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THE  
**Cairngorm Club Journal.**

EDITED BY

ALEX. INKSON M'CONNOCHIE.

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# The Cairngorm Club.

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PRESIDENT,	-	H. E. The Right Hon. JAMES BRYCE, D.C.L., LL.D.
CHAIRMAN,	-	JOHN CLARKE, M.A.
TREASURER,	-	T. R. GILLIES, 181a Union Street, Aberdeen.
SECRETARY,	-	A. I. M'CONNOCHE, 88 Devonshire Road, Aberdeen.

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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.

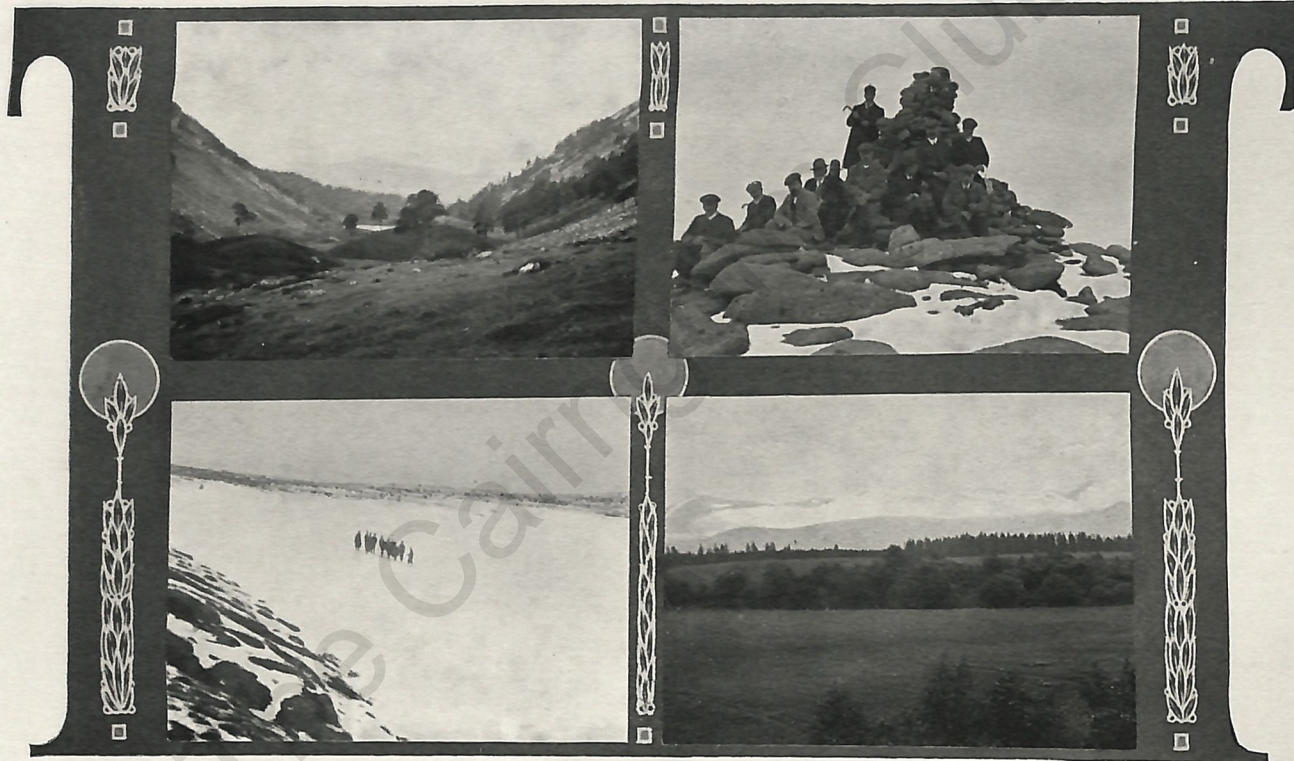
V.—The annual general meeting of the Club shall be held in December for the following business : (1) to receive the Treasurer's accounts for the year to 30th November ; (2) to elect the Office-Bearers and Committee for the next year ; (3) to fix the excursions for the ensuing year ; and (4) to transact any other necessary business. Special general meetings shall be held whenever deemed necessary

*Continued on page 3 of Cover.*



The Pass of Rebhoan.

The Cairn.



Margaret's Coffin.

From Aviemore (at 9 p.m.)

CAIRNGORM, 26TH JUNE, 1909.



THE  
**Cairngorm Club Journal.**

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SIR JOHN MURRAY'S SURVEY OF THE  
CAIRNGORM LOCHS.

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

[In this article the passages in square brackets are mine ; but most of the article is copied from the published accounts of the Bathymetrical Survey of Scottish Lochs and from the Report of the 1901 meeting of the British Association. Thanks are due and are hereby paid for kind permission to print copies of reports and maps.]

About forty years ago excellent bathymetrical charts of Loch Lomond and Loch Awe were published by the Hydrographic Department of the Admiralty, based on surveys undertaken by naval officers. Some of the general charts of the Scottish coasts published by the Admiralty also show a few soundings down the centres of the fresh-water lochs forming the Caledonian Canal, viz., Loch Ness, Loch Lochy, and Loch Oich, but the charts of Lochs Lomond and Awe represent the only systematic surveys of the fresh-water lochs in Scotland that existed previous to the year 1883.

About that time many scientific men in Scotland felt that a survey of these fresh-water lochs should be undertaken ; which led to the Council of the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh bringing this subject under the notice of Her Majesty's Government.



[The Council of the Royal Society of Edinburgh applied to the Treasury to have at least *some* of the Scottish lochs surveyed, pointing out the importance of such a survey as aiding in the study of the physical, biological, and geological conditions and relations of the lochs. The declination of the Treasury contained this amazing statement of *reason*, "My Lords are informed that the nautical surveys of Loch Lomond and Loch Awe were undertaken by naval officers in the interests of navigation, and that the same considerations do not apply to the other lochs of which surveys are suggested. My Lords are also informed that the proposed bathymetrical surveys do not come within the function of the Survey Department of the Office of Works (late Ordnance Survey)." The Government was questioned in the House of Lords, and the Royal Society of London also asked for the making of the survey. But "there was no practical outcome from this correspondence; the Government declined to undertake any of the proposed surveys."]

In the year 1888 Mr. J. S. Grant-Wilson published in *The Scottish Geographical Magazine* [vol. iv., p. 251] an account of Lochs Tay, Earn, Rannoch, and Tummel in Perthshire, with special reference to the glaciation of the district, and he gives small contoured maps of these lochs [on a scale of one inch to a mile] in which the positions of some of the deepest soundings are laid down.

During the twelve years from 1896 to 1908 a bathymetrical survey of the fresh-water lochs of Scotland was carried out under the direction of Sir John Murray, the late Mr. Frederick Pattison Pullar, and Mr. Laurence Pullar. [Mr. F. P. Pullar was associated with Sir John Murray in the earlier stages of the systematic survey, and himself designed and constructed the sounding machine used. A figure and description of this machine is given in *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, vol. xvi., p. 198. On February 15th, 1901, Mr. F. P. Pullar was drowned in Airthrey Loch while gallantly assisting to rescue skaters who had been immersed through the breaking of the ice.



An obituary notice of him appeared in *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, vol. xvii., p. 148, from which we extract the concluding paragraph: "Mr. Pullar was beloved by all who knew him. He was a man of great bodily and mental activity, lively disposition, generous and brave, knowing no fear. His friends were justified in believing that a great future lay before him. His promising career has been cut short by an act of devotion. He sacrificed his life in an heroic endeavour to save the life of another."]

In his presidential address to the Geographical Section of the British Association at Glasgow in September, 1901, Dr. H. R. Mill said, "It is with profound satisfaction that I now make an announcement—by special favour the first public announcement—of a scheme of geographical research on a national scale by private enterprise. Sir John Murray and Mr. Laurence Pullar have resolved to complete the bathymetrical survey of all the fresh-water lakes of the British Islands. Mr. Laurence Pullar will take an active part in the proposed survey, and has made over to trustees a sum of money sufficient to enable the investigation to be commenced forthwith and to be carried through in a comprehensive and thorough manner. It is intended to make the finished work an appropriate and worthy memorial of Mr. Pullar's son, the late Mr. Fred Pullar, who had entered enthusiastically upon the survey of the lochs of Scotland, and whose heroic death while endeavouring to save life in Airthrey Loch last February must be present to the memory of many of you."

[The reports of the survey of the Scottish lochs were at first published serially in the *Geographical Journal*, and in *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, the former journal issuing about half of the reports, and the latter rather less. The Royal Geographical Society in 1908 issued the remaining reports in a single separate volume. In the serial issue the reports were accompanied by maps on a scale of three inches to a mile, the depths of the water being shown by tints of blue, and the heights of the



surrounding land by tints of brown. In the volume the land was left uncoloured. There can be no question that the earlier maps were the finer and more effective. All the maps were produced by Batholomew, and exhibit in the highest degree the excellence of execution for which that firm is famous.] It is proposed to collect all the maps and descriptions of the Scottish lochs [that appeared serially] into a series of volumes, and these, it is hoped, will be published during the year 1909, along with much new matter concerning the physical, chemical, and biological conditions of the Scottish Fresh-Water Lochs.

[This new issue will not appear till 1910, and will be in six volumes: vol. 1, general discussions of the various scientific aspects of lakes in general, and of Scottish lochs in particular; vol. 2, the text of the descriptions of the Scottish lochs and a bibliography of limnology; vols. 3, 4, 5, 6, the maps of the Scottish lochs. In all probability this will have to be a limited issue, as the expense of re-printing the maps is greater than the available funds would permit, and the present stock of printed map sheets is small.]

[The Cairngorm Lochs included in the survey are Morlich by Mr. R. C. Marshall, Builg by Drs. T. N. Johnston and L. W. Collet, and an Eilein and Gamhna by Mr. R. C. Marshall. It will be seen from this list that none of the specifically "Cairngorm" lochs has been surveyed, for we miss Einich, Avon, Etchachan, Mhic Ghillie Chaoile, the Lochan Uaine of Cairn Toul and that of Ben Mac Dhui, the "Corrie" Lochans of Braeriach and Cairngorm, Suarach (or Steurtach), na Beinne and an t'Seilich of Glen Einich, and the Dubh Lochan of Beinn a' Bhuid, most if not all of which are surely worthy of survey. The reason for their omission is given in the statement, "As a rule, those lochs on which there are now no rowing boats, or to which boats could not be easily transported have been omitted in the meantime," though this scarcely excludes Loch Einich. The omitted lochs are not even shown on the index map of the Spey basin—from which also Braeriach is omit-

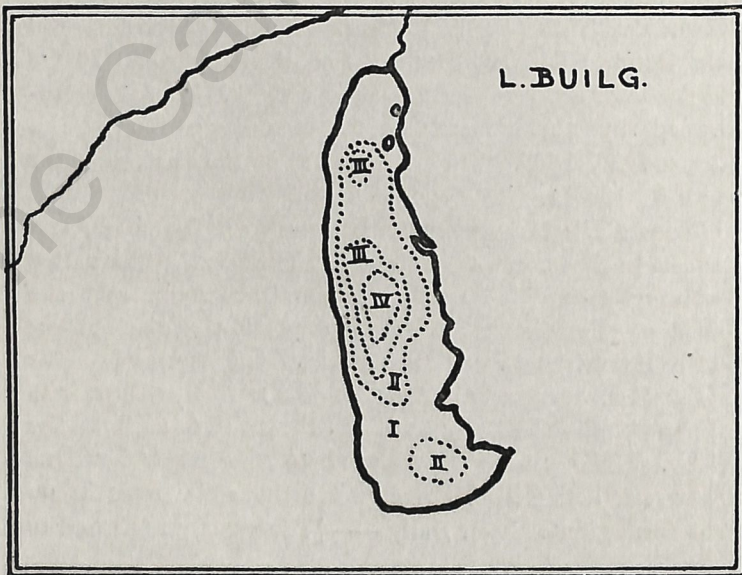
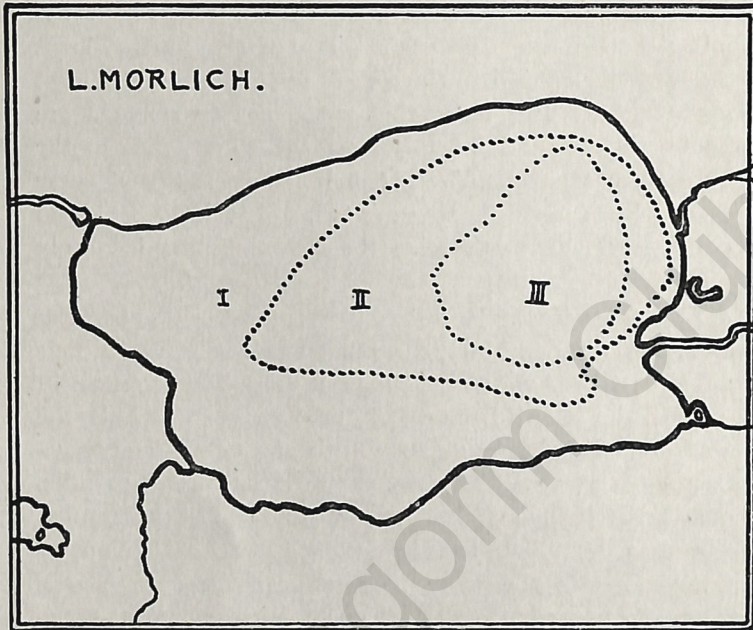


ted—, though, oddly enough, Loch Avon is shown on the index map of the Dee basin. Two of the omitted lochs are thus mentioned in the text of the report, "The most important of the lochs that could not be sounded are Lochs Eunach and Avon, lying at a high elevation in the Cairngorm mountains." The omission especially of these two lochs is much to be regretted, and it is to be hoped that they may yet receive the attention that is surely their due.]

*Loch Morlich*, the largest of the Spey lochs in superficial area, lies in Glen More, surrounded by woods, about four miles east of Aviemore. The loch is sub-rectangular in outline, the length from east to west exceeding a mile, the maximum breadth being two-thirds of a mile. The superficial area exceeds 300 acres, or nearly half a square mile, and the drainage area is large—exceeding 17 square miles. The maximum depth of 49 feet was recorded comparatively close to the east shore, whence the water shoals gradually towards the west, the western portion of the loch being very shallow; nearly 60 per cent. of the entire lake-floor is covered with less than 10 feet of water. The volume is estimated at 192 million cubic feet, and the mean depth at nearly 15 feet. The loch was surveyed on October 10, 1903, when the elevation was 1045·0 feet above sea-level, as compared with 1045·8 feet determined by the officers of the Ordnance Survey on August 16, 1866. The temperature of the surface water was 49°·1 Fahr.

