

THE Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY
ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHIE.

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ISSUED TWICE A YEAR.

PUBLISHED BY
THE CAIRNGORM CLUB.

AGENTS :
ABERDEEN : D. WYLLIE & SON.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

Nos. 1, 20 and 25 are out of print.

The Cairngorm Club.

PRESIDENT,	- -	H. E. The Right Hon. JAMES BRYCE, D.C.L., LL.D.
CHAIRMAN,	- - - - -	JAMES A. HADDEN.
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RULES.

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

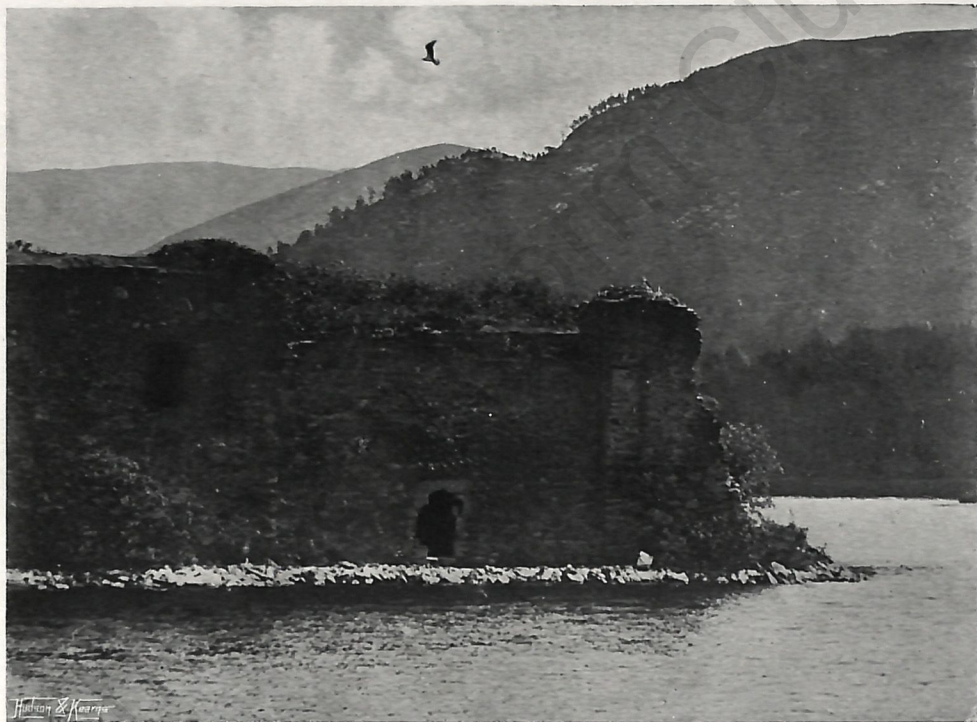
II.—The objects of the Club shall be: (1) to encourage mountain climbing in Scotland, with special reference to the Cairngorm group of mountains; (2) to procure and impart scientific, topographical, and historical information about the Scottish mountains, their superficial physical features, minerals, 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

Continued on page 3 of Cover.



By kind permission of "Country Life."

LOCH AN EILEIN CASTLE.

"The cock osprey in the picture may be seen hovering on high, looking for finny prey in the water below. . . . The hen bird is to be descried sitting at the edge of her nest on the right-hand turret."

THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

Vol. V.

JULY, 1907.

No. 29.

CORGARFF AND ITS HILLS IN WINTER.

BY SETON P. GORDON, F.Z.S.

LYING at the head of the Don, Corgarff, "The Rough Corrie," is one of the wildest and most desolate spots in Aberdeenshire, and few districts in this country have a heavier fall of snow during the winter months. Last January a friend and I motored across from Aboyne to the Allargue Arms, a most comfortable and cheery hotel, where, during our stay, we received every kindness and consideration at the hands of genial Mr. Morrison, the proprietor. We had spent two days here before Christmas, but rashly motoring over to Aboyne on Christmas day, were unable to get back again till January 12th, on account of the roads being completely blocked by the terrific blizzard that commenced immediately after our departure. The first week of January, however, brought with it soft winds from the Atlantic, and when we left Aboyne on the morning of Saturday the 12th, the snow there had practically all disappeared. Our troubles began on the Birkhill at Tillypronie, as snow and ice still thickly covered the road here, and the wheels of the car refused to bite on the slippery surface. At length, however, with the help of two men pushing hard behind, the summit point of the road (1,200 ft.) was safely gained. But here the going was worse than ever, as the wreaths had not as yet been cut, and we had almost given up the idea of proceeding any further, when a party of sturdy roadmen appeared on the scene, and with

the aid of these men and the keeper who lives on the hill-top—at one time six men were pushing their hardest behind the car—we got safely through without any mishap. A country grocer going on his rounds was unfortunately kept back at each drift until the car got through it, and his language towards the close was scarcely complimentary, but under the circumstances we readily forgave him, although whether he experienced any forgiving sentiment towards us is extremely doubtful. Once the main Donside road was gained, the rest of the journey was comparatively easy, as the drifts were not serious until near our destination, and even here they had been cut some time before. After a good night's rest, we set out next morning for Meikle Corr Riabhaich (2553 ft.) which stands on the right hand side of the road crossing to Tomintoul, about four miles north of Corgarff. From the hotel, for quite half a mile onwards, a succession of immense snow-wreaths lay across the road, some of them quite 10 ft. in depth, and the larchwood was almost buried in the snow. Keeping the road until the highest point (2,090 ft.) was reached—which by the way, is on the boundary between Aberdeenshire and Banffshire—we struck off to the right, and began the climb. From the road, the summit is easily gained, but to the south of the Cairn we came upon a magnificent glissade—steep, with snow in first-class order, and here we spent some time. In the corrie we found a great number of grouse and a few white hares sheltering from the keen west wind, and these seemed surprised indeed at our sudden appearance. About an inch of fresh snow had fallen over night, and while it made the surface softer “going,” completely blinded us as we glissaded down, forcing us to shut our eyes, and let ourselves go, trusting mainly to luck. Near the end of the run was an almost precipitous descent of a few feet, and this added a great excitement to the glissade. The sun was shining brilliantly as we lunched in the shelter of the corrie, and the snow was giving off a dazzling light. We noticed that at one point there had been a slight avalanche, and large blocks of snow had become detached from an overhanging cornice. The cairn of Meikle Corr Riabhaich is very loosely constructed

and as we sheltered behind it, we could hear the wind moaning and whistling through the stones, although little or no draught was felt where we stood. Although the weather was rather hazy, we had an excellent view of all the surrounding hills. Southward, Lochnagar, Mount Keen and Morven stood out clearly, and east, the Buck of the Cabrach was very distinct. Westwards the Cairngorms were visible, though slight snow showers and mist rather obscured the view in this direction. We have remarked how often Ben Muich Dhui is mist capped, while further east Ben Avon is usually quite free of cloud, the explanation being that Braeriach and Ben Muich Dhui catch any mist coming from the west, and thus Ben Avon usually escapes; especially is this the case during the winter months. To the north-west, the Speyside hills carried a good many large snow drifts, but it was noticed that not even the Cairngorms had a continuous coating of snow. Striking north from the cairn, we made for the Ironstone Mine—now fallen into disuse—which is situated near the source of the Conglass Water, disturbing on our way great numbers of grouse. As we rested awhile amongst the heather, admiring the view to the westwards, a pair of golden eagles came along the hillside straight towards us, and the hen bird had got within a dozen yards of us, when, suddenly perceiving our motionless forms, she soared abruptly skywards, the rush of the air through their wings being clearly heard. The grouse were mad with fear, and were flying about in an aimless fashion, having seemingly quite lost their heads, but the eagles paid not the slightest attention to them, and, sailing on, were soon lost to view. Near the disused mine, we came upon a grouse's egg lying in the heather beside a stone, where a hoodie crow or some other marauder had evidently carried it during the nesting season, as the mark of his beak was plainly seen on the shell. The astonishing part of the find was the fact that the egg was still intact, and with the spots and blotches only slightly faded, notwithstanding the severe frost and snow that had lately been experienced on the hill. We surmised that the egg-stealer had been driven off before he had time to suck his prize, as the remains of a second egg in the

vicinity pointed to the stone being a favourite rendezvous of the plunderer. In one of the disused shafts of the mine we found a white hare sheltering, which on our approach set off up the hillside at a tremendous speed, and we could not help envying its agility. From the mine, the source of the Nocht water, which joins the Don at Bellabeg, is only a mile or so distant in an easterly direction, but as the sun had already disappeared, we made for the Tomintoul road, and returned to Corgarff. A pair of snow buntings was disturbed at the edge of the Conglass Water, and made a charming picture as they flew backwards and forwards over our heads, as though loth to leave the spot, and then, calling faintly to each other, set off towards the east, the sunset tinging their snow white plumage a delicate pink. Regaining the road, we found it for the most part covered with deep wreaths, hard enough, as a rule, to bear our weight, but rendering all vehicular traffic of any sort quite out of the question, although we noticed that at least one man and a horse had crossed since the storm. We heard at the hotel that no vehicle of any description had crossed to or from Tomintoul since November, but that a joiner at Tomintoul was endeavouring to have the road cut in order that his carts could cross to Corgarff; so far, however, the road authorities had taken no action. Certainly it appeared to us a Herculean labour to clear the road of the snow, and quite impracticable unless a whole army of men were employed, although on certain days many of the wreaths would easily bear the weight of a horse and cart. As darkness was gathering, a grouse was seen to settle on the heather where evidently a golden eagle was resting, unnoticed by the intruder, as the king of birds immediately dashed out at the unfortunate grouse, but, fortunately for the latter, missed his mark and seemed to strike heavily against the hillside. Then he began to rise, ascending in spirals with hardly a motion of the wing, and seemed to look with disdain on the coveys of affrighted grouse that were flying frantically over the place. His mate soon appeared on the scene, and, although there was a strong head wind, came soaring towards us at a great speed, with wings bent well back, so as to offer as little resistance

as possible to the wind. The haze of the day had now completely cleared off, and Ben Avon stood out darkly against the brilliant sunset. The grouse were crowing loudly on every side, as though thankful for the recent escape, and the white hares were our companions until we had almost reached the hotel.

