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THE Cairngorm Club Journal.

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MR. JOHN CLARKE, M.A.,
CHAIRMAN OF THE CLUB, 1910-12.

THE

Cairngorm Club Journal.

Vol. VIII. JANUARY, 1916. No. 46

SOME PLACE-NAMES IN THE CAIRNGORM REGION.

By Professor W. J. Watson, M.A., LL.D.

At the request of the Editor, who has provided me with a copy of the July issue, I have undertaken to write a few notes on this subject, which is naturally of interest to the members of the Club. It would not be very difficult, if the thing were gone about in the right way, to form an approximately complete list of the names within the Club's sphere of operations, in alphabetical order, in orthodox Gaelic spelling, and with authoritative interpretation of their meanings. For this there is one condition necessary, and that is that the names, so far as possible, shall be checked from the mouths of Gaelic speakers native to the surrounding districts, especially Badenoch and Braemar. This is not a piece of work that can be done by any chance man who can read and write Gaelic; it is work for an expert, and one who would do it with authority is the Rev. C. M. Robertson, U.F. Church, Kilchoman, Islay. If the Cairngorm Club can persuade Mr. Robertson to spend a summer holiday in Braemar and Badenoch, it will have done a good work. Once the data have been secured, the process of interpretation would not, I believe, in this particular case offer much difficulty. At present, however, there are by no means sufficient data as to the true forms of the

names, and it should be obvious that a discussion that does not start from firm data is futile. Yet this, if I may say so with respect, is exactly the character of the discussions in the number before me. The one thing needful, the native pronunciation in Gaelic, is the one thing that nobody thinks of ascertaining.

The name of the pass from Badenoch to Braemar is a case in point. All Gaelic speakers who have the native tradition call it *Làirig Dhrù*, and there is no doubt whatever that the name is connected with the stream Druie, at its Badenoch end. It seemed good, however, to some Ordnance Survey man to write it down not as it was, but as he thought it ought to be, and so we got the official *Làirig Ghruamach*, as we got thousands of "official" names besides. Dr. MacBain, our greatest authority on Gaelic philology, compared the river Druie with the Gaulish stream Druentia, and would connect both with the root of Gaelic *drùdhadh*, oozing, soaking. Those who follow Dr. MacBain will not, as a rule, find themselves far wrong.

The *Beinn Iutharn* problem proceeds on the same lines: data not ascertained. Here, however, the question is complicated by dialect. The native pronunciation is difficult to reproduce, but may be written *Beinn (Fh)iùbharainn*, which is dialectic for *Beinn Fhaobharainn*, based on *faobhar*, edge. The dialectic peculiarity is that both in Braemar and on the south side of the Grampians, *faobhar* is palatalised into *fyaobhar*, which becomes in common speech *fiùbhar*. The same sort of palatalisation is heard in the dialectic pronunciation of "smooth" as "smyooth." *Faobhar na beinne*, the edge of the hill, is a well-known Gaelic expression, applied to the sloping part of the outline or sky-line of a hill, as opposed to the flat outline or sky-line of the top, which is *fàire*. The termination in *Beinn Fhiùbharainn* is not clear; it may be *roinn*, a point, spit, yielding the meaning "edge-point."

Allt na Bienne is truly an impossible form for Scottish Gaelic, whatever it might be for a possible

French variety. On the other hand, it does not follow that *Allt na Beinne* is right, though it is unquestionably good Gaelic. The question here again is—What do the Gaelic people call the stream? The best authority available to me assures me that it is called *Beanaïdh* (Bennie) simply, without the addition of *allt* or *abhainn*. If so, the name belongs to the large class of stream names with the ending *(a)idh*, common in the North and East of Scotland—that is, in Pictland—e.g., Tromie, Geldie, Divie. The root may be that of old Irish *ben-im*, I smite.

Burn o' Vat is a correct translation of *Allt na Dabhaich*, which is the original. The term *dabhach* (davoch) was applied to any large vat, but it is familiar to me only as applied to the vat used in connection with distilling, especially of a private nature. There is another *Allt na Dabhaich* at Dunvallary, Ledaig. The secondary use of *dabhach*, as applied in Scotland to a measure of land, is well known.

Cairntoul has been often discussed. It is surely simply *Carn an t-sabhail*, Barn-cairn. What and where is the barn? *Carn Sabhail* in Ross means Cairn of Barns (plural) and it is noted for its grass. But among the Cairngorms, the term *sabhal* is used to denote, fancifully, wild rocks—e.g., *Sabhalan* Bynack, the barns of Bynack. I think Cairntable, in Galloway, is the same as Cairntoul, but whether the barn was real or metaphorical, I do not know here either.

The Devil's Point is known to be a euphemistic translation of *Bod an Deamhain*. To judge from the place-names, the Devil had quite a connection in Aberdeenshire—e.g., Bogenjohn, for *Bog an Deamhain*, the Devil's morass; and other places which I refrain from naming.

In Braeriach, "brae" is *bràigh*, upper part; seen in Braemar, Braemoray and many other instances, followed by a genitive case—"upper part of Mar," and so on. Here, however, it is qualified by the adjective *riabhach*, brindled, the name meaning "the brindled upland."

Derry is known in Gaelic as *an Doire*, the copse. The old name of Londonderry in Ireland is *Doire Calgaich*, Calgach's (= Calgacus) oak-copse, mentioned in Adamnan's "Life of Columba" (circ. 700 A.D.) as Roboretum Calgaci. But *doire* now means any kind of copse, not oak only. There is another Derry on the north side of Loch Earn, Perthshire, also *an Doire* in Gaelic.

Of Loch Etchachan I can say nothing, for I do not know whether the initial vowel is long or short as the word is pronounced in Gaelic.

Loch Avon takes its name from the stream that issues from it, and this is well named *Athfhinn*, the very white one, from the clearness of its water. Avon elsewhere usually represents *abhainn*, a river, but not here.

Loch Callater is in Gaelic pronounced *Loch Caladair*, and *Caladar* becomes in Scotch Cawdor. It is a stream name, a compound of *cal*, call, and *dobhar*, water. It ought to be a sounding stream, like the *Calair* of Balquhidder. The idea of "calling" is quite common in river names. Any one who has fished a pool below a little rapid at dead of night knows how the stream talks.

The same idea is seen in Lochnagar, in Gaelic *Loch na Gàire*, the loch of the outcry, with reference to the howling of the wind among the rocks. It is hardly necessary to say that now the name has been transferred from loch to mountain.

Glen Giusachan, or in Gaelic spelling *Giùthsachan*, means Glen of the little fir wood, the term *giuthsachan* being a diminutive of *giuthsach*, a fir wood, seen in *Cinn a' Ghiùthsaich*, Kingussie, "at Firwood Head."

The name Corriemuillie occurs twice in Ross-shire as well as in Aberdeenshire. It means "Mill Corry," from *muileann*, mas. or fem., a mill; genitive, *muilne*, fem. The mills in question would have been, doubtless, of the old type with horizontal wheel connected directly by a rigid vertical shaft with the millstone above it; in fact, a water-driven quern. This kind of mill is still in active use in Lewis, where I saw one last year.

I have taken the above place-names at random from the July number of the *Journal*.

ABERDEEN TO FORT WILLIAM THROUGH GLEN FESHIE.

By James B. Nicol.

Nearly twenty years ago, in company with several friends, I paid a number of vists to the Cairngorm Mountains and to the district about Braemar. These expeditions were undertaken usually on the spring holidays, and for a number of years they were regarded by us as annual events; but after a time other interests claimed our attention, and the excursions became interrupted and less regular, and in the end they were dropped altogether. Among the various roads which intersect this wild mountainous region, the path from Braemar to Speyside through Glen Feshie has ever seemed to me a singularly attractive one; but from some reason or other it is one of the few walks in this district which we never attempted. Happening, however, to read last year a description of the physical features of the district, and in particular of Glen Feshie, my interest in it was again aroused, and, after some consideration, I resolved to visit it at the earliest opportunity. This presented itself in August last; but as my friends of former years were unavailable, and as I did not happen to know at the time of a suitable companion to accompany me, I had to undertake it by myself. To attempt such a walk with any reasonable chance of success necessarily entails some preparation beforehand, and to this end I proposed to walk up part of Deeside before attempting Glen Feshie. If thereafter I succeeded in reaching Speyside, I might go still farther afield and prolong my tour to Fort William, but this extension would of necessity be dependent on my earlier success.

Monday, 16th August, was the date I had fixed for setting forth. Rain had fallen heavily during the previous night and in the morning the weather seemed

so unpromising that, at the last moment, I decided to go by train to Drum. Here, as the rain had ceased, I got out and commenced walking. Speed being a secondary consideration in my programme, the first part of the way was taken at a leisurely pace; halts were made at intervals to examine any interesting features of the country, and towards evening I arrived at Aboyne, 20 miles from my starting-point. The following day—Tuesday—the twelve miles between Aboyne and Ballater were covered in about three hours; but while it was my intention to devote more time to this interesting stretch of country, the threatening aspect of the weather forbade delay. I walked steadily on and about noon reached Ballater. The road to Braemar is one which, in the course of years, has become thoroughly familiar to me, and, being anxious to reach the head of Glen Dee before darkness set in, I decided to get along it as quickly as possible, and accordingly took the motor bus and reached Braemar at 3.30 p.m.

Half an hour sufficed to complete some minor arrangements, and at 4 p.m. I set out for Bynack Lodge, 12 miles distant. The route chosen at the outset was the less frequented and more agreeable path through the moor to the Car Cairn: here, since the weather had improved and the sun shone brilliantly, a glorious view of the hills was obtained, while westward, as far as the eye could reach, the river could be seen glistening in the afternoon sun. Descending again to the main road beyond Corriemulzie, I passed through Inverey, and soon reached the Linn of Dee and the end of civilization in Deeside.

In the bare moor leading westward from the Linn, few signs of life were seen. A herd of deer, startled at my approach, trotted away gracefully to the south, and a solitary curlew wailed out its melancholy note; but, apart from these evidences, the whole valley seemed to be untenanted and for the first time since I had set out a decidedly eerie feeling crept over me as the evening advanced. On turning the corner beyond the Bridge of

Dee, however, I was cheered by a glimpse of Beinn a' Ghlo, its peak crimsoned with the light from the setting sun; then I sighted the spruces surrounding Bynack, and, on reaching the Lodge received a hospitable welcome from the solitary keeper stationed there.

