—a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer—five being a quorum.

V.—The annual general meeting of the Club shall be held in December for the following business: (1) to receive the Treasurer's accounts for the year to 30th November; (2) to elect the Office-Bearers and Committee for the next

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THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

Vol. IV.

JULY, 1902.

No. 19.

THE BEN UARNS.

BY JOHN RITCHIE, LL.B.

“ Double the labour of my task,
Lessen my poor and scanty fare,
But give, O give me what I ask—
The sunlight and the mountain air ”.

THE THERE is probably no one who is fond of walking among our Scottish hills who has not had the tantalising experience of gazing day after day at a distant range of mountains without any immediate prospect of being able to spend a day on their summits. In the spring particularly, when a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of Bens and Stucs and Carns and Mealls, he longs more than ever to be up and away on a long “stravaig” among these hills, and if this opportunity is denied he must needs interest himself on bright clear days in endeavouring to identify the various heights by the aid of his maps and field glass.

In such manner the writer used to occupy a little of his spare time in the earlier part of last year. If any members of the Club have an hour or two to spend in Perth, and wish to enjoy a good view of the Eastern Grampians as seen from that neighbourhood, they cannot do better than make their way to Corsiehill, on the northern slope of the Hill of Kinnoull. From this point a splendid panorama of mountain summits

is visible, particularly to the north and north-east. Most of these can be identified without undue difficulty, but several of the hills give one a little trouble. To the east of Beinn a' Ghlo and Ben Vuroch there is a break without any prominent mountain, but then comes a great "hornet's nest" of hills stretching between Glen Tilt and the Cairnwell. My friend M. and I spent some little time in trying to clear up to our own satisfaction the topography of this region, but though we felt sure as to the identity of Glas Thulachan and several of his companions, we had a difficulty with regard to others. We accordingly resolved, with a view to solving our doubts, to have a little walk of exploration in this district.

With this purpose before us we left Perth one afternoon at the end of June last year, and made our way from Blair Atholl up Glen Tilt. The night was fair but cloudy, and mist rolled round the summits of Beinn a' Ghlo. The few glimpses we had of Carn nan Gabhar, with the mist trailing over its dark corries, were impressive in the extreme.

I suppose no reader of "St. Ives" can ever forget the cry of the watch as he passed along the back of the castle rock, when the French prisoners were waiting the hour of their escape—"Past yin o'clock, and a dark, haary moarnin'". The condition of the morning was not much better when, a little later than "yin o'clock", M. and I set out for Carn an Righ (3377). At 8.40 we reached the bridge across the Gleann Beag Burn, on the Kirkmichael road. The weather was improving a little, but the higher part of the hill was wrapped in mist. A lofty spur of the mountain overhung the road in front of us and was clear, but the summit was evidently further east. Fearing that there might be a fall between the two points we kept well to the east, but, after walking a little distance, we saw that a ridge connected the point first seen with the summit. We accordingly turned towards the height that was clear, and reached it at 9.35. The walking was very easy—over short heather. As indicated, our best course would have been to climb direct to this point, and thence along the

ridge to the summit of the mountain. We hoped to see Loch Loch from the spot we had reached, but in this expectation we were mistaken. In fact we had little or no view in any direction, though Carn nan Gabhar to the south loomed grandly through the mist. But while there was no distant view to be had, we gazed on the green, grassy haughs at our feet, and wondered on which of these stood the famous rustic palace which the Earl of Atholl erected for King James V. when he came on a hunting expedition to this lonely district in 1529. Some writers state that the site of this palace was on the bank of the Tilt near Blair Atholl, and this was pointed out to Queen Victoria as the true site when she visited Athole in 1844. An old map before the writer, however, gives "Remains of James Vth Sylvan Palace" on the banks of a stream to the north of Loch Loch; an old guide to Perthshire refers to the vestiges of the palace as being near Loch Loch, and to this view we shall adhere, for is not Carn an Righ "the hill of the king"? It is a little uncertain, however, whether the site is visible from the spot where we stood. Lindsay of Pitscottie gives the following quaint and interesting account of this "sylvan pavilion":—

"In the summer of the year 1529, King James the Fifth, accompanied by Queen Margaret and the Pope's Ambassador, went to hunt in Athole, where he remained three days, most nobly entertained by the Earl of Athole, and killed thirty score of hart and hynd, with other small beasts, as roe and roebuck, wolf and fox, and wild cats. The Earl of Athole, hearing of the King's coming, made great provision for him in all things pertaining to a Prince, so that he was as well served and eased with all things necessary to his estate as he had been in his own Palace of Edinburgh. For, I heard say, this noble Earl gart make a curious palace to the King, his mother, and the Ambassador, where they were as honourably lodged as they had been in England, France, Italy, or Spain, concerning the time and equivalent for their hunting or pastime; which was builded in midst of a fair meadow, a palace of green timber, wound with green birks, that were green both under and above, which was fashioned in four quarters, and in every quarter and nuke thereof a great round, as it had

been a block-house, which was lofted and geisted, the space of three house height; the floors laid with green scharets and spreats, medwärts and flowers, that no man knew whereon he zied, but as he had been in a garden. Further, there were two great rounds on ilk side of the gate, and a great portcullis of tree, falling down with the manner of a barrace, with a drawbridge, and a great stank of water of sixteen feet deep, and thirty feet of breadth. And also this palace within was hung with fine tapestry and arasses of silk, and lighted with fine glass windows in all airths; that this palace was as pleasantly decored with all necessaries pertaining to a Prince as it had been his own Royal palace at home. Farther, this Earl gart make such provision for the King and his mother, that they had all manner of meats, drinks, and delicates that were to be gotten at that time in Scotland, either in burgh or land—viz., all kind of drink, as ale, beer, wine, etc.; of meats, with fleshes, etc.; and also the stanks that were round about the palace were full of delicate fishes, as salmonds, trouts, pearches, pikes, eels, and all other kind of delicate fishes that could be gotten in fresh waters, and all ready for the banquet. Syne were there proper stewards, etc.; and the halls and chambers were prepared with costly bedding, vessels, and napry, according for a King; so that he wanted none of his orders more than he had been at home. The King remained in this wilderness at the hunting the space of three days and three nights, and his company, as I have shewn. I heard men say it cost the Earl of Athole, every day, in expenses, a thousand pounds. All this sumptuous edifice was purposely consumed by fire on the King's departure”.

An easy walk along the ridge to the east brought us to the highest point of Carn an Righ at 10 a.m.* From this

* It is thought that the “time quotations” given are fairly reliable, at least for the earlier part of the day, but, through the kindness of a fellow-member who walked over this district in 1893, and to whom we were much indebted for the information he gave us, I am able to note some further “quotations” which will be of service to any members of the Club who think of walking over these hills :—

- Carn Aosda to Carn Geoidh, 1 hr. 15 min.
- Carn Geoidh to Cairnwell, 1 hr. 5 min.
- Creag Easgaidh to Loch nan Eun, 30 min.
- Loch nan Eun to Glas Thulachan, 1 hr.
- Glas Thulachan to Carn an Righ, 1 hr.
- Carn an Righ to Mam nan Carn, 1 hr.
- Mam nan Carn to Ben Uarn Beg, 40 min.

position nothing was to be seen, as the mist kept whirling round us without rising for a moment. Only the dim outline of Glas Thulachan was occasionally visible across the valley to the east.

We spent little or no time here, and at once set out for Beinn Iutharn Mhor (Ben Uarn Mor) (3424). Descending towards the north-east we reached the valley between the two mountains in about half-an-hour. The sun now shone out for the first time that day, and we felt joyful, but our joy was brief. For a few moments, however, Ben Uarn, "the mountain of hell", stood out before us, sparkling in the sun, its southern slope rising in one long, gradual incline from the spot where we stood. The screes on its speckled side glittered in the morning light; the sky was bright blue overhead. We climbed along a pathway leading upwards in a gentle depression between Ben Uarn and Mam nan Carn (3217), and, striking to the left, reached the summit of the former at 11.10. Our hopes were born to disappointment, as we got to the top just in time to be enveloped once more. We were slightly better off, however, than on Carn an Righ, as the mist kept lifting occasionally, when we did our best to make out the chief features of the landscape to the north. A haze lay over everything, but the Larig Ghru was visible, with Beinn Bhrotain and Ben Muich Dhui—and the Devil's Point was distinctly seen. We had a view down Glen Ey, and across to Beinn Iutharn Bheag (Ben Uarn Beg) (3011), which, with the hill on which we stood, forms the grand "gateway" of that glen from the south; but the hills to the north of the Dee in that direction were invisible.

If, however, the distant view was lost to us, there are always compensations in life, and the view at our feet, as we looked down the steep slope towards the tiny Lochan Uaine, was charming. The little tarn lay darkly blue in the hollow. On the hillside, just below us, a deer was feeding, unconscious of our presence. The mist whirled along the northern ridges of the mountain, now rising and now falling, and magnifying a hundred fold the grandeur of the corrie.

From Ben Uarn Mor, a walk along the north side of Mam nan Carn, over ground which proved very good going indeed, brought us in less than an hour to Ben Uarn Beg and Loch nan Eun, "the loch of the birds". In the latter I found a great disappointment. I was prepared to see a mountain loch like Loch Brandy in Glen Clova, with high hills rising abruptly from its shores. In a flat stretch of moorland lay a small sheet of water, leaden gray under the dull sky, little distinguishable in its appearance and general surroundings from dozens of lochs in less mountainous districts. One point of difference, which gave some interest to the scene, was the presence of an enormous number of gulls and other birds, which make this lonely and comparatively inaccessible loch their breeding-ground. Rising in hundreds from its shores, and from the little islet it contains, with their mournful cries they added a touch of gloom and melancholy to our surroundings, all the more striking as the day had now settled down into a condition of dull, cloudy grayness. Loch nan Eun may appear to more advantage under other conditions, but dreariness without grandeur is the recollection that at present remains in the writer's mind.

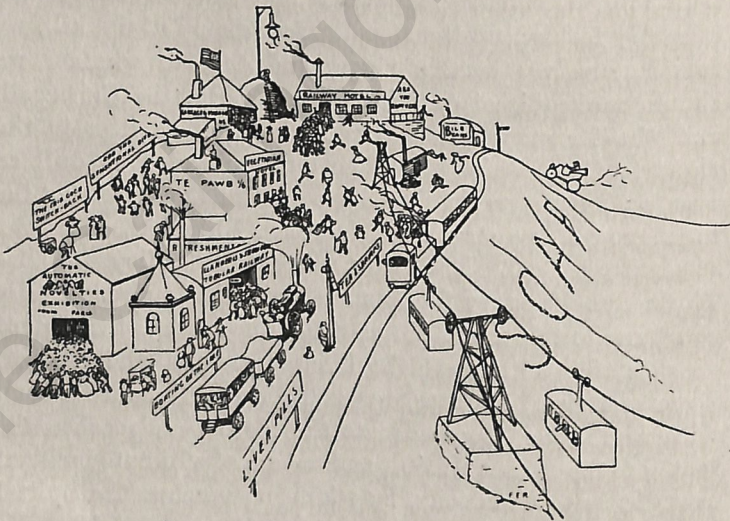
Ben Uarn Beg rises in a gradual slope from the north side of the loch, and after a short ascent the summit was reached at 12.50. There was no view, as mist and haze seemed now to have settled like a pall over all the landscape. After a descent to the shore of the loch, where we had lunch, M. made various efforts to obtain a photo of the fine mass of An Socach (3073) on the west side of the Baddoch glen, but, unfortunately, these had no success. We then turned our gaze eastward. Carn Aosda (3003) was seen, and a part of Loch Brothachan; while beyond these lay a mountain in the far distance, which seemed to lie bathed in a chance stream of sunlight, but which we could not identify.

For what hill should we make next was now the question. Glas Thulachan lay too far out of our course; but, on the east side of the deep glen leading southward from Loch nan Eun, towards the Spittal of Glenshee, there rose a

noble looking mountain, with conical peak, which a glance at our map showed to be Carn Bhinnein (3006). This beautiful summit, as seen from this point, was very striking, in the boldness of its outline. So far as we had seen, it was the finest looking hill in this range.

We then set out over the ground between Creag Easgaidh and the Baddoch watershed, intending to make for the ridge between Carn Bhinnein and Carn Geoidh (3194), and we found the walking over this part the roughest of the day. The heather was long, while every now and again we came on holes, several feet in depth, which made careful walking necessary. The monotony of this was broken for a little by a view down the Baddoch glen to the Braemar road, which we thought was visible at a point near Alltamhait. We were neither of us sorry to find ourselves in the little valley at the foot of Carn Bhinnein, which was reached about 2.30. Climbing in a leisurely fashion up the steep, grassy slopes of the hill, we found ourselves on the ridge, and debated whether we should make direct east for Carn Geoidh, the Cairnwell, and the Braemar and Blairgowrie road, or turn to the right to Carn Bhinnein. The day continued as dull as ever, so, having no temptation to continue our walk on the high ground, we struck out for Carn Bhinnein, which we reached at 3.45. The view across the valley to Glas Thulachan was very fine, and left us with a strong desire to return to this mountain on a clear day, when the distant view to the south would be likely to reward the climber. Even as it was, however, we bade Carn Bhinnein farewell with regret, and descended to the glen. We reached the foot of the hill at 4.40, and a walk without incident brought us to Glenloch, by which we reached the Spittal of Glenshee and welcome quarters there at 6.10. We were well satisfied with the increase in our knowledge of the topography of the district obtained from this walk, as it helped us to settle the question of which hills in this range are visible from the view point previously referred to. Carn an Rìgh, Glas Thulachan, Carn Bhinnein, and Carn Geoidh are all seen, but not the Ben Uarns.

During the greater part of the day we had the misfortune to be without sunshine, and even without the compensation of the grandeur of the mist. It was a cold, gray, uninteresting day, but, even so, it was a most enjoyable one, long to be remembered. The fine lines by Eliza Cook, which appear at the head of this paper (let every member of the Cairngorm Club know them by heart, and repeat them aloud when he sits down to his humble little lunch on the hill side), are therefore to be read in a slightly ironical sense. Alas, we missed the sunlight, but we had the mountain air, and we may have better fortune next time, for we mean to go back.