Another delightful expedition was the ascent of Cairn Culchavie (2385 feet) which lies just beyond Delnadamp to the south of the Don. Our car took us as far as Inchmore, the last habitation on the valley of the Don, and from here the summit appeared to be very easily gained. It was soon found, however, that appearances were in this case very deceptive, as when the skyline was reached, we found the summit still beyond us, and this occurred more than once, so that ere the real top was ultimately reached, darkness had begun to fall. An exceedingly fine view was obtained of Ben Avon, on which deep snow fields were lying, and the Avon was seen flowing rapidly down by Inchrory. Ben Rinnes to the northward stood out very prominently, and eastward Bennachie was dimly seen through the haze. Morven and the Brown Cow were also clearly seen, but what most caught the eye was the beautiful sunset effect to the south-west, where the sky was lit up with a beautiful pinkish tinge, changing, as darkness came on, to a delicate green. Frost was now setting in, and the pools of water on the hill were rapidly being covered with a thin film of ice, although the air still seemed to us to be soft and mild. The Inchrory deer fence crosses Cairn Culchavie's summit, and we kept alongside of this for the first part of the descent. On the north-eastern face of the hill was an extensive snow field, seemingly offering splendid facilities for a glissade, but to our disappointment we found that the surface of the snow was just too soft for this form of sport, so we had to get down the snow field as well as possible, every now and again sinking deep into the snow. At length, however, the path from Inchrory to Delnadamp was struck, and soon the car was reached. By this time it was quite dark, and we noticed in the distance an astonished keeper and his friend gazing at the motor in a dazed fashion, as though wondering what in the world it was

doing there at that time of year. The run back to the Allargue Arms had to be undertaken with a good deal of caution, as deep snow wreaths still lay half-way across the road, and the latter was in a terrible state, what with the melting snow, and frost and thaw alternating. The weather fortunately remained delightful, and it was resolved that a walk to Inchrory should be the next expedition. After exploring the Castle of Corgarff during the morning, over which we were most kindly shewn by the inmates, we again took the car to Inchmore, and walked across to Avonside. A very hard frost prevailed, with a piercing west wind, but the sun shone brightly, although the air was rather hazy, especially to the east. A thick sheet of marvellously smooth and clear black ice covered every pool, and even the streams themselves were partly frozen over. Soon after entering the forest of Glenavon, the Don crosses the path, here a tiny stream within about half a mile from its source on Cairn Culchavie. The water at a first glance seems to fall into the Avon, but by winding about ultimately flows eastwards towards Aberdeen and the coast. A herd of deer was noticed grazing near the source, and their footmarks were seen on the surface of the frozen snow. A cloud was resting on the summit of Ben Muich Dhui, and apparently light snow was falling on the hill. Ben Avon, however, stood out very sharply, and from the height above Inchrory Lodge, the Avon, with the Ben in the back-ground, made a very fine picture in the fast fading light of the winter's afternoon. A large flock of linnets and bramblings was flitting restlessly about in the field bordering the Avon, but bird life at this time of year is not at all common at this elevation, although during our walk across we had the hardy red grouse as our companions. At more than one point we noticed very large stacks of peat that had been built up at the roadside for the use of the crofters. As we were returning, we met, about half way across, a man hurrying in the direction of Inchrory. He had, he said, come across from Tomintoul *via* Cockbridge that morning begging for rabbit skins—he was a butcher down in his luck he told us—and was returning as fast as possible, hoping to reach Tomintoul before dark. He

was utterly unfamiliar with the road, and we could not help pitying his long walk down Avonside ere he reached his destination.

Looking back towards Ben Avon, we noticed a dark stormy looking cloud coming up from the south-west. Evidently there were two wind currents at work, as the cloud was swirling about in an extraordinary manner, and was taking on all kinds of shapes—the most common being that of a horse prancing on its rear legs. It was conjectured that this might be the sign of stormy weather, but fortunately these fears proved groundless, and next day we were enabled to make the ascent of Ben à Chruinnach (2,536 ft.) under very favourable conditions. We had barely left the hotel before we noticed the grouse flying aimlessly in all directions, and soon a golden eagle came into view, soaring majestically overhead and causing great terror in grouseland. The king of birds, however, took no notice of the terrified grouse, and made as if to cross over by the Tornahaish hill to Gairnside, but changing his mind he turned west again and passed right overhead, making apparently for Avonside. We kept the Tomintoul road as far as the watershed, and here found a grouse newly eaten by probably the same eagle as we had just seen. The bird had been killed only a very short time, and had been picked very clean indeed, while all around the road was strewn with the luckless victim's feathers. From the summit of the road to the hill top is a rise of only some 500 feet, but walking was made difficult by the hardness of the snow, and one was very apt to slide down backwards, unless each footstep was dug out before-hand. Although the grouse had mostly paired on the lower ground, here they were still in large packs, and the appearance of an eagle coming across from Meikle Corr Riabhach caused a temporary panic. Quite a number of white hares were put up, and were for the most part fairly fearless. From the summit cairn on a clear day a very fine view of the Cairngorms is obtained, but unfortunately the weather to the west was rather hazy, and so the hills were only partly visible. We made out the village of Tomintoul, and beyond, the hills of the Spey valley, but towards Morven the weather

appeared threatening, and Morven itself was half shrouded in mist. We had a splendid glissade down the south-east side of the hill, a huge snow field some 200 yards long and quite 30 feet deep having been piled up here by the northern blizzard. A slight "fresh" had set in, but nevertheless the going was quite fast enough, in fact rather too fast in places, where the gradient was about one in two. Striking the road about a mile above the hotel, we watched the glorious sunset for some time, and thought with pleasure on our delightful outing on the lone Donside mountains.

SOME NOTES ON THE PHYSIOLOGY OF MOUNTAINEERING.

BY WILLIAM BARCLAY, L.D.S.

MOUNTAINEERING is the noblest of sports; it is the most perfect of all recreations, admirably adapted for repairing and building up the much abused organs of the human frame. It appeals specially to the soot-begrimed dweller in cities, where, for the most part of the year, his poor body is cooped up in dingy factory or workshop, where his lungs are constantly filled with air that is none of the purest, and his whole system is continually kept under such a high strain that the least irregularity completely upsets the whole machinery. No wonder then that to the city youth who has once known the spring of the heather, or the highland lad whom business has called south, each successive holiday season, aye, even the short week-ends, only serve as a fresh stimulus to draw him back again and again, to the same old hills, the same quiet glens. Seldom indeed are nature's organs of locomotion called upon by the city man to do any degree of work at all; far handier is it for him to jump on a passing car, which for the merest trifle will land him at his door without entailing the least exertion.

The benefits derived from mountaineering are twofold, partly physical and partly mental. Physically, of course, the muscles play the most important part, since they are the instruments by which the body is raised from a lower to a higher level. In ascending a steep mountain side a great amount of extra work is thrown upon the muscles, principally those of the legs. This extra work demanded of these organs means that they will require a greater supply of nourishment, while at the same time, the waste materials that they throw off will also be increased. The first of these is supplied by the blood, and the second is passed into, and carried off by that same stream. The blood therefore will contain

a greater amount of impurities, is more venous, than normally, and this condition must be remedied.

Now there is a wonderful mechanism here called into play. Everyone knows that sudden and severe exercise makes us out of breath, due to the impure blood being thrown onwards to the heart and lungs more rapidly than these latter can at first transmit it. Hence, in order that the blood may get rid of its waste carbonic acid gas, and receive a fresh supply of oxygen, with such rapidity that the supply shall be equal to the demand, it is evident that the respirations must be increased; and this is exactly what happens. When the arterial blood that is deficient in oxygen reaches the brain, it so influences a particular part of it—the respiratory centre—that quicker and more powerful influences are sent out, along the particular nerves, and increase the respiratory movements, both in strength and in frequency.

As stated above, muscular exercise has an important bearing on the circulation. The hurrying movements of the blood with its increased waste are brought about by the action of the valves in the veins; these prevent the blood from being forced backwards by the pressure of the rapidly contracting muscles, and so this extra force is used in sending the impure blood faster to the heart, where, if the existing conditions were not altered, it would accumulate and cause a complete stoppage. But here, as elsewhere, we find that provision has been made for any such emergency, and just as fast as the blood reaches the heart, so fast that organ transmits it. Thus when a larger quantity of blood than usual finds its way to the heart, part of the inhibitory influence, the nerves that regulate, or keep in check, the beatings of the heart, is removed, and the unconstrained organ “thumps” vigorously against the chest wall as it pumps the impure blood outwards with increased speed to that great purifying centre, the lungs. Here the blood gives up most of its waste material—carbonic acid gas, from the hard-working muscles—and here it receives in return, part of its life-giving property—a fresh supply of oxygen—which it conveys to all parts of the body.

So we see that the troublesome “peching” and increased

thudding of the heart, with which we are all more or less afflicted, according to our "fitness," when ascending a steep slope, is, after all, simply nature's method of renewing the impoverished blood, and thereby enabling us to continue the exertion. At the same time, this is one of the best possible lung exercises; for just as oft-repeated exercise of any muscle increases it in size and power, so oft-repeated increased respirations also cause an increase both in the size and capacity, not only of the lungs, but of the thoracic cavity as well. Thus we get a broadening and deepening of the chest, and a strengthening of the lung tissue, both most beneficial means of warding off disease, especially pulmonary consumption. Now, in man at least, as most of the breathing is of the abdominal type—the thoracic cavity being increased in size by the descent of the diaphragm, or muscular partition between the chest and abdomen—it is plain that every time we take a full inspiration, the abdominal organs—stomach, intestines, etc.,—are pushed out of place, evidenced by the swelling of the belly; with expiration, however, they return to their normal position. Can it be doubted that this increase in the churning motions of these organs has a decided, a beneficial effect upon digestion? I think not.

We have seen that an additional amount of nutriment—in this case, the free and unpolluted air (oxygen) of the mountains—is pumped into the blood stream, and as the blood is the vehicle by which nourishment is carried to the tissues and waste material taken from them, it follows I think, that the whole body will be greatly benefited thereby. Besides oxygen, the blood also supplies the tissues with all the other elements necessary for their support and vital activity, and these, of course, are derived primarily from the food.

I think it is a generally accepted fact among mountaineers that the muscles of mastication are also greatly benefited by a day on the hills, at least judging from the size of rucksack which some members of the climbing fraternity hawk about with them. No doubt it is the keenness of the mountain air, together with the extra strain thrown upon the different organs of the body, that largely accounts for this "mountain appetite."

There is another important function brought about by the hard working muscles. It is well known that the blood issuing from a rapidly contracting muscle is much warmer than that which enters it. How is this accounted for? It is the result of the chemical change—oxidation, or the union of the oxygen brought by the blood with the tissue elements—that goes on in a living muscle; and as the temperature of the body cannot be raised much above the normal without producing injurious effects, it is evident that this additional amount of heat must be got rid of. The skin with its numerous sweat glands is the principal medium by which the body throws off its extra warmth. The secretion of sweat is constantly going on, but the amount is so small that it is at once evaporated, and goes off into the atmosphere without our ever being aware of its presence. But if we are in a very warm atmosphere, or doing great muscular work, the blood-vessels immediately beneath the skin get flushed with blood, and we feel intolerably warm. As a result of this great blood supply to the skin there is an increase in the functional activity of the sweat glands, showing itself by profuse perspiration which bathes the surface of the body; and it is principally by the rapid evaporation of this sweat that the body gets rid of its extra heat, a little no doubt being removed by other means—radiation, the lungs, etc. Of course our sensations of heat and cold are based only on the cutaneous blood supply; if there is a large supply of blood to the skin, we feel warm; and this sense of warmth is due to the action of this warm blood on the sensory nerve-endings in the skin. But on the other hand, if the capillaries on the surface of the body are contracted, and nearly empty, we have a feeling of cold, caused by the action of the external air on these same peripheral nerve-endings. Thus our “feeling” is no real guide to the body temperature, which in health is always about the same, no matter how hot or how cold we “feel.”

Now from the foregoing, I think we can adduce some points of practical interest. First of all we have the beneficial effect on the glands themselves, stimulating them to action;

then there is the mechanical opening and cleansing of their ducts—the pores of the skin—by the increased secretion. We also find that the sweat carries with it many noxious excretions from the body, and if these were allowed to accumulate and dry on the surface, trouble would ultimately follow. But with every movement the clothes are rubbed against the skin, and so these impurities, along with the excess sweat, are constantly being absorbed and removed; and in addition, this gentle friction has a stimulating effect upon the cutaneous vessels and nerves. It is this which explains to a certain extent the pleasant glow that is felt after a good sweat followed by a vigorous rubbing with a coarse towel; and hence the benefit of wearing woollen articles next the skin.

