

THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY

JAMES GRAY KYD.

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(NUMBERS 39 to 42)

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The Cairngorm Club

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RULES.

I.—The Club shall be called "THE CAIRNGORM CLUB."

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

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

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

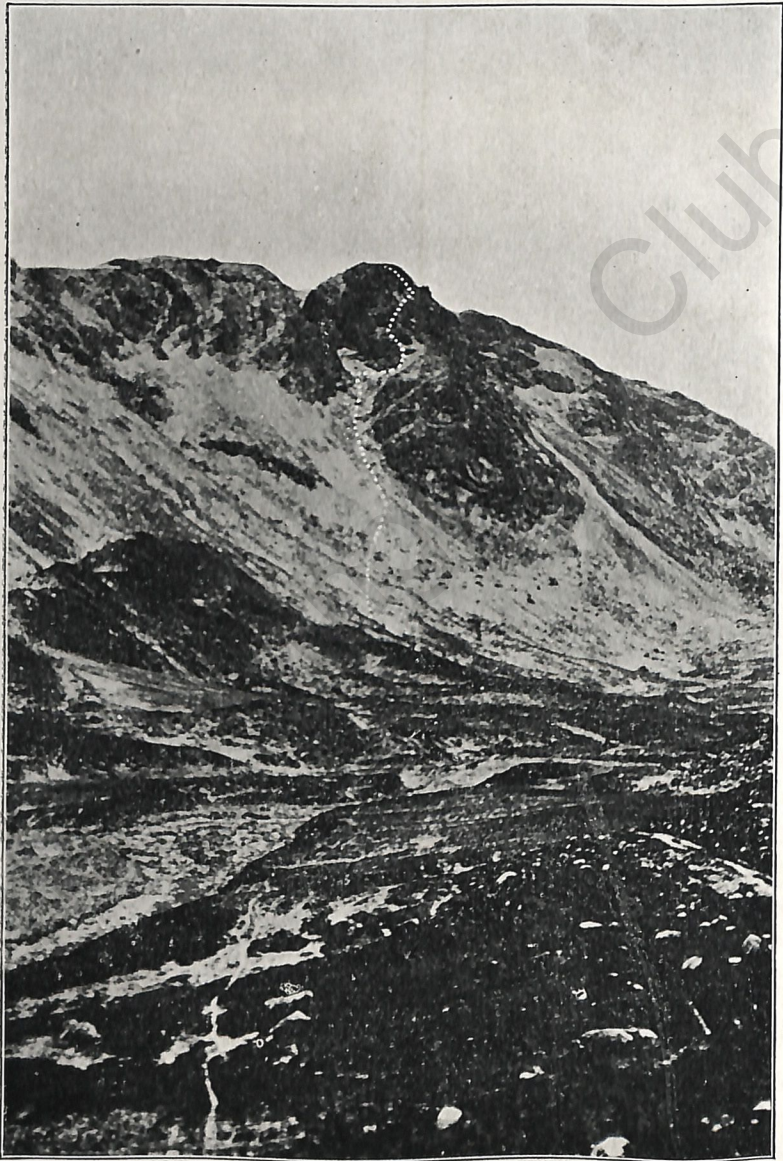


Photo H. J. Drummond

2nd Jan., 1911.

THE NORTH EAST FACE OF CRAIG MAUD, GLEN DOLL.

The dotted line in illustration shows route of climb :

(1) The head of the big flanking gully.

(2) The highest point.

The pinnacles.

THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

Vol. VII.

JULY, 1911.

No. 37

THE ATTRACTION OF THE HILLS.

BY WILL. C. SMITH.

So many of the Scottish hills have been climbed, and so many accounts of these climbs have been published, that I cannot pretend to offer anything new or original to this Journal. But the glorious attractions of the hills and the response of the human spirit to these attractions abide for ever with undiminished strength. There are no doubt many motives urging men to the hills: the joy of adventure, the beauty of form and colour, the training of nerve and muscle. But one of the strongest is the love of solitude, at least that solitude which is shared by two or three. "The infinite composure of the hills, and large simplicity of this fair world." Nothing is quite so refreshing as to be "far from the madding crowd," away from the mean anxieties of the struggle for existence and the dull monotony of social conventions. As Whitman says:—

"Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose."

The idea is copied in Stevenson's famous "Vagabond" song:—

"Give to me the life I love,
Let the lave go by me:
Give the jolly heaven above
And the byway nigh me.

Bed in the bush with stars to see,
 Bread I dip in the river—
 There's the life for a man like me,
 There's the life for ever."

There is certainly a Bohemian element in every well-constituted mind and character. It breaks out in unexpected quarters, from the staid Professor, the over-worked physician, the man of business, the man of science. Even the massive and dignified Dr. Chalmers once said to the Story children at Roseneath in his broad Fifeshire accent: "Noo, let us abāāndon oorselves to miscellawneous impulses!" As the years pass, it perhaps becomes more difficult to find a true solitude. The railway whistle shrieks through the passes of Aberfoyle and Killiecrankie, and across the quaking bogs of Rannoch, and one reads of ridiculous attempts being made to drive a motor up Ben Nevis. In England a National Trust has been formed to preserve a few bits of amenity here and there. The example had already been set by the United States and Canada. But in mountainous Scotland things are not so bad. The Aluminium Company has diminished the flow of Foyers and destroyed the peace of Kinlochmore. But, as Palgrave wrote of Nature in the mountains of Savoy, although men

"Tame heaths to green fertility,
 And grind their roadway through the hill
 With lurid forgelights in the glen!
 Yet still some relics she reserves
 Of what was all her own:
 Keeps the wild surface of the moor,
 Or, where the glacier torrents roar,
 Reigns o'er grey piles of wrinkled stone."

It would indeed be intolerable if the mountains of Scotland were in this sense to become civilised, or if the inhabitants of Scotland were to be excluded from habitual intercourse with the high places of their country. But, fortunately, from Assynt to the Cairnsmore of Fleet, and from Lochnagar to Cruachan and Nevis, there is yet left ample room for the climber, the artist, the poet, the botanist, the geologist. These and all others, who are capable of

exercising common sense, have no difficulty in going where they wish to go.

One of the most attractive features of this study of solitude is, not the peaks or summits of the great ranges, but the bye-ways that take you from one watershed to another. It is possible to traverse Scotland without troubling the modern highways and without leaving the grass and the heather. For various reasons of business and sport there was a network of subsidiary roads, now no longer used. There was the whole system of drove roads, before local markets for sheep and cattle were superseded by the railways and the central marts. There was the more ancient system of Thieves' Roads, by which the bestial taken in a foray were driven, often a great distance, to the home of the successful thief. An example is the Bealach nam Bo on the side of Ben Venue above Loch Katrine. At a later date many of these through country roads were utilised by the smugglers, and men still living can remember the long lines of shelties or ponies, with ankers of illicit whisky and other contraband goods on their backs moving through the hills from East to West. One of the finest of the old drove roads was that from Braemar by Loch Callater and Jock's Road down the White Water to Clova. The sheep not sold at Braemar were by this route regularly taken over to Cullow, near Kirriemuir, in Forfarshire and there again offered for sale. It seems strange that the public right of way from Braemar to Clova should ever have been contested, for not only were the sportsmen interested, like the Ogilvys of Clova, Lord Southesk, and Mr. Gurney, quite clear about the existence of the market drove road through the forest of Glen Doll, but it was proved that at an earlier period the Catholic population of Clova went over to the Braemar Church by this very route. The whole line of country was of course the happy hunting ground of the botanist (see the books of Wm. Gardiner, and Wm. Don's "Flora of Forfarshire," 1854), but the botanist is, like the painter and the geologist, re-

garded as a privileged person, and even his habitual presence is attributed to the toleration of the proprietor. The witnesses examined in the Glen Doll case included an old man, perhaps the last surviving specimen of an ancient Scottish institution, the "whip-the-cat" or travelling tailor, who went from house to house, making or mending clothes, and receiving board in part payment of his services. Apart, from the climbing possibilities of Glen Doll, it is a highly attractive glen; the great corrie of Glen Fee, the big sharp rocks of Craig Rennet and Craig Maud, the steep rough zig-zag up Jock's Road, the glittering water-falls of Craig Lunkart and the Feula, the weather-beaten shieling, whose hospitality many an artist and man of science has acknowledged, the stretch of soft-pleasant walking in the valley of the White Water, and the descent from the bare ridges of Tolmont to the stern shores of Loch Callater and the Castleton, make up one of the best walks in Scotland.

Another ancient road, now seldom traversed, is the Minikaig Pass, or direct route from Blair in Athole to Kingussie in Badenoch. It is considerably shorter than the westward curve of the Inverness coach road, now followed by the Highland Railway, but it rises at least 1,000 feet higher than the Drumochter Pass. On one occasion I left the night north train at Blair about 2 a.m. and succeeded in catching an early afternoon train at Kingussie. This road ascends from Blair House by Glen Banvie and Glen Bruar. Some three miles north of the Bruar Lodge it climbs steeply to the 2,600 feet level, and for several miles still northward it keeps a steady horizontal, and then rapidly descends the Allt Bhran to Glen Tromie, which it may be said to reach at Inver na Cuilce, the confluence of the reeds. It does not proceed to Tromie Bridge, but across the Meall Buidhe direct to Ruthven. As you ascend northwards, in Bruar, you are not far from the Beinn Dearg which figured so largely in the report of the Tullibardine Commission on the Athole Deer Forests and to which the unhappy politicians were conducted upon ponies. Probably this route was used for

cattle and other purposes, but there is no doubt it was also improved and used as a marching road for detachments of military on their way to Ruthven Barracks in Badenoch. One of the 17th century manuscripts contains this passage: "Ther is a way from the yate of Blair in Atholl to Ruffen in Badenoch maid be David Cuming Earle of Athoill for carts to pass with wyne, and the way is called Rad na pheny, or way of wane wheills it is layd with calsay in sundrie parts." A Gaelic word "fe(u)n" is still used in Athole for a certain kind of wheeled conveyance. In another place it is said "Monygegg Item the stryp that crooketh so oft upon the heid of the wild Month and hills of Mynygegg, is called Keuchen vin Lowib, it runneth to Athoil and falleth in Breur and Bruer in Garry." This is the Caochan Lub of the modern atlas, the burn down which the pass descends southward and which unites with the Allt na Cuil to form the Bruar Water. Caochan Lub just means "meandering rill," the "stryp that crooketh so oft." Whether the road built by David Cumming, "the way of waggon wheels," is the Minikaig, or not, I have no means of absolutely determining, and I invite controversy. I think there are signs of "calsay" in most parts of it, although the high level is now of course soft. The wine carts present a difficulty, but for a long time this was the only road. The maps of Moll, *circa* 1725, show the road prominently, but nothing at all in the line of the Dalnacardoch road subsequently made by Wade before 1745. In the first map of the Commission of Highland Roads and Bridges Minikaig seems to figure as a county road. The later maps of Taylor, Skinner, Ainslie, Thomson, and Stobie, also show the Minikaig, although Thomson makes it strike the Tromie Water at a higher point.

The Earl of Athole referred to was probably that David who early in the 14th century built Blair and married Joan Comyn, to whose people the Castle of Ruthven at one time belonged. At the end of the previous century there had been a dispute between a previous David, Earl of Athole and the Comyns as to the building of Blair, and,

according to Fordun, the King acted as arbiter in the matter. The statement of the brothers Anderson in their well-known guide to the Highlands that the Minikaig Pass descends by Glen Feshie to Loch Insh is, it is thought, inaccurate. The Minikaig route started from Blair itself; in crossing to Bruar it passed the Carn Mhic or Mac Shimi, the place at which a fight occurred between the Murrays and Simon Lovat (on some maps called Lord Lovat's Cairn); and its natural destination is the Castle (afterwards the Barracks) of Ruthven. Of course, once the "way of waggon wheels" was established, other routes were connected with it. Thus instead of following the Allt Bhran into Tromie one can either go straight north by the Allt na Dhubh Chattan (the burn of the black cats) to Inveruglas and the village of Insh; or pass a little to the east of the Allt na Cuilce and the Loch an t' Sluic to Sir George Cooper's Shooting Lodge in Glen Feshie. These, however, are offshoots of the original Minikaig. It is quite true, as Anderson states, that the shortening of the road south from Badenoch to Athole is greater if you start from Invereshie. But this has nothing to do with the identification of the original Minikaig. Anderson describes another road which starting from Kingussie proceeds through the Forest of Gaick to the water of Bruar, and which he says is higher and more dangerous than the Minikaig and not so direct. He repeats legends about soldiers being lost in the snow, and gives a date, 1 January, 1799, for one ghastly and circumstantial story of a party of sportsmen and stalkers being destroyed by lightning, the skeletons found long afterwards still grasping their guns. This is, perhaps, the tragedy referred to by Mrs. Grant of Laggan in one of her famous letters. There is of course a modern road going to Loch an t' Seilich (the loch of the willows) and further up into the forest of Gaick, and there is a modern road from Calvine up the north side of the Bruar Water to the Lodge. But there is no evidence of the use of any ancient route through Gaick. The origin of the name Minikaig is a little obscure. Dr.

Watson, of the Royal High School, Edinburgh, in a note in the *Celtic Review*, v. p. 340, says it is : mion + gag, or a little cleft, and this is accepted by Professor MacKinnon. Such authority must be taken as conclusive, but the explanation is not satisfactory from the geographical, or pedestrian, point of view. There is no "little cleft" about it. The pass is along the open side of a hill, and its characteristic feature is the extraordinary distance for which it preserves a level. There is also a Gaelic word, min, which means smooth or level. It must be kept in view, however, that all this part of the Grampian range has always been known, and is still known, as Monadh Miongaig, or, as some old maps say, the Mountains of Menegegg. The district is, of course, traversed by a profound cleft passing through the line of the two lochs above Loch Seilich.

Another field of interest open to mountaineers is what may be called the literary antiquities of the subject. Aberdeen is the home and breeding-ground of great antiquaries, and so it is not surprising to find that the Macfarlane Geographical Collections (a series of manuscripts in the Advocates' Library) were in 1907 edited for the Scottish History Society by a distinguished Aberdonian, the late Sir Arthur Mitchell, who himself had probably the largest and most complete library of topographical works relating to Scotland. The mere catalogue of these occupies a substantial volume. These collections of Macfarlane consist partly of the descriptions made by various hands for the use of Sir Robert Sibbald, and partly of descriptions made by the great Timothy Pont, Sir Robert Gordon of Straloch, his son James Gordon, the parson of Rothiemay, Sir John Scot of Scotstarvet, David Buchanan, and others. In the second volume of Mitchell's printed edition occurs a paper in James Gordon's handwriting called "Noates and observations of dyvers parts of the Hielands and Isles of Scotland." Some of these were probably the work of Pont, but Gordon says that in June, 1644, he got at Aberdeen from Campbell of Glenurchay himself "the Noats of distances of places about the head of Loch Tay, Loch Erin

(Earn), L. Dochart, Glen Urchay, etc." Gordon did not slavishly accept the authority of the great Pont, for with regard to the Notes on Badenoch, he says:—"This is wryten out of Mr. Timothies Papers, and in it thur manie things false." The distances given are of great interest, being mostly of course under-statements according to modern imperial measure. Thus:—"Loch Tay 10 myl the nearest way betwixt Balloch and the Kirk of Kylvyn." Taymouth always appears as Balloch in these papers, and Inchaddin is supposed to be Kenmore.