Next morning—Wednesday—after an early breakfast, a start was made for Glen Geldie. The two keepers—from Bynack and Geldie respectively—had arranged to shoot deer in the glen, and as their route coincided with my own, I considered myself fortunate in having company for the first part of my way. In an hour Geldie Lodge was reached, and there we separated: the keepers, disappointed in signs of deer, made off to the south, while I, continuing due west, entered the extensive moor leading to the Feshie. Here, so far as I could discover, no road exists. Various tracks I followed at the outset landed me in bogs or died out, and at last, growing weary of these false trails, I gave up the quest and made straight for a small ridge which the keepers had pointed out to guide me through the moor. This was duly reached, and seating myself behind a big boulder, I made a leisurely survey of my surroundings before proceeding farther. The most prominent features in Glen Geldie—which by this time I had passed through—are the two large imposing hills named An Sgarsoch and Carn an Fhidhleir (Cairn Ealar) (3,300 feet and 3,276 feet respectively). These rise in long sweeping slopes to fully 1600 feet above the valley: both stand on the county boundary between Aberdeen and Perth, but Cairn Ealar has the additional distinction of being the meeting-point of the three counties of Aberdeen, Perth and Inverness. The ascent in Glen Geldie is so gradual that on arriving at the ridge I was at first doubtful if I had actually reached the watershed, but, on looking westward, my doubts were immediately settled, on observing the Geldie and the Feshie flowing away from each other in opposite directions. No ridge of any consequence separates the streams, and to all appearance little effort would even

now be required to divert the waters of the Feshie into—what is now generally admitted to have been—their old channel down Glen Geldie.

Crossing the county march into Inverness-shire, I now made my way over rough broken ground to the banks of the Feshie, where I struck the footpath leading down the Glen. Before I had gone far it became apparent that the general character of this glen was entirely different from that of Glen Geldie. Instead of a wide open valley with easy side slopes and an almost imperceptible gradient, I here found a comparatively narrow, steep-sided, winding glen, which fell so rapidly that in a short time it assumed a deep trench-like appearance. The side hills rose in height and became more precipitous; dykes of harder rock projected from their sides like the ribs of some mighty giant; wild gullies opened up here and there, and long talus slopes of loose stones gathered round their base. Suddenly, on coming round the bend in the middle of the glen, a great scene presented itself in the appearance of the two hills, Craig Caillich and Creag-na-Gaibhre, on either side of the gorge, which, rising almost vertically to a great height, form a most impressive natural gateway to the glen. Up to this point the floor of the valley had been encumbered with great quantities of glacial deposits, in which the river has cut a deep channel on the west side; but beyond this the valley opens out and forms a level grassy haugh, through which the stream runs at lessened speed and in a number of branches. Large Scotch fir trees of great age—a remnant, it is believed, of the ancient Caledonian forest—cover the haugh and afford a grateful shade, and the situation was so agreeable and restful that I halted here for more than an hour to have lunch and a good rest. On a high bank on the other side of the river could be seen Glen Feshie Lodge—the shooting-box of Sir George Cooper. The Lodge, which was largely rebuilt a few years ago, is well surrounded with trees and commands a fine view of the gorge which I had just descended.

Resuming my walk, I crossed the Feshie by a long trestle-bridge and followed the left bank for about three miles, until I struck the hill road leading westward to Kingussie. This road crosses a high rolling moor, from which an extensive view is obtained of the surrounding country. The tablelands of the Cairngorms, the Monadhliaths and the Gaick were all comparatively near neighbours; but through a gap in the hills to the south-west appeared another sea of hill-tops fading into the blue distance, which from their direction I concluded must be the hills of Lochaber near Glen Spean. Descending through the moorland I soon came to the river Tromie, but for a distance of nearly half a mile beyond the river I found the roadway had been cut up and destroyed in a most extraordinary manner by a severe thunderstorm and cloudburst which had occurred only a few days previously. Shortly after this the ruins of Ruthven Barracks were passed, then the Spey was crossed, and about six o'clock I reached Kingussie.

Next morning, Thursday, I entered on the first stage of my journey to Fort William. The effects of my previous day's walk of 24 miles had not yet passed off, and finding that a motor car plied daily to Laggan Inn, I availed myself of its help and by this means was carried there in an hour and a half. The scenery of Upper Strathspey and Strath Mashie, through which I passed, is so grand that at the time I regretted I had not given more time to it and walked the whole way; but, on the other hand, I consoled myself with the reflection that I had escaped a long walk of 18 miles on a hard macadamized road and would in all probability find quite sufficient scope for the exercise of my energies on the remainder of the road down Glen Spean.

For the first two hours after leaving Laggan Inn I walked along the northern shore of Loch Laggan, a noble sheet of water, some seven miles long and about half a mile in width. Two large hills, Binnein Shios and Binnein Shuas, rose directly from the waters of the loch on the south side; while on the north side the lower

portions of the massive Creag Meaghaidh and Carn Liath were seen towering up into the clouds; owing to mist, however, their summits were never exposed to view. After passing the loch the valley widens, and Glen Spean proper is entered. At first the river Spean, which drains the loch, pursues a winding course through an alluvial flat, but gradually, as it works westward, it cuts deeply into moraine hillocks which block the valley near Loch Treig, and latterly, on nearing Glen Roy, it plunges into a magnificent rock gorge which it has cut through the schists. Loch Treig itself cannot be seen from the road, but the two large hills on either side of it, Cnoc Dearg and Easain Mhor, were conspicuous features all afternoon: these form part of the range which continues as far west as Fort William and culminates there in the Ben Nevis group. On coming opposite Loch Treig, the first indications of the "parallel roads" may be observed in the long straight line which is visible for a number of miles on either side of the valley at a considerable height on the hillside. At this point, too, the railway line to Fort William enters the glen and brings some evidences of civilization into the scene: otherwise the appearance of Glen Spean is desolate in the extreme—few houses exist, and little or no traffic passes over the road, while the absence of travellers makes walking monotonous and lonely. Only at one or two points were any signs of cultivation observed, and even sheep-grazing seems to be engaged in to a very limited extent.

Next day, Friday, Glen Roy was visited in rather adverse conditions. The early morning was very wet, thick mist hung low on the hills, but, on a slight improvement taking place after breakfast, I walked up the glen for four miles to the point known as "the gap," from which an excellent view of the upper part of the glen may be had. There the three level lines or "parallel roads" are very clearly visible—indeed, much better than I had anticipated they would be seen; and for several miles ahead they could be traced, keeping their exact

relation to each other and following all the slight irregularities of the hillsides. The lines—or old beach levels, to give them their correct designation—clearly show the great extent and depth of the glacial loch which filled this and the adjacent valley, and indicate no less clearly the enormous mass of the Glen Spean glacier which blocked the lower end of Glen Roy and impounded the waters of the loch. Rain, however, prevented a farther advance up the glen. I returned to the Roy Bridge Inn at noon, and thereafter walked the remaining 13 miles to Fort William. The stretch of country between Roy Bridge and Spean Bridge is well wooded and forms a pleasant contrast to the country both east and west, and the gorges at these bridges are well worth visiting; but the remainder of the road to Fort William surpasses in dreariness and desolation the upper part of Glen Spean. Unfortunately, the weather was most unfavourable: cold rain showers frequently drove me to seek shelter wherever available, and thick mist hung far down on the hills; and it was with a certain feeling of relief that I at last reached more civilized regions and eventually arrived at my destination about 4 p.m.

The task which I had set before me at the outset was now practically accomplished. In the five days since I started I had walked over 107 miles, and in addition, had travelled by train and motor about 46 miles, and, considering my want of training, I concluded I had stood the journey well. The remainder of the afternoon and evening were spent "building castles in the air," or, in other words, planning further excursions to use up other five days I had at my disposal. These latterly resolved themselves into:—(1) a day on Ben Nevis—principally in mist; (2) a whole day spent in Glen Nevis; (3) a train journey in rain to Arisaig, and a walk from thence to Mallaig, visiting Loch Morar on the way; (4) a sail in a patrol boat from Mallaig to Kyle of Lochalsh through the Sound of Sleat, and in the evening a walk to Broadford Inn in Skye; and (5) a visit to the Red Hills and to Blaven on Loch Slapin, returning to Broadford at

night. A full account of these five very enjoyable days would extend far beyond the limits of these notes, and I must forego further reference to them meanwhile. But on leaving Broadford, I inwardly registered a vow, that if, after these days of stress and warfare are past, I should ever chance to have ten days to spare, I should spend them in Skye. In my ten days' holiday I had walked over 180 miles, and, with the exception of a vicious blister on my instep, I felt capable of going on indefinitely. My return journey was performed in the orthodox fashion by boat to Kyle of Lochalsh and by train through Inverness to Aberdeen.

FIR NAM BEANN.

("LAND OF THE HILLS.")

Back from the fevered crowd and stifling weather,
To the wide moorland with its soothing winds:
Faint hum the bees among the blooming heather,
And the red stag is calling to his hinds.

High over far-off hills the eagle yet is sailing;
In frothy rushing pools the leaping salmon play;
Loud in the glen uncanny curlew wailing,
Iscariot-driven, their mission to betray.

* * * * * * *

DUGALD MACINTYRE.

—*Chambers's Journal* for August.

—Slieve Bearnagh.

—Lough Shannagh.

—Slieve Commedagh.

—Slieve Donard.

—Rocky Mountain.

—Slieve Bignian.

Photo by *James Gray Kyd.*

PANORAMIC VIEW FROM SLIEVE MUCK.

THE MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE.

By James Gray Kyd.

When we've got all we want we're as quiet as can be
Where the Mountains o' Mourne sweep down to the sea.
—*Irish Song.*

THE sea-girt Mountains of Mourne have attracted me for many years. Before ever I had seen Ireland I had heard of their charm; and passing glimpses of their graceful outlines, which later I had had when travelling between Dublin and Belfast, deepened my desire to visit them. One clear sunny day last August, when lying among the heather and the gorse on the rocky headland of Howth—which forms the northern arm of Dublin Bay—I saw in the distant horizon their wavy outlines rolling down to the sea. I determined then that I must visit Mourne, aud that right early.

It was therefore with a joyful heart that, with a congenial companion, I set out from Dublin in mid-September, bound for the ancient kingdom of Mourne. We had arranged to spend a few days at Greenore, on the southern extremity of Carlingford Lough, and the first near view of the mountains which we got that September evening was one that shall live long in our memory. We had left the city in bright sunshine, but as our train steamed northward, the sun was blotted out by haze, and as we tapered our way to the point of Greenore, the countryside was shrouded in mist. Across the waters of the lough the dark forms of the Mourne Mountains showed dim and hazy in the distance, their glens sombre in the failing light, and their summits lost in the clouds. It was not difficult to picture the fierce feuds and bloody battles which once on a time were waged in this wild region. Across the waters stand the ruins of Greencastle—the southern

fortress of the kingdom—which formed the stronghold and the grave of many a warrior in years that are gone.