*Loch Builg* lies nearly 20 miles east of Aviemore, and about 6 miles north-west from Balmoral castle, in a valley running north and south between Glen Avon and the head of Glen Gairn. A small proportion of the outflow finds its way into the river Gairn, and thence into the river Dee, as already stated; but the normal outflow is to the north, by the Builg burn and the river Avon, into the Spey. The reader is referred to the paper by Drs. Johnston and Collet, already cited, for some remarks on the formation of Loch Builg.—[The passages referred to







are placed here in parenthesis.] Loch Builg might also be included among the lochs of the Dee basin, since a certain proportion of its overflow drains through the moraine matter at its southern end into the river Gairn, but as its normal outflow is at the northern end into the river Avon, it will be dealt with among the lochs of the Spey basin. Lochs Muick, Callater, and Builg were made the subject of a short paper by Drs. Johnston and Collet, "On the formation of certain lakes in the Highlands." Proc. Roy. Soc. Edin. vol. xxvi., p. 107.—The loch is less than a mile in length, by a quarter of a mile in maximum breadth, the superficial area being about 77 acres. The maximum depth of 86 feet was observed approximately in the middle of the loch. The volume of water is estimated at 93 million cubic feet, and the mean depth at nearly 28 feet. The floor of the loch is somewhat irregular, there being three deep basins separated by two ridges. The largest and deepest basin occupies the central portion of the loch, while towards the northern end two soundings in 50 feet were taken, the greatest depth recorded on the intervening ridge being 34 feet; near the southern end a depth of 36 feet was found, the deepest sounding on the ridge separating it from the central deep basin being 21 feet. About 58 per cent. of the lake-floor is covered by less than 25 feet of water.

The loch was surveyed on July 12, 1905, when the elevation was found to be 1585·0 feet above the sea; the elevation given to the Ordnance Survey map is 1585·3 feet, but the date when levelled is not indicated. Temperatures taken on the deepest part of the loch showed a range from surface to bottom of 12° Fahr., the readings being as follows:—

Surface	- -	61°·5 Fahr.	50 feet	- -	52°·4 Fahr.
25 feet	- -	56°·5	85 "	- -	49°·5 "

*Loch Gamhna*, the smallest of the Spey lochs surveyed, lies about 2 miles to the south-east of Loch Alvie, on the opposite bank of the River Spey, and immediately to the south of Loch an Eilein, into which it drains. Irregular



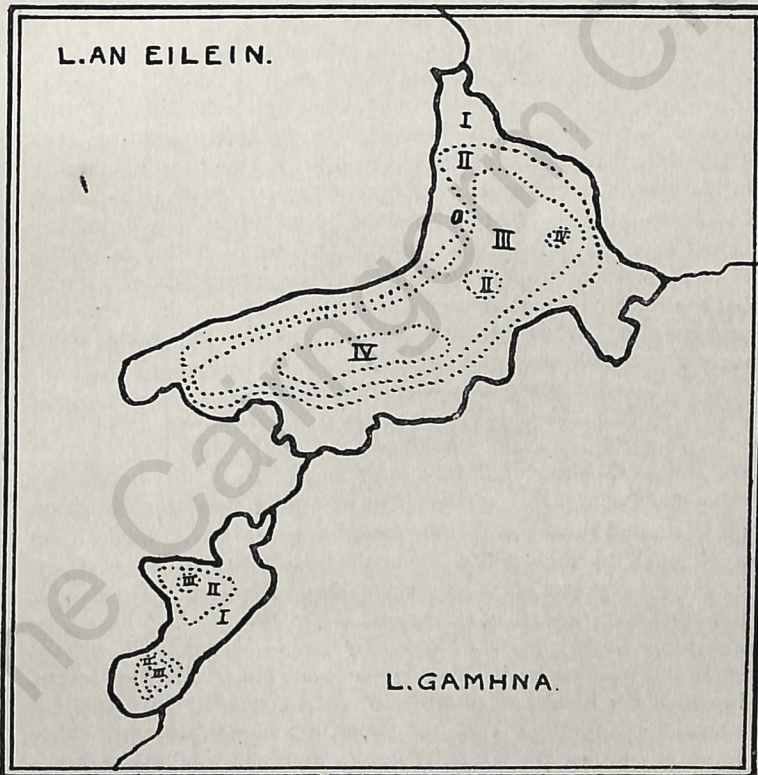
in outline, the loch trends in a south-west and north-east direction, and is less than half a mile in length by one-fifth of a mile in maximum breadth, covering an area of about 25 acres. The maximum depth of 41 feet was recorded in a small basin at the south-west end of the loch; there is a second deep basin, having a maximum depth of 29 feet, lying in the wide part of the loch towards the north-east end, these two basins being separated by a shoaling covered by only 4 feet of water, where the outline of the loch is constricted. The volume is estimated at 10 million cubic feet, and the mean depth at  $9\frac{1}{2}$  feet, nearly three quarters of the lake-floor being covered by less than ten feet of water. The loch was surveyed on October 14, 1903, when the elevation was found to be 889.3 feet above the sea, or 6 feet lower than that determined by the Ordnance Survey officers in September, 1868, viz., 895.2 feet. This lowering is due to the banks of the stream giving way, and consequent outflow into Loch an Eilein. The surface temperature was  $46^{\circ}1$  Fahr.

*Loch an Eilein* lies about 3 miles south of Aviemore, amid picturesque surroundings. At the time of the survey a couple of ospreys were nesting in the ruins of the castle on the island. [This statement about the ospreys seems to have arisen from a misreading of the reporting surveyor's notes. There were certainly no ospreys nesting at Loch an Eilein in 1903. See C. C. J. vol. v., p. 278]. Somewhat crescentic in outline, the loch exceeds a mile in length, along the axis of maximum depth from south-west to north-east, the maximum breadth being nearly half a mile. The superficial area is about 130 acres, and the drainage area, including Loch Gambna, is almost  $2\frac{3}{4}$  square miles. The maximum depth of 66 feet was recorded towards the south-west end, and deep water occurs also near the north-east shore, where soundings in 51 and 47 feet were taken, the water shoaling in the central part of the loch to a depth of 20 feet. The volume of water is estimated at 144 million cubic feet, and the mean depth at  $25\frac{1}{2}$  feet, 54 per cent. of the lake-floor being covered by less than 25 feet of water.



The loch was surveyed on October 14, 1903, when the elevation was found to be 839.6 feet above the sea, or nearly a foot lower than that observed by the Ordnance Survey officers in September 21, 1868, viz., 840.4 feet above sea-level. Temperatures taken in the deepest part of the loch showed a range from surface to bottom of only  $\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  Fahr. :—

Surface	- -	49°.2 Fahr.	40 feet	- -	48°.8 Fahr.
10 feet	- -	49°.0 "	50 "	- -	48°.7 "
20 "	- -	48°.8 "	60 "	- -	48°.6 "
30 "	- -	48°.8 "			



[The maps herewith are black-and-white hand drawn imitations of the maps accompanying the reports. The depths are indicated thus :— On the maps of Lochs Morlich, an Eilein, and Gamhna, zone I less than 10 feet, zone II between 10 and 25 feet, zone III between 25 and 50 feet, zone IV more than 50 feet ; on the map of Loch Builg, zone I less than 25 feet, zone II between 25 and 50 feet, zone III between 50 and 75 feet, zone IV more than 75 feet].



THE CAIRNGORM PARISHES AND THE (OLD)  
STATISTICAL ACCOUNT OF SCOTLAND.

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

II.

KIRKMICHAEL. By the Rev. Mr. John Grant.

*Name, Extent, Surface, &c.*—In Monkish history, this parish derives its ecclesiastic name from St. Michael, to whom the chapel, where now the kirk stands, was anciently dedicated. If this account be true, it may be observed, that the tutelary patron, ever since the period of his election, has paid little regard to the morality of his clients. In the Gaelic, the vernacular idiom, it is called Strath-āth-fhin, from “Strath,” a dale, “āth,” a ford, and “Fin,” the hero Fingal, so highly celebrated in the Poems of Ossian. It is generally written Strath-avan, avan being the appellative for a river ; but the former etymon approaches much nearer to the provincial pronunciation. It is further confirmed by a stanza, which is still recited by the old people of the country.

Chaidh m'o bheans bhatha',

Ain uisg āth- fhin, nan clachan sleamhuin ;

'S bho chaidh mo bheans' bhatha',

Bheirmeid āth-fhin, ainm an amhuin.

“On the limpid water of the slippery stones, has my wife been drowned, and since my wife has there been drowned, henceforth its name shall be the water of Fingal.” It is the tradition of the country, that in one of Fingal's excursions, in pursuit of the deer of the mountains, after having crossed the river, he was followed by his wife, who being carried down by the violence of the stream, sunk, and was drowned. To commemorate this melancholy event, in which the hero was tenderly interested, he uttered the above stanza. Since that period, the water, which was formerly called An-uisge-geal, or the White Water, in allusion to its transparency, assumed by an easy transition, the name of the ford or river of Fingal.

The parish of Kirkmichael——[Footnote refers to its remoteness, its ancient lack of population, and its long continuance in the possession of the Earls of Huntly.]——is divided into 10 little districts, called Davochs.——[Footnote praises the Duke of Gordon and his factor, as owner and manager of one of these.]——Several antiquaries have mistaken the etymon of Davoch ; but the word is evidently derived



from Daimh, oxen, and Ach, field. In its original acceptation, it imports as much land as can be ploughed by 8 oxen. In the Regiam Majestatem, it is clearly defined.—[Footnote quotes this definition.]—

This parish lies at the western extremity of the county of Banff, from which it is distant between 30 and 40 computed miles. On every side, there are natural barriers which separate it from the surrounding countries; from the parish of Strath-don, toward the S., by Leach<sup>h</sup>-mhic-ghothin, the declivity of the smith's son; from the parish of Cromdale toward the N. by Beinn Chromdal, the hill of the winding dale. These are two long branches of hills, that, running in an easterly direction, project from the northern trunk of the Grampian mountains.—[Footnote.] Grampian, from Grant and Beinn. Grant, like the *ἀγος* of the Greeks, has two opposite meanings. In some fragments ascribed to Ossian, it signifies beautiful. This meaning, now, is obsolete, and it signifies deformed, ugly, &c. The old Caledonians, as these mountains abounded in game, and connecting beauty with utility, might have given the name in the former sense. Mr. Henry Saville, and Mr. Lhuyd, two eminent antiquaries, call them Grant Feinn, from which comes the soft inflected Grampian of the Romans.—From the parish of Abernethy toward the W., it is separated by moors and hills, that connect Cromdale hill with Glenavon; from the parish of Inveravan, by moors and hills, and narrow defiles. The length between the extreme points that are habitable, may be about 10 computed miles. The breadth is unequal. Where it tapers at the extremities, in some places, it is less than a mile; between the verges that bound the middle, it may be about 3 computed miles. In its shape, it resembles an irregular oblong oval.

Cairn-gorm, or the Blue Mountain, one of the high, though perhaps not the highest of those lofty mountains that stud the Grampian desert, rises 4050 feet above the level of the sea; and Loch-avon not more than a mile from the foot of the Cairn-gorm, 1750 feet.—[Footnote.] For the height of this mountain and Lochavon, the writer is obliged to James Hay, Esq. of Gordon Castle, a gentleman of much knowledge, whose skill in observing, and whose accuracy in describing natural appearances, are well known to the Linnaean Society in London.—At the southern extremity of the parish, there is a cataract falling from a height of 18 feet. From this cataract to Lochavon, the source of the river, there are 8 computed miles; between the manse of Kirkmichael, which lies within 2 miles of the northern extremity of the parish, and the above cataract, there are 7 computed miles. As the source of the river there, is situated so near the cultivated part of the country, it may be inferred, that the situation of the whole ground is very considerably elevated above the surface of the sea.—

[Footnote.] Close by Lochavon, there is a large stone called Clach-dhian, from clach, a stone, and dhian, protection or refuge. It has been a cavity



within, capable of containing 18 armed men, according to the figure made use of in describing it. One corner of it rises 6 feet 4 inches in height. The breadth of it may be about 12 feet. Plain within, it rises on the outside from the several verges of the roof, into a kind of a irregular protuberance of an oblong form. In times of licence and depredation, it afforded a retreat to freebooters.

Clach-bhan, from clach, a stone, and bean, a woman, is another stone situated upon a summit of a hill, called Meal-a-ghaneimh, from meal, a knoll or mound, and ganeimh, sand. On one side, it measures 20 feet in height. On the other side, it is lower and of a sloping form. In the face of it, 2 seats have been excavated, resembling that of an armed chair. Till of late, this stone used to be visited by pregnant women, not only of this, but from distant countries, impressed with the superstitious idea, that by sitting in these seats, the pains of travail would become easy to them, and other obstetrical assistance rendered unnecessary. —

The face of the country, in general, exhibits a bleak and gloomy appearance. In crossing the centre of it, few cheering objects attract the eye of the traveller. From detached hills covered with heath, and destitute of verdure, where here and there a lonely tree marks the depredations of time, he naturally turns with aversion. But, should he happen to pass after a heavy fall of rain, when the numerous brooks that intersect the country pour their troubled streams into the roaring Avon, he must commiserate the condition of the inhabitants, at such a season, precluded from the rest of the world, and even from enjoying the society of each other. Frequently in winter, the snow lies so deep, that the communication between it and other countries, becomes almost impracticable. The banks of the Avon, however, are pleasant enough, and in different places tufted with groves of birch, mixed with some alder. This being the largest stream that waters the country, from its source to where it falls into the Spey (the Tuessis of Antoninus's Itinerary), it flows over a space of 24 or 25 miles, including its windings. — [Footnote.] Tuessis, from Tuath, north, and uisg, water, by way of eminence, being the largest river in the N. of Scotland, it was afterward called Spey, from Spadha, a long stride, in allusion to the length of its course. — In the parish, there are 2 other lesser streams, besides a variety of brooks; the one called Conlas, from cuthin, narrow, and glas, green, and the other, ainnac, from eil, a rock, and nidh, to wash.

*Climate.*—From its elevated situation, the numerous brooks by which it is intersected, and its vicinity to the Grampian mountains, it might naturally be expected, that the atmosphere of this country has little to recommend it. Of this, the inhabitants have sufficient experience. Their winters are always cold and severe, while their summers are seldom warm and genial. The disorders consequently to which they are subject, may, in a great measure, be attributed to their climate. These, for the most part, are coughs, consumptions, and affections of the lungs, by which many of those advanced in life are



cut off, and frequently several of those who die at an earlier period. In summer and autumn, what the Medical Faculty call nervous fevers, chiefly prevail, and frequently prove fatal. These are the common disorders.

*Soil, Springs, Natural History, &c.*—As the face of this country rises into hills, or sinks into valleys, as it slopes into declivities, or extends into plains, the soil accordingly varies. Along the banks of the Avon, and the brooks, it generally consists of a mixture of sand and black earth; in the more elevated plains, of a pretty fertile black mould, on the sloping declivities, of a kind of reddish earth and gravel; the nearer it approaches the summits of the hills, it is mixed with moss and gravel. In some few places, it is deep and clayey. In the parish, there are several springs of mineral waters: One in particular, is much frequented by people troubled with the stone, or labouring under stomachic complaints. Some medical gentlemen, who have made the experiment, assert that it is superior to the celebrated wells of Pananich on Deeside. It has been observed, that the hills of this country are covered with heath, and destitute of wood; yet, in the interstices of the heath, there grows a rank clayey, and a plant called Canach an Shleibh, or the mountain down, on which cattle and sheep feed in summer, and grow tolerably fat. The forest of Glenavon which is 11 miles in length, and between 3 and 4 in breadth, contains many green spots, and during 4 months of the summer and autumn seasons, affords pasture for a 1000 head of cattle. This forest is the property of his Grace the Duke of Gordon. Further, toward the S., and forming a division of the forest of Glenavon, lies Glenbuilg, also the property of the Duke of Gordon. Glenbuilg will be about 5 miles in length, and between 2 and 3 in breadth. If no part of it were laid under sheep, it might afford pasturage for 500 or 600 head of cattle.