The true distance from Kenmore to Killin by either side of the loch is not less than 15 miles. The length of the old Scottish mile is generally stated at 1,984 yards, much the same as the knot or nautical mile, therefore about $\frac{9}{8}$ of the statute mile. Ten Scotch miles would therefore be about 11.25 statute miles. "Castell Cheul-Cheurn and Finlarig, 26 myl, the way is up Dochart river to the Kirk of Strafillen." Finlarig is at Bridge of Lochay, and the Castle referred to is Kilchurn on Loch Awe. The modern pedestrian would call this more than 30 miles. "Crowachan Bain the hiest hill in all Lorne or the neighbouring countreyis and Binnevis in Lochabir 24 myl." Here again, even the the black crow would have a much longer flight. "St. Johnstoun (i.e. Perth) and Ballach at the foot of Loch Tay are distant 26 myl, if you go be Dunkeld and follow the river, but be the nearest way throw Glen Almond it is only 18." Shade of Timothy Pont! Railways and mainroads are no doubt apt to distract the mind from the shorter routes, although the adventurous motor car has done something to restore a proper perspective. It is true the road by Amulree and Glen Almond is much shorter than by Aberfeldy and Dunkeld, but the distances given are only about 70% of the true figures.

Again, we have a full and detailed description of the "Coryes and Sheels in Glen Lyon," a magnificent glen too little visited. One of the earliest references to Glen Lyon in Celtic literature is "Fingal built 12 castles in the crooked glen of rough stones;" and the ruins of these castles remain to this day. "On the southsyd, first is Aldagob, 3 myl

long, just agains Sestell (Chesthill); it falleth out of Bennen, and Bhellach-nacht a cory upon the north syd of Bin Lawers." This is the beautiful glen which may be approached by a zigzag path from Fearnan on Loch Tay; it is part of the sheep farm of Borland, and gives a fine waterfall almost opposite Chesthill. Almost every point in Lyon is of interest. There is Roro, or Ruaru, formerly occupied by the Macgregors, from which one Macgregor was hunted by the Campbells with black bloodhounds as far as the Dubh Eas, the waterfall above the Inn at Lawers. There is Balnahannaid, where a mill was built by St. Eonan "of the ruddy cheeks," who also built the church at Balgie, which in these papers appears as "Balna-heglis" with the Kirk "of Bremond." This "heglis" is of course the same as Eccles, or ecclesia. The list of "Sheels or Sheellings" gives an interesting glimpse of the economic conditions in the 17th century. In many parts of the Highlands there was a regular summer migration to the Sheallings, as to the Sennes or mountain pastures in Switzerland. Such was Killin in Glen Fechlin above Foyers; and such the great shealing called Finglen, or Finnalairbeg, upon the Corrie Cheataich (or Misty Corrie) in the ancient forest of Binteaskernich or Bentaskerly on the South of Loch Lyon. It is related of an old woman in Glen Lyon, who died only in 1840, that, in referring with rapture to her early visits to this Shealling, she would say: "Finglen of my heart, where there would be no Sunday!" a very natural protest against the old fetish of the Scottish Sabbath, an incubus on social health and morality equally condemned by reason and scripture.

Of equal interest are the occasional lists of forests, e.g., "Maim Laerne is the King's forrest very riche in deer, lying upon Brae Urchay, Brae Lyon and Brae Lochy 10 myl of lenth." Now, this name is confined to the upper part of Glen Lochay. Elsewhere in an account of the Dulnan Water this passage occurs: "From Duthell eastwards there is a great forrest belonging to His Majesty called the Leanach which formerly was well replenished with deer and roe, but much neglected

by reason they pasture much cattell there which brings in money to the Laird of Calder who is Forrester!" Wicked Forester! Here and there one is struck by the breadth of view of these early geographers. What could be better than this definition of Ben More? "Bin Moir whose mouth and skirts distinguisheth Glen Dochart from the head of Forth and Brae Glen Fallacht." Dochart is Tay water, Balquidder is Forth water, and Falloch is Clyde water. Here and there also, there is a flash of enthusiasm beyond the mere geographer. Thus of Loch Maree, known as "the fresh Loch Ewe," "Dochart, Brochaig, and Garriff fall in Loch Ew, by sum it is called Loch Mulrui, this fair loch is reported never to freeze, it is compassed about with many fair and tall woods as any in all the west of Scotland, in sum parts with hollye, in sum places with fair and beautiful fyrrs of 60, 70, 80 foot of good and serviceable timmer for masts and raes, in other places ar great plentie of excellent great oakes, whair may be sawin out planks 4 sumtymes 5 foot broad. All thir bounds is compass'd and hemd in with many hills but thois beautifull to look on thair skirts being all adorned with wood even to the brink of the loch for the most part." This should encourage the afforestation people! The name Mulrui is supposed to come from St. Maelrubha, who was patron of the chapel to the Virgin on the Eilean Maree in the lower part of the loch. The fact that the head of Loch Maree is known as Kinlochewe suggests that Loch Ewe was the oldest name of the loch; indeed it is said that the salt Loch Ewe at one time formed part of the same loch. The upper part of the loch may then have been called after St. Maelrubha, who died in Applecross about 722, and in modern times this may have been unconsciously adapted to Maree.

Occasionally in these ancient manuscripts one meets direct statements as to the meaning of place names. Thus in the paper on Koryes in Rennach (Corries in Rannoch), we read, "North-west from the head of Loch Treyig (Treig) at the head of Glen Evisch is the great moss of Monyredy, or moss of armour, so cald be-

cause sumtime the Earle of Mar, his men flying from Maconeil did throw away thair armour in this moss. This Monyredy betwin Nevish water and the water of Rha being four myle long and falleth in Loch Treyig. This water of Rha cumeth out of Kory Rha." The name of Monyredy has disappeared from the map, but the place is well-known, not far east from the Pass of Steall by which one enters the head of Glen Nevis. The water mentioned comes down from the Stob Coire Easan on the north. A similar historical origin of a place name occurs in the Bealach Spainnteach in Glen Shiel, where the wretched Spanish expedition of 1719 disappeared.

Not less interesting are the legends which are recorded by these geographers. In the undated account of Strathspay, the anonymous author says of Glen More—"The people of this parish much neglect labouring, being addicted to the wood, which leaves them poor. There is much talking of a spirit called Lyerg that frequents the Glen More. He appears with a red hand in the habit of a souldier and challenges men to fight with him, as lately in '69, he fought with three brothers one after another, who immediately dyed thereafter." There is reason to believe that this spirit is not dead. At all events, only four or five years ago, a learned Professor, who was crossing Beinn Muic Dhuie alone, was pursued all day by an invisible foe whose step on the granite he constantly heard behind him. Again, speaking of the Clanphadrick Grants of Tullochgorum and Inverellon, the same writer says: "In old there frequented this family a spirit called Meg Mulloch. It appeared like a little Boy, and in dark night would hold a candle before the good-man, and show him the way home, and if the good-wife would not come to bed, it would cast her in beyond him."

I must now close these Notes by expressing the hope that the Cairngorm Club has a long and vigorous future before it.

CLIMBS IN GLEN CLOVA AND GLEN DOLL.

BY HOWARD G. DRUMMOND.

To discover a district teeming with virgin climbs within a short distance of one's native city is a blessing undreamt of by the mountaineer of to-day, when almost every rock face of comparatively easy access has been at least tested by his brethren of the mountain and the crag. Many on high level tramps from Braemar to Clova must have gazed on the frowning precipices of Craig Rennet and Craig Maud, many must have peered from the shores of Loch Brandy across the sunlit valley into the dark recesses of the Winter Corrie of Driesh, but none seem to have craved the stern joy of an assault on their steep ramparts. Possibly they lacked time, or had read Mr. Duncan's article on the Clova Hills (C.C.J. vol. III, page 1) and concluded that the climbs afforded by these faces were either mere scrambles or impossible.

On New Year's day, 1910, two strangers to the Glen, J. A. Parker and myself (H. Alexander, Jun., the originator of the idea unfortunately having been recalled to Aberdeen) were able to record a climb on the east face of Craig Rennet, and on 2nd January, with J. Bruce Miller, an ascent of the west face of Winter Corrie, Driesh. These expeditions have been recorded by Parker in an article in the Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, (vol. xi., page 29). I will therefore, for the benefit of those to whom that paper is not available, give a short account of these climbs, partially extracted with his kind permission from that article, and confine myself more particularly to our adventures of 3rd January, 1911, when we barley escaped defeat in an attack on the north-eastern face of Craig Maud. A sharp frost held the ground underfoot as we passed through the pine wood round Glen Doll lodge in the early winter morning of New Year's day 1910, tramping steadily towards Craig Rennet, which fills the angle between

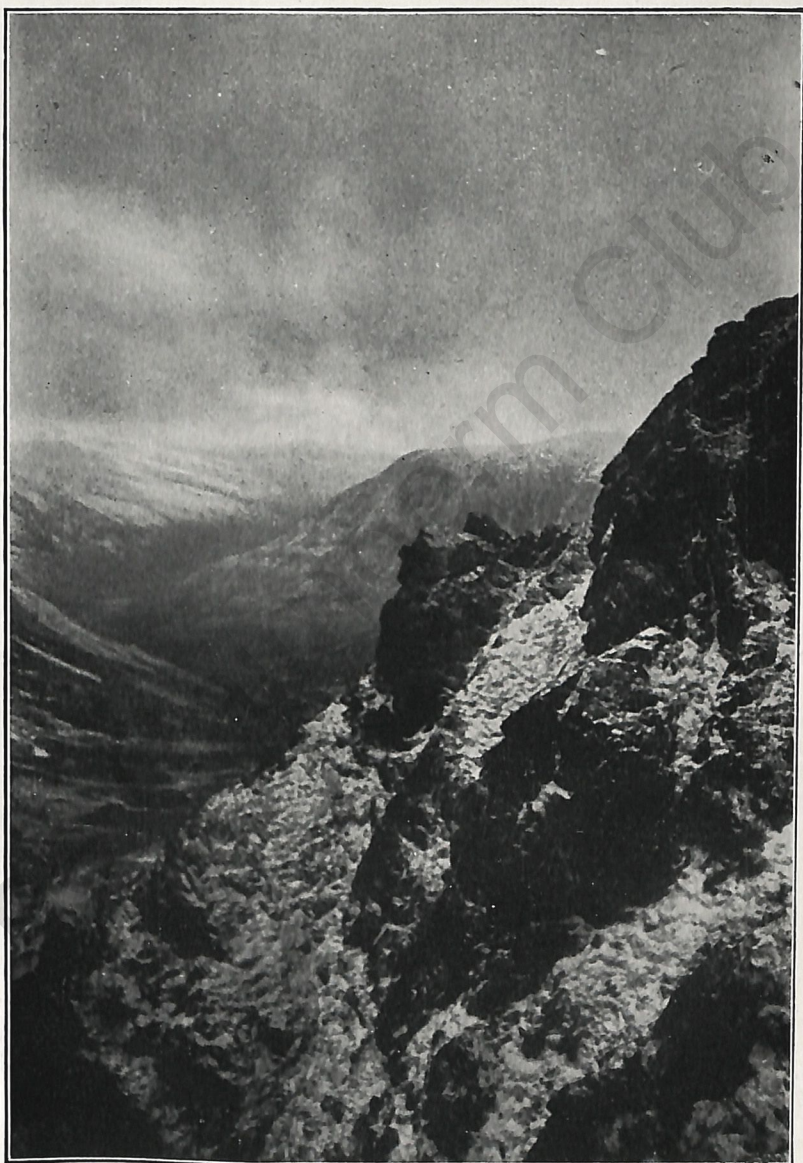


Photo by

H. G. Drummond.

THE PINNACLE RIDGE, CRAIG MAUD AND GLEN DOLL.

Glen Doll and the Glen of the Fee burn, occupying a corresponding position in Glen Doll to the Devil's Point in Glen Dee.

The summit was shrouded in mist, and we could see little of what was before us, but were much struck by the appearance of the buttress of Driesh, called the Scorrie, which stands at the meeting of Glen Doll and Glen Clova, and determined to inspect it next day.

"Looked at from the east in the half light of a dull winter day, the east face of Craig Rennet appeared of unrelieved steepness with practically no snow on it. On closer inspection a very shallow and ill-defined gully was seen to run up the east face for about two-thirds of the total height, and then to terminate. The route which we took struck the rocks at their lowest point to the left of the gully, and kept pretty close to the latter all the way up. The gully was entered about half way up, but was immediately left by an easy traverse to the left on to the rocks, which from this point assumed the character of an ill-defined ridge. Near the top the face became more broken up, and the angle easing off considerably, no further difficulty was encountered."

The height of our climb would be about 700 feet, the average gradient 55° , and the time occupied two hours. My strongest personal recollection of this climb, as well as of the others recorded in the district, is of a succession of steep chimneys up which we squirmed, to find ourselves emerging on sloping ledges of frozen turf and ice, which afforded little or no hold to pull ourselves out by, and it was only with difficulty that we resisted the inclination to slide down faster than we had wormed up. All the climbs would probably be much easier in summer than in winter. Leaving the summit of Craig Rennet (2,443 feet) we made through the mist for Jock's Road crossing en route Craig Maud, the buttresses and gullies of which impressed us greatly.

Joined by Bruce Miller, the early morning of the next day found us at the base of the Scorrie, but the sight of the dark precipices of Winter Corrie changed our purpose, and we advanced to their inspection.

“Looked at from the entrance to the corrie, the rocks of the west face were seen to be divided vertically at their highest point by a conspicuous gully, which extended about half of the total height of the face. The floor of the gully was, however, cut off from the screes by a band of vertical rock, extending round the top of the screes, over which, in line with the gully, poured a small waterfall.”

We commenced our climb a short distance to the left of the waterfall, and after some exciting experiences, which included a watery passage of the fall, and an avalanche of ice fragments from above, we reached a grass saddle at the base of the main gully. The traverse into its right hand upper branch over bulging masses of ice involved some tricky step cutting, but above that we were able to kick steps.

“Half way up, however, we were stopped by a pitch of rock covered with soft snow up which the leader could not go unaided. Had the top portion of the chimney looked feasible we would possibly have surmounted this pitch, but as it consisted of an overhanging pitch garnished with ice beneath, and a number of large and possibly loose blocks overhead, we did not try; the fact that there was not much daylight left for experiments being a deciding factor in our councils. We therefore retraced our steps to the head of the big gully, and as soon as possible traversed out to the north across a steep heather slope, climbed up a stiffish heather and rock corner, on to more heather, and then under a projecting nose of rock by a narrow ledge. This took us to the foot of a steep chimney of frozen scree, a climb up which placed us on the top of the steep face of the hill at a point some little height above the pinnacle whose chimney had beaten us.”

This most interesting climb occupied between four and five hours, and whetted our appetite for an attack on Craig Maud. However, beyond a flying visit over the Capel and Doll tourist route in September, it was not till January, 1911, that we were able to return to the attack. On New Year's eve Parker and I were again at Clova

under the kindly wing of Mrs. Birse. The somewhat lengthy drive of the previous year from Kirriemuir had been very much shortened by the hotel motor, a new importation, and we determined, that if necessary, we would use it to reduce our walking, and give us longer daylight. New Year's day was bright and sunny, but alas! for our hopes of a rock climb, a furious gale was blowing, which, as we proceeded up the Glen increased to such violence that it would have been impossible to keep one's balance on any steep or exposed place:—

“Sunrays leaning on our northern hills and lighting
Wild cloud-mountains that drag the hills along.”