The few days which we spent at Greenore before crossing to County Down to explore the Mournes afforded us many wonderful sights of the changing beauty of the dark, silent mountains. The intervening strip of water, with its ever-changing colour, makes a fine foreground for the mountains beyond. The sight of mountains rising steeply from the sea is not one that is common to those whose climbing is mainly done in eastern Scotland, and it is a special delight to us to find the mountainous parts of Ireland mainly on the coast. Unlike Scotland, the Emerald Isle has a flat central plain with a girdle of mountains around the sea shores, both east and west, and the charm of sea-scapes seen from the mountains is new to one whose principal mountain exploits have been among the Cairn-gorms. A view of a winding coast is a pleasant change from a landscape of billowy hills; and a sea studded with islets—such as one views from the mountains of Connemara or from the peaks of Skye—with the broad Atlantic rolling towards the sunset, may perhaps hold a charm less alloyed than does a depopulated Highland glen.

The Mourne Mountains are a cluster rather than a range, although there is a distinct succession of peaks starting among the stately oaks of Rostrevor in the south-west, which trends in a north-easterly direction to Newcastle, culminating in Slieve Donard, and then bends in sickle-shape south-eastward toward the sea at Kilkeel. Our intention was to follow this outer rim of the group, leaving to a future date the exploration of the wedges of mountains which penetrate into the centre of this great outer chain.*

*Mourne Mountains in Down.—The ancient name was Beanna Boirche, the peaks of the shepherd Boirche, who herded on these mountains the cattle of Ross, King of Ulster in the third century. About the middle of the twelfth century a tribe of the MacMahons from Cremorne, in Monaghan, settled in the south of the present county of Down, and gave their tribe name of Mughdhorna (Mourna) to the barony of Mourne and to the Mourne Mountains.—Joyce's "Irish Local Names Explained."

After a few days at Greenore, we journeyed to Warrenpoint, at the head of Carlingford Lough, by the London and North-Western Railway Company's paddle steamer which plies around the fjord. The day was dull and the outlines of the mountains were only faintly visible, but the mist added a weird wonder to the dark glens which cut deeply into the centre of Mourne. From Warrenpoint the motor omnibus took us to the sylvan village of Rostrevor, where we left the lough behind and wended our way up the steep street towards the Hilltown road. About half a mile from Rostrevor the road forks, the right hand branch crossing the Kilbroney River. This was the road we took. It winds pleasantly through meadowland. with a well-wooded hillside on our right. A linen mill is passed, about two miles from Rostrevor, with its sloping bleaching greens, which make their presence known to more than one of the senses. We are in the linen country, and these mills have brought wealth and fame to Ulster from the farthest corners of the world.

The sun was struggling hard to gain a mastery over the clouds, but by the time we reached the Yellow Water bridge—one hour after leaving Rostrevor —the day looked very bad. We were not deterred, however, and started up the banks of the Yellow Water, which is appropriately named on account of the several mineral springs that discolour the main stream. There is a turf-cutters' track which mounts the hillside steeply on the right bank of the stream, and should any Club member ever follow our route, we recommend the track rather than the bank of the stream, as there the bracken is shoulder high, and higher up the rocks and heather afford very bad going. At about 1,000 feet level we got into the clouds. We hugged the right bank of the stream till it lost itself in a bog on the plateau to the south of the cone of Shanlieve. Here we struck northward up the steep shoulder of the mountain, and found the summit with difficulty, as the mist was very dense. Our original intention was to

walk along the range of Eagle Mountain, through Windy Gap on to Pigeon Rock Mountain, and thence on to Hilltown *via* Cock Mountain and Hen Mountain, but with only two and a half hours more of daylight, and the mist as thick as ever I have seen it, we made a north-westerly direction to endeavour to pick up the turf-cutters' road which joins the Hilltown road at the Leitrim fork.

These turf-cutters' tracks are a feature of the mountains of Ireland, leading from the country by-ways up to the great turf-bogs, or peat-bogs, as they would be called in Scotland. The turf industry is much developed, and these bogs are hives of industry in the summer and autumn months. The turf is carted to the banks of the canals, which link up the whole of Ireland, and is conveyed on long flat barges to the cities, where it is put to its many uses. The burning of turf in city homes is much more common in Ireland than in Scotland. The canal banks along the out-skirts of Dublin are busy depôts for the distribution of the fuel throughout the city, and walking in the suburbs on a calm evening, one is reminded of the scents of a clachan in the Highlands.

After descending some 700 feet we came to an impassable bog which forms the feeding source of the Rocky Water. We tried various routes round it, but deemed it better to strike south-west and get back to the Yellow Water again. The descent was made in thick mist, the whole countryside being blotted out. We reached the Hilltown road at 5.15, and started tramping northward to Hilltown, where we arrived about 7 o'clock, glad to receive the very kindly welcome afforded to us at the inn.

We have heard few wilder nights than the night which followed our first day in Mourne. The wind reached hurricane force, and the rain came down in sheets. We were rather despondent as we sat at breakfast next morning, and till about half-past ten the day looked hopeless. But the cheery postman shed

Photo by *James Gray Kyd.*

SLIEVE BEARNAGH, FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

Photo by *James Gray Kyd.*

LOOKING SOUTH FROM SLIEVE BEARNAGH.

hope into our doubting hearts by assuring us that it was to clear, and, sure enough, he was right, so by half-past eleven we started on our journey. We took the main Newcastle road until the fork about a mile and a half from Hilltown ; here, we took the right-hand road under the well-named Hen Mountain, which certainly bears a most striking resemblance to a brooding hen. We wound our way up the steep road by the Kinnahalla plantation of fir and birch. The river Bann on our right was a wonderful sight after the heavy rain, as it plunged over the rocky ledges—which form a striking feature almost right up to the watershed—hurrying on to rest a while in the ample bosom of Lough Neagh before losing itself in the waters of the North Atlantic.

As we climbed, the broad cultivated plain of County Down opened up behind us, with the prosperous little towns dotted here and there, and that view gave us hopes of a fine prospect when we reached the summit of the road at 1,225 feet.

When nearing the last few feet of a climb over a col, we always have a strong inclination to hurry on to catch the earliest glimpse of the country beyond. The rain of the night had cleared the air as well as filled the rivers, and seldom have we seen a more delightful prospect than met our eyes as we reached the summit of the pass on the lonely Deer's Meadow, as the flat summit plateau is appropriately named.

In the foreground, the mountain road trended away southward down the boulder-strewn hillside ; beyond was the richly-cultivated pasture-land which lies between the mountains and Kilkeel, and then the flat tongue of County Louth stretching out into the Irish Sea between Carlingford Lough and Dundalk Bay. Farther south, the sandy Leinster coast leads on to Lambay Island and Howth Head, and on and on, till our eyes carried us away into County Wicklow, where the Bray Head and Sugar Loaf stood out grandly against the dome of blue.

Our route lay up the steep side of Slieve Muck (2,198 feet). A well-built stone wall runs up to the summit, and good dry ground is to be found by its side: forty minutes' climb brought us to the crest, and there for the first time we looked into the heart of Mourne. Slieve Muck forms the pivot of the whole cluster, and the view around was wonderful. Rocky Slieve Bearnagh mounts guard over Lough Shannagh, and is joined to our view point by the rounded hills—Carn Mountain, Slieve Lough Shannagh, and the two Slieve Meels. Farther east from Bearnagh our eyes carry us over Slieve Commedagh to Slieve Donard—the monarch of Mourne—and round the great silent amphitheatre of brown and sullen mountains to Slieve Bignian, with its rocky torrs of granite, which have stood the weathering of ages. Away to the north-east the Mull of Galloway stretches towards us; and, farther south, in the hazy distance, the Isle of Man relieves the otherwise unbroken outlines of the Irish Sea. Away westward, the view is very different. Cultivated fields give place to barren hillsides, and smiling villages to lonely valleys. North-west, away in the dim distance, we see the waters of Lough Neagh—that great inland sea—and, beyond, the blue outlines of the Sperrin Mountains of Derry. In the northern horizon our eyes meet the Cave Hill and the other prominent points around Belfast Lough. I have seldom seen a more satisfying prospect than that which unfolded itself to us that lovely September day in the heart of the mountains of Mourne.

From Slieve Muck our route lay north-east towards Slieve Bearnagh (2,394 feet). We skirted the intervening hills and reached the dip between Slieve Meel More and Slieve Bearnagh about an hour after leaving Slieve Muck. The final ascent of Bearnagh is very steep and fatiguing, but the toil of the climb is soon forgotten on the wonderful rocky summit of this magnificent mountain. The view is similar to that from Slieve Muck, but the dignified Slieve Donard

is closer, and the two deep cuts of the Silent Valley and the Annalong River, with Slieve Bignian dividing them, is a fresh prospect. The Silent Valley winds away to the sea, flanked by dark frowning precipices.*

After spending as long as we could on Bearnagh, we struck down to the Hare's Gap—a steep dip between Bearnagh and Slievenaglogh. The sides of the Trassey Valley, which runs north-west from the Hare's Gap, are buttressed with dark precipices on either side, and we saw several chimneys and ledges which, we are sure, would give sport to those members of the Club who favour this form of hill-climbing. As we rested on the Hare's Gap, the lights of evening were deepening and the shadows lengthening. The sky overhead was deep blue; near the distant horizon it faded into a wonderful green as it met the pink-tipped clouds, which changed into a purple hue as they lost themselves in the distance of the Sperrin Mountains.

A good path runs down the valley and joins the Hilltown-Newcastle road, short of the flax mill on the Shimna River. It was moonlight when we walked down the valley towards the sea, and by the time we reached the wooded village of Byransford, the full moon was lighting up the water with its silvery beams, and throwing into dark relief the valleys of the mountains. Soon the welcome lights of Newcastle

* *Slieve* (Irish *Sliabh*)—cognate to Welsh *Llyfr*, Old High German *Slipf*, and Anglo-Saxon *Tó slípan*—in Irish place-names signifies sometimes a mountain, sometimes a range of mountains, and sometimes even a whole district of mountainous country. "The word in the Anglicised form of *Slieve* is applied to a great number of the principal mountains in Ireland, and it is almost always followed by a limiting form, such as an adjective or a noun in a genitive case. For example, Slievesnaght, the name of a mountain in Innishowen, and of several others in different parts of the country, represents the Irish *Sliab-sneachta*, the mountain of the snow; Slievemore, great mountain; Slievemuck, pig mountain."—Joyce's "Origin and History of Irish Names of Places."

The Irish word *Beann*, corresponding to Scottish *Ben* and Welsh *Pen*, is used for a mountain, the gable of a house, or anything of that nature sharply defined and pointed. Thus the adjective derived from it, *beannach*, corresponds to Scott's "antlered monarch of the waste."

were seen, and we were glad to get rest and refreshment in this delightful spot.

