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Vol. IX.

July 1917.

No. 49.

THE  
**Cairngorm Club Journal.**

EDITED BY

ROBERT ANDERSON.

CONTENTS.

- Mountain Indicator on Brimmond.....James Cruickshank.  
My Cairngorm Easter.....William T. Palmer.  
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Lieutenant Austyn J. C. Fyfe.  
Captain Robert J. A. Dunn.  
Captain James Ellis.

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Ramblers' Club.

REVIEWS:

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ILLUSTRATIONS:

Brimmond Mountain Indicator and Chart; Diagram—Blue Hill to Mor-  
rone; Lieutenant Fyfe; Captain Dunn; Captain Ellis; Mr. W. A.  
Hawes.

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THE  
Cairngorm Club Journal

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Cairngorm Club Journal

EDITED BY  
ROBERT ANDERSON

VOL. IX  
JULY 1917—JANUARY 1920

ABERDEEN  
THE CAIRNGORM CLUB  
1920

W. JOLLY AND SONS, LTD., ABERDEEN.

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THE CAIRNGORM CLUB

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- 1917 R. D. Winsloe, Dunsdale, Frodsham, Cheshire.  
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1917 David P. Levack, 10 Golden Square, Aberdeen.

1917 John W. Levack, 10 Golden Square, Aberdeen.

1917 Mrs. Levack, 10 Golden Square, Aberdeen.

1918 J. N. Milne, Cressbrook, Queen's Road, Aberdeen.

1918 Mrs. Milne, Cressbrook, Queen's Road, Aberdeen.

1919 Miss Isabel Rose Simpson, West Bungalow, Cults.

1910 Mrs. Simpson, West Bungalow, Cults.

The Cairngorm Club

## RULES.

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

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

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

IV.—The management of the Club shall be vested in a Committee, consisting of ten members in addition to the following Office-Bearers—a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer (or a Secretary and Treasurer)—five being a quorum. Three members of the Committee shall retire annually and be ineligible for re-election for a period of one year.

V.—The annual general meeting of the club shall be held in December for the following business: (1) to receive the Treasurer's accounts for the year to 30th November ; (2) to elect the Office-Bearers and Committee for the next year ; (3) to fix the excursions for the ensuing year ; and (4) to transact any other necessary business. Special general meetings shall be held whenever deemed necessary by the Chairman, or on a requisition by at least ten members of the Club. General meetings shall have power to deprive of membership of the Club any member who may, in the opinion of the Committee, have misconducted himself.

VI.—A Minute-Book shall be kept by the Secretary, in which all proceedings shall be duly entered.

VII.—The election of members of the Club shall be made by the Committee in such manner as they may determine.