The amount of ice everywhere was particularly noticeable, and greatly in excess of what we had experienced the previous year; any gully climbing would have required a great deal of time and constant step-cutting.

From the valley opposite Craig Maud we made a minute examination of our peak through the glasses. The north-eastern face, as will be seen by the accompanying illustration, consists of several almost perpendicular faces of rock joined by steep slopes of snow-coated turf. The direct ascent of these faces would probably be possible under good conditions, but covered as the rocks were with sheets of ice, this was manifestly out of the question. Two noticeable gullies, however, flanked this main face, either of which appeared feasible for a considerable portion of the ascent, after which a traverse could be made on to the face. Two outstanding pinnacles could be seen on the sky line to the right of the highest point, and we felt that, if they were once gained, the worst difficulty was over. Fain would we have climbed in the bright sunshine, but it was impossible, so we contented ourselves with a long hill walk. Jock's Road surmounted, we directed our steps towards the summit of Tom Buidhe (3,140 feet). The frozen bog made good going, but sometimes a backward slide was unavoidable. Then we visited the Caenlochan Glen, and as we peered into its depths from the shelter on the point to the north of Finalty Hill, we could feel the

mountain shaking with the mighty wind. The run before it to the top of Mayar (3,043 feet) was a mere bagatelle. On the lee side of the summit we rested and fed, wondering if it were possible that the wind was still rising. We rose from our shelter and proceeded into the open, to fling ourselves immediately flat on the ground, holding on for dear life with hands and ice axes to any projection available. The next half hour saw us doing a horizontal climb downwards, clinging to a wire fence. Such was the violence of the wind that we could scarcely breathe, and had to seek cover to restore ourselves. More sheltered ground was reached and the descent concluded by Kilbo Corrie without further incident.

In the evening Alexander and Miller arrived, and though the evening was cold and cloudy, hopes for the morrow ran high:—

“Oft ends the day of your shifting brilliant laughter
Chill as a dull face frowning on a song.”

Alas! the wind had brought snow in its train, and a blizzard reigned throughout the 2nd January. An attempt was made to reach Loch Lee, after climbing a sheltered gully at the head of Loch Brandy, but a mile or two was enough, so four small icebergs descended to the frozen shores of Loch Wharral, and thence to Clova. Parker had unwillingly to leave us and proved our Jonah. The third of January dawned bright and clear, with plenty of sun and no wind. The motor whirled us to Braedownie, and in high spirits we tramped up the Glen. Choosing the left hand gully, as being more on the face of the peak than the other, we quickly surmounted the steep lower slopes. Ahead of us, our gully led into a black rocky chasm, disappeared, and again worked its way to the summit ridge further to the left. Cutting and kicking steps we advanced till we saw into this miniature corrie, and realized that our advance was checked in that direction. Hugh pendant icicles festooned the rocks, and the gully above was solid ice. Could we traverse on to the main face, and if so could we get up it? The rope was now put on, and a tricky piece of climbing over frozen scree and ice got us out of the gully; then cutting a few

steps across two subsidiary ones, we gained a foothold immediately underneath one of the steep bands of rock, but lower down than we had originally intended to strike the face. Plenty of chimneys led upwards, but they were all very steep. However, selecting the most promising, we made an attempt. For half an hour I struggled there with freezing fingers, but ice, ice everywhere, nor anything to hold by. Sarcastic remarks kept floating up, and finally there was open mutiny. Alexander unroped, and disappeared round a corner. Excited shouts proclaimed a find, and he returned with a tale of a "through route." I commenced to descend, then to slide, but well fielded by my second man, landed safely. Our former traverse was continued, and we came on a curious break or gateway in the cliff, almost in a direct line beneath the pinnacles towering above us. Passing under this natural arch, we easily surmounted the first rocks from the back by a convenient staircase, and found ourselves on the main ridge or backbone of the mountain. A noticeable feature of the climb from this stage onward was the way in which we were perpetually forced on to this arête, thus getting sensational views to the bottom of the Glen, which seemed directly beneath us. The going was distinctly tricky, but we made good progress towards the pinnacles. Landing on an easier slope above the first steep pitch, we examined the gully which had detained us so long, and found it overhanging at the top, and that all the others appeared equally difficult. Easier rocks led us to the ridge running between the pinnacles and the summit. This ridge was extremely narrow, and we straddled across it at its lowest point immediately behind the pinnacles. The drop to the right was sheer for 700 or 800 feet, and that on the left scarcely less so.

Our final difficulty now confronted us, a large slab which shelved at a nasty angle into the big drop to the right. There appeared to be only the most minute holds on it, and the surface was covered with a coating of snow which looked as if it would enjoy sliding off. However, Miller gallantly advanced to the attack, while we

sat tight on the ridge. Having spread-eagled himself for sometime, a difficult piece of climbing left him anchored well above us on the ridge. He had however, in his struggles packed the snow on the slab well into the small holds, and it now presented a surface like a slide, so that by the time it was the poor last man's turn to negotiate it, he was fain to become cargo and be hauled up ignominiously on the rope. Our troubles were now over, and in a short time we gained the summit. As we came out on the skyline in the strong sunlight we must have been clearly visible to anyone in the valley below, and a distant halloo was borne up to us from some unseen watcher for whom we looked in vain. The difficulty of this ascent throughout was caused by the extremely adverse condition in which the previous day's blizzard had left the rocks. Under ordinary circumstances the climb should not give much trouble, consisting more of route-finding than of any actual technical difficulty. Any particularly severe pitch would that day have beaten us, and had we not found our through route we would not have succeeded in the ascent. Thanks to an early start our climb was over while the day was young.

After lunching, we again rounded Jock's Road, and struck northward towards lonely Loch Esk. The scenery all round was magnificent, the sun shining on the white snow carpet and black crags made a picture not readily forgotten on one of the finest winter days it has been my lot to spend in our Scottish mountain fastnesses. A herd of deer feeding near the dark pines at Bachnagairn added to the charm. Those weird-looking pines, like grim sentinels guarding the lonely shieling, seemed to challenge us:—"Enter these enchanted woods, you who dare." Homeward, now, the sun sinking in the raying west, and the joy of victory in our hearts.

A WEEK AT SLIGACHAN.

BY JOHN R. LEVACK.

THE Cuillins in Skye, it is well known, exercise quite a peculiar and intense fascination on those climbers who have essayed their steep cliffs and narrow ridges. The mountaineer who once sets foot and hand on those hills discovers, when he returns home, that a new and absorbing interest has been added to his life. However strenuous, however exacting, his everyday work may be, there is always at the back of his mind a memory and a longing—a memory of grand days on the rocks, and a longing to return to them.

Mr. William Garden and I had spent an active week in Glen Brittle, at the south-west side of the Cuillins, whence we had climbed eleven peaks during a week in September, 1908 (See Vol. vi., p. 88). It was quite natural, therefore, for us to return to Skye in the following September, which we did, accompanied by two non-climbing friends whom we had persuaded to accompany us by telling them of the glories of the "Isle of Mist." We arrived at Sligachan on the evening of Saturday, Sept. 11th, and naturally we were anxious for good weather. It was no joke when we looked out next morning to find Glen Sligachan a blur of driving mist and rain, and the hills shrouded to their very bases. Breakfast that morning was a gloomy meal, and reproachful looks from our friends made us squirm with discomfort at the thought of having enticed them across the sea to nothing more than a rainy wilderness. We were cheerful and optimistic, however, and said that fine weather in Skye was worth waiting for. Sure enough, by lunch time, the rain ceased and the clouds broke. The mist slowly rolled up the sides of the Red Hills, and the pinnacles of Sgurr nan Gilleann peeped at times above their billowy shroud. Then the sun came out, and we had a perfect afternoon. We set off for a preliminary walk on one of the Red Hills, Beinn Dearg

Mhor, 2389 feet. This hill is crescent-shaped, and the walk along its ridge is a thing to remember, not only for the superb views of the whole range of the Cuillins across Glen Sligachan, but of the island-studded sea and the distant hills of the mainland.

Next morning we were to begin climbing operations in earnest, and the first expedition was to be a traverse of Sgurr nan Gillean, ascending by the famous north-east ridge or "Pinnacle Route," and descending by the western ridge. Accordingly, as the morning promised well, we had an early breakfast, and shortly after nine o'clock started off across the moor towards the base of the first pinnacle of the mountain.

As we trudged across the moor, the morning mists cleared up and we had every prospect of a perfect day, in striking contrast to what Garden and I had experienced a year before when we attempted the same route in bad weather and nearly got blown off the rocks at the foot of the first pinnacle, besides being drenched to the skin. Now, however, we were in luck. Three other climbing friends accompanied us, and at 11.40 a.m. we roped at the base of the first pinnacle where it abuts on Coire a' Bhàsteir. Five on a rope means slow going, but we had all the day before us and we were in no hurry. The leader mounted rapidly up the steep rocks, and we soon reached the top of our pinnacle (2500 feet). From thence a short dip and a gentle rise took us to the top of the second pinnacle (2700 feet), and then another little dip brought us to the foot of the third pinnacle. Up to this point no serious climbing was encountered, and although we had roped, there was no real necessity for it. But now we were obviously in for something quite different. The third pinnacle rises steeply from the col between it and the second pinnacle, and it looks difficult. But the rocks are so well broken up and so firm that we found no actual difficulty in reaching the top (2900 feet), although the sense of being suspended in mid-air and of clinging to a vertical surface like a fly on a window pane is very real and impressive.

From the top of this pinnacle one cranes one's neck over the highest boulder to see what is beyond. Anyone afflicted with "nerves" or a "light head" shouldn't do it. The topmost rocks overhang, and one looks straight down to the narrow col joining this pinnacle with the fourth one, or Knight's Peak, as it is called, whilst on either side vertical precipices drop some hundreds of feet to the steep screes of Bhasteir and Riabhach Corries. The descent of this overhanging face is the one difficult bit of the Pinnacle route, and obviously a slip here would be awkward.

As we clung to the rocks on the top of our pinnacle, a long discussion took place as to the proper route down. Some of us insisted that the fringe of rocks on the Bhasteir side was the best way; others demanded those on the Riabhach side. Ultimately the leader went down the Riabhach (south) side to prospect, and found the well-known vertical holdless groove in the rocks leading down to a shallow ledge, on which standing room for himself and the next man could just be got. I was third on the rope, and while all this reconnoitring was taking place, I lay on a big slab of gabbro, securely hitched and held by the man above me, whilst I in turn had the rope hitched for the man in front, watching the rock gymnastics below, and filled with a sense of mental and physical exhilaration difficult to describe. The perfect weather, the magnificent scenery, the general sense of contentment and comfort, all combined to give a feeling only to be experienced by those who climb the Cuillins in congenial company and good weather. One by one we reached the col, the last man coming down in grand style with the help of a spare rope hitched above him.

The route now lay up the face of Knight's Peak, the rocks of which are astonishingly steep but so splendidly firm and broken as to be quite easy. The narrow ridge forming the summit (3000 feet) was soon gained, and we looked across the deep gap to the sharp peak of Sgurr nan Gillean itself towering grandly above us. The descent of the west face of Knight's Peak gave us some trouble, as

we kept too far to the south or Riabhach side, and had some exciting moments, clinging to vertical slabby rocks with insufficient holds. But at last we got to the col, and stood facing the wall-like rocks which constitute the commencement of the climb on the Sgurr itself.

A short breathing space was taken to get rid of some of the excitement developed in the descent of Knight's Peak, then up we went and eventually found ourselves just under the western ridge of the mountain, a few yards from the summit (3167 feet). At this point there is a broad scree-ledge below the huge boulders that form the ridge leading to the summit, and between two of those boulders is a gap into which one climbs, and as "one's head is thrust over the edge suddenly there bursts into view, outlined against a background of delicately tinted ocean, such a scene of wonderful mountain landscape as occupies one's senses to the exclusion of all else." The same writer says, "Two mountain scenes stand out far above all others in my memory—one, my first impression of the Matterhorn, and the other this view of the Cuillin."

It is impossible to describe the sensations we experienced as we clambered over the last rocks of the ridge on to the gigantic slab which forms the peak of Sgurr nan Gillean. We crowded together—there is not much standing room—and gazed over the wonderful sea of peaks and ridges, then back across the moor far below to Sligachan and to the sea and its islands beyond. Everything was visible, and even the outer Hebrides were clear and distinct, set in a shimmering sea gilded by the rays of the setting sun. But we could not linger as it was nearly five o'clock, and it was essential to be clear of the mountain before it was dark.

The descent by the western ridge is easy for some distance, but ultimately a point is reached where the ridge suddenly narrows to the dimensions of a stone dyke, a most unstable-looking structure with a sheer drop on either side of about a hundred feet. To add to the difficulties of the place, a pillar of gabbro is perched end up on the middle of the narrowest part. This rock is known as the

“policeman,” and he bulges on both sides, effectually barring the way. He stands splendidly firm, however, and, by grasping his neck, it is possible to swing one’s feet round his right side till foot-hold is gained beyond him.

Those of us who were short of stature found it easier to climb right up and over him, and I found that it was perfectly comfortable and safe to lie prone on his flat top, whilst the next man negotiated the narrow dyke-top to his base. Here again, anyone with a tendency to “light head” should not try this experiment, but, if he can manage it, it will cure him for evermore! Beyond the “policeman” the route lies down a more or less vertical but easy chimney, which lands one on the screes at the foot of the cliffs. Here we unroped $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours after we had “tied on” at the foot of the first pinnacle, and we raced along the screes back past the foot of all the pinnacles to the point where we had started our climb. After a short rest and some sandwiches, we hurried down the rocks in the gathering twilight and on to the moor. The journey across the moor towards Sligachan was a go-as-you-please affair, as it was now too dark to see each other. Anyhow, I sat down more than once in soft boggy places, and arrived at the hotel very wet, very cool, and very well pleased with the day’s outing.

Next day (Tuesday) the non-climbing members of the party claimed us, and we had a long drive westward to Struan. The views we had of the whole Cuillin range were particularly fine. The quaint jagged outline of the peaks from Sgurr nan Gillean southwards to Sgurr nan Gobhar, peeping up across the moorland, was most impressive.

On Wednesday we set out to climb Bidein, three rock towers which form the culmination of the long ridge of Druim nan Ramh, and which stands most prominently at the head of Coire na Creiche. The actual summit of Bidein, the central and highest peak (2860 feet) is, with the exception of the Inaccessible Pinnacle of Sgurr Dearg, the most difficult to scale of all the Cuillins.

Reaching Coire na Creiche by Bealach a Mhaim, we kept along the base of Bruach na Frithe and entered Coire

Mhadaidh. Ascending by a stone shoot there, we reached the foot of the north Bidein, where we roped. A short climb took us to the summit of this peak, and, craning our necks over the perpendicular drop to the col between us and the central peak, we realised the nature of the main climb. Now, too, the mist came down, the only time it did come down during the whole week, and the rocks got wet and dripping. The face of the central peak looked more or less impossible, but the pressing problem for us was how to get down to the col. This took more than a little care, and the outstanding features of the descent were loose stones and narrow ledges on a more or less vertical face. At the col, things looked worse, the rocks of the central peak rising into the mist, wet, slabby, and forbidding, so we decided to give up the climb. A sporting descent by the gully leading from the col towards Coire na Creiche took us to the base of the rocks and out of the mist.

Skirting the central and south Bideins, we reached Bealach na Glai Moire and descended a stone shoot into Coire an Uaigneis and so towards Coruisk. All this took time, and we knew we were too late to go on to Loch Coruisk, so we climbed over the ridge of Druim nan Ramh into Harta Corrie.

