

# THE Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY

ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHIE.

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# The Cairngorm Club.

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## 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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*Photo. by*

BRIDGE OF LUI.

*Geo. Bean, Jun*

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THE LOCH-AN-EILEIN OSPREYS.

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

AMONG Scotland's many beautiful places, the Rothiemurchus Loch-an-Eilein deservedly takes a high place; for here are present all the picturesque elements of Highland scenery—great mountain mass, steep crag, narrow pass, forest of fir and birch, tangle of juniper and heather, rushing stream, and placid loch with its solitary island crowned by the ruins of an old castle. And these elements are so arranged and combined as to make a picture that satisfies the fastidious eye of the trained artist, and delights the less sophisticated lover of nature. An additional item of interest is afforded by the fact that the southern turret of the ruined castle has often been the home of the Osprey (*Pandion haliaëtus*), one of the rarest and most beautiful of our birds of prey. There is, perhaps, no other of our raptors at once so interesting and so easy to observe. The dark, stern golden eagle will not brook observation, but sails off indignant on majestic wing; the smaller falcons and hawks dart in arrowy flight from the presence of man. But the Osprey allows of moderately near approach, and permits itself to be inspected as it stands or sits on its nest, or as it soars in wide curves above the loch. At rest or in motion, it is indeed a beautiful bird; the varied light and dark of its plumage, the large dark gleaming eye, the handsome, alert pose, the wide-spread wing, broad fan-tail, and powerful, easy flight—all

mark it as a bird of noble type, and make it very attractive and charming. Certainly its presence at Loch-an-Eilein gives the crowning touch to the beauties of that place; and, should the bird not come, one feels its absence as that of an intimate friend, and wishes the words of one of our minor poets were true—

“King Pandion is not dead;  
Loch-an-Eilein to this day  
Sees each year his wings outspread,  
Hails his coming, owns his sway.”

In “The Vertebrate Fauna of the Moray Basin”, 1895, Mr. Harvie-Brown gave a summary of the history of the Loch-an-Eilein Ospreys up to that date; and I purpose here to supplement his records from notes made by me from that time to this, premising, however, that my jottings are merely those of a holiday-maker, and not the records of a professed naturalist.

I first saw the Ospreys in August, 1894. I was staying for that month at Loch-an-Eilein Gate, and had many opportunities of seeing the birds, either when I went for a morning swim in the loch, or in the afternoons, which were often spent at the loch side. When I was in the water the bird would fly above me, uttering its screaming cry. I was at first somewhat apprehensive of attack, but afterwards came to regard the flight of the calling bird as adding pleasure to the morning swim.

That year the birds had nested at the castle, and hatched two young ones. I saw the parent bird, presumably the female, feed the young with fish, and noted the gradual growth in the strength of voice of the young birds. On August 24th I saw one of the young birds make its first flight, and the other one trying its wings without rising from the nest. The next morning all the birds were flying. There was but one on the nest when I went to the loch just after 7 A.M., and that one at once rose and flew away. On August 26th, in the forenoon, three birds, I suppose the mother and her two young ones, were flying about near the nest when a heron flew across the loch and was driven away by the mother bird.

In 1895 I was in the same neighbourhood during August and part of September, but saw the Ospreys only once, as far as I can remember. They had built on the castle, but I have no certain information as to whether they had bred. About the middle of September a cormorant put in an appearance at the loch, and there were fears lest its presence should disturb the Ospreys. Mr. Hinxman, who was there at the time, advised that the cormorant should be shot; but I am told that its departure made this unnecessary. I understand that cormorants, though not previously unknown at Loch-an-Eilein, are somewhat rare visitors there.

In 1896 I was at Loch-an-Eilein during August, and saw the Ospreys several times. They had nested at the castle, and had hatched. I saw three birds flying together, but did not ascertain whether there were two young or only one. The probability is, however, that the three birds were the mother and two young, for I think that the male bird was less tolerant of observation, and usually kept out of sight.

In 1897 I was at Loch-an-Eilein during the latter half of April and during the whole of August. I am told that the two birds arrived on March 29th. They were still at the castle in the summer, and I often saw them. There was then certainly one young bird, and there may have been two. On August 9th, when I was near Loch Gamhna, the tributary loch to the south of Loch-an-Eilein, I saw the two Ospreys flying. One of them alighted on a dead tree near the loch, and was eating an eel. It seemed to grasp the eel between its claw and the tree, and tore at it with its beak, the eel dangling below the bough. At the foot of the tree I afterwards found the débris of fish. On August 18th I saw one bird fly to the nest on the castle, and shortly afterwards a second bird came to it, bringing a fish, which it carried in its characteristic fore-and-aft manner. Then the second bird flew about, dipping into the water, once somewhat deeply. I suppose it was attempting to catch fish, but it did not get anything. While I was watching the bird did not dive, but, flying

along just above the surface of the water, dipped its feet and legs. Once the under surface of the body touched the water, and several times just the points of the wings did so. The first bird rose from the nest, carrying the fish, and both birds flew away. On August 21st I twice saw the pair of birds flying very high. They rose so high that they were lost in the vertical distance. I have similarly seen herons circle upwards over Loch-an-Eilein till the eye could distinguish them no longer, and have often wondered what birds might be high above us and looking down at us.

In 1898 I was at Loch-an-Eilein during most of April, and in the neighbourhood all August and part of September. The Ospreys came on March 29th, and were busy building on the castle when I first saw them on April 9th. On April 11th, in the early morning, I watched them busy with stick and turf, and was amused to see difference of opinion between them as to "furnishing", the female not approving of the male's selection and placing of turf, he, of course, meekly permitting his arrangement to be altered. That morning I saw the male twice attempt to couple, but apparently without success. The following morning I saw the action a third time, and apparently successful. The male bird rose on wing a few feet above the female, and gently dropped towards her, she rising high on her feet to receive him. The action had about it a gracefulness and delicacy that was entirely in keeping with what I feel to be the general dignity that seems to belong to these birds.

In the summer I did not see the birds at all. Apparently they did not hatch at the castle nest; but four birds were seen flying together near Glen Feshie, and it seems probable that they had nested in that neighbourhood. In September, when it was certain that the birds were not using the castle nest and had apparently gone away, I obtained permission to visit the nest, and found it empty and bare, made of branches and twigs, with no lining of any kind.

In 1899 I was at Rothiemurchus during August and

part of September. This was the year of the forest fire, which began on August 24th and so seriously damaged the stretch of hillside on the south-east of Loch-an-Eilein (see *Cairngorm Club Journal*, January, 1900). I did not see the Ospreys that year at all. A pair of the birds came to the castle on or about April 3rd, and nested there. They were followed by a third bird. Opinions differ as to whether the third was a male or a female, the former seeming the more probable. There ensued much fighting, in the course of which the nest was damaged, and, according to one witness, the eggs were smashed and knocked down into the loch. The result of the fighting is not known; but after it the castle nest was deserted. It is said that another nest was used, of which I shall make further mention; but, as far as is known, there were no young ones produced. It may be noted that in May of this same year an Osprey was shot at Knoekespoek, and it has been suggested that the third bird was the mate of the one shot.

In 1900 I was at or near Rothiemurchus during most of April and all August. Several times in the spring I saw one Osprey at the castle nest, but apparently not building; and towards the end of the month I saw the two birds on the tree which I thought had been described to me as the one on which they had nested in the previous year. But they were not then nesting there, nor was there any trace of a nest in the tree, and no one seemed to know where they were nesting. At the end of my spring holiday, being desirous to know about this, I devoted one day to a careful search. Knowing the district well, I was able to choose a point that commanded a wide range of the possible nesting country. Here I spread a plaid, and lay on my back, field-glass in hand, carefully scanning the heavens. I was rewarded; for in the afternoon one of the birds flew into sight, carrying a fish in its claws, and settled on a tall tree. I watched it through the glass, and after a time it flew off to another tree, in the top of which I was delighted to see the nest. The bird remained there awhile, and then flew away, still carrying its fish. I made my way to the tree, the position of which I had carefully



noted, and scrambled up to the nest, which was built of biggish twigs, many of them nearly a yard in length, and was roughly lined with heather, loose straw, and the straw wrapper of a wine-bottle. Retiring from the immediate neighbourhood of the tree, I concealed myself among the heather, and remained on watch. After a time the two birds flew into sight, one of them still carrying a fish. They sailed about for some time, the one with the fish continually calling; but they did not go to the nest. I reported what I had seen to the Laird and to the keeper, and promised to keep the position of the nesting-tree a secret.

In the summer I did not see the birds at all, but I ascertained by inspection that they were not using the nest I had found in the spring. No one seemed to know anything of their nesting.

In 1901 I was at Rothiemurchus during April and August. In the spring I learned that an Osprey had arrived on April 1st, and I saw the one bird several times. It seemed to be building at the castle, and apparently had not visited the other nest. I was told that the men floating the timber from the burnt forest had seen this Osprey and a "black", *i.e.*, golden, eagle fighting over Ord Ban. In the summer I did not see the birds at all, and apparently there was but the one in the district.

In 1902 I was at Rothiemurchus in April and in August. A single Osprey came on April 4th, and I saw it several times at the castle nest. It had not used the other nest, which, indeed, was somewhat fallen to pieces. In the summer I did not see the bird at all, and apparently there was again but the one in the district.

This year I was at Rothiemurchus in April. The season was late, and the weather continually cold and stormy. The Osprey had not returned, and up to the time of writing it has not appeared.

Summing up these observations briefly, the record stands thus:—1894, two adults, two young; 1895, two adults, probably young; 1896, two adults, and young, probably two; 1897, two adults, and young, probably two;

1898, two adults and two young; 1899, three adults, no young; 1900, two adults; 1901, one adult; 1902, one adult; 1903, no Osprey.

When the birds resume their nesting at Loch-an-Eilein—as it is to be hoped they will do—they should, if possible, be protected even more carefully than in the past, for there is some reason to fear that their alternative nest has been plundered. It is also to be desired that a systematic record should be kept of such points as dates of arrival, of hatching, and of departure. This could probably be done by arrangement between the keeper and the tenant of the Loch Cottage.

## A FOX-HUNT IN THE HIGHLANDS.

THE spell of Arctic weather that came in April had many and varied results. To holiday-makers it brought disappointment and much enforced detention indoors, though at Rothiemurchus we had not a little compensation in the superb view of the north face of the Cairngorms, dressed all in their heavy winter coats; to shepherds it brought anxiety and severe labour among the newly-dropped lambs; to wild fowl and beasts it brought famine. Thus it came about that we had the unwonted spectacle of more than a dozen black-headed gulls squabbling over table-scrap within three yards of our dining-room window, and that the foxes got among the lambs and carried off at least one.

I had been out for a long day among the hills and glens, wading part of the time through deep snow slush, and had quite failed to discover any traces of the return of the Loch an Eilein ospreys. Perhaps they had known afar off of the unkindly weather, and delayed their return thus a month past their usual date; let us hope so. Anyway, as I trudged home in the gloaming I saw Keeper Cox in his garden, and stopped for a brief crack. He told me of the depredations of the foxes, and also that a hunt was arranged for the morrow, the rendezvous being Milton Bridge, at 6 in the morning, and the area to be drawn including Ord Ban and Kennapol, hills well-known to me, and separating Lochs an Eilein and Gamhna from the Spey. I asked leave to join the hunt, and was welcomed, as I should "make one more", and at the outside the force available would not exceed twenty men.

Accordingly, the next morning I was up at 5, my toilet and breakfast were less leisurely than usual, and I was soon speeding on my cycle through air that was keen with biting frost, and over roads that were iron-hard, and that in yesterday's muddy places gave me a shaking that

made it no easy matter to remain in the saddle and retain the pedals. At 6 I joined the company of fourteen men, five of them keepers, and the rest gillies and estate workers. I was the only outsider, and we had but two dogs, one of which shortly went off on some expedition of its own, and the other, though keeping with us, gave no voice all day. Of course, in a Highland fox-hunt there is none of the "pomp and circumstance" of fox-hunting as followed in "hunting" shires. We had no ladies and gentlemen on horseback, no gay coats and trim tailor-made habits, no pack of musical-voiced hounds. We were not out for amusement, but grimly intent on business. To us the foxes were vermin, and our object was to discover and exterminate them. Our drive was over two precipitous hills clothed with a dense growth of pine, juniper, and heather; and our day's work called for much physical exertion, and demanded no little agility, strength, skill, and care.