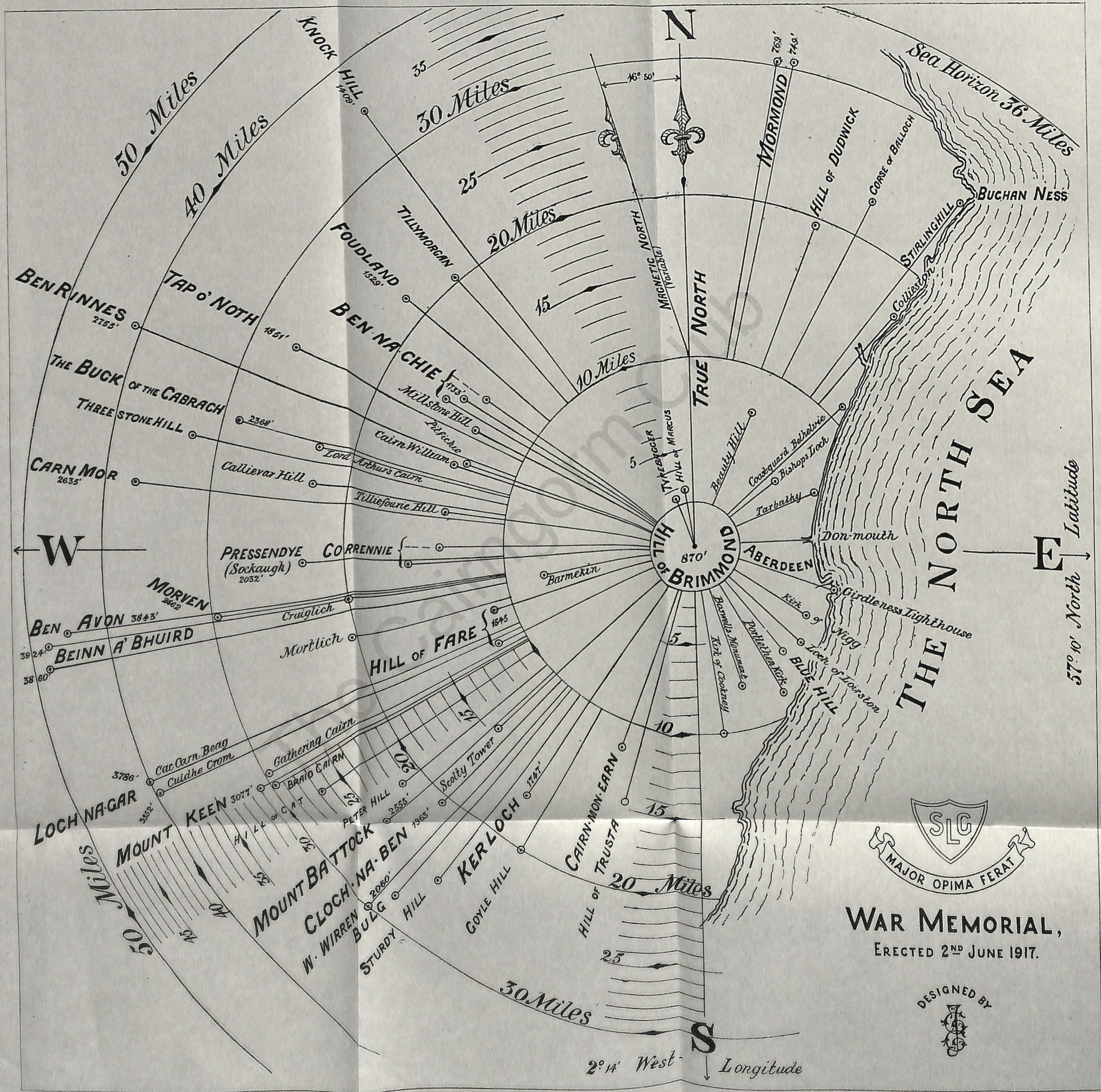
VIII.—The entry money of members shall be 7/6 and the annual subscription 7/6. Members may compound future Annual Subscriptions by payments as follows:—members entered before 20th February, 1890, £1 11s. 6d.; members of fifteen years and over, £2 7s. 3d.; ten years and over, £3 3s.; five years and over, £4 14s. 6d.; and new members £7 10s., including entry money. Members shall receive copies of all current issues of the Club publications.

IX.—The annual subscription shall be payable in January. Members not in arrear may retire from the Club at any time on sending notice in writing to the Secretary or Treasurer.

X.—The Committee shall have power to elect suitable persons to be Honorary Members of the Club. Honorary Members shall have no voice in the management of the Club, but otherwise shall have all the rights and benefits of ordinary members. The Committee shall also have power to elect qualified Minor Members, belonging to the household of ordinary members. Minor Members shall pay an annual subscription of 3/9, but shall have no voice in the management of the Club, nor be entitled to receive copies of the Club's publications.

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





**WAR MEMORIAL,**  
ERECTED 2<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 1917.

DESIGNED BY  


BRIMMOND MOUNTAIN INDICATOR.

THE ROSEMOUNT PRESS, ABERDEEN.

THE  
Cairngorm Club Journal.

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Vol. IX.

JULY, 1917.

No 49.

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MOUNTAIN INDICATOR ON BRIMMOND.

BY JAMES CRUICKSHANK.