Tea at the Bloody Stone and a long trudge home by the Sligachan path (beset that night by boulders similar in designation to their giant prototype in Harta Corrie), ended a long and interesting day.

Thursday was decreed an off day by the climbers, so the writer took a non-climbing member of the party up to Coire a' Bhasteir as far as the foot of the first pinnacle of Sgurr nan Gillean, and spent the afternoon taking photographs.

Friday was a calm and cloudless day, and four of us set off to traverse Sgurr a' Mhadaidh (3014 feet). Entering Coire na Creiche we passed the foot of Sgurr na Fheadain, climbed into Coire Tarneilear, and up to the ridge between Sgurr Thuilm and Mhadaidh. Here the rope was put on and the four peaks of Mhadaidh were traversed. At no

First Pinnacle

Second Pinnacle

Third Pinnacle

Fourth Pinnacle or
(Knight's Peak)

Sgurr nan Gillean

Western Ridge

The Gendarme



Photo by

PINNACLE RIDGE OF SGURR NAN GILLEAN, FROM BHASTEIR GORGE.

J. R. Levack.

point is the climbing difficult, but the hands are constantly employed. "Many fine situations are encountered, and when about midway between the peaks the sense of aloofness, and of being cut off on all sides, is most striking."

A descent into Tarneilear and a look at the famous "waterpipe" gully of Sgurr na Fheadain completed the enjoyment of a very fine day.

We had thus been remarkably fortunate in having been able, with the help of fine weather, to do three good climbs in five days, so we thought we deserved a lazy day on Saturday. Consequently we came down for late breakfast that morning, but the weather was finer than ever. The hills looked entrancing, and we felt that such a day was too good to waste in the vicinity of the hotel. Breakfast was scarcely begun when Garden looked at me and I at him. Simultaneously we said, "This won't do; let us go and climb Greadaidh."

A rapid scramble for sandwiches, the rope, and a rucksack, and we set off, three hours later than we should have been. But our week's training stood us in good stead, and we footed the long grind to Bealach a Mhaim, then down across Coire na Creiche, up and round the western shoulder of Sgurr Thuilm, and into Coire a' Greadaidh. A traverse of the whole ridge of Sgurr a' Greadaidh was seen to be impossible in the remaining hours of the short September day, so we decided to go straight up the west face of the mountain from the upper N.W. division of Coire Greadaidh. After surmounting the tiresome scree we reached the foot of the rocks, and roped. The ascent consisted of a climb up a 300 foot gully "which offers no difficulty to rock climbers." At the summit cairn (3197 ft.) we allowed ourselves seven minutes' rest, but these minutes were worth coming for. Not a breath of wind stirred to break the solitude, not a sound could be heard except the far-off trickle of diminutive burns deep down in the corries. The sun was so hot that we had to use our handkerchiefs under our caps to shade our faces, and I remember watching an ordinary-looking spider clambering over the stones of the

cairn. Coruisk shone like silver far below, and the outer Hebrides stood like jewels in a molten sea of gold.

But we had to hurry down, and once free of our gully and the rope, we fairly raeed down the screes till we reached a burn in the Corrie and cooled our parched tongues and burning heads.

In Coire na Creiche we had a long rest on a slab in the middle of the Allt Coir' a' Mhadaidh, but the countless hordes of midges slightly marred the otherwise perfect enjoyment of the place.

A hurried trot past Bealach a Mhaim and down the path by the Red Burn brought us to Sligachan in the dark some time after eight o'clock.

Later in the evening it was reported that an unusual display of Aurora Borealis was in evidence, and the majority of the hotel guests turned out to see it, but I was tired and desperately sleepy, so I went to bed. Not so Garden, who brought out his bag-pipes and played as he marched to and fro between the hotel door and the bridge over Sligachan burn.

My last recollections that night were of feelings of intense satisfaction and lazy comfort as I listened drowsily to the seductive wail of "Over the Sea to Skye," and unconsciously dropped into the dreamless sleep of the tired climber.



THE COLORADO ROCKIES : THE YANKEE DOODLE LAKE AND THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE.

THE COLORADO ROCKIES.

BY ROBERT ANDERSON.

The Rocky Mountains comprise a series of great mountainous ranges running across the western portion of North America and constituting the "backbone" of the Continent. A continuation of the Cordilleras of Mexico, they stretch from New Mexico to Alaska, traversing a number of the Western States and the western and north-western provinces of Canada. Since the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian Rockies have come to be fairly well known, owing to the numerous descriptions by travellers of the magnificent mountain scenery through which the line passes. So extensive, indeed, is what may be called the "reading" acquaintance with the Canadian Rockies that it is occasionally accompanied by the belief that the Rocky Mountains exist wholly and solely in the Dominion. This notion, of course, is entirely erroneous. There is a very large and very grand section of the Rocky Mountains in the United States, particularly in Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana; and though Mr. James Outram, in his "In the Heart of the Canadian Rockies" (See *C.C.J.*, v., 146-8), claims superiority for the section in the Dominion as "more Alpine in its vast areas of glacier and striking grandeur of pinnacle and precipice," he has to concede that the highest individual peaks and the greatest mean elevation are found south of the Canadian border-line.

The Colorado Rockies extend across the State of that name from north to south for a distance of about 280 miles. The state itself is a very elevated tableland, lying between 5000 and 6000 ft. above sea-level, and it is not surprising therefore that mountains rising from this plateau should attain heights that, nominally, are stupendous. There are no fewer than 40 peaks, for instance, upwards of 14,000 ft. high, and a hundred between that height and 13,000 ft., while many summits range from

11,000 to 13,000 ft. Even allowing for the "mile high" base on which they stand, mountains of these elevations are necessarily, by their very height alone if by nothing else, grand and imposing. In the main, however, these mountains are grand rather than picturesque. Sometimes their lower sides are thickly wooded, generally with varieties of pine and spruce, and thus have a scenic attractiveness, but on the upper heights the wood becomes thin and scanty, and above the timber line (somewhere about 10,000 ft.) barren rock and broken crags (mostly granitic) are the prevailing feature. In other places, however, trees, shrubs, and foliage will be entirely absent, and the mountains will be wholly rock, possibly with a covering of detritus, or with shoulders boldly thrown out consisting of stones and debris. The name of "Rockies" indeed, as a writer has put it, is exceedingly appropriate, "for on these mountains and their intervening plateaus naked rocks are developed to an extent rarely equalled elsewhere in the world. . . . Enormous crags and bold peaks of bare rocks mostly compose the mountains, while the streams flow at the bases of towering precipices in deep chasms and canyons filled with broken rocks."

The barrenness of this mountain region is attributable to the great elevation and the extreme aridity, and these factors also cause much disintegration of the rock material. Excessive denudation is likewise produced by storms; and Mr. Enos A. Mills, in an interesting work on "Wild Life on the Rockies," furnishes the following striking account of the denudation process—"One of the most remarkable things connected with this strange locality is that its impressive landscapes may be overturned or blotted out, or new scenes may be brought forth, in a day. The mountains do not stand a storm well. A hard rain will dissolve ridges, lay bare new strata, undermine and overturn cliffs. It seems almost a land of enchantment, where old landmarks may disappear in a single storm, or an impressive landscape come forth in a night. Here the god of erosion works incessantly and rapidly, dissecting the earth and the rocks. During a single storm a hilltop

may dissolve, a mountain side be fluted with slides, a grove be overturned and swept away by an avalanche, or a lake be buried for ever. This rapid erosion of slopes and summits causes many changes and much upbuilding upon their bases. Gulches are filled, water-courses invaded, rivers bent far to one side, and groves slowly buried alive." One result of the denudation that goes on is that the rock in some places has been "weathered" into strange and fantastic shapes, noticeable specimens of curious formations thus produced being observable in the "The Garden of the Gods" at the foot of Pike's Peak. All is not barrenness or denudation, however, for within the mountain ranges are many exquisite valleys, or "parks" as they are called, with lakes and streams, wooded glens, and picturesque canyons or ravines. These parks are largely resorted to by sportsmen as well as by people seeking rest or recuperation. Although the facetious Mr. Dooley says he has "always thought iv th' beasts iv th' forest prowlin' around an' takin' a leg off a man that'd been sint to Colorado f'r his lungs," the only dangerous animals to be encountered are (occasionally) bears and mountain lions; and according to Mr. Mills, they are not particularly ferocious, but are apt rather to be scared at the sight of man.

Very fine views of the Rocky Mountains are obtainable from Denver, the foothills being only twelve to twenty miles distant. The range is visible from the steps in front of the State Capitol, situated on a slope above the business portion of the city. On one of these steps you may read "The top of this step is one mile above sea level"; and it is perhaps as well to bear that in mind in looking over to the mountains. A much better view, however, is to be had from the crest of the Cheesman Park, higher up the hill, with a clear prospect above the intervening houses. Here a long stretch of the range is spread out—something like 170 miles—extending from beyond Long's Peak, a shapely mountain of pyramidal form in the north, to Pike's Peak in the south—a huge rounded mass with bulky sides, long believed to be the monarch of the Colorado Rockies (14,147 feet high), but now deposed, Long's Peak even

being higher. Between these two is a veritable "sea of mountains" of varying shapes, the contours and skylines greatly diversified. In a recent visit to Denver, I had many an opportunity of looking at this magnificent panorama of mountains, and seeing it under various aspects—in brilliant sunshine, with a sky of Italian blue overhead, or shrouded in lowering clouds pierced by vivid lightning flashes; or again, when slowly emerging from a pall of mist, or when coated with snow, with every peak and ridge and corrie thrown up in the bright, clear frosty air. And always, and in whatever aspect, was the view superb and entrancing, especially when the mountains were

Bathed in the tenderest purple of distance,
Tinted and shadowed by pencils of air.

To be fully appreciated, however, mountains have to be seen close at hand. Unfortunately, my opportunities of inspecting the Colorado Rockies from the inside, so to speak, were limited to the crossing of some the ranges by the railways that now penetrate their recesses. Marvels of engineering are these mountain railroads, and many are the striking pictures of scenery that are revealed by their aid. One in particular, the Denver, North-Western and Pacific Railway, claims special attention because of the altitude to which it ascends and the numerous loops and zig-zags by which it makes the ascent. It is designed to connect Denver with Salt Lake City by a new and shorter route, but it is being built in stages, and for the present the terminus is at Steamboat Springs, 214 miles from Denver. Striking across the plains, the railroad line, passing through numerous tunnels, finds its way within the mountains, steadily ascending as it proceeds, opening up to the view of those travelling by it a remarkable diversity of scenery, all of it highly attractive, and some of it even awe-inspiring. I may repeat a description of the route in general terms which I have already given elsewhere—

"There is a constant succession of mountainous slopes, some of them sparsely clothed with slender pines, others bare and rugged, huge aggregations of detritus. Streams

flow far down below, dashing their way through deep and rocky defiles. The wooded slopes give way occasionally to precipitous cliffs. Far-off peaks come into sight, and at times a glimpse is obtained of a spreading 'park' or valley encircled by mountains. One of these smiling valleys, Boulder Park is reached at Tolland; and here begins one of the principal of the many engineering feats that mark this railroad—the ascent to what is known as the Continental Divide. The train climbs to the summit of the range by a series of loops, one above the other, three railroad tracks being plainly discernible. A lake called Yankee Doodle Lake is completely encircled by a band of steels rails, and, after passing it, the summit of the Divide at Corona is gained by a loop nearly five miles long. This final climb takes one high above the timber line, up, indeed, to heights that nearly make one giddy as one looks down the almost precipitous slopes that descend from the railroad track. A particular spot here bears the significant title of the Devil's Slide, and near it may be seen the old stage-road across the range at Rollins Pass; it is easy, after seeing it, to realise the dangers of the stage routes and the skill and daring of the drivers. Corona is 11,660 feet above sea level, and is the highest point reached by any standard-gauge railroad."

Several noble mountains are skirted by the railroad, including James' Peak (14,242 ft.) and the Arapahoes (13,520 ft.); and the line winds its way through two canyons—Byers Canyon and Gore Canyon—in each of which a rushing, dashing mountain stream makes a circuitous route for itself through massive walls of rock on either side.

A journey to the San Luis Valley, in the south of the State—near the borders of New Mexico in fact, and no very great distance (as distances are reckoned in America) from the Rio Grande—involved the crossing of the Sangre de Cristo range of mountains by La Veta Pass, a height of 9242 feet being attained. The weather changed suddenly two days before I set out (it was towards the end of October), a very decided fall in the temperature being

accompanied by a fall of snow even in Denver, while the mountains seen from the city were thickly coated. Here, as elsewhere, mountains become more beautiful than ever when draped in snow; but the crossing of them then by train is not always—as an American would put it—“a practical proposition.” We succeeded however, keeping fairly well up to time too, and I had the pleasure of witnessing the gradual dawn of day in these stupendous heights. Though occupying a berth in a sleeping-car (I travelled over-night), I wakened very early and got too much interested in my novel surroundings to think of sleeping again. The train was labouring through a succession of hills, thinly timbered and covered with snow, these hills being backed by high mountain tops. Crossing a trestle-bridge, one looked down into a deep ravine; anon, we would be toiling up a steep gradient along a track cut in the mountain-side. Gently the morning light began to steal over the scene, irradiating what had formerly been cold and bleak and repellent. Soft saffron hues touched the sky, and then a delicate pink flush suffused the snow-clad mountain-sides. Inexpressibly beautiful was the indication thus afforded that the sun had risen.

I left the train at Blanca, a little town at the foot of the Sierra Blanca (or White Mountain). This mountain is on the north side of the San Luis Valley, an extensive plateau, about 100 miles long from north to south, and 75 miles across from east to west. The mountain is a magnificent one, the highest in Colorado. It attains a height of 14,463 feet, but the effect of such a height is lost by the fact that the San Luis Valley has an altitude of from 7500 to 8000 feet. Still, a height of over 6000 feet from its nominal base makes a very considerable showing, which is greatly augmented by the circumstance that the Sierra Blanca stands by itself and is not part of a range. Height and isolation are by no means the sole or even the principal features of the Sierra Blanca, however. They give it majesty and grandeur, it is true, but the mountain has a massiveness and a beauty all its own. The friend with whom I was travelling, who has a wide



TUNNEL ON THE ROCKIES.



GORE CANYON.

knowledge of the State, declares it the most lovely mountain in Colorado, and having seen something of the Colorado mountains myself, I am disposed to concur in his opinion. It consists of half-a-dozen peaks linked together by ridges and projecting buttresses, while a seventh peak to the east rises somewhat independently and detached from the others. The charm of the mountain lies in its graceful proportions—(I am speaking of it, of course, as seen from a distance)—in the sharp lines of its slopes and buttresses, which were in all likelihood accentuated by the Sierra being completely enshrouded in snow. Many a view had we of this majestic mountain as we drove up and down the valley, but my most vivid recollection is of the colours thrown out around it during a brilliant sunset. Behind the summits of the peaks there stretched what appeared a lake of light green colour surrounded by pale gold. The shade of the gold deepened, overspreading the lake, and becoming ultimately transmuted into a rich copper tint. Gradually the sun sank, the colours vanished, and the Sierra stood out white and cold.