Standing chatting on the bridge was but cold work, with the thermometer somewhere considerably below 32° F., and we were not sorry when Keeper Cox gave us orders for the drive. Three guns were sent on along the road by the loch side, and were to station themselves in the boggy hollow on the south of Ord Ban. When we had given them sufficient start, we were scattered in a line along the north side of the hill, our instructions being to wait where we had been posted till a signal gun was fired, and then to make our way due south over the hill, each man going as straight forward as possible, and keeping within sound of the men nearest him. We were to make as much noise as we could by voice and stick, so as to alarm the foxes and drive them before us to where the guns were in waiting. It was a new experience to me to go over a hill in this noisy fashion, for I had always made it a rule to move about as quietly as possible so as not to alarm the wild creatures whose presence adds so much to the charm of a holiday in the hills. But, acting up to orders, I raised my voice in wild shouts, and quite spoiled my heavy oak stick by whacking it on rocks and tree trunks. It was

curious to hear the varied tones of voice as the men shouted. One or two had full musical voices, and gave vent to ringing, resonant tones; others had the curious high-pitched, slightly nasal quality of voice, common in the Highlands among Gaelic-speaking people, penetrating and carrying, but not full or rich; one man had a harsh, bleating voice, suggesting what that of a sheep might become if the animal were hoarse and angry—not a sound that a fox would find attractive. There was a buoyancy and excitement in springing lightfoot up a steep hillside in the early morning; the air was keen and fresh, the ground frost-bound under foot, the sun gradually dispersing the mist and revealing the great hills across the forest, robed in their unbroken cloaks of snow. Deer sprang away startled in front of us, crows rose with loud, startled cries, grouse and blackcock cluttered away, rabbits scuttled to their holes; on the top of the hill a hare sat up to investigate, and then bolted, and two sheep with their lambs that had strayed high up the hill were evidently much puzzled by the unwonted disturbance. As we cleared the north face of the hill, and began the descent on the south, it was necessary to get the men better into line, for the right wing, having the easier ground, had got rather ahead. This pause, I think, gave the fox his chance of escape, and he took it; for he probably nosed the watchers below, and worked his way to the extreme right of our line. When we came out of the dense woodland on the south of the hill, we learned that the westernmost beater had seen the fox run out beyond our line and double back towards the hill. If this man had brought his gun—as he should have done—Master Reynard would have met his deserts. As it was we lost him.

When we had joined our posted guns, we made a short halt, for the men who had made their way across the east face of Ord Ban had been hard-worked. Refreshments, bread, cheese, and whisky, were produced, but partaken of only sparingly, as much more work had yet to be done. It was then arranged to draw Kennapol, the hill next south from Ord Ban, a smaller hill, but steeper, and more densely

covered with rough juniper. The arrangements for the drive were much as before, the guns going ahead to the Inchriach, the wooded hollow beyond Loch Gamhna, on the south side of the hill. The signal gun having been fired, we started anew to make noises, and this time alarmed a herd of deer that had watched us with curiosity, and also raised an eagle that floated over our heads. We heard shots in front, and on coming down to the trysting-place learned that a fox had been driven down to the guns, but had in all probability escaped, as Mackenzie, the forest keeper, feared that both his shots had missed. Indeed, a fox fleeing for his life through the dense tangle of juniper and long heather would offer but a poor mark.

Then ensued some little discussion as to the use of any further driving. Some men had done enough hill-running, but all were disappointed at not getting a fox, and it was decided to draw Kennapol again, on the chance that the fox had been wounded. So the guns returned to their original station between the two hills, and, as the day had become bright and warm, it was a pleasure to lie on the hill-side and rest while we gave them the necessary start. Opposite to us was the west face of Creag Fhiaclach, which had so wofully suffered in the forest fire of 1899; the burnt timber has all been cleared off it, and it still presents a wide stretch of utter desolation, in which there is little of vegetation surviving except the mosses, which in places are very luxuriant and beautiful.

When time was up, we recrossed Kennapol, but without incident or result. Those of us who went near the summit were drawn aside to look at the inscribed memorial cairn which the Duke of Bedford erected to the memory of the Duchess, who was very fond of Kennapol and its surroundings. And, indeed, the spot is a choice one, and combines all the beauties characteristic of the Highlands—hill, glen, crag, cavern, loch, river, stretches of heather and juniper, and dense pine woods. Care was necessary in descending the north face of the hill, for the rocks were steep, wet, and slippery, and the patches of melting snow made the difficulty greater than usual. But we all got down without mishap, and without any further sight of the fox.

The day's work was now done; but the day's pleasure was by no means over. Our final halt was near the western corner of Loch an Eilein. Here we sat and lay under some of the fine old pine trees that still adorn the forest. Bread and cheese and whisky were again produced, and now met with ready acceptance. Story, chat, and laughter passed away the time. One, declining more bread and cheese, offered to take "plenty of whisky" instead; another told of the minister who, speaking warningly of whisky as "a nail in the coffin", was asked to drive another while the hammer was still in his hand. But the drinking was strictly confined to reasonable drams, and no one was the worse. Previous fox-hunts were recalled, the tricks of Reynard discussed, and arrangements proposed for another raid on a later day. Then the young folks had their reward for the day's exertions. The keepers served out a supply of shot cartridges, and the empty bottle was flung high as a moving target. Inexperienced shots, of course, missed it, but a tall, solemn-faced gillie smashed it at his first attempt. Empty cartridge cases were flung up, and a keeper showed that even so small an object could be struck at a fairly long range. One good man, possibly slightly elated by a dram, gaily flung up his cap for the neophytes to shoot at, and, luckily for him, they did not hit it. But all things come to an end, and, when the ammunition was expended, the merry party broke up, dispersing to their several homeward ways, the only regret being that our foxes had escaped.

## A HIGHLAND TOUR IN 1800.\*

DR. JOHN LEYDEN, a poet and litterateur of some celebrity in the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, left Scotland in 1803 for India, "there to acquire, by the power of his wonderful genius, a foremost place in Oriental learning", and died at Batavia in 1811. He was the author of various works, but a "Tour in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland in 1800" written by him is only now published. The manuscript of this work was purchased at Messrs. Sotheby's Rooms, London, about four or five years ago, and came into Mr. Sinton's hands two years since. The tour described was begun on July 14, and continued till October 1, 1800, Leyden accompanying two young foreigners who had studied at Edinburgh in the preceding winter. The manuscript consists of 152 closely-written pages, commences in the form of a journal, and is continued in the character of letters addressed to literary friends in Edinburgh, among them being Sir Walter (then plain Mr.) Scott. Dr. Leyden collected a great deal of valuable information regarding the literary antiquities and traditions of the Highlands, and in his "Journal" "many curious observations appear on the Ossian controversy, which still exercised the literati of the time". More than half the book is occupied with accounts of travel in the Western Highlands and Hebrides, but, as Dr. Leyden came through Inverness-shire from Ben Nevis and travelled south through Aberdeenshire, portions of his "Journal" have an interest for members of the Cairngorm Club.

In 1800, there was, of course, no "Observatory" road

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\* JOURNAL OF A TOUR IN THE HIGHLANDS AND WESTERN ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND IN 1800. By John Leyden. Edited, with a Bibliography, by James Sinton. William Blackwood & Sons. 1903.



to the summit of Ben Nevis, and apparently no track. Here is Leyden's account of his ascent—

The next morning after our arrival at Fort William (August 31), having provided a guide, we began to ascend Ben Nevis by a route which seemed winding and circuitous. Soon after we entered Glen Nevis we began to ascend gradually, winding along the foot of the mountain till we reached a gully of considerable depth, after passing a slender wood of birch. Ascending the gully, we began to climb a steep heathy declivity, shaping our course in a zigzag direction. The heath became more and more stunted as we proceeded, and at last we found nothing but yellow moss and gray stones, which occupied the whole side of the mountain and rendered it exceedingly difficult to advance. The day, which was at first remarkably fine, became now dull and leaden; and when we reached the top we found the view not only very circumscribed, but almost entirely divested of magnificence and grandeur. On the north side, Ben Nevis is steep but not precipitous; on the south, it is a vast, ragged, and uneven precipice, the height of which in some places is represented to be 500 yards. This precipice consists entirely of granite, which in numerous places has the appearance of regular strata, and is divided into blocks and slabs, generally of a rhombic form. The top of the hill is entirely covered with loose slabs and masses of the same substance, which, from the exterior, one would take to be slag. A few masses of vitrified slag, small and loose likewise, presented themselves, as well as various pieces of plum-puddingstone. The enormous precipice on the south side seems to have been formed in the same manner as the east side of the Skiddaw, by rending obliquely from the hill those enormous mountainous ridges on the south which are connected with the principal eminence, and little inferior to it in height. On the top of the hill, as well as in the chasms of the precipice, the snow lies unmelted through the whole summer, and this singularity very soon produced a match of snowballs. The top of the mountain is of considerable extent, and entirely covered with loose stones, chiefly granitine. The view from the mountain is extremely extensive, but by no means so grand as that from Cruchan Ben, as the subjacent country lies not in such wild and terrific disorder. From the one you see nothing but sharp ridges and peaks and narrow valleys; from the other you overlook,

indeed, numerous mountains, and see ridge rising behind ridge, but they are more distant, and the adjacent flat country is more extensive.

After examining the Parallel Roads of Glen Roy, spending a night at "a miserable inn" where there was not a particle of bread, and fasting twenty-nine hours, Leyden and his party crossed the Pass of Corryarrick—

Having procured three horses—for we were still fourteen miles from Fort Augustus—we proceeded towards the steep, bleak, rocky pass of Corryarrick, and ascended the zigzag, which I cannot think above a mile in length. The side of the mountain is indeed steep, bleak, and dismal, but neither great nor sublime. The soil over which the road passes along the declivity is wet and plashy, abounding in springs and void of canals or drains, which ought to have been formed in constructing the road. Near the top of the mountain it is not entirely covered with heath, but many spaces appear of a bare whitish surface, watery and full of loose stones. The day was extremely fine, but the view from Corryarrick was neither great, beautiful, nor picturesque. On the south it looked into the wild black region of Badenoch, surmounting the heathy hills which separate it from the similar district of Lochaber; on the west and north it extended from Ben Nevis over the hills of Lochaber, Glenelg, and Kintail to the gray heathy mountains on the confines of Ross; but the scene was neither diversified by variety nor striking from its native grandeur.

This description practically coincides with the impressions formed by the present writer, who crossed Corryarrick a dozen years ago, and who wrote at the time—

The road, once used for wheeled vehicles, has long since been abandoned, and has fallen into considerable decay; but it remains a very favourite route for pedestrians. It must be the length of the walk or the desire to get from the great Glen to Strathspey that makes it this, for the route has certainly no other attraction. It has been described to me as the most desolate and dreary walk in Scotland, and though it did not strike me as particularly desolate or dreary, I am free to confess that it is not decidedly attractive.

From Fort Augustus, our travellers proceeded to Inverness, and, visiting Nairn, Forres, and Elgin, proceeded to Fochabers over a district well wooded but discriminated by no characteristic scenery, and soon perceived the red, broken, and lofty banks of the Spey. The Spey descends with prodigious violence from the high inland district of Badenoch, but we did not see it in its magnificence. In its ordinary state it is not superior to the Tweed. The lower part of Strathspey is very fertile, and the greater part of the district is well sheltered with wood. The insipid bleak country by which it is surrounded causes it to be considered as beautiful.

It must be borne in mind, of course, that, a century ago, the "country side" in the North-East of Scotland must have had a totally different aspect from that which it has to-day; and this explains much of what must appear to present-day readers as curious, not to say extraordinary, description. For instance, Dr. Leyden gives this account of the view from Tap o' Noth—

The view from Noth is wild and desolate rather than picturesque. The nearest districts are covered with a brown uninterrupted heath, variegated with meadows and corn-fields, with few trees except in the immediate vicinity of great houses. It is bordered on the south side by the Dee's mountains, and northwards expands as far as the Paps of Caithness. The long hill of Benachie is one of the most picturesque objects, and there is a beautiful view of Huntly, in the vale of Strathbogie, towards the south-east.