A BRASS index chart, showing the mountains, hills, and places of interest within the range of view has just been erected on the summit of Brimmond Hill. It is well known that there is a remarkably extensive view from Brimmond, which is only five miles from Aberdeen, and is readily accessible from either Bucksburn or Bankhead railway station, or by walking along the Skene road to Kingswells and thence past Fairley. As the late Mr. Alexander Copland put it, in an article in the *C.C.J.* (Vol. 1, pp. 219 235)—“This low, heathy mountain, having a summit of 870 feet above sea level, with no overtopping hill for miles around, affords a standpoint, on a clear day, for an extensive and varied view.” The article referred to gave a detailed account of the hill-tops and other landscape features observable, and it was supplemented by an exceedingly useful pictorial outline or chart. This chart has proved serviceable to many who have since visited the hill; but now the visitor will find in the brass index chart or Indicator which has just been erected a most efficient, albeit a silent, guide to the view spread out before him in all directions.

Mountain indicators are not a novelty farther south, but we believe that, with the exception of one at

Grantown-on-Spey, this is the first set up in the north-east of Scotland. Its erection is due to the Stoneywood Literary Guild, which in 1910 published a small local history, "Brimmond and its Shadow," the brochure including a map of the district and a reproduction of Mr. Copland's chart. Various reasons contributed to the adoption of the proposal to erect the Indicator. The Guild desired to mark the completion of its ten years' existence; it wished to do something to make known the unrivalled view from Brimmond (a place with which it has had numerous associations); and it also deemed it fitting for a Literary Society to take steps for the erection of a memorial to the men of the parish and district who have fallen in the Great War. The memorial will thus render the summit of Brimmond a place of peculiar interest to many in the Newhills district, and the form which has been given to it will make it an object of utility to all who visit the hill. Being quite unobtrusive, both from a distance and near at hand, the memorial will have none of the objections so often urged against hill monuments.

The chart is engraved on a tablet of heavy surface-polished gun-metal, 2 feet square by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick, and this tablet is fixed to an iron support of equal dimensions and then joined to a pedestal  $2\frac{1}{4}$  feet high. The pedestal is fixed with bolts and concrete to the foundation, which is of solid rock, shaped into a level table. A wooden cover, which the visitor is requested to replace, protects the chart from the weather.

The design of the chart (a reproduction of which is furnished with this article) is as follows:—In the middle of the plate, measuring from north to south, and at about one-third of its width from the east side, there is a pin-hole, from which as a centre five circles are drawn at varying radii, these circles representing the distance of 10 up to 50 miles from Brimmond; and there are three intermediate scales at convenient positions on the plate graduated to single miles, so that the distance of any hill can be readily as-

certained, the farthest away one to be seen being Beinn a' Bhuird at 48 miles off. A special characteristic of these circles is that the distances are foreshortened, or in perspective, with the object of the features represented being more compactly laid down; the space occupied by the first circle, representing 10 miles from the centre, measures  $4\frac{1}{4}$  inches, while the outer ten miles space measures only  $1\frac{3}{4}$ . From the centre pin-hole straight lines are cut in the plate radiating outward exactly in the direction of the nearer hills; but for far-off hills these lines do not come into the centre but stop short at the 10 miles circle, thus preventing the overcrowding of so many lines (64 in all) which would otherwise have joined at the central point. At the extreme end of each indicating direction line there is a pin-hole sunk in the plate, with the name of the hill indicated (in bold letters for the sky-line hills, and in smaller letters for the hills which do not appear on the horizon line); and the heights in feet of the more prominent hills are given, including that of Brimmond itself, 870 feet above sea-level, as already stated. By placing an ordinary pin or match in the centre hole and another in the hole at the extreme end of the direction line of any particular hill, and then looking in the line of the two pins, one can be in no dubiety as to the exact location of the hill in question. Then there is a line cut right across the plate indicating true North; and the magnetic North, which meantime is about 17 deg. south-west of true North, is also shown, but it varies slightly every year in long cycles. The coast line is shown, and the sea horizon is given as at 36 statute miles distant. The geographical position of Brimmond is also marked, viz. :—2 deg. 14 mins. West; 57 deg. 10 mins. North.