The San Luis Valley, by the way, is almost completely enclosed by high mountain ranges. Circumstances rendered us more familiar with the Culebra range, running along the east side of the valley. This range is one of very considerable length, presenting nearly every variety of mountain form—sharp peaks and rounded domes, cones and haystacks, precipitous cliffs, and corries and ridges in abundance; and, like the Sierra Blanca, it is never the same—you perceive some new feature every time you look at it, or the altered light will throw up something in a different aspect or different proportion. The principal summit is Culebra Peak (14,200 ft.), also higher than Pike's Peak. It bears—at a distance—a slight resemblance to Cairngorm as seen from Aviemore, with the ridge sloping upwards, the precipices to the west, and the crest along to the Lurcher's Rock; but the similarity is perhaps fanciful—it became greatly modified the nearer one approached the Peak.

Automobilism gives promise of leading to a better knowledge and increased appreciation of mountains and mountain scenery. Everybody who is anybody in America has his automobile—he does not call it a motor-car!—and in the mountainous region of Colorado the towns are vying with each other in laying out “sky-line drives”—drives along the ridges of lower hills from which views are to be had of the higher mountains on the sky-line. I had a delightful automobile drive from Colorado Springs to Canon City along a road skirting the Rocky Mountains—a road which had been newly widened and improved by convict labour, the State Penitentiary being located at Canon City. Both Canon City and Penrose—the latter as yet a city in embryo, awaiting development by the taking up of adjoining land as the outcome of a large irrigation scheme—have their sky-line drives, but Canon City has just “gone one better.” It has constructed a ten-mile drive to the summit of the towering cliffs, about 2000 feet high, which constitute the Royal Gorge of the Arkansas River. Not the least delightful of my experiences in the Colorado Rockies was to be driven in an automobile one forenoon to the top of the Royal Gorge, and then to ride through the gorge in the afternoon on a train running along so narrow a roadbed between the cliffs and the river channel that at one point it has to be carried over the latter by a rather celebrated hanging bridge.

SLIOCH.

It was Sunday. When I came down to breakfast, I found, standing businesslike at the door, two ladies who had arrived the previous evening. They had asked for a guide to take them up Slioch and had been promised the "boots," a lad of sixteen or thereby. After a long interval he appeared. The reason of the delay was obvious:—he had changed into his Sunday clothes and polite boots for the important occasion. He had been up Slioch once, he told me. The cavalcade set off, the guide laden with lunches, hairpins, and various odd wraps, including the feminine gender of sweaters, whatever it may be.

After breakfast my sister and I agreed to start in pursuit. We avoided the long approach to the hill by bicycling down the road almost as far as Loch Maree, leaving the bicycles in the heather and fording the river. It is so refreshing to get one's feet wet early. We saw the guide leading the ladies up the face of the steep direct ascent of Meall Each, the southmost knob of Slioch. At times it appeared to be necessary to go on all fours. We preferred gentler methods and skirted round the knob. On reaching the top of it, we found the two ladies solemnly taking lunch. No smiles could be got out of them. The trouble was that the guide had proudly announced that they were now on the summit of Slioch, while a glance at the map had shown the ladies that they were not on the summit, and, what was worse, that the route to the top, marked on their map, did not go over Meall Each. The guide had been rejected in disgrace and was munching a melancholy meal alone among some rocks. There was nothing for it but to go back to the Hotel baffled.

We invited the disconsolate party to join us and go to the top, but they protested that the ridge joining Meall Each to the main hill was difficult and dangerous

at one part. I asked the guide about the awesome part where apparently a few rocks projected. His answer, "They would pe sayin' that the stones pe ferry pad," did not reassure the ladies. After some persuasion, the whole company set off along the ridge. It was broad and grassy. The finding of some dwarf cornel gave fresh heart to the dispirited ones. Then came the negotiating of the rocks, which was a matter of only a few anxious minutes followed by exultation. A long slow pull over soft grass brought us to the top. In the general hilarity the guide was forgiven.

For two minutes we admired the view. Then down came the mist and blotted out everything. The ladies donned their extra garments, and, horror of horrors, up went an umbrella! Proud Slioch hung his head in shame. At least I think so, but the mist was very thick.

By the aid of a compass we made the best of our way down. There was much consternation when we came upon the top of some rocks which lost themselves beneath in mist. A little caution and some slight encouragement got the party past this obstacle. A rough wet tramp, enlivened by the collapse of a lady who had stood upon a frog, brought us to the bridge over the Fhasaigh Burn, where we at last got beneath the mist. At this stage the guide needed a little brandy by way of encouragement. "It would haf peen the duntin' down the hill as did it," he explained. On his recovery my sister and I made for our bicycles over the river, while the others trudged home on foot.

At dinner we reassembled, the visitors resplendent in borrowed garments, and the day's outing was reviewed under the genial influence of a bottle of champagne.

M.

LOST IN THE MIST ON THE CAIRNGORMS.

(A MID-VICTORIAN EXPERIENCE).

BY GEORGE G. CAMERON.

IN the *Journal* for January last the article on Glen Tilt recalls personal experiences of a date much nearer our own day than the forties of last century. The present writer had his day in Glen Tilt when he had to wade the Tarff, but was spared an encounter with the Duke of Atholl. Some years after, a young friend from Glasgow arrived in Aberdeen on a cycling tour. This was in the early days of cycling, before the safety machine saw the light. My friend was over 6 feet in height, and when mounted on the huge bicycle then in use, he attracted the attention of the people wherever he appeared. His programme included a ride up the valley of the Dee to Braemar, and thence through Glen Tilt to Blair Atholl. He carried his cycle over Glen Tilt, and waded the Tarff with the clumsy machine on his back. Since the date of that exploit, I have not felt disposed to say much about having crossed Glen Tilt.

Of late years, the situation for mountaineers has changed considerably for the better. The young members of the Cairngorm Club scarcely know the state of things 30 or 40 years ago. The following paper records the experiences of an early member of the Cairngorm Club, years before the Club was heard of.

Over thirty years ago, on a summer afternoon, the writer, with a brother tourist, arrived at Lynwilg Inn. Their purpose was to climb to the summit of Cairngorm and Ben Muich Dhui next day, and descend in time to catch the Strathspey train in the afternoon, from Boat of Garten to Aberdeen. The evening passed pleasantly in the company of a member of the Mazawattee Tea Company, who opened our eyes as to the immense sums spent by large public companies in advertising. I have

never seen a Mazawattee advertisement since without associating it with that night in the Lynwilg Inn.

As we had a long day's journey, we were on foot soon after one o'clock a.m. In certain states of the river it seems that the Spey may be forded at a point almost opposite the Inn. But as neither of us was a good swimmer, we followed the turnpike to the bridge near Aviemore, though the journey would have been considerably shortened by fording the river and making our way straight through the Rothiemurchus Forest. Avoiding the perplexities of the forest, we kept the road to Coylum Bridge, and made our way up stream to the Bennie Bridge, and crossed for the Larig Pass. For a short distance we followed the Larig path, then turned off to the left, passed under the Castle Hill, carefully looking for Cairngorm stones, and gradually pushed up the side of Cairngorm, and reached the summit between seven and eight o'clock. The day was before us and we did not hurry, but while we were climbing Cairngorm a mist began to show itself here and there on the hills—not to any great extent at first, and we flattered ourselves that it would clear off as the day advanced. We sat down to breakfast on the top of Cairngorm in the best of spirits, believing that we should accomplish our purpose and have an ideal day on the Cairngorms. Before breakfast was over we had too good reason to change our opinion. The mist was gradually settling down over the tops of the mountains, and we resolved to make for the top of Ben Muich Dhui as fast as our feet—already somewhat tired—could carry us. We got to the top of the Ben, but we never reached the cairn. The mist was quite thick, and we wandered to and fro for an hour. We knew that we were on the summit; there was no more climbing, whichever direction we took. Sometimes we found ourselves on the edge of the precipitous side of the mountain, looking down on the Pools of Dee. Turning rapidly in an opposite direction, we found ourselves by and bye descending, probably in the direction of Loch Etchachan, though of that we could not be certain. The only thing

we were sure about was that we were on the top of the Ben, and that we had not reached the cairn. An hour seemed quite enough for this sort of work; we had tired ourselves to no purpose. The cairn would not surrender.

Our business now was to get down to the valley in time to secure our train to Aberdeen. Yes—to get down; but how? Time was rapidly passing; the mist was still thick all around us. We had no food beyond a few biscuits, as we counted on our breakfast to supply the necessary strength to bring us down to the valley, when we could dine before leaving for Aberdeen. If the mist did not lift we might have to spend the night on the mountain side, and the outlook was becoming serious. We sat down to consider the situation. As we were cooling down and collecting our thoughts the mist lifted, so that we could see about 100 yards ahead. I at once took out my compass and set our route for the north-west, with the view of reaching the Larig path. We set off hopefully, but the mist came down thicker than before, and for an hour we trudged on in darkness. At the end of that time we found ourselves on the southern shoulder of Cairngorm, looking down on the Shelter Stone, and the south-west end of Loch Avon. Talk about being lost in a fog! I had often used the expression, but neither of us dreamed of what it meant till we sat and looked helplessly at each other above Loch Avon, when we thought we must be about the Larig path, close to the Rothiemurchus forest. We took our bearings, settled our route by compass, and started again for the Larig path, before the mist came down. Soon we were in darkness, and spent another hour in steady walking, hoping, as if against hope, to strike the path that was to lead us to rest. After another weary hour the mist lifted, and to our horror and disgust, we found that instead of going almost due west, as we intended to do, we had gone north-east, crossed the summit of Cairngorm, and were on the N.E. shoulder of the hill, looking down on the opposite end of Loch Avon from that which met our astonished gaze an hour before. It seemed incredible, but the fact could not be disputed.

Truly we were lost in a fog! And we learned that in such a case it is no use to consult the compass at the start of a tramp, and then put it in one's pocket. The only safe course is to keep it in one's hand, and take every step under its guidance.

We sat down and considered what we should do. The matter was becoming serious. Fortunately, the mist lifted more widely than it had done previously. We saw fairly distinctly for a considerable distance the district across which lay the way to our path. Without the loss of a moment we made off, resolved to get over as much ground as possible before the mist came down again. But from this time the mist was compassionate and generous; we had no more trouble with it. After a race of a mile or so we saw a man on our right, still at a considerable distance, but obviously doing his best to cut across our track. It was not difficult to guess who he was, or what was the object of his race across the hill to intercept us. The lessee of the Forest, an English Lord, was a game-preservee of the extreme kind. But for this, we would have varied our day's programme and descended by Loch Morlich. But it was far from our purpose to give any ground of offence, and we resolved to return by the way by which we ascended.

The margin of time was getting very narrow, if we were to save our train, and we were reluctant to lose even a yard by slowing our pace. But we could not fairly ignore the keeper's signals, and after a while we stopped. When he came up, we wished him good-day, and when he recovered his breath, he asked us what we were doing there, and where we were going. We replied that we were there against our will—that we wished to get off the hill and down to the Larig path,—that the mist had completely bamboozled us,—and that we were doing our best to gain the path from which we had helplessly wandered. This keeper was quite gentlemanly and reasonable. He informed us that his Lordship was out stalking in the direction in which we were going, that if we went on we might spoil his sport, and thus create ill-feeling; and he suggested that we should re-

trace our steps so far, and descend by the path leading by Loch Morlich. We replied that we had purposely avoided that path from regard to his Lordship, that if we returned to it, we should certainly lose our train to Aberdeen; but that rather than risk the spoiling of his Lordship's sport we would act on his suggestion. If the keeper had not been so polite, we might have turned a deaf ear to his proposal, and, even at the risk of encountering his Lordship in the face, might have hurried on our way in the hope of still securing our train.

If we had done so, or if we had run directly in his Lordship's way, we were assured, on reaching our quarters at night, that it would not have been surprising if he had fired at us. Reports of this kind reached us from time to time, but we were not disposed to attach much value to them. When a lessee—a wealthy man from another quarter—interferes in any way with what the people regard as their liberties—though, it may be, not their rights—he is apt to be characterised in terms somewhat unreasonable, if not unfair. In any case we avoided all this side of the question by bidding good-bye to the keeper in a friendly way, and turning our faces towards the path to Loch Morlich. Our train was lost, and we made up our minds to a night on Speyside. We had gone only about half-a-mile, when, out from behind a knoll, suddenly marched another keeper. What his exact position was among the officials of the Lodge, we had no means of determining. He was as overbearing as the other keeper had been considerate and polite. "Where are you going?" he asked, in a tone intended obviously to alarm us. "We are going, against our will, to the path from Cairngorm by Loch Morlich. A little bit back on the hill a keeper told us that his Lordship was out stalking in the direction in which we were going, and he requested us politely to turn back and descend by Loch Morlich. Though it means the loss of our train to Aberdeen, we have done so rather than run the risk of interfering with his Lordship's sport." "You should not be on the hill." "Eh, do you mean to say that we have no right to be on the hill?" "No, I don't

say that; but this is not the right of way." "Of course not; we are here at the request of the keeper we have just left; and if we were not on the legal path when we encountered him, the fault was that of the mist. Perhaps you and your English master ignore Providence, and make no allowance for the mist." "If you wish to go on the hill you should apply to his Lordship, who would furnish you with a guide to take you up and down safely." This fairly roused us, and I turned on him and said, "You are a Scotsman, and you condescend to tell a countryman that he should go on his knees and beg a wealthy English Lord, who has leased our forests for sport, to permit him to go on the hills on which his fathers roamed as free as the air they breathed! Are you not ashamed of yourself?" "Well, I am disposed to agree with you," was the reply, and our trouble was at an end.

When we reached the Loch Morlich path we sat down to rest. Our difficulties were past, and though we were tired and hungry, we had a good road before us, and the end of the journey was in view. We had not sat long when another keeper arrived on the scene, accompanied by an English gentleman and a young lad, scarcely more than a boy. The keeper made some gruff remark as to how we were there. I asked him if he had anything to do with us, and he replied that he had been sent to take us off the hill. On this I turned to my companion and said, "This is becoming intolerable; take out your notebook and write down what this man says." Then turning to the keeper I continued, "You say you were sent to take us off the hill. Who sent you?" "My master, of course." "Who is your master?" "Lord ———." "Well, we have just left two keepers, at different places on the hill, who assured us that his Lordship had been for some time out stalking far from the Lodge." "Oh, it wasn't Lord ——— who sent me, but the head man at the Lodge." "That is contradiction number one," I said to my friend, "have you got it down?" "Yes." Then I proceeded, "You say you were sent to take us off the hill. How did you know we were on the hill? Till a short

time ago, it was impossible for anyone to see us on the hill." The reply was that we had been seen on a spur of the hill, which was quite possibly the N.E. summit on which we sat disconsolate, looking down on the end of Loch Avon which we did not wish to see. The fact was that there were keepers at the Lodge whose business it was to discover, through the help of their field-glasses, any persons climbing the hill. When the mist lifted all around, *we* had been discovered on the shoulder of Cairngorm, and the *English gentleman* making his way around by the Castle Hill to the summit. When we started across country two keepers were sent after us to bring us down by Loch Morlich; and another was sent post-haste to the top of Cairngorm to bring the other party down by the same path. Poor keepers! Two were sent after us, and they had to hurry across the country lest we should escape them. The man sent up to intercept the Englishman had to reach the top of Cairngorm before he could leave it. The keeper had to go at express-train rate, and it was no wonder that he was not in the best of tempers when he reached us, resting quietly by the side of the path.