SNOWDON SUMMIT IN 1960 (see page 32).

MISADVENTURES ON THE CAIRNGORMS.

BY ERNEST A. BAKER, M.A.

THE inexperienced Englishman, used to mountaineering in the Lake District or the West Highlands, where the hotels are considerably less than forty miles apart, may well regard a holiday in the wild region of the Cairngorms as a somewhat formidable undertaking. A look at the map, with its vast spaces of meandering contours, vacant of any hospitable black dots or inviting road-marks, makes him rejoice, on the one hand, to see what a large slice of Great Britain still remains virtually in a primeval state, while, on the other hand, he cannot help reflecting how pleasant an adjunct to mountain scenery are the dinners and breakfasts, the comfortable beds and pleasant company of Wastdale Head and Sligachan, the very things that in the Cairngorms are most inaccessible. It is in such a region that the services of a friend practically acquainted with the topography, and versed in the arts of converting hard-grained foresters to charitable views upon "access to mountains", and of eliciting the hospitality of their wives, are something to be warmly welcomed. Albeit this advantage hardly insures one against all the accidents of travel in rough country, the chances of a night out, of going a long day on an empty stomach, or of mistakes due to mist. Both with the experienced guide and without him, I have met with several of those adventures in the Cairngorms that are agreeable only when we come to look back on them from a comfortable distance.

When, some years ago, a Cairngormer asked me to join him in a dash across from Glen Tilt to Rothiemurchus, I assented gladly, hoping to profit hugely in future visits by the knowledge gained under his tuition. We started from Blair Atholl one morning, in what my friend's diary described as "golden weather". The Tilt was low and

pellucid, the hills were so clear in the sunlight as to lose somewhat of their apparent stature. At a cottage below Marble Lodge, we met one of the earliest specimens I became acquainted with of that fine race of men, the Highland foresters, a stalwart clan whose good graces it is well to cultivate if you would fain wander at ease in the recesses of the Eastern Grampians.

My companion professed some acquaintance with the Gaelic. Being a little sceptical, I suggested as an opportunity to exhibit his skill that he should say "Good-morning" to a youngster whom we met a little further on. The young Celt stared in a frightened manner at my friend mouthing his gibberish, and then took to his heels. We did not produce any more "Gaelic" after this. We saw no other person till we had walked up the whole length of Glen Tilt, and were crossing the forlorn stretch of boggy land at the watershed. We were now pretty tired, after a hot day's journey. Just as we saw, far, far away, two solitary cottages, like specks on the vast mountainous landscape, we caught sight also of two figures a mile ahead, hastening in the same direction as we. Were they bound on the same errand, namely, to secure a bed at one of the two cottages, the only bed, indeed, that my friend knew of for many miles? The idea made us hurry on, although to try to catch them up was vain. However, we found no other guests in possession when we reached the forester's house, and we were made very comfortable, though one bed in the wall had to accommodate the pair of us.

My companion had been talking a good deal about the attractions of that cheapest of Highland hostels, the Shelter Stone by Loch Avon, and the inspiration came to me that we might as well spend a night there, and so see more of the mountains than if we crossed through the Larig in one day. We decided to do this, if the next day were fine; and in the morning our hostess was asked if she could furnish us with the necessary provisions. She soon got together a miscellaneous collection of edibles, oatcakes, bread, scones, butter, bacon, tea, salt fish, etc.

As our bags were hardly roomy enough for a camping-out expedition, all these things were packed in a large brown-paper parcel, and tied to my knapsack.

We began to climb Ben Muich Dhui by the steep buttress overlooking Allt Clach nan Taillear. It was hot, and this route is one of the driest. Snow gleamed all around us, in the channel of the burn, and in every cleft and gully of the walls enclosing the Garbh-choire behind us. A parching thirst was exasperated by the sight of coolness and moisture a stone's throw away but practically out of reach.

From the cairn we enjoyed one of the clearest views I ever obtained from a 4000 feet top. We slaked our thirst at a well not far distant, then crossed the slopes towards the rocky descent to Loch Avon. This is a perfectly easy descent, very different indeed from the blood-curdling description to be read in a certain romance. But you must not wander too far at the side, as I did. My comrade, self-absorbed, was leaving me to my own devices (divers purple patches in his journal, and a sonnet to boot, were the probable explanation), and he allowed me to skirt the torrent too closely. This nearly proved fatal to the comestibles, for, suddenly slipping at an awkward ledge, I recovered myself, but the brown-paper parcel burst, and sent its contents rolling far and wide. We were lucky enough to collect everything almost undamaged, and continued our way more sedately to the Shelter Stone. An impertinent entry in the journal was to the effect, that "Baker was more delighted at saving the grub than at his own escape". Being unprovided with any sort of cooking-pan, we hunted up the best specimens of old meat tins and biscuit canisters that lay on what might be termed the kitchen-midden, and after scouring them with gravel in the stream hard by, so thoroughly that two or three were ground into holes, we produced two serviceable utensils, and at once set about getting dinner.

By the time we had rested and dined, it was early evening. We proposed to ascend Cairngorm, but, despite

the perfect morning, a heavy shower delayed us. Then we set out to climb the gully that sends down a long tail of rock and scree just opposite our lodging. As a rock climb, this does not rank high; where the rocks are bare, it is too easy to be interesting, whereas, near the top, it is earthy, and after the rain we found this part so wet and slippery, that we were glad to make a safe exit. The climb occupied us a longer time than we had bargained for, and the sun had set when we reached Cairngorm top. We spent a few minutes gazing around on the vast and solemn landscape on which the shadows were gathering swiftly, then a sprinkling of rain fell, evidently the forerunner of a heavy shower, and we ran as fast as we could down the stony sides into Coire Raibert and regained the shore of Loch Avon, well-nigh in darkness, by a very rough descent a long way to the east of our gully. The rain had soaked us, and we had not a change of clothes between us. We kindled the fire again almost in the cave mouth, and tried to dry our things, but the main result was, that for a while we were smoked out of our hole. The night that ensued on this scorching day was remarkably cold; it was difficult to keep warm inside the shelter, though we utilised everything, down to pieces of brown paper, in lieu of coverlet.

There was not much lying abed in the morning. A dense mist overlay everything about 100 feet above our heads, the loch was clear from end to end, but we knew well what to expect on top. We ascended by the margin of the burn that tumbles into the Garbh Uisge, and made as straight a line as we could to the W.N.W., crossing several beds of snow. We must have gone farther to the left than we intended, for we presently found ourselves on the brink of a precipice, close to a fine pinnacle which we identified later as Creag na Leacainn. There was no way here for us; we bore away south, my comrade's knowledge of the locality only sufficing to warn us that we were on the edge of the Larig's deep chasm. Fearing more cliffs below, we would not venture down the steep slopes that skirted the Creag, but returned to the top, and, after

more wandering, found a way off the mountain between Creag na Leacainn and Creag a' Chalamain. When we found ourselves actually coming down, and apparently safe from the crags that had seemed to beset every step on that misty plateau up above, we had time to bethink us that we were hungry; but the stock of provender had been reduced to three hard-boiled eggs, which we divided punctiliously.

We were descending rapidly now, and the merry tinkle of a stream below grew louder and louder, until, suddenly, the mist thinned, our surroundings became visible, and, to our delight, we found an unmistakable track. Saved! was my instant thought, but to my surprise my comrade looked doubtful at this sign of human neighbourhood, and at length said he was sure this was not the Larig. For me to have any opinion, or at least to express one, on such a matter, was of course absurd, so I bowed to his local experience when he said our best course was to follow the stream down the glen until we came to something or other of a less dubious nature. It was the Larig after all, and anybody who knows the character of the ground traversed by the burn from the foot of Castle Hill to Auldrue, will appreciate our sufferings in fighting a way through such a virgin tract. All the while it was raining, and the drenched vegetation sprinkled us bountifully at every step. Nor when we regained the track were our troubles over, for my conductor got mixed up about the bridges at Auldrue. Instead of keeping straight on to the bridge below the confluence with the Bennie, he crossed the Larig burn, and, seeing the other stream confronting us, plunged in without delay and forded it. The stream was high, but my long-shanked friend cared nothing for that, though I was afraid of being swept away, and even after our previous drenching, I found myself appreciably the wetter for this operation.

Such was my first experience of the Cairngorms. A friend at home was so interested by our account of the expedition, of the proceedings at the Shelter Stone particularly, that he came north with me about a year later,

bent on finding out by a night there, whether the Stone was really so comfortable as we made out. We reached Aviemore by the afternoon train. We bought some provisions at the store, but, by an unlucky chance, we could not obtain any bread. The seriousness of this did not dawn on us at first, and we hoped to make shift with a few scones and a stock of oatcake that we got in Rothiemurchus. Laden with provender and with fuel, gathered in the forest for culinary purposes, we did not reach the top of the ridge by way of Creag na Leacainn till the sun was disappearing; we descended into the crag-girt basin of Loch Avon, over deep snow-wreaths, in twilight; and it was about as dark as it ever gets in a mid-June night when we came to the Stone. We had invented a beautiful cooking-pan—kettle, saucepan, fryingpan, and teapot all in one—whose virtues we now put to the test; and when we had made the beds and prepared supper, there was but one drawback to our happiness, the dearth of bread. The eeriness of the situation took hold of my friend's imagination—I believe it was that, though it may have been the food—and he slept very poorly. The scones were soon eaten up, and the oatcake proved to be stale and dry, about as toothsome as confections of saw-dust. At breakfast, when we nearly came to eating our bacon-fat with a spoon, we began to realise why bread is such an important element in the national diet. Vainly did we argue that fat is the most concentrated form of energy; we preferred our energy in a sandwich. We looked at our boots, they were obviously in need of dubbin; so we put the bacon-fat on our boots, and trusted that the energy was not in the wrong place after all.

We were afoot before 6 a.m., but my companion was indisposed, and anxious to get back to more comfortable quarters at once. So we crossed Cairn an Lochain and descended as directly as possible into the Pass, where I put my friend on the right track for Rothiemurchus and started alone up the steep side of Braeriach. I traversed all the 4000 feet tops round to Cairn Toul, and dropped down at the head of Loch Eunach, a good day's work on

next to nothing to eat; for the oatcake, which had spoiled our breakfast, was still more trying in the form of sandwiches. It was on the summit rock of Cairn Toul, this day, that I made the acquaintance of Mr. A. L. Bagley, now a well-trying mountaineering friend; he had, unseen, been in my wake for several hours and met me, as I came down from the cairn, in one of the loneliest spots in all Britain.

Many readers of this journal will remember the depressing weather that spoiled the festivities on Jubilee Day, 1897. Two men, of whom I was one, thought it would be an excellent way to see the bonfires if we spent the night on a mountain-top. We selected Beinn a' Ghlo as a central summit, unmindful of the sinister omen conveyed in the name, the "mountain of the mist". We had been so impressed by the difficulties of getting provisions in the remoter Highlands, that we had brought from town a weighty collection of tinned meats, tea, coffee, fruit, and many other things, the bulk of which had gone further on by train when we set out from Blair Atholl. To these necessaries my comrade, who was new to the mountaineering profession, had indiscreetly added a little arsenal of things that might possibly come in useful. He had no notion of cutting away to the vanishing point everything that swells the rucksack, which is the fine art of travel and camping-out. His piece of soap reminded one of a hard day's washing, he had a good many yards of bandages suitable for all sorts of contusions and breakages, a dozen clean handkerchiefs, and so on in proportion. But somehow, throughout this journey in various parts of Scotland, we seemed to be lugging our provisions just to those places where plenty reigned; while, if by chance we found ourselves ten miles away from anywhere and desperately hungry, the "tommy bag" was sure to be empty. Some of those tinned meats actually went back by train as they had come, and we had very little satisfaction for carrying 20 pounds on our backs where roads are unknown. Bitterly did we regret our lack of improvidence.

We had barely reached the top of Carn Liath's

stubborn slope, when the mist fell upon us and held us in its fell clutches until, after several hours of resistance, we fled from its ancient sanctuary. One could grope one's way in the dark along the narrow ridge that connects the first peak with that higher one with the name of portentous length. You know the poet's hexameter—

“Something outlandish, Braigh something, Braigh-Choire, he believed,
Chruim Bhalgain.”

But find the ultimate summit we could not; and late in the day, disappointed, wet, and tired, we descended the valley of Allt Fheannach into Glen Tilt, and pushed on through drenching rain over the col into Glen Dee,

“Heedless of scenery, heedless of bogs, and of perspiration.”

We spent Jubilee night at our old quarters, and hoped for better luck next day; but the weather remained as bad as ever till midday, and we durst not set out, as we had designed, to cross the hills through the Larig Ghru. Nevertheless, we could not stay here; there were trains to catch, and engagements to keep in the west. Why not, then, try to get to the Highland Railway by way of Glen Feshie? This plan we discussed with the old forester, who thought it was feasible, but observed that a bridge had been washed away on a tributary of the Feshie a good many months ago, and he had not heard that it had been replaced. We thought little of this information at the time, and set off for Insh as gaily as the depressing aspect of everything would allow. The country separating Glen Geldie from Glen Feshie is a dreary morass, with a track crossing it—on the map. The map, indeed, says, “Glen Geldie path indistinct”; it ought to have said “non-existent”. For an hour or two we were practically at sea, navigating through mist and rain across a desolate, featureless waste; and when we had steered across the final stretch of quaking bogs and miry pools, without being engulfed, and came in sight of the Feshie, we fondly hoped that we had put the worst behind us. But the adventure had only just begun. Anon we came to the

Eidart, the big affluent to the Feshie that drains the western slopes of Cairn Toul; it was in spate, and the track ended abruptly just over a tumbling rapid. Now we remembered that somebody had said something about a bridge that had been washed away. Were we to be obliged, after all, to go back to Glen Dee? We walked up stream to the falls, and tried to nerve ourselves to the desperate measure of jumping the granite ravine, down which the pent-up stream rushes with thunder and fury. Then we returned to the junction of the two rivers, and took the inevitable step. We forded the Feshie. But it was not long before we realised that our position on the wrong side of the glen was an impossible one, for the mountains soon close in, and the glen becomes a ravine. Only one thing remained to be done; we must ford the Feshie again, below the junction; so, choosing a spot where the river, doubled in volume, spread itself broad and shallow, in we went, and after a long, stern struggle, regained the northside track.