The long and narrow defile that bounds the southern extremity of the parish, and contiguous to the Avon, exhibits a beautiful and picturesque appearance. It is everywhere covered with grass, the ever-green juniper, and the fragrant birch. From the beginning of April, till the middle of November, sheep and goats, in numerous flocks, are constantly seen feeding on its pendent sides. In many of the Grampian mountains are found, precious stones of a variety of colours. But whatever may be their specific difference, they are all denominated by the well known name of Cairn-gorm stones, that being the mountain in which they have been found in the greatest abundance. Some of them are beautifully polished by the hand of nature, while others are rude and shapless. They are ranked by naturalists in the class of topazes.—[Footnote tells of limestone, freestone, slate, and marl in the parish, and of the iron mines of the York-Building Company in Leac-mhic-ghothin.]——



*Population, &c.*—According to Dr. Webster's report, the population in 1755, was 1288. No sessional records are now in existence belonging to this parish, previous to the 1725, when the incumbent before the last was admitted. Ever since, it has not been possible to keep them with accuracy. Dissenters, of whatever denomination, watch the opportunity of encroaching upon the prerogative of the Established Church. As the third, then, of the people of this parish are Roman Catholics, the priest generally takes the liberty of sharing in the functions that belong to the Protestant clergyman.—  
 [Footnote states that this condition of things prevents the recording of some marriages and baptisms; it continues, Some years ago, too, the taxes imposed upon deaths, marriages, and baptisms, made them be considered as a kind of contraband goods, and for that reason, many of them were as much as possible concealed from publick view, that they might elude an imposition, which they called tyrannical and oppressive.]—

By the most accurate inquiry, it has been found that this parish contains 1276 inhabitants, young and old, and of both sexes. Of these, 384 are Roman Catholics; all the individuals of each profession are included, in 253 families, containing, at an average, 5 persons to a family, with 265 children under 8 years of age . . . . . By a pretty accurate calculation, the total of black cattle in the parish, amounts to 1400, with 7050 sheep, 310 goats, and 303 horses. No other domestic animals are reared, except some poultry, and a few geese.

*Acres, Rent, &c.*—The whole parish, exclusive of the forest of Glenavon, Glenbuilg, and the hill pasture belonging to the davoeh of Delnabo, the property of Sir James Grant, contains 29,500 acres, of which little more than 1550 are arable. The whole rent may be about 1100l. Sterling; but to a certain extent of grass following each farm, no rent is affixed.

*Ecclesiastical State, Schools, Poor, &c.*—The glebe, manse, and garden, occupy a space of between 9 and 10 acres, situated on an eminence, and hanging upon the sloping sides. A part of the soil is poor, and a part tolerably fertile. The value of it may be about 6l.—[Footnote tells of the minister's difficulty in getting fuel.]—The church was built in 1747, and has been never since repaired. As a house of worship, it would appear to a stranger to be totally deserted. A few broken windows mark the sable walls: the glass is broken, and gives free access to the winds from all the cardinal points. Were the people enthusiasts, a little current of air might be necessary to cool them; but in their present disposition, they frequently complain of the inroads of the cold, to disturb them in their sober meditations; yet they never express a wish to remove the inconvenience. Their apathy is the more extraordinary, as his Grace the Duke of Gordon, is ever ready to listen to the representations of his people, and never refuses to grant them a



just and equitable request. Sir James Grant is patron of the parish. From 1717, till 1786, the stipend of the parish was no more than 47l. 4s. 5½d. Sterling. During the latter of these years, his Grace the Duke of Gordon, informed of the smallness of the living, was pleased to bestow upon the present incumbent, without the painful feeling of solicitation, a gratuitous augmentation; and this at a time when the Court of Session were inimical to such claims. The stipend, at present, is 68l. 6s. 8d. Sterling, with 10l. Sterling, allowed by his Grace for a house. It will not be deemed a digression, to mention that his Grace gave a farm to the present incumbent, at a moderate rent, when an advanced one, and a fine of 20 guineas were offered by others.—There are 2 schools; a Society one at Tammtoul [*sic*], with a salary of 13l. 10s., and a parochial one at Tamchlaggan, with a salary of 8l. 6s. 8d.—No funds appropriated for the relief of the poor, have been hitherto established in this parish. Three years ago, the trifling sum of 5l. Sterling, was bequeathed by an old woman; and, without exaggeration, few parishes stand more in need of the charitable contributions of the well disposed. The number of the old and infirm at present on the list, amounts to 32 persons; while the annual collection, distributed last week, came to no more than 42s. 6½d. Sterling. In this large treasure, designed to be incorruptible, beyond the power of moths and rust, there were 1s., 5 sixpences, 443d., and 50 farthings.—[Footnote mentions the special poverty in the years 1782 and 1783, and the general need of more generous contributions for the poor.]—

The price of provisions in this country has been different, at different times. In the reign of King William, it is well known that a famine prevailed over the whole kingdom, and continued during several years. Either agriculture, at that time, must have been imperfectly understood, or the calamity must have been severe, when a boll of meal cost 1l. 6s. 8d. Sterling. The year 1709, is also noted for a dearth, and winter, uncommonly rigorous over every part of Europe.—[Footnote mentions the severity of that winter, compares early and recent prices, and wanders away to discuss the troublesome manners of servants].

Among other grievances, it must not be omitted, that the inhabitants in this, and the contiguous districts, descant with melancholy declamation, on the heavy and increasing taxation imposed by Government. . . . .

*Village, &c.*—Tammtoul is the only village within the precincts of this parish. It is inhabited by 37 families, without a single manufacture, by which such a number of people might be supposed to be able to acquire a subsistence. The Duke of Gordon leaves them at full liberty, each to pursue the occupation most agreeable to them. No monopolies are established here; no



restraints upon the industry of the community. All of them sell whisky, and all of them drink it. When disengaged from this business, the women spin yarn, kiss their inamoratos, or dance to the discordant sounds of an old fiddle. The men, when not participating in the amusements of the women, sell small articles of merchandise, or let themselves occasionally for days labour, and by these means earn a scanty subsistence for themselves and families. In moulding human nature, the effects of habit are wonderful. This village, to them, has more than the charms of a Thessalian Tempe. Absent from it, they are seized with the mal de pais; and never did a Laplander long more ardently for his snow-clad mountains, than they sicken to revisit the barren moor of their turf-thatched hovels. Here the Roman Catholic priest has got an elegant meeting-house, and the Protestant clergyman, the reverse of it; yet, to an expiring mode of worship, it would be illiberal to envy this transient superiority, in a country where a succession of ages has witnessed its absurdities. A school is stationed at this village, attended by 40 or 50 little recreants, all promising to be very like their parents.—[Footnote narrates the wanderings abroad of Mrs. McKenzie, a woman of Tomintoul.] —

*Antiquities, Eminent Men, &c.* — — — No crosses, no obelisks, no remains of antiquity have been hitherto discovered in this parish. That it was ever visited by the Romans, is not probable. In that expedition, in which Severus lost 50,000 men, as recorded by the abbreviator of Dio Cassius, no vestige exists that any part of his army pursued their rout [*sic*] through the mountains and defiles of Strath-ath-fhin: no marks of encampments are to be seen; there is no tradition, that either Roman urns, or Roman coins have been ever discovered. In the year 1715, a small fort was erected in the southern extremity, but soon after, it was abandoned, and now lies in ruins.

—[Footnote.] The great road that passes through the country, to facilitate the march of the troops between Perth and Fort-George, was not made till the year 1754: and now the stages are so bad, that few travel it. The roads here, in general, are wretched beyond description; and yet the people, in terms of the statute, are annually called out to work at them. This only can be imputed to their indolence, their want of the necessary implements, and the ignorance or indifference of the persons appointed to superintend them. No good roads can be expected according to the present mode of management. To effect this, a commutation is absolutely necessary. On the river Ath-fhin, there is a bridge, where it is crossed by the great road. Two other bridges, one at Delvoran, and one at Delnacairn, a little E. of the kirk, would prove essentially useful, as they would facilitate the water-course, which at present is frequently interrupted, and render the communication safe and commodious. Another upon Ailnac at Delnabo, and one upon Conlas at Ruthven, would also be very necessary. —



As far as tradition can be depended upon, no battle, nor skirmish of consequence, ever happened in this country. The only one mentioned, was fought between Macdonald of the Isles, and an Alexander Stewart, chief of that name. The former, with the greatest part of his men, was killed, and from the carnage of that day, the place is still called Blar nan Mairbh, the moss or field of the dead.—[Footnote.] Casual rencounters have frequently happened. Manslaughter, murder, and robbery, at a period not very remote, form a distinguishing feature in the character of the Highlanders. But from the detail of such scenes of barbarity, the human mind turns away with horror. One instance, however, it may not be improper to mention: In the year 1575, soon after the establishment of the Reformation in Scotland, a priest who had refused to marry the uncle to the niece, was seized by the ruffian and his party, laid upon a faggot, bound to a stone, and in this manner burnt to death. The remembrance of this atrocious deed is still preserved in the name of the stone, which to this day, is called Clach-ant-shagairt, or the Priest's stone.—

If any persons of eminence were ever born in this district, time has swept them from its annals. But, if such there have been, Mr. George Gordon of Foddaletter, is justly entitled to be ranked in the number. This gentleman's abilities rose beyond that mediocrity, which sometimes acquires celebrity without the possession of merit. As a chymist and botanist, his knowledge was considerable; and this knowledge he applied to the extension of the useful arts. At an early period of life, he discovered, that by a certain preparation, the excrescence of the stones and rocks of the mountains, forms a beautiful purple dye. It is called in the Gaelic, crotal, from crot, a bunch, and eil, a rock. He erected a manufacture of it at Leith. At that place, in 1765, the inventor died, much regretted; while his mind was teeming with various and original projects for the improvement of his country.—[Footnote tells of James an Tuim, or James of the Hill, an outlaw.]—

*Stature, &c.*—Many have asserted, that in size and stature, the people of modern times, have decreased considerably from that of their ancestors. . . . Every old man in this district can recollect the time when many of the inhabitants were stronger, bigger, and more robust than at present.—[Footnote attributes the decadence to less favourable circumstances in modern times.]—In this and the surrounding countries, the mean size may be about 5 feet 7 inches. There are 3 individuals in this parish above 6 feet; 13, 5 feet 10 inches; and some of them 5 feet 11 inches; there are many who measure 5 feet 8 inches in height.

*Means of Improvement.*—From the geographical view of this country, it will occur to the attentive observer, that the condition of the inhabitants appears to admit of little melioration. For the im-



provements of agriculture and manufactures, the country is ill calculated. . . . .

*Manufactures.*—In this parish, there are 4 mills; the multures of these together, will scarce amount to 80 bolls of meal, and this quantity multiplied by 32, the proportion paid to each, will make the whole quantity of victual raised in the country 2560 bolls. When this number is divided by 1276 individuals, it will be found, that each will have little more to live upon, during the year, than 2 bolls of meal; besides, that from the whole quantity of victual, as mentioned above, foreign beggars subtract, at a moderate calculation, 60 bolls. No manufactures of any kind have as yet been established in this country; and the presumption is, that a considerable time must elapse before such an event can happen. ———  
[Footnote discusses the difficulty of establishing manufactures in so remote a district.]—

*Learned Professions.*—All retainers to the law, except one sheriff-officer and three constables, if they can be classed among that species of men, feel this country rather cold for their residence. Never was the solemn brow of Justice of Peace seen in the parish of Kirkmichael, before last autumn. . . . . Medical gentlemen are seldom called to this country. Mountain air, and constant exercise, render their aid, for the most part, unnecessary; besides that, the people can ill afford to pay doctors and retainers of the law at the same time.

*Animals.*—The domesticated animals here, have no peculiarities to distinguish them from such as may be met with in every other part of the Highlands. These have been described already. The wild ones are deer, foxes, badgers, polecats, otters, and hares. In former times the ravenous wolf, ———[Footnote.] The last said to be killed in this country, was about 150 years ago; yet it is probable that wolves were in Scotland for some time after that period, as the last killed in Ireland was in 1709. ———and the bounding chamois, were numerous in the Grampian mountains. ———[Footnote discusses the extent of the Grampians.] ———As a proof of this, it may not be unacceptable to the curious reader, to subjoin a passage from “Barclay de Regno, et Regali potestate,” describing a singular kind of hunting feast, with which the Earl of Atholl entertained Mary Queen of Scots. ———[Footnote gives a Latin quotation, too long to reprint here, describing the famous hunt in 1563; chamois, however, were not among the animals slain.]—

In these mountains, it is asserted by the country people, that there is a small quadruped which they call famh. In summer mornings it issues from its lurking places, emitting a kind of glutinous matter fatal to horses, if they happen to eat of the grass upon which it has been deposited. It is somewhat larger than a mole, of a brownish



colour, with a large head disproportionate to its body. From this deformed appearance, and its noxious quality, the word seems to have been transferred to denote a monster, a cruel mischievous person, who, in the Gaelic language, is usually called a *famh-fhear*. Other quadrupeds once indigenous to the Grampian mountains are now extinct, and now known only by name; such as the *Torneimh*, or wild boar, an *lon*, or the bison.—[Footnote.] It has been asserted by some antiquaries, that the bear was never a native in Scotland. It is a fact, however, well vouched, that during the residence of the Romans in Britain, bears were sent from it to Rome, and baited there. In an ancient Gaelic Poem, ascribed to Ossian, the hero Dermid is said to have been killed by a bear on *Beinn Ghielleinn* in Perthshire.—Lizards, and serpents, may be frequently met with, and of the latter, different specieses [*sic*], some of them striped and variegated, others black and hairy. It is a curious fact, that goats eat serpents, without any prejudice from their bite. Hence, it has passed into a proverb, *cleas na gaoithr githeadh na nathrach*, “like the goat eating the serpent,” importing a querulous temper in the midst of plenty. Incredible as this may appear, it may not be improbable. Goats are animals that feed much upon plants and herbs; and upon the supposition that the bite of serpents were more poisonous than what they are known to be in our northern latitudes; yet, by an instinct of nature, goats might be led to have recourse to such plants and herbs as are an antidote against their bite.—[Footnote.] . . . . . There is also a small kind of reptile called *bratag*, covered with a downy hair, alternately spotted into black and white; if cattle happen to eat it, they generally swell, and sometimes die. It has the same effect upon sheep. The birds in this parish are of the same genus and species with those of the neighbouring countries; such as moorfowl, partridges, wild duck, crows, magpies, wood pigeons, hawks, kites, owls, herons, snipes, king’s fisher, swallows, sparrows, blackbird, and thrush. In the higher hills are *ptarmagans*. In the steep and abrupt rocks of *Glenavon*, the eagle builds its eyry; and during the latter end of spring, and beginning of summer, is very destructive to kids, lambs, and fawns. Some of the more adventurous shepherds, watching them at this season of depredation, frequently scale the rugged rocks, where they nestle, and share with their young in the spoil. Till of late years that his sequestered haunts have been disturbed by the intrusion of more numerous flocks of sheep, the black cock, or *gallus Scoticanus*, was wont to hail the dawn of the vernal morning amidst the heaths of this country. . . . . Now he has fled to *Strathspey*, where the numerous and extensive woods afford him a secure retreat. . . . The *capercaille*, once a native here, is now totally extinct, and known only by name. He continued in *Strathspey* till the year 1745. The last seen in Scotland, was in the woods of *Strathglas*, about 32 years ago.