The Englishman greatly enjoyed our catechising of the keeper. And when, apparently, we had done, he quietly interposed in this way: "Well, this is exceedingly interesting to me. I went up with my young friend by the Larig route. We wished very much to descend by Loch Morlich; but as we were strangers, and the lessee was reported to be very sensitive as to his rights, we made up our minds to descend by the same route as we had taken in ascending. But while we were on the top this man came up and offered himself as guide by the very route we wished to take. It is rather amusing, but very satisfactory to us." Between the two parties the keeper was in a funk, and we had a good deal of sympathy with him. In those days, the keepers were, in many respects, to be condoled with, rather than blamed. And, if a man had a bit of a character, he could scarcely be blamed for being somewhat crusty, after such a race to the top of Cairngorm, and such a welcome when he descended with

his capture. When we started, he went with us and kept us company to Loch Morlich. At the Lodge gate he came up to me and said that it was customary for travellers who passed that way to leave their cards. I replied that when we were in that quarter and wished to call on his Lordship we would hand in our cards. And so we left him, and hurried on to Boat of Garten where we spent the night.

We were sorry for the keepers; it is no use to blame them. Of course there are keepers and keepers. The first one we encountered was as gentlemanly as we could wish, and we at once yielded to his proposal. The second was bumptious and we treated him accordingly. The third was obviously indignant on account of his day's experiences with *these horrid mountaineers*. But all three were simply obeying orders; moreover, the lessee paid a heavy rent for the Forest, and expected that his shooting and stalking would not be interfered with. The proprietor should have let the Forest on the distinct condition that the public should have the unrestricted use of the rights of way involved. If it were clearly understood by the public that this was done, there should be no trouble. Mountaineers would keep to the right of way (unless a mist turned them topsy-turvy, and *then* there must be give and take). Keepers would discharge their duties, faithful to their employers, and in accordance with the laws of the country. Lessees would respect the rights of the people, and would find, in return, that their interests as lessees were scrupulously observed. It is gratifying to believe that we are coming nearer and nearer to such a condition of things.

HEY FOR THE HILLS.

Oh, hey for the hills an' the heather,
An' hey for the moorlands sae braw,
When balmy an' bricht is the weather,
An' moorcocks sae merrily craw.
Some speak o' the charms o' the valley,
Some roose the delights o' the sea ;
I scorn wi' sic low things to dally—
The hills an' the heather for me.

Oh, aft on the hills an' the heather,
Sae bracing an' fine was the air,
My foot has been licht as a feather,
My heart kennin' naething o' care.
Some speak o' the joys o' potation,
An' roose certain species o' bree ;
Hoot, fie ! for pure blissful elation—
The hills an' the heather for me.

Oh, aft on the hills an' the heather,
'Mid mony a grand, stirring scene,
Mysel' an' my comrade together,
How happy an' blithe we ha'e been !
Some aye whar's a crowd are stravaigin',
Some thrang to the club-houses flee ;
But for converse an' social colleaguin'—
The hills an' the heather for me.

Oh, hey, for the hills an' the heather,
If ought will prevent me to gang,
It will only be duty's strong tether,
An' may it no keep me for lang.
Through life they shall hae my devotion,
An' if oot o' my bed I maun dee,
May it no be the street or the ocean—
The hills an' the heather for me.

DARK LOCHNAGAR.

BY SETON GORDON, F.Z.S.

OF all the Scottish hills Lochnagar, 3,786 feet above sea level, was perhaps Byron's favourite. During the earlier years of his storm-tossed career, the poet had his home not many miles from the base of the mountain, and to it his wanderings took him many a time, in fair weather and foul. In his immortal poem "Lochnagar" Byron contrasts the placid English scenery with the wild grandeur of his favourite mountain :

"Away, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses !
In you let the minions of luxury rove ;
Restore me the rocks where the snowflake reposes,
Though still they are sacred to freedom and love.

England ! thy beauties are tame and domestic
To one who has roved o'er the mountains afar ;
Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic !
The steep frowning glories of dark Lochnagar."

We have ascended Lochnagar at every season of the year—in spring when its dark corries are still deeply shrouded in their mantle of snow; in summer, when only a few sheltered snow wreaths remain at the foot of its lofty precipice; and in autumn when its summit is powdered with the snows of a mountain storm; but we had never penetrated to its summit plateau during the depth of winter, at a season which is, as a rule, noted for its tempests and its fierce squalls of snow and sleet. The day we choose for the expedition breaks in a most auspicious manner. The dawn at this season of the year is late, and it is not until close on nine o'clock that the rising sun lights up the snow-clad hills away to the north-west with a soft glow. Our way leads for some time along the valley of the Royal Dee, but after a time the

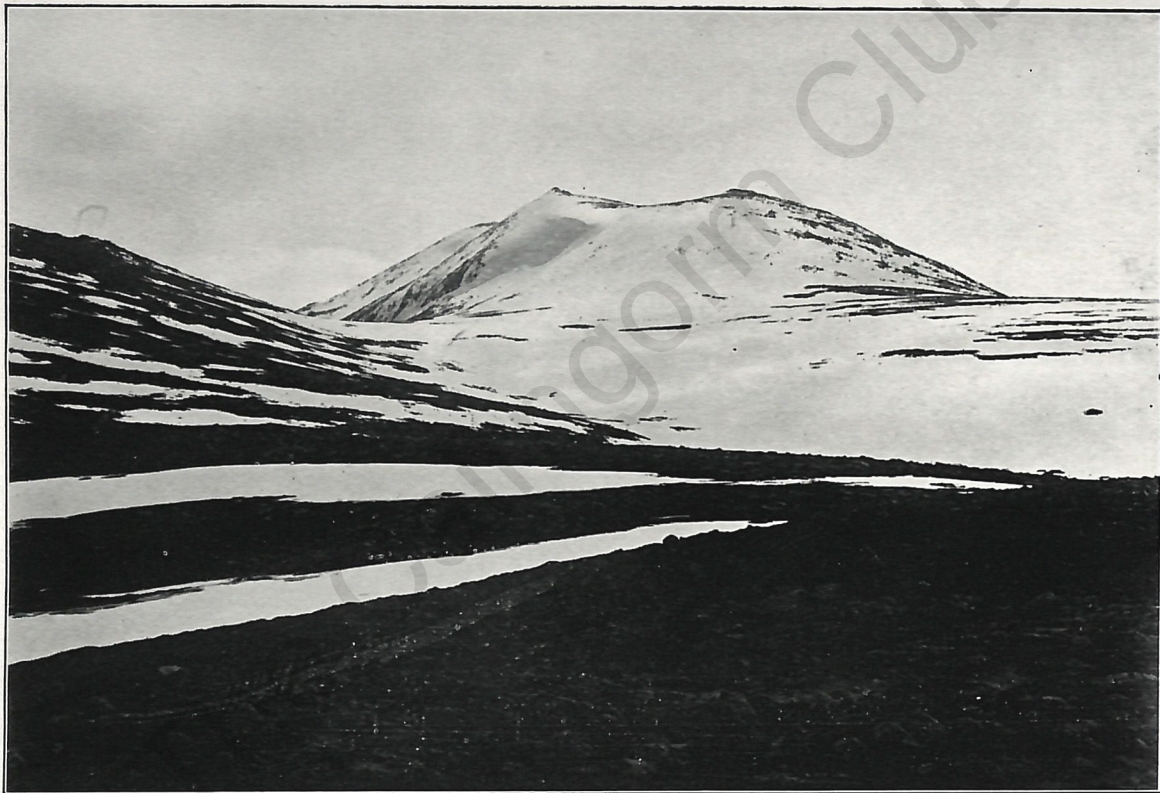


Photo by

LOCH-NA-GAR FROM THE NORTH.
A MID-APRIL VIEW.

Seton Gordon.

river is left on our right, and we penetrate up through a romantic valley where a mountain torrent hurries to meet the parent river. On the banks of the stream countless birches sigh softly in the wind, and we pass a rough stone which marks—it is said—the spot where half-a-dozen of the clan Gordon were treacherously done to death by a foeman. Up to a height of 1,400 feet above sea level a good road leads up the Glen, but here we strike off, and follow a mountain track which follows the Allt-na-giubhsach (the burn of the fir tree). The sun is shining warmly on the hillside, and the ground is crisp with frost, but the season has been an exceptionally open one, and the heather on the hillside is still fresh and green. Though close on mid-day, the sun scarce tops the mountains which rise abruptly on either side of the glen, but the air is wonderfully clear and the hills look at their best. Every stone in the burn is thickly encrusted with ice, and now and again we pass enormous icicles, marking the sites of diminutive waterfalls which are fast in the grip of the frost.

Until we reach a height of 2,000 feet, not a vestige of snow is seen, but at this point a large drift lies across the path. It is now frozen hard, and on its surface are seen the footmarks of deer. A fox, too, has been in the vicinity, evidently in search of grouse—for the head of the burn is a favourite resort of these birds. A flock of Meadow Pipits are met with here, and their presence at this height shows clearly how remarkably mild the winter has been. Soon we reach the watershed between Dee and Muich, and here a magnificent view of the Cairngorm mountains is obtained. Though on Lochnagar the sun is still shining brightly, heavy clouds are resting on the summits of these Northern hills, and a piercing wind out of the north-west comes sweeping across the valley of the Dee from their snowy corries. At the height of slightly over 2,000 feet we pass the ruins of what in the older days was probably a watcher's bothy or smuggler's stronghold, but now nothing remains save the bare foundations, though numerous raspberry plants are still growing around the ruins. Due north of us, across the valley of the Dee, is a

somewhat interesting hill known as the Brown Cow. On the slopes of this hill an immense wreath of snow is formed during the winter and remains on the hillside until well on into the summer. Appropriately enough, the snow field is known to the natives as "the brown cow's white calf," and is a conspicuous landmark.

At a height of just under 3,000 feet, we hear the first ptarmigan. He is some distance away, and his whereabouts can only be surmised by his weird croaking call note. A little further on we flush a covey of these birds and they fly off down wind at lightning speed. As they pass overhead we remark on the wonderful purity of their plumage, which is spotlessly white, saving for a few of their tail feathers, these latter standing out in marked contrast. True children of the mist are the snowy ptarmigan. When the storms of winter sweep wildly over the mountains and all other bird life has sought more sheltered quarters, the ptarmigan are left in undisputed possession of their mountain tops, and seem to find a stern pleasure in battling with the snow and wind. As we gain an extensive table-land at a height of close on 3,500 feet, we put up a flock of snow bunting—hardy dwellers of the mountains who nest in more northern altitudes than ours, and the majority of whom pass the winter only in these islands. Unlike the ptarmigan, however, they are forced to descend to the lower grounds on the advent of a heavy storm.

From the plateau we have a magnificent view of the Loch of Lochnagar nestling in the corrie a full 1,000 ft. beneath us. The dark waters are thickly coated with ice, on the surface of which are a number of gigantic cracks extending in all directions. Evidently the waters of the loch were, at the time when they froze, at a higher level than they are at present and the ice has partially collapsed. The loch is almost entirely surrounded by precipices, and though the plateau where we are standing is quite free of snow, an extensive cornice overhangs the precipice on every side, and deep wreaths have been piled up amongst the rocks beneath us. A thin mist has now descended on the summit, though to windward the weather

has become much clearer, and suddenly through the mist the dark form of a golden eagle is seen battling with the gale. At times when a fierce gust of wind strikes him, he rises perpendicularly many yards into the air and as suddenly shoots down again like an arrow. He appears to revel in the gale and soon disappears into the mist, not, however, before he has caused great uneasiness—even consternation—among the ptarmigan in the neighbourhood. Though to the north-west the weather is dark and somewhat threatening, the view to the south is wonderfully clear, and hill upon hill in eastern Perthshire and Fifeshire stand out with great distinctness. To our east—some 50 miles down the valley of the Dee—we imagine we see the faint outline of the North Sea, but it is in the north-west that the view is the grandest. Here are situated the Cairngorm group of mountains—giant hills, most of them over 4,000 feet high—and though Lochnagar carries comparatively little snow, the Cairngorms are deeply covered. On these the sun—now low on the horizon—is shining with beautiful effect, lighting up their snowy slopes with a soft pink light, and even penetrating at times to their mist-capped summits.

After reaching a height of some 3,400 feet, the path leads for a considerable distance along a plateau skirting the precipices, and it is at the western extremity of this plateau that we enter the mist. All around us the ptarmigan are croaking, and we stalk and successfully photograph a pair as they run across an extensive snow field. A mountain hare in a coat of whiteness rivalling the snow suddenly darts out from a sheltering stone at our feet, and scampers off at top speed, being soon lost in the mist. Though a cloud is shrouding the hill, yet the mist is remarkably thin, and overhead the sky is clearly seen through it, while the sun's rays penetrate and impart a rosy tinge to the cloud. The mountain boasts of two summit cairns, but the one furthest to the north is the higher. Before gaining this, we pass close to the edge of the precipice, and look down into the swirling mist beneath us. Very grand do the rocks appear in the

uncertain light, for at this altitude the ground is covered deep in snow, and the black outlines of the cliffs stand out conspicuously against the surrounding whiteness. On every rock and stone the most wonderful crystals of snow have formed. They look for all the world like living plants, growing at every angle, but it is chiefly to the north that they face.

We remain at the top only a very few minutes, but during our stay the clouds suddenly roll away, and the view obtained is exceedingly fine. It lasts for only a few seconds, however, and then once again the mountain is mist-capped. On the sheltered side of the summit cairn, we discover the hollow where a mountain hare has passed the night; one would imagine that the quarters were somewhat exposed for the time of year, but with her thick coat, the white hare is almost impervious to the cold. As we emerge from the mist, a few hundred feet below the summit we see the form of an eagle sharply defined against the eastern sky. He is sailing in spirals, and suddenly shoots earthward at great speed. Without touching the ground, however, he rises almost as rapidly as he "stooped." A passing cloud hides him for a moment, and then he is seen to be making his way along the precipice directly towards us. We remain motionless, and the king of birds passes not many yards from where we lie concealed, scanning with his proud eye the corries far beneath him. The sun now is fast sinking in the south-west, and immediately opposite—in the north-eastern sky—its rays, striking on the ice particles in the atmosphere, form the faint outlines of a rainbow. Our descent is rendered somewhat precarious by the amount of ice on the hill, and going is necessarily slow. As we reach the low grounds the western sky is a deep turquoise blue, and in it numerous fleecy clouds stand out a brilliant crimson, while to the eastward the mountains catch the sunset, and are bathed in its soft light. On a prominent ridge to the west the dark forms of three stags stand out sharply against the evening sky, and the murmur of the burn is the only sound to break the stillness of this wonderful winter night.



Photo by

THE WESTERN SOURCE OF THE MUICH.
THE DUBH LOCH (HALF-FROZEN) IN THE BACKGROUND.

Seton Gordon.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

EASTER MEET.

THE Second Easter Meet of the Club was held this year at Braemar, the headquarters of the Club being the Invercauld Arms Hotel.

The following were present :—

Members :—Miss Angus, Mrs. Croll, Miss Wilson, Messrs. Henry Alexander, Junior ; Dr. W. F. Croll, John Dickson, J. B. Gillies, Thomas Jamieson, James Gray Kyd, Alfred A. Longden, A. P. Milne, George McIntyre, J. M. Rattray, and Alex. M. Watt.

Guests :—Dr. Arthur, Dr. A. Findlay, and J. Proctor.

The official hour of departure from Aberdeen was the 8.5 train on Good-Friday morning, April 14th. Some of the members followed later, but our two Dundee lady members showed their enthusiasm by leaving their home during the small hours of the morning and reaching Aberdeen in time to join the general party in the Ballater train.

The morning was exquisite, and augured well for a fine week-end. It has been hinted that the Secretary spent a considerable part of the previous night between scanning the skies and tapping his barometer.