Similarly,

The view from an eminence above Kildrummie is exceedingly wild, but it is extremely difficult to analyse it. It is not picturesque. It appears to be a desert, though intersected by numerous corn-fields, and containing many villages, cottages, and elegant houses. The heath, the natural covering of the country, is dun—short and uniform—uninterrupted by rocks or precipices. . . .

Ascending the hills above Kildrummie, the beautiful strath of the Don expands before the eye, variegated with green and yellow corn-fields, intermixed with long strips of heath, as the

natural character of the country seems to be similar to that of the Garioch and Strathbogie.

Again,

The view from Dunedeir is rather extensive than various. It commands a view of the Garioch, a flat fertile district when compared with the rest of the east coast we have passed. The horizon is skirted with brown, unbroken, heathy hills.

Finally, Aberdeen is reached, "its beauty enhanced by the flat insipid country we had left".

A visit is paid to Deeside, but the travellers did not go beyond Mar Lodge—had no time even to proceed to the Linn of Dee. At Kincardine O'Neil, "the scenery becomes truly picturesque and romantic, though it hardly aspires at the grand or sublime". The Pass of Ballater attracts attention, and the travellers "followed the windings of the Dee into Braemar, where the scenery becomes more bold and grand, though it remains equally romantic. Lofty ridges and spires of dun hills, steep declivities, narrow passes, and overhanging rocks present themselves more frequently, while the trees—especially the firs—become more huge and tall". The chief thing noted about Braemar, curiously enough, is that the Gaelic of the place is "deemed extremely barbarous"! From Braemar, Dr. Leyden and his companions travelled to Glenshee, proceeding up "Glen Beg"—"a bleak dismal unfertile valley"—to a pass, the name of which is omitted in Leyden's manuscript, but is said to "resemble considerably the pass of Corryarick". Doubtless the Cairnwell is meant.

Arrived at Perth, Dr. Leyden writes—"I may now congratulate myself on a safe escape from the Indians of Scotland, as our friend Ramsay denominates the Highlanders". Elsewhere he is equally uncomplimentary, for, writing on one occasion from Oban, he says—

Here am I in great spirits, listening to the sound of a bag-pipe and the dunning of some very alert Highlanders dancing the Highland fling with great glee. Though I have acquired a few Gaelic words and phrases, I am really in considerable danger of mistaking the house where I write for the tower of

Babel, for such a jargon of sound as that produced by a riotous company bawling Gaelic songs and chattering something very like Billingsgate, blending with English oaths and the humstrum of a Highland bagpipe, seldom assails any ears but those of the damned.

The attitude of the tourist and traveller to both Highland scenery and Highland people has changed very considerably since Leyden's day.



*Photo. by*

IN GLEN LUIBEG.

*A. Cruickshank.*

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE CAIRNGORMS.

BY WILLIAM SMITHARD.

ONE marked advantage of the Scottish railways to the tourist is the absence of tunnels; although heavy gradients abound, one may travel in North Britain for hundreds of miles without being deprived of daylight or annoyed by sulphurous fumes; and nowhere did we appreciate this more than on our journey over the Highland Railway through the Grampians.

The scenery surprised us; we had been led to expect a desolation and a monotony that would be depressing and wearisome, but somehow we could not conjure up the prescribed feelings. It is true there is no beauty as ordinarily understood, but the league-stretched, endless-seeming hills made a picture of vastness and expanse that was decidedly to our taste, and the warm evening light mellowed and enriched the rough vegetation on the rolling slopes, quite freeing them from the charge of cheerless barrenness. Then, again, the repetition of the same features seemed only fitting in such a stern landscape, as many blows are required to drive a big nail home; and a further appeal was made to the imagination by the past history of the region; it is one of Nature's disused workshops; everywhere are signs of glacial action on an immense scale, and the innumerable moraine heaps are the lasting monuments of tremendous forces long since dissipated.

It was some time after sunset when we reached Aviemore, and we walked three miles by starlight to Loch an Eilein, where a cottage was to be our headquarters for a few days. Seen the morning after our arrival, the loch was perfectly beautiful; in the foreground is the tiny island, with its fragment of ruined castle almost overgrown with luxuriant bushes. The shores are belted with fir trees, and beyond them rises the majestic form of Cairngorm, with subsidiary mountains.

An hour's walking along a cart-track through the forest brought us in sight of the Larig Ghru. The sky was heavy with cumulus clouds, about 3000 feet high, drifting slowly from the south, and enveloping the tops of the loftier mountains. The bare cone of Carn Elrick was quite clear; beyond it, over Glen Eunach, the steep black cliffs of Sgoran Dubh showed plainly, but the summit was obscured. In the foreground of the Larig is an undulating stretch of forest, carpeted with heather, which is picked out with rushes here and there in the boggy places, and also shows patches of green or golden bracken.

The shape of the pass is like the section of a gigantic bowl, beautifully regular, formed by the sloping sides of Braeriach on the western and Ben Muich Dhui on the eastern side. On the tops of those mountains the clouds were heavy and opaque, but in the bowl of the pass itself they were permeated with sunlight, thus getting an exquisite pearly luminosity, while their movements now and then revealed patches of azure background. The sweeping lines of the bowl were broken in just one place by the slight protrusion of the black spiky tops of a couple of pine trees, and altogether the scene was one of almost ethereal beauty. The view is hidden as we plunge once more into the forest by a narrow foot-track through the soft peat, but soon we get a peep into a small but lovely glen, of which the path skirts the eastern slopes; through it the stream from the Larig Ghru falls rapidly, and on the sides are masses of the grey foliage of the birch on a dusky background, studded with a few small firs. This is a glen within a glen, as it were; the stream has cut its way deep down through the moraine heaps, forming a rift where the birches are well sheltered, but on the wide open ground on each side above the tiny glen the pines as usual monopolise nearly all the available space.

Rising rapidly, we are soon on the southern edge of the forest, and all luxuriance is left behind. Castle Hill (the eastern counterpart of Carn Elrick), covered with white boulders, is on our left, and, separated from it by a dip is the much higher Lurcher's Crag, a shoulder of



Cairngorm. We are now well within the pass, which narrows quickly as we get between the stupendous cliffs which close in from either side; presently we come to a wilderness of big boulders, over which we pick our way with mincing steps for an hour or so before reaching the "col" or summit of the pass. It would, however, be impossible to lose one's way, as the precipices towering above do not permit of any unintentional side issues, and the only exit is towards Deeside, unless the traveller elects to do some stiff rock-climbing. We obtained a grand view from the head of the pass; and one advantage of doing the Larig Ghru is that a plentiful supply of pure cold water is available all the way—a great boon to the thirsty traveller.

Next day was devoted to Ben Muich Dhui and Cairngorm. Leaving the Larig Ghru between Castle Hill and the Lurcher's Crag, we ascended the ridge of the latter. Fine views opened out as we rose; north-west the new hotel at Aviemore showed its white walls conspicuously, and beyond it were the low hills of Monadh Liath range, in black shadow; due north and close at hand was a range of small heights, broken by several shallow corries, and culminating in Meall a' Bhuachaille, between which and Mam Suim is a pass leading in a north-easterly direction to the flat country of Strath Nethy, and beyond that are more and more hills. They were all clear of the clouds, which lay close together in long parallel lines just above the summits, like a series of blinds each rolled up a little higher than the one below. In the foreground was the immense forest of Rothiemurchus, looking very dark in spite of the brilliant sunshine, with its gem-like Loch an Eilein and Loch Morlich.

An hour and a half's easy walking brought us to the top of the Lurcher's Crag; the view north and west was maintained, but Cairngorm and Ben Muich Dhui were covered with clouds; Sgoran Dubh, however, was quite clear, and beyond it could be seen Ben Nevis and the Glencoe Mountains quite plainly, so we had every encouragement to proceed. It took us two hours longer to reach the summit of Ben Muich Dhui, and by that time

all the mountains were free of clouds. We were delighted to get to the top after the seemingly endless up-and-down walk over the sand and boulders of the plateau. On the summit is a good cairn, surrounded by a ring of smaller ones, like a priest and his acolytes.

Immensity and contrast are the keynotes of the view ; rotundity terminates abruptly in precipices, and grey rounded boulders give way to black, steep crags. Scores of mountains, of all shapes and sizes, are around, but it would take a whole day to identify them. To the north, terminating the plateau on which we stand, is the huge bald and rounded top of Cairngorm. Between us and it is a series of mounds or steppes, covered with boulders and sand, very gaunt in the fierce sunlight, and looking much more like a sea-beach left bare by the receding tide than a mountain summit. A short walk westward brings us over the precipices of the Larig Ghru, which are still more impressive now seen from above, and on the other side of the pass are the steep and savage corries of Braeriach and Cairn Toul.

An hour is all too short to realise the scene in the fulness of its grandeur, but it was after three o'clock, and six hours' walking still lay between us and home.

The walk over the plateau to Cairngorm is very fine, disclosing grand corries and precipices hitherto unseen. Midway between the two summits, and 1500 feet below, on our right, was Loch Avon. Only a small dip is involved between the Ben and Cairngorm, but our muscles rebelled a little at the call upon them to take us up the latter, and we were glad that it concluded our climbing for the day. We descended in a north-westerly direction, by a regular and easy track that gives no variety, and in an hour and a half reached Glenmore Lodge.

Our last excursion in the Cairngorm district was to Sgoran Dubh and Braeriach. From the east end of Loch an Eilein we climbed the steep face of Creag Dubh, after passing through the desolate remains of a portion of the forest which was devastated by fire some years ago. The morning was dull and cloudy,

but we had fine views of the loch, and saw its island to great advantage from Cadha Mor. We went southward along the lofty ridge which forms the western wall of Glen Eunach. A slight dip, followed by a sharp rise, brought us to the cairn on Sgoran Dubh in just over three hours from the time of starting. Sgoran Dubh's eastern face drops almost sheer down for 2000 feet to Loch Eunach; this face is seamed with a number of wide gullies, divided by black and broken craggy arêtes, and when the mist blew over at intervals we looked right down the gullies to the blue surface of the loch, and across to the zigzag paths up Braeriach on the opposite slopes.

At Sgoran Dubh my companion was for turning back on account of the mist, but I wanted to do Braeriach at all hazards, so he decided to continue along with me. We had to make a considerable descent, but the going was quite easy until we got to the head of the glen, when we plunged into the wilderness of moraine heaps that stretches between Glen Feshie and Glen Dee. There is no means of avoiding the heavy labour involved in this part of the walk; no friendly ridge or stream runs in the right direction, and there is nothing for it but to adopt the switch-back method over the heaps, which are interspersed with bogs and tiny lochs.

We were glad to begin the steep climb up to Braeriach. Going steadily up the grassy slope, littered with boulders here and there, we soon entered the mist again, and in a while, after a stiff tug, came to level ground, which was evidently the western plateau of the mountain. Working to compass and map, we made for the northern cairn, and, after walking for about a mile, came right on it, just as the mist lifted for a few moments. From there we struck due east over a slight depression, and presently came to the main or eastern plateau of Braeriach. We were well rewarded for our pains. "Nature did never yet betray the heart that loved her" was the uppermost thought in our minds. Responsive to the fitful gusts of the breeze, the mist rose and fell rapidly, and the glimpses we got down the awful precipices and corries on the northern face of the

mountain were perhaps the more startling for their transitoriness. In our excitement we forgot for awhile to note our direction, and on looking at the compass were rather alarmed to find that we were going south-east instead of north. Our guide-book map did not give much detail, but we came to the conclusion that our south-easterly direction was only a temporary one, due to our having followed the edges of the horse-shoe corries we had been looking at, which had caused us to box the compass in a few minutes. A tiny loch flashed into momentary view high up on the opposite wall of a corrie, but the surroundings were not shown sufficiently to enable us to locate it with certainty. I felt sure that our general direction had been correct, *i.e.*, northerly, so we took that line again, and pushed on rapidly, for it was less than an hour to sunset, and we were not equipped for a night out in such a wild place. Presently we came to a deep declivity, which we descended in suspense, and with keen anxiety to get below the clouds, so as to know whether our judgment had been successfully exercised. To our delight we found we were in the long and grassy Corrie Bennie, which would take us into Glen Eunach, and was our nearest way home, which we reached soon after nightfall.