It was getting late when we arrived, drenched from head to foot, at the first dwellings, the "Huts". There a hospitable fisherman met us and asked us in, giving us complicated instructions as to the nearest way to Insh. He also gave us a dram of fine old Glenlivet. For some reason he offered it in wine-glasses, neat, and the fiery liquid wreaked such destruction on my vocal passages, that for some time my efforts to speak were something like the chirp of a sparrow with a bad cold. Perhaps the hours of gloaming and darkness that we spent hunting the wet moorlands for the missing township of Insh, were as trying a part of the day's experiences as any. We found the place at a quarter before midnight; and, though we had great difficulty in securing an entrance at the cosy little inn, being mistaken for toppers in quest of illegal drinks, we had nothing to complain of when we got inside.

About a year later the ambitious plans of three climbers were likewise turned to derision by the Cairngorm weather. We had foolishly sent changes of clothes, the ropes, and even our climbing boots, forward to

Braemar, without ascertaining from the authorities whether a succession of fine days would allow us to go and fetch them. Scarcely had we reached the foot of the hills, when such mists and rains descended as sent us "bootless home and weatherbeaten back". We wired for our missing equipments; and one day, in the meantime, after a morning of rain, we set out, ropeless, to try to climb the rocky face of Sgoran Dubh. Some fine scrambling fell to our lot, but the mist swallowed us up, and the result was, that we got badly pounded, just before nightfall, on the crags under the summit of Sgor Gaoith, and had extreme difficulty in extricating ourselves by a climb down a rugged watercourse. During the ascent an accident occurred that might have ended seriously. One of the three, climbing recklessly ahead, sent down some hundred-weights of loose stones right over the others, who escaped destruction by the bigger fragments almost by a miracle.

But this paper is growing lengthy, and such other adventures and misadventures as we met with on that holiday were chiefly of the kind that require time to bring out their latent charms. Therefore, I will reserve them for a future chronicle. As to the incidents of my last visit to that delightful region, our efforts to find a good rock-climb on crumbly granite, and the stormy night we spent at the top of the Larig Ghru, my companion, Mr. Puttrel, is, I believe, doing them justice. Whether, after so many mistakes and failures (I will not call them misfortunes entirely), we are wiser men, is still a moot point, only to be settled by our conduct on future expeditions.

ANOTHER NIGHT IN THE LARIG.

By J. W. PUTTRELL.

HURRAH for Scotland! This was certainly the heart feeling, if not the actual expression, of a merry pair of mountaineers bound for the Cairngorms. My friend, Mr. E. A. Baker, and I had in previous years learnt to love and respect Bonnie Scotland, particularly from a scansorial point of view; hence our eager, almost boyish anticipation of another good time within her borders. Of a truth, there is a subtle fascination about Scotland's hills, peculiarly undefinable in character, but which, to the mountaineer of either the "Munro" or the "Mummery" type, is real and irresistible. Nature, in wonderful beneficence, has dealt lavishly with our kinsmen north of the border, for have they not received the lion's share of her gifts in possessing the highest mountain, the highest pass, and the loftiest and most extensive mountain chain in Great Britain, not to mention other records of equal significance? Our Glencoe visit of May, 1900, in company with George and Ashley Abraham, of Keswick, left nothing to be desired, the record-bag on that occasion including, as it did, the first direct ascent of the Crowberry Ridge on the Buchaille Etive Mor, one of the longest and most hazardous rock-climbs in the British Isles. This season, 1901, however, we were tempted to try our luck elsewhere, hoping to find an excellent substitute for Glencoe, that Eldorado of ambitious cragsmen, in and among the rocky facets of the Cairngorms, near Aviemore.

"The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley", says Burns, and so events proved in this instance. At the outset, owing to the Exhibition attractions at Glasgow, and an uneventful, albeit pleasurable, stay of several days in Arran, our visit, unfortunately, verged too near the shooting season to allow the possibility of free access to the mountains. How we longed to taste the

forbidden fruit, to creep unobserved through the deer preserves or sanctuaries, and touch the distant rocks, which so magnificently sentinelled the semi-sacred enclosures. This was not to be, however, for even in such a remote and highly aristocratic region as, say, Glen Eunach, law and order must be respected, even by the harmless, innocent-looking "mountain-pounder". Where the open-door policy prevailed, however, we found, to our regret, the granite rocks very unsatisfactory to handle, totally different from the splendid porphyry of Glencoe. Contact with the crags of Braeriach, and especially the smooth, sloping slabs of the Lurcher's Rock (Creag na Leacainn), plainly demonstrated the futility of seriously attempting new work, however fascinating, without a third man on the rope. Frankly, in several of our attacks, we found discretion the better part of valour, our feeling and sentiment being happily summarised in a new version of an old adage—

" He who climbs and runs away
Lives to climb another day."

Bearing this in mind, we decided to go over the hills and far away, to Lochnagar, of Royal fame, there to see the sights and take stock of the climbing round and about Lochnagar Corrie, that amphitheatre of granite rock, so frequently and enthusiastically referred to by writers in this and other magazines.

And hereby hangs a tale, and one I would unfold as gracefully as my simple Saxon will permit. Of course, aspiration and attainment are two totally different things. We wished, for instance, to see Lochnagar, a devoutly honest wish on our part, but the desire, as subsequent events only too sadly proved, was not to be fulfilled. Having taken the precaution to forward a change of raiment to Braemar, in anticipation of possible bad weather, we started out from Coylum Bridge at 9.30 a.m., intending to spend the afternoon on Braeraich, and afterwards to return to the Larig Ghru. There we were to repose over night under the "broad canopy of Heaven", prior to

completing the latter portion of our journey. Briefly, then, this was our intended plan of campaign. It was friend Baker's happy suggestion to spend the night in this famous Pass, and the idea naturally attracted the writer, who foresaw the possibility of adventure therein. The warning note of a friendly Sheffielder, as to the terrible Larig, was, at the moment, contemptuously ignored, for, thought we, what was the Pass to us adventurers bold, who had braved the terrors of the Bottomless Pit in Derbyshire! Try not the Pass? Absurd! *We* would try it, anyway! Therefore, crossing the Druie by the stone bridge, we soon entered Rothiemurchus Forest by the regulation path leading to the "gruesome" Larig. The forest was wrapt in gloom, for as yet the morning sunlight had not penetrated into its darkling depths. To us city men, the death-like silence of the woods was deeply impressive: no sound reached the ear, not even the desolate plaint of the wood-pigeon. In whichever direction we turned, no life-like movement was apparent, except in and around the cone-shaped ant-hills, upon which, in silent activity, the myriad tiny insects were displaying their marvellous architectural skill. Some of these nest erections, it is worthy of note, were abnormally large, measuring quite four feet in height, affording ample evidence of the assiduous toil and patience of the minute master-builders. Overhead, we observed rain-laden clouds rolling heavily across the sky; this fact, coupled with a slump in the barometer, betokened anything but journeying mercies throughout the remainder of the day. Heedless, however, of these ominous signs of bad weather, we sped merrily along the beaten track, forcing our way as best we could through the luxuriant growth of heather and ferns. Throughout its sinuous turnings, this narrow, trench-like path was thickly bestrewn with boulders of varied shapes and sizes, and these, with a liberal distribution of projecting tree-roots artfully secreted 'neath the overlapping juniper, made things decidedly warm for our shin bones, besides preventing the maintainance of that natural swing, the sure sign of the active mountaineer. In this irregular,

happy-go-lucky style we proceeded apace through the forest glade, encountering other slight hindrances, such as giant pine trees which had recently been uprooted by the forest storms, and hurled athwart the path like so many sticks or skittles. Now a veritable Slough of Despond confronted us, every step across which had to be measured and tested, or, for our remissness, we paid the penalty of sinking up to our knees in the treacherous, miry swamps. We were not to be daunted, however, by the intervention of these minor obstacles, for we had now reached the open moorland, and our eyes were intently fixed on the vista, which, for the first time during the journey, unrolled itself in complete splendour before our gaze. The grandly elevated panoramic view was eminently Scottish in conformation. Where not moss-clad, or mantled with heather, the moorland for miles around was bespread, to our delight, with fruit, ripe, for our acceptance, in the shape of luscious bilberries, crowberries, and big red cranberries, which ran riot everywhere in prodigal profusion. As we approached the entrance to the Pass, we observed the twin-shaped hills of Carn Elrick (on the right) and Castle Hill (on the left) keeping watch in lonely grandeur, like the ancient Japanese Nios, or Temple-guards, set to ward off the attack of evil spirits. Beyond these outposts, east and west, the higher ramparts of the Cairngorms reared themselves in savage grandeur into the clouds, the topmost crags being visible at intervals as the swirling mists rolled away. A few more minutes of now fairly easy going brought us into the Larig proper. The track hereabouts zig-zagged upward along the burn side, and anon by the flat-topped moraine heaps, the latter interesting relics of a bygone ice-age. Although we had reached the altitude of 1800 feet, massive bastions of rock towered high above us. The wet, mossy slabs on the left glistened in the morning sunlight, and beyond, away up the hill side, we espied the big chimney, dark and cavernous in aspect, which only the previous forenoon had refused us admittance. Picking up the two rugs, our sole bedding outfit, and the A.C. ropes, which had been planted the day before, we trudged quickly

along, hoping thereby to prolong our stay on Braeriach. The path grew very indistinct and irregular, prior to reaching the March Burn (2300 feet). Thinking, therefore, the locality suitable for our evening's bivouac, and one withal sheltered from the prevalent sou' wester, we at 1 p.m. cached our impedimenta of rugs, tinned-rabbit, jam, etc., the better to survey the situation, and, if possible, select a recess or cave wherein to pass the night. Of accommodation, even of the most primitive kind, there was none, for, minutely as we searched over the chaotic wilderness of rock, no kindly harbour of refuge opened to our gaze. Would that by some mighty titanic power the hospitably renowned "Shelter Stone" could be transplanted and placed at our service for the night! This, and similar Utopian ideas, forced themselves upon our imaginations as we realised our homeless condition in this, the highest mountain pass in Great Britain! It was, indeed, "Hobson's choice" after all, nothing for it, in fact, but to prepare for a real night out, so, returning to the cache, we there made a gite or shelter, by edging two prominent, angular masses of granite with an irregular wall of boulders, this to act, as we hoped, as a slight protection against the elements. Having put our house in order, to use a homely phrase, we light-heartedly hied our way along the brae-side to the right (*Sron na Leirg*) until, finally, we emerged at the Larig end of the Braeriach crags. The precipice walk along the edge of these stupendous cliffs, and the unique views into the rock-girt hollow of *An Garbh-choire*, were experiences long to be remembered. It is not at all pleasing to disparage the sights and scenes of one's own native land, yet I am bound to admit that, from a spectacular point of view, the rock scenery hereabouts shows up to advantage against anything in Snowdonia or Cumberland. A narrow chimney particularly took our fancy, but the wind, blowing great guns, and rapidly increasing in violence, effectively weaned us away from the spot; so taking a direct route down a boulder-strewn ridge, we soon gained the lower end of *An Garbh-choire*. We would fain have lingered to view in

detail the surrounding scenery, but we were naturally anxious to reach our quarters in the Larig before night-fall. We noticed, however, with great interest, the contrasting forms of landscape, the graceful aspect of Cairn Toul on the south, with its pretty lakelet nestling peacefully 'neath its high towers of silence; on the north, the rock-riven escarpment of Braeriach at the head of the desolate-looking An Garbh-choire, bleak and bare, showing, all too clearly, sad traces of the destroying hand of Time. Later, whilst enjoying a repast of bilberries and chocolate, it occurred to us that in this treeless waste, if we wanted a fire in the Larig, we must commence forthwith to gather the necessary fuel. Everything combustible, therefore, was commandeered, especially the dried roots and stems of the juniper. Luckily, we came across several small, but invaluable, branches, and, with these strapped on our backs, continued our way over the rugged slope, for all the world like merry hunters returning from the chase. We reached our home in the Pass about 6 p.m. The task of making the fire, and securing refreshing drinks of hot coffee and bovril, was soon accomplished. Baker was the handy man on this occasion, and right royally did he act his part. As for the writer, he merely cracked jokes, chiefly at the expense of the new cook, and generally made things hum, especially so when, early in the proceedings, to his chagrin, he found he had opened his thumb instead of the rabbit-tin! Immersion, however, in a cold stream near by, and a little bandaging, soon rectified this stupid blunder. Whilst feasting to the full on boiled rabbit, sardines, tinned pears, etc., we regretfully noticed the appearance of rain. Anticipating events, therefore, we hurriedly finished our meal, and, packing our surplus stock of eatables into the rucksacks, prepared to settle down finally for the night. A rock floor, however, is not an ideal bed whereon to lie; therefore, to improve, and if possible, effeminise, the settling-down process, we gathered a few bunches of grass and fern leaves. These we spread on the ground, and covered over with one of the rugs. With the remaining rug we rigged up an awning, but, finding it

unserviceable and unstable, we decided to use it as a top sheet instead. Having well fuelled the camp fire, and feeling ready to turn in for the evening, time 8.30 p.m., we, by mutual arrangement, tossed for choice of position. The spin of the coin resulted in a lucky win for the writer, who, taking advantage of it, accepted the inner berth nearest the boulder. The rain now came down in earnest, and night closing in upon us, with its almost Egyptian darkness, made us realise our luckless condition. Hour succeeded hour in dreary monotony. Meanwhile, the clouds emptied themselves from a leaden sky as copiously as ever. This we could tell by the increased volume in the streamlet that was burrowing its way underneath the rocks hard by, the gurgling sound of which gradually increased from a thin, musical ripple to a deep turbulent roar. To picture accurately the situation and our feelings in cold print would almost be an impossibility. As we peered with wet faces from out our strange resting-place, the night's outlook appeared cheerless in the extreme, for the moon failed to "lift her lamp on high", and the stars were extinguished in the firmament. The wind, however, was strongly in evidence. We were, indeed, caught napping by "Boreas rude", in that he hurled and swirled the aqueous clouds *up* the Pass instead of down, a change of course quite unexpected, and one we were totally unprepared for at the time. Bedrenched and comfortless in the extreme, we cheerily stuck to our posts. About 1 a.m., however, the rain poured down in torrents, and the temperature, falling to almost freezing point, made things decidedly uncomfortable, to say the least. We now began seriously to consider our position. Should we hold on till morning, or should we evacuate our unpleasant quarters? These, and other queries, were seriously discussed, as we lay awake, shivering in the night air. However, we heroically decided to sit tight till morning, come what might. At last the hour of five arrived. The sky was still leaden with rain-clouds, and the aspect was anything but encouraging. We shook off the blanket, which was thoroughly saturated. Baker, as the outer man, was first