Newcastle is probably the best starting-point for excursions among the Mourne Mountains. The giants of the group are all within easy access, and there are many attractions around this charming seaside village. The golf course is surpassed by few even in Scotland, and the ever-changing views of sea and hill are a constant delight. The surrounding countryside is rich in historic lore, and the botanist and geologist will find ample scope for their hobbies among the mountains or by the "surf-bound rocky shore." Slieve Donard dominates the village in a most imposing manner, the wooded lower slopes being crowned by heathery uplands and the rugged precipices that rise from the valley of the Glen River.

Slieve Donard takes its name from St. Domhanghart, a divine who lived in the fifth century. History relates that he built a hut and chapel on the summit of this mountain, and that he repaired thither for spiritual refreshment. This saint had followers for centuries after his earthly career was over, and even in recent times the shrine on the summit was visited by pilgrims who did penance and offered their devotions. We are afraid that in modern days we do not reverence the relics of the ancient saints, for the last remains of St. Domhanghart's shrine seem to have formed the material for building a shelter for our Ordnance surveyors during their lengthened sojourn on the summit of Slieve Donard, which formed one of the points of the main triangulation in the survey of the British Isles.

Our objective as we left Newcastle in the bright sunshine of a crisp autumn morning was this mountain. We entered the gateway of Donard Lodge, and turned immediately to the left, keeping close to the banks of the streamlet. The path was carpeted with leaves and the undergrowth luxuriant. As we got clear of the woods, we reached the quarries with the busy workmen chipping at the famous Mourne granite. What a

prospect these men have as they hew and carve the rocks! The sea trends northward in the gentle curve of Dundrum Bay, and eastward the Isle of Man is like a gem in the exquisite setting of the Irish Sea.

We kept close to the shoulder of Thomas Mountain and reached the clouds at about the 1,000 feet level. The walking is easy on the hillside carpeted with bog-myrtle and heather, and the ascent is gradual till the moraine at the valley head is reached. There the final pull up the cone to the summit is attacked. On the actual summit is a substantial cairn, built by the Belfast Water Commissioners, who are enclosing the whole basin drained by the Silent Valley river with a substantial dry-stone dyke of enormous dimensions—some eight feet high and three feet broad. There is convenient shelter in the angle between the westward and the southward walls, in which we were glad to take refuge from the unkindly wet wind.

Our route lay southward by the side of the wall to the slope of Rocky Mountain (1,718 feet), where we picked up a turf-cutters' track which took us into the valley of the Annalong River. We got on to the main Newcastle-Kilkeel road at Annalong after passing through a highly-cultivated countryside. These farmers of County Down are industrious and their steadings are substantial—much more so than those found in the south and west of Ireland—and each farm-house is surrounded by a garden, where hedges of fuchsias and bushes of hydrangeas give a pleasing touch of colour to the landscape. At Annalong the road winds pleasantly southward by the sea, past tiny villages and prosperous farms on to the thriving little town of Kilkeel, with its daring fishing fleet and its wonderful view of the mountains. The sea is a rich blessing to the folk along the coast; the fleet of Kilkeel bring in their silver harvest, which is conveyed to Greenore for dispatch to the markets of England, and the farmer manures his land with the sea-weed washed up on the rocky shore. After Kilkeel, on we went southward,

still by the sea, to Greencastle with its once powerful stronghold, through a countryside rich in agriculture and gay with its way-side flowers.

Night was falling as we reached Greencastle, and the lighthouses along the coast flashed out their message of warning and guidance to friend and foe alike. To the north the last rays of the setting sun were fading over the peaceful mountains of Mourne, where we had walked for the past few days among a kindly, industrious folk, with a good deal of Scottish canniness in their character.

TABLE MOUNTAIN.

By William Barclay.

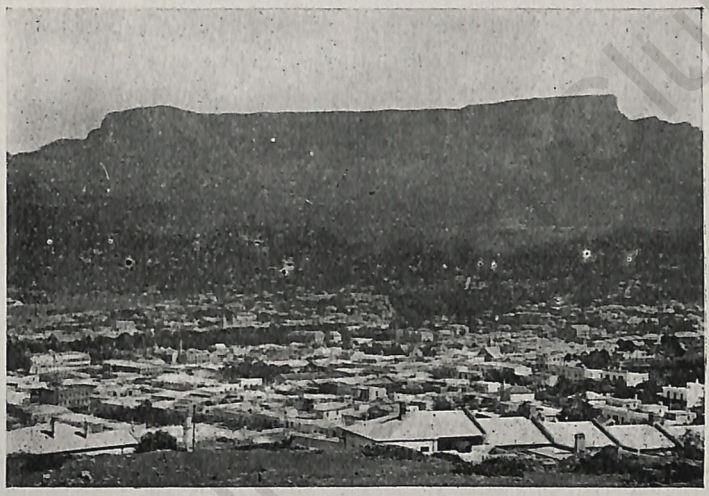

Photo by *William Barclay.*

TABLE MOUNTAIN.

Taking advantage of a two days' stay in Cape Town of the mail-boat in which I was making a journey to the homeland, I thought one of the days might be profitably spent in an ascent of Table Mountain.

Rising as it does to a height of 3,582 feet, Table Mountain, with its satellites running out on each flank—the Devil's Peak (3,300 feet) and the Lion's Head (2,000 feet)—forms a sort of rough horseshoe, enclosing a valley, in the hollow of which Cape Town lies. It has a most majestic appearance as viewed from the harbour; and to the hillman the impulse to ascend it is irresistible.

The mountain itself, rising immediately behind the town, shows an almost unbroken front of precipice, nearly two miles in length, and from 1,500 to 2,000 feet in height; and the easiest and quickest line of ascent,

especially for a stranger, is by a deep ravine—the Platteklip—which runs diagonally from left to right up the face of the rocks. The bottom of this gorge can be reached by a path running along the hillside below the cliffs, which gives off a track towards the gorge. The path begins in the Kloof, between Table Mountain and the Lion's Head. There is no mistaking the Platteklip —it is so deep, and offers the only obvious line of ascent to the chance visitor; though I believe the Cape Mountain Club have charted out a hundred or more different climbs on the mountain.

It was Good Friday; and from the harbour I struck right up through the town, in as straight a line as I could, for the middle of the mountain, and, after passing the highest-perched houses, I entered the pine woods covering the lower slopes. Here, I soon lost the track I had been following, but I just kept on through the wood, which was thickly floored with pine needles. Later, I encountered a heavy growth of underwood, plentifully sprinkled with large buried stones, and this made the going rather heavy and treacherous; however, I soon topped the trees and struck the path running along the hillside. The ravine was now in sight, and I speedily discovered a faint track leading up to it. The sun was very hot, and the scramble up this scree-covered and rocky gully was rather warm work. The gully was also pretty steep, and there was no water about; but when I entered the upper half I got into the shadow of the cliffs, and the climb was then much pleasanter.

Just after 1 o'clock—four hours from my start from the ship—I stepped on to the summit plateau, and then I had a walk of about a mile along a practically flat tableland before I reached the highest point.

Table Mountain reminded me somewhat of Braeriach, from its deeply-indented precipitous face and the large extent of its flat summit; only here I noticed clumps of dwarf pine trees growing in different parts of the plateau. The rest of the surface was covered with long

coarse grass, and a peculiar kind of plant like large rushes. The highest point is crowned with a circular concrete pillar, bearing a few loose stones on its summit, and is about half a mile from the edge of the precipices.

After exploring the precipices, I made tracks for the saddle connecting the mountain with its larger offspring, the Devil's Peak; but found to my dismay no passage there for a solitary climber, so I kept farther round to the east, and got on to a track which led me to another ravine—Skeleton by name—on the eastern face of the mountain. Here I passed one of the reservoirs in the catchment area of the Cape Town Waterworks, and also a small hut erected for the convenience of visitors. Then I entered the gorge proper, and it led me steeply down a thickly-wooded ravine for perhaps 1,600 or 1,800 feet. Thereafter I enjoyed a pleasant walk through the old pine woods lying on the slopes of the Devil's Peak to Claremont, where I got a train for Cape Town.

A notable feature of Table Mountain is that its summit is often shrouded in cloud, while great wreaths of mist pour down its precipices, overlapping them like a tablecloth. "Sometimes," to quote a description, "the cloud is still and white and fleecy, and sometimes one would think it a cataract of foam as it rolls over and descends in mighty convolutions." There is a delightful legend of how Table Mountain "comes to have its tablecloth." Long, long ago, a Dutchman, who was supposed to have accumulated a large fortune as a pirate and to have retired from business, lived in a lonely house on the eastern slopes of the Devil's Peak. He used to spend his days drinking and smoking by himself. He was a mighty smoker and prided himself on smoking more than any man alive. One day there suddenly appeared to him a mysterious stranger, who wagered that he would smoke more than the Dutchman at one sitting, suggesting in the good old fashion of diabolic wagers that the stakes should be the Dutchman's soul against the kingdoms of the world. The prudent Dutchman, however, declined the bargain,

because in his view he had no soul to barter, and on the other hand had no desire for more wealth; but said he was agreeable nevertheless to enter into a smoking competition with the stranger for the love of the thing. The contest was carried on for days and nights on end, with the result that the smoke emitted by the valiant competitors from their pipes (which were refilled as fast as they were emptied) accumulated in a dense cloud, which swirled and eddied all about. At last the devil—for the stranger was no other than his Satanic Majesty—owned himself vanquished, and disappeared in a tremendous crash of thunder, taking the victorious mynheer with him, however: hence the name, Devil's Peak, and the common saying, when the cloud rests on the mountain, that "the Devil is smoking to-day." The cloud, of course, is accounted for in a perfectly natural way—by the congealing of the moist cold wind from the sea when suddenly brought in contact with the warm land. It appears so often as to have become a familiar feature of the mountain to dwellers in Cape Town. To those who happen to be on the mountain when it descends, it is a source of considerable danger; and I was warned by two or three people about the danger of going up the mountain alone, in case "the wet blanket" should come down.

There is not much to say about the view from the summit. Cape Town with its harbour lies at one's feet, with the expanse of Table Bay beyond, while looking eastward one catches a glimpse of False Bay, backed by a noble range of hills in the distance. The Lion's Head is a prominent object in the landscape, and on one of the lower slopes of the Devil's Peak stands the striking memorial to Cecil Rhodes.

LONGMUIR'S "SPEYSIDE."