the swallow may be excepted, the cuckoo and the lapwing, “tiring its ech oes with unvaried cries,” are the only migratory birds that pay their



annual visits to this country ; and after a short stay, wing their flight to more genial climates. The former seldom appears before the beginning of May, and often its arrival is announced by cold blasts from the N., and showers of snow, which are considered as an auspicious omen of the approaching summer. This temporary rigour of the weather is called by the people, *glas-shiontachd na cuach*, or the heavy storm of the cuckoo. —

*Wood, Shrubs, Herbs, &c.*—At a period perhaps not very remote, this country was covered with wood. In the hills and mosses by which it is bordered, fir-root is found in such abundance, that it supplies the inhabitants with a warm and luminous light during the tedious nights of winter. Frequently large trunks of the fir are found at a considerable depth below the surface. Occupied in this employment, many of the poorer people drive the root to the low country, from which they bring meal, iron, salt, and other articles in exchange ; and by this mode of industry, earn a precarious subsistence for themselves and families during the summer season. No fir-wood, however, at present exists, except a few scattered trees in the southern extremity, upon the banks of the Avon. The only woods to be seen, are birch and alder, and these covering but a small extent of ground. Till of late, groves of alder, in which were trees of pretty large dimensions, grew, in several places along the banks of the river, but now they are almost cut down, and will soon be totally consumed. These, with a little hazel, thorns, haw-thorns, holly, willows, and mountain-ash, are the only species of wood that still remain. Indigenous shrubs of different kinds grow wild in the hills, that carry fruit, such as wild strawberries, two kinds of black berries, and two of red berries. In the beginning of harvest, when these fruits are ripe, they are sought for with avidity by the poorer children, to whom, during the season of their maturity, they supply a portion of food. It is probable, that formerly, if at any time the labours of the chase proved unsuccessful, even the men and women of ancient Caledonia allayed their hunger by these spontaneous productions of nature. Dio Cassius expressly asserts, that our ancestors made use of a vegetable preparation, by which they repressed, for a time, that importunate appetite. Caesar seems to allude to it in his description of the *Chara*. The soft inflected *Chara* of the Roman, evidently points to the *Còr* of the Caledonians. *Cor* signifies excellent, super-eminent, a very expressive and appropriate name, if it supplied the place of food. It grows a little below the surface of the ground, and spreads laterally into several ramifications, carrying larger or smaller knobs according to the soil, and at irregular distances. In spring it protrudes a small greenish stalk, and in summer bears a beautiful flower, which changing into pods, contains feed, when the root becomes insipid and loses its virtue. The country people, even at present, are wont to steep it among water, where having continued for some days, it becomes



a pleasant and nutritive drink. Till of late that the little wood of the kind has been better preserved, the inhabitants used in the month of March to extract a liquid from the birch, called *fion-na-uig*, a *bheatha*,——[Footnote.] The wine or water of the birch, or the water of life, in allusion to its salubrity.——which they considered as very salubrious and conducive to longevity. By an easy metaphor, the name has been transferred to denominate that well known spirit distilled from malt; but a spirit of different effects in its consequence.

It may not perhaps be improper to observe, that a tradition prevails among the Highlanders, that together with these, the Picts were acquainted with the art of extracting a delicious beverage from heath, and of an intoxicating quality. Except to make a yellow dye, the uses of this shrub at present, are unknown. But there is a probability, that in August, when it carries a beautiful purple bloom, if it were cropped in sufficient quantities, what is now considered a fiction, might, by proper skill, be realized; for, at that season, it emits fragrant and honied effluvia.——

[Footnote.] The writer of this statistical article is not so well acquainted with the science of botany, as to be able to enumerate the various plants and herbs that grow in this district. He believes few uncommon ones are to be met with, unless among the Grampian mountains, which might afford a rich field of observation to the naturalist. The plant called an *dubh-chosach*, black footed, or maiden hair, is frequently gathered among the woods and rocks, and used as a tea in asthmatic complaints. Another plant grows in several parts of the parish, and rises on a stalk near 2 feet in height. It spreads into small branches, with sharp-pointed leaves of a pale green, and bears a pretty large berry, red at first, but changing into a livid hue as it ripens. Perhaps it may be the *solanum somniferum* of the historian Buchanan, by the aid of which, infused in the drink, and mixed with the meat presented by King Duncan to the Danes, he and his generals gained a decisive victory over that barbarous people. This berry is still considered as poisonous by the country people, and they cautiously abstain from it.

Modern scepticism rejects the above passage of the history, and considers it as fictitious; but in ancient times when the wants of the inhabitants were few, gratified from the spontaneous productions of the field, or the beasts of the forest; as they lived almost constantly in the open air, climbing rugged mountains, or plunging into woody dales; they must necessarily acquire a considerable knowledge of plants and herbs, together with their various and specific qualities: besides that agriculture being in a rude state, and many of the present domesticated animals unknown, owing to these causes, the vegetable race would arrive at a higher degree of perfection, and their virtues would consequently operate with more energy and effect. In the list of plants, must be reckoned the seamrog, or the wild trefoil, in great estimation of old with the Druids. It is still considered as an anodyne in the diseases of cattle; from this circumstance it has derived its name. *Seimh*, in the Gaelic, signifying pacifick and soothing. When gathered, it is plucked by



the left hand. The person thus employed, must be silent, and never look back till the business be finished.——

*Language.*—The common idiom of this country, is a dialect of the ancient Celtic, which in remote ages pervaded the southern and western regions of Europe; and together with the Gothic, divided this quarter of the globe into two radical and distinct languages. Though the latter, owing to the better fortune of the people who spoke it, has prevailed over the former, yet may a considerable portion of the roots of several modern languages be traced to a Celtic original. This, however, is not the place for such discussions. The dialect spoken in this country is growing daily more corrupted, by the admission of Anglicisms, and a number of terms unknown to the simple arts of the ancient Highlanders. Such is the folly or bad taste of the people, that they gratify a preposterous vanity from this kind of innovation. It may therefore be well supposed, that the language is upon the decline; that the harmony of its cadence is gradually changing, and the purity of its structure mixing with foreign idioms. The young people speak Gaelic and English indifferently, and with equal impropriety. Their uncouth articulation of discordant words and jarring sounds, resembles the musick of frogs in a Dutch canal, harsh and disgusting to the Attic ear of a genuine Highlander. Some of the old people speak the Gaelic, and consequently with a degree of propriety. On subjects of common occurrence, they are at no loss for expression in well chosen and natural language. Hence, it may be inferred, that the parish of Kirkmichael spoke the same dialect of the Celtic that is now spoken in Badenoch, making allowance for some little difference, in point of pronunciation. In terms descriptive of the objects of nature and local situations; in the names of the seasons of the year, of mountains, lakes, brooks, and rivers, their language is as just and appropriate as any in the Highlands of Scotland. There are a few words, however, that would seem peculiar to themselves, but which may be traced to the parent Celtic; some words are used by them metaphorically and not unappositely applied; . . . . . In this country they have still many proverbs, and many of them beautiful, both with respect to language and sentiment. The insertion, however, of one of these, at present, may be sufficient. Eisd, say they, ri gaoth non gleann, gus an traogh na 'huisgachaibh—Listen to the winds of the hills till the waters assuage; importing that passion should be restrained till the voice of reason be heard.——[A long Footnote urges the desirability of a Gaelic dictionary, suggests that the Highland Society of London should patronise one, and records that Argyllshire clergymen were busy on one, but notes that their knowledge of the language is too much provincial.]——

*Superstitions, Ghosts, Fairies, Genii, &c.*—In a statistical account,



even the weaknesses of the human mind may afford some little entertainment. That fear and ignorance incident to a rude state, have always been productive of opinions, rites, and observances which enlightened reason disclaims. But among the vulgar, who have not an opportunity of cultivating this faculty, old prejudices endeared to them by the creed of their ancestors, will long continue to maintain their influence. It may therefore be easily imagined, that this country has its due proportion of that superstition which generally prevails over the Highlands. Unable to account for the cause, they consider the effects of times and seasons, as certain and infallible. The moon in her increase, full growth, and in her wane, are with them the emblems of a rising, flourishing, and declining fortune. At the last period of her revolution, they carefully avoid to engage in any business of importance; but the first and the middle they seize with avidity, presaging the most auspicious issue to their undertaking. Poor Martinus Scriblerus never more anxiously watched the blowing of the west wind to secure an heir to his genius, than the love-sick swain and his nymph for the coming of the new moon to be noosed together in matrimony. Should the planet happen to be at the height of her splendour when the ceremony is performed, their future life will be a scene of festivity, and all its paths strewn over with rose-buds of delight. But when her tapering horns are turned towards the N., passion becomes frost-bound, and seldom thaws till the genial season again approaches. From the moon, they not only draw prognostications of the weather, but according to their creed, also discover future events. There they are dimly portrayed, and ingenious illusion never fails in the explanation. The veneration paid to this planet, and the opinion of its influences, are obvious from the meaning still affixed to some words of the Gaelic language. In Druidic mythology, when the circle of the moon was complete, fortune then promised to be the most propitious. Agreeably to this idea, rath, which signifies in Gaelic, a wheel or circle, is transferred to signify fortune. They say, "ata rath air," he is fortunate. The name, when the circle is diminishing, and consequently unlucky, they call mi-rath. Of one that is unfortunate, they say, "ata mi-rath air." Deas uil, and Tuath uil, are synonymous expressions, allusive to a circular movement observed in the Druidic worship.

Nor is it to the moon alone that they direct their regards; almost every season of the year claims a share of their superstition: Saimh-theine, or Hallow Eve; Beil-teine, or the first day of May; and Oidhch 'Choille, or the first night of January. The rites observed at Saimh-theine, and Beil-teine, are well known, and need not be described. But on the first night of January, they observe, with anxious attention, the disposition of the atmosphere. As it is calm



or boisterous ; as the wind blows from the S. or the N. ; from the E. or the W., they prognosticate the nature of the weather, till the conclusion of the year. The first night of the New Year, when the wind blows from the W., they call *dàr-na-coille*, the night of the fecundation of the trees ; and from this circumstance has been derived the name of that night in the Gaelic language.—

[Footnote quotes opinions from Virgil of the “genial and fertilising nature of the west wind.”]—Their faith in the above signs, is couched in the following verses :

Gaoth a deas, teas is torradh,  
 Gaoth a niar, iasg is bainne,  
 Gaoth a tuath, fuachd is gailinn,  
 Gaoth a near, meas air chrannaibh.

“The wind of the S. will be productive of heat and fertility ; the wind of the W. of milk and fish ; the wind from the N. of cold and storm ; the wind from the E. of fruit on the trees.”

The appearance of the first three days of winter is also observed :

Dorach doirauta' dubh,  
 Chead tri la do'n gheamthra ;  
 Ge be bheire geil dhe'n chroi,  
 Cha tugainn 's e gu famthra.

“Dark, lurid, and stormy, the first three days of winter ; whoever would despair of the cattle, I would not till summer.”

The superstitious regard paid to particular times and seasons, is not more prevalent in this country, than the belief in the existence of ghosts. On the sequestered hill, and in the darksome valley, frequently does the benighted traveller behold the visionary semblance of his departed friend, perhaps of his enemy. The former addresses him in the language of affection ; if danger is approaching, he is warned to prepare against it, or the means of avoiding it disclosed. By the latter, he is attacked with the vehemence of resentment. The inhabitants of this, and the visitant from the other world, engage in furious combat. For a while, the victory is in suspense. At length the ghost is overthrown, and his violence appeased : a few traits of his life upon earth are described. If he stole a ploughshare from his neighbour, the place where it lies concealed is pointed out. His antagonist is requested to restore it to the owner ; and if he fails, punishment is threatened to follow the breach of promise ; for, till restitution be made, so long must the miserable culprit be excluded from the regions of the happy.—

[Footnote quotes some speeches of ghosts in Gaelic verse.]—

Not more firmly established in this country, is the belief in ghosts, than that in fairies. The legendary records of fancy, transmitted



from age to age, have assigned their mansions to that class of genii, in detached hillocks covered with verdure, situated on the banks of purling brooks, or surrounded by thickets of wood. This hillocks are called *sioth-dhunan*, abbreviated *sioth-anan*, from *sioth*, peace, and *dun*, a mound. They derive this name from the practice of the Druids, who were wont occasionally to retire to green eminences to administer justice, establish peace, and compose differences between contending parties. As that venerable order taught a *Saoghl hal*, or world beyond the present, their followers, when they were no more, fondly imagined, that seats, where they exercised a virtue so beneficial to mankind, were still inhabited by them in their disembodied state. In the autumnal season, when the moon shines from a serene sky, often is the wayfaring traveller arrested by the musick of the hills, more melodious than the strains of Orpheus, charming the shades, and restoring his beloved Eurydice to the regions of light.

*Cantu commotae Erebi, de sedibus imis,  
Umbræ ibant tenues.*

Often struck with a more solemn scene, he beholds the visionary hunters engaged in the chase, and pursuing the deer of the clouds, while the hollow rocks in long-sounding echoes reverberate their cries.

*Chorus aequalis Dryadum, clamore supremos,  
Implerunt montes.*

——[Footnotes.] . . . . . Notwithstanding the progressive increase of knowledge and proportional decay of superstition in the Highlands, these genii are still supposed by many of the people to exist in the woods and sequestered valleys of the mountains, where they frequently appear to the lonely traveller, clothed in green, with dishevelled hair floating over their shoulders, and with faces more blooming than the vernal blush of a summer mornig. At night in particular, when fancy assimilates to its own preconceived ideas, every appearance, and every sound, the wandering enthusiast is frequently entertained by their musick, more melodious than he ever before heard . . . . . There are several now livng, who assert that they have seen and heard this aerial hunting; and that they have been suddenly surrounded by visionary forms, more numerous than leaves strewed on the streams of Vallumbrosa in November blasts, and assailed by a multitude of voices, louder than the noise of rushing waters.

About 50 years ago, a clergyman in the neighbourhood, whose faith was more regulated by the scepticism of philosophy, than the credulity of superstition, could not be prevailed upon to yield his assent to the opinion of the times. At length, however, he felt from experience, that he doubted what he ought to have believed. One night as he was returning home, at a late hour, from a presbytery, he was seized by the fairies, and carried aloft



into the air. Through fields of aether and fleecy clouds he journeyed many a mile, descrying, like Sancho Panza on his Clavileno, the earth far distant below him, and no bigger than a nut-shell. Being thus sufficiently convinced of the reality of their existence, they let him down at the door of his own house, where he afterwards often recited to the wondering circle, the marvellous tale of his adventure.——

The same credulity that gives air-formed inhabitants to green hillocks and solitary groves, has given their portion of genii to rivers and fountains. The presiding spirit of that element, in Celtic mythology, was called Neithe. The primitive of this word, signifies to wash, or purify with water. In the name of some rivers, it is still retained, as in the river Neithe of Abernethy in Strathspey. To this day, fountains are regarded with particular veneration over every part of the Highlands. The sick who resort to them for health, address their vows to the presiding powers, and offer presents to conciliate their favour. These presents generally consist of a small piece of money, or a few fragrant flowers. The same reverence, in ancient times, seems to have been entertained for fountains by every people in Europe. The Romans who extended their worship to almost every object in nature, did not forget in their ritual, the homage due to fountains. It is to this, Horace alludes in his address to his limpid fountains of Blandusia [*sic*].