to rise, and I eagerly followed, both of us thankful to stretch our limbs and exercise ourselves, even though wet to the skin. Our first idea was to make a fire. We went straight for our stock of fuel, but, alas! the incessant rains had made it useless for the purpose intended, in spite of our elaborate precaution overnight. This was indeed a serious matter, stark and stiff as we were, needing stimulant to carry us on our remaining 10 hours journey to Braemar. However, there was nothing else for it but to sample what provisions we had in the rucksack, which had safely guarded the contents during the night's exposure. We gathered up the rugs, safely cached them away near the gite, along with our cooking utensils, and at once pressed on towards Braemar. We soon reached the summit of the Pass, and down we went on the far side, until, arriving opposite the Devil's Point, we held a council of war as to the advisability of proceeding further. We could hardly make up our minds to beat a retreat, but, eventually, we decided on so doing. This discretion was, indeed, the better part of valour taking everything into consideration, the weather, as much as anything, influencing us in the decision. Retracing our steps to the col, we made for the gite, which we found with some difficulty. We had a little more lunch, and, strapping the rugs and other impedimenta on our backs, made for home. Baker found his load anything but light, so we made a halt, and planted his rug and rucksack in an adjacent cranny, to be called for later, I doing likewise with my rug, which I also found inconveniently heavy. Unburdened somewhat as we were, we exuberantly romped down the Pass, reaching, at last, the Rothiemurchus Forest with its tantalising pathway. This, I confess, troubled us more than usual, for naturally we were not in the best of condition after our recent experience. However, we made light of the mazy $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of forest track, ultimately arriving about midday at Coylum Bridge, happily, as it proved, none the worse for our adventure in the famous Larig Ghru.

WHAT IT IS COMING TO!

To the EDITOR of "THE CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL."

SIR,—

While staying at Llanberis this summer, I determined to take a run up Snowdon. Though not a club member, I have done a good deal of mountaineering in my time, having been twice up Helvellyn and also the Great Ormes Head (the latter on the occasion of my honeymoon), and really—for sheer enjoyment—Snowdon beats every mountain I have hitherto done. As you, Sir, know, they take you the round trip, and give you three good, solid meals at the summit, and a day's amusement fully equal to anything you can get in London—all for five shillings and sixpence, including fees to guides!

Fleda (my wife) and I, having determined to go, chose the Tubular Railway Ascent—or Penny Pipe, as I call it—for, as Fleda said, you can't fall out of a tunnel; and, besides, it's quieter and you escape the smuts from the rack-railway and the traction engines; and they say the Ropeway Ascent, though much quicker, is very exposed and draughty, and apt to make you sea-sick in windy weather. I put on my new khaki leather puttee riding gaiters and my Tyrolean hat, and took my bamboo alpenstock, with a nail in the end, which I used on the ascent of the Great Orme. Fleda looked bewitching in the latest thing in summer millinery. We started quite early in the morning from Llanberis (Central) Station, and, really, the thing was so well managed that we were not on our feet for more than an hour the whole day, excepting while we were waiting to get into the hotel for lunch.

Our time from Llanberis to the Summit Terminus was one hour and three quarters. Of course, Snowdon cannot compare with the great mountains of the Alps, yet 30,000

feet* is a respectable height, and to do it in one hour and three quarters (including a stoppage of 37 minutes at one place) is pretty good going! They have to do this ascent quickly, as I understand there is some difficulty in breathing if you are in the tunnel long, owing to the rarification of the atmosphere due to the altitude, or, what we climbers would call, "mountain sickness". There are blow-holes at intervals along the tunnel, and altogether it reminds one much of the "Underground".

Directly after our train had started, Fleda said we ought to have gone up by the Traction Engine Ascent, because it is so much more romantic! Just like a woman! We had brought some food with us to eat in the train (my invariable custom when mountaineering), and there was a man who played the concertina and sang, and the time soon passed; but when we reached the terminus, we both had tremendous appetites, and the first thing we and the other passengers did, was to seek a place to get a meal.

The largest and most fashionable hotel on Snowdon is close to the Tubular Terminus, so we had not far to go. Around the door was gathered a large crowd, which, maddened by the continuous clatter of knives and forks from within, was making violent efforts (after the manner of crowds) to force itself *en masse* through a door two feet wide. After undergoing half an hour of steadily increasing pressure, we were shot through the entrance like corks from a pop-gun, and Fleda lost her parasol in the process. Once in, we had a really most satisfactory meal—really *most* satisfactory—but the waiters seemed much overworked. After this, I had a nap. Fleda, who had been studying the programme of the day, woke me, and said we must go at once if we wanted to see Miss Lottie Trotter's Phenomenal Dive from the summit of Snowdon into Lyn Glaslyn—a distance of upwards of

*Surely Mr. Flopjoy's figures are overstated. The height of Snowdon in 1895 was 3560 feet. We cannot suppose that even the enormous output of refuse from the buildings on the summit would account for such an increase in the space of 65 years.—ED.

20,000 feet. The programme said that Miss Trotter would perform this astonishing feat twice daily in genuine Welsh national costume, and that the Snowdonian Shepherds' Brass Band would play a selection of popular music during the show. I would have liked to rest longer—it was a *very* satisfactory meal—but my wife said she had come up principally to see this dive, and see it she would. So we went. Miss Lottie Trotter (from New York) was dressed in pink tights and a high beaver hat, such as the Welsh peasant women have worn ever since the Glacial Age. She also had the American flag tied round her waist. We had an excellent view. The lady stood on a small platform projecting from the cliff a little below the summit, and a gentleman in evening dress stood beside her. The gentleman waved a flag (American), the band stopped suddenly in the midst of a tune, the lady kissed her hand, fired a pistol, and leaped into space! We held our breath as we watched her going down, down, down—growing smaller and smaller till she was hardly visible. Then a white splash on the surface of the lake showed that she had reached the water, and the band burst forth again just where it had left off in “The Belle of New York”—and the show was over! They say the lake is a mile and a half deep just there, so there appears to be little chance of Miss Trotter's striking the bottom. Still, it is a thrilling show, and quite worth the trouble of coming up to see. I understand it will be discontinued after the August bank holiday next year, as the lake is getting rapidly shallower. Fleda said it was absurd that, whilst Unassisted Nature could take one down in a few seconds, Modern Science should require an hour and three quarters to get one up. But I am told that the Snowdonian Air Ship Syndicate now claim to do the ascent in $3\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. Apart from the additional time which this gives the mountaineer for meals and rest at the summit, I do not see much advantage in such excessive speed. After the dive, we spent a pleasant hour in the Telephone Office, wiring facetious messages to our friends. Then Fleda felt a sinking, and so we turned into a very

decent hotel which we saw, and had something to eat. After that we went round the mutoscope machines, and then tried to get in to the American International Pigeon Eating Competition. But it was too full, and so we went to look at some new houses which they are building near the electric light station. They are very conveniently placed for the amusements and the railways, but the neighbourhood is too noisy to think of living there.

We now found ourselves at the entrance to the Crib Goch Switchback, which I had been told on no account to miss. Fleda said it was dangerous, and refused to go: but it does not do to have nerves when mountaineering, and so I said I *should*. But I felt a little uncomfortable when she replied, "All right; I shall go to the Bio-Panoramographoscopic Lecture on Snowdon—it's close by". However, I went. It is a remarkably swift switchback, and very varied. The sensation is like the immediate symptoms of sea-sickness. There is a water-jump in it too. I cannot truthfully say I enjoyed it, but it is a branch of mountaineering which is new to me. Crib Goch is a sort of natural railway-embankment affair, but it has been made as bright and cheerful as such a place can be, by a tasteful display of that flag without which no British landscape is complete—I mean the stars and stripes. This is the only amusement on Snowdon for which there is any extra charge to those holding circular tickets. .

As the lecture was not over, I had to wait for my wife, and, for the first and last time that day, I began to feel a little bored. But, presently, finding a fight going on between two men who had quarrelled over an automatic novelty machine, this feeling passed away. I then whiled away the time with cockshies at a bottle, but had the misfortune to break a window, and so gave it up.

When the lecture was over, we strolled down to the Ropeway Station, and bought an evening paper, "Comic Slabs", and a book of photographs. Then we had our own photographs taken. Presently two very shabby men, carrying a lot of cordage, arrived at the summit by some unknown route. I supposed them to be miners or brick-

layers or something, but they turned out to be actually posing as mountaineers! Why, they hadn't even got an alpenstock between them! They had the effrontery to say that they had come up the precipice—which is obviously impossible—and that Miss Trotter had passed them going down, and that they had taken her for an unusually heavy discharge of refuse from one of the hotels. They were covered with coffee-grounds and potato-parings, and one had part of a soup-plate bedded in his skull. They wanted to make a complaint to the manager of one of the hotels for throwing such things over. They admitted, as calmly as possible, that they had been climbing up the gully belonging to the hotel in question. Disgusting! Such people ought not to be allowed on mountains. These fellows were quite sour with the manager—a very civil man—but he threatened to give them into custody as trespassers, and warned them off the premises. They beat a hurried retreat without spending so much as a penny on the place. They were probably tramps. The crowd were now forming up for Miss Trotter's evening performance; but, although this was to have the additional attraction of limelight, we concluded that the waiting would be too tiring. So we climbed the magnificent new cairn, and found the ladders and ropes, which have been recently fixed to it, a great help. The cairn is constructed entirely of oyster-shells and mutton-bones, collected during several years by an aged man, who was once the proprietor of the original shanty on the summit. There is an inscription in Welsh, done in bottle-ends of various colours—a quotation from one of the ancient bards, I am told. I don't know what it means, but it evidently has some deep national significance, for one sees it on every wall, fence, milestone, and wayside boulder in Wales. The words are "Te Pawb"*.

Near the cairn is a decayed stone pillar, with the remains of a

*We are not intimately familiar with the Welsh language, but we had always supposed that this inscription was the work of an enterprising grocer, and that it signified "Everybody's Tea!"—ED.

brass plate on the top. It is said by some to be of druidical origin, and by others to have once borne a map of the country. It is now quite covered with advertisements, and is shortly to be removed as an obstruction. We had only just time to scratch our names on the lamp-post on the cairn before descending, for our train started in half an hour, and our tickets entitled us to another meal. So we descended the ladders as rapidly as our very trustworthy guide would allow, and snatched a rather hurried supper. Then, just as the great central search light on the cairn began to cast its beams upon the surrounding mountains, and the band was beginning to play, we got into our train, and in less than two hours we were home again. We were longer coming down than going up, owing to something having gone wrong with the engine.

I send you a view of the summit of Snowdon as it now is. It shows, I think, what can be done when a naturally dreary spot falls into the hands of really enterprising, business-like, and up-to-date people. Who would believe that, but a few years ago, this was one of the most desolate and deserted spots in these islands?

I should like to add that I am not pecuniarily interested in any of these concerns. I write simply to make known what has been done to improve and beautify this once solitary summit. I hope to see the day when *all* the great peaks of our mountain districts may undergo a similar transformation; when Scawfell shall be no longer a wilderness, nor Great Gable a desert; when Tryfaen shall be traversed by trains, and Cader crowned with a Casino.—Yours truly,

FREDK. FLOPJOY.

LONDON, *October*, 1960.

VANISHING SNOWS.

BY REV. WILLIAM CRUICKSHANK, B.D.

THE following observations regarding the melting of the winter accumulation of snow on Cairngorm and adjoining mountains were taken from one viewpoint, over the period 21st May to 2nd June.

The spring and early summer of 1902 will long be remembered in Strathspey for the severity of the weather. According to universal testimony, no such accumulation of snow has been seen on Cairngorm at so late a date for many years. In a particular instance, recollection travels back as far as 1860 for a parallel, or, strictly speaking, more than a parallel.

The covering of snow, which had in very considerable measure disappeared during February, was resumed in March. Towards the close of the latter month the low ground began to clear, but snow still rested continuously on the hills. Throughout April this remained the case, and the showers of hail and occasionally of snow, which made bitter the existence of dwellers in the strath during that month, had an equivalent on the higher ground in persistent snow. Up to 21st May it could not be said that the snowfall had in any measure been perceptibly impressed by the sun's strengthening beams, and on the mountains over all there lay a mantle of white which contrasted vividly with the russet tint of the birch copses and of the heather-clad knolls on the lower ground. On the date just mentioned, however, the wind, which had for some three weeks blown from the north, shifted round to N.-W. and W., which directions were maintained for the next eight days. Then the melting process on a large scale began.

On the date these observations were commenced the state of matters on the Cairngorms was this:—At an elevation of 2000 feet or thereby, *i.e.*, some distance below the summit of Carn Elrick (a notable landmark from the

point of survey), the lower limit of snow might be drawn in a line of demarcation as clear as on Alpine summits in summer. Above that level the Cairngorm range was one expanse of white, save here and there on precipitous faces. The purple of the under half contrasted most markedly with the white of the upper. The hills on this particular day seemed unduly near, an evidence, it is said, of speedy rainfall.

During the night rain did fall, with an accompaniment of high wind, through the influence of which there was quite a perceptible disappearance of snow on the morning of the 22nd. Naturally, the slopes exposed to the wind were the first parts to be cleared. On the 23rd the disappearance was most marvellous, resulting from a high N.-W. wind that prevailed all night. For the first time dark points appeared on the main ridge (E. to W.), while the lateral ridges were for the most part bare. Fields of snow were now confined to the carries, with accentuation on the side remote from the wind. The only other continuous lines of white were along the water courses, where in the furrowed track snow had gathered or been driven. The diminution of the extent of white continued throughout the day. The lower limit of snow seemed slowly to rise; only here and there a patch remained below the general level. The wider expanses on the mountain side now presented a ribbed aspect, which soon developed into a mottled surface. The white line of the water courses remained, however, as before. A notable atmospheric accompaniment was a pall of cloud sweeping the ridge along the line of wind, and bridging the Larig at intervals by an unsubstantial crossing.