Now when we consider the large amount of water—sweat being composed of 98 per cent of water—which the body throws off in this way, especially during active exercise, it is natural I think that we should ask ourselves whence comes all this fluid. A little of it, a very little indeed, is produced in the body by the metabolism of the tissues—the oxidation of the hydrogen in the food—but by far the greater part must be taken into the body as fluid, along with the food-stuffs.

The man who has climbed a steep hillside in July, knows what it is to sweat, just as much as the blacksmith does, and as a direct result of this great loss of fluid from the body, he experiences the sensation termed thirst. Thirst is a peculiar sensation referred to the back of the mouth and throat, and is simply the cry of the system for water—more water. No animal can live long without that precious fluid, yet we find individuals who ignore this demand altogether, and try to satisfy their shrivelled up tissues with acid drops, raisins, etc.; needless to say nature “has” them in the end, for we can’t cheat nature.

As a proof that it is the system in general, and not simply the local area at the back of the mouth that is involved in severe thirst, we have only to notice the extreme degree of thirst experienced after any great withdrawal of fluid from the body, the wounded soldier for instance, whose sole cry is

for water, wherewith to replace that more precious fluid which he has lost. A more convincing proof than that even is the fact that in the relief of thirst it is not at all necessary that the liquid be taken by the mouth; the thirst can be equally well relieved by injection into the circulation direct—as is done after any great loss of blood, transfusion—or into the bowel, in which case it is absorbed into the blood. Of course the chronic thirst of the habitual toper is quite another matter, and one which does not concern us here; but we must say just a word as to the use of alcohol.

In the writer's humble opinion this is a quite unnecessary addition to the mountaineer's lunch bag, especially for the purpose for which it is usually carried—fatigue or cold. To give brandy to a person who is utterly tired out, is about the worst thing one can possibly do. What he wants is food, and that if possible warm; hot cocoa or beef-juice is admirable.

And now as to the climber who has got thoroughly soaked and stands shivering behind the cairn or in the lee of some friendly rock, sipping at the contents of his flask, in the vain endeavour to warm himself. In this we have an example of the very popular fallacy that the ingestion of spirits puts heat into the body. Why! it does the very opposite; it throws warmth out of the body, and that at a much faster rate than it can be manufactured.

One of the first effects of alcohol on the system, after it has entered the circulation, is to dilate the small blood-vessels of the skin, and so send more warm blood to the surface. This is the heating effect that the alcoholicist speaks about; but let us look at the facts a little more closely.

It is well known that the blood in its passage through the capillaries of the skin gets considerably lowered in temperature, as the atmosphere, in this country at least, is generally at a lower degree than the blood; in fact, as we explained before, it is principally by this means that the regular body temperature is maintained. Now it is evident that when a healthy person is cold and shivering, the blood-vessels on the surface of his body will be contracted and contain very little blood, the organism simply doing its best to keep all the heat

it possibly can. What then will be the result if in these circumstances we dilate these superficial vessels and so allow the warm blood to flow to the surface, and be acted upon by the cold air? Plainly this, I think, the individual will have a feeling of great warmth, due to the hot blood circulating in his skin, but as we have seen, this is utterly fallacious, for from the very fact of his "feeling" warm he is actually cooling the whole volume of blood in his body. Under these circumstances again, the best thing is warm fluid nourishment, but as this will seldom be obtainable at the time, the next best thing is movement; keep on the move and so manufacture heat—by the contraction of the muscles—though it be only "marking time" or trotting round the cairn.

I think we have also good reason to believe that the direct rays of the sun exert a beneficial influence on the skin; contrast the rosy-cheeked children of the country who are constantly in the sunlight, with the sickly pale-skinned little ones from any of the back lanes or alleys of our crowded cities. There is no doubt, however, that a large part of this is due to the fresh air and more wholesome food, but it is equally true that the bright sunlight also plays a not small part.

It will thus be seen that the good to be obtained from these excursions among the hills would be very limited indeed were it not for the purity of the air, the slightly larger percentage of oxygen with its traces of ozone, and the entire absence of bacteria and all the foul and offensive gases with which the atmosphere of our towns is continually laden.

"Fresh air and sunlight, these are the great natural germicides, they provide a prevention which will do away with the need for the cure, now unhappily so often sought in vain, in an open air treatment."

"It is from the influence of the pure air and sunlight on the blood, and through it on all the other tissues of the body, and chiefly the nervous, that the good results in mountaineering are obtained."

Now as to the effects on the senses. There is not the least doubt but that the receptive organs of special sense—

the eye, the ear, and the nose—are beneficially affected during a sojourn among the mountains.

Taking the sense of sight first; the man who works all day at a desk or in a confined space has his eyes constantly fixed on near objects, and so is continually using his mechanism of accommodation. Is it to be wondered at then that the small muscles and ligaments that preside over this apparatus soon get tired? Notice the relief experienced whenever the eyes are turned to distant objects. When an individual is on the hills or in the open his eyes are more or less constantly turned to distant scenes,

“The blue hills that are far away,”

and his optical apparatus enjoys a day of rest and relaxation.

The auditory organ is affected in much the same way. The silence of the hills in contrast to the noise and bustle of the busy street brings a much needed rest to another part of our brain. And here again it is that the mountaineer stands almost alone, for where can we find the same peace and quiet, the same calm and repose that is found on the mountain tops?

It is also true that the sense of smell is much more keen in the fresh and exhilarating air of the country, than in the stagnant and polluted media in which we live in towns. For here in the city our olfactory organs are considerably blunted in their function, owing to the continual breathing of a stale and stuffy atmosphere. This is well shown in persons in a crowded room, who may be quite oblivious to the foulness of the air, until they go out for “a breath of fresh air” and come in again; then, and only then do they notice the stuffiness. Now on the mountains we are far removed from all sources of pollution, nothing is here but the genuine article laden with the fragrance of the heath and brake, or the resinous odour of the pines, now so much sought after by people with pulmonary troubles.

To the active brain worker there is no more profitable occupation than a ramble among the mountains; here his thoughts are completely severed from all their ordinary every-day associations, and here he is brought face to face

with all the varied and wonderful works of nature: it may be the sight of a flower

“A wee modest crimson-tipped flower,”

the cry of a bird, the roar of a cataract, or the movements of a large herd of deer that attract the attention; but certain it is that every one of them supplies food for a line of thought that is far removed from the channels of everyday life, into which his tired and overwrought brain has been ploughed. And if the brain, the great governor of all, is benefited, surely it is but natural to expect that every other organ, every part of every organ, will also participate.

As a final proof of the general good to the economy from these excursions, I may mention the enormous, the almost incredible distances one may travel among these mountain fastnesses, without the least feeling of fatigue.

In conclusion, then, provided the individual is in a fair state of health, and not too much given over to laziness or luxury, I can boldly assert that there is nothing better than hill-climbing for bringing back the blush of health to the faded cheek; and if the person has a knowledge of any of the natural sciences—botany, geology, etc.—the pleasure derivable from such excursions will be added to tenfold.

In Memoriam :

THE REV. WILLIAM FORSYTH, M.A., D.D.

Born 1825.

Died 1907.

DR. FORSYTH, an esteemed Honorary Member of the Club, died at the Manse of Abernethy, Strathspey, on 27th April, 1907. He was born at the Dell of Abernethy, and graduated at King's College in 1843. Three years later he was ordained to the church of Ardersier, where he ministered for seven years. In 1853 he was translated to Dornoch, and in 1863 he became minister of his native parish. Both in Ardersier and in Dornoch the young clergyman acquired a reputation, not only by his devotion to ministerial duties, but for his uncommon sagacity and unbending integrity. His grasp of affairs was remarkable, and was specially manifested in the action he took during the potato famine of 1846 and the cholera visitation of 1849, and in his successful dealing with educational matters in both northern parishes.

The education of the young was indeed a subject to him of special interest, and his influence as an educationist was felt far beyond the united parishes of Abernethy and Kin-cardine, of the School Board of which he was for many years Chairman. He also served as Chairman of the Parochial Board, and latterly of the Parish Council, and was also a County Councillor, and a member of the Inverness-shire Secondary Education Committee. He was a frequent contributor to religious periodicals, and now and again favoured our Journal with an article that much increased the Club's knowledge of its titular mountain. As a writer, however, he will be best remembered for the history he wrote of his native parish, "In the Shadow of Cairngorm," published in 1900, and reviewed at considerable length in our third volume.

The University of Aberdeen conferred on him in 1889 the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Divinity. He celebrated his diamond jubilee last October, when parishioners and friends

made him and Mrs. Forsyth a handsome presentation, as stated at page 229 of the present volume.

Dr. Forsyth was a notable man, and no less lovable. Naturally he was adored by his parishioners, and as years wore on was venerated by a wide circle of friends far beyond Strathspey. Much learning and the varied experiences of a long busy life had widened both his knowledge and his interests, but withal, the simplicity of his character was outstanding. It was to him, as he said, a delight to tell of bygone days, and

“To speak of you, ye mountains and ye lakes,
And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds,
That dwell among the hills where I was born.”

JAMES SHEARER.

Born 1836.

Died 1907.

JAMES SHEARER, a humble member, but one of our most lovable, died at Cairnie on 9th May, 1907. He began life as a herd-boy, ultimately becoming a shoemaker. A man of many parts, he was a total abstainer, had deep religious feelings, though not rigid in sect; was a bee-master of some authority; a church precentor for several years; and a regular correspondent to the *Banffshire Journal* since 1866. In his younger days he attended the meetings of the Keith Mutual Improvement Society; in later years many a long walk he took to be present at discussions of the Huntly Field Club. The recently issued “History of Cairnie” is not a little indebted to him for information.

No member better enjoyed the Club's Excursions than James Shearer, and frequently he put himself to no small trouble to attend them. His fellow-members much enjoyed his company; his presence was welcomed by all. A love of nature and a passion for the hills made him kin with those he counted his “betters,” but he often marvelled at the terms of equality on which he was invariably received. He is survived by two married daughters, to whom the Club begs to extend its sympathy.

CLUNY.

A south-west breeze sweeps o'er the sea,
And through thy woods the song-birds call,
The budding leaves bedeck the tree,
As spring's warm teardrops on them fall,
Oh, Cluny fair !

Now summer's sun looks down, and lo,
Both flower and leaf are in their prime ;
We breathe their perfume as they blow
Their bounties o'er our sea-nursed clime,
Oh, Cluny fair !

As through thy woods I wander lone,
And greet their fragrance everywhere,
Old mem'ries wake of days long gone—
Another form is with me there,
Oh, Cluny fair !

While glide the summer suns away,
And beauty fades, a transient dream,
Sweet memories live, and live for aye,
Till life is lost in Lethe's stream,
Oh, Cluny fair !

J. REID, M.A.

Castle Fraser.

CLACH-A-BHOINEIDE—THE BONNET STONE:
A LEGEND OF THE MONADH-LIATH.

BY REV. D. McDOUGALL.

THE somewhat tragical incident that gave rise to the following legend dates probably from the middle of the seventeenth century. It gave the name of the Bonnet Stone to a large boulder on the northern slope of the hill immediately behind Craigellachie and forming the summit of the ridge between the Dulnan and the Spey. The particulars of the event, which tradition has handed down, are in substance as here described.