HAVING in the last number disinterred Macgillivray's "Deeside" from the shelf of forgotten works, we may now perform a similar service for a corresponding book on the Spey valley—"Speyside: Its Picturesque Scenery and Antiquities: With occasional notices of its Geology and Botany," by [the Rev.] John Longmuir, A.M., LL.D., published in 1860 by Messrs. Lewis and James Smith, Aberdeen. Between the two books, however, there is in reality more of contrast than of correspondence. Dr. Macgillivray's work, as we saw, was the outcome of direct personal investigation, and abounded in felicitous descriptions of natural scenery, which graphically portrayed the immediate impressions of an acute observer. It is a book instinct with individuality. Dr. Longmuir's work, on the other hand, is little else than a compilation—a painstaking, fairly erudite, and thoroughly creditable compilation, it is true, but almost wholly destitute of personality. It is less a description of Speyside than an account of Strathspey—of its castles and mansions and the historical incidents associated with the region, interspersed with many legendary and antiquarian details. As much as this, indeed, may be gathered almost from the verse which does duty as a herald of the contents—probably Dr. Longmuir's own composition, he having been something of a poet:—

> Tradition's lore and Celtic lay
> May well beguile the longest day,
> While we pursue our Highland way;
> Or, sad delight,
> Recall the straths of rapid Spey,
> When far from sight.

How far Dr. Longmuir—who was for well-nigh forty years a well-known clergyman in Aberdeen, minister of the Mariners' Church (Free Church) in Commerce Street—was qualified to write a book on Speyside, we

are not able to say. He was not a native of Strathspey, nor at any time a resident in it, and we are not aware that he was familiar with it by frequent visits. But he possessed fair literary talent, which he exercised in various directions, and he acquired a considerable reputation as a geologist, and also as a lexicographer, editing several new issues of standard dictionaries, including that of Dr. Jamieson on the Scottish language. He was the author of a popular guide to Dunnottar Castle, which has run through many editions and is still in demand; and this may have suggested to Mr. Lewis Smith his selection for the preparation of a book on Speyside, which was probably more an enterprise of the publisher than of the writer. Be that as it may, Dr. Longmuir, in a preface to the book, so far justified his participation in the undertaking by stating that he had resided for several years in the province of Moray, and in that way had obtained a more accurate knowledge of its localities and traditions than he could otherwise have done. "In order still further to qualify himself for the composition of this manual," the preface continues, "he recently traversed the banks of the Spey from its mouth to its source; and he has, besides, availed himself of every work that could contribute to his materials, but more especially of Shaw's 'Province of Moray,' the 'Statistical Account,' and the works of the late Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, Bart., Dr. MacCulloch, and General Stewart."

The result was a closely-printed book of 216 pages, full of information about the Strathspey district, instructive and interesting in a high degree, but suffering from the inevitable defect of a compilation of the kind—that anything like a general view of the region and its characteristic features is lost in the accumulation and elaboration of details. In one particular, indeed, this defect is exceedingly conspicuous. Dr. Longmuir apparently was less concerned about the scenic beauties of the Spey than about the historic incidents that had occurred on its banks; not that he

was regardless of the scenery or insensible to its fascination, but that—judging at least from his mode of treatment—he deemed the history of the more importance. It is curious to note, for instance, that all the descriptions of scenery he furnishes consist of quotations from other writers; his own personal interest in the work would seem to have been centred on other features. A striking example of this rather remarkable attitude occurs in the opening pages. Dr. Longmuir quotes the following general sketch of the river by the author of "The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland," whom he terms "the fastidious MacCulloch":—

In point of magnitude, I believe it [the Spey] must follow the Tay—and in beauty it may be allowed to follow the Earn; preceding alike the Tweed, and the Clyde, and the Don, but being still inferior to many of our larger rivers in the important particular of not being navigable, and in being therefore nearly useless. The small lake, or rather pool, whence it originates, is its most unquestionable head; since, unlike the Tay, none of its subsidiary streams, not even the Truim, can pretend to compete with this primary one. It is one decided Spey from its very spring, receiving numerous accessions, but no rival. Its course is almost everywhere rapid; nor does it show any still water till near the very sea. It is also the wildest and most capricious of our large rivers; its alternations of emptiness and flood being more complete and more sudden than those of any of the streams which I have named. The causes of this are obvious, in considering the origin and courses of its tributary waters; while the elevation of its source, amounting to more than 1,200 feet, accounts for the rapidity of its flow. . . . From the spring its course displays little beauty till it reaches Clunie and Speybridge. Hence it increases in interest as it approaches Kinrara: whence, for a few miles it is attended by a series of landscapes alike various, singular and magnificent. If, after this, there are some efforts at beauty, these are rare, and offer little that is new or striking; while, near its exit from the mountainous country, it loses all character, and continues from Fochabers to the sea a wide, insipid sheet of water.*

And then he gives his own idea of what Speyside represents:—

What throbbing emotions, what imperishable associations are awakened in thousands of bosoms by the bare announcement of the

* MacCulloch's statements and opinions are not unimpeachable. See "Strathspey," by Alex. Inkson McConnochie (Aberdeen, 1902).

simple word "Strathspey!" It embodies the distinctions of the clans, with their tartans, emblems and slogans—their music, now arousing the martial spirit by its pibrochs, exciting to the lively dance by the reels that derive from it their specific name, or moving to pity by its wailings in the coronach over the dead. Then, who but a Highlander can appreciate the highly figurative strains of its poetry, or recount with such a glow of enthusiasm the honours of his chieftain, or the contests of his followers with rival clans! Not a turn of the river, not a pass in the mountains, or the name of an estate, that does not recall some wild legend of the olden, or some thrilling event of more recent times; not a plain that is not associated with some battle; not a castle that has not stood its siege or been enveloped in flames; not a dark pool or gloomy loch that has not its tale, either of guilt or superstition; not a manse that has not been inhabited by some minister that eminently served his Master, or a town that has not been the birthplace of some who have shone either in the literature, the commerce, or the arms of their country. Or, turning from the castle to the cairn, from the kirk to the cromlech, what a field is opened up to the investigator of the manners of the past!—The inhabitants of these straths drawing around the cruel rites of the Druidical circle where human sacrifices were offered up; the struggle between light and darkness, ere Christianity diffused its peace and good-will; the social progress of the district, from the times when civil discord destroyed the happiness of the family circle, retarding agriculture and commerce; and the conviction that forces itself upon the mind that we are under the deepest obligation to maintain our civil and religious privileges at home, and to extend them to all for the promotion of their happiness and the glory of the "Father of lights," who has graciously bestowed upon us these invaluable blessings! Or, if we wander through the solemn forests, or traverse the long stretches of brown heath, where the silence is only broken by the hum of the bee among its purple hills, new ideas are suggested and emotions awakened. Or if we ascend the rugged summits of the hills, whence the works of men are scarcely discernible, and a boundless prospect opens on every side, what heart does not feel the insignificance of human grandeur, or can resist the impression of the wisdom, power and goodness of Him "who weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance," or fail to long for the time when "the mountains and hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands!"

Here we have the keynote to the book—it is to deal with the region rather than with the river, with historical and personal associations instead of physical features; and the book responds to the note thus struck. Cairn-

gorm, so conspicuous over such a large stretch of the Spey valley, is dismissed in 28 lines, all but ten of them devoted to the crystals known as cairngorms. Glenmore, at the foot of the mountain, receives more attention than the mountain itself, mainly, however, by the introduction of a quotation, the authorship of which is not acknowledged—it is from Christopher North we rather think. Braeriach, Sgoran Dubh, and the Lâirig Pass are not so much as mentioned. Kinrara, perhaps the most beautiful spot on the Spey, is not absolutely overlooked, but here again a quotation—this time from MacCulloch and duly acknowledged—is made to do the principal duty of description. An exquisite view of the Spey, embracing two lovely bends of the river, is obtained from the bridge at Grantown ; but it is wholly disregarded, and in its place we have this sample of the dreadful manner in which it was customary to write guide-books half a century ago :—

> To those who desire to penetrate the Highlands a little farther than Rothes, we would recommend Grantown, not only on account of its being a neat and cleanly town, where all the comforts of life may be readily obtained, but on account of the numerous points of interest spread all around it, at such convenient distances as would afford many pleasing excursions that would both interest the mind and invigorate the body.

Such defects and deficiencies as those just pointed out may appear surprising, perhaps even shocking, to readers of to-day ; but the fault is not altogether Dr. Longmuir's. We have readjusted our values since his book was published. The appreciation of mountains hardly existed in the sixties of last century ; the admiration of picturesque scenery was not the acknowledged and general taste that it has since become. Railway travel, moreover, had not then familiarised the public with the beauties of Speyside. Dr. Longmuir, in delineating what was very much a *terra incognita*, naturally—and quite excusably—dealt with such incidents and particulars as he fancied—and fancied rightly—would interest his readers ; hence the preponderance of detailed information over picturesque description.

Beginning at Garmouth, where the river—all trace gone of the dubious character of "the thundering Spey" assigned it in one of Aytoun's ballads—flows leisurely into the Moray Firth, Dr. Longmuir works his way up to its source in Loch Spey, on the borders of Lochaber. The course of the stream lends itself to effective treatment of the kind which the worthy doctor essayed, and which, it may be freely acknowledged, he accomplished with a large measure of success, if without any special distinction. The valley of the Spey, with its adjacent glens, is rich in romance and story. The ruins of Castle Roy and Lochindorb are reminiscent of the proud and powerful Comyns. Loch-an-Eilein recalls the ferocious Wolf of Badenoch. Highland clans are represented by the Macphersons and the Grants. A later Macpherson translated—or wrote—Ossian's Poems, and two of the numerous families of Grants were satirised in Sir Alexander Boswell's comic verses :—

Come the Grants of Tullochgorum,
Wi' their pipers gaun before 'em,
Proud the mothers are that bore 'em,
Feedle fa-fum.

Next the Grants of Rothiemurchus,
Every man his sword and dirk has,
Every man as proud's a Turk is,
Tweedle-da-dum.

The Gordons, also, are among the clans associated with Speyside. Gordon Castle is beside the river; the gay and witty Duchess, the celebrated Jean Maxwell, lies buried at Kinrara within sound of its waters; Tor Alvie is crowned by a column commemorative of the last Duke, and a cairn to the memory of the Gordon Highlanders who fell at Waterloo. Glenlivet was the scene of a battle between Huntly and Argyle; in the Haughs of Cromdale a Highland force was routed in an ignominious fashion, humorously hit off in a ballad once more familiar than it now is; and incidents of note in the Jacobite campaigns occurred at Ruthven and Speymouth. And in comparatively modern times, the Spey Valley once

again made history by the destructive floods that poured down the river and its affluents in the memorable spate of 1829.