On the 24th the disappearance on the several parts was proportionately continued; the main ridge was in greater part black; the sides of the Larig all but clear. A noticeable feature in the disposition of the snow-patches now came under notice. They were planted immediately under the upper lateral ridges, remote from the direction of the prevailing wind. This seemed to indicate two things:— (1) That the wind which was at the time blowing had been the main factor in clearing the area under snow, the

sunbeams having little to do with the vanishing process; and (2) that the wind which caused the drifts was from the same direction as that now acting. As further showing that the wind had more to do with the matter than the sun, it may be remarked that the Spey showed no increase at all proportioned to the decrease in the snows. The transition from snow to vapour had been rapidly conducted, and so saved the discomfort of flooded plains. Among the snow-patches thus gathered under the ridges, the most marked succession was that on the west side of the Larig, which was at the end of the month still clearly existent.

On this same 24th the eye could not fail to remark the fine combination of colour that prevailed in nature. The faint green of the late-opening birches; the rich green of the corn blades matching the living green of the larches; the sombre mantles of the firs, whose combination was at points relieved by an occasional larch; the brown of the moors and the nearer hills, and the hazy purple of the under portion of the more remote, o'ertopped by the diversified white and black of the upper ridges, made a happy and harmonious whole. The other shades will remain throughout summer, slightly mellowed no doubt, but the white will be in great measure lost, and with it much of the effect will depart.

As though nature were conscious of being behind in her annual working and were in haste to atone for the lost interval as for the unduly prolonged manifestations of winter, there blew for the next four days (25th, 26th, 27th, 28th) a steady N.-W. wind, which latterly veered to W. At times its strength was such as to form a gale. Under this prolonged force the snows on Cairngorm became every day reduced, although the main aspect of the hills seemed to be unchanged. On the 26th the eye could plainly trace a zig-zag path devoid of snow from the base to the summit of Cairngorm. On the 28th the opener expanses were practically without snow. This held good throughout the day, but in the evening there was again quite a perceptible veil of white over the whole hill area, from 2500 feet upwards, and comprising the sides of the Larig.

The 29th was stormy, with local showers all day, and in

the afternoon an exceptionally heavy hailstorm. The hills were enveloped nearly the whole day, so that there was no possibility of accurately noting the effect upon them. But the morning of the 30th was clear, and revealed no additional fall.

The wind now changed from the direction it had held for over a week, and was converted into one from E. and N. by turns. The latter part of the 30th was extremely cold, and the rainfall heavy. The 31st was even worse in both these respects. Up to evening the Cairngorms were quite invisible, but late in the day the cloud screen was to some extent raised, and the effect of the cold north wind became evident. This record was commenced in the confident persuasion that phenomena were being remarked for the last time this season, but on this final day of May the initial phenomenon was, contrary to all expectation, again manifested. That is to say, the mantle of white again rested on the hills over all from an elevation of 2500 feet upwards. In this affected area was included the Larig down to its entrance. On the 1st of June the wind still continued from the north, but carried no snow with it. In so far as the hills were visible, it was seen that the high ridges exposed to the wind were again clear, but that on the lee side drifts had gathered to a small extent. The morning of the 2nd showed these as all but dissipated, save at higher altitudes on Cairngorm itself. With the continuance throughout twenty-four hours of the mild weather presently experienced these will no doubt in turn disappear. There will then remain only the main accumulations, which from the point of survey are arranged thus:—On Cairngorm and adjoining heights west to the Larig, six; on Braeriach, four. These masses are collected in the corries, in parts inaccessible to the influence of wind or of sun, and are of so solid a nature that they are likely to persist in considerable measure throughout the summer.

THE CLUB AT CLOCHNABEN.

BY WILLIAM SKEA.

THE Club visited Clochnaben (1900) on the Spring Holiday. There are many landmarks in the north-east of Scotland visible alike to the mariner and to the pedestrian. Clochnaben is one of those, and, therefore, an object of curiosity to all; while to the hill-climbing fraternity it is a legitimate object of investigation. The "stone on the hill", or "stone of the woman", is a huge stack of weather-worn and fractured granite on the summit of the "ben." The rocks stand 95 feet up from the ridge, and are 270 paces in circumference at their base. It is not a great mountain, although essentially attractive as a landmark. On his many journeys up Deeside to Balmoral, the late Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone invariably set himself to look for Clochnaben when the train drew near to Banchory. On a certain occasion he was questioned by one of his travelling companions as to his interest in this hill; when he replied that the sight of Clochnaben always made him feel near home! He probably referred to the fact that this hill is an outlying part of the estate of Fasque which belongs to a member of the Gladstone family. Be this as it may, the members of the Club, who visited Clochnaben on the 5th of May, did not experience this home-like feeling. The weather was wintry. Nevertheless about thirty members left Aberdeen for Banchory, whence they drove through Strachan to Glen of Dye. The drive was not unpleasant. To look down upon good, well-driven horses doing their work easily is one of the genuine pleasures of life. The main features of the district are sylvan, agricultural, and sporting (*i.e.*, moorland). Of homesteads there are few, but all of these are "trig", and their precincts and the cultivated land bear unmistakable evidence of industry, energy, and skill. The sylvan scenery

begins at Banchory, and is charmingly romantic on the banks of the Feugh at Inverey, the seat of a scion of an ancient family, the Douglasses of Tilquihilly. The trees were reluctantly showing their buds, but everywhere they were fresh and bonnie. The moorlands were "a study in black and white"—the white being heavy wreaths of snow among the heather.

The ascent of the ben was made by what is known as "The Miller's Bog", and the course mapped out was that of "The Aquaduct", the start being made from behind the Glen Dye Shooting Lodge. The "Aquaduct" is an excellent example of the native energy and dogged perseverance of the Scot. It is a narrow but effective stream of water, or "lead", artificially constructed, and reaches from the southern shoulder of Clochnaben down into Glen Dye, crossing in its course, of several miles, two deep ravines by means of leaky, wooden aqueducts, supported by struts of the same material. There never was any royal road to a hilltop, and while we commend the aqueduct route as the safest in winter for a mixed party of mountaineers, accompanied by ladies, yet we think a bee line from "the gate" to the "Cloch" (although here and there wet ground would be met with) would shorten the ascent by at least forty minutes. On this occasion the climb to the summit occupied fully two hours. There were frequent showers of snow, and detours to avoid wet ground. One had often to take to the heather, which, being rank and woody, did not afford a "progressive" foothold. The wind at the summit was bitterly cold, with frequent showers of snow. But the keen, cutting effects of the storm were modified when the lower rocks of the "Cloch" had been scaled. There, in view of the nearer surrounding hills and the moorland—there is no distant view—one experienced the grateful *shelter* (*shadow* there was none) of "a great rock in a weary land"! When all the members of the party had climbed into this perch of shelter from the stormy blast, a meeting of the Club was held under the presidency of Mr. Wm. Porter, who had been asked to officiate for the Chairman (Mr. Harvey), who was absent.

Half an hour finished the business, and, the return having been arranged, the company divided into two parties. One, under the guidance of Mr. Alex. Copland, returned southward to Glen Dye Lodge, where they joined the vehicles; the other, under the guidance of Mr. Robert Anderson, after visiting the minor "Cloch", descended by the north side of the hill. The descent was not easy. For twenty minutes a perfect blizzard prevailed, and, what with heavy snow-wreaths and the blinding snow, some time was lost. When the tempest abated, a look around showed that the party had taken what sailors call too much "eastering", and the course was at once altered. Soon thereafter the Greendams Burn was struck and forded, a movement which led on to what is called the "peat road". Here, at least, was a track that we knew led towards our "objective"; but what had probably been a road before the winter came upon it, was now a series of detached *bits* of road. At short intervals this road was literally cut out of existence by torrents from the high land—not scored, but cut to a depth of, at least in one case where we took the trouble to measure, over four feet—through sand and clay and shingle, down to the bare rock. There is no other road within miles of the place, and who is to mend it? let Fasque and Finzean decide; but whoever does so has his work cut out for him. Before leaving sight of Clochnaben (indeed it would be difficult to do so within the next five miles right ahead), let us say that, bleak as Clochnaben was on that 5th of May, it was impossible to deny the prospects it offered to the sportsman. Grouse rose and "cocked" away from our very feet sometimes—and this at intervals of not more than ten minutes; while of white hares—well, besides single specimens, five were within gunshot at one moment. Of deer we saw none, but four hillmen who had crossed Mount Battock from Glensesk, with whom we foregathered at "mine Inn", told us that they had seen several herds of both stags and hinds within a few miles of where we had been buffetting with the snowstorm. But, to our tale. The peat road had placed

before our eyes the "White Stones" of Feughside Inn, apparently about five miles distant, and thither, with earnest assiduity, we bent our steps. If, as Mr. Johnstone says, "the miles are lang in Sutherland, and, oh, the folk are few!" we can assure him that they are equally so in the parish of Strachan in Kincardineshire. But, with that Feughside Inn in view, onward we strode, through bog and mire, over marsh and deer-fence, over field and furrow, until we reached the turnpike, within biscuit throw of the house of entertainment. To cross a meadow and a bridge of planks leading over the Feugh was a task of five minutes. We had arrived before the Glen Dye Lodge section of the party, and we were received by Mr. Smith and his wife and family literally with open arms. And, when the late comers arrived, we were "as fresh as new paint". Our smiles at their reception were broadened by the sunshine, for the weather had taken "a thocht" and mended. Pen could not tell the merits of that ample Scottish dinner, to which the united party sat down in the cleanly and well furnished Feughside Inn. It was our first acquaintance with the hostelry, yet we are persuaded that the host would have warmed the hearts of the Ettrick Shepherd, Christopher North, ay, and of Sir Walter Scott himself. From road to roof the Feughside Inn is as clean as any west-end city boudoir, the cooking is excellent, the viands abundant, and the attendance—by the bye there were no "waiters"—was that of ladies who seemed to anticipate every want of the guests. Mr. Porter again presided, and, it is needless to say, "all went merry as a marriage bell". The drive back to Banchory in the early evening was rapid and delightful. And after a wait of a few minutes, the train from Ballater drew up, with carriages "Reserved for the Cairngorm Club"—one of the many kind arrangements of Mr. Wm. Deuchar, the indefatigable passenger superintendent of the Great North of Scotland Railway.

RED DEER ANTLERS FOUND IN ABERDEEN.

BY JOHN MILNE, LL.D.

IN April, 1901, in excavating for the foundation of a chimney for electric works to be erected at Dee Village, Aberdeen, the antlers and some bones of a red deer were found at a great depth below the surface in a bed of gravel and clay. Those taking an interest in the find naturally wish to know how the body of the stag had come to be where its remains were found, when it was deposited, and how it had been covered up. Something may be learned from the following section of the strata seen in the side of the excavation.

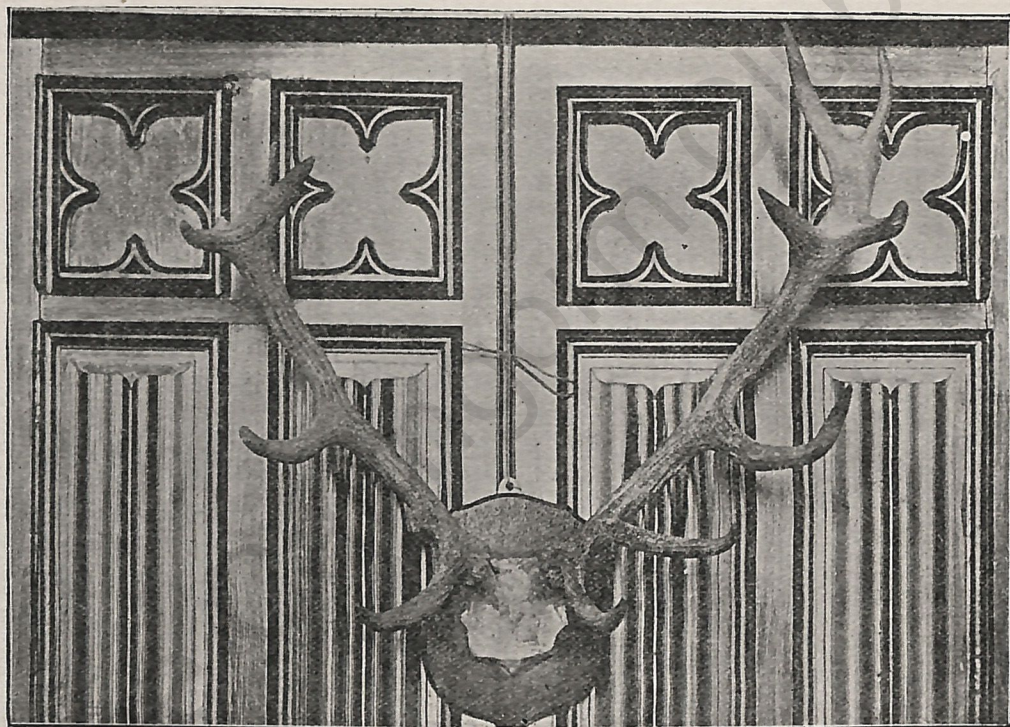
LEVEL OF DEE VILLAGE ROAD.		
Feet.	Inches.	
4	6	Made-up ground.
1	5	Broken brick and tile rubbish.
3	0	Rough sand and gravel.
2	6	Fine sand and blue clay in alternate layers.
1	7	Rough gravel and pebbles.
1	2	Close blue sand and clay (like harbour dredgings).
1	6	Gravel (hard, uniform, solid gravel and clay, upon which the chimney is founded).