The affair originated in a quarrel between two neighbours in the parish of Duthil over the carcase of a deer, which one of them had killed. The two men were both experienced huntsmen, who spent a good deal of their time in hunting deer and other wild game to supply the needs of their household, as food of other kinds was by no means too plentiful in those days, especially amongst people isolated in mountain glens far distant from town. On this occasion both went together in quest of game, as was often the case; and in a short time one of them succeeded in killing a stag on the hill above referred to. He at once set about skinning the animal, and, having suitably trimmed the carcase, laid it aside in a secure corner, as he imagined, till he should get it conveyed home. His companion meanwhile continued his search for game in hopes of being rewarded with like success; but on seeing his more fortunate neighbour hurrying homewards, apparently with a view to procure help to carry his venison home, a new idea took hold of his mind, which promised him a good supply of food without much further trouble. His plan was to take possession of the slain deer himself and conceal it in a safe spot till he should find a suitable opportunity of secretly conveying it home, believing no doubt that somebody else would be blamed for the theft. But not content with

stealing his neighbour's property, he resolved to play a disgusting and cruel practical joke on him as well, and carried out his purpose in the following manner. A young colt or foal which had died the day before was lying not very far from the spot, in a narrow recess along the same hill-side. He forthwith flayed the carcase of the colt and transferred it to the spot where his neighbour had left the deer he had killed and dressed; in its place his treacherous companion put the carcase of the colt as a substitute for the venison which he carried home for his own use. Shortly afterwards the owner of the stag arrived at the place to carry home his spoil, quite unaware, as it was now dusk, that it was the carcase of a colt he was carrying home, and not the venison that he had killed. After arriving home, he lost no great time in cutting off and cooking a part of the animal, little suspecting that all his toil had ended in carrying to his house a dead colt and not venison. But instead of enjoying savoury venison for his supper, what he had prepared had quite a different flavour from what venison should have, and he found himself unable to partake of it, as it was utterly unpalatable. He soon began to suspect that a mean and cowardly trick had been played upon him, and a more close inspection of the carcase he had brought home with him convinced him of the deceit which had been practised against him.

His suspicion at once fell on his neighbour, who alone knew of the whereabouts in which the dead stag lay hidden, and he determined to be revenged. On the day following he took a walk in the direction of the hill on which he had killed his venison, and met his companion by the side of a spring of water in close proximity to the scene of his exploit. After a few words of greeting, his friend mockingly asked him how he enjoyed the venison he had killed the day before. The question asked convinced him that his suspicion was well founded, and he at once charged him with the theft of his venison. This induced an immediate quarrel, and in a fit of anger and wild passion he attacked the thief, who lost his life in the struggle. Not satisfied with killing the culprit by the side of this mountain spring, in a fit of mad

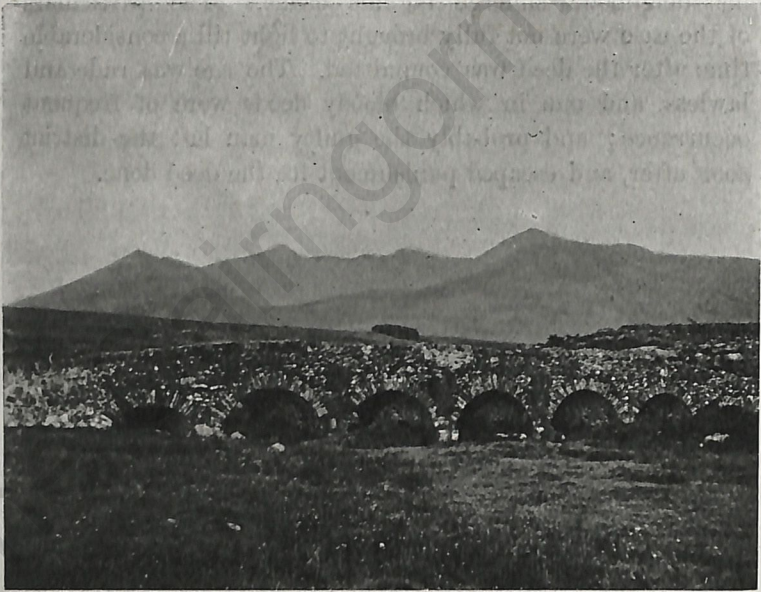
resentment he cut off his head, placing it with the cap or bonnet belonging to it on the stone where it was afterwards found; and this it was that gave to that boulder ever afterwards the name of *Clach-a-Bhoineide*, or the Bonnet Stone. The spring where his victim was killed obtained also the name of *Fuaran a Bhoineide*, although at first it was called *Fuaran Phol*, or Paul's Spring, after the name of the murdered man. In the neighbourhood of both the spring and the stone is a marshy hollow or recess, where the dead colt or foal was found, which from that circumstance came to be known as *Sluganan t-Searraich*, or the foal's marsh.

Tradition does not say whether the man who thus killed his neighbour suffered for his crime. The particulars of the case were not fully brought to light till a considerable time after the deed was committed. The age was rude and lawless, and one in which bloody deeds were of frequent occurrence; and probably the guilty man left the district soon after, and escaped punishment for the deed done.

MACGILLICUDDY'S REEKS:
IN THE WET ON CARRAUNTOOHILL.

BY ERNEST A. BAKER.

THE right starting point for Carrauntoohill (3,414 ft.), the highest mountain in Ireland, is a homely little hotel at Glencar, eight Irish miles from the railway station at Lough Caragh, on the route to Valentia. We did not find this out



GLENCAR BRIDGE AND THE REEKS.

till we had made arrangements for setting out from Killarney, from which tout-ridden paradise we got away with all speed as soon as we found Glencar on the Ordnance map, having cancelled luncheon basket, jaunting car, and an early call. But a day had been lost, and we had to pay the forfeit of inexperience. From Bantry to Glengarriff and Kenmare and Killarney we had enjoyed weather of a halcyon serenity little

known in Kerry. Even the inquisitorial American had been induced now and then to turn an eye upon the scenery, and vary his interrogations as to the yield of oats per acre with reminiscences, not too insulting, of the grandeurs of his native Yellowstone. Driving up past the forest-fringed and mountain-girdled lake of Caragh and over the high moors to Glencar, we had the ineffable curves and soaring pinnacles of the Reeks ever above us, bathed in an atmosphere of pure, aerial tints that softened, but did not blur, their gracious contours. A mile or two from their lowest spurs is Glencar, with mountains, lakes and tarns on every side, and the two Caragh rivers, the larger one a noble salmon stream, flowing past the white-walled inn.

But the beatific splendours of the sunset harbingered an adverse change for us. Glencar reminds one of a hundred places in the Western Highlands of Scotland, reminds one with a difference not easy to define. The weather, at any rate, is not the point of contrast, for we set out for "the Reeks" next morning in a Scotch mist that might have been distilled on the skirts of Ben Nevis. Walking three miles beside the lesser Caragh, which runs down from the mountains through whole thickets of regal *Osmunda*, we sat us down beside its source, Lough Acoose, and spent an hour sadly hoping that the peaks would come forth again at length as radiantly as on yester evening. To-day was our last chance—to-morrow we were off home again.

Carrauntoohill stands at the head of a deep corrie, or mountain glen, Coomloughra, whose sides are two high ridges running far out from the midst of the Reeks to the peak of Caher on the south and the long crest of Beenkeragh over against it. Caher flings down a series of precipitous buttresses towards the three loughs, Eighter, Coomloughra and Eagher, which lie in this vast hollow—so we had ascertained with a field-glass last evening—and on certain of these rocks, we were told, excellent climbing was to be found by the enterprising. Long before we had crossed the last bog and stumped up the wet and slippery slopes to the foot of the crags we were soaked to the skin, and could with impunity challenge the weather to do its worst.

At 2,000 feet above the sea we struck along an ill-defined terrace on the face of Caher, whose shattered buttresses hung above and beneath us. Far down in the misty vacuity of the corrie we had glimpses ever and anon of the spray-swept waters of Coomloughra and its sister tarns, with the huge steepness of Beenkeragh glooming through the mist beyond. At moments we could see even the notched and jagged razor-edge that runs up and down from Carrauntoohill over Beenkeragh, and Skregmore, almost encircling, with Caher, the whole of this majestic amphitheatre.

Hard purple sandstone, not unlike in texture to the famous grits of Torridon, is the material of which these cliffs are made, but it is far less solid and firm, the buttresses running aslant up the mountain face, and exposing their edges to the action of the weather. These sharp and nearly vertical arêtes tower up into the mist like a series of slabs set one over another edgewise. We made for what seemed the steepest and most continuous, and on that account was probably made of firmer substance than the rest. Behind its lower slabs we sat down again before climbing, and waited still more hopelessly for any possible change; but another hour's persistent smoking had no effect upon the weather.

We got to work at last on our buttress, defiant of wind and rain, but sorely distressed by the drenched vegetation that smothered many of the ledges between the cleaner pitches. Gritty surfaces and a reasonable sufficiency of handholds behind the slabs took us upward at a fair pace. Even the vertical and overhanging rocks that rose in rapid steps on the front of the buttress proved amenable to cautious treatment. But after 200 feet of scrambling, the edge of the arête broadened out, steep as ever, driving us off into the western gully. So far, we had not used the rope, confiding in the soundness of the rock; but here a succession of slabby cliffs, with extremely few ledges and handholds, induced us to link ourselves together and make use of all our science. One of these short cliffs, with a fissure cut across its face, gave us a bad five minutes ere we struggled out upon its shattered top and shifted away a treacherous slab for the benefit of future scramblers.

The rocks here had decayed more rapidly, flaking away in large splinters, several of which went a thousand feet down the corrie when our movements dislodged them. So steep is this face that nearly all the debris shoots right away to the foot of the cliffs, and the gullies are remarkably free from scree when the ruinous state of the buttresses is considered. It is a most unusual thing for a face so steep to have so much vegetation between the rocks.

High on the left our buttress seemed to end in a massive turret, fixed on bad foundations and apparently tottering to its fall. We regained our route here, and, climbing behind the turret, saw that the buttress still ran on, in more and more of those crazy slabs, far up into the mists. We had climbed about 500 feet, when we reached the point where it tapers away into the mountain. There we looked over, as far as the mist permitted, into the bewildering maze of cliffs and ridges on the flank of Caher beyond. We were soon at the 3,000 ft. level, and a few minutes later the cairn loomed up before us. A serviceable shelter has been built into this structure, where we made another leisurely halt, with the same neutral effect on the weather. The aneroid gave our height as 3,100 feet, a hundred short of the registered altitude; but, to our surprise, as we continued our way east we came in a furlong or so to a cairnless peak, which gave the required figure of 3,200 feet. Unless the aneroid was seriously at fault, the cairn is not placed on Caher's true summit.

We had not broken through the clouds to the light of day, but had reached a thicker zone than ever. Nothing but the proverbial pea-soup similitude can give an idea of our atmosphere. But a blind man could find his way from Caher to Carrauntoohill, if his sense of touch preserved him from a headlong flight down the gulfs to right and left. The ridge is like that of Crib Goch, on the Gorphwysfa ascent to Snowdon, save that the dangerous cliffs are here on the north side, plunging down to Coomloughra, and only the precipitous slope on the other side. Often it would be a difficult feat to keep upon the actual ridge; one must perforce seek a safer footing lower down, especially if the wind blow as it

did that day. Eastward, and then more and more to the north, we made our way, pausing oftentimes to admire the superimpending crags of the great buttresses, or to look down through the mouths of black gullies into the churning vapours filling deep Coomloughra.