After dinner we gathered round the glowing peats, Mr. C— mixing some special farewell toddy, and we spent a delightful hour listening to his racy talk about the big Rothiemurchus world and the little world beyond. Next day we found ourselves in Skye.

I suppose every man, or at least every mountaineer, has two or three landmarks in his career that he always looks back to and measures by. A very prominent one with me is my visit to the Cairngorms.

## A WEEK-END IN AND AROUND THE TROSSACHS.

BY AN EDINBURGH MEMBER.

ON the Saturday evening preceding the Edinburgh September Holiday of 1900, the writer and six comrades, all Edinburgh Volunteers, found themselves at Callander. In the summer they had spent a fortnight amidst the incessant rain and mud of the Forth Brigade Camp at Lochcote, and the contempt, which they had there acquired, for the comforts and luxuries of city life was responsible for the expedition on which they were now bent.

The party carried forty-eight hours' rations, including Bovril, tins of café-au-lait, and suchlike beverages, familiar to campers-out. Each man carried a spirit lamp for boiling water (all spirits other than those required for the lamps were strictly barred!). The general idea was to have two complete days and nights in the Highlands; and the special idea was, on the first night to sleep out in the Trossachs; on the following day to cross over Ben Venue to Ben Lomond, and in the evening get back to or near to the Trossachs; and on the Monday to climb Ben Ledi, and then return to Edinburgh by the evening train from Callander.

More than a quarter of a century divided the ages of the oldest and youngest of the party, but the former backed himself for a hundred yards sprint against any of his friends, of whatever age, and the writer feels assured that seldom has a party setting out on a similar excursion looked or felt in better fettle. Nevertheless, it must be owned that in all likelihood our appearance caused amusement to onlookers. The equipment of some of our members was, to say the least, unusual. Instead of providing themselves with knapsacks of the conventional pattern for pedestrian tourists, they defied usage, and

(tell it not at Headquarters!) the Volunteer Regulations as well, by making use of their regimental equipment. For example, the senior aforesaid, whose military enthusiasm thirty years or thereby of continuous service in the Volunteers has not damped, reached the height of absurdity by dangling from his belt (regulation Rifle Brigade pattern) a tin mug of the kind usually associated with Sunday School picnics. However, no objection was taken by the local guardians of law and order, and by twilight we were well on our way by the side of Loch Vennachar to the Trossachs, where we intended to bivouac.

About ten o'clock we reached a spot near the Sluices, at the east end of Loch Katrine. We meant to rely for shelter on the trees and bracken, and there was no want of these, but otherwise the circumstances were the reverse of encouraging. The night was so dark that, when near the head of Loch Achray, one of the party stumbled over one obstruction and nearly fell on a second; it was not until matches had been lighted that it was found that these obstructions were two navvies—drunk and sound asleep—stretched across the road. A thick mist which had hung over the country for some days, and was now developing into a drizzle, had made the grass and bracken quite wet. The Achray Water flowed close by the road, but we had no pail, or suitable substitute, for drawing water, and the temptation was strong to dispense with hot Bovril for supper rather than risk an involuntary dip in the river. At this juncture a light was seen. This betokened a house, but—had we not forsworn houses until our return to Edinburgh? And so for a time each man outdid his neighbour in ignoring that light! However, an eminently sensible member of the party suggested that we might, at any rate, see whether a pail could be borrowed. There seemed to be a suspicion that behind this suggestion lurked the idea of asking shelter for the night, for all felt it their duty to object to any negotiations whatsoever with the occupants of the house. The objections were not strongly pressed, however, and liberty was given to our friend to endeavour to

get the use of a pail. The negotiations between him and the good lady of the house were continued longer than seemed reasonable, and other two or three members of the party found their way to the door. By and by the pioneers returned with the intimation (it need not be said whether it was welcome or unwelcome!) that an unfurnished apartment, attached to the house, was at our disposal for the night. No time was lost in taking possession. Water was brought from the river, the spirit lamps were lighted, and very soon the fragrance of café-au-lait filled the room, and supper was being eaten with great contentment. To crown our good luck, the gudeman presently appeared with a supply of fuel, and a fire was lighted in a stove. Before getting into these comparatively comfortable quarters, we had not been in such an unfortunate plight as Fitz-James, when,

“Not the summer solstice there,  
Tempered the midnight mountain air,  
But every breeze that swept the wold  
Benumbed his drenched limbs with cold.  
In dread, in danger, and alone,  
Famished and chilled, through ways unknown,  
Tangled and steep, he journeyed on;  
Till, as a rock's huge point he turned,  
A watch-fire close before him burned”.

Still we were irresistibly reminded of the hospitality which Fitz-James received from Roderick Dhu—

“He gave him of his Highland cheer,  
The hardened flesh of mountain deer;  
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,  
And bade the Saxon share his plaid”.

The night was a rather sleepless one. The wooden floor made a somewhat hard couch, and in the cold autumn night our waterproofs were poor substitutes for blankets. Besides, there were snorers in the party. In the last number of the *Journal* (page 102) it is said—“A *Rhonchissator* or Snorer is a pestilent Thing in a Tent, and there be few who can abide him, even among those of his own kind. It avails nothing to reproach him with his Trumpeting; for, look you, he will deny it—snore he never so rumbustiously”.

The writer can say, from his camping experience in general and this Trossachs experience in particular, that these are words of wisdom. When morning came, every one was firmly convinced that he had not, but that all his neighbours had, snored. In such a case it is difficult to get at the truth, and perhaps all that can, with safety, be affirmed is that there was hardly a moment during the four or five hours nominally given over to sleep, when all of us refrained from snoring. In view of all this it was not wonderful that we were early astir. Breakfast was over by five o'clock, and a start was made ten minutes later.

There was now a wonderful unanimity of opinion that in the Trossachs the nights were much colder than in Edinburgh! And the proposal that for the succeeding night we should, if possible, take advantage of the shelter, which we had so unexpectedly found, was carried *nemine contradicente*. A note was accordingly left to inform our hosts that, with their kind permission, we should again be their lodgers.

Crossing the river at the Sluices we made for the western peak of Ben Venue by the route indicated in Baddeley's map. As we ascended by the Pass of Bealnam-bo, the view was particularly fine, the mist which hung over Loch Katrine adding to the effect, but, before we had ascended far, it became so thick as to make us doubt the practicability of carrying out our programme. This was to cross from Ben Venue by the east side of Beinn Bhreac, thence down the Eas Cheagill, and thence to Ben Lomond by the path which strikes off at the west end of Loch Ard.

The summit of Ben Venue was reached about seven o'clock. Here an attempt was made to photograph the party, but the mist was so thick that one could see but a few yards in front, and the attempt resulted in failure. Soon after leaving the summit, we dropped into a water course, which it was thought must be Eas Cheagill, though it was agreed that we had reached that stream in an unexpectedly short time; but the man with the map and compass pronounced the water to be running in the proper



direction—almost due south—and, thus reassured, the party went forward. As we got lower, the mist became less dense, and, the sun breaking through for a moment, it was seen that we were now going eastwards. A further examination of the map showed that, instead of getting into Eas Cheagill, we had dropped into Glen Rievach, and were on the way back to the Trossachs. Still, all hope of Ben Lomond was not abandoned, and, compass and map in hand, we made a fresh start—over Beinn an Fhogharaidh—for the west end of Loch Ard. By the time the top of the latter Ben was reached, however, the mist had become “small rain,” and the one obvious thing was that there was no hope of a view that day from the top of Ben Lomond, should we have the good fortune to get there. Reluctantly it was decided to make for Aberfoyle, thence by Loch Ard and Loch Chon to Stronachlacher, and back by the north side of Loch Katrine to our quarters near the Sluices.

The descent to the road from the Trossachs and Aberfoyle was made by the Slate Quarries, and Aberfoyle was reached without incident. Space does not permit of our enlarging on the beauties of that delightful spot—beauties which would have made it popular apart from its associations with Bailie Nicol Jarvie. The veritable coulter with which the worthy Bailie did such good execution, and which still dangles from a tree opposite the Hotel bearing his name, adds romance to the scene, however.

Leaving Aberfoyle by the Stronachlacher road, we were soon in full view of Loch Ard, “the spacious mirror which reflects in still magnificence the high dark heathy mountains, huge grey rocks, and shaggy banks by which it is encircled”. Perhaps the long tramp which we had had over the misty hills, and a swim in the Loch which was now indulged in, and which made us all feel as if we were but beginning the day, sharpened our appreciation of the loveliness of the scene. Certain it is that we all felt we had seldom beheld such a delightful Arcadia. Loch Chon, which was next passed, is thought by some to be even more beautiful than Loch Ard. Loch Ard, however, has an

advantage in its associations. At its east end is the famous "Pass" of Aberfoyle, and at Ledard, near its west end, and a short distance north of the road, is the waterfall which Scott made the greeting place of Flora MacIvor and Waverley.

Stronachlacher Hotel was reached in time for tea, and such a tea! Men who, for twenty-four hours, had tasted nothing but sandwiches and the results of their own cooking (?) were not easily satisfied, and the waiter stared as helping after helping of cold meat was called for. Let us express the hope that our depredations did not lead to an increase in the moderate tariff of the hotel.

After tea a boat was hired to row the party across Loch Katrine, and the walk was continued eastwards along the north side of the Loch. The mist had by this time lifted, and the view of the Loch and the hills on the south side—among which Ben Venue, of course, stood out prominently—was charming. Our quarters at the east end of the Loch were reached as darkness was closing in.

In camp the first night is invariably sleepless, the second night usually sleepy. So it was with our party; and during our second night in the Trossachs even the snoring nuisance was not felt. It was past six o'clock before it was agreed that reveillé must be held to have been sounded, and by the time we had bathed in the river and leisurely breakfasted and got ready for the road it was 9.15. The Brig of Turk was reached about 10, and left about 10.40. Taking the road along the Finglas Water to the farm of Achnahard, we commenced the ascent of Ben Ledi about 12.30, in a mist as thick as that which we had experienced on Ben Venue. It was three hours later (not good time in ordinary circumstances) ere the top was reached. The mist was very troublesome, and necessitated almost continuous reference to the map and compass. Our view from the top was even more limited than that of the party whose ascent is described in Vol. II. of the *Journal* (page 118), for we never saw more than a few yards ahead. We afterwards considered ourselves lucky, however, for a

party of ladies and gentlemen, who made the ascent the same day, got lost in attempting to descend by the ordinary route to Coilantogle, and had to spend the night on the hill. We ate the last of our provisions on the summit, and, descending by the Pass of Leny, reached Callander about 6.30. Three hours later we were back in Edinburgh.

To some members of the party now in a distant land, the outing must be one of the brightest of their memories of Scotland. It is one of the writer's pleasantest recollections, though what it would have been but for the shelter so opportunely found in the Trossachs he does not care to conjecture.

MEMORANDA OF AN EXCURSION TO THE  
GRAMPIANS AND STRATHSPEY  
IN JULY, 1863.

BY THE LATE PETER ANDERSON

(*Joint Author of "The Guide to the Highlands".*)\*

I TOOK the opportunity of the inspection of the portion of the Inverness and Perth Junction Railway from Forres to Aviemore by Captain Rich, R.E., on Thursday, 30th July, 1863, to make out an ascent I had from sometime previously projected of Braeriach, the next highest of the Grampians to Ben MacDhui, being within 31 feet of it, and to visit Loch an Eilan and Loch Enich and the Rothiemurchus forest. Mr. William P. Grant of Rothiemurchus, having learnt my purpose, and that I intended to put up, according to arrangements with the innkeeper, Mr. Thomas Cumming, at the Boat-house of Rothiemurchus, very kindly invited me to take up my quarters at The Doune, better than a mile from the former, which is at the mouth of Loch-an-Eilan burn.