On the lower right-hand corner of the plate are inscribed the crest of the Stoneywood Literary Guild, with its motto "Major Opima Ferat" ("Let the worthiest carry off the prize"—the motto of the Moirs of Stoneywood) and the title "War Memorial Erected 2nd June, 1917," while on the outer rim there is lettered

“Designed by G. G. J.” and “George Robb, Engraver, Adelphi, Aberdeen—W. L. K.” On the south side of the pedestal is a brass plate with the inscription:—

TO THE  
MEMORY OF THE MEN  
OF  
NEWHILLS PARISH  
AND DISTRICT  
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES  
IN THE GREAT WAR.  
1914—1918

A circular stone wall,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet high, concreted on the top, surrounds the Indicator, and forms a seat from which to study the view, the floor of the space thus enclosed being neatly laid with concreted pebbles. The outer side of the wall is joined to the level of the hill by a sloping bank of stones and earth laid with green turf, forming a belt 5 yards broad; and a short approach,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide, facing due south, cuts through this bank, the sides of the approach being built of stone and lime. The Indicator has been erected on a point about 100 yards north of the main summit of the hill, to avoid removing the Ordnance Survey Cairn, but the view is not thereby impaired, but rather enhanced since it brings the Don Valley better within range. A number of turf paths have been formed to save inconvenience when the ground is marshy, and these paths all lead to the approach. The main path is from the Ordnance Survey Cairn, and on the cairn a fine new flagstaff has been erected. Any disturbance to the hill caused by the various operations will soon disappear as the natural conditions assert themselves.

A small metal pillar placed in a sunk stone enclosure at the north side of the enclosing wall, bearing the letters “K. C.” (King’s College), marks the southern boundary of the lands of Tulloch, owned by Aberdeen University. The further course of the boundary along the hill westward is marked by stone pillars with the same initials. On the east side of the hill behind Ashtown Farm is a



*Photo by*

BRIMMOND MOUNTAIN INDICATOR.

*George R. Ford.*

boundary stone with the letter "C," said to represent Commonty.

Mr. G. Gordon Jenkins, C.E., of Messrs. Jenkins & Marr, Aberdeen, kindly undertook the designing of the chart, and the result is a masterpiece of ingenuity and accuracy, involving much painstaking work, which only one doing it as a labour of love would care to bestow; the chart has been well described as "a very fine example of cartography and draughtmanship." The engraving of the chart was executed in the works of Mr. George Robb, Adelphi, Aberdeen, and reflects the utmost credit on his staff. Thanks are also due to Mr. Robb personally for his enthusiastic and generous co-operation in the work. Mr. James A. Parker, C.E., rendered valuable assistance in surveying the site; Mr. James Duguid (who originated the proposal to erect the Indicator) prepared most of the iron and brass work; and Mr. James Dunbar attended to the setting up. All the work of erection, including the making of the embankment and the footpaths, was carried out by members of the Guild, and in this respect the Indicator is a noteworthy example of what can be done by enthusiasm without the expenditure of money. A good deal of organisation was necessary in planning the transport up the hill of the plate and pedestal (over 6 cwts.) together with the tools and materials necessary for their erection, but this was successfully accomplished by making use of the "Jubilee" Road along the ridge of the hill, one of the members, Mr. A. W. Brown, having lent a horse and cart for the purpose.

The ownership of Brimmond is a thorny question, but the utmost care was taken to ascertain all possible claims, and in every instance where proprietorship was known or discovered permission to erect the Indicator was applied for and was readily granted.

In all probability the Brimmond Memorial will point the way to the erection of similar memorials in other districts possessing notable hill views. It is hoped that every respect will be paid to the preservation of the

Indicator, especially on account of the sacred associations to which it is meant to do honour.

It may be mentioned that the Stoneywood Literary Guild has enrolled 721 members during the past ten years, and has at present a roll of fully 300 members, while 108 of its former members are meanwhile serving in the Army.

At the opening ceremony on 2nd June last, tea was served at the top of the hill, and not a little transport difficulty had to be overcome in providing for the large company who attended. The unveiling of the Indicator was performed by Mr. G. G. Jenkins, who expressed the hope that the memorial would remain for generations unimpaired except by the gentle hand of time, and so continue to serve its dual purpose, which might be expressed in a couplet:—

When gazing here on heights afar,  
Think on our boys who fell in war.