Where the ridge strikes Carrauntoohill it widens out, and the summit cone of the Reeks is on this side a grassy brae. Our halt on the peak we had taken so much trouble to ascend was a very brief one, for we had wasted time waiting for the mist to break, and now the afternoon was fleeting. We verified the barometer, which we felt must, with the compass, be the chief guide in our subsequent gropings, and looked round for our route homewards. Macgillicuddy's Reeks are something like an octopus, sending out huge knotty tentacles to the Gap of Dunloe towards Killarney, and to the west towards Glencar. The two long western limbs, by one of which, the Caher ridge, we had ascended, all but meet again at the far end of Coomloughra; and our object now was to descend by the other, the three-mile ridge of Beenkeragh and Skregmore. But still the curtains kept obstinately drawn all round us; nothing could be seen of any ridge abutting on Carrauntoohill except the one we had come up by. The mass of the mountain seems to be sheared away in precipices on all other sides. Next day we had the belated satisfaction of making out with a field-glass that there is a sudden break between Carrauntoohill and Beenkeragh. But now, although we suspected the existence of such a break, we utterly failed to locate it. For one thing, the Ordnance Survey in this district has not marked out the contour lines, and our map was not even shaded. Beenkeragh was simply put in a mile to the north-northwest, but the shape of the connecting link was for us to guess.

We launched out into the unknown, keeping the right direction as nearly as the steepness of the cliffs would allow, an abrupt ledge pushing us further and further east. Grievously weathered and disintegrated, this side of Carrauntoohill is covered with loose masses of wreckage, most of it ready to shoot away down hill on the slightest provocation. To avoid hitting each other with any of

these missiles unwarily dislodged, we kept as much abreast as we could, and when sheer cliffs breaking across the mountain forced us into a shattered, irregular gully, the lower man took cover whilst his mate slid cautiously from one precarious hold to the next. The gully soon gave birth to a streamlet, and developed into something more like a sporting climb, which, however, made the chances of hitting the ridge to Beenkeragh in that direction still more unlikely. Some 500 feet down, a gap opened in the steep buttress to our left. I traversed cautiously through, for there was a drop of unknown depth just underneath. All that could be made out beyond of the northern face of Carrauntoohill were long slopes of tremendous steepness, broken at every few yards by impracticable cliffs—of the wished-for ridge not a sign. Traversing across a precipitous face being one of the least welcome tasks a climber can set himself, we were not eager to venture that way; and now the path we had been following seemed to be cut off. A stone was pushed over into the mist. There was a pause before it struck the mountain, and then another, its final echoes as it fell into the distant screes sounding very far away indeed.

We clambered back along the slippery cliff top to the gully, which at this point cuts through a portion of the escarpment in a straight, steep pitch, with a waterfall. The pitch might be 40 feet or it might be 400 feet; we could not see down it for twenty, and the noise of the stream was confused with the clattering of many waters and the beating of the gale. Beside the gully, on the east, the cliffs went down in broad bands, with sloping ledges between, zig-zagging among which, in worm-like attitudes, we landed in about a hundred feet at the bottom of the pitch. Broken rocks led on to where, deep below, a stream was falling down the mountain side. In vain we tried to find out whether it ran east or west. But we had travelled so far from our proper direction that we had small hope of finding that it flowed down the western side of Beenkeragh.

We found ourselves in a deep cove, hemmed in by rocks, and sloping, so far as we could make out from the data at our disposal, toward the Hag's Glen, on quite the wrong side

of the mountain for us. We had, in fact, descended 1,200 feet from the summit, and would have been thankful to find ourselves back again. The alternative before us was to re-ascend to the 3,100 ft. level, and drop over the ridge into Coomloughra, or to continue downwards and circumambulate the whole northern portion of Macgillicuddy's Reeks. We decided to climb, but first to have some food. A paper of sandwiches had been thoughtfully reserved for emergencies. Unfortunately, they had not been well packed. The string had broken, and the sandwiches had been distributed into a sort of cushion underneath the camera and a bundle of photographic plates, which they had doubtless saved from many hard knocks. We emptied out the mixture of paper, nutriment, and various odds and ends, on to the hillside, and browsed at leisure. Then, striking up a gully at the head of the cove, we mounted again deeper and deeper into the mist. Our only fear was lest this route should prove impracticable; but after climbing out to avoid a steepish pitch, crossing an outcrop of easy rocks, and dragging ourselves wearily up one of those portentously steep grass slopes that are such a feature of the Reeks, we came out on the sky-line.

Then we turned west for Beenkeragh, whose distance was still entirely unknown to us. Caher's ridge had been like a high-pitched roof; Beenkeragh's resembled the top of a ruinous, dry-built wall. You could see through it where big blocks had tumbled out; many of those that remained on the summit rocked at a touch. There was no dropping below the crest here. We had to bestride it and worry up and down every tooth and indentation, wind, rain, mist and greasy rocks making the going exceedingly tiresome. Reaching the apex of a sharp pinnacle, we took stock of the situation. The summit, which was not in sight, and might be a mile away yet, was 214 feet higher than our present position, which was exactly 3,100 feet above sea-level by the aneroid. We knew only too well that there were two miles of this sort of work before us if we pushed on over Skregmore. It was late, and we reluctantly determined to give up the rest of the programme. At the first point where a descent appeared feasible without too much climbing, we left the

ridge, soon reaching a steep grass slope broken by crag, down which in the process of time, slipping, tumbling and sliding on the boggy herbage and loose scree, we reached the haven of Glen Coomloughra. For the first time since the morning we were actually below the mist. On three sides were the mountain walls, their lower slopes alone visible; on the other Lough Eagher outspread its lonely waters. We skirted its southern shores, sometimes wading past the foot of projecting bluffs; then crossing the moraine between the lakes we followed the north edge of Coomloughra and Eighter, to where the accumulated waters make a passage between the opposing horns of the two great ridges, and fling themselves in a far-seen cataract down to the lowlands.

This mountain portal commands a wide prospect of western Kerry. The vision that broke upon us was a clouded one, but therewithal the more solemn and more magnificently stern. A wild sunset was burning itself out in the west, still throwing into dark relief Brander on the far sea-shore, and the Slieve Mish Mountains, with Dingle Bay running far in among the hills, Lough Caragh and half a score of lakes and tarns dimly lighted by the fading splendour. Dusky woods, wan waters, and gloomy moorlands grew darker and darker as we looked at the smouldering sky, until all were swallowed up by new rain clouds from the black south-west.

With true Irish contrariness, just as we dropped at length into the valley, the mountains came out of the mist. Caher and Carrauntoohill and Beenkeragh, there they all were, feebly illumined by the last glimmer of twilight, but clear right up to the highest rock-tooth on their crest. Nor was this bitter piece of irony our only trial. Between us and the hotel was a tract of bog. In the morning we had found the path across with no difficulty; in the dark we went incontinently adrift. For half an hour we floundered blindly through rivulets and moss-hags, splashing ourselves up to the eyes with miry water in the ditches where peats had been cut. Our appearance was inglorious when we re-entered the hotel. "Had we done it?" they asked. - The gillies had declared that it was a sheer impossibility to find the way to Carrauntoohill in such weather. They did not know the mountaineer.

ALLT AN LOCHAN UAINE.

From the Gaelic of William Smith, in "Poems in the Aberdeenshire
Dialect," by John Milne.

By the green loch's bonny burn
Once I had my lonely dwelling,
Though high it stood upon a hill
The warmth within was never failing;
And though drifting down the hill,
Came the snow my hut to cumber,
Yet the purling icy brook
Sooth'd my weary eyes to slumber.

Chorus.

Thou the maiden of my heart,
Fret nor frown though I should leave thee,
Short the time when I return,
Let not then the parting grieve thee.
When the monarch of the glen
Bellows loud in boastful measure,
Then a kiss from off thy lips
I would not give for Lowland treasure.

One night alone and in the glen,
Reposing in that lonely shieling,
A warning voice came soft and low
Upon my dreamy senses stealing;
From underneath my pillow came
A warning to be up and doing,
For "Reynard" was within the glen,
And on the scent was fast pursuing.

I rose in anger, and in haste
I girded me with belt and band ;
"The Colonel's Daughter," ever true,
Encouraged me at my right hand,
Saying "Fear not, forward, banish fear
And clouds of anger from your face,
And should it come to hot pursuit,
Your fearless feet will win the race."

To guard against my lurking foes,
I searched the course of every stream—
The hollows one by one I searched
From Lui far to Carnavaime ;
And long before the morning beam
Had fired the mountain tops and sky,
I found the "Fox" was in the glen
And prowling there to scent his prey.

My mind in meditation sank,
And mused upon that mighty Power
That caused the streams to issue forth
Clear gushing from their rocky bower,
And who, through Christ the Crucified,
Who bore our sins upon the tree,
Would, in the hour of greatest need,
My guide and guard and succour be.

A HIGHLAND GLEN IN SPRING AND AUTUMN.

BY ALEX. INKSON McCONNOCHE.

IT was a cold March afternoon as we walked down Glen Monadh. The ground was black or brown by the banks of the river, but white on the hill slopes, and lifeless save for the grunting ptarmigan. It had been a day on which the thoughtful farmer took care to set loose the prisoners from their stalls for an hour or two. Not that the cattle could find aught to eat, for what grass showed had months ago been cropped bare, as clean shaved as though a barber had plied his art on the pastures of the fields.

We stumbled through mire here, over snow-wreaths there, and as we had left the deer ground a mile behind unexpectedly found ourselves faced by the slimmest of gates fastened in the rudest manner. A herd of black cattle had, however, watched our coming with evident interest; their expectant and disconsolate appearance was plain to any one who had made animals a study. They had wearied of the cold outside as they had wearied of the noisome atmosphere of their byres, and they would be back again.

The brains of a bullock have been literally weighed in the balance—are they not sold by the pound? But evidently weight is not a measure of capacity, otherwise they would have pushed against the frail barrier and opened the way to their winter prison. Accustomed, however, to depend on others, the cattle had come to the conclusion that relief had now arrived, that we had opened the gate for them, not for ourselves. We had some difficulty in making them aware of their blunder; indeed, our hazel stick had reluctantly to be applied so as to impress the truth on their dull minds and bodies. Thus we cleared a passage through them, and, heedless, went on our way. We heard an unusual sound, and we fortunately looked back; there was a wild young fellow, head down, about to charge us. The steadfast look of the

human eye, which is said to appal the king of beasts, is powerless against a stupid ox; we thought discretion the better part of valour. The champion had the good wishes of the herd, for all heads were turned so as to witness the punishment that probably they considered we richly deserved. As it was, their cries of disappointment and rage were audible for some time as we held on our way.

Some thirty sheep had disappeared from the low ground and made their way into the recesses of the deer forest. The stalking season was at hand, and so they must needs be brought down, otherwise they might render fruitless more than one long patient stalk.