The antlers were found in the bed of gravel on which the chimney rests, at a depth of about eighteen feet below the surface. The first six feet of the excavation passed through material laid down recently by man; the lower twelve were in estuarine beds of gravel, sand, mud, and clay. On comparing the level of Dee Village Road with Ordnance Survey marks, it was found that the bed in which the antlers lay was about the level of ordinary high water mark.

Red deer abound on the hills and in the glens of the upper half of the Dee basin. They keep to the high ground by day, but come boldly down to the glens and valleys at night. In passing from their day to their night haunts they frequently have to cross streams, which they do by

wading. Deer can swim across lakes and arms of the sea: a stag that was kept in confinement in Duff House grounds for a long time has been found several miles from land off Banff; but they cannot cross rivers in flood. A gentleman who lives near the river Dee saw about 1889, at Cambus O'May, a dead stag floating down the river in a spate; and in 1896 or 1897, after a thunderstorm and heavy rain at night, he saw several deer huddled together on a knoll on the north side of the Dee between Braemar and Invercauld, surrounded with water. They had come down from the hills to feed after the storm abated, but the river had risen in flood and cut off their retreat before daylight came in. Though the east wind is often dry or only showery near the coast, yet in the interior of Aberdeenshire, in river valleys bordered with hills, it often brings persistent rain. A few hundred feet of elevation bring the moisture-laden air down to a temperature at which it can no longer carry the water it has absorbed from the sea, and frequently steady, heavy rain falls.

The stag whose remains were found at Dee Village probably lost his life in trying to ford the Dee in an autumn spate brought on by a strong east wind. After drowning he might have lain at the bottom of the river in some deep pool for a few hours, but soon the grass in his stomach would have begun to decompose and give off gas. Then he floated, and was carried down the river with one antler rubbing on the bottom. The right antler is quite complete, and carries three tines and a crown with four points; the left, which had trailed, has only four tines and points. The right antler measures 36 inches from the tip to the base, along the outside; and it is 8 inches in circumference above, but clear of, the burr. The spread, or extreme width, of the antlers had been about 40 inches. The stag had been about 8 years old, and as he had lost his life in autumn after his antlers were fully developed, but while they had still a firm hold of the skull, he may have been a solitary rover expelled by younger and more active rivals from the society of the hinds in the rutting season—September and October. Such exiles from the herd be-



THE DEE VILLAGE ANTLERS.

[Photo by James Porter.]

come fierce and aggressive; they lose their timidity, and do not trouble themselves to go to the hills by day, but lurk about among bushes in glens and near rivers; hence they are more liable than others to be surrounded by water in spates, and drowned.

Arriving at Aberdeen when the tide was low, the drowned stag would have been carried towards the mouth of the river, but with the rise of the tide his course would have been arrested, and the east wind had blown him up the mouth of the Ferryhill Burn and stranded him where his remains were found. Within the memory of a lady still living in Aberdeen, Ferryhill was covered with broom. Dee Village, though it had an old, worn-out look, was not an ancient place. Probably a hundred years ago the daily perambulations of those who lived about the Green did not extend beyond Mary's Well, between Marywell Street and Affleck Street, or the Mill Road to the Meal Mill on Ferryhill Burn; and so the body of the stag might have been allowed to lie undisturbed till it was covered up by mud carried down by the burn in spates, and by sand and gravel driven in from the Dee in storms.

Those who were boys in Aberdeen about 1844 will remember the interest with which they watched "floaters" bringing to land at Poynerook rafts of trees which they had floated down the Dee from Glentanner. The landing-place was a gently sloping beach of sand and gravel, which varied much from day to day according to the direction from which the wind blew and the height to which the tide rose. With an east wind at spring tides there would soon have been deposition in the estuary of the Ferryhill Burn of sand and gravel sufficient to bury the body of the stag to a depth of 12 feet. In 1768, on September 16, the Dee rose 12 feet, and again, in 1774, on November 30, it rose 13 feet. The work of spates, with east winds and high tides, is indicated by the layers of rough gravel; the alternate layers of fine sand and blue clay point to quiet water in times of spring tides.

How long the body of the stag lay where the antlers were found can only be judged by the state of the bones.

The antlers are still attached to the front of the skull, which looks well preserved; but the greater part of the skeleton had disappeared. If the bones had been constantly soaking with water there would have been very slow decay and removal of their substance. I found a man digging a drain in a street in York, and saw some bones among the earth he was casting out. They proved to be leg bones of a *bos primigenius* which had stuck in a bog till it died, probably 1000 years ago. On the other hand, bones wet every winter and dry every summer might decay entirely in 100 years. The layer of gravel and clay in which the bones of the stag were found had been usually wet, but occasionally dry, and, looking to all the circumstances, it is pretty certain that it is more than 100 years since the stag was stranded at Dee Village, and not likely more than 200 years.

The antlers have been cleaned and mounted upon a board, and are now in Aberdeen Art Gallery. The stag that carried them had been of about the same age and size as the one Landseer selected for his painting, "The Stag at Bay".

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

ON the 1st July, 1901, accompanied by Mr. J. A. Ferguson, I made the ascent of Cairn Toul and Braeriach. Driving from Laggantygown to Coylum Bridge, which we reached at 7.10 a.m., we
CAIRN TOUL straightway entered the driving road leading towards
AND Glen Eunach. A steady pace was maintained all the
BRAERIACH. way through Rothiemurchus Forest and up the glen. The morning was very warm, the sun beating down from a cloudless sky; and, there being little or no wind, those Rothiemurchus flies, familiar friends no doubt of many members of the Club, had a lively time, as if disputing the passage of the glen. The walk, however, to us—smoke-begrimed toilers of the city—was thoroughly enjoyable, the wild grandeur of the hills as they close in on Loch Eunach being naturally much admired. The upper bothy was reached at 9.5, and our course now lay up the well-beaten, zig-zag track in Coire Dhonndail. In the hollow of the corrie, at a nice grassy spot, we encountered a large herd of deer, mostly hinds with their calves, escorted by a few antlered stags leading the way. This, to us, was a pretty sight, and added interest to our walk. At 10.5 we found ourselves at the top of the corrie at the 3000 feet level, with the great rolling plateau of Braeriach before us. Squatting down beside a clear running stream, we made a dive for the contents of our lunch bag, and thus replenished the inner man for further heavy work. The walk was resumed at 10.20, when the compass was consulted for the first time, and a course struck for the edge of An Garbh-choire. At 11 we were looking down the gullies with something akin to awesome admiration, and feasted our eyes on the great snow patches with their arches and bridges. The next move was a scramble to the top of Sgor an Lochain Uaine, which was reached at 11.25. A few minutes' rest, a look at Lochan Uaine, and a general view of An Garbh-choire sufficed for this point of vantage. A rapid descent to the dip, and the final attack was now made on Cairn Toul proper. But, oh! those huge boulders! To J. A. F., a young stalwart six-footer, this was child's play, and the boulders were negotiated with the ease and grace of the antlered denizens of these majestic mountains and romantic glens, but it was a different tale for the writer, with his extra stones of flesh, to whom, for the time being, the plaintive cry of Bailie Nicol Jarvie upon a memorable occasion when visiting his kinsman Rob Roy among the Aberfoyle mountains, was fittingly brought to mind. At noon, however, we had reached the cairn, and felt our bodily exertions were more than amply rewarded. Our view was simply charming; Lochnagar, Beinn a' Ghlo, and Ben Alder were easily recognised,

and all the nearer peaks were of course taken in and commented upon. The top of Cairn Toul was left at 11.30, and, after rounding Sgor an Lochain Uaine, our course lay round the top of the precipices with An Garbh-choire always in view. The "infant rills of Dee" were crossed by a snow bridge, a few yards above the spot where they make their first and great plunge into Fuar Garbh-choire, and the summit cairn of Braeriach duly "bagged" at 2.10. After a short rest no difficulty was experienced in finding the track leading down Coire Ruadh to the Larig. The Pools of Dee were reached at 3.35. Some time had to be spent here in order to examine these wonderful works of nature, and we were agreeably surprised to notice trout disporting themselves in their waters. After making our way, "cautiously" need it be said, over the watershed, our course lay down the Larig to Coylum Bridge, where we arrived safely at 7 p.m., after one of the most interesting and most enjoyable mountaineering excursions it has been our lot to undertake.—ROBERT NIVEN.

IN the course of my rambles over the moors between Pitlochry and Aberfeldy, I came across a fine specimen of a "Shelter Stone".

It is situated about an hour and a half's walk from LOCH NA BA Pitlochry, and a quarter of a mile to the east of SHELTER STONE. the little Loch na Bà, which lies at the foot of the ridge running on to Farragon Hill. The most direct route from Pitlochry is by following the hill road for Grandtully, until Lochan na Moine Mhor, at the march dyke, is reached. If a course be now struck across the moor for Farragon, it will not be long ere two huge boulders come into view. The westerly is the larger of the two, and is the one in which the "Shelter" is to be found. The "Stone" stands 15 feet above the ground; the top stone, one end of which rests on the ground and the other end on a smaller stone, is 19 feet long, 12 feet broad, and 7 feet thick. Although the entrance is rather small, the inside is tolerably comfortable, certainly much more so than our friend at Loch Avon. The inside dimensions are—length, 6 feet; breadth, 7 feet; greatest height, 3 feet 5 inches, tapering off to the ground. Of course, the situation of the "Stone" is such that it is little frequented by mountaineers, being far handier for the poacher or belated sportsman.—WILLIAM BARCLAY.

OUR week-end party, which numbered four, left Aberdeen by train for Edzell, and drove to Invermark, rain falling almost incessantly.

The next morning, however, smiled on us, and so FROM THE MARK we improved the occasion by visiting Loch Lee TO THE FEUGH. and its vicinity. Thereafter we set out for Mount Keen, with the sun shining brightly and radiantly, illuminating the snow-capped hills, and thus converting the formerly dull and forbidding aspect into one of surpassing beauty. We made a halt at the Queen's Well to drink of its sparkling water and indulge in a retrospect of the valley of the Mark, now bathed in sunshine.

A well-defined bridle-path leads over Keer to Glen Tanner, passing within a few hundred yards of the summit. The ascent is rather steep in some parts, particularly at The Ladder. We had an excellent view of the Benhinnans and the Cairngorms; Cairn Toul was particularly noticeable, while Morven, with Lochs Kinord and Davan, seemed almost within stone-throw—so clear was the atmosphere. Grouse and ptarmigan were numerous, and we saw several herds of deer on the descent. We had the good fortune to see at close quarters about 70 stags being fed. This was an excellent opportunity for an interesting photograph, but, alas, we had used our last plate on the summit. Some hours after we reached Auchronie, the sky became overcast, and a steady drizzle set in, changing later to snow.



THE QUEEN'S WELL, GLEN MARK.

S. happened to waken about five next morning, and, after trying in vain to tell the time by looking inquiringly at my pedometer, he succeeded in discovering that it was half-past 900 on F.'s pocket aneroid, and alarmed us with the intelligence that there was a depth of three inches of snow all over the valley. We all rushed to the windows to verify his report, and, sure enough, there were the hills no longer capped, but mantled, snow spreading over the glen like a great sheet: and this in May! Doubts were now entertained as to the probable result in such conditions of our proposed ascent of Mount Battock; but a good breakfast and a clear sky dispelled our fears, and we determined to make the attempt. Tarfside was reached about 9 a.m., and the climb commenced along the shoulder of Bennygray (1823). Between Bennygray and the summit of Battock,

peat hags of considerable depth had to be negotiated, a task which was rendered difficult owing to the soft snow in them. They are too wide to jump and too long to walk round, consequently the only way to get across was by plunging boldly into the snow and crawling painfully up the opposite side, a feat which would no doubt appeal very humorously to a spectator, but is not quite so funny to those participating. By dint of plodding and plunging we ultimately reached firmer ground, arriving at the summit at noon. Our view was extensive; Mount Keen, the field of our preceding day's outing, stood out clear and crisp behind the Hill of Cat, Cock Cairn, and Braid Cairn. Lochnagar lost none of its majesty although twenty miles distant; to its right, Beinn a' Bhuid and Ben Avon stood out prominently. Our view to the north and east was entirely obliterated by an approaching snowstorm, but away to the south-east we could easily distinguish the coast of Fife. We had intended to meet the Cairngorm Club on Clochnaben at 1 p.m., but, knowing one hour to be quite insufficient to cover the four miles of very bad ground separating us from the rendezvous, we decided to proceed to Feughside Inn by the Water of Aven. We had no reason to repent of our decision, as the weather completely broke down, the threatened storm sweeping up the valley of the Aven like a winter blast, and compelling us to descend to the shelter of the precipitous side of Peter Hill. After a long and somewhat wet walk along the left bank of the Aven, we reached Feughside Inn about four o'clock—a few minutes in advance of the Clochnaben party.—W. G. M.

THIS loch lies near the summit of Meall an t-Sluichd, in Glen Callater. A brief account of it is given by Rev. George Grub, Rector of Holy Trinity, Ayr (son of the late LOCH PHADRUG. Professor Grub, Aberdeen), in a paper entitled "A Highland Walk through Moorland and Forest" in the *Scottish Standard Bearer* for August, 1901. "The loch is small", says Mr. Grub, "but remarkable for its reflecting only sky and clouds, without any dark overhanging mountain shadow".

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Free Press*, writing on 20th February, furnished the following:—Cairngormers of all conditions, and many

another besides, will hear with the deepest regret of the death of Mrs. Christie, Braemar, formerly MRS. CHRISTIE, residing at the Linn of Dee, which occurred on LINN OF DEE. Monday (17th February), as the result of an apoplectic seizure. A woman of much intelligence and force of character, with a strong vein of pawky humour, she was a great favourite with the many visitors of all classes—from the Queen on the throne to the humblest hill-walker—who called on her during her twelve years' stay at the Linn; and hillmen in particular greatly enjoyed a sojourn under her hospitable roof. The heartfelt sympathy of her troops of friends will go out to her sorrowing family in their bereavement.

ON 20th May last, two young men, named R. W. Cockburn and J. Taylor, walked two miles into Edinburgh and caught the early train to Fort-William, where they arrived about 10 o'clock. After partaking of some light refreshment, they made the ascent of Ben Nevis, which was then deeply covered with snow, stayed a short time with the meteorologists at the Observatory, and returned again to Fort-William, where they joined the south-going train which leaves for Edinburgh shortly after 4 o'clock. This is the first known occasion on which any one has journeyed from the Scottish capital to the summit of Britain's highest mountain and back again in one day.