The bottom of the valley of the Spey at Rothiemurchus is a level plain, and the river has a shingly beach. The Doune, a comfortable and substantial mansion, lies near the river, which keeps the south side of Tor Alvie, and just a little below that eminence, in the midst of a level grass lawn of some 200 acres, with hardwood interspersed, in front of the Ord Bain, a rocky hill some 600 or 700 feet high, pretty well covered with birch, and lying in advance of the mountains which line the strath upwards. The Ord Bain, with adjoining eminences round Loch an Eilan and Loch Gamhna, contract Strathspey on the south as Craigel-

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\* The Club has to thank Mr. P. J. Anderson, the only son of the writer, for the use of these Notes. Names, heights, &c., are reproduced as in the original MS.—ED.

lachie does on the north, and Tor Alvie blocks up the centre. These are all richly mantled with birch. Immediately behind the house is a flat-topped alluvial eminence (whence the name) on which anciently, no doubt, stood a stronghold, but which was last century occupied by a commodious wooden residence, the rooms of which were handsomely panelled and well furnished.

Provided next morning with a stout serviceable pony, and attended by a guide, James M'Gregor—the best in that locality,—and a boy, James Grant, to ride the pony from Loch Enich round to meet me in the evening at the entrance to the Larig—the pass through the Grampians to Braemar—we set out at 8.30 A.M.

The road to Loch an Eilan and Loch Enich leads between the garden and the *quoad sacra* manse. The former loch lies on the south side of the Ord Bain about one and a half miles from The Doune, and is encompassed on other two sides by Cadha Mor, the terminal mountain of the lofty range which lines Glen Enich on the north—the slopes of which and the shores of the loch on that side are covered with large pines, and the small rocky eminence of Creag Carn Poul (head of the pool) is covered with birch. The east side of the loch, wooded with young fir, is bordered by the lower slopes of a great plateau which advances from the base of the grand distinctive group which the Grampians here form. The loch, which widens in the centre on the west side into a circular form, may be about a mile and a half in length, and has a fine waving shore-line. Near the north centre shore, and in front of a cultivated space, lies the little islet, with the most picturesque tree-filled shell of its old castle, the walls tenanted by a couple of water eagles, which to a day every year—1st to 3rd April—return to hatch their brood in their insular eyrie. I accordingly saw a fledgling keep a dignified state on the ruined wall.

A wide undulating fir wood—where we observed a number of the young natural-grown trees of two to four feet in height, as well as heather in large patches quite scorched by the severe and very unusual frost of the 15th

July, on which occasion snow lay for four or five days on the top of the mountains, and there was ice one-quarter of an inch thick on the margin of the Spey—leads to the opening of Glen Enich, which is filled up with a well-grown pine forest.

Glen Enich runs up for some 8 or 9 miles into the heart of the Grampians between Braeriach and a lofty, unbroken range which walls it on the north-west, the highest point of which is Scorguie, and it terminates at a high connecting mountain screen about half the height of Scorguie, forming a great corrie, the upper end of which is occupied by the waters of Loch Enich. The glen is of considerable width, but is in a great measure filled up by prodigious deposits of gravel and sand running with an occasional break along the centre on both sides of the Bennie, and displaying, particularly on the north side, very steep, smooth faces and rounded or tabular summits arrayed in mingled heath and pasture. These deposits, however, cease before we come to the lake. The pines arrange themselves in masses, more especially on the risings of the undulating ground, which is covered with heather and blaeberreries and cranberries. For a space the road runs along the face of the alluvial deposit throughout the pine wood, here overhanging the mountain torrent and its bed of large stones. Here there are some magnificent pines—some of them what are called Roy—back-growing trees, red in the heart, in all stages of decay, to the bleached and barkless skeleton. Looking back, the eye commands a long reach of forest—Mealvonachie?—shelving downwards along the course of the Bennie, the Kincardine forests ascending far beyond—all on the Rothiemurchus property—on the outskirts of Glenmore, which lies at the foot of Cairngorm. Creag na Leacainn presents itself on the further side, and Elrick, diverse from the contiguous mountains in its somewhat conical form, on the near side of the Larig Ghrymach, and in front of that prolongation of Braeriach which flanks the Larig. Up the glen, Braeriach, a large and very grand mass, faces obliquely. Alongst this face runs a long deep hollow,

Corrie Bennie, from which the Bennie Beg flows, and, nearer at hand, towards the top of this limb of the mountain, Corrie Lochan. On the right side of the glen, in front, Scorguie shows a flattened peak surmounting the jagged flank outline of its long range. The forest soon ceases, and the rest of the way is between the unadorned smooth-surfaced deposits, backed by the sterile mountain masses.

Loch Enich, to the foot of which there is a good but private carriage road—and which, the guide and boy taking three hours to reach, I infer to be ten good miles from The Doune—is about one and a half miles long by one-half mile wide. Lofty, continuous, and in most parts inaccessible precipices environ its waters. The face of Scorguie for about a couple of miles consists—for two-thirds or three-fourths at top of an elevation of say 2000 feet above the level of the lake, which must be fully 1000 feet above the sea-level, The Doune being 700—of ragged, broken, perpendicular precipices, sinking into less but very steep acclivities, all much furrowed with watercourses. The highest point is at the lower end of the lake, and on either side of the summit the range rises into a spiry peak. The ridge at the upper end of the lake subsides into about half the height of Scorguie, while on the south side Braeriach rises here considerably higher than Scorguie—not so perpendicularly—much strewed on the lower acclivities with detritus, with green rocky corries above. The lower summit of Braeriach behind seems some 600 or 700 feet higher than Scorguie, while the highest, which lies to the east and towards the Larig, is some 400 or 500 more. Loch Enich must be much of the character of Loch Aan, but on a considerably less grand scale. I would expect that the high elevation of the surrounding precipices at Loch Aan must be unbroken, and probably greater at the head than at the sides of the lake. There are large-sized char in Loch Enich.

We began the ascent a little back from the lake by a slanting track formed by Lord Stamford, who rents Rothiemurchus, Kinrara, and Glenmore shootings. It took us

two hours to reach the first summit. The top of the mountain presents a great tabular expanse of grit and stones, from which two rounded summits gradually rise, one considerably higher than the other. The day was exceedingly hot, and a hot mist obscured the distant view, the most remote point beyond Ben Vrockan, which lies behind the mountains flanking the southern part of the Larig—and the mountains lining Glen Geusachan, being Ben y Gloe. To the west we overlooked the upper portions of the range on this further side of Glen Feshie.

The only plant on this summit, excepting what might be *Lichen nivalis*, was *Silene acaulis* in small patches—its small purplish disk, where fully expanded, studding the short herbage, exceedingly pretty. In the lower ascent *Alchemilla alpina* was in great abundance, and by the mossy springs *Saxifraga stellaris*, also very pleasing, almost like London Pride in its minute spotted petals. I also found *Cerastium alpinum* and *Epilobium alpinum*, and a good deal of *Rubus chamaemorus*. I renewed my acquaintance with these Alpine beauties with much pleasure. But the flora of the Grampians is very scanty. I was disappointed at not finding *Azalea procumbens*. But on and near the highest summit there was a good deal of *Arbutus alpina*. Amidst the miles of blaeberry and cranberry throughout the day not a single berry was to be seen—the effect of the frost. But as we neared the first summit we were greeted by a very interesting sight—a troop of deer—all finely-antlered bucks, walking slowly past in single file within a couple of hundred yards of us till they disappeared behind a swelling of the hill-side.

My guide took me to what he called the true Well of Dee, a little east by north of the first summit, where we lunched, cooling our whisky and water from a patch of snow. I heartily endorse his opinion. The rivulet runs a long way, fully half-a-mile, along the wide topmost plain before being precipitated, and is a good-sized burn of limpid water with a shingly bed, requiring something more than a wide step to cross even in the then dry weather, and to appearance considerably longer, as we averred, in its



course than the stream we afterwards found descending the mountain face opposite, and which finds its way into what are called the Wells of Dee near the watershed of the Larig.

As we ascended towards the highest summit, 4265 feet, we picked up some tolerable specimens—one very good—of Cairngorm. These are distinguished by their black colour, amidst the grey grit and stones. The highest summit is an extraordinary agglomeration of huge rounded and flattened fragments of stones wedged together. Near the top of the ascent we came suddenly on Garachor Dee, a vast corrie, in the angle between the highest portion of Braeriach and the flank of the mountain or plateau which spreads itself towards Cairntoul. At the angle the stream precipitates itself. The precipices here are of truly tremendous depth, and their elevation is indicated by the great sheets of snow lying in the crevices. The eye is at once arrested by two great precipitous walls of perpendicular rock, one in advance of the other, which Cairntoul on the same side of the Larig presents across a great amphitheatric recess, into which the streams from the Garachor Dee and the Garachor Four at the opposite corner discharge themselves before descending to the bottom of the Larig. At the foot of the eastmost and highest of the precipices of Cairntoul lies an elevated tarn or pool of water. Cairntoul looks exactly as high as Braeriach, and is in fact just 20 feet lower, or 4245 feet. From the very topmost point of Braeriach another tremendous corrie cut out chimney-like in the perpendicular mountain face, Garachor Vrochan, lined by jagged walls of rock, sinks perpendicularly to a great plateau of broken rocks, corresponding to the tarn on the face of Cairntoul. Here, at 3.15 p.m., we sat down and lighted our pipes under the lee of a rocky fragment on the very edge of Garachor Vrockan. I cannot affirm that I felt free of all sense of insecurity, and I certainly could not divine how we were to reach the level of the Larig so immediately beneath without the risk of more precipitation than was compatible with whole bones. On the further side of the

Larig the mountains rise at once from the watercourse, very steep in appearance, but not in reality inaccessible acclivities, rising nearly opposite, but rather more to the south, into the gradually rounded summit of Ben Mac Dhui. All the acclivities, however, rapidly pass into a range of perpendicular precipices towards the entrance of the Larig. The opposite mountains form one continuous rampart, of which the portion south of Ben Mac Dhui and the furthest in sight on that side of the Larig is Carn a' Mhaim. Beyond Ben Mac Dhui the upper portions of Ben na Mheadoin, and, between the two, of Ben Aan (3967 feet), on the further side of Loch Aan, show themselves. To the right the eye scans mountainous ranges in Braemar. To the left the topmost peak of Cairngorm (4095 feet) rises from the wide ridge common to it, Ben Mac Dhui and Creag na Leacainn at the north-east corner of the Larig; south-west of Cairntoul are Ben y Vrockan and Carn Geusachan and the mountains of Glen Geusachan, which joins the Larig on the further side of Cairntoul.

I don't recollect being ever more impressed with a sense of wild, rugged grandeur. The elevations and the prodigious mass of mountain land on all hands, the depth of the perpendicular walls of the succession of corries encircling the great hollow immediately below, and the very striking evidences of the power of the elemental warfare which had torn so many rocky masses from the mountain sides—the immense mountain plains and mountain tops covered with nothing but grit and broken stones, a feature which the deep cleaving ravine of the Larig revealed as characteristic of the mountain-sides to fully two-thirds of their upper elevation, formed a scene of magnificent desolation unrelieved save by the scanty heathy verdure seen to gather round the foundations of the mountains and amongst the infant Dee in the course of its descent—such as I never did witness before. The disappointment of the obscurity of the distant view was perhaps fully compensated by the singular sense of helpless desolation in the world of sight being circumscribed so completely to these gigantic forms and this desolate wilderness of verdureless

stone and grit, with which we were thus left to hold an all but companionless communion—for the distant forms of certain Sappers and Miners, descried pursuing their vocation towards the top of Ben Mac Dhui, did not serve to dispel the feeling of remote loneliness. At a rough guess I should take the bottom of the Larig at the base of Ben Mac Dhui and Cairntoul to be about 500 to 600 feet above the level of the Spey at The Doune of Rothiemurchus. This would take 1200 to 1300 off its full elevation, leaving quite 3000 feet (perpendicular) of an almost unbroken acclivity from top to bottom here, and so of the other mountain masses. The water shear of the Larig, which at the top of the pass runs rapidly, will be a couple of hundred feet or so of higher level, and lies north of the highest portion of Ben Mac Dhui.