These and such-like things—stone circles, clan feuds, the pranks of warlocks and witches, and curious items of family history—evidently monopolised Dr. Longmuir's interest, and so his book, as we have said, is more an account of Strathspey than a description of the Spey. Probably, for the purpose of "book-making," such a procedure was unavoidable; and it must be admitted that, within the limits either prescribed to him or adopted of his own choice, Dr. Longmuir produced a fairly meritorious and exceedingly interesting work. It is none the less regrettable, however, that in a work dealing with Speyside such scant notice should be taken of the river and of the typical Scottish region through which it flows and to which it contributes so much picturesqueness. "To me there is no music like the thundering of the Spey. Heart of me! how often in France—even fair France—have I longed to be beside it, and feel the soft peat-scented air, and see day by day the young heather spreading on the hill!" This rapturous outburst is placed by Mr. John Foster in the mouth of the heroine of his latest novel, "The Bright Eyes of Danger." It must stir emotions and resuscitate memories in all who have ever roamed over Speyside—such feelings and recollections as a re-perusal of Dr. Longmuir's work fails to awaken.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SGARSOCH MARKET.

TO THE EDITOR, "CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL."

SIR,—It is one of the many advantages of the Braemar district that it possesses two contrasting types of hills. You have, in the first place, to the north-west and north, the Cairngorm group, from Cairntoul to Ben Avon, with all its lesser outliers; and the features of the Cairngorms in general are heather, flat wind-swept tops, and fine corries here and there, tinged usually with the redness of the granite of which they are composed. To the south and south-west of Braemar you have a totally different type of mountain. Glas Maol, the Ben Uarns, and the Sgarsoch are the chief representatives of this type, which is marked by rounded tops, grassy slopes, and the absence of rock corries. The visitor to the Braemar district has, in fact, the option of two quite different sorts of mountain scenery, and by taking one as an offset to the other he enhances the attractions of both. Frankly, even the Cairngorms get monotonous day after day; the antidote is an occasional trip southward on to the main Grampian range, after which the Cairngorms may be returned to with renewed zest. Of all this southern group of hills, probably the Sgarsoch is the most attractive. It stands almost at the extreme limits of Aberdeenshire, next door in fact to Carn an Fhidhleir (Cairn Ealar), on which the three counties meet. So it is a longish walk from Braemar.

I had heard frequently of the tradition which says that the Sgarsoch was once the scene of a great cattle market—the forerunner, it is said, of the Falkirk Tryst. This tradition is very strong in Braemar, and many people there say they have substantiated it by personal

observation of remains of roads, causeways, and the like on the summit of the hill. "You'll find a piece of pavement up there, like the pavement on the streets of Aberdeen," was one statement made to me. So I went to the Sgarsoch to see for myself. It was a day in June some years ago—a splendid morning—as I entered the fine open strath beyond the Linn, where at length you leave the trees behind and come in sight of the hill towards which I was bent. Rounding the "Rough Toppy" (Cnapan Garbh), which looks down on the Bynack, I was soon on the hill itself, reaching the summit, as you might say, "without further incident." It was a day which made me almost forget the quasi-antiquarian purpose of my journey. The hills of Perthshire lay in front, tumbled about in the sun, jostling and crowding one another unendingly away to the west. Ben-y-Gloe, that odd, lumpy hill, was close at hand; and to the left of it the eye travelled through a gap away down to the low country. The agricultural land somewhere about Coupar Angus was visible there, the Sidlaws rising behind it. They say that from the Sgarsoch you can make out the Wallace Monument at Stirling on a clear day with a good glass. I do not know. It is a fine view, anyway, with its peeps of the lowlands and its wide sweep of the Highlands.

I took a walk round the hill to see what was to be seen of the Sgarsoch market, or such vestiges of it as remain. On the north side, just under the top, is a great quantity of tumbled stone, mostly blocks of the size of which the ordinary drystone dyke is built. Here and there these stones did give the appearance of having been built into something, and especially was this the case towards the west side. I did not find any "pavement," though the weathering of some outcrops of rock gave the effect of one. I came to the conclusion, however, that there was little use in a single individual trying to explore the place. I would suggest that a party of some size might go up; and,

taking the hill in sections, I think their trouble might be well spent. If they even produced a negative result, that would in no way render such an expedition fruitless. The strength of the local tradition as to the importance which the Sgarsoch market once had would of itself justify a careful exploration of the site.

I did not find a road, or the marks of a road, which is said to lead from the hill down towards Glen Feshie, but I did find what looked very like an old road leading in exactly the opposite direction—that is to say, down towards the Tarf. I followed the latter track for some quarter of a mile. It winds down the east end of the Sgarsoch and is some twelve feet broad, of a fairly uniform width, and to all appearance cut out of the hillside.

As I have said, the market on the Sgarsoch is believed to have been the original of what is now the Falkirk Tryst. As a matter of historical fact, I find from the books of reference that the latter well-known market is the representative of the older tryst at Crieff, it having been moved from Crieff to Falkirk about the year 1770. So that the Sgarsoch market, if it represented the same, would necessarily be a thing of a rather remote period. The Crieff fair, judging from its reputation in old Scottish literature, must itself have been a market of long standing; and this would place the Sgarsoch market at least two centuries back from now.

To sum up, I might collect the "evidences" on the matter as follows:—

(1) The strength of the local tradition as to there having once been a great annual cattle market held on various kinds when narrated by the Braemar people.

(2) The geographical situation of the hill itself; it is the one and only point which is equally accessible to Strathspey (through Glen Feshie), Upper Deeside and Perthshire, whether from Blair Atholl or Kirkmichael.

(3) I hesitate to put beside these evidences my own cursory observations; but I believe from what I saw

that a careful scrutiny of the hill would repay any trouble involved. I saw sufficient to justify such an investigation. Not that any structures of much importance are likely to be found, far less any buried treasure, but chiefly because a site which, if tradition speaks true, once possessed a very considerable place in the economic history of Scotland, deserves to be investigated.

Our forefathers were not all, as is frequently supposed, cattle-stealers. Some were mere prosaic cattle-dealers. Do you not remember an anecdote which is told of the old Crieff Tryst?—How Lord Seafield, who was Chancellor of Scotland at the time of the Union of 1707, went to Crieff and found his brother, who was a strong anti-Unionist, practising as a cattle-dealer. When his lordship reproached his brother with the indignity of such a business, he was met with the pointed retort—"Better sell nowt nor sell a nation!" It is this old-world Scotland of a former time which a trip to the Sgarsoch, made in the proper spirit, helps to bring to mind—I am, etc.,

W. M. ALEXANDER.

ABERDEEN, 16th September, 1915.

[See Note on "An Sgarsoch and Carn an Fhidhleir" in *C.C.J.*, I., 52-5.—EDITOR.]

PROPOSED MOUNTAIN INDICATOR ON BEN MUICH DHUI.

AT the Annual Meeting of the Club (reported on p. 174) Mr. J. A. Parker submitted a full-sized drawing he had prepared of the Mountain Indicator which it is proposed to erect on the summit of Ben Muich Dhui as a memorial of the late Mr. Alexander Copland (see pp. 73, 79). The design shows a granite pedestal 3 ft. 6 ins. high, and 3 ft. in diameter, surmounted by a bronze tablet 2 ft. 9 ins. in diameter, the latter containing radial lines pointing out the positions of the most important hills to be seen from the summit, with their names, heights, and distances, surrounded by a circular panorama of the horizon—a reproduction of that prepared by the late Mr. Copland eighteen years ago. The Indicator would be erected about 20 or 30 ft. west from the cairn.

In order to insure accuracy, it will be necessary to verify the panorama on the ground; and it will greatly assist Mr. Parker in this part of the work if any members who have photographs taken from the summit will kindly send him copies. He would also be greatly indebted to any members who would kindly take photographs from the summit for this purpose. Such photographs should, of course, be taken on absolutely clear days, and preferably with a long-focus lens.

EXCURSIONS AND NOTES.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Free Press* who climbed Ben Muich Dhui and Cairngorm on Monday, 4th October, reported that all the ground over 2500 feet was covered with snow, varying from half a foot to three feet, not to speak of wreaths. This was the result of a recent storm, and no one in the district remembers so much snow on the hills so early in the season. With brilliant sunshine, such as was prevalent, the effect was Alpine and very fine.

EARLY SNOW ON THE CAIRNGORMS.

A PARTY of five (three ladies and two gentlemen) walked from Nethy Bridge to the Green Loch on one of the rather rare dry and bright days in July last. The outward route was by the Dell road to Forest Lodge, and then by Rynettin and the Pass of Rebhoan—a distance, we were assured, of 8 miles (5 miles to Rynettin and 3 to the Green Loch), though we were inclined to think the latter distance under-estimated. (There is a good illustration of the Pass of Rebhoan in *C.C.J.*, VI., 145). The Green Loch (An Lochan Uaine) is a beautiful little loch at the entrance to Glen More. It is situated at the foot of a crag of considerable height with extensive scree-slopes and a scanty lining of firs, whose gnarled trunks and twisted shapes indicate the severity of the storms that sweep through this narrow pass. A fringe of similar weather-beaten and scattered firs encircles the loch, the shores of which consist of stones, save for a tiny spit of sand at each end. There is an engaging view down into Glenmore Forest with its mountain backing, but the attraction of the spot is the loch itself, the delicate green colour of the water constituting a special charm. Whence the peculiar colour of the water is a subject of speculation on the part of most beholders, but possibly the real reason is the simple one that, while water is colourless in small quantities, it is blue-green when viewed in mass (See "An Lochan Uaine" in *C.C.J.*, I., 294). On the return journey, a hill track round the shoulder of Cairn Rynettin was taken, leading ultimately to the eastmost of the Tulloch roads—a route which shortened the distance somewhat.—R A.

THE GREEN LOCH.

THE Black Mount Forest in Argyleshire, belonging to the Marquis of Breadalbane, has a reputation for its white deer, it seems. This white strain has been reported as apparent time after time, though at long intervals; and for the past few seasons a white stag has been observed repeatedly in the uppermost corries of the beat which is worked from Alltchaorunn Lodge in Glen Etive. Invited to visit the forest with the view to an "introduction" to the animal, Mr. A. I. McConnochie recounted his experiences in an article in the *Glasgow Herald*

THE WHITE HART OF THE BLACK MOUNT.