We set off with the head stalker and a collie, rejoicing at the opportunity of spending an autumn day in the wilds of Glen Monadh with such intelligent company. We had not gone a hundred yards from the cottage when we saw our first bird—a solitary snipe. The snipe is a rare fellow in these parts, and seems so out of keeping in every way with the aggressive grouse that its appearance was a marvel and a delight to us. In the short time it remained in sight we were reminded how plentiful is animal life, to the trained eye, in a Highland glen. True, nine out of ten people will probably return from a long walk, reporting that they saw nothing but rock and heather, tarn and hillock; but not so he who has been taught to use his eyes. We envy the man who had the good fortune to see, as he rested for a few minutes on a grassy knoll, a fox, two eagles, three hares, several grouse and ptarmigan, and a parcel of stags and hinds, at the same time hearing a curlew in the distance. Our luck was not, however, to be despised. We had just cleared the wood and sat down to take the usual spy, when a great herd of deer was picked out on the far slope. There was nothing for the naked eye, but the telescopes revealed many stags, hinds, and fawns, feeding all unconscious of our proximity—a sight on which we could have lingered for an hour. But our plans did not permit of such leisurely enjoyment, and so, as we had to cross that slope, we were allowed to make a little experiment on the deer. We gave a

long shrill whistle with the dog call, and all the deer stood at gaze, then with one accord they trooped down hill. Evidently they had seen nothing alarming, but they took warning from their ears, and sought safety in the wood, just as the stalker had told us to expect.

Higher up, the glass was again brought into requisition. Without it there was nothing to be seen, with it the distant ground was crawling with deer, but still we saw no sheep. At over 2,000 feet of altitude we rested and searched the hill sides, and were rewarded with a glorious sight across a ravine. There in the long heather lay a small parcel of stags; in some instances only antlers, in others the whole head and a bit of the back were visible. We did not intrude on them; it is just as reprehensible to needlessly disturb resting deer as to rouse cattle when they chew the cud. A few other stags by and by joined the party, but kept their legs as they fed, though one lazy fellow lay down and nibbled at the grass within range of his lips.

We next reached a zone where new weather was in the making. Below all was fair and still, here we had promise of change. Further up in the gullies we could see a patch or two of last winter's snow, but it was the beautiful clouds that sounded the note of alarm. Here and there they were of magnificently brilliant colours, some difficult to name by the non-artistic, but gold and green predominated. This wealth of colour in such circumstances has generally a significance that demands attention as being the precursor of a storm. Several mountain hares fled from before us, suggestive of lost stalks the following month, for a frightened hare is sufficient warning to a wily stag. Roes too, had wandered to these heights, and went off on our approach at the rate of over twenty miles an hour. A roe makes excellent speed for a short distance, and as it moves forward by its own peculiar bounds, is a most attractive animal. We were in a little garden of white heather, and the second bloom of the cranberry was unusually abundant.

But still we saw no sheep. The silence could be felt; it was complete save for the melody of a burn or two hurrying

down to the glen stream. We traced the musical rills to their very sources, and there found our missing sheep, to their evident astonishment. Fain would they have gone over the march and into the next county, but Rover would have none of it. When at last he had them all herded together, the troublesome return journey was commenced. For the sheep had enjoyed their mountain freedom, and every now and again broke away, so the dog had a rough time and much running. But he seemed accustomed to rebellious charges, and when a direction from his master was necessary, he carried it out promptly and unerringly. As we descended lower, the sheep seemed to return to their former docility and gave no further trouble, even submitting to being penned without remonstrance.

THE WALKER'S SONG.

Out of the pris'ning house,
Out of the city's tangle,
The library's death and dust,
The market's heat and wrangle.

The cheer of the open road,
The noble lust of travel—
These are goodlier goods of the soul
Than the lecture's froth and cavil.

The spoil of the hard-won hill !
The bare brown miles of heather !
The tang of the salt sea air,
And whip of the wet, wild weather !

Shelter from God's own sky ?
A straight, cramped yard of breathing ?
Who is content with these
With blood in his veins a-seething ?

Let prig and precisian skulk
And whine for the lee and the tether,
While we, unfettered and glad,
Shall roam through the earth for ever.

K.

HISTORY OF THE LOCH AN EILEIN OSPREYS.

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

IN July, 1903, I had an article in this Journal giving an account of my observations of the Loch an Eilein ospreys from 1894 to 1903. I little thought then that I was perhaps writing the requiem of these noble birds, but it is the regrettable fact that ospreys have not re-visited Loch an Eilein since that time, and some of our best ornithologists are beginning to fear that the bird may be lost to our fauna. There is a vague rumour, which I have not been able to trace to any definite source, that ospreys were somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Cairngorms last year, and that their nest was robbed, but enquiries made then and since have quite failed to bring me any confirmation of the story.

The early history of the Loch an Eilein ospreys is mainly contained in Harvie-Brown's "Vertebrate Fauna of the Moray Basin," 1895, but there are also occasional references to the birds in other published writings. Unfortunately not a little of the information supplied to Harvie-Brown suffers from vagueness, inaccuracy, and confusion, and so his story is not as satisfactory as could be wished. I propose to attempt here a chronological analysis of what is known as to the history of the Loch an Eilein ospreys, with occasional references to their neighbours in Glenmore, drawing my information from Harvie-Brown's book, from my own observation, and from other available sources.

It may be noted as somewhat curious that Lachlan Shaw's "History of the Province of Moray," 1775, has no mention of the osprey, though it contains a special chapter on the Fauna. Also in Sir John Sinclair's (old) "Statistical Account of Scotland," 1791-99, there is no mention of ospreys, though other birds are named. Much of Harvie-Brown's information was obtained from Lewis Dunbar, who several times took ospreys' eggs at Loch an Eilein and at Glenmore.

Dunbar gave his information partly by word of mouth to Harvie-Brown at Loch an Eilein in 1892, and partly in two manuscript reports written in 1886 and in 1892; his statements, however, are not uniformly consistent among themselves, nor do they always agree with written contemporary records elsewhere; it was, indeed, scarcely to be expected that he would have precise and accurate recollection of all his nest riflings.

1804. The earliest reference that I know of is in Colonel Thornton's "Sporting Tour"; he heard of ospreys at "Loch Morlaix," in Glenmore, but apparently did not hear of them at Loch an Eilein.

1808. Mrs. Smith, (Elizabeth Grant), in "Memoirs of a Highland Lady," 1898, writes, "A low square tower at the end of the ruin supported an eagle's nest. Often the birds rose as we were watching their eyrie, and wheeled skimming over the loch in search of the food required by the young eaglets, who could be seen peeping over the pile of sticks that formed their home."

1824. John MacCulloch, the geologist, writing of the Castle of Loch an Eilein, says, "The eagle has built his eyrie on its walls."

1842-48. Ospreys built on the ruined lodge at Loch Merlich, seemingly the lodge on the south side of the Allt Mor; its ruins, or those of its successor, were cleared away last year.

1843. In this year Roualeyn Gordon-Cumming went to South Africa. Before this time—years uncertain, probably not long before—he had taken ospreys' eggs at Loch an Eilein.

In this year R. Carruthers, in his "Highland Note Book," says of the osprey and the castle, "She has long been a denizen of the ruined tower, and still remains."

1844. Thos. Macpherson Grant wrote to Dr. Gordon reporting ospreys at Loch an Eilein, and at other lochs in Badenoch, specially mentioning Loch Insh, and also saying that there were several pairs in Abernethy Forest.

1845. "The New Statistical Account" says, "The osprey

builds her nest and nurtures her young on the top of one of the turrets of Loch an Eilein Castle, and supplies herself with food from the neighbouring lakes and streams."

1846. Lewis Dunbar said that in this year he first took eggs from the Loch an Eilein nest. It seems, however, that this really occurred in 1848, as Dunbar's reported dates are all two years wrong.

1846-7. There are no records for these two seasons.

1848-52. For these years some of the information is chronologically uncertain, and the different statements irreconcilable. One year the ospreys deserted Loch an Eilein because of timber-floating, went to Loch Morlich, and built there, and had their nest robbed by Dunbar. But Harvie-Brown also says that the birds went to Loch Gambna, and built on a tree by its south-east shore, a tree that was blown down about 1879. In another of these years, or more probably in each of two or three other years, perhaps 1849, 1850, 1851, both the Loch an Eilein and the Loch Morlich nests were occupied, and Dunbar took the first clutch from each nest. At this period it is said that there were no jackdaws at the castle, though many occupied the neighbouring cliffs. It is quite doubtful whether the Loch an Eilein ospreys and the Loch Morlich ospreys were ever the same pair.

1848. Dunbar's first harrying of the Loch an Eilein nest really took place in this year. He swam across to the castle, and carried off the eggs in his bonnet. The woman living at the neighbouring cottage saw him come from the water, and fled. The eggs were sent to Charles St. John. The same year Dunbar made his first harrying of the nest on the ruined lodge at Loch Morlich. In this year died the first Sir John Peter Grant of Rothiemurchus.

1849. In May of this year Dunbar took three eggs from a nest in an old fir-tree at Loch Morlich. According to a statement by Harvie-Brown of the custodian of the Natural History Museum at Newcastle, there were also two young birds just hatched in the same nest. It seems unlikely that five eggs would be in the one clutch, but Harvie-Brown, while reporting these two statements in different parts of his

book, makes no remark as to the improbability, apparently not recognising that the two statements refer to the same year. The eggs were sent to St. John, in Sutherland, and he sent one to Hancock of Newcastle, from whom it passed to the Newcastle Museum. Dunbar says that the ospreys moved their young to the nest on the ruined lodge, though he does not definitely say that he is referring to this same year. He climbed up to the nest, though he does not say why, and then the birds removed their young to some place unknown.

In the same month Dunbar made his second harrying of the Loch an Eilein nest, getting three eggs, and sending them to Hancock. He also visited an old breeding site, apparently near Loch Gamhna, in a tree that Harvie-Brown says has since been cut down.

1850. Dunbar with Mr. Hancock and Dunbar's brother or cousin visited old breeding sites near the Nethy, and then went on to the Loch Morlich Lodge. Here they shot the female bird, and took two eggs from the nest, and apparently carried off the nest also. On dissection, the bird was found to contain another egg, Dunbar says "beautifully marked," but Hancock says "not shelled."

In this year also Dunbar made his third harrying of the Loch an Eilein nest, getting three eggs, which were sent to Hancock.

1851. Dunbar made his fourth harrying of the Loch an Eilein nest, getting two eggs, which were given to Mr. Wolley, who apparently was staying in the neighbourhood, but declined to accompany Dunbar in his visit to the loch. Wolley says in his "*Ootheca Wolleyana*" that he refused, "considering my position there, . . . the more so as I suspected the proprietress protected the birds, and I have been since assured that there was a man appointed on purpose to take care of them." Dunbar's visit on this occasion was at 3 a.m., and in a snowstorm.

There is some confusion in the records of the Loch Morlich nesting and harrying of this year. Wolley certainly had one egg from Loch Morlich, got by a shepherd, and sent to

Wolley apparently by Dunbar's brother or cousin, but Harvie-Brown's accounts leave it doubtful whether, besides this, Dunbar also sent to Wolley eggs, or even two clutches of eggs from Loch Morlich.

In this year a new lodge was built at Loch Morlich against the old one.

1852. Dunbar made his fifth and last harrying of the Loch an Eilein nest, getting three eggs, and sending them to Wolley. He went to the nest at night; Wolley writes, "At 11.35 p.m., very dark, and no moon. Had cramp in return, and was hauled out by his cousin," who had accompanied him. Dunbar wrote to Wolley, "The cock bird flew away before I reached the island; and after I climbed up to the top of the ruin, and was just at the nest, I put out my hand to catch the hen, but when she felt me she gave a loud scream, and flew away also."