The easiest ascent of Ben Mac Dhui from the Spey is by Cairngorm. Both summits can readily be attained, or the descent to Loch Aan can be made out returning over the shoulder of Cairngorm—or the tourist can reach Castleton of Braemar. But either is a hard day's work, the fag of which may, however, be lessened by riding or driving to Loch Morlich. Indeed, instances were mentioned of individual tourists having made out Cairngorm and Ben Mac Dhui, Loch Aan from the latter, which must be a very steep descent, and returning by Cairngorm to the Boat-house, all in one day. But such an effort demands no ordinary walking powers, and is more than I should like to have to face. Perhaps by driving to and from Loch Morlich it might not be so much out of the way. It seems no uncommon thing in parties bivouacking for the night under the shelter stone at Loch Aan.

*Arbutus alpina*, very stunted—with, as I presume, *Lichen nivalis*—is the characteristic flora of the summit. Descending gradually from the summit, we suddenly turned off—on the side of the mountain opposite to the end of Corrie Bennie, where the southern face fronting Cairntoul begins to round off to the course of the Larig. The descent along an abrupt alluvial stripe was about as steep towards the top as I have come down, and must make

the ascent on this side sufficiently fagging and scrambling, for which reason I had, by the guide's advice, followed the route I did instead of the reverse, as I had intended.

We reached the bottom a little below the Wells of Dee. The time occupied in the descent, but for several stoppages to press plants—for which I had a couple of boards of pasteboard with leaves of blotting-paper—a better arrangement than carrying a vasculum—would have been just an hour. The highest part of the bottom of the Larig is a downright avalanche of broken stones, “the fragments of an earlier world”—or rather a succession of avalanches at intervals have formed a series of great embankments of broken stone from side to side, with deep hollows betwixt. In these, on the Mar side, the Dee—*i.e.*, this fork of the infant Dee—spreads out into a series of lochans. The lowest and largest—the first we came to—I judged to be about 50 feet long by 30 broad, of remarkably clear water, with a green bottom. In this and the next—a much smaller piece of water, with a short descent and less rugged than the barrier below the other, which may be from 30 to 40 feet high—trouts of a good size were darting about the sides. The third, which is a mere pool, is some hundred yards from the second, and intermediate there are two of those high banks of stone, between which probably at times there may be a gathering of water. A rivulet coming down the face of Corriemore—the boundary between Rothiemurchus and Braemar—feeds the pools, but the stream has a subterranean passage underneath the banks of stone and elsewhere in its progress.

At the water shear there are two more great hollows girt by great masses of broken stones, but without pools. Then appears a stream issuing from beneath the lower rampart of stone with a northward course, running occasionally underground. This is the Ault Druie. The Druie falls into the Bennie, and the Luineag from Loch Morlich at the foot of Cairngorm joins just at Coilum Bridge, a mile or so from the Spey and about one and a half miles below the Boat-house and between four and five miles from Loch Morlich, and their conjoined waters get the name of Ault Druie.

The whole bottom of the upper portion of the pass for fully a mile is, as may be conceived, of the most rugged possible character, and it continues sufficiently broken for a mile or so more each way. For a couple of miles from the lowest lochan the passage is flanked on either hand by a very grand range of precipices—on our side Coire Odhar an Lochain Duibh, a prolongation of Braeriach between the Larig and Corrie Bennie—on the other Corriemore and Creag na Leacainn. Both rise in precipitous acclivities of broken stones wedged together, but these rapidly pass into upright walls of black rock much of a basaltic aspect, and crested at an elevation of apparently more than 1500 feet with jagged spikes of disintegrating rock.

I am not aware that there is another instance in this country of such a mountain pass as the Larig. For eight to ten miles it cleaves asunder these mighty mountains to the great depth indicated, and on either side, in near proximity, rises an abrupt and lofty mountain rampart, which for miles assumes a perfectly vertical structure. Everlasting silence and unrelieved desolation pervade this unique region. The wayfarer along the watercourses, however, loses the grand corries in the upper stages of Braeriach and Cairntoul, the details of which must be rather guessed at (though their presence is perceived) than realised from below. The summit of Braeriach is obviously the most commanding position of any for the corries, and perhaps for the outlook generally. I did not perceive—and the same remark had been made to me by another—any reason for the character assigned to this region of the notable number of cataracts on the mountain sides. Nor do I fancy that in wet weather they will be particularly more decided in number than in other similar localities.

At the lower end of the wall of Braeriach, the Larig becomes filled up on both sides with banks of broken rock and gravel, having only room for the burn—then the mountains open out, Elrick presenting its somewhat conical bulk on the left. Here we descried a herd of deer

on the crest of Elrick, and on that of the corresponding mountain in front of Creag na Leacainn, another which my guide computed to number about a hundred.

The boy and pony we found at 6.15 P.M. waiting us about a couple of miles from the water shear, and probably eight miles from The Doune. The footing over the broken moorland was such as only the known familiarity of the animal with his work could reconcile the rider to. Presently the great alluvial deposits reappear from the south side of Elrick, and a great alluvial plain is found to expand in front of the mountains stretching away towards Glenmore and the Kincardine hills. The burn—on the east side of which our course latterly lay—plunges through a deep ravine scooped out of the alluvial deposit and alongst the base of Elrick. The very lofty faces of this ravine are filled up with birch and a pine forest, where the young trees and the old wood—a remnant of the once great forest—most pleasingly intermingle their contrasted light and dark livery with that of the birch. The track runs along the edge of the ravine. A few pines are scattered over the surface of the platform, and on the hill slopes beyond are seen portions of the Kincardine and Glenmore forests. In front large tracts of varied wood are seen in Strathspey, which is bounded on the north by a great mountain range. Altogether the whole scene is very grand indeed.

Descending to the haugh ground by the waterside after it has emerged from its confinement, we crossed the stream and passed the farm-house of Auldrue—continued across the terrace on a lower level towards, and got back to, Loch an Eilan.

Reached The Doune at 8.45 P.M., the day's work having just occupied twelve and a quarter hours, of which I was, say, seven hours on foot.

## BEINN DEARG AND CÀRN A' CHLAMAIN.

WHOEVER has visited the Beinn a' Ghlo mountains must have noticed, just to the north of Glen Tilt, two important summits much higher than their neighbours. One is Beinn Dearg (3304), appearing from this point, however, as a huge unshapely mass; the other, the one to the east, the more noble of the two, is Càrn a' Chlamain (the Kite's Cairn) (3158). Neither can be said to be very popular among hillmen, though both are easy of access—within  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours of Blair Atholl—and command most extensive and interesting panoramas of

“Mountain and mist, lone glen, and murmuring stream,  
Shaggy forest, and grey hillside”.

Beinn Dearg, being equidistant from Struan and Blair Atholl, may be reached either by Glen Bruar or Glen Tilt; an excellent variation being to ascend by the one glen and return by the other. Glen Bruar, I believe, on the whole, offers a better approach than Glen Tilt, in so much that if one wishes it, one may have a road right on to the slopes of the hill; and, further, one is able to view the mountain long before one is actually on it—an important consideration to some. The “glen” road begins just opposite Struan Station, and climbs steadily uphill till it joins the Bruar Water near Cuilltemhuc; then it follows the windings of the stream up the glen. A little short of Cuilltemhuc a magnificent view is got of Beinn Dearg, away at the head of the glen. Two routes now present themselves to the climber. The first and most direct is to leave the road at a point about six miles from Struan, ford the Bruar, and then ascend by the right bank of Allt Hecchan. The other, longer no doubt, but equally good, is to keep to the road till Bruar Lodge is passed; a short distance beyond this a stalker's path will be observed to break off to the right, and rise by the side of a burn to a

height of about 2000 feet, ending just at the base of the final slope of Beinn Dearg. The remaining 1300 feet of this slope, although at first through long heather, then over a sea of boulders, offers very little resistance, and the summit, adorned with its large cairn, is soon reached. The most convenient road from Blair Atholl is that which passes up through Old Blair, just behind the castle, and then runs along the north side of Glen Tilt. This road gives origin to another which leads off about a mile and a half from Old Blair, passes through a strip of wood, and then follows the course of Allt Slanuehaidh to a bothy just below Beinn a' Chait. Our route now lies over the summit of this hill, which occupies a position two miles to the south of Beinn Dearg, then across the dip—the gathering ground of the Allts Heechan and Diridh—between them, and so on to the southern slopes of Beinn Dearg, and finally up to the summit.

Càrn a' Chlamain lies four miles to the east of Beinn Dearg, and may be included in an excursion to that mountain, or ascended direct from Glen Tilt. In the latter case, starting from Blair Atholl, the Right of Way track through Glen Tilt should be followed to about half-a-mile beyond Marble Lodge, where Allt Cruinnich comes tumbling down from the slopes of the mountain. In that part of its course immediately above the road, this burn cuts its way through a deep rocky gorge, and forms some pretty little waterfalls—a perfect treat to the photographer. When the camera has been satisfied, and the visitor emerges from the depths, an old cart track will be found running up the east side of the glen of Allt Cruinnich, and this should be followed to its termination at the junction of the two head-streams of the burn. Thereafter, an easy walk between the forking streams lands one below the stony front of Càrn a' Chlamain, and then it is but a step to the summit.

The view from both hills is very similar, although, perhaps, that from Beinn Dearg is the more extensive of the two; nevertheless they both command a very wide range. Directly north, and over the high ground beyond



the northern Meall Tionail, the sharp peak of Sgor Ghaoith is seen towering above Glen Eunach, and from Càrn a' Chlamain the summit cairn and part of the rocky face of Sgoran Dubh Mor are also visible. In the immediate foreground, and just across the valley of the Tarf, Carn an Fhidleir and An Sgarsoch send down their numerous rills to feed that stream. Behind these, and over Glen Geldie, Monadh Mor and Beinn Bhrotain lead up to the great central mass of the Cairngorms—Braeriach, Angel's Peak, Cairn Toul, Ben Muich Dhui, and Derry Cairngorm. A little farther off, Beinn a' Bhuid and Ben Avon with its Barns complete the tale. From Càrn a' Chlamain the Barns of Beinn Mheadhoin are also seen. Away among the Deeside hills, the round top of Morven is easily singled out. Then at the head of Glen Tilt the telescope brings Falar Lodge into view, nestling at the feet of its guardian angels—Carn Bhac, Beinn Iutharn Mhor, Carn an Righ, and Glas Thulachan. Over the shoulder of this last the summit of Creag Leacach shows up, while through the gap between Carn Bhac and Beinn Iutharn Mhor, the highest point, Cac Carn Beag, of Lochnagar, surrounded by its satellites, comes into view. From Càrn a' Chlamain, however, Lochnagar is seen peeping over the north slope of Beinn Iutharn Mhor. On the other side of Glen Tilt, directly opposite, we have the Beinn a' Ghlo tops spread out in all their grandness, and, although I believe it is from the south that the finest view of this interesting group is obtained, still, the view from these points, across the deep and narrow Glen Tilt, is also very impressive. Far away on the southern horizon, through the gap between Carn Liath and the second top—I won't attempt to spell it—the Lomonds of Fife, with their connecting ridge, 50 miles away, may be seen on a good day from Càrn a' Chlamain. I myself have never seen them from Beinn Dearg, as the weather conditions were never favourable in this direction. Next on the list is Ben Vrackie, keeping watch over the famous "Pass"; then, between that point and Farragon, we have a wide

gap, devoid of any noteworthy tops, but filled in with undulating ridges. In front lie the long hummocky ridge leading up to Farragon, then the hills bounding Strath Braan, to north and south, and finally the far-off Ochils. Over the peculiarly shaped Farragon Hill rises the summit plateau of Ben Chonzie; then a little to the right of that may be seen just the point of Ben Vorlich. Now we have Schichallion—cutting a very sorry figure indeed from this quarter—and Carn Mairg, overtopped by Ben Lawers, all bright and smiling, having just emerged from the rain clouds. Farther round is the bulky Beinn a' Chuallaich, above Kinloch-Rannoch, and right over that hill the eye encounters first Beinn Heasgarnich and then Ben More, Am Binnean, and Beinn Laoigh. Over the right shoulder of Chuallaich the great array of tops encircling Loch Lyon almost defies identification, but just to the right of these Cruachan can be made out. Then comes the Black Mount group, with Clachlet and Stob Ghabhar in the van, and Ben Starav behind; just beside these and helping to swell the crowd are the Buchailles of Etive, overtopped by Bidean nam Bian. Another important summit, much nearer than these, now claims our attention, namely Ben Alder—a veritable giant towering above the monotonous uplands bounding Drumochter. Between Ben Alder and the great undulating Monadh Liaths, Creag Meaghaidh looks down on Loch Laggan; beyond these are others, strangers to me, unless perhaps Mam Soul and Cairn Eige; but nearer at hand, only ten miles off, the round summit of Meall na Cuaich is much more easily distinguished. This, then, completes our circuit, and, although it has been a fairly extensive one, it still falls far short of the actual vista obtainable from these hills.

## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

WE have before had occasion to refer to the laudable efforts of Colonel Duncan A. Johnston, R.E., the present Director-General, to improve the service of the Ordnance Survey.

**THE ORDNANCE SURVEY** In no direction have these been more evident than in the issue to the public of improved maps, reduced from the standard one-inch sheets. Last year we announced the commencement of the publication of maps of England and Scotland on the scale of four miles to the inch, which were printed in five colours, a departure which not only rendered them pleasing to the eye, but considerably increased their usefulness in affording an idea of the character of the country represented. We have received from the Director-General specimens of a similar map which is now being brought out, on the scale of two miles to the inch. This production naturally invites comparison with unofficial maps on the same scale which have been reduced from the one-inch sheets. On these Ordnance Survey maps the different tints are not employed in the representation of contours. These, however, are quite clearly indicated by lines with heights in figures, there being in this connection a departure from the methods of representation employed in the four-mile maps. There the slopes are indicated entirely by a new process of stipple-shading. In the new two-mile maps contours are outlined, but only the bolder slopes are shown up by stipple, no attempt being made to indicate by shading the gentler slopes. The outline and names are printed black, water blue, woods green, principal roads burnt sienna, and contours and bolder slopes brown. The printing of the names is admirably distinct, and the various features are clearly indicated; in other ways the execution of the maps is to be commended. They are full of information. The printed area of each sheet measures 18in. by 12in., and thus covers 864 square miles of country. Each sheet may be obtained mounted on linen and folded between covers so as to fit comfortably into the pocket. Ground forms are shown, and the details which it has been found possible to introduce on this scale will doubtless recommend the maps to motorists and bicyclists, who will find that each sheet possesses the further advantage of being so folded that any section of it can be consulted without the whole map being opened out. It is not intended that sheets of this map shall be issued for the whole of the country, but for certain areas only. It is hoped that before the end of the summer maps for all

the selected areas in that section of England which lies south and east of Gloucester will have been published. Each sheet is issued separately at the price of one shilling.

It may also be noted that the last undertaking in the original programme of the Ordnance Survey is now approaching completion. This is the Survey map on the scale of ten miles to the inch, which was designed originally as an index to the one-inch map, but was recommended by the Military Map Committee of 1892 for use as a strategic map. The scale has been found useful for many purposes for which the larger maps were unsuitable. Amongst other features are shown towns, villages, all first-class and most second-class roads, railways, rivers, and lakes. On this scale the map of Great Britain comprises twelve sheets. Of these, eight sheets have been published in outline, three more sheets are nearly ready, and the last sheet will be published in about three months. A hill edition of this map is in course of preparation, and will, it is hoped, be completed by the end of the year.—*The Times*.

THE motor-car threatens to kill pedestrianism, just as it and the electric tramcar together threaten to extinguish horse-traction—and horses as well. Happily, we cannot all own or hire motor-cars, so pedestrianism has still a chance left with people of humble circumstance and moderate means. Still, "motor-ing" has its attractions, and these are wonderfully expressed in "A Song of Speed" by W. E. Henley, in the April number of Mr. Henry Norman's new magazine, "The World's Work". Mr. Henley eulogises the motor-car as the personification of "speed", and narrates in glowing verse what this "speed" enables one to realise. There is a revelation of scenery, for instance, which is thus depicted—

SCENERY VIEWED FROM  
A MOTOR-CAR.

"Speed, and the lap  
Of the Land that you know  
For the first time (it seems),  
As you push through the maze  
Of her beauties and privacies,  
Terrors, astonishments:  
Heath, common, pinewood,  
Downland and river-scape,  
Cherry-orchards, water-meads,  
Forests and stubbles,  
Oak-temples, daisy-spreads,  
Vistas of harebell,  
Hills of the ruggedest,  
Vales of the comeliest,  
Barrows and cromlechs;  
.  
.  
.  
Secular avenues,  
Noble alignments  
Of Elms, since a century  
Hailing the Dawns  
And exalting the Sunsets;

Beech-woods that burn out  
 The life in their leafage,  
 And figure the death  
 Of the Year in a glory  
 Of colour and fire”.

The pedestrian, if at all observant, must have noticed these things; but, nevertheless, he stands indebted to the poet for presenting them in such magnificent language.

A GOOD retort to the exaltation of speed appeared in the *Monthly Review* for May. It was written by Mr.

A SONG AGAINST SPEED. E. V. Lucas. We may quote the following stanzas—

“Velocity—its praises ring  
 That those who race may read—  
 The joyousness of hurrying,  
 The ecstasies of speed.  
 Yet flame-like though your progress be,  
 Some thrills you’ve yet to gain;  
 Not dead to all sensations we  
 Who loiter in the lane.

“Of speed the savour and the sting  
 None but the weak deride;  
 But ah, the joy of lingering  
 About the country-side!  
 The swiftest wheel, the conquering run  
 We count no privilege  
 Beside acquiring, in the sun,  
 The secret of the hedge.

“The turnpike from the car to fling,  
 As from a yacht the sea,  
 Is doubtless as inspiriting  
 As aught on land can be;  
 I grant the glory, the romance,  
 But look behind the veil—  
 Suppose that while the motor pants  
 You miss the nightingale!”

THE devotion to “motoring” in England is leading, some people allege, to a revulsion of feeling, and walking is once more becoming the “fashion”. Some countenance to this

REVIVAL OF WALKING. notion is lent by the stock-brokers’ “walk” from London to Brighton on May-Day, but it may be doubted if this walk will really make walking more popular. The *Aberdeen Daily Journal* of 2nd May made the following comments on the subject—

“Neither athleticism in general nor pedestrianism in particular gains very much by the Stock Exchange walk from London to Brighton. To cover the distance, 52½ miles, in nine hours and a half is, of course, a feat in its way; but the fact that it was accomplished by only four out of 87 starters is an indication that the feat is one which can be accomplished only

by a very few. No surprise need be felt at the small number of 'early arrivals'. Their record means that—specially attired for the occasion—they travelled at an average rate of five miles and a half an hour. This is what ordinary pedestrians will be inclined to call a 'desperate pace', four miles an hour being a fair walking average; but it was maintained throughout the nine hours and a half, despite wet roads, occasional rain, and wind in the walkers' faces. The feat is a triumph of 'condition' and endurance; and perhaps there may be a sense of satisfaction in the reflection that all the members of the Stock Exchange are not the effeminate and luxurious mortals they are sometimes supposed to be. But the nett result is very small. The whole affair, indeed, conveys the suggestion of a 'lark'—a lark with 'a bit of betting' combined, bets being freely exchanged as to whether this or that competitor would accomplish the walk, and a huge sweepstake being organised. Besides, after all, what is gained by the mere covering of 52 miles in nine hours and a half—by 'doing' the distance at the rate of five miles and a half per hour? The thing can only be done as a sort of 'professionalism', by careful training beforehand, and so is instantly relegated to the domain of mere 'sport', with little or no practical outcome. The general cause of athletics may be benefited a little, but that is all. Pedestrianism is a pastime, not a sport, and its pleasures are neutralised when the element of speed is made the primary consideration; nothing whatever is gained by 'counting mile-stones'. The suggestion has been made that a fresh impetus will be given to walking by this exhibition; but we take leave to doubt it. The stock-brokers have had their playful little holiday; that, we fancy, is the beginning and the end of the 'walk' to Brighton".

GREAT floods in the Spey, particularly in the Badenoch region, caused by exceptionally heavy rains, occurred in the end of January.

RECORD FLOODS IN THE SPEY. They reached their greatest height on Saturday, the 31st of that month, and exceeded all previous records, all the old flood marks, so far as they are known or can be testified to with certainty, being obliterated. The appearance of the Spey valley was thus graphically described by the Badenoch correspondent of the *Scotsman*—"The whole valley of the Spey in the eastern part of Badenoch is a complete sea from side to side, and that means well on to two miles in width, midway between Kincairdie and Kingussie stations. From high ground at Insh on the south side, the railway embankment can be traced like a dark thread on the opposite expanse of waters, but the great high banks extending for miles as protection to the meadows have completely disappeared from view under water. The course of the Spey through the alluvial haughs between Kingussie and Loch Insh cannot be discerned or indicated except by the tops of tree clumps known to grow beside the channel. Except these tree tops, everything is under water over a tract of country six miles long by one and a half broad". On the Friday and the Saturday, all communication between the two sides of the Spey was cut off, all the way from Newtonmore to Aviemore; the roadway south of Aviemore station was much under water all the way to The Doune, the seat of Mr. J. P. Grant of Rothiemurchus. Between Boat of Garten and Grantown, "the valley became a huge surging lake, covering an area of more than twelve square miles". The last couple of miles of the Spey—below Fochabers—was "converted into a vast inland sea, with numerous islets", the river being

considerably over a mile in breadth, and forming a new channel—more to the eastward—for its passage to the sea. Immense destruction was caused by the floods.

THE *Alpine Journal* has published some interesting particulars of the discoveries of the latest American surveying party among the mountains of Alaska. The result is that

THE MONARCH OF MOUNT ST. ELIAS (18,090 feet) is  
NORTH AMERICAN MOUNTAINS. deposed from the pride of place as  
the loftiest summit in United States  
territory. From its top the Duke of the Abruzzi observed taller  
giants. One of these, named Mount M'Kinley, has now been  
measured, and found to exceed Mount St. Elias by some 2000 feet,  
giving a total height of 20,000 feet.

ON 29th December, 1902, a very interesting ceremony took place on one of the highest peaks of the Cromdale Hills, overlooking the famous battlefield celebrated in song and

CORONATION CAIRN ON THE story. In honour of the Coronation a  
CROMDALE HILLS. memorial cairn was erected in August,

and was completed on the day mentioned by there being placed in position a handsome tablet of polished Peterhead granite, bearing the following inscription:—"King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra. This cairn was erected on the site of the Coronation bonfire, lighted by Miss M'Gregor, Balmenach, on 9th August, 1902". The tablet, which was placed in position by Master Ian Lacy M'Gregor, Balmenach, was supplied by Mr. Hutcheon, sculptor, Aberdeen.

WE went to Aviemore on April 8th and left it on the 24th. At the "summit level" there were but few detached patches of snow, and none at all near the railway. At Aviemore we

CAIRNGORM found the big hills with discontinuous snow on  
APRIL SNOW NOTES. them, lying in heavy wreaths in the corries, the big wreath in the Coire Cas of Cairngorm being very distinct. April 9th was a bright, warm day; the 10th was dull and chilly in the morning, bright and clear in the afternoon, and dull with rain in the evening. Thenceforward, till the 22nd, snow fell more or less each day, the falls being notably heavy on the 13th, 16th, and 19th, and the northerly wind often very strong and cold. All the big hills became completely covered with somewhat deep snow, and even the low ground, down to the level of the Spey, was often whitened. In no case did the snow lie the whole day on any part of Ord Ban, though Carn Elrick was several times whitened to its base throughout the day. The 23rd and 24th were warm days with sunshine, and the diminution of the snow on the face of the heights was at once noticeable. The Spey was low during all the

time. On the 20th I tried to walk up the Larig, but found the soft slushy snow intolerably bad going, and I did not get even as far as the Lurcher's Crag. On the 11th two men came through the Larig. They had walked from Blair Atholl the previous day, and then tried to cross the hills, but had to give up at the Devil's Point. On the 13th they went up Cairngorm in the forenoon. In the intervals between the snow-showers we found the air unusually clear. The cairns on Cairngorm and Ben Muich Dhui were very plainly to be seen, but the cairns on Braeriach seemed to be buried completely in snow, and I could not once see either of them. I think this Arctic weather is the severest recorded.—C. G. C.