O fons Blandusiae splendidior vitro,  
Dulci digne mero, non sine floribus,  
Cras donaberis haedo.

——[Footnote.] Some modern antiquaries have asserted, that the Celtic nations never worshipped rivers, and had no divinities appropriated to them. Several ancient authorities, however, might be adduced to evince the contrary. Gildas expressly says, “Ut omittam,” talking of the Britons, “montes ipsos, aut colles, aut fluvios, quibus divinus honor a caeco tunc populo cumulabatur.” The vulgar in many parts of the Highlands, even at present, not only pay a sacred regard to particular fountains, but are firmly persuaded that certain lakes are inhabited by spirits. In Strathspey, there is a lake still called Loch-nan Spioradan; the lake of spirits. Two of these are supposed frequently to make their appearance, the one under the form of a horse beautifully caparisoned, with golden trappings. With the bit of his bridle, the anti-conjuror of this parish expels jealousy, and cures other maladies of the mind. The other under that of a bull docile as Jupiter wafting Europa over the Hellespont. The former is called an each uisg, the horse of the water; the latter, an taru uisg, the bull of the water. The mhaidan mhare, or mermaid, is another spirit supposed to reside in the waters. Before the rivers are swelled by heavy rains, she is frequently seen, and all the attributes of a beautiful virgin ascribed to that part of her person that is visible. Her figure is enchanting, and her voice melodious



as that of the Syrens. But fair as she is, her appearance never fails to announce some melancholy accident on her native element. It is always considered as a sure prognostication of drowning.

In Celtic mythology to the above named, is added a fourth spirit. When the waters are agitated by a violent current of wind, and streams are swept from their surface and driven before the blast, or whirled in circling eddies aloft in the air, the vulgar, to this day, consider this phenomenon as the effect of the angry spirit operating upon that element. They call it by a very expressive name, the mariach shine, or the rider of the storm. Anvona is also reckoned as a divinity of the waters, derived from anfadh, a storm or hurricane, a compound from an, a particle of privation, and feadh, serenity, tranquillity.——

Near the kirk of this parish, there is a fountain once highly celebrated, and anciently dedicated to St. Michael. Many a patient have its waters restored to health, and many more have attested the efficacy of their virtues. But, as the presiding power is sometimes capricious, and apt to desert his charge, it now lies neglected, choked with weeds, unhonoured and unfrequented. In better days it was not so; for the winged guardian under the semblance of a fly, was never absent from his duty. If the sober matron wished to know the issue of her husband's ailment, or the love-sick nymph, that of her languishing swain, they visited the well of St. Michael. Every movement of the sympathetic fly was regarded in silent awe; and as he appeared cheerful or dejected, the anxious votaries drew their presages; their breaths vibrated with correspondent emotions. Like the Delai Lama of Thibet, or the King of Great Britain, whom a fiction of the English law supposes never to die, the guardian fly of the well of St. Michael, was believed to be exempted from the laws of mortality. To the eye of ignorance he might sometimes appear dead, but, agreeably to the Druidic system, it was only a transmigration into a similar form, which made little alteration on the real identity.——[Footnote mentions an old man who still believed in the well and the fly.]——

Among the branches into which the moss-grown trunk of superstition divides itself, may be reckoned witchcraft and magic. These, though decayed and withered by time, still retain some faint traces of their ancient verdure. Even at present, witches are supposed, as of old, to ride on broomsticks through the air. In this country, the 12th of May is one of their festivals. On the morning of that day, they are frequently seen dancing on the surface of the water of Avon, brushing the dews of the lawn, and milking cows in their fold. Any uncommon sickness is generally attributed to their demoniacal practices. They make fields barren or fertile, raise or still whirlwinds, give or take away milk at pleasure. The



force of their incantations is not to be resisted, and extends even to the moon in the midst of her aerial career. It is the good fortune, however, of this country to be provided with an anti-conjurer that defeats both them and their sable patron in their combined efforts. His fame is widely diffused, and wherever he goes, *crescit eundo*. If the spouse is jealous of her husband, the anti-conjurer is consulted to restore the affections of the bewitched heart. If a near connexion lies confined to the bed of sickness, it is in vain to expect relief without the balsamick medicine of the anti-conjurer. If a person happens to be deprived of his senses, the deranged cells of the brain must be adjusted by the magic charms of the anti-conjurer. If a farmer loses his cattle, the houses must be purified with water sprinkled by him. In searching for the latent mischief, this gentleman never fails to find little parcels of heterogeneous ingredients lurking in the walls, consisting of the legs of mice, and the wings of bats; all the work of the witches . . .

*Dress.*—Since the year 1745, there is a considerable change on the dress of the people of this district. By a singular kind of policy, as if rebellion lurked in the shape and colour of a coat, at the above period, the ancient dress was proscribed and none durst wear it without running the risk of a vigorous prosecution. It was consequently superseded by the Low Country dress. To the ancient braccæ, or truish—[Footnote.] Truish, from *trusà* or dress.—and belted plaid, succeeded strait breeches, and an awkward coat of a uniform colour; sometimes a long surtout dangling down to the heels, encumbering the freedom of motion. The barbarous policy of Edward the First, did not more effectually destroy the spirit of the indignant Welsh, by the murder of their bards, than the prohibition of their ancient garb, that of the poor Highlanders. In the enthusiasm of patriotism, Mr. Fraser of Lovat got the prohibitory act repealed, in order, according to his own emphatic words, “to divert the minds of the people from Transatlantic notions.” Let metaphysicians, if they choose, trace the connexion. But, though this respectable gentleman, with the view to making them good subjects, procured liberty to the Highlanders of exposing their naked posteriors to the north wind, on their bleak mountains, few have availed themselves of the privilege. Habit reconciles them to the present, and they seem to have no desire of resuming their ancient garb. The blue bonnet, however, with the exception of some round hats, still maintains its ground. Since the year 1745, the women too, like the men, have altered considerably in their apparel. Before that period, they wore sometimes white blankets covering their heads, sometimes their shoulders,



drawn forward by their hands, surrounded on each side by a fold. These, as fashion varied, were succeeded by barred plaids, or blankets, were different colours blended, crossing each other at right angles, somewhat distant, and bearing a square space in the middle. Wearied of barred plaids, they betook themselves to Stirling ones, and now duffle cardinals begin to have the ascendant. Formerly their hair flowed in easy ringlets over their shoulders; not many years ago, it was bound behind in a cue, now it spreads into a protuberance on the forehead, supported by cushions; sometimes, it is plain, and split in the middle. But who can describe the caprice of female ornament more various than the changes of the moon!

*Manner of Living.*—Not more than 50 years ago, their mode of living in this country was different from what it is at present. Places that were at that time waste, are now planted with inhabitants. And though sheep, upon the whole, be more numerous than formerly; yet they are chiefly the property of those who occupy the out-skirts, and to whom the hills and glens lie more convenient. In the central places, the farms are enlarged, at least as much as the nature of the ground can admit; consequently the smaller tenants are fewer, and live less at their ease: but previous to the above period, even cottagers kept a few sheep, because the hill pasture was a common, and there were few of any description who did not occasionally feed upon flesh. But at present, unless it be at Christmas, or when any little festivals are celebrated, the fold is kept sacred for the market, in order to make money to supply the exigencies of the family, and satisfy the many demands to which it is exposed, from bad seasons, precarious crops, and increasing taxes: besides that, the luxury of the times has imported into this country, inaccessible as it is to other improvements, a portion of factitious wants, which must be gratified. Fifty years ago they used burnt plates of whisky, instead of that spirit, which must now be diluted with warm water, and sweetened with sugar. It must, however, be acknowledged, that it is seldom they indulge in this beverage; they oftener drink it raw and unmixed. It may easily be supposed that a plant of such universal consumption as tea, should not be unknown to the people of this country. Few of the better families are without it, though sparingly used; and some of the old women, even when they cannot afford sugar, infuse it in boiling water, and drink it for their headachs. These headachs frequently return, but fortunately by the aid of the grand elixir, they are seldom of long duration.



*Character, &c.*—The character of a people never fails to change with their changing condition. In contemplating them at the extreme points of a period of 70 or 80 years, it would be difficult to recognise their identity. . . . Not further removed than the more distant of these extremes, the people of his country were generous and hospitable. If they were occasionally subject to the foibles, they possessed the virtues of genuine Highlanders. If they resented injuries with vehemence and passion, their breasts felt the glow of affection and friendship. Attached to their chieftain, they followed his standard where-ever it led ; and never shrunk from danger in the defence of his cause. Connected with the freebooters of Lochaber, they imbibed no inconsiderable portion of their spirit and manners : Address and stratagem marked their enterprises : Active abroad, they were indolent at home : Addicted to depredation, they neglected the arts of industry and agriculture : Disengaged from those pursuits that require vigour and exertion, they passed the vacant hour in social enjoyment, in song and festivity, and in listening to the tale of other years : Rude in their manners, their bosoms frequently opened to the warm impressions of a disinterested benevolence. The indigent and the stranger found them always ready to sympathize with their distress. What Paul the Deacon, in his barbarous Latin, said of the Lombards of Italy, might be applied to them :

Terribilis facies, hirsutaque barba,  
Sed corda benigna fuerunt.

——(Footnote.) A dreadful countenance, with rough beards, but with hearts benevolent.——

But, in contemplating the nearer extreme of the above period, a different picture appears. The spirit of commerce which, in a certain degree has pervaded every corner of the Highlands, with its natural concomitants, avarice and selfishness, has penetrated hither. In the private views of the individual, the interests of the community are disregarded. Cunning has supplanted sincerity, and dissimulation candour : Profession supplies the place of reality, and flattery is used as a lure to betray the unwary. Obligations are rewarded by ingratitude ; and when the favour is past, the benefit is no longer remembered. Opposed to interest, promises cease to be binding ; and the most successful in the arts of deception acquires the esteem of uncommon merit and abilities. It may therefore be supposed, that, in a field where the prize is so attractive, there will be many candidates. To aid them in this career of ambition, it must be acknowledged, in alleviation of their bias, that they have had models of imitation not unworthy of the doctrines of a Machiavel.



Unfortunately for them, these models have been strangers, and of that rank in life who have always the most powerful influence in making proselytes among the vulgar.

Such are the causes to which it must be imputed, that there is so little discrimination to be observed in the character of the people of this country; for, where one object is pursued, the means of attainment will be generally uniform. Suspended between barbarism and civilization, the mind is never so strongly influenced by virtue, as it is attracted by the magnetism of vice. In this view, however, they are not singular from their neighbours. From a combination of causes, particularly high taxation, and increasing commerce, avarice and selfishness must necessarily constitute a prominent feature in the character of many. At the same time, there may still be found the usual proportion of persons of a different character, conspicuous for honour and integrity, humane and benevolent, just and upright in their transactions.

*Miscellaneous Observations.*—It has been observed, that the central parts of this country lie at a considerable distance from moss, which is yearly diminishing in proportion to the consumption. From the increase of population, and as the natural woods are every where decaying, the period is approaching, when the Highlands must sensibly feel the difficulty of procuring the necessary accommodation of fuel. To anticipate such an event, is an object that peculiarly calls for the attention of proprietors. There are few of this description in the Highlands, who are not possessed of considerable tracks of moor and hill. In this district, there are at least 18,000 acres that lie barren, and at present of little value. This space of ground laid under fir, would contain, at a moderate calculation, 80,000,000 plants, exclusive of the forest of Glenavon, and without much injury to the pasture. By converting the waste ground to this purpose, the rent of the proprietors would increase, while the farmer would be supplied in fuel, and materials for building. Plantations of fir so extensive, may appear an arduous undertaking; but by giving farmers long leases, indemnifying them at removal, appropriating a portion of the rent for the purpose, and various methods that might be devised, it might be successfully carried into execution; and when accomplished, would be worthy of a great and patriotic proprietor. It has been asserted that moss grows; but this is a fallacy to obvious to be credited. Being the production of wood and moisture, it is well known from experience, that when the component ingredients are once exhausted, the substance itself cannot be reproduced. . . . .



No complaint seems to be more universal over the Highlands, nor in this country in particular, than the increasing inclemency of the seasons. Modern philosophers attribute this phenomenon to the vast shoals of ice accumulating in the northern seas. But whatever be the cause, the opinion of the effect prevails among the people. Since the year 1768, they observe, that the summers are colder, and productive of greater quantities of rain, than was remembered in the same space of time, during any preceding period. The assertion, though conjectural, appears to be founded upon probability. Even within these 20 last years, the beds of brooks and rivers are considerably enlarged, and much of the contiguous grounds destroyed by the floods. The trouts, that formerly swarmed in lakes and rivers, are exceedingly decreased. The few migratory birds that visit the country, are later in their arrival, and sooner take their departure: The hum of the mountain bee is not so frequently heard: even the insect tribes that fluttered in the air of a warm summer, are less prolific than usual. In Glenavon, of this parish, are mosses, near 3000 feet above the level of the sea, full of the fir root; where no wood at present, owing to the cold, could grow. Some of the highest hills in the Grampian desert, are denominated from the wood which formerly grew upon them, such as beinn a chaorin, the mountain of the service tree. Are these then appearances the result of a temporary cessation, or has nature become more languid in her energies? Such, however, are the assertions of the old people, the neverfailing panegyrists of the times that are elapsed. Mr. Hume and the Abbè du Bois, are of a different opinion, and assert, that in ancient times, the seasons were colder than at present, but the facts adduced by these respectable writers are too vague and remote to overthrow the experience of feeling.— [Footnote suggests that farms should be carefully valued, so that rents might be properly fixed instead of being left to the chances of competitive offers.]——.



## TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF OUR CLUB.

· BY JAMES GRAY KYD.

It has been said that Alpine Mountaineering dates from the ascent of the Wetterhorn by Sir Alfred Wills. No doubt the Alps had been the playground and the graveyard of many a climber before Wills made the ascent of the virgin "Peak of Tempests," but the delightful story of his conquering journey was perhaps what enticed our countrymen to the glories of the snows. We are proud to read in the recent address which, as president, the Bishop of Bristol gave to the Alpine Club, that Scotland gave this well known Alpinist his first taste of snow climbing. Our own land has had, and always will have, great attraction for the mountaineer.

In the snowy Alps, in the tropical Andes, in the unexplored Himalaya, the problem which meets the climber is to find the right way up the peaks; while here in Scotland it has been said that climbers are now busily engaged in looking for the wrong way up all our hills. It would be an engaging study to trace in detail the history of Scottish mountaineering. The guide books of the Andersons and the writings of Hill Burton show us that before the days of the Cairngorm Club the hills had their charm for city dwellers. This fact cannot be gainsaid, yet no one will deny that our club has had a great influence in the development of the sport in Scotland. We have lived for the long period of twenty-one years, and our "Coming of Age" was officially celebrated, on 26th June last, by an excursion to Cairngorm, when the following, members and friends journeyed to Nethy Bridge:—C. T. Christie, Collie, Sidney Couper, J. R. Leslie Gray, James G. Kyd, Thomas Kyd, Mrs. Thomas Kyd, A. I. M'Connochie, Mrs. A. I. M'Connochie, John McGregor, George McIntyre, W. M. McPherson, George Reid, James Reid, Miss Reid, and J. D. W. Stewart. The Club was favoured with the



company of Mr. Alexander Carr from Rynettin to the summit.