(August 28). He and a stalker set out from the lodge on a day of intense heat in mid-July, and laboriously climbed up Aonach Mor, ultimately reaching a point where they looked into Coireach Ba, the sanctuary of the forest. "Truly a wonderful scene, a stupendous corrie girt by two mountains, steep, rugged, and high, on the north Clach Leathad (3602 feet), on the south Stob Ghabhar (3565 feet), the goats' peak; at its mouth a wide-spreading, far-reaching chain of moor lochs which develops into Loch Laidon. This corrie was swarming with hinds and their fawns, some of the latter breaking a silence which could be felt with cries for their dams. A few stags were also seen, one of them a Royal." No white beast being observed far or near, Mr. McConnochie and his companion broke new ground and looked into the corrie on the north side of Aonach Mor. "And lo! there was our white hart. Feeding in close company with a ten-pointer, whose coat was brilliantly red, he at once attracted attention by his abnormal markings. Head and neck were practically pure white, the fore legs and part of the shoulders were also of the same colour, while here and there the normal red was spotted in a somewhat grotesque fashion. The white stag is understood to be about seven years old, but the head is not promising; there are only eight points, and the brows are rather disappointing."

TIDES ON LOCH ERICHT.

THE following interesting communication appeared in "Country Life," 26th December, 1914:—"I enclose photograph of Loch Ericht, taken from the Dalwhinnie end. While photographing last September, a somewhat curious phenomenon occurred, the cause of which I shall be interested to learn. It was a fine sunny morning, with a slight breeze from the north, and the loch was therefore almost still near the shore. I noticed the water begin to rise and gradually cover the shingle to a width of about six inches, and then slowly subside again. After an interval of about ten minutes, a similar rise and fall occurred. Could this be caused by intermittent springs or some volcanic movement?—H. W. BURNUP."

The Editor of "Country Life" sent the query to Dr. James Ritchie, D.Sc., of the Natural History Department, Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, who wrote as follows:—"I have no doubt the fluctuations of level observed by your correspondent were simply manifestations of a sort of regular tide which has been found to exist in many freshwater lakes. For long such movements have been known on Lake Geneva, where the water rises very slowly for twenty to thirty minutes and then as slowly falls again. As regards Scottish lakes, such tidal phenomena—known as 'seiches,' from the local Swiss name—were unknown until the summer of 1903, when the members of the Lake Survey of Scotland discovered periodical fluctuations in Loch Ness. In the earlier observations the tidal waves were measured by a foot-rule, and never exceeded 3½ in. in height. Finer results have been obtained by the use of delicate instruments, which showed that wave oscillations of different character occurred regularly at periods of 31·5 min., 15·3 min. and 8·8 min. So far as I know, no 'seiche' phenomena have hitherto been noted on Loch Ericht (certainly none has been measured), but it is almost certain that they must exist here as in other lakes, and the period of their recurrence leaves little doubt that Mr. Burnup actually was witness of 'seiche' waves."

Dr. Ritchie thought it improbable that intermittent springs could be the cause of the oscillations, or that they were attributable to earthquake movements, but said somewhat similar movements have been traced to the latter cause. For example, at the time of the great Lisbon earthquake in November 1755, the *Scots Magazine* related how :—

"On the 1st November, Loch Lomond, all of a sudden, and without the least gust of wind, rose against its banks with great rapidity, and immediately retiring, in about five minutes subsided, as low in appearance as ever it used to be in the greatest drought of summer. In about five minutes after, it returned again, as high and with as great rapidity as before. The agitation continued in the same manner, from about half-past nine till a quarter past ten in the morning; the waters taking five minutes to subside and as many to rise again. About eleven the agitation ceased. The height the waters rose was measured immediately afterwards and was found to be 2 ft. 6 in. in the perpendicular. The same day at the same hour Loch Lung [Long] and Loch Keatrin [Katrine] were agitated in much the same manner. We are informed from Inverness that the agitation on Loch Ness was so violent as to threaten destruction to some houses built on the sides of it."

Similar occurrences were recorded from Loch Tay in September 1784 and July 1794, when the waters moved to and from a distance of 4 yards or 5 yards, and continued oscillating, in a modified degree for four days.

"The general causes of the smaller oscillations in regular 'seiches,'" said Dr. Ritchie in conclusion, "are obscure, but they appear to be due in some way to differences of atmospheric pressure. Probably violent gusts of wind, swirling down the narrow glens and striking the surface of the lake almost vertically would be sufficient to set up a series of oscillations which would continue for some time. At any rate these 'tidal' waves are larger when the barometer is falling suddenly; they are also more pronounced at the extremities of lakes, especially at the head of long, narrow lochs whose banks gradually approach each other, and where the bottom shelves gently. At the Dalwhinnie end of Loch Ericht these conditions would have favoured the observations of your correspondent."

"Mount Cavell."

Suggestions have been made in the Canadian press that Mount Robson, the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies (13,700 feet high), should henceforth be called Mount Cavell, being thus constituted "an eternal monument to Edith Cavell, the martyred British nurse." The sentiment that inspires the proposed change is entirely laudable, but the perpetuation by this means of remembrance of the grim tragedy with which the lady's name is associated may be doubted. We have seen it remarked that the magnificence of "the great Mount Robson" is entirely unsuited by its name, and possibly this objection would still remain even if the name were changed as proposed. An account of Mount Robson and its imposing surroundings will be found in an interesting article in *Scribner's Magazine* for May 1914.

THE CLUB AND MILITARY SERVICE.

THE names of other four members have to be added to the Club's "Roll of Honour." Probably there are others who have escaped the notice of the officials, and the Editor would be greatly obliged if they or their friends would communicate with him (furnishing the regiment entered and the rank held), so that the list may be rendered as complete as possible. The following three gentlemen have responded to the call for men since our last issue :—

Dr. E. M. Corner, of 37 Harley Street, London, has been posted to the commission of Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps (Territorial), attached to the 5th Base Hospital (St. Thomas's) in London. He works also at the King George Hospital.

Mr. A. P. Milne, Cressbrook, Aberdeen, has been commissioned as Lieutenant (temporarily) in the 2nd Field Company, Highland Division, Royal Engineers. He served in the 1st Aberdeenshire Royal Engineers from 1894 until 1902, attaining the rank of Captain.

Mr. D. Ronald Macdonald, 98 Queen's Road, Aberdeen, joined the Royal Engineers (regular force) as a motor dispatch rider, and is now a Corporal attached to the 4th Signal Company, 4th Division, in France.

The fourth, unfortunately, has been killed—Mr. George Buchanan Smith, LL.B., Chanonry Lodge, Old Aberdeen, the eldest son of the Principal of the University. On the outbreak of the war, he was gazetted a Second Lieutenant, and was attached to the 1st Battalion, Gordon Highlanders. He was severely wounded on December 14th while leading his platoon in a charge on the German trenches in Flanders, and was in hospital for more than two months. He returned to France in August last, and was attached to the 12th Battalion of the Gordons. He fell leading his platoon in the first charge of the memorable advance on Loos on 25th September. A young man of great promise (he was only 24), his loss is deeply deplored by all who knew him, and not least by his fellow-members of the Club.

It may be of interest to mention that Major G. A. Smith, of the 4th Battalion, Gordon Highlanders, has been promoted to be Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the 8th Battalion, King's Own (Royal Lancaster) Regiment.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE twenty-seventh annual meeting of the Club was held in the Secretary's office, 14 Golden Square, Aberdeen, on 27th December 1915—Mr. T. R. Gillies, advocate, the Chairman of the Club presiding. The Chairman and other office-bearers, along with the Committee (named on p. 31), were re-elected *en bloc*, on the motion of Mr. Henry Alexander, seconded by Mr. J. A. Parker, it being felt undesirable at the present moment to make any change, as the activities of the Club are virtually suspended during the war.

The Treasurer's account for the year 1915, showing a credit balance of £39 0s. 3d., were submitted and approved; and, on the motion of Mr. John Clarke, seconded by Mr. W. M. McPherson, it was resolved to give

a donation of £3 3s. to be divided equally between the War Dressings Depots at the University and in Bon-Accord Square.

Mr. Parker submitted a drawing of the proposed Mountain Indicator on Ben Muich Dhui (see p. 170).

Mr. Parker also called attention to the necessity of a bridge over the Eidart in Glen Feshie. The matter was left over for further consideration.

THE MEMBERSHIP.

OWING to the suspension of the Club's activities on account of the war, there have been no accessions to the membership during the year. The following seven members have resigned:—Sir George Henschel, Messrs. Charles Diack, Hugh S. Ingram, George Mearns, Ian Maxwell Rattray, James Reid, and William Tennant. The membership now stands at 147.

OUR PORTRAIT.

IT will be seen from our frontispiece that we have reverted to a former practice of furnishing portraits of prominent members of the Club. Naturally, we should have begun with the present Chairman, only his portrait has been given already in his former capacity of Treasurer (Vol. V., p. 285). That being so, we have chosen his immediate predecessor, Mr. John Clarke, M.A., who was Chairman for three years, 1910-11-12. Mr. Clarke is an original member of the Club and has taken a very active part in its proceedings, frequently contributing to the *Journal*; and his Chairmanship was distinguished by the erection of the Allt-na-Beinne Bridge. We hope to give portraits of other ex-Chairmen in future numbers.

REVIEWS.

HILL BIRDS OF SCOTLAND. By Seton Gordon, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U. London: Edward Arnold.—The author of "The Charm of the Hills" (See *C.C.J.*, vii., 246) displayed in that work, as in a previous one. "Birds of the Loch and Mountain," such an extensive knowledge of the wild life of the mountains that one is not surprised to find him writing a book which deals exclusively with the birds that are to be found in our high altitudes. It is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Seton Gordon is a most patient observer—one who never grudges the time spent nor the trouble involved in obtaining first-hand, the most accurate information about birds and their habits. While he is indefatigable in the pursuit of an object for his note-book and his camera, he is also perfectly indifferent as to the fatigue and discomfort that may be entailed, and the lack of success that occasionally attends his efforts; and he writes of them with the most charming insouciance. Executing so much "tracking" of birds in the hills—and animals as well—he has had some remarkable experiences; and mountaineers will find much in the book to interest them quite apart from the fascinating details of bird life that are furnished. Here, for instance, is a sample of the hardships to which Mr. Gordon and a friend were subjected in the course of an expedition to study the ptarmigan in its home 2500 feet above sea-level:—

THE BIRDS OF THE MOUNTAINS.

"Out in the open the wind was blowing with gale force, the drift and falling snow rendering progress difficult. . . . We reached our shelter before the full force of the gale swept the glen, and it was fortunate we did so. . . . Although the darkness had not yet closed in, the drift was so thick that there was a certain element of danger in venturing even a few yards from the door of the bothy; so a coin was tossed to decide who should make the journey to the well for a fresh supply of water. I succeeded in winning the toss, so my friend set out with a large pail to search for the well. It may be difficult to credit the fact, but so thick was the drift that, in the twenty-five yards which separated well from bothy, he several times lost his bearings, and returned five minutes later breathless and exhausted, just as I was debating whether it would be advisable to tune up my bagpipes to guide him back to shelter."