THE Committee, having fixed on Mount Battock for the Spring Excursion, the Club party started for Edzell on 4th May. After breakfast at the Panmure Arms Hotel, the members  
MOUNT BATTOCK. drove to Millden. The weather had not been propitious for some days previously, and Mount Battock was not even visible close to its base. Mist and rain seemed all-powerful, and so the party returned direct to Edzell. A visit was paid to the ruins of Edzell Castle before dinner, and the waiting hour at Brechin was well spent in an inspection of the Round Tower and the Cathedral.

THE following new members have been admitted:—

NEW MEMBERS. A. Lovie Murray and John Sandison.

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## REVIEWS.

ALL interested in mountaineering may be recommended to read "Climbing on the Himalaya and other Mountain Ranges", by J. Norman Collie, F.R.S., member of the  
A BOOK ON CLIMBING. Alpine Club. The book, as the title indicates, is chiefly devoted to the Himalaya, though there are articles on the Canadian Rockies and on the Lofoten Isles in Norway, as well as stray notes on some of the mountains of England, Scotland, and Ireland. From an article on "A Chuilionn" (The Coolins of Skye) we take the following on Scottish mountain scenery—

"To those who can appreciate the beauty of true hill form, the ever-changing colour and wonderful power and character of the sea-girt islands of the west, the lonely grandeur of Rannoch Moor, the spacious wooded valley of the Spey at Aviemore, backed by the Cairngorm mountains, wild Glen Affric prodigal of gnarled pines abounding in strange curves of strength, or the savage gloom of Glencoe—all these scenes tell the same tale, and proclaim in no doubtful manner that the Scottish mountain land in its own way is able to offer some of the most beautiful mountain scenery in the world.



"The Highlands of Scotland contain mountain form of the very finest and most subtle kind—form not so much architectural, but form where the savage grandeur, the strength, and the vastness of the mountains is subordinate to simpler, yet in a way more complicated, structures. Scottish mountains have something finer to give than architectural form. In their modelling may be seen the same beauties that in perfection exist in Greek statuary. The curving lines of the human figure are more subtle than those of any cathedral ever built. . . . It is in the gentleness of ascent in many of the Highland hills, in the restraint and repose of the slopes 'full of slumber', that we can trace all the finer and more delicate human lines; and it is due to the strength of these lines that the bigger mountains seem to rise without an effort from the moors and smaller hills that surround them. To many people the Cairngorm range is composed of shapeless, flat-topped mountains devoid almost of any character. They do not rise like the Matterhorn in savage grandeur, yet the sculptured sides of Braeriach, seen from Sgoran Dubh Mhor, are in reality far more full of rich and intricate mountain sculpture than the whole face of the Matterhorn as seen from the Riffel Alp".

THE *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* has for some time past been devoting articles to the formation of a mountaineering Guide Book; and in the May number a beginning was

THE CAIRNGORM MOUNTAINS. made with the Cairngorm Mountains, Mr. Lionel W. Hinxman furnishing an article on the range

generally, "W. A. S." writing at great length on the Western Cairngorms, and "H. R." on "Sgoran Dubh Climbs". "W. A. S." describes with enthusiasm ascents of Sgoran Dubh, Braeriach, and Cairntoul—ascents made chiefly from Glen Feshie, five ways up from that glen being detailed. We may quote one passage, giving an account of a striking spectacle witnessed on the summit of Cairn Toul—"The view is magnificent. If not so extensive as that from Braeriach, you see from Cairn Toul more into the hearts of the hills themselves, and the imposing mass of Ben Muich Dhui (its summit is just two miles across the great intervening gulf, some 2500 feet deep, on the valley of the Upper Dee) dominates the scene. I remember seeing a wonderful and lovely effect from here one autumn day. Some light mists hung like an upper veil or curtain across the Larig, under which you saw the stream coming sparkling down from the pools, as if through a long light cavern, to meet the waters of the Garachory. The sun was shining and a shower of rain came on, and a light wind lifting the veil of mist, a brilliant double rainbow was formed directed over the Larig from cliff to cliff, like some glorified and ethereal triumphal arch above the wild roadway to Strathspey".

LORD AVEBURY (better known as Sir John Lubbock) read a paper at the meeting of the Geological Society, on 27th May, on the formation of mountains. Experiments, he said, had been made long ago by Sir J. Hall, and afterwards by Daubree, Ruskin, Cadell, and others, by arranging layers of cloth, clay, cement, &c., and studying the folds and fractures which resulted when they were compressed. In all these experiments, however, the pressure was in one direction

only, whereas it was obvious that if mountains were due, at any rate in part, to the contraction of the earth, in nature the contraction and consequent pressure took place from all sides. Lord Avebury said that he therefore provided himself with a square case compressible on all four sides at once. In the central space he arranged layers of sand, cloth, &c., and compressed them, thus throwing them into folds. He then took in each experiment four casts in plaster of Paris, beginning from the top, and these casts were exhibited to the Society. They presented an interesting analogy to actual mountain districts, though, of course, they did not show the results of subsequent denudation due to rain and rivers. It had long been observed that mountainous districts showed two sets of lines at right angles to one another. Anyone who would glance at a map of Scotland would see this clearly. One set was represented by the Great Glen, with the lochs and valleys parallel to it, such as the Minch, Loch Awe, Loch Fyne, and many others; the second series at right angles to it by Loch Shin, Loch Maree, the Sound of Mull, &c. This characteristic of mountain regions had long been known, and there had been discussions as to whether the folds were simultaneous or successive. Lord Avebury's casts showed this feature very clearly, and it was evident that the cross foldings took place simultaneously. The paper led to an interesting discussion.

THE *Scottish Field* for May has an interesting article on "Record-Breaking on Ben Nevis" by "An Old Climber". The best "record"

HINTS TO  
HILL-CLIMBERS.      hitherto seems to have been made by Mr. Ewen Mackenzie, who, on 30th September, 1901, made the ascent in 1 hr. 8 mins. 19 sec. (see *C.C.J.*, III., 374). More generally interesting, however, are "a few hints to those anxious to climb Ben Nevis, whether for pleasure or fame". They have been drawn up by Mr. William Swan, of Fort William, who has held the record on more than one occasion; and, as they may be serviceable to climbers of other hills than Ben Nevis, we reproduce them—

1. Wear a good pair of boots, with soles well secured.
2. Don't be deluded into taking so-called "short cuts", especially if fog or mist prevails, during the ascent. Stick to the road.
3. Avoid, in so far as possible, drinking water on the way. One is very much inclined to drink too much water where there are burns and wells in such profusion.
4. If the traveller should meet with snow, he or she should studiously avoid sucking it, as it produces a weakness all through the body.
5. Don't hurry and then take a rest at intervals. An easy pace, with only the fewest possible breaks for rests, is far less fatiguing.
6. Although not absolutely necessary, it is advisable to carry a stick.

"THE TRAMP'S HAND-BOOK" is the title of the first volume of a series of Country Hand-books projected by Mr. John Lane, of "The Bodley Head", London. It is written by Harry Roberts and illustrated by William Pascoe. "Tramping", however, as conceived and expounded by Mr. Roberts, is a very elaborate affair. A chapter is

devoted to "The Tramp's Furniture", which includes a waterproof sheet for sleeping in; a candlestick and candles; a galvanised bucket, a couple of basins for washing purposes, and a canvas bucket; pails, pots, and pans; cups, plates, and dishes; and a supply of cloths and towels. "A few carpenter's tools are useful, though not essential", and a large supply of wax vestas should be carried in an air-tight tin. Among "the other articles most worthy of space" are the following—"Corkscrew, tin-opener, strong single-bladed pocket knife, bill-hook, rope, string, pack of cards, stationery, pens, ink, pencils, small folding mirror, comb, brushes, soap, sponge, enamelled iron jug, oil-skin suit, compass, warm felt slippers, books, a good supply of blankets, a change of clothing, candles, &c., &c." What a luxurious "tramp"! This is a specification, however, for "moving unostentatiously along English lanes in a donkey cart, or travelling with pomp in elaborate caravan". When it comes to "walking for pleasure", our "tramp" is content with what can be "easily contained in capacious pockets co-extensive with his jacket"—two cellular shirts (one for night wear), a pair of thick socks, a handkerchief, a pair of cellular pants, and a toothbrush; a pencil, a note book, two or three needles, a little thread, and mending wool, and a few buttons. To tell the truth, the book consists too much of advice about the preparations for "tramp" life, about food and cookery; what is written about the life itself is small in comparison and is almost wholly contained in the opening chapters—"A Defence of Vagabondage" and "The Art of Walking". From the latter we excerpt the following—"Of all methods of travelling, commend me to walking. The exercise is itself fruitful of exhilaration and hope, and the winding road traversing plain and climbing hill—'the long brown path' leading wherever we choose—is pregnant with promise and surprise. Beyond the ever-moving horizon are golden cities and great adventures, and the very limitation of our pace gives to all the world, its cornfields and its hills and its woodland, a vastness and a grandeur of which they who grind their way rapidly on wheels know nothing. Then, again, who is so free as he who goes a-foot; who but he may, when he choose and without premeditation or preparation, lie on the heather and fall asleep under the warmth-giving wing of the August sun? Who but he can leave the highway and follow any path that takes his fancy, over stile and hedgebank though it lead?"

UNDER this title, the *Times* delivered a rather slashing criticism of Mr. Roberts's book—contemptuous but perfectly good-humoured, and bearing the impress of being written by quite as good a "tramp" as the author. It mercilessly assailed the notion—that pervades the book—of inducing men to become vagabonds by set rules, declaring that "the true tramp can learn nothing from a writing fellow". And it scarified Mr. Roberts's plea for more company. "The true vagabond", wrote the critic, "is happiest alone. There is absurdity in two men walking together; three—and the

thing is grotesque. Hazlitt was right in deprecating conversation. The walker does not want to converse, except with nature and himself. There are a hundred reasons why he wishes to be alone. His sacred selfishness demands it. He came out for it; otherwise he would have stayed in the city. No one is quite worthy to commune with him (every true vagabond is superior to every one else). He detests having his attention called to beautiful things (every true vagabond is the first detector and judge of beautiful things). He does not want to agree; even less does he want to disagree (every true vagabond knows best). A companion is a mistake in many ways, but chiefly because when he is with you you are not alone".

*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.

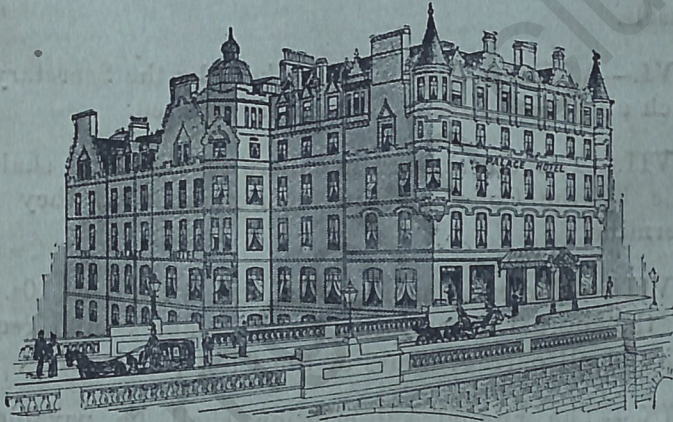
XI.—No change shall be made on the Rules except at a general meeting of the members, called on seven days' notice. Intimation of any proposed change must be made in the notice calling such meeting, and any alteration proposed shall only be adopted if voted for by at least three-fourths of the members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

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