The proceedings were most successful, and were thus described in the local papers of June 29 by the present writer :

It was in the early hours of the 23rd of June, 1887, when six mountaineers were trying vainly to sleep at the Shelter Stone, near Loch Avon, under the shadow of Cairngorm, that this, the oldest mountaineering club in Scotland, had its birth. Alexander Copland, Rev. Robert Lippe, A. I. M'Connochie, Rev. C. C. Macdonald, W. A. Hawes, and W. Anderson had climbed Ben Muich Dhui on Jubilee Day, and as the darkness came on they awakened the echoes of the hills by exploding fireworks, and astonished the dwellers in Glen Dee and Strathspey by illuminating the midnight sky with showers of rockets. After their loyal task was completed, they wended their way downwards towards Loch Etchachan, and descended cautiously in the dim light of dawn to the Shelter Stone. Before commencing to ascend Cairngorm, this little gathering informally agreed to endeavour to start a club to encourage mountaineering in Scotland; and, as the result of this meeting, we have the Cairngorm Club with all its usefulness. Of the six founders only Mr. Anderson has died, and happily the other five are true to the vows they pledged on that summer morning. The exact spot where the formation took place was Maghan na Banaraich (the Dairymaid's Field); and what more suitable scene could be found? Far up in lone Glen Avon, with the huge buttresses of Ben Muich Dhui looming down and the still waters of Loch Avon in the foreground, we have a spot probably freer from the jar and fret of civilisation than any other in Scotland.

“And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.”

These half-dozen stalwarts climbed up the steep screes to Cairngorm, perhaps full of hope for their new idea, but yet probably with little thought that they were to be the founders of a club that was destined to bind mountaineers together throughout Scotland, and which has probably done more in fostering a real love of the mountains than any other club of its kind in Britain. True, nowadays clubs spring up almost yearly—they flourish for a time and then die away; but the Cairngorm Club pursues its course with



that calm dignity that it has gained from the majestic hills themselves.

The next phase in the Club's history was a meeting in the Bath Hotel, Aberdeen, on 9th January, 1889. At this gathering the office-bearers appointed at the Dairymaid's Field were formally re-elected. After this, the Club was governed by a committee, and a set of rules was drawn up. The membership of the club was then about 15, and now it numbers about 150.

The first official excursion was held on 9th July, 1889, to Cairngorm. Nethy Bridge Hotel was the headquarters of the club. Shortly after 7 in the morning of the appointed day, twenty-seven eager hillmen drove off from the hotel to Glenmore Lodge, which was reached at a quarter to 10; and there the club commenced its first official climb. At the Cairn, the Speyside party was met by four clubmen who had come up from Braemar, and there, on the summit of Cairngorm, in the enthusiasm of youth, the club rejoiced in its first conquest. Mr. M'Connochie—to whom the club owes practically everything—lit a fire, and soon regaled the party with a hot luncheon of soup and boiled beef, when it was remarked by some of the more flippant members of the gathering that although somewhat "high" (altitudinally at least) the meat was eaten with avidity. It is interesting to look over the names of some of the climbers who made the ascent:

Charles Brown, Alexander Copland, David Darling, Dickson, G. F. Duthie, John Fleming, T. R. Gillies, George Gowans, Gustav Hein, Thomas Kyd, John M'Gregor, Alexander Macphail, A. I. M'Connochie, W. Todd Moffatt, G. Philip, John Rust, Charles Ruxton, Rev. G. A. Smith, Rev. Robert Semple, Alexander Taylor.

The following members, now dead, were also of the party:—James Allan, J. W. Duncan, Alexander Edmond of Garthdee, Hugh Imlay, W. J. Jamieson, Andrew Macpherson.

After the feast on the summit was over, the main party left the Cairn at three o'clock and wandered over the plateau to Ben Muich Dhui, which was reached at five. Tales have not been allowed to die down of how one of the clubmen got lost in going over to Ben Muich Dhui, and of how he had to return to Nethy Bridge. On the summit of Ben Muich Dhui the party split up into two, one portion going down to Braemar, led by the secretary, *via* Glen Lui Beg, and the other by the more usual Coire Etchachan path, under the care of the treasurer.



Now, after these twenty years of climbing, the Club celebrated its majority on Saturday. Again Nethy Bridge Hotel was the headquarters, and again Cairngorm was the goal of the day. Seventeen members and friends arrived on Friday night, mostly by train, but some came westward from Aberdeen by motor car. Two brakes carried our party up Strath Nethy early on Saturday. The night had been very wet, but the weather soon cleared, and we all enjoyed our drive through the forest in the fresh morning air. The birches were sweet-scented after the night of rain, but we soon left them behind, and got in among the majestic pines of the Abernethy forest and out again on to the bare moorland. At times our secretary had to be held in his place in our "machine," for on spotting a roe-buck or a young "calf" his enthusiasm was intense. All along our drive we got surprises, for the deer were hugging the low ground, being driven from the heights by the severe weather. We saw several curlews, and the note of the oyster-catcher was heard often on our drive. A greenshank and several wild duck added life to the lonely tarn beyond Rynettin. A gray-hen's nest in a juniper bush at the roadside was proof that the Glen is not often visited in these beautiful months of early summer. After Rebhoan, the road degenerates, and on Saturday most of it was little better than a watercourse in spate.

We started the climb at Glenmore Lodge shortly before ten o'clock, and were amused at the notice-board suggesting that all mountaineering be done before September when we considered that, notwithstanding the ample stables here, the gentleman responsible for this notice had made it necessary for us to send our traps back to the neighbouring estate of Abernethy, at Rebhoan, in order that shelter might be got for the horses. The ascent was made at that slow pace born of experience, without rush or spurt, and the summit was reached in about three hours. During the climb we gazed across the peaceful surface of Loch Morlich, surrounded by its fringe of dark pines, to the green hills around Kinveachy Lodge, sparkling white in the sunlight. There had been a great deal of fresh snow, which we struck at the 3,200 foot line, quite a phenomenally low altitude for a mid-summer's day. On the summit plateau we measured new snow to the depth of fifteen inches.

The summit was shrouded in mist, but a meeting was duly held under the genial chairmanship of Mr. M'Gregor,



who mentioned that Mr. M'Connochie and he were the only two of the original climbers who had reached the summit on the majority excursion; Mr. Thomas Kyd, also one of the members of the original party, being at Rynnetin, on the lower reaches of the mountain. After our meeting, Mr. M'Connochie took the party in a south-easterly direction, in the mist, in the hope of having a sight of Loch Avon. We stood for a while on an outstanding rock gazing downward into the abyss of cloud, when suddenly the atmosphere cleared, and in an instant the birthplace of the Club was revealed to us, while across the crags we saw Loch Etchachan in the hazy distance. We visited the Marquis's Well and saw the fireplace where twenty years ago the never-to-be-forgotten meal was cooked. The mist came down just a little lower than this level, and when we got out of it the whole countryside stood out sharp and clear, the canopy of cloud seeming to focus the landscape with extraordinary precision.

Away to the north we gazed across the Moray Firth, to the rounded hills of Caithness, and admired the beauty of the Black Isle tapering eastwards into the sea. Towards Lochaber we saw Ben Nevis, and further south the Buchailles Etive stood out clear. Coming northward the scene was wonderful, and our eyes carried us to

“Where Grampians over Grampians soar,  
Where ‘dowie dens’ deep bosom’d lie,  
Where ends the long Atlantic roar,  
Beneath the savage hills of Skye.”

But we could not stay in the heights all day gazing at this “pictured plan”, so we descended direct to Rebhoan, where we joined our conveyances. The descent was without special incident, save that the disappearance of the geologist of the party caused some consternation, until he was discovered happy among the schists and mica of the rocks with a mind blissfully indifferent to time and tide, to say nothing of carriages.

Those of the party who also attended the first excursion noticed many changes in the glen. Here and there a ruin marks the spot where a score of years ago a shieling brightened the valley. It has been suggested that such uplands are now practically depopulated in order that “a degenerate lord might boast his sheep.” or rather more truly, his deer. What would the members of the meet in 1889 have thought if some of their party had come wheeling away from Aberdeen to Strathspey by motor



car, or if boiling tea had been carried to 4000 feet above the sea in a Thermos flask? Yes; times move slowly, but it is on such occasions as Saturday's excursion that the advances of two decades are brought home to us.

Our Club, although it has reached its majority, is still vigorous. Its Journal—which is probably a unique collection of true mountaineering literature, as opposed to the mere enumeration of rock-climbing feats—is in its sixth volume. It would be invidious to mention any articles specifically, but one in particular—that by Mr. James Bryce, the late member for South Aberdeen, entitled “Some Stray Thoughts on Mountain Climbing”—may be regarded as a classic so long as the hills last.

The Club has published a map of the Cairngorm range of mountains, which is the most complete, as well as the most accurate, plan of this great massif district, the Himalaya of Great Britain. Mr. Copland's charts are monuments of toil and loving labour, and no one knows the trials and disappointments which the veteran had to endure before his great task was so successfully finished.

What will be the future of mountaineering in Scotland one cannot tell. The Access to Mountains Bill is at present before Parliament. It is hard to say whether it would be an unmixed blessing to climbers. However, whatever awaits the Scottish mountaineer of the future, the name of the Cairngorm Club will always stand for what is best in the sport. There is a tendency in these days for climbers to go away in smaller parties and forsake the official organised excursions. This is not altogether to be wondered at. Yet these more solitary climbers would find that by attending some of the Club's excursions they would have their ardour increased and their knowledge heightened by contact with climbers of lifelong experience.

To all mountaineers the Club extends a cordial welcome, and we may hope that, as the Club is now entering its prime, its membership and usefulness may be yet further increased.

In these twenty-one years our club has had official excursions to all the principal peaks within reasonable distance of our headquarters. We have visited hills as near home as Brimmond, and wandered westward to Lochaber to scale the giant of British mountains. Our outings have been generally favoured with kindly weather, and only thrice, I believe, in our history have the elements



been so unpropitious as to oblige us to abandon our climb. At one excursion we had as many as one hundred and sixty present. This was, however, before our present rules in regard to guests were in force, and in fact the number was the cause of these rules being made. For the idea of eight score of people invading the fastnesses of our deer forests was evidently ridiculous. The most scantily attended excursion was to Ben Nevis, when only two members put in an appearance, and curiously enough they climbed singly, neither knowing of the other's presence. Between these two extremes there have been some seventy excursions, attended by kindred spirits with whom the memory of the happy outings will last for all time.

Dr. Lippe gives us in Volume I. of the Journal a racy account of the birth and early days of our Club. He chronicles the various excursions that were undertaken to the end of 1892. Taking up the story where the genial doctor left off, we shall mention the principal events that have happened in our history. The year 1893 was an eventful one to us, for it was then that we agreed that our Journal should be issued, and the five volumes that have appeared are unique in the mass of information they give us of "scientific, topographical and historical" facts about the Scottish mountains. We visited the Hill of Fare and the Barmekin of Echt on May-day of that year, and our excursion provoked the usual futile discussion as to the derivation of the name of the latter hill. On July 11, our Club journeyed to Atholl and ascended Beinn a' Ghlo, while on the autumn holiday we went to Bennachie and found the Don so much swollen with the autumn rains that, like young Lochinvar, we were tempted to swim "where ford there was none;" however, we took the less heroic course and left the train at Kemnay instead of Monymusk.\*

In the spring of 1894 Mount Keen was revisited; this time the company was of more manageable extent, so that the duties of our Guide-Secretary were not so heavy as on the occasion of our first visit to this, the most easterly mountain in Scotland where a budding Cairngormer can

\* These were the days before the Gregson Bridge.



qualify for membership of our Club. Ben Alder was the goal of our midsummer excursion that year, and the outing was made especially pleasant by the romantic row that our party enjoyed down Loch Ericht. In September we climbed Kerloch, journeying by Stonehaven, from which we drove to Hobseat, visiting the Roman Camp at Raedykes on the way. From Hobseat we had a long heathery walk over Kerloch to Bridge of Dye, whence we drove to Whitestone and then on to Banchory.

In 1895, we visited Sockaugh in spring, Cairn Toul in July, and the Buck of the Cabrach in autumn.

The Spring Holiday of 1896 found our club on the summit of the Broad Cairn. One of Her Majesty's keepers who accompanied us was surprised at the fleetness of our lady members, and remarked "I niver saw a lady on the Broad Cairn afore!" At Midsummer

"With hark and whoop and wild halloo,  
No rest Ben Vorlich's echos knew."

for then some of our enthusiasts visited this glorious Perthshire peak. On the Autumn Holiday we climbed Coillebhar and Lord Arthur's Cairn, journeying by rail to Alford and returning by Gartly. Even now, after thirteen years, the memory of the dinner provided by kindly Mrs. Smith, the Lumsden hostess, is still fresh to some of us.

Ben Aigan was visited in the spring of 1897, while some of our patriotic clubmen celebrated Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee by displays of fireworks on Cairngorm, Ben Muich Dhui and Lochnagar. Our mountaineers were more loyal than the weather, and the damp squibs made a rather poor display. Beinn Mheadoin and Derry Cairngorm were the goals of our Midsummer excursion, and Mr. Copland's tale of the trip is one of the many gems of writing that he has given us. We climbed Morven on the Autumn Holiday. A most delightful lecture by our President on "The Preservation of Natural Scenery" was given to our Club on 8th June, 1897.

In 1898 we went south to Bencleuch in spring, and in July we wandered far north to Ben Wyvis. In autumn



we revisited Bennachie, but this time we journeyed by rail to Oyne, returning from Pitcaple.

We visited Corryhabbie Hill on 1st May, 1899, when the fates seemed to be against us. The weather was unpleasant, but worse than that one of our carriages and its occupants were thrown over a bank at Glenfiddich Lodge. Fortunately no serious damage was done, but the occurrence somewhat damped the day's pleasure. Cairngorm and Lochnagar were revisited on the Summer and Autumn Holidays respectively of that year. On 15th November, 1899, we had another lecture from our President; this time his subject was "Types of Mountain Scenery."

For the third time Mount Keen was officially visited by the Club on 7th May, 1900. Mount Blair was the destination of the Summer Excursion, but the weather was not so good as it might have been. An extra summer excursion was arranged to Ben Nevis, but clubmen evidently thought that 'twas "a far cry to Lochaber," as only two bold spirits scaled the monarch of British mountains. On the Autumn Holiday we journeyed to the Hill of Foudland and Dunnideer.

In 1901 we went far afield. Spring found us scaling the Lomonds of Fife, in summer we were on Schiehallion's graceful cone, while on the Autumn Holiday we left Aberdeen in a fog and reached the Bin of Cullen under a cloudless sky.

In the spring of 1902 we visited Clochnaben—one of the "twa lan'marks o' the sea" that figure so much in the life and horizon of Aberdeenshire mountaineers. The Summer Holiday found us on our way to Ben Avon, but the weather was so wretchedly bad that all idea of ascending the mountain had to be abandoned.

Strangely enough the next excursion—to Mount Battock on 4th May, 1903—had also to be abandoned on account of the state of the weather. At the Summer Holiday we went south to climb Ben Lomond, and were well rewarded for our long journey.

In 1904 we inaugurated our Saturday afternoon



excursions, of which up to this time no fewer than twelve have been carried out. In this season we went to Cairn-mon-earn, Bennachie, and Brimmond Hill on Saturday afternoons, besides going further afield—on the Spring holiday to the Coyles of Muick, and on the Summer holiday to Braeriach.