Incidents like these are strewn abundantly through the book, and render it exceedingly attractive to readers to whom mere accounts of bird life may not appeal. Mountaineers, however, can hardy be insensible to such accounts, for they must necessarily feel interested, more or less, in all creatures that have their habitation on the mountains. They will derive much instruction as well as pleasure from the perusal of Mr. Seton Gordon's delightful pages. R. A.

THE FESHIE AND THE GELDIE.

NOBODY who walks through Glen Feshie can fail to notice the striking manner in which the Feshie, flowing apparently towards the Geldie valley, turns suddenly from east-north-east to north-north-west, with a very sharp bend or "elbow"—Mr. J. B. Nicol, for example, refers to it in his article in this number. The geological conclusion is that the Feshie "captured" the headwaters of the Geldie; and the operation was described by Mr. Lionel W. Hinxman, of H.M. Geological Survey, in a paper on "The River Spey," which he contributed to the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* in April, 1901 (See also *C.C.J.*, iii., 259). Mr. Alexander Bremner, D.Sc., deals much more fully with "The Capture of the Geldie by the Feshie" in the November number of the *S.G. Magazine*, contesting in particular Mr. Hinxman's conclusion that the capture took place in post-glacial times. He points out that where the Feshie wheels so suddenly it flows in a channel incised on a nearly flat platform of glacial debris raised 20 feet above the western extremity of the Geldie valley. A great spread of moraine stuff, he goes on to say, extends westward from three miles below the bend and cloaks both sides of the Feshie valley to beyond the mouth of the Eidart, forming to the north of the Geldie a rude, hummocky-topped terrace, which looks like the terminal moraine of glaciers descending in late glacial times from the corries of Carn an Fhidhleir (Cairn Ealar) and An Sgarsoch. While the present upper Geldie valley was occupied by glacier ice, an overflow of melt-water was directed across, and cut a channel in the morainic deosits between the elbow and the mouth of the Eidart, and the present upper Feshie occupied the channel thus excavated, and has done remarkably little to deepen or otherwise modify it. "In other words, present conditions were established on a terrain of glacial deposits. The process, moreover, was not river capture, but river diversion. The upper Feshie was restrained from passing eastward by the barrier of moraine stuff at the head of the Geldie valley, or by the ice behind it, or by both; and, finding ready outlet by way of the overflow channel, took its course towards the north-north-west. Consequently diversion—it cannot be called capture—was not post-glacial in date but late glacial."

ASCENT OF MOUNT OLYMPUS.

WHAT is claimed to be the first ascent of Mount Olympus, the famous mountain of Greek mythology, was made on 30th April, 1914, by Aristides E. Phoutrides and Francis P. Farquhar, and a joint account of the performance was contributed by them to the November number of *Scribner's Magazine*. Mount Olympus is in Thessaly but only became Greek territory in 1912 as a result of the Balkan War. Its height is generally given as 9794 feet, but the topmost summit is only one of many—an old Greek folk-song credits Olympus with having two-and-forty peaks. As the adventurous travellers "plodded on and up," they saw rounded peaks towering on either side of them, and as they mounted higher and higher other peaks began to come into view, "springing from the ground full-grown, like the armed men of Cadmus." They were successful in getting a number of excellent photographs which illustrate the article and convey admirable impressions of the classical mountain.

"Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal."

The June number of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* opens with a pleasing sketch of a section of Speyside scenery—"Through Rothiemurchus to Rebhoan." Mr. E. P. Buchanan, the writer, has found in this region "a fascination all-compelling and a charm which is unique;" and some of us to whom it is also familiar can endorse his raptures. He waxes particularly enthusiastic over the Green Loch. The accompanying four views have been exceedingly well chosen. Mr. Alfred Harker discourses interestingly on "Some Old Maps," his article being supplemented by reproductions of the maps of Richard of Cirencester and Ortelius. The principal "mountaineering" paper—in the climbing sense—is devoted to "The Eastern Faces of Blaven and Clach Glas."

The feature of the October number is a paper on "Dalwhinnie to Fort Augustus, over Corryarrick," by Mr. A. B. Noble, who gives a good account of the famous military road across the Pass of Corryarrick constructed by Marshal Wade, now in a sadly-neglected condition. Three excellent photographs accompany the paper, one of them being by Mr. J. G. Kyd. Mr. Walter A. Reid describes the summer meet. Those attending it were the guests of Sir Hugh Munro at Lindertis, and were conveyed in motor-cars to Glen Doll the first day, and to Glen Isla the second; hence the punning title of the article, "The S.M.C. in Clover Again." Mr. T. Fraser Campbell, in "Half-Hours in the Club Library," deals with three old accounts of tours in the Highlands, dated respectively 1786, 1792, and 1816.

Aberdeen and the Highlands.

The October number also contains a further contribution by Mr. Harker on "Some Old Maps," with reproductions of a map of Scotland by N. Tindal, copied from Moll's map of 1714, and part of a map of Scotland taken from Faden's General Atlas, 1778. Incidentally, Mr. Harker alludes to the lack of an authoritative geographical definition of the Highlands; and referring to Sir Archibald Geikie's treatment of the Highland boundary as coinciding with the important geological line of the Highland border fault, and thus running nearly straight from the mouth of the Clyde to Stonehaven, he says—"From the Clyde to the western confines of Forfarshire the abrupt change of physical characters on crossing the fault is so marked that there is little room for difference of opinion; but I think it will be generally conceded, from the mountaineer's point of view at least, that the Highlands must be bounded eastward and northward as well as southward. Our Aberdeen friends will probably not claim to live in the Highlands. Will they be agreed as to where they cross the line in a journey up Deeside?" It is not easy to answer the question, but we take it there is a general tendency to accept as correct Thomas Pennant's description of the Pass of Ballater as "the eastern entrance into the Highlands," made in his "Tour in Scotland," 1769. Mr. Harker mentions the Highland line laid down by T. B. Johnston in his "Map of the Clans of Scotland" (1872 and 1885), and we find a reference to this line

in a former volume of the *C.C.J.* (III., 313). It is there stated that the boundary thus delineated touched the line of longitude 3° W., in the north-west corner of Forfarshire, "and followed that line due north across the Dee, just west of Craigendarroch, through Ballater, and along the water-shed which separates Dee and Don; and then turned N.N.W., and W.N.W., south of Elgin and Findhorn, till it terminated on the Moray Firth, near Nairn. North and west of this line was all regarded as Highlands, with the exception of Caithness."

THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

The Climbers' Club Jonrnal, being now an annual production, has assumed considerable dimensions, the number for 1915 running to 144 pages. There are interesting accounts of climbs in Scotland, Wales, the Val d' Isère in France, the Harz Mountains and the Alps, and—by no means least—in the Lofoten Islands and Arctic Norway. Dr. Edred M. Corner, one of our members and contributors, in an article titled "Long Days and Lonely Mountain Travel in Scotland," describes, very briefly, a number of walking excursions in Scotland, mostly made alone, including a round (in one day) of Cairntoul, Sgor an Lochain Uaine (generally designated the Angel's Peak), Braeriach, Cairngorm, Ben Muich Dhui, "and a host of lesser tops." "Suffice it," he parenthetically adds, "that a little after 10 p.m. I need travel no further." Fuller details of some of Dr. Corner's walks have appeared in our own pages (Vols. II., III. and IV.) Of the general articles, one of the most interesting is that on "The Love of Natural Scenery as Disclosed in English Literature," by Mr. H. Gale Gotch. Though the general love of scenery is comparatively modern, its exposition in literature being generally assigned as beginning with Wordsworth, Mr. Gotch harks back to earlier times, and shows by ample quotation that Shakespeare and Milton were by no means insensible to natural beauty and the feeling for space and brilliant landscape, and the appreciation of scenery is similarly observable in later writers who were antecedent to the Great Lake poet.

MOUNTAINEERING ALONE.

THE advisability of solitary walking in mountainous regions is a matter of some controversy, but the practice is stoutly defended by Dr. Corner, in the article in the *Climbers' Club Journal* to which reference has just been made. Mentioning that on one occasion he started from Ballater and spent a long and most pleasurable day wandering about the summits of the Lochnagar group of hills, reaching Milton of Clova, "in the company of a curlew," at 10 p.m., he goes on to say—"Personally, I think that there are few greater pleasures for the mountaineer than travelling alone over a large wide stretch of country, untrammelled by care of time, fatigue, danger, or difficulty, choosing the way as the features of the journey suggest, answerable to none but himself for the character of the route, the length and frequency of the pauses, and the rate of progress. The practice of travelling alone is to be condemned where anything like serious climbing is done. But where walking only is done, the lonely wayfarer may be justified in taking on himself the risks of lonely travel for the many recompences it has. In no other way have I so quickly, surely and lastingly learned the

physical character and geography of a country. In no other way have I been taught to observe so much and so closely. Company in mountaineering, as in other ploys of life, detracts from the responsibility of the individual. The man who cannot be trusted to do a long day over easy ground had better give up mountaineering and take to spillikins. Travelling alone across the incidents of country, mountains and rivers, teaches a man a lot of the country, its people and himself, their uses and limits, as they can be learned in no other way. A man who can travel well and safely over a rough country in all weathers is a valuable addition to a party of serious climbers. Such is the use of mountaineering alone. It gives a training such as cannot be so quickly or so accurately acquired in any other way."

THE LAIRIG DHRU.

A WRITER in *T.P.'s. Weekly* has been recommending Aviemore as a holiday, eulogising it as an ideal spot to those who love mountains and pine forests. She—for the writer seems a woman—enthused particularly over the Larig Ghru, or the Làirig Dhrù, as we ought now to term it after Professor Watson's decisive pronouncement in the opening pages of this number. "For solitary grandeur," she wrote, "it is unsurpassed in Scotland. There are Braeriach and Cairntoul on the one side; on the other, Ben Muich Dhui, and Cairngorm beyond. If one does not aspire to climb to the top of any of the hills, to be at the foot of them even is a sublime thing. I have sat for hours here, and they have always had a message for me. One day stands out. It was a grey day; no sun, with great mists rolling about the hills. Nature was in one of her darker moods, and she can be very terrible here. The hills were purple black, and the sky lowering; there was a storm ahead. But I was not afraid of the storm, so I sat on. And how very, very small I felt, with this wonderful vastness about me. How petty and trivial all my worries seemed, and how my longings after the beautiful and good were renewed and strengthened. I needed to come here to have my perspective adjusted. But Nature is not always thus. She has her playful days, too, when she coquets. And how charmingly here! The colours are all softened and toned down; hills tender blue in the foreground to strong purple at the back and in the shadows. And the wonderful greens and the golden light from the sun!"

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