At Ballater the party drove up Glen Muick as far as Allt-na-giubhsach, where they left the conveyances. Mr. Jamieson and Dr. Arthur took the Lochnagar track and crossed over the Meikle Pap into Glen Gelder, where they found the "going" very bad. Mr. Jamieson had the misfortune to lose his cap and Dr. Arthur his flask, and, judging by their late arrival at Braemar, and from the fact that the genial doctor's pedometer registered $23\frac{1}{2}$ miles for the route of some dozen miles, their efforts to recover their losses must have been attended with considerable walking.

The main party walked along the shores of Loch Muick, which was rough, in the strong western gale. Lunch in the woods around the Glas-allt Shiel was a

pleasant interlude. The Allt-an-Dubh Loch was crossed shortly after one o'clock, and the party got into the well-made stalkers' track which climbs up Corrie Chash. The ascent was gradual, and, save for the difficulty of crossing a steep snow gully, was without special incident.

On reaching the head of the Corrie, however, the chief difficulty of the day was met. The wind was blowing with the force of a gale right from the west, and the journey along the tops to Loch Callater was made doubly trying that day. The snow was lying in patches on the slopes of the Broad Cairn, and as the ground was marshy the route had to be carefully chosen.

It was a welcome relief to shelter on the lee-side of the summit rocks of the Broad Cairn, and look down on Loch Muick sullen and rough in the gale; however, we had to push on and mount Cairn Bannoch, so with stout hearts we got on to the plateau again and fought the terrific force of the wind. After leaving Cairn Bannoch, the soft snow in the dip between it and Càrn ant Sagairt Mor (Cairn Taggart), made walking slow and laboured. Loch Callater was soon reached, and the tempests of the heights forgotten in the calm of the valley. Braemar was reached in the early evening by the majority, although the Lochnagar couple did not arrive until nearly eleven o'clock.

The weather on Saturday was not so fine as on the previous day, but nevertheless the sun occasionally shone out, especially in the morning and late afternoon. The goal of the day's outing was Beinn Iutharn Mhor, one of the remote mountains at the head of lonely Glen Ey. We drove up in two brakes, and our well-informed City Analyst made the deserted glen live again with his tales of days gone by.

At Altanour Lodge, we found everything prepared for the Club's comfort; the house had been unoccupied all winter, but His Grace The Duke of Fife had instructed his stalkers to give the members a welcome in this lonely spot.

The party split up here: some went geologising on the curious vein of marble that runs transversely across the glen here, but the main party climbed Beinn Iutharn Mhor by various routes. Unfortunately the mist came down just as we reached the summit, so the view was somewhat restricted. The descent was made by the snow gully into Allt Beinn Iutharn—at least into the Allt Beinn Iutharn valley—although one “slender” member managed to disappear through the snow into the Allt!

Then snow came on as we descended to the Lodge, and we were a wet party as we drove down the Glen. We had tea at Miss Gruer's at Thistle Cottage, Inverey, where we were joined by Dr. and Mrs. Croll, who motored up from Ballater.

It was a merry party that sat down to dinner in the Invercauld Arms. We had Dr. Brown as our guest, and after dinner he delighted the company with a most exquisite lantern show of snow scenes in the Braemar district. Several members of the Club had brought up slides, and altogether a most enjoyable evening was spent.

Mr. A. H. Farquharson, whose courtesy to the Club did much to make the Meet successful, kindly favoured us with his presence.

Easter Sunday dawned magnificently and the members were early astir: some went to church, but most spent the day in the “large religion of the hills.” We had Mr. Farquharson's private ferry at Inverchandlick placed at our disposal, which cut off a considerable distance for those who went up the Gleann an t Slugain; but for some reason, known only to themselves, several members, who left first, preferred to wander aimlessly down the turnpike road till opposite Invercauld House and cross by the ferry there. The main party climbed Beinn a' Bhuidir by the Chioch ridge, and so on to the Sneck and Ben Avon; others climbed Ben Avon only; while Alexander, Longden, and Watt climbed one of the snow gullies above Dubh Lochan. The gully gave a sporting climb, and its ascent involved step-cutting for almost four hours; after reaching the summit ridge, they got on to the North Top

of Beinn a' Bhuird and descended by the Sneek in thick mist and blinding snow.

The walk down the glen to the ferry was very wintry; snow fell all the way, and the appearance of the landscape recalled Christmas rather than Easter.

The Meet broke up on Monday morning, when the majority left for Aberdeen by the early motor; and to those who participated, the week-end is now one of those happy memories of which the ardent mountaineer has many.

ABOVE THE TIMBER LINE.

Below, the winding path lies broad and green,
 With cool, tree-shadowed spaces flecked with light;
 Chirpings of birds deep-hidden from the sight,
 Whose fledgling-laden nests the branches screen,
 And murmuring brooks and morning air serene,
 Speak pleasant days and gentle, soft delight.
 But now the way grows narrow, and a blight
 The thinning trees reveal; the rugged mien
 Of the bare mountain-side looms sharp in view,
 Daring the lofty-souled to brave its steep.
 There, where the keen-eyed eagles vigil keep,
 And ice-glazed trails reflect the heaven's blue,
 The worn and eager climber sees unfurled
 A vision of God's meaning of the world.

M.

SPRING EXCURSION.

THE Spring Excursion this year was held on May-day, when the Buck was climbed by the Club.

The following were present:—

Members:—Mrs. Croll, Messrs. C. T. Christie, S. Cooper, Dr. Croll, H. G. Drummond, R. J. A. Dunn, William Malcolm, G. McIntyre, W. M. McPherson, James Rennie, John Rust, Alex. Simpson, A. C. Simpson, John Wallace, and Alex. M. Watt.

Guests:—Miss J. Dunn, Mr. McIntyre, Jr., Miss Mackenzie, Mrs. Rust, Miss Rust, Dr. Souttar, and Miss Wallace.

Brilliant sunshine favoured us as we disembarked from the morning train at Gartly. There was a nip in the wind, however, which caused us to don coats and wraps as we entered the vehicles which were to drive us to the base of the hill. Rhyndie was soon left behind, and we skirted the Tap o' Noth with its vitrified fort. Then a stretch of open moor with an isolated moss-litter factory showed that clouds were banking up, and some fears were expressed that rain would catch us before we were clear of the high ground.

The Buck showed a brown expanse of wet-looking heather and grass, with a solitary patch of snow on its eastern slope. Gone was its white raiment of six weeks before, gone were the deep drifts blocking the Cabrach turnpike, gone was the snowy mantle draping the craggy summit of the Tap. It was a somewhat cramped and cold party which commenced the ascent of the northern face, but the angle was steep, and, when half the ascent was accomplished and drier ground reached, there was a general agreement that lunch time had arrived. The Cairn was reached at 1.15 p.m. and an extensive view was enjoyed, embracing:—Tap o' Noth, Cook's Cairn, Corryhabbie, Ben Avon, Bienn a' Bhuid, Morven, and Mount Keen. Lochnagar was shrouded in mist, as also was Bennachie to the east. The temperature, though bracing, did not encourage us to linger, and when the photo-

graphers had been satisfied, the descent to Lumsden began in a direction slightly north of east, to the moss road, which joins the driving road at Todstown to the south of Clayhooter Hill.

At Todstown some rejoined the vehicles, others walked through the Clova woods direct to Lumsden, all arriving safely just in time to avoid the first heavy rain. The good things provided by Mrs. Smith in the old-fashioned hall were done ample justice to, and the time soon passed when we had to mount the conveyances and drive back to Gartly.

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

THIS rambling note may be read in connection with "A Lonely Wander" (*C.C.J.*, Vol vi., p. 76), but my friend Barclay went further westward than I did. My station was Lochielside ;

IN THE
LOCHIEL
COUNTRY. thence I walked back to Fassifern before taking to Gleann Suileag in the deer forest of Achdalu. It is a far cry from Fassifern to Quatre Bras, but the connection is not likely ever to be forgotten in the country of the

Camérons. Gleann Suileag has little to recommend it, but it is the key to scenery which made a great impression on me. There is only one house, a stalker's, in the glen. The waterparting reached, the route was continued into the sheep district of Glen Loy. Then at Achnamellan an obliging shepherd directed me over Am Mam into Glen Mallie ; another waterparting reached, the scene was changed. There one looks down on the "Old" or Lochiel Forest, which, according to Robertson's "Agriculture of Inverness" (1808), was then the only "regular forest in all the county" ; sheep were introduced in 1764. The Old Forest (An t-Seann Fhrith) is a forest in a double sense, for there are to be seen several miles of the grandest pines in the Highlands, not even Ballochbuie excepted. Many of the firs are of outstanding size, and never fail to attract the attention of interested visitors. The quality, too, is so superior that sections submitted to experts have been mistaken for pitch pine. Yet we read that, in 1793, the woods being far from shore, and the roads bad, "to purchase imported timber, therefore, is found to be cheaper ; at least it is preferred."

Glen Mallie was left with regret, though a more picturesque scene than Loch Arkaig could hardly be imagined. The "voyage" across from Invermallie to Ardachrie in the beautiful evening was made all the more pleasant by the company of a most intelligent stalker ; one could never weary of the mountain vista at the head of the loch. The following morning gave additional facilities for a more intimate acquaintance with the loch, nor could a better guide have been found than the head stalker. The eastern end is particularly well wooded and romantic, the western barer but grander ; a slight curve in the loch prevents the whole sheet being seen at a glance. Viewed from the lower end the cone of Sgor na h-Aide forms a picturesque point in the west. Altogether the loch scenery is of the finest—perhaps not equalled, not to say excelled, by that of any other loch in the Highlands ; at least so it seemed to the writer last July. Queen Victoria described Loch Arkaig as "very lovely, reminding one of Loch Katrine."

I continued the walk to Loch Lochy *via* Mile Dorcka, the Dark Mile—"dark from the number of very fine trees which overhang it, while on the left it is overshadowed by beetling rocks with a rich tangled undergrowth of bracken and heather." The West Highland train picked me up

at Spean Bridge, "and so home" to Glasgow, with considerably enlarged ideas as to the beauty and grandeur of the West Highlands. A. I. M.

THERE are many delightful hill walks around Newtonmore, in fact we know of few places which offer better opportunities for heather rambling than does this picturesque Highland village. A visit A' CHAILLEACH to Loch Dubh, some six miles west, makes a grand [MONADHLIATH] excursion. The route lies up Glen Banchor, by the banks of the Calder, to the Dalballoch Ford; here it is easy to follow up the wrong glen, but the people in the cottage can give directions. The Allt an Lochain Duibh should be kept well on the left; the glen is deceptive, and around each corner and over every moraine one expects to find the "black loch," but it is a good hour and three quarters' walk from the cottage to the Loch. When reached, the scene will amply repay the rough tramp. A pleasant variation of the route is to find one's way back to Newtonmore over the ridge to the east into the Glen Balloch and holding eastwards still over another ridge into the next valley, down which an easy walk brings one back to Glen Banchor, about two and a half miles above Newtonmore.

A' Chailleach (the old woman) makes a splendid day from Newtonmore. The Glen Banchor road is followed till within a couple of hundred yards of the first stream coming down from the north. This stream is kept on the left until one is opposite the "red hut," a conspicuous little cabin on the south shoulder of A' Chailleach. Here the stream should be crossed—and some difficulty may be found in doing so in wet weather—and the hut made for, from which the ridge can be gained in fifty minutes and the summit in ten minutes more. The whole walk from Newtonmore to the summit can easily be done in three hours. J. G. K.

H. Alexander, Jr., J. Bruce Miller, and J. A. Parker had a very fine day on Lochnagar on 5th March. They went up the Black Spout, which was full of very hard snow, and took three hours of continuous step cutting. Not satisfied with that, they went across to the Loch to the west, and climbed one of the buttresses; they then descended to Ballochbuie and motored back to Ballater.

ON October 29th, 1910, W. A. Reid and J. R. Levack left Tyndrum at 10.30 a.m., having come from Dunblane by the morning train, and climbed Ben Laoigh (3708 ft.) by the north ridge of the BEN LAOIGH N.E. corrie, returning to Tyndrum at 5.30. The weather AND BEN was fairly good, but there was mist at the summit cairn. CRUACHAN. Next day they left Loch Awe Hotel at 8 a.m. and drove 3½ miles to the falls of Cruachan. Climbing from this point at 8.30, they reached the top of Meall Cuanail (3004 ft.) at 10.45. Then Stob Dearg (3611 ft.), the most westerly peak of the Cruachan range was gained at 12.15, Ben Cruachan itself (3689 ft.) at 1 p.m., Drochaid Ghlas (3312) at 2.10, Stob Diamh (3272 ft.) at 3 p.m., and Stob Garbh (3215 ft.) at 3.20.

A long descent by a grassy slope brought them, at 4.40, to the disused

quarries at the north end of the mountain, and the hotel was reached at 5.30. The weather was perfect.

ON March 4th, 1911, W. Garden, J. W. Garden, W. A. Reid, and J. R. Levack left Strathyre at 8 a.m. and drove to Ardvorlich on Loch Earn, left Ardvorlich at 9.30, and reached the top of Ben Vorlich (3224 ft.) at 11.45. Descending the west side of the hill, the foot of the steep face of Stùc a Chroin was reached and the rope was put on. After a somewhat difficult ascent of the buttress immediately to the south of the most northerly gully on the mountain face, the summit cairn (3189 ft.) was reached at 4.15. A bee-line westwards was then made down across Glenample and over the ridge to Strathyre, which was reached at 7 p.m.

Next morning they drove past Loch Voil to the head of Loch Doine. Leaving this at 10.30, they climbed the south slop of Stob Invercarraig, and arrived at the Cairn of Stob Coire an Lochain (3497 ft.) at 12.50, and Am Binnein (3821 ft.) at 1.30. Descending the north side of Am Binnein, which was very icy, they then climbed Ben More (3843 ft.) in a snow blizzard, reaching the cairn at 3 p.m. Descending by the N.W. ridge they reached Crianlarich at 5.45 p.m.

J. R. L.

The above note on these four great Perthshire peaks recalls a walk undertaken in July, 1908, by H. Kellas, W. L. Cook, and J. G. Kyd. Instead of beginning at Ben Vorlich and working westwards we began at Ben More and came east.

On 18th July we disturbed the peace of Crianlarich by rising at half-past 3. We left the hotel at 4.15, reaching Benmore farm half an hour later; crossing the roadside fence we climbed up through the dewy meadow on to the steep N.W. slope of Ben More; after a stiff climb we reached the summit at 6.20. The whole landscape was under cloud, an occasional hill peeping out like an island out of the surf. We spent an hour and a quarter on the top and then made tracks for Am Biennein which we mounted at 8.25; half an hour sufficed us on this top as the morning sun had dispelled the clouds, and although magnificent, the view was not so strange as that we had had from Ben More. Twelve minutes brought us to the top of Stob Coire an Lochain, from there we dipped into Glen Carnaig, and found the "going" bad. I expect Dr. Levack's route over Stob Invercarraig is the better one between Loch Doine and Stob Coire an Lochain; however we reached the head of Loch Voil at 10.30, just an hour and a quarter after leaving the Stob. We had a refreshing dip in the cool waters of the Loch, and as we had a trap awaiting us, we soon drove down through Balquhiddier to King's House Inn, where we lunched. After an hour and a half at King's House we left at 1.30 and wandered up through the steading to the ridge behind the Inn. We struck the Burn of Ample at 2.45, and reached the top of Stùc a Chroin at 4.40. An hour and twenty minutes brought us to the summit of Ben Vorlich, and Ardvorlich was reached at 7.20, just an hour after leaving the summit of Ben Vorlich and fifteen hours after leaving Crianlarich. A trap met us here and drove us to St. Fillans. Next day we spent boating on Loch Earn, and felt glad that there were other things in life worth living for besides climbing hills.