In 1905 we had Saturday afternoon excursions to Cairn William, Ben Aigan, and Ben Rinnes; and in Spring and Summer we climbed Lochnagar and Ben Lawers respectively. In December we held an At Home in Kennaway's Rooms, which was most enjoyable, and gave members the opportunity of each other's acquaintance in the drawing room as well as on the hill side.

Mount Keen was successfully revisited on the Spring holiday of 1906, and at midsummer a glorious day was spent on Ben Iutharn Mhor, at the head of Glen Ey. On the Autumn holiday members had an opportunity of experiencing the sensation of being lost on a hill top, for our guide on Cromdale Hills fairly lost himself. In fact one was tempted to sing, "The Cairngorm Club it rues that ere it came to Cromdale!" We visited Finella Hill on the afternoon of Saturday, 2nd June.

In the spring of 1907 we climbed Morven from Cambus o' May, and at midsummer we climbed Forfarshire's highest mountain—Glas Maol. Ben Aigan was the hill selected for the only Saturday excursion of this season.

We journeyed to Edzell on the May holiday of 1908, and from there we drove up the birch-clad Esk valley to Millden, making the ascent of Mount Battock from this place. At midsummer we climbed our Parent Mountain—Cairngorm, and Ord Bain of Rothiemurchus was ascended on a June Saturday afternoon.

In the spring of 1909 we went back to look for the Cromdale Hills, which were invisible in 1906, and Ben Rinnes formed a pleasant excursion for 5th June. Our great majority meet was held in June as above described, and Carmaferg was "billed" for 31st July, but the weather was unkindly.

The last twenty-one years have seen great changes in



our sport in Scotland. In the late 'Eighties the mountains were visited oftener by elderly people than they are now. I have been told that twenty-five years ago it was not uncommon to see as many as four parties ascending Ben Muich Dhui, each with a guide and ponies. Now-a-days the profession of Mountain Guide has almost died out in our country. This no doubt is the result of greater knowledge of the mountains fostered by our club and the clubs of similar constitution. Further, there is more climbing among young men of the less leisured class than there was twenty years ago; the great frequency of holidays and the cheaper travelling that now prevail have opened the "large religion of the hills" to many that could not enjoy it in years gone by. The great passes now figure less in the lives of the people of the Highlands than they used to do. Were it not for tourists, such passes as Glen Feshie and the Learg Ghru would seldom be crossed.

In closing these notes of the first score of years of our Club, we would express the hope that our membership may increase as our age grows, and that the good work that has been done in the past may flourish as the years roll on.



## A WEEK-END IN SNOWDONIA.

BY WILLIAM BARCLAY.

IT was just after my first winter in England that the advent of spring, and the bright sunny days, brought on a bad attack of that "longing for the hills" so familiar to all true lovers of the mountains. No one, save those who have been brought up among them, or have served a long apprenticeship in their vast solitudes, toiling up the steep heathery slopes, or fighting one's way along the narrow, wind-swept ridges, can understand what a power this "spirit of the wild" is in the life of the individual; a presence that is always with him, always felt, and which at times breaks out into a raging fever the temperature of which will not be reduced till he has made a journey to their sacred precincts. As for ourselves, we have fortunately always been able to satisfy the longing by periodic visits to some mountainous district—be it either Scottish, English or Welsh. The following is an account of one such week-end among the larger hills of North Wales: the small slate village of Llanberis, conveniently situated for all the big mountains, was chosen as our centre.

We arrived on the Saturday evening, and after tea had a preliminary walk to the summit of Elidyr Fawr (3029 feet), and from there passed on to Y Garn (3104 feet) about a mile distant. These mountains, rising on the opposite side of the glen to Snowdon, and separated only by the deep pass of Llanberis, afforded an uninterrupted view of the giant, and materially assisted us in forming our plans for the morrow. It is on the slopes of Elidyr Fawr that the largest of the Llanberis slate quarries is to be found, and seen from a distance, or from the opposite side of the glen for that matter, the whole hillside appears as one giant staircase, the steps being the different



terraces where the work of excavation is going on. And if any Alpine enthusiast is anxious to expend some of his surplus energy, he could not do better than start on any of the immense mounds of slaty rubbish that abound hereabouts, and we guarantee him good "sport."

We did not make a very early start on the morrow, but by ten o'clock might have been seen quietly stealing out of the village. By then, the sun was out in all his glory, with every promise of a perfect day, and as we lightly stepped up towards the "pass," the mountains themselves gave us a smiling welcome. Our programme was the ascent of Snowdon by the "difficult and dangerous" Crib Goch Ridge, one of the long arms of the mountain, so as we neared the summit of Llanberis pass, we left the road and struck over the moorland for the northern extremity of this magnificent ridge. The Crib Goch terminates abruptly in a perpendicular wall of rock, but we rounded this to the east, and after some scrambling up scree- and grass-covered slopes we found ourselves on the back of it. Our route now stretched in front of us, in the shape of a large inverted S, right round to the main peak of Snowdon; to the right was the large corrie streaked with patches of snow, while on our left we could look down the beautiful vale of Nant y Gwryd as far as Capel Curig. The slope immediately in front though not steep was sufficiently disagreeable with the small sharp scree which covered it, but once beyond this the ridge narrowed considerably. We were now at a fairly good height, and looking down on either side could see parties, all over the hillside like so many flies—a most extraordinary sight to one who had only been used to solitary tramps among the lone hills of the "north Countree."

The ridge had now got so narrow that we could sit astride on it—a rather sensational position, as on the right it fell in great precipices for well nigh 500 feet, and to the left, in a slope of broken rock and scree, almost equally steep, to the little Llyn Llydaw. We



stood by the small cairn (3023 feet) on the summit of Crib Goch at one o'clock; after this, the route, still very narrow, bent to the right, and led to another top only a short distance away.

The whole eastern face of Snowdon was now in view, from the dark green waters of the little Glaslyn, under its precipices, up through the snow-filled gullies to the little wooden hotel perched rather insecurely on its summit. Though there was little room for it, the camera was unpacked and set up, being pointed first at Snowdon, and then backwards over the Crib Goch, and just at the moment of exposure a couple of figures suddenly stepped up to the cairn and were duly recorded on the plate. We had now a steep descent to the col, where we had some lunch and a lounge; then we continued our way upward towards the next point on the ridge—Crib-y-Ddysgyl (3500 feet). Passing over this top we soon joined the path and railway line coming up from Llanberis, and in a few minutes more stood on the summit of Wales (3560 feet), of almost equal height with our own dear Schiehallion—alike, but ah! how different. There is a cairn—a fairly large one too—but the summit area is almost wholly occupied by the refreshment room and its outhouses. We patronised the premises, and found the charges fairly moderate, considering the site. Then after we had explored every nook and corner, and Mac had climbed to the top of the cairn, we turned our faces homeward, and descended by the path to Llanberis.

The next morning was still good, though there was mist on the higher summits. After breakfast we set off for the Glyders—twin mountains, just across the pass from Snowdon. While trudging up the glen we were nearly frizzled up with the heat, but as we ascended we noticed that the mist was very low on the giant opposite, and long before we reached our own summit we were into it. We left the road about a mile beyond Old Llanberis, and followed the course of the Afon Las to its source in Llyn y Cwm; from



here it was a very short ascent to the plateau, and then an easy walk over boulders to the cairn of Glyder Fawr (3279 feet). We stayed a short time here, and as there was no sign of the mist clearing, we set our faces eastward for the twin Glyder Fach. After about a quarter of an hour's groping about in the gloom we reached the top, and found it to be much the finer of the two, as the summit was crowned with a host of fine rocky needles, over which we had to scramble. Our only regret was that we could not employ the camera, though we waited for nearly an hour on the off chance of the mist clearing. While perched on the top of the highest pinnacle, we heard a party moving about in the gloom beneath us, and later on, when returning to the higher top, we overtook them—wandering. We put them right and then descended to the pass, and so reached Llanberis.

Taking it all round we enjoyed our week-end immensely, certainly much better than we expected for a mountain holiday south of the Tweed. What struck us most in contrast to our own Scottish hills, was the number of people out; nowhere on any of the Highland mountains—excepting Ben Nevis—have we ever met more than two parties on any one day, and we have had a fairly wide experience; while here—why the hillsides were literally alive with people. But of course this is easily explained, as the climbing ground is limited, and the climbers are far more numerous than in Scotland.



## LAMMERMOOR GLENS.

BY THE REV. WM. MCCONACHIE, B.D., F.S.A.

OUR hills have none of the wild magnificence of the Cairngorms and other northern heights. Though they possess a quiet beauty and pastoral fascination all their own, he who visits them must not look for rugged grandeur or any of those mountain aspects that appeal to the sublime. From the valley of the Leader they rise into rounded summits of no great height, with those characteristic moors, reaching for miles beyond them, from which the system takes its name. The botanist will find none of the Alpine treasures of higher hills—the flora altogether is meagre—nor the climber spots to whet his appetite for adventure. Yet he who is a student of the relics of a forgotten past, the hillfort, the barrow, the stone-circle, the cairn, even the underground dwelling, will find them of absorbing interest. Nor will the nature lover ever weary among them. Withal they are easy of access from their gentle slopes, and the narrow winding glens that lead everywhere into the heart of them.

Late in April we took a walk that embraced two of these glens, combining pleasure with duty, in the form of a visit to the shepherds' houses. The day was one of these delightful ones that come like a benediction amid the ever changing weather of the early season. We drove four miles, then left our trap and walked three more up one of two glens that unite before they open to the larger dale. Each of them is guarded by a hillfort, one with ramparts of great height. In the valley is a terraced barrow, and many traces have been found around of prehistoric occupation. A little way past these, and the modern homestead pleasantly situated at the foot of the hill, we were away from everyone. The stillness of the glen gathered about us like a mantle. We felt it before we became conscious of the many sounds that penetrated it—the cheery



notes of the newly returned sandpiper, a ring-ousel's wild melody, the plaintive piping of golden plovers. Red grouse were abundant enough; we could never get away from their incessant go-back! go-back! back! back! Many of the hen-birds had begun to nest among the heather. The deep baa of the old blackfaced sheep was answered by the shrill bleat of young sportive lambs. Beside us all the way, a clear, glancing stream smiled and babbled to the bright sunshine. Once or twice we saw wild duck rise from it; they, too, would nest in the heather. The glen itself curved and doubled, limiting the vision and increasing that feeling of mystery that was part of its charm. Wheatears were in great abundance with the ring-ousel, sandpiper, and dipper; next to red grouse, curlew and plover on the uplands were the most common of the glen birds. Hares chased one another along the slopes above us, leaping and dancing for joy of life. Both the brown and the Alpine kinds were noticed, though the latter are not nearly so plentiful as on higher hills.

Brown hill extended beyond brown hill on either side of us, yet there was no monotony of colouring. Round their summits the blue of the sky grew intense, and they rose from a narrow meadow of living green. In places the stream had washed away the covering of turf and soil from the groundwork of Silurian rock. On the higher slopes were patches of bluish scree that might have been thousands of cartloads of stone emptied here and there on the hill side. A lone windswept group of fir trees crowning a height on the left was the only trace of wood we could see. Once the glens and uplands of the Lammermoors must have been well wooded. White birch is found in the mosses, with oak, willow and abundance of hazel nuts. In hollows of the hills and at rare intervals along the streams, clumps of old birch and other trees with an undergrowth of hazel and juniper remain to show the nature of this ancient wood. The people speak of these as parts of the Caledonian forest. But they are scanty enough, and afford little cover for even the roedeer which, with the larger red-deer, is quite unknown. Black game frequent



the glens and moorland, though in no great numbers; the capercailzie has never received sufficient encouragement to wander so far south.

Before we seemed to have walked any distance, the narrow glen opened to show a field of meadow grass with the shepherd's house in a sheltering fold of the hills. Never had miles passed so quickly. It was no great disappointment to find a closed door, with the prospect of such another walk along the turf road with the prattling stream for companionship. That day we breasted the incline to the right, following the peat road, to leave it again for the burnt heather of the moor. A short walk through the nesting places of curlew, plover, and muir-fowl with bright red wattles, brought us to another glen.

Seldom was place-name better justified. From every side came the sound of rushing water. The pleasant murmur of mountain brooks reached its loudest near the shepherd's house of Glenburnie. A happy spot surely, if there be one on earth, with the soothing note like a soft hand stroking the brow and charming care from the heart. It was a kindly, hospitable home, in any case, and possessed on that side a very substantial element of happiness. From the shepherd we learned a great many facts about the hills, which a year or two among them has amply confirmed. One or two cleughs in the glen are an occasional haunt of the fox, and a lucky find of cubs, for which there is a ready market in the south, is one of the shepherd's perquisites. He sees the big hawk sometimes—all the larger kinds of Falconidæ are included under this generic term. Buzzards and peregrine falcons visit the moors, year by year, too often never to leave them. A kite was trapped twenty years ago near the mouth of these glens. Occasionally the shepherd kills an adder. There are more here than in the glen we walked up, and in another further eastward still, the shepherds never find them. This is the key to their distribution along this side of the Lammermoors, though what determines it is more difficult to explain. In the glens to the west they go on increasing, the most westerly of all being infested



by them, and sheep are occasionally lost from their poisonous bite. A sheep dog in Glenburnie was bitten, but soon recovered from the effects. Dotterel still come, every autumn, to the upper moors, and occasionally in the later spring, but only for a few days. So he talked freely until one side of the glen was in shadow, the other bathed in softening light. We had almost two miles still to walk to the point where the two glens meet to enter the lower dale. Before we reached it the purpling lights of evening had clothed hollow and height with indescribable beauty. The very air around us glowed with it, and we walked as through an enchanted world.



## SEVEN DAYS' TRAMPING IN THE HIGHLANDS.

BY THOMAS STELL.

I ARRIVED at Fort William from Keighley on the Saturday morning of Whit week of 1909. Fort William makes a capital centre for seeing some of the finest scenery that we have in all our island. For an easy saunter there is the walk down the side of Loch Linnhe, which was the way I took after lunch, leaving till evening the old Inverlochy Castle, when the bats are flitting about. I then returned again to the pier to enjoy the view across the Loch, or sit on the crags watching the sunset and after-glow.

Sunday was kept for a rest day, only taking one or two short walks. One, a particularly pretty one, was by the side of the River Spean, where the broom along the banks made a wonderful show of colour.

Monday morning opened dull, with every appearance of rain. I had planned to go to Shiel Hotel on Loch Shiel, a distance of about 35 miles, so I made use of the motor bus down Loch Linnhe side as far as Corran Ferry, which I crossed just in time to catch the mail cart to Strontian on Loch Sunart, a drive of some fifteen miles—eight or nine of which were by the side of Loch Linnhe. The scenery was very fine and varied, but the rain that had been threatening now came on in earnest. We reached Strontian Hotel about 3.30 p.m., where I had a very good lunch, enjoying at the same time a fine view across Loch Sunart, including a waterfall on the south side of the Loch. By 6 o'clock the rain ceased, so I set out on foot. There were thirteen miles yet to walk, but I was in excellent form. The first ten were along Loch Sunart, nearly all through trees and over headlands, with ever changing views. There was one particularly choice spot with one or two gipsy tents and an old woman on guard smoking. Salen was the next stage, the road for Loch Shiel now holding northwards. I saw a grand sunset through the trees about 9.30, and arrived at the hotel at 10 o'clock. I



turned into bed by 11, after arranging to have breakfast ready by 4 o'clock. I had found that the next stage was twenty miles, six of them on a road, the rest on a bridle track ending at Kinlochailort Station in the middle of Prince Charlie's country, the train leaving there soon after 2 p.m., thus giving about nine hours for the walking—none too many.