Gordon-Cumming also robbed the nest this same year, and this severe treatment probably deterred the ospreys from returning the next year.

Wolley also received a single egg this year from Dunbar's brother William, but there is no record of where it was obtained.

1853-62. There is no record for these years.

1863. Peter Anderson, the joint-author of the classic "Guide to the Highlands," in his "Memoranda of an Excursion to the Grampians and Strathspey in July, 1863," published in this Journal in July, 1903, writes thus of Loch an Eilein Castle, "the little islet, with the most picturesque tree-filled shell of its old castle, the walls tenanted by a couple of small 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."

1864-71. There is no record for these years.

1872. Lord Stamford, then the sporting tenant of Rothiemurchus, shot one of the birds, but, according to Harvie-Brown, without knowing what bird he was shooting; the bird rose suddenly from the hollow of a mountain stream

among trees, and was shot at sight without recognition ; the sportsman regretted the result of his hasty shot.

1873-78. There is no record for these years.

1879. In *The Scotsman* of June 9th, 1879, there appeared an article, unsigned, but quite obviously written by Mr. Jolly, H.M. Inspector of Schools, giving an account of a visit to Loch an Eilein, where the ospreys had that season hatched two young, one of which, however, was later found dead on the shore. On June 12th, in the same paper, appeared a letter to the Editor, protesting against the publication of information as to the breeding-place of the ospreys, lest mischief should ensue. In *Good Words* for April, 1880, Mr. Jolly gave, under his own name, an extended account of the visit previously reported in *The Scotsman*. It may fairly be said that Mr. Jolly's article first made the Loch an Eilein ospreys known to the general public, but it is a moot point whether the ospreys have or have not benefited by the publicity.

1880. In August, 1880, Mr. Jolly again saw the ospreys at Loch an Eilein, where they had reared two young. Of this second visit Mr. Jolly gave an account in *Good Words* for May, 1881, (Harvie-Brown by some curious error says September, 1880), with an excellent drawing by Mrs. Blackburn, showing the "fore and aft" manner in which the bird carries a fish.

1881. The ospreys were at Loch an Eilein, but I do not know whether they reared any young.

1882-4. There is no record for these seasons, but in 1892 Mr. Charles Grant, younger son of the second Sir John Peter Grant, in a letter to Harvie-Brown, said in somewhat vague terms that about this time the Loch an Eilein nest was deserted for some few years.

1885 or 1886. There is reason to believe that in one of these years the birds nested near the north-west corner of Loch Gamhna, but did not breed. Harvie-Brown and Norrie photographed the remains of this nest in 1893.

The Rev. Dr. Forsyth, whose death is noticed in this number of the Journal, and who had great knowledge of and

interest in the district, in 1885 wrote to Harvie-Brown that until just before the time of writing ospreys had bred in the Abernethy forest, and that even then he doubted whether the Loch an Eilein birds were the only ones in the district.

1887. The ospreys bred at Loch an Eilein, and the eggs were taken. Harvie-Brown seems to suggest that the birds then went to Loch Gambhna, and that their eggs were taken there also.

1888. The story of this year is specially interesting, and was reported, but not quite accurately, to Harvie-Brown by Mr. Chas. Grant in 1902, in the letter already mentioned. Two female birds came on April 7th, and fought till one was killed. The dead bird was picked up, according to Mr. Grant, by William Grant, a local tailor, and is now preserved as a mounted specimen in The Doune. The same day a male bird arrived, and the next day another male. The progress and end of the combat between the two males seems unknown, but the surviving pair after a few days deserted Loch an Eilein, and bred at Loch Gambhna, rearing three young. One little point may be corrected in this account: the man that got the body of the slain hen-bird was Peter Grant, mason, son of old Mrs. Grant, then and for some years later resident at the Tea Cottage. This information I had from those who saw him carrying the bird to The Doune.

1889. The ospreys were seen at Loch an Eilein and at Loch Insh; they nested at Loch Gambhna, and the eggs were taken.

In August of this year an osprey was shot at Lower Cabrach on the Deveron.

1890. According to Mr. Chas. Grant, the ospreys bred in Rothiemurchus, but not at Loch an Eilein. According to a statement in the *Elgin Courant* of May 24th, 1892, three birds came, and one was killed in fight. I do not know what authority there is for this.

This year an osprey was shot at Meyen, on Lower Deveron.

1891. The birds were not at Loch an Eilein; they bred, presumably at Loch Gambhna, and the eggs were taken.

1892. The birds came to Loch an Eilein, but were "dis-

turbed," and left again. Harvie-Brown's statements about this year are not clear. Apparently he says both that the birds bred at Loch Gamhna, and also that he was told there that the birds had not used the Loch Gamhna nest for ten years. That same year also he was told by the keeper that the Loch an Eilein nest was all blown down, and yet the same day he and Dunbar saw "plenty of nest," and an osprey flying there. The same month he saw evidence of the shooting of an osprey in that neighbourhood; his text does not say where, but his illustration places it in the Richmond and Gordon property. He saw also another nest in the middle of the Rothiemurchus forest.

1893. The ospreys returned to Loch an Eilein at what Harvie-Brown calls "their usual time, *i.e.*, between the 15th and 16th of April." Hinxman, however, writing to Harvie-Brown says, "their first appearance in spring is very regular, —between April 4th and 6th." According to Hinxman, only one bird came in 1893, and it stayed but a short time.

In April, 1893, the Zoological Society of London awarded silver medals to Donald Cameron of Lochiel, and John Peter Grant of Rothiemurchus, "in recognition of the efforts made to protect the osprey in their respective districts." The John Peter Grant here referred to was the son of the second Sir John Peter Grant, who had died in the preceding January. The medals were to be presented on June 22nd, but the laird died on June 11th, and the present laird, also John Peter, succeeded to the estate, and received the medal.

1894. In August of this year my previous set of notes began. The birds had been seen in the spring, and reported to Harvie-Brown by Hinxman, William Douglas, and Colin Phillip. Two young ones were hatched at the castle nest.

1895. This year the ospreys hatched at the castle nest in June. They were photographed by O. A. J. Lee. Apparently there were again two young birds.

1896. The ospreys hatched at the castle nest. There were two young birds.

1897. The two birds arrived on March 29th, and hatched at the castle nest; probably there were two young birds.

1898. The two birds arrived at the castle nest on March 29th, but apparently they had no young there. Four ospreys were seen flying together near Glen Feshie, but their place of breeding seemed unknown.

1899—the year of the Rothiemurchus forest fire. Two birds arrived on April 3rd, and nested. A third bird arrived, and there was much fighting, in the course of which the nest was damaged and the eggs were smashed. It is not known whether the birds nested elsewhere. In May of this year an osprey was shot at Knockespock.

1900. Two ospreys came to Rothiemurchus, and one of them visited the castle nest several times. They did not breed there, nor, so far as is known, anywhere else. They nested elsewhere, as I have told at some length in my previous article.

1901. Apparently only one bird came to the castle nest, arriving on April 1st, but seemed to be mateless. It was seen fighting with a golden eagle.

1902. A single osprey came to the castle nest on April 4th, and apparently remained mateless.

Since 1902 no osprey has been seen at Rothiemurchus, but in September, 1904, one was shot near Guildford, in Surrey.

This finishes my story—a story of such ruthless persecution and of such altogether inadequate protection that the wonder is that the ospreys have survived so long. It will be a matter for serious regret if we lose these birds, but lose them we shall—even if we have not already lost them—unless this persecution is prevented, and the birds are given a fair chance to continue the course of life that adds such a charm to that most beautiful of Highland beauty-spots—Loch an Eilein.

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

THE arctic character of the winter that has just closed has given ample scope for the enjoyment of the Norwegian sport of ski-ing without leaving our own shores. On New Year's day, a friend and I

SKI-ING NOTES. ascended Bennachie from Oyne. We travelled from Aberdeen by the early morning train and managed to strap on our ski in Oyne station, and get through the village without any very great demonstration on the part of the inhabitants. The snow was in perfect condition until we got into the wood, but there it became somewhat heavy. We ascended Craig Shannoch, taking slightly longer than a fellow-clubman who was on foot, and struck over toward the Mither Tap.

Once on the crest of the hill we flew downwards, soon reaching the woods of Pittodrie, then dodging in and out among the fir trees, kept on at an immense speed till we reached a farm about two miles from Pitcaple station. The good farmer was struck almost dumb at the speed with which we came down his sloping pasture; and on our enquiring how long we should take to reach Pitcaple we were informed that it took "about half-an-oor tae walk, but ye'd gang in about twa meenuts on thae things!" However, he underestimated our time, as we found that the snow on the turnpike was not in very good condition, so our progress was slow. On reaching Pitcaple we kept on to Inveramsay, where we caught a suitable train home.

On the morning of the 3rd of February, four of us started from Ballater with our ski to ascend Morven. We wended our way up the Tullich Valley, and put on our ski about half-way up the glen. On reaching the head of the valley we found the snow too hard for ski-ing uphill, there having been a thaw the day before followed by a sharp frost through the night, so we unstrapped our ski and tramped up to the cairn. The view was superb in every direction, but we were too anxious to try our "Telemark" swings on the way down to spend long on the summit. We put on our ski about a hundred yards from the cairn, and got a most glorious run right down to the Lary Burn, about two miles below Morven Lodge. The run was so splendid that two of us reascended about 800 feet to enjoy the return flight. We ski-ed down to the junction of the Lary and the Gairn, and then walked home, down Glen Gairn so well known to us when the trees are green, yet in that calm winter's evening, with the daylight flickering, we found many a charm in the glen which she does not reveal to her summer visitor.—J. G. K.

THE Spring Excursion for 1907 was held on 6th May, when Morven was revisited. The ascent was made from Cambus o' May station, *via*

Tomnakiest, and the descent made *via* Lary to Glen

MORVEN. Gairn. The atmospheric conditions were not favourable for a wide prospect, but the Cairngorms and

Lochnagar—on which latter mountain were several club members—were seen. There was a good deal of snow in the upper gullies of Morven. The

members dined in the Invercauld Arms Hotel, Ballater, the chairman of the club, Mr. James A. Hadden, presiding. Mr. James A. Parker and Mr. George Anderson were admitted members of the Club.

THIS hostel has more than once been referred to in the *Journal*; the last occasion was in the present volume at page 174. Alas, there will be no

more mountain excursions from Shiel Inn, for the deer forest of Cluanie has crept down to the head of Loch Duich, and so the old house, much mentioned on mile-stones, has been shut up. It is decidedly hard on mountaineers and fishermen.

ON 15th March, along with two friends, the writer ascended Ben Muich Dhui with the aid of ski. We left Inverey about 6:30 a.m., and walked up to Derry Lodge, carrying our ski all the way—

BEN MUICH no light weight. As the bridge over the Derry
DHUI. was down, we struck up to the left, and, skiing along the shoulder of Carn Crom and Derry Cairngorm, ultimately with much toil reached the head of Loch Etchachan. Here we left our ski, and struggled on foot to the summit, which we reached about 2 p.m. The view was wonderfully clear. It was strange in the arctic conditions of our surroundings to gaze upon the brown and green of Strathspey.