J. G. K.

WE print the name of the peer of the Cairngorm range as per margin, with some hesitation and a great deal more trepidation. For Mr. F. C.

Diack has been revising the spelling and meaning of "BEN MUICH DHUI." local place-names in light of their Gaelic derivatives, and has upset a large number of existing and generally recognised forms. Having outraged the susceptibilities of the Public Librarian by insisting that the original name of Aberdeen was Aberdon, and that Aberdeen really means the mouth of the Don, he afterwards (*Free Press*, May 6) fell foul of the maps and guide-books that give the name of our beloved mountain as "Ben Muich Dhui," meant to represent B. (na) muice duibhe, "hill of the black pig." Mr. Diack maintains that this name is a "ghost" form or artificial creation. "On Deeside, Speyside, and Strathaven alike," he says, "the designation is always Beinn Mac Duibh (not B. Mhic Dhuib), 'Macduff's hill'," and, though local tradition is silent as to who this Macduff was, he can be identified with fair certainty from historical records. "The Macduff Earls of Fife held lands in the north about the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, perhaps earlier, and from extant charters we find among their possessions the lands of Strathaven, of which our hill would have been the southern boundary. It seems likely that here lies the explanation of the name." Authorities are cited in support of the Beinn Mac Duibh or Ben Macduff theory, and Mr. Diack opines that "it is clear that 'the black pig' must be definitely discarded, regretfully or otherwise."

There are all the elements here, we suspect, provocative of a keen controversy; but the battle must be left to Gaelic scholars. Not improbably, the most of us will go on writing and printing "Ben Muich Dhui," be it right or wrong, leaving its meaning indeterminate. The interpretation, "the mountain of the black sow," is supposed to be derived from the hog-backed ungainly appearance of the mountain, or from some hunting incident in the days when wild swine abounded there (see *C. C. J.*, I., 311). On the other hand, Sir Archibald Geikie gives the hill or the mountain "of dark gloom" ("Scenery of Scotland" and "Landscape in History"). Mr. Diack's article, by the way, contains also fresh meanings of Cairntoul, the Larig Ghru, and Morrone.

LORD EVERSLEY—better known perhaps by his name when a commoner, George John Shaw-Lefevre—has introduced a bill into the House of Lords

which proposes to enact that where evidence is given of forty years' use of a way, the claim of the public shall not be defeated by showing that the land has been in family settlement during that period. This looks severely technical, but it appears that in England a public right of way can only be established by proof of actual dedication by an owner of the land possessed of the entire legal estate, or by evidence of use over a sufficiently long period to justify a presumption of dedication. Cases, however, frequently occur where, though there is evidence of long use the land has been in family settlement successively renewed, so that no owner had been in a position to dedicate the footpath to the public. The bill will practically assimilate the law of England to that of Scotland. It has been referred to a Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Munro-Ferguson has introduced in the Commons a Rights of Way Bill for Scotland. It provides for the protection, by legal or other proceedings, of public rights of way, by District Committees or County Councils, on the representation of a Parish Council or of six parish electors that encroachment has taken place or is likely to take place. Under a clause of the bill every county clerk must prepare a list of public ways within the county, including footpaths and drove roads.

MR. THOMAS E. HAMMOND, President of the Surrey Walking Club, had a brief article extolling the pleasures of walking, in the *Daily Mail* of

THE
PLEASURES OF
WALKING.

May 5th. He pointed out, what we believe is quite true, that "even in these days of easy travelling, and with every temptation to ride, walking has never been so popular." The advantages of walking which he enumerated are familiar enough to be almost commonplaces. "One sees a deal more of the country in detail than do cyclists or motorists, and one is able to take to the footpaths and thus enjoy a cross-country ramble which is forbidden the former, and moreover there is endless pleasure in getting from one place to another merely by the aid of strolling. A further advantage is that by walking one arrives at a perfect state of physical fitness."

Assent may not be given so readily to Mr. Hammond's assertion that the best time for walking is undoubtedly during the night—say, between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8 a.m. Most of the long distance walks of the Surrey Club, he says, commence in the evening and continue throughout the night, and sometimes the whole of the following day.

THE London Rifle Brigade accomplished a walking feat on April 22nd and 23rd last, when they marched from the Duke of York's Column, Waterloo Place, London, to the Aquarium, Brighton, a distance of

A MARCHING
FEAT.

fully 52½ miles, in the actual marching time of 13¾ hours, or at the rate of nearly four miles per hour. This is claimed as a remarkable feat of endurance, more especially as the men were in full marching order, including rifle, bayonet, haversack, water-bottle, overcoat, and equipment—a total weight of 45 lb. Fifty-six officers and men completed the journey, and not a man fell out.

THE summit of Ben Nevis was reached by a motor car on 13th May last, but mountain-climbing by this novel means is hardly likely to become popular. It looks, indeed, as if the feat were intended

MOTOR CAR
ON
BEN NEVIS.

more to demonstrate what a motor car can do than for any other purpose. Its accomplishment, moreover, was a matter of great difficulty, five days' work being required to safely pilot the car to the top. A new route to the half-way house had to be found, and though from that point onward the bridle path was utilised, it had sometimes to be temporarily widened and sometimes to be skirted, while snow near the summit had also to be skilfully negotiated. The car which has made this "record" was a Ford 20 horse-power touring car. See "Up Ben Nevis on a Motor-Cycle" in *C. C. J.*, iii., 375.

The following new members have been admitted to the Club during the present year :—

- Miss Mary Angus, Inneriach, Blackness Road, Dundee.
 Mrs. W. F. Croll, 41 Albert Street, Aberdeen.
 Miss Agnes Wilson, Inneriach, Blackness Road, Dundee.
 Henry Alexander, Jun., M.A., 1 Queen's Cross, Aberdeen.
 William Angus, Resident Engineer, Tyne Commission, Grange Road, Ryton-on-Tyne.
 William Littlejohn Cook, 30 Carden Place, Aberdeen.
 Robert J. A. Dunn, 5 Queen's Road, Aberdeen.
 William Dunn, M.A., LL.B., 11 and 12 Clement's Lane, London, E.C.
 James Hastings Edwards, M.A., LL.B., 1 Golden Square, Aberdeen.
 Austyn J. C. Fyfe, F.F.A., 27 Belvidere Crescent, Aberdeen.
 James B. Gillies, B.L., 375 Great Western Road, Aberdeen.
 James Iverach, 12 Ferryhill Place, Aberdeen.
 James Vass Lorimer, 55 King's Gate, Aberdeen.
 D. Ronald Macdonald, 98 Queen's Road, Aberdeen.
 J. Duncan MacDiarmid, M.A., B.L., 173A Union Street.
 Cecil Mackie, 35 Forest Road, Aberdeen.
 William Malcolm, 164 Bonaccord Street, Aberdeen.
 J. Bruce Miller, 17 Rubislaw Den North, Aberdeen.
 A. P. Milne, Cressbrook, Queen's Road, Aberdeen.
 J. W. Milne, C.A., 46A Union Street, Aberdeen.
 Alex. Ogilvie, 119 Hamilton Place, Aberdeen.
 Ian Maxwell Ratray, Coral Bank, Blairgowrie.
 John Robertson, 62 Queen's Road, Aberdeen.
 Charles Reid, M.A., Woodbank, Cults.
 William F. Shirras, 16 Carden Place, Aberdeen.
 A. Landsborough Thomson, Castletown House, Chanonry, Old Aberdeen.
 Alexander Mackay Watt, 130 Hamilton Place, Aberdeen.
 Theodore Watt, M.A., Rosemount Press, Aberdeen.
 Alexander Morrice Wilson, M.A., Beechwood, Rubislaw Den South, Aberdeen.
 H. E. Wright, M.A., 11A New Square, Lincoln's Inn, London, W.C.

REVIEWS.

MESSRS. LONGMAN have just published a handsome volume, "King Edward VII. as a Sportsman," by Alfred E. T. Watson. His Majesty, as everybody knows, was interested in nearly every form of sport—
 EDWARD VII. except angling. He was a fairly good shot, had stalked
 AND deer in his time, was fond of yachting, and delighted in
 BALMORAL. horse-racing; but "the river, except as a 'thing of beauty,'
 had no charm for him—neither by temperament nor by
 circumstance was he predisposed to the angler's art." More than all this,
 the King, according to the introduction to the volume, possessed in a
 superlative degree all the qualifications that mark the perfect sportsman,
 and took the right view of sport; "instead of being a slave to it and making
 a business of it, to him it was always a relaxation, and often a much-needed

one—he valued sport more for what it gave him than for the actual thing itself.” The social and sociable side of sport specially appealed to the King, we are told, and was displayed in a very marked manner when His Majesty was in residence at Balmoral. “Perhaps nowhere in the domain of sport did King Edward feel more thoroughly in his element than he did when, seated in the heather and surrounded by his guests, he could breathe the keen Scotch air that he always loved, and enjoy to the full the matchless scenery of the slopes of Lochnagar.”

The introduction just quoted from is furnished by Captain the Hon. Sir Seymour Fortescue, who for the last seventeen years was Equerry-in-Waiting to the King. He also contributes the chapter devoted to Balmoral, though two-thirds of it is written by Captain Blair Oliphant, of Ardblair Castle, Blairgowrie, whose assistance he secured “to do justice to Balmoral.” Much of the chapter, of course, relates to deer-stalking and stags that fell to King Edward’s rifle, and accounts are given of “the good men and true whose lives had been devoted to the care of the forest,” embracing a very striking reference to the intimacy that sprang up between His Majesty and Arthur Grant, the head stalker. Of Balmoral as a sporting ground Captain Oliphant says:—

“There is in the length and breadth of Scotland no stretch of country more fitted by its natural beauties and sporting amenities for the recreation of Kings than the moors and glens of the Upper Dee. Here is to be found the best of all that Scotland has to offer to the lover of the beautiful, to the seeker after health and rest, and to the sportsman. In the narrow compass between the Cairngorm Mountains on the north and Lochnagar on the south are all the delights that Nature, in her wildest and most untrammelled flights, holds forth to those who have the understanding to take pleasure in her contrasts and caprices. Here is solitude and the storm, here silence and the deep chanting of the wind, here the forbidding austerity of crag and scarp and the laughter of a thousand streams, here the naked summits in unabashed array and the little hills clad decently with birch and pine. And in the midst of all the river, as it were, the soul of the land.”

“**ABERDEEN Street Names: Their History, Meaning, and Personal Associations**”, by G. M. FRASER, Aberdeen: The Bonaccord Press, 1911. Price 3/6 net.—This, the latest addition to the works

ABERDEEN STREET NAMES. by our City’s Librarian, is one which possesses particular interest to our club members. Its title is sufficiently explicit to indicate the nature of the volume, but not until one has read the book can one have an idea of the wealth of local history and tradition contained in its pages.

The author makes the street names, which have perhaps become, through familiarity, nothing more than names, alive with associations. Few of us in the bustle of business, hurrying along the Netherkirkgate, pause to remind ourselves that we are on one of the paths taken by our forefathers to the old St. Nicholas Church; nor do we think on our evening stroll by Forest Road and the Stockets that we are treading the ground covered by the old Stocket Forest, one of the seven Royal hunting forests of Aberdeenshire, where the incident is said to have occurred of the saving of the King

from a ferocious wolf, which was slain by a Highland follower, with his skein. His reward was a grant of land in the forest, and thus arose the family and lands of Skene. Mr. Fraser gives us some very happy derivations, and we cannot but admire his patient effort and his firmness in refusing those quite likely but yet inadmissible. His story of such names as Footdee, Guestrow, Mounthooly, and many others, far too numerous to mention, are full of romance.

It is a book which should be possessed by every one of our Club Members, who will find that after reading it their pedestrian excursions around and in our own town have a new and living interest.

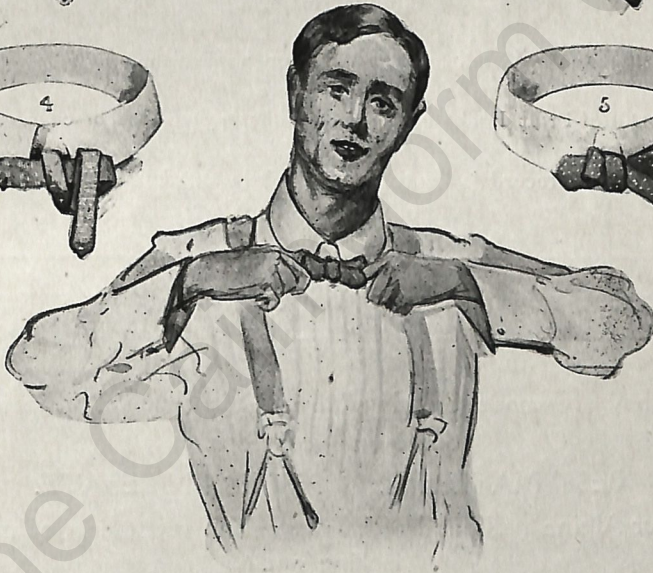
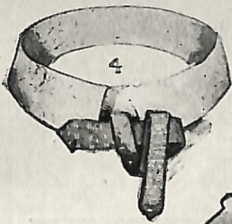
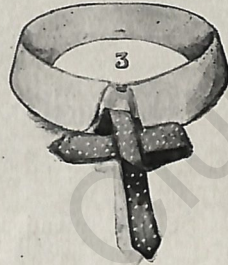
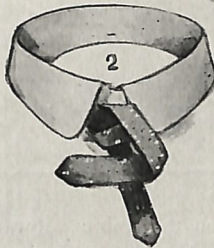
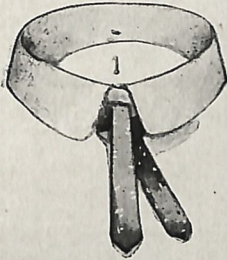
The author has earned the sincere gratitude of all Aberdonians for bringing to light the many stirring memories of his latest book.

"Swiss Mountain Climbs", by George D. Abraham, London: Mills & Boon, Ltd., 1911. Price 7/6 net.—Mr. Abraham is one of the most prolific of all writers on Mountaineering. Hardly a season passes but we have some new work from his pen; and this, his latest book, keeps up the high standard to which his previous works attained. "Swiss Mountain Climbs" deals with the Swiss Alps in three parts:—

- I. The Bernese Oberland and its outlying groups.
- II. The Pennine Alps.
- III. The Bernina Alps and outlying centres.

The Alps of Savoy, which of course are not "Swiss," are conspicuous by their absence. The book is full of thrilling tales of perilous climbs and stormy glacier passages; and besides being a most excellent guide-book, is also a charming volume to read, although one has not been, nor may ever be, attacking the cliffs of the Schreckhorn.

To the first-class climber the book is useful, and to the moderate man it is almost invaluable, and even to the ordinary tourist doing a fortnight in "The Playground of Europe" it has much that will help and guide. From the more important centres, series of walks and easy climbs are described with precision and in detail. Yes, the book is one that should be in the hands of all who leave our shores for Switzerland, and it will be found to be a more amusing, and only slightly less exhaustive, guide than Karl Baedeker! Mr. Abraham's photographs are, as usual, one of the features of his book.



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