On Friday, after four hour's sleep, I was looking out of the window, up Loch Shiel—and what a glorious morning! The waters danced in the sunshine, while the mists crept and curled up the sides of the hills. I had the whole country to myself; here and there were a few crofters' cottages, some of them with peat reek curling up into the sweet morning air. The cairns by the road side were numerous, a group of three being quite out of the ordinary—they were very large and well built. Directly after passing them I reached Kinloch-Moidart, a small hamlet planted in a most charming spot at the head of Loch Moidart. Here the road proper comes to an end, and the bridle track begins, winding rather steeply up through trees and over rocks and crags, now dipping down to the sea, now rising up again. With nothing but the sea and oneself it was a continued succession of grand and lovely views all the way to Kinlochailort. I call this walk the finest I have ever had; the day was perfect. The train landed me back at Fort William about half past-three. The evening was spent across the Loch in Ardgour with three or four friends. It was nearly 11 o'clock when we returned, a splendid moonlight night showing up Ben Nevis to perfection.

Wednesday came with more fine weather. It seems to be always fine up there about Whitsuntide, for we have been up for our holidays for ten or eleven years in succession without being troubled with rain, to any extent at least.

I left Fort William on Thursday about 9 a.m., taking the road over the Black Mount to Kinlochmore, and then on to King's House. A very quiet walk it was, with just the hills for company and an occasional shieling or two



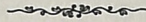
with little crofts. About four miles short of Kinlochmore and the new works of the Aluminium Co., up the side of the hill, there are the Seven Springs, supposed to be the best water in all Scotland—at least a man who was cutting peat told me so! In about another three miles there is the view over the head of Loch Leven and over the mountains of Glencoe, and for comparison the wonderful pipe track in which they have bottled the waterfalls. There are still nine miles of moor and mountains to King's House, not without some fine views, especially one of the summit and observatory of Ben Nevis. When the top of the Devil's Staircase is reached there is another capital view over the Moor of Rannoch, the entrance to Glen Etive, and down Glencoe. In four miles the tourist finds himself at King's House.

Out into another new day, Friday, full of contentment; over the bridge and across the moor. Following the small mountain stream, one rises higher all the time, crossing the shoulders of mountains, passing by a shooting lodge about three or four miles from King's House where the moorland track starts. Winding in and out and around, one has a glorious time for about six miles; then a short rest and lunch by a choice spring ere starting on the last stage, another six miles, to Rannoch Station. It can hardly be called a walk, for it has to be taken in jumps about every six yards, being all moorland and very wet and swampy. The track is intermittent; one picks it up occasionally, with Loch Lydoch for company for several miles on the right and mountains on the left.

In these holidays you have six months' looking forward in anticipation, and other six in pleasant memories, with a solid hope that you have laid in another stock of good health.



## EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.



THE following letter from Mr. W. F. Porter-Fausset, Barrister-at-Law, appeared in *The Daily News* of 19th November last :— In the beginning of August last, I went with two friends to Ross and Inverness in Scotland to climb some of the splendid mountains in that neighbourhood. We travelled by train to Invergarry, where we found a comfortable hotel. There we left the railway and walked over Ben Qu to Tomdoun, our luggage following us by the mail coach.

Communication with the rest of the world ends here, but the landlord informed us that we could get a bed at a small inn at Clunie, which is within reach of the mountains. We accordingly sent our luggage on by private car, and walked there ourselves over the hills. The inn proved to be nearly full, but the mistress of the house eventually agreed to put us up for a week. In the morning, however, after he heard that we were pedestrians, the landlord told us that there had been a mistake. He was expecting some motorists, and there was no room for us. This was very galling, as there was apparently no other accommodation in the place or in the district. The inn at Shiel, which was fourteen miles distant, had, we were informed, been closed by the action of the landlords, and our only course appeared to be to return to Tomdoun, which is too far from the mountains to be of any use for climbers.

We were loath to do this, however, and after spending the morning in vain attempts to get accommodation at the few cottages near at hand, we decided to go down the pass to Alltbeath, which is at the foot of Mam Soul, the highest mountain in the district. We trusted to getting accommodation at Alltbeath, where we knew there was a cottage. We started after lunch down the pass, and as it was very rough travelling and there was a river to cross, we did not reach Alltbeath until after four o'clock.

We saw the cottage where we hoped to spend the night, and avoiding some ugly-looking dogs which belonged there, we started up the mountain. At 6.30 p.m. we had been walking hard, and were still some way from the top. The weather was now becoming worse, and there was a mist over the top of the mountain. One of my companions and myself, therefore, decided to make our way back to the cottage and secure a bed before it was too late. Our friend, who is indefatigable, was determined to make the top and join us later.

I was very leg-weary, and we went slowly back to the cottage, which we reached shortly before eight o'clock. It was then getting dark and raining. A woman opened the door to us, and we asked if she could give us a shake-down for the night, explaining our position and saying we should be glad to pay her well for any trouble. She refused point-blank on the grounds that "the gentlemen who took the shooting would not like it, and that if she were to take us in, her husband would lose his job as under-gamekeeper.



We pointed out that we should have to sleep on the hillside in the wet, and might take serious harm. "Surely the gentlemen would not like that." "Indeed," said she "what would they care"! The nearest accommodation was some twenty miles away, at Glen Affric, and as a last resort I asked to see her husband. He, seeing our position, agreed to give us a shelter on condition that we left at daybreak and went straight back to Clunie, leaving the mountains alone. We had perforce to accept these conditions, and the woman then took us in and did her best for us. Our friend arrived later and was also taken in.

In the morning we were smuggled out like convicts and returned to Clunie. We arrived there for lunch and found that our beds were still empty, but the landlord explained that the motorists (!) were expected at any moment. We then chartered a trap and returned sadly to Tomdoun.

These mountains of which I am speaking form a vast deer forest of which the present tenant is the Earl of Durham. There is no question here of crowds of tourists from the towns desecrating private grounds. It is patent that even before the shooting commences one of the finest districts in Scotland is a closed book to climbers and pedestrians. Inn-keepers are afraid to let their rooms to any but fishermen lest they should lose their licence, and cottagers are forbidden to do so. For ourselves, we returned to Spean Bridge, where we had very good climbing in the Ben Nevis range. I have been on walking expeditions in Scotland, Ireland, and Switzerland in company with the same friends every year for the last ten years. We usually go at that period of the year, because it is the only time at which we can take our holiday together, and it is only fair to say that we have never met with a similar experience.

As far as our frightening the deer is concerned, we have seen plenty of deer on the Scottish mountains, and the only effect which we produce is that they wander to the next ridge, survey us for a few moments with curiosity, and then go on browsing.

THE Aberdeen Touring Club held its third annual dinner in the County Hotel, Aberdeen, on the 3rd December. Mr. James Cran Hendry,

solicitor, presided over a very large turnout of THE ABERDEEN members and friends, and the proceedings were both TOURING CLUB. interesting and instructive. After dinner, the Chair-

man stated he wished to extend a very hearty welcome to all present that evening. He cordially invited all who studied their health to join the Club, and get the benefits of good companionship. Pedestrianism was a fine and exhilarating pastime, and inexpensive; and what was better than a fine tramp in the open country away from the bustle of town life! Thereafter the health of the King was enthusiastically pledged. The toast of the territorial forces was responded to by Sergeant Ross who stated that the manœuvres and training he received had been very beneficial, and life in the open in the camping season had done him a great deal of good, for it put him in mind of the objects of the Club. The toast of the friends of the Club was replied to by Mr. Willock, who in an enthusiastic speech remarked that the citizens of Aberdeen had reason to be proud of the Granite City, because they had easy access and facilities to roam the country, scale its mountains and inhale fine fresh air as compared with less



fortunate towns. Thereafter a pleasant evening was spent in song and story, the Chairman having specially contributed racy reminiscences of climbs and excursions in various parts of Scotland.—ROBERT MURDOCH-LAWRANCE, 71 Bon-Accord Street, Aberdeen.

THE following interesting extracts are taken from a speech delivered, on 11th December last, at the annual general meeting of the Aberdeen Branch of the Royal Scottish Arboricultural Society

AFFORESTATION. by our fellow member, Sir John Fleming, LL.D. :—

In taking a perfectly detached view of the case, and making a large and generous allowance for improvement in quality consequent upon a better selection of suitable seeds and greater attention to massed growths with proper shelter, I can come to no other conclusion than that for Scotland the trees to grow are the larch and the fir, and the products very much as at present in staves and sleepers and pitwood and boxwood, with the addition as time proceeds of roofing and light joisting in dimensions from 4 inches by 2 inches up to 7 inches by 2½ inches. I have not mentioned spruce, unless for scenic effect or for protection, the Scottish whitewood, so far as my experience goes, is an inferior wood, only less inferior than its sister, the silver fir. An improvement may be effected in the manner of its growth, but at present it is much too knotty. I am afraid my strictures upon the spruce may cause some controversy : were it possible to grow such wood as is grown in the Baltic the case would be entirely different. The Government authorities quite evidently do not share my views, for I observed that the other night Sir Samuel Scott drew from Mr. Hobhouse in the House of Commons the answer that there had been ordered for direct planting on the hillside at Loch Awe 80,000 Scots, 150,000 larch, 35,000 Douglas, 45,000 silver, 240,000 spruce, and 40,000 Sitka spruces.

The counsel to grow common varieties of firs and look for what may be regarded as mean markets may seem unpatriotic, but there the most profitable markets will be found. There was a rude truth in the advice I once heard a veteran dealer in mahogany give to a beginner, "If you want to make money buy trash." What was meant was that you made about the same profit off the foot of a low priced log as you did off a high priced one, and only half, or perhaps less than half, the money was needed for the purchase. The reasons I put forward for this line of policy are these. You will always have an abundant demand, you will have easily handled dimensions. The foreigner will be less able to compete with you in cheap wood than in dear, as his freight and handling charges will be as high per cubic foot in the one case as in the other. I know strong arguments will be used to you that you should try Douglas fir, let us say, instead of the *Sylvestris*. All honour to the Durris lairds for their heroic experiments, but as far as they have gone they have failed to establish that, whatever the tree may be in its native haunts in British Columbia, it has in this country proved a commercial success. If it could ever be supposed to produce here in Scotland the same quality of wood as it does in the west coast of America, then it would be a brilliant success. These remarks may suffice as to what to grow ; as to distribution and mixture of varieties I can give no advice.



I should think that up to 1500 feet altitude might suit either the fir or the larch. The only remark I would make before leaving this part of the subject would be, try and make your planting fairly continuous and not patchy.

I referred to the want of a cheap form of transit from the wood to the sawmill, from the sawmill to the seats of commerce ; in these facilities this old country is notoriously deficient. These, of course, will not be severely missed for many years to come, but still they ought to come up for early consideration. Splendid waterways for defloation of logs are an almost universal appanage of all the great wood-exporting countries, both of the old world and the new. The Tay, the Spey, and our own Dee have in olden days been so used, and it is hoped they may be so used again, and I see nothing to prevent it if the fish do not prove more powerful than the tree. The Caledonian Canal and many of the western arms of the sea might also be requisitioned in the same way, but these would only tap a very small area of the lands we hope may some day be covered with forest. Light railway lines up the side valleys, more suitable railway trucks, cheaper railway rates for what will be a welcome new traffic to all Scottish railways, these are all essential, but I doubt if they will ever be obtained without a nationalising of the railways. In all these arrangements the use of the handy man will come in ; steel cable ways, for instance, a speciality of a well-known Aberdeen firm of engineers, would in all probability be found indispensable. At the present time timber can be brought from Russia, 1500 miles away, to Aberdeen at 7s. to 7s. 6d. per ton ; from Ballater to Aberdeen, 44 miles, the rate is practically the same . . . The larch has qualities that are unsurpassed. There is no fir that can hold a nail like the Scots fir, and if it could only be grown a little cleaner and with less sap, it also would be a wood hard to beat. I have left to others the decision as to when and where to plant, and all matters of fencing and distribution, and touched only on what I happen to know a little about. In conclusion I have no hesitation in saying that with care and circumspection, aided by the country's common purse, a healthy peasantry will arise, the fair face of our beautiful country will become still fairer, new industries will be created, and all surely to the nation's profit " when afforestation comes."

THE twenty-first Annual Meeting of the Club was held on 22nd December, 1909, the Chairman, Mr. James A. Hadden, presiding over a large and representative attendance of members. The Treasurer's Accounts, of which the usual abstract was in the hands of the members, were passed. It was resolved  
 OUR TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING. that all compositions of annual subscriptions should be added to the investments of the Club, the interest of the investments being treated as revenue.

His Excellency the Right Hon. James Bryce was re-elected President, and Messrs Alexander Copland and Robert Anderson were re-elected Vice-Presidents. Mr. John Clarke, M.A., was, on the motion of Mr. James A. Hadden, elected Chairman, and thereupon took the chair. Mr. Hadden was cordially thanked for his services to the Club during the three years he had held the chair.



The following Committee was constituted for the current year —

James Conner.	James A. Hadden.
James G. Kyd.	John R. Levaack.
John McGregor.	R. W. Mackie.
George McIntyre.	W. M. McPherson.
William Porter.	Alexander Simpson.

A new departure was made in fixing the Excursions for the ensuing season, Meets being arranged as follows:—Easter week-end, Ballater; Spring Holiday week-end, Dufftown; and Summer Holiday week-end, Aviemore. Two Saturday afternoon Excursions were also agreed to. Details were left in the hands of the Committee. It was suggested that in addition to official climbs, should such be arranged by the Committee, members attending the various Meets might to some extent make their own selection both of days and of mountains to be climbed. The Easter week-end Meet was fixed with a view to give members an opportunity of snow-work, say on Lochnagar, Broad Cairn or Morven. In connection with the Aviemore Meet, Braeriach, Cairn Toul and Sgoran Dubh seemed most favoured.

The Committee, having rendered the remit made to them at the previous annual meeting, with a view to widening the scope and increasing the usefulness of the Club, recommended that the entry money should be reduced from 10/6 to 5/-, and that new members' compositions should be reduced accordingly from £5 5s. to £5. Rule VIII. was therefore altered to read as on page 3 of cover.

Rule X. was also dealt with so as to include Minor Members, the following addition being made:—"The Committee shall also have power to elect qualified Minor Members, belonging to the household of ordinary members. Minor Members shall pay an annual subscription of 2/6, but shall have no voice in the management of the Club, nor be entitled to receive copies of the Club's publications."

The Committee was empowered to arrange in the course of 1910 for a Lecture and an At Home. The foregoing remit to the Committee was continued for the ensuing year.

On the motion of Mr. McPherson, the Secretary and the Treasurer were thanked for their services to the Club; and the Chairman, on the motion of Mr. Anderson, was thanked for presiding.

New Members—Mr. Reginald Collie, Stoneshiel Hall, Reston; and Mr. Robert T. Sellar, 56 Bedford Place, Aberdeen.



*Continued from page 2 of Cover.*

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 5s. 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 11s. 6d.; ten years and over, £2 2s.; five years and over, £3 3s.; and new members £5 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. The Committee shall also have power to elect qualified Minor Members, belonging to the household of ordinary members. Minor Members shall pay an annual subscription of 2/6, but shall have no voice in the management of the Club, nor be entitled to receive copies of the Club's publications.

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.