A
MOUNTAINEERING
FEAT.

WE went to Aviemore on April 9th. At the "summit level" only small detached scraps of melting snow lay at the rail level. At Aviemore the high ground above about 1500 feet was covered with a broken coating up to about 3000 feet; above this the snow seemed continuous. During our four first days we had much snow, the weather being thoroughly wintry. During the remainder of our fortnight conditions varied considerably, some days being really hot, notably the forenoon of the 20th. The thaw was rapid and marked, the higher braes assuming a speckled appearance, and the Spey coming down in full flood, especially from the 20th to the 23rd. By the 25th the outline of the big wreath in the Coire Cas of Cairngorm was well defined. On April 19th I went with M. up the Larig Ghru to the watershed. The snow was not continuous on the north of the ridge, but on the south the hollows of the Pools of Dee were quite filled. The condition of the snow for walking was very variable. In many places it was firm and good; in many others it was rather soft; but, alas, not a few big patches were quite soft, and we sank in up to the hips, and had no small difficulty in extricating our legs from the grip of the snow, which seemed to pack tightly around them. Oh! that the photographer had been there! what laughing-moving pictures he might have secured. The day was dull in the morning, and we had no trouble with sunlight; in the afternoon rain fell heavily, and we had a somewhat uncomfortable, slow return, my companion having wrenched his knee in the struggle through the snow. During the day we saw a few ptarmigan on the snow, half a dozen deer, which allowed us to approach unusually near, and no fewer than thirty-three blackcock, the largest number I have ever come across in one day.—C. G. C.

I was at Aviemore from the 12th to the 23rd of April, and had one or two good days on the hills. On my arrival I found the hills coated with snow down to their very base, much of this having fallen the previous week. In fact, my first day was ushered in with a snowstorm, which whitened all the low ground; but this had all disappeared by midday. On the 15th I walked to Glenmore

THE CAIRNGORMS
IN APRIL.

Lodge, and thence ascended Cairngorm. I came in contact with the snow, at first in large patches, about the 1800 feet level; these soon became continuous, and from the 3000 feet contour I found one unbroken snowfield. The sun was scorching hot, and the snow was villainously soft, so the rest can be better imagined than described. I reached the cairn about one o'clock, and found it so completely plastered up with snow as to be invisible. From here to Ben Muich Dhui was one great stretch of dazzling whiteness. I descended for a short distance towards Loch Avon, but found the snow getting softer and deeper, and as I did not feel inclined for such heavy tramping I returned to the summit, and retraced my steps to Glenmore Lodge.

The morning of the 17th was a little cloudy, the mist just touching the summit of Braeriach, but as the barometer was steadily rising I set off for Glen Eunach. I was accompanied part of the way by a forester on a heather-burning expedition. The lower bothy was reached about midday, several slight showers of rain being encountered on the way. Here I found considerable difficulty in crossing the Bennie, as the footbridge had been washed to one side. Once across the stream, I rounded the southern end of Loch Mhic Ghille-chaoile, and so got on to the steep snow slope of Sgoran Dubh Bheag. This snow was in excellent condition in contrast to that found on Cairngorm; the difference may be accounted for by the fact that on the nights of the 15th and 16th there was a slight frost. When I reached the upper and steeper part of the slope the snow was so hard that I could hardly dig my toes into it—an ice axe was badly wanted. On the ridge leading up to the summit, however, I found much less snow, simply large patches. From the summit I had an excellent view of the steep face of Sgoran Dubh Mhor carrying magnificent cornices; Braeriach across the glen, its corries packed with snow, and the mist still hovering about its summit, was also grand. The walk up the remaining slope of Sgoran Dubh Mhor was a very simple matter, thanks to the condition of the snow; but just as I neared the cairn I was enveloped in mist, and in a few minutes the air was thick with driving snow. Five minutes was long enough to spend at the cairn in such conditions, so I retreated to the lesser height, then I followed the ridge on to Cadha Mor, and finally to Cadha Bheag, whence I descended to the road. I encountered very little snow in my walk along the ridge; indeed, it was quite like a summer day, for although the slopes of the hills were heavily coated, the summits had been swept almost bare, only a few isolated patches remaining.

The following day I ascended Craiggowrie, and found that the snow had almost entirely disappeared from that hill. On the 21st I paid a visit to Craigellachie, and went to the cairn of Carn Dearg Mòr; this hill was entirely free from snow except on its north face, where I found several large beds of it.

When I left on the 23rd the snow was fast disappearing from all the hills; the ridges were almost black, but, of course, the corries still contained a good deal of snow.—WILLIAM BARCLAY.

OWING to the length and severity of the past winter, and the stormy weather in the beginning of May, the snow still lay in considerable depth on the Cairngorms. On 4th May a party

BEN MUICH DHUI
IN MAY.

of five aspiring young mountaineers started for Ben Muich Dhui determined to make a bold attempt to reach the top, in spite of the threatening weather and the fact that snow had fallen heavily on the previous night. Derry Lodge was passed at 9 a.m., and the snow began to fall thickly and steadily; the glen looked a wilderness, and far from inviting. The path being completely obliterated by the snow we kept well to the right, and avoided all suspicious looking patches which might hide pitfalls. Reaching the foot of Corrie Etchachan we made a short pause. Snow had now ceased to fall, although storm clouds were hanging gloomily around Beinn Mheadhoin and Beinn a' Chaoruinn. Turning up the corrie we soon found ourselves



floundering almost to the waist in wreaths which hid torrent beds, as we struggled upwards against an icy blast, which whirled the snow in fantastic eddies, and made us painfully aware that we had ears and noses. These obstacles overcome, we ultimately reached the top of the corrie, and looked eagerly for Loch Etchachan. It was not to be seen. A field of white marked the spot where the dark

waters were hidden under a covering of ice and snow. The sun now broke through the clouds, and looking backwards we observed that the bed of the Derry Burn was levelled up with snow, the water only to be seen emerging at the foot of the corrie. The glare of the snow under the bright sun hurt our eyes a little as we bent to the left for the top. We found the snow frozen in many places. It was pleasant to walk across until it would suddenly give way, and we sunk well over the knees. Still, we made good progress, and had almost reached the hut before we observed it, so piled up around it were the masses of snow. We crept under its lee, and ate a hurried lunch. The cold was intense, and the cutting wind felt like a knife flaying the skin off one's face. We soon started for the cairn—we had to keep moving—and quickly reached it, the hard frozen snow and boulders along the top affording good walking. As we looked around we felt amply rewarded. Across Glen Dee, Braeriach and Cairn Toul stood like Alps, their rugged grandeur softened with a veil of white, excepting where the steepness was too great to retain

hold of it. The corries were completely blocked up, and the Garchory Burn invisible. In the far west Ben Nevis was seen mantled with a cloud—southwards Glen Dee lay before us, and “Dark Lochnagar”, dark no longer, but “a dream in white”. Beinn a’ Bhuird’s huge mass seemed indistinguishable from the sky, and Cairngorm lay to the north, a great dome of unblemished purity. All around and beyond, the lesser hills, conspicuous among which was Ben Rinnes, lay with the snowline clearly marked on their sides as by a straight-edge. The whole made a vision of beauty and grandeur, the memory of which will ever afford pleasure. Above, the sun was shining brightly in a sky clear for the time, and we observed, a little underneath, a beautiful thin cloud which appeared to consist of concentric rings of rainbow colouring, caused, we thought, by the



refraction of light from minute particles of ice suspended in the air. An exclamation from one of the party caused us to look north, and we saw a grey curtain suspended across the horizon and approaching rapidly; this and the freezing cold caused us to stampede for Corrie Etchachan. We made an almost straight line for the head of the corrie, although the descent in many parts was dangerously steep and the snow very soft. However we reached Glen Derry in time to escape the threatened snowfall. The tramp down the glen was the least pleasant part of the mountain excursion, which was an unqualified success. We were fortunate enough to secure several “snap-shots” of stags. The most interesting scene was a fight between two stags, who, as they had then no horns, used their fore-legs as weapons, but the distance was too great for a successful photograph.—G. B.

AN interesting correspondence under this heading was carried on in the *Aberdeen Free Press* during August, 1901. It originated by a correspondent asking how far off the reflection of the lights

“**ABERDEEN** of Aberdeen in the sky at night is seen, now that **FROM AFAR**”. electric lighting is so extensively used. Answers to this query showed that the reflection is seen at New Deer, 32 miles distant; and at Ythan Wells, 40 miles distant, at an altitude of 800 feet. One correspondent declared that on any clear day Aberdeen may be easily seen from the Tap o' Noth. We confess to being a little sceptical, as Brimmond Hill shuts off the view of Aberdeen from nearly every eminence north-west of the city.

As stated in the *C.C.J.*, Vol. II., p. 108, this cairn lies at the meeting point of Inverness, Banff, and Aberdeen, and of Duthil-Rothiemurchus,

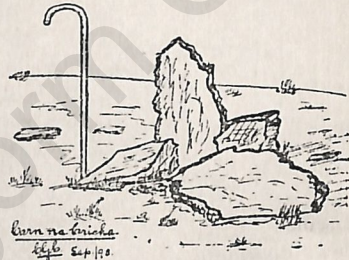
Kirkmichael, and

CARN NA CRICHE Crathie-Braemar.

(3931). The name is not shown on any

map. We noted the following summits as being visible from Carn na Criche on a recent visit:— Ben Muich Dhui, Beinn a' Ghlo, Devil's Point, Beinn Bhrotain, Cairn Toul, Schichallion, Ben Lawers, Sgor an Lochain Uaine, Braeriach, Ben Alder,

Sgor Ghaoith, Creag Mheagaidh, Sgoran Dubh Mhor, Bennachie, Ben Avon, Beinn Mheadhoin, Beinn a' Bhuird, Lochnagar, Tolmount, and Derry Cairngorm. To the north-west, on the horizon, were many “sugar loaves”. The north and north-east are blocked by neighbouring rising ground.



AN article on “Cairngorm and Cairngorms” in the *Scotsman* on 17th June led to an interesting correspondence as to the precise nature of Cairngorm stones, or “Cairngorms” as “**CAIRNGORMS**”. they are generally called. The writer's declaration that they are really topazes was instantly challenged. The topaz, it was pointed out, is a stone of complex composition, containing approximately 30 per cent. silica, 55 per cent. alumina, and 15 per cent. fluorine; whereas Cairngorm stone (rock crystal or quartz crystal) is simply silica, containing approximately 47 per cent. silicon and 53 per cent. oxygen. A correspondent, writing from Kingussie over the signature “Coire Odhar”, said “Cairngorms” are simply well-crystallised quartz—the same mineral which, when colourless, is called rock crystal, and, when violet, amethyst. He suggested that the mistake of confounding them with topaz arose from the fact that a great deal of pale-coloured topaz (mostly Brazilian) is imported into this country, cut, set, and sold as “real Scottish cairngorm.” He added the comforting announcement that “there are many good localities for

cairn gorms [on Cairngorm] which have never yet been worked by digging, and that loose specimens on the surface are by no means so rare as the author of the article seems to think". Another correspondent challenged a statement that the Marquis's Well on Cairngorm was so named from a Marquis of Huntly who lunched there when hunting, saying—"I have been familiar with this district for long, and lived for several years in it, and I never heard this romance. What I always heard was that the well derived its name from the Marquis of Argyll having taken a hasty drink from it in his flight from the battle of Glenlivet, and the only thing any of the Huntly family had at that time to do with it was that the Earl of Huntly and the Earl of Erroll were hot-foot after him". But, unfortunately for this contention, there was no Marquis of Argyll until 50 years after the battle of Glenlivet.

A DELIGHTFUL article, under this title, by Mr. Leslie Stephen—a well-known walker, and an ex-President of the Alpine Club—appeared in the *Monthly Review* for August, 1901. "Walking", says Mr. Stephen, "is among IN PRAISE OF WALKING. recreations what ploughing and fishing are among industrial labours: it is primitive and simple; it brings us into contact with mother earth and unsophisticated nature; it requires no elaborate apparatus and no extraneous excitement. It is fit even for poets and philosophers, and he who can thoroughly enjoy it must have at least some capacity for worshipping the 'cherub Contemplation'. He must be able to enjoy his own society without the factitious stimulus of more violent physical recreations. . . . The true walker is one to whom the pursuit is in itself delightful; who is not indeed priggish enough to be above a certain complacency in the physical prowess required for his pursuit, but to whom the muscular effort of the legs is subsidiary to the 'cerebration' stimulated by the effort, to the quiet musings and imaginings which arise most spontaneously as he walks, and generate the intellectual harmony which is the natural accompaniment to the monotonous tramp of his feet. The cyclist or the golf-player, I am told, can hold such intercourse with himself in the intervals of striking the ball or working his machine. But the true pedestrian loves walking because, so far from distracting his mind, it is favourable to the equable and abundant flow of tranquil and half-conscious meditation. Therefore, I should be sorry if the pleasures of cycling or any other recreation tended to put out of fashion the habit of the good old walking tour." As becomes a proper walker, Mr. Stephen's tastes are wide. He is fond of the Fen country as well as of the Lake country; he has walked the coast from the mouth of the Bristol Avon by the Land's End to the Isle of Wight; and he is familiar with "the many delicious bits of walking in the neighbourhood of London".

The late Dr. Mandell Creighton, the Bishop of London, was (according to the biographical sketch of him in the *Times*) an

indefatigable walker, and had traversed many parts of England on foot, studying their history and storing it up by the way. He used to say that a man who could not find ample recreation as well as the best of exercise in walking must have an ill-stored and ill-regulated mind. Nothing was more delightful (added the *Times's* writer) than to wander with him to some historic spot in Northumberland or Worcestershire, or afterwards in the neighbourhood of Peterborough, and listen to his luminous but never pedantic talk on the history it enshrined.