The cold being intense, we gladly retraced our steps, and, after some excellent glissading (too rapid in places for my taste), soon regained our ski. Putting them on once more, we ski-ed down Coire Etchachan in great style, and, after tramping along the glen and wading through the icy Derry, gladly partook of a most welcome tea at Derry Lodge. Setting out again, we wended our way down Glen Lui, and arrived at Inverey somewhere about 10 p.m. We had been out for 15 hours, but came back rejoicing that we had made the first ascent for 1907.—IAN M. MCLAREN.

THE first day of June found the writer and nine other enthusiastic climbers at Boat of Garten. We had left Aberdeen with the intention of reaching the cairn of Braeriach, whatever the condition of the

BRAERIACH. weather might be. A fairly early start (7:30 a.m.) was made, and, though it had been raining heavily all night, the sun was then shining brilliantly. We drove along through Aviemore and up past Loch an Eilein, which was a beautiful sight in the morning sunshine. Here we had our first check—two trees had to be removed from the road. This was soon overcome, but when we reached the point where there should be a bridge over the Bennie, we looked for it in vain. Luckily we all got across safely, and soon arrived at the lower bothy.

Starting to climb at 10:30 a.m., the lower end of the ridge between Coire an Lochan and Coire Ruadh was reached in about an hour. Up till now we had been walking in sunshine, but at this point we entered a very dense but fairly dry mist with a great amount of snow under foot; fortunately the snow was not very soft. We saw Loch Coire an Lochan indistinctly below us to the right, apparently half-frozen over. On the left, round the edge of Coire Ruadh, was a magnificent snow cornice.

Pushing on slowly, and using map and compass, we reached the summit cairn at 12:45 p.m., which was quite good, considering the fact that latterly we had to proceed very cautiously. Surrounded by mist and snow we lunched in an eerie silence, with the precipices dimly opening up a few yards distant. It was too cold to remain long still, so we pushed on for the Wells of Dee, which we soon reached, thanks to the skilful guiding of two of our party. We heard the water running in a snow tunnel several feet below us, and, after some digging, managed to drink each other's health at the source of the Dee. The whole plateau was one vast snowfield, except here and there where there were one or two wind-swept ridges. At several points we thrust our sticks in as far as we could, and yet were unable to touch terra firma.

From the Wells we proceeded by the March Cairn for Coire Dhondail—at least this was our intention, but somehow we failed, owing to the mist, to see the cairn. At any rate we soon began to descend, even attempting in places some mild glissading, and before long Loch Eunach appeared far below us. After this we took it very easily, and reached our waggonette about 3 p.m. The waterfalls behind the upper bothy were exceptionally fine. We all enjoyed the day immensely. Though we had no view, still to most it was a new experience, and excellent practice for careful use of map and compass.—IAN M. McLAREN.

IN an article, "Scottish Mountaineering and its Dangers," in *The Scotsman* of 25th June last, there is the following reference to Mr. Copland and the

THE
CAIRNGORM CLUB
AND ITS
FIRST CHAIRMAN.

be given without offence. Mr. Alexander Copland, of Aberdeen, had taken up the pastime before these two gentlemen had laid it down, and has celebrated his jubilee as a hill-climber. His experiences, beginning with the Cairngorms, have induced many to follow in his steps, for, alike in newspaper, pamphlet, and book form, his mountain expeditions make agreeable reading. As one of the founders, and the first chairman of the Cairngorm Club, our oldest Scottish hill club, he has left his impress both on the literature and the practice of mountaineering. His own club has faithfully carried on its work in the spirit in which its founders inaugurated it, though more advanced ideas have prevailed in similar societies both in England and Scotland. The Scottish Mountaineering Club, with its headquarters in Edinburgh and Glasgow, is naturally, though the younger, the leading club on the north side of the Border, and so to it one must look for development in Scottish hill-climbing. Founded with the same ideas, but perhaps with more ambitions than the Aberdeen club, it gradually attracted members 'furth of Scotland' with Alpine experience."

THE Aberdeen Touring Club held its annual dinner in the County Hotel

Y. Z.

on 23rd February last, Mr. John T. Nicol presiding. In the course of the evening the Chairman, referring to the prosperity that THE ABERDEEN TOURING CLUB. the Club had already experienced, expressed his confidence that in the near future success would be even greater with the co-operation of the new committee. Vocal and instrumental music, interspersed with a few pawky stories, closed a pleasant evening.—ROBERT MURDOCH-LAWRANCE.

MESSRS. Thomas Graham, Accountant, and John W. Smiley, Commercial Traveller, both of Birkenhead, spent a June holiday in Fort William for the purpose of doing some climbing on Ben Nevis. On FATALITY ON BEN NEVIS. Friday, the 14th, having already scaled the Ben by other routes, they ascended by the bridle-path to the Lochan, crossed the flat and entered the gully at the foot of the north-east buttress. Before starting the climb proper, they roped themselves together. After getting up Slingsby's Chimney about 200 feet the rocks were found to be very dangerous owing to their rotten condition, so it was determined to discontinue the ascent by that route. In the act of turning, Smiley missed his hand-grip and almost immediately lost his footing. After a fall of about 40 feet he felt the rope jerk, and in a twinkling Graham shot past him. At that moment Smiley had secured a hand-hold, but lost it as the rope tightened, and fell, about a hundred feet lower, to a ledge where he found his companion was lying. Before, however, he reached him, Graham rolled down another dozen feet or so; he was unconscious, having sustained a severe scalp wound which had practically caused instantaneous death. Smiley, in great pain and weak from loss of blood, and with a useless arm, managed to descend to Achintee, where, after being kindly treated, he was driven to the hospital at Fort William. Strange to say, his injuries were not serious—a cut on the head, right hand gashed, bruised left shoulder, and a dislocated ankle.

A search party was at once organised. By 10 p.m. they had gained the level of the Lochan when rain fell and mist gathered. The party divided— one section following the bed of the valley, the other skirting the base of the precipice. The latter section had several acetylene lamps which were not altogether serviceable, as progress was slowly made in soaking rain and mist. Corrie Mhuilinn was reached at 1 a.m., and several hours were spent without result.

The Procurator Fiscal had previously wired to the Rev. A. E. Robertson, whose knowledge of Ben Nevis is unequalled, for his assistance. Mr. Robertson arrived on the Saturday morning, and Smiley being now in better condition, more precise details were available. Shortly before noon the body was discovered with a telescope, lying on a ledge of the Chimney, the altitude being 3000 feet. Mr. Robertson, accompanied by and roped with Alexander Hunter, John Buchanan and Lawrence McDougall, now cut steps with his ice-axe, and the body was ultimately lowered by the rope, and thereafter conveyed to Fort-William.

REVIEWS.

THE sketches of Rothiemurchus and the adjoining region which Dr. Hugh Macmillan contributed a few years ago to the *Art Journal* (See *C. C. J.*, IV., 59) have now been collected and published in a volume

DR. MACMILLAN'S under the title of "Rothiemurchus" (London: J. M. Dent & Co.) Two chapters are devoted to Rothiemurchus, two to Loch an Eilein, two to Glen Eunach,

and the remaining chapters deal successively with the Larig Ghru, Glenmore and Cairngorm, and Kinrara. Dr. Macmillan spent many a holiday season at the "Forest Cabin" on the borders of Loch an Eilein, a photograph of which forms the frontispiece to this pleasant little volume. He came to know the district well and to keenly appreciate its beauties; and in these sketches we have a series of graphic descriptions of the natural features of the locality, felicitous in style and elevated in sentiment. Dr. Macmillan had a facile pen, which could be employed to equal advantage in portraying grandeur of mountain scenery or the beauties of wood and water; and it is perhaps safe to say that the varied charms of the region of which Rothiemurchus forms the centre have never been so elaborately delineated, or withal so fully and lovingly. The writer is infused with enthusiasm, and the enthusiasm becomes contagious and affects the reader. Sometimes the style is a little overstrained, as where, describing the Larig Ghru opposite Carn Elrick, Dr. Macmillan says—"The sound of many waters comes up to you and seems to fill all the hushed listening air like the shout of a multitude." Objection might also be taken to such statements as that the Larig Ghru means "the savage pass," and that nothing can exceed its loneliness; and we are afraid that the Cairngorm Club is credited with "zealous efforts" for which an unattached hillman is entitled to honour. Not a few of the details, moreover, are susceptible of considerable revision. But these are trifling blemishes in a book which it is a delight to read, and which may be recommended for the indications of the routes that are given quite as much as for the glowing descriptions of what is to be seen along these routes.

WE welcome this recently issued guide (120 pp.) to the Highlands, published by Mr. R. W. Grant, of the Morayshire Game Farm, Forres. The

maps (by Bartholemew) show the road routes for motorists

THE HIGHLANDS throughout Scotland, as well as on the other side of the border as far as Penrith and Bishop Auckland. There

BY are also numerous illustrations, and intending tourists will find the advertisement pages useful. The reader

ROAD OR RAIL. is assured that "every tour given has been taken by the compiler himself during the last few years, either by motor car or cycle."

THE Highland Railway has this season published an "Official A. B. C.

Tourist Guide to the Highlands of Scotland." It is a well-printed booklet of 186 pages, with many illustrations and maps, and full of useful information to the tourist and mountaineer. The cover, which is in colours, is one of the most attractive—save for the face of the "Imperial"—we have seen.

MR. LAWRENCE of the Aviemore Post Office has just issued the second edition of a "Guide to Aviemore and Vicinity." There are five chapters—Aviemore and Rothiemurchus, Aviemore to Kincaig, Glen Feshie, Abernethy, and Aviemore to Carr Bridge. The author is Mr. Alex. Inkson McConnochie.

ONE of the sensations of the spring publishing season was a new novel by A. E. W. Mason, "Running Water," in which mountaineering in the Alps figures very prominently. The hero and heroine are brought into friendly relations by their climbing the Aiguille d' Argentiere together, and the denouement of the plot occurs in an attempt of the villain of the piece and his victim to ascend Mont Blanc by the "Brenva route," characterised by a thin ridge of ice, across which the adventurous climber has to straddle with a leg hanging down either precipice. A thrilling account is given of this climb, and there are capital descriptions besides of other ascents, a night on an ice-slope, mountain views, and the thoughts inspired by mountain scenery. Even the arch-plotter is subject to the influence of mountains. His daring scheme to bring about the death of his companion as by an accident, is frustrated by the hero, of course, and then we have this rather striking commentary—

"Garrett Skinner knew that his plan was not merely foiled, but also understood. He stood up and looked about him, and even to Chayne's eyes there was a dignity in his quiet manner, his patience under defeat. For Garrett Skinner, rogue though he was, the mountains had their message. All through that long night, while he sat by the side of his victim, they had been whispering it. Whether bound in frost beneath the stars, or sparkling to the sun, or grey under a sky of clouds, or buried deep in flakes of whirling snow, they spoke to him always of the grandeur of their indifference. They might be traversed and scaled, but they were unconquered always, because they were indifferent. The climber might lie in wait through the bad weather at the base of the peak, seize upon his chance, and stand upon the summit with a cry of triumph and derision. The mountains were indifferent. As they endured success, so they inflicted defeat—with a sublime indifference, lifting their foreheads to the stars as though wrapt in some high communion. Something of their patience had entered into Garrett Skinner. He did not deny his name, he asked no question, he accepted failure."

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 may compound future Annual Subscriptions by payments as follows:—Members entered before 20th February, 1890, £1 1s.; Members of fifteen years and over, £1 1s. 6d. ten years and over, £2 2s.; five years and over, £3 3s.; and new members, £5 5s., including entry money. 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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The Cairngorm Club