MR. J. W. LAWRENCE, the publisher of "The Guide to Aviemore," makes the following announcement in this recently-published handbook :—

"By the courtesy of C. A. Moreing, Esq., Lessee of GLEN EUNACH the Rothiemurchus Forest, and J. P. Grant, Esq., of Rothiemurchus, I am permitted to state that the private driving road to Loch Eunach will, during their pleasure, be open to the public, except during the shooting season from 12th August to 15th October. Mr. Moreing also kindly intimates that parties going there may use his bothies, on the condition that the public respects his sporting rights, and does not trespass in the Forest during the time the road is closed. Dogs must not be taken into the Forest, neither is fishing allowed. I think it well to warn the public that, in the deer-stalking season, it is extremely dangerous to go into the Forest or woods, owing to the present practice of using long-range modern rifles in this sport.— J. S. LAWRENCE".

THERE have been prepared for publication from the Ordnance Survey Office at Southampton the first of a new series of maps of Great Britain, which reflect credit upon the energy and enterprise of the Director-General of the Survey, COLONEL D. A. JOHNSTON, R.E. The revised map of the British Islands, on the scale of 1 in. to the mile, is, of course, deservedly popular; but the scale is somewhat large for the purpose of those who require a map which shall at once show considerable detail and cover a wide area, without being too bulky. Accordingly in 1898 was begun the revision of the outline map of England and Wales on the scale of four miles to the inch. The new departure of the Ordnance Survey consists in the issue of coloured maps on this scale for both England and Scotland, showing the chief surface features of the two countries with commendable clearness.

The 1-in. map has been issued with the hills in black and brown, and several sheets on the same scale have been published in colours. The War Office, however, attaches great importance to the 4-mile map, and the new series was primarily designed for the convenience of the military authorities. At the same time it should be useful for many civil purposes, while tourists who require an accurate map of a district covering any considerable area cannot do better than provide themselves, when the new issue is completed, with the particular sheets covering the region in which they are staying. The maps are printed in five colours. Outlines and

names are printed as usual in black. seas, rivers, and lakes in blue, hills in light brown, large woods in green, and the main roads in burnt sienna. Especial interest attaches to the method of representing hilly and mountainous country which has been adopted. Stipple shading by photo-etching has been introduced for the first time in connection with Ordnance Survey maps. The result is satisfactory. The method is not, of course, to be preferred to the representation of elevations by contours, but the scale of four miles to the inch is too small to allow of contours being shown in a satisfactory manner, and the new maps really afford a very graphic presentation of the orographical features of the country. Praise-worthy, too, is the distinctness with which every detail shown is represented. The names of the smallest places are clearly legible, and there is no confusion in the representation of the natural features, roads, and railways. Altogether the general appearance of the maps is pleasing. The Ordnance Survey Department has been subjected to very severe strictures in the past and unfavourably compared with similar services in foreign countries. These have not been altogether undeserved, but Colonel Johnston is certainly to be congratulated that such creditable specimens of the cartographer's art should appear under his directorship. The map of England and Wales will be published in 25 sheets, which will be sold unmounted at 1s. 6d. each; that of Scotland will be complete in 17 sheets of slightly smaller size, to be sold at 1s. each. Combined sheets, folded and in cover, are shortly to be issued, so as to show in one map one or more counties or some other convenient area.—*The Times*, 29th May, 1902.

THE following new members have been admitted:—Alfred Melvin, Hugh Strachan, Alexander R. D. MacDonald, James Morrison, Miss Gillies, James Forbes, and Dr. John Mackie.

NEW MEMBERS.

REVIEWS.

THE latest volume of the New Spalding Club (edited by Rev. John G. Michie), dealing as it does with the records of the family of Farquharson of Invercauld, is of considerable interest to mountaineers to whom Invercauld and the Invercauld property are more or less familiar.

INVERCAULD. So far as mountains are concerned, however, the book is disappointing. Beinn a' Bhuid—judging at least from the index—is mentioned only twice, and Lochnagar only five times. On the other hand, a perusal of the volume discloses much material about the Invercauld region, all interesting, and some of it even entertaining. A century and a half ago, the Invercauld estates extended almost from Dunkeld in the south to Tarland in the north; but they have been largely curtailed since, and in 1878 Queen

Victoria acquired Ballochbuie—"the bonniest plaid in Scotland". The family dates back to the sixteenth century, and claims as its progenitor Finla or Finlay Moir (so called on account of his gigantic size and great strength of body), who fell at Pinkie; he is said to have been descended from Farquhar, son of Shaw of Rothiemurchus. His eldest son, William, is reckoned the second Farquharson of Invercauld; and other sons became the founders of the Farquharson families of Monaltrie, Inverey, Allanquoich, Finzean, Whitehouse, etc. The "barony" of Invercauld originally was not of large extent, and the following is given by Mr. Michie as the traditionary account of the accession of the Farquharson family to the property:—"The head of the family of Stewart of Invercauld, at the beginning of the 16th century, was baillie over the Earl of Mar's lands in Braemar, in which office he was succeeded by his grandson, Finla Mor. When the Earl of Huntly, as representing the Crown, into whose hands the earldom of Mar had fallen, became administrator of its immense revenues, he continued Finla in his office. If it fell out so, it explains the circumstance of Finla Mor's being selected to carry the Royal Standard at the battle of Pinkie. He did so not merely on account of his great stature and bravery, but in right of being Huntly's representative in the Highlands. His infetment into the office and in the barony of Invercauld may therefore be approximately stated as at 1530 A.D.". Other lands were subsequently acquired—among them, Aberarder, Achallater, Braickly, Coldrach, Castleton, and Crathie. Over much of this property the Earls of Mar remained superiors, the rights of superiority passing to Lord Braco (afterwards Earl of Fife) in 1725; and questions of ownership and servitude led to frequent disputes between the Fifes and the Farquharsons and occasional litigations. Far and away the most entertaining documents in the "Records" are the pleadings in one of these law suits. Lord Fife claimed all the fir woods and adjacent heath, and sought to interdict a tenant of Invercauld from ploughing a piece of moor ground. Invercauld pleaded that, if the cultivable portions of his land were not tilled, "the adjacent fir-woods would in time spread over them, and render this country [Braemar], what it originally was, namely, a wild uncultivated Desert, the Habitation of wild Beasts only". There might sometimes be difficulty in deciding whether moor ground was cultivable, but not in this case—"for here God and Nature had arbitrated most exactly, and fixed the precise Bounds betwixt what is cultivable and fit for the Production of Corn, and what is only fit for the growth of Trees; for the hills here are very lofty, some of them as high as most in Scotland, and they sink at once by a precipitate Declivity, into those Flats, by the Side of the River, which, as was said before, are the only Ground fit for cultivation in this Country". Quaint old phrases are used—for instance, "as wind and weather shears", as descriptive of a boundary march, and "the stool of the wood", the precise meaning of which is not so clear; probably tree stumps with shoots are meant. That Highland evictions are no new thing is

shown by a letter, dated 1726, proposing the clearance of Glen Lui, in order to enhance the value of the property to a purchaser. The eviction is ordered "that people may see that they are not to be suffered in their illegal Insolence, nor dream that by such doings they can continue their usurpations"; and instructions are given to the "discreet men" employed to carry out the eviction to "regard not at the time impertinencys so as to be provoked to do any thing but what belongs to the Ejection, only you may observe and notice such Impertinencys, if any be offered, and since you are to have people with you, there will be no want of proof, and—punish that Impertinency afterwards in fit season". The volume, as was inevitable, contains allusions to the leading features of Deeside history—the tragedy chronicled in the ballad of "The Baron of Braickley", and the two Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745. In connection with the '45 affair, there is a very interesting memoir of Francis Farquharson of Monaltrie, the "Baron Ban".

A SERIES of papers on Rothiemurchus by Rev. Dr. Hugh Macmillan, with illustrations from drawings by A. Scott Rankin, has been appearing in the *Art Journal*. The following is a quotation from the opening paper:—"Of all the districts overshadowed by the extensive Cairngorm range, the most magnificent, by universal consent, is Rothiemurchus. This is a region entirely unique. There is nothing like it elsewhere. If Scotland as a whole is Norway post-dated, this part of the country is especially Norwegian. Scotland is famous for its artistic colouring, which Millais compared to a wet Scottish pebble; but here the colouring is richer and more varied than in any other part of the country. The purples are like wine and not like slate, the deep blue-greens are like a peacock's tail in the sun, the distant glens hold diaphanous bluish shadows, and a bloom like that of a plum is on the lofty peaks, which changes at sunset into a velvety chocolate, or the hue of glowing copper in the heart of a furnace. A day in October is something to be remembered all one's life, when the tops of the mountains all round the horizon are pure white with the early snow, and their slopes are adorned with the brilliant tints of faded bracken, golden birch, and brown heather, and all the low grounds are filled with the unchangeable blue-green of the firs. At Rothiemurchus the landscape picture is most beautifully balanced, framed on both sides by heath-clad hills, and rising gradually to the lofty uplands of Braeriach and Cairngorm, and the broad summit of Ben Muich Dhui rounding up and shouldering away behind the great chain itself, coifed with radiant cloud, or turbaned with folded mist, or clearly revealed in the sparkling light, bearing up with them in their aged arms the burden of earth's beauty for the blessing of heaven. All the views exhibit the most harmonious relations to one another, and each is enhanced by the loveliness of its neighbour". One of the papers was devoted to Loch an Eilein. The illustrations are thoroughly reminiscent of the district.

AMONG one of the early works dealing with the Cairngorms is the volume titled "Scenery of the Grampian Mountains", by George Fen-

well Robson, published in 1819. (A copy is to be seen in the Aberdeen Public Library.) It consists of 40 views of the mountains, each view being accompanied by a brief description. Describing Braeriach and Cairn MOUNTAINS. Toul, Mr. Robson says—"From the abruptness of their

acclivities and the stony fragments which cover them, these two lofty eminences are very difficult of ascent; but neither difficulty nor danger should deter the tourist who has reached the foot of Braeriach from visiting its summit. After the impediments of his arduous progress are surmounted, and he is refreshed by the pure air of the mountain, let him approach with cautious steps the brink of the precipice, which forms an indented battlement along its southern brow. In a situation so exalted, admiration is raised to enthusiasm, and seems to expand with the extent of the prospect: from this tremendous cliff

'How fearful

And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eye so low!'

But even the description of Shakespeare is insufficient to convey an adequate idea of the scene; and it is by an actual visit only that we are enabled fully to appreciate its sublimity; yet it may in some degree aid the conception of the reader to inform him that the perpendicular altitude of the rock we speak of is five times the height of St. Paul's Cathedral". Not a few of Mr. Robson's comments and criticisms provoke a smile, so completely has feeling on many subjects changed since he wrote. For example, he had a great aversion to snow as a feature in the landscape. "Many of these eminences", he remarks—in his description of "Ben-y-Bourd"—"are never wholly divested of snow; a circumstance which bespeaks their height, but is not any addition to their beauty. No colour is so obnoxious to the eye, or so discordant with the sombre hues of nature, as an extensive surface of pure white; on the gloomy front of a mountain, its harshness is peculiarly conspicuous; and though here it does not always prevail in considerable quantities, its scattered patches are ever at variance with the graduating tints of landscape. Distant summits, robed in snow, have indeed pretensions both to beauty and sublimity; but it is only when they mingle with the kindred hues of the atmosphere, and not when opposed to their local colour, as is evinced by the eminences of Aberdeenshire".

Continued from page 2 of Cover.

year; (3) to fix the excursions for the ensuing year; and (4) to transact any other necessary business. Special general meetings shall be held whenever deemed necessary by the Chairman, or on a requisition by at least ten members of the Club. General meetings shall have power to deprive of membership of the Club any member who may, in the opinion of the Committee, have misconducted himself.

VI.—A Minute-Book shall be kept by the Secretary, in which all proceedings shall be duly entered.

VII.—The election of members of the Club shall be made by the Committee in such manner as they may determine.

VIII.—The entry money of members shall be 10s. 6d., and the annual subscription 5s. Members shall receive copies of all current issues of the Club publications.

IX.—The annual subscription shall be payable in January. Members not in arrear may retire from the Club at any time on sending notice in writing to the Secretary or Treasurer.

X.—The Committee shall have power to elect suitable persons to be Honorary Members of the Club. Honorary Members shall have no voice in the management of the Club, but otherwise shall have all the rights and benefits of ordinary members.

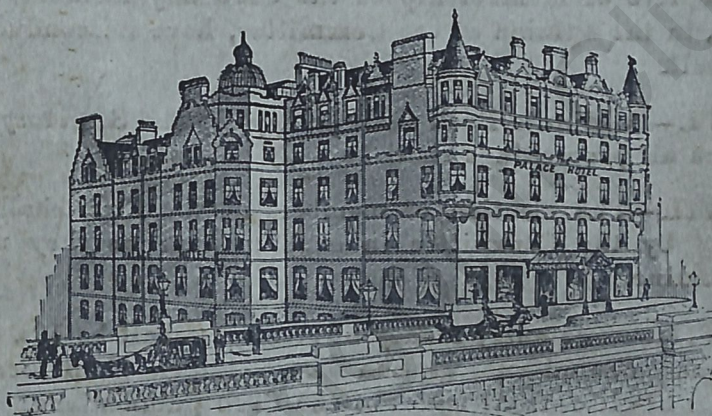
XI.—No change shall be made on the Rules except at a general meeting of the members, called on seven days' notice. Intimation of any proposed change must be made in the notice calling such meeting, and any alteration proposed shall only be adopted if voted for by at least three-fourths of the members present at the meeting.

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Their Majesties the King and Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, the late Empress Frederick of Germany, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, Princess Christian and Princess Victoria, Princess Henry of Battenberg, the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark, the Empress Eugenie, the King of the Belgians, the King of Portugal, the Duke of Cambridge, Prince Adolphus of Teck and Prince Francis of Teck, the Grand Duke Paul and Grand Duke Sergius of Russia, the Grand Duke Michael of Russia, the Prince and Princess Dolgorouki, the Marquis of Salisbury, Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, the Earl and Countess of Aberdeen, the Earl and Countess of Kintore, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, the Earl of Chesterfield, the Earl of Warwick, the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, the Right Hon. The Lord Advocate, and many distinguished visitors.

Covered way from Station Platform.

Hotel Porters attend all Trains.

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Address—Manager, Palace Hotel, Aberdeen.