Speeches were delivered by Mr. G. M. Fraser, Public Librarian, Aberdeen, and by Sheriff Laing, that of the former being descriptive of the chart, while the Sheriff dealt more particularly with the commemorative nature of the memorial; and votes of thanks to the speakers and to the workers were proposed by Major McLennan, Stoneywood Wireless Station, and Mr. W. Gunn, Stoneywood, respectively. A detachment of soldiers, under the command of Major McLennan, from the Wireless Station lent interest to the proceedings; and the unveiling ceremony was made impressive by appropriate music by a choir (Mr. J. F. Proctor, conductor), a hymn which was sung being previously read by Rev. Dr. James Brebner, late of Fòrgue.

About 150 members of the Guild were present; and in addition the following, among others, received invitations, most of whom were present: Mr. George Robb, Mr. A. S. R. Bruce, Mr. D. R. Thom, Professor Hendrick, Captain and Miss Brooke of Fairley, Mr. G. M. Angus, Major and Miss Campbell of Cloghill, Captain M. V. Hay of Seaton, Mrs. Aberdeen of Dyke-



side, Miss Smith, Newhills Manse; Mr. W. Campbell, Chairman of the Newhills Parish Council; Dr. Maver, Chairman of the Newhills School Board; Mr. D. J. Williamson, Mr. A. Marr, Dr. Maitland, Mr. W. Maxwell, Mr. V. H. Wildi and Mr. J. W. Davidson. The following members of the Cairngorm Club were also present: Messrs. Robert Anderson and John Clarke (Vice-Presidents), and Messrs. Henry Alexander, George Duncan, William Garden, W. M. McPherson, J. A. Parker, Theodore Watt, and R. M. Williamson.

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#### MOUNTAINS IN THE EVENING.

At summer eve, when Heaven's ethereal bow  
Spans with bright arch the glittering hills below,  
Why to yon mountain turns the musing eye,  
Whose sunlight summit mingles with the sky?  
Why do those cliffs of shadowy tint appear  
More sweet than all the landscape smiling near?—  
'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,  
And robes the mountain in its azure hue.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

## MY CAIRNGORM EASTER.

BY WILLIAM T. PALMER,

EDITOR OF "THE FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB JOURNAL," ETC.

IN Easter week of last year (1916) I planned a five days' march—to begin at Killin, and to end, so far as walking was concerned, at Fort Augustus. I expected a certain amount of exertion, but my routes never contain anything dangerous or sensational. The first day, however, gave me a tingling. As I walked from Killin down the north shore of Loch Tay, it was just the usual April weather—squalls of warm snow or cold rain, with some pauses—chill, frozen, or thawing—between. The loch was jerked into white horses as the heavy blasts rushed on, but the clouds on the hills, though travelling at great speed, never broke. The mist-line I reckoned at about 1,000 feet up, and there was a queer blue glimmer which indicated that snow lay just within the veil. My instructions were to leave the road at a one-chimneyed cottage, and to slant upward towards the stream of Tom Breck. Beyond the first steep there was to be a narrow glen, at the head of which the path to the Ben Lawers ridge swung steeply to the right. From the top of this ridge I was to keep to the left to the summit; and it was my intention to continue beyond until there was a clear descent to Glen Lyon.

### ON BEN LAWERS IN A SNOWSTORM.

But when within the mist one felt less secure. Even on a "Baddeley" map, the route looked a tangle, with chances of trouble among crags and cornices. There was no doubt that the Ben was thick with snow. My companion, being an ice-axe, had no vote, but was a potent influence in deciding against the Killin instructions. One must make at once for the ridge though the wind thundered above. It would be better sport

wrestling with the storm than groping about a corrie choked with cloud and snow where one could never be certain of the right route. The compass fixed a line for the first peak on the ridge, and up I went. With every hundred feet there was a more vigorous resistance, yet I did not wish to lose direction by leaving the exposed buttress. The gale simply yelled, but its power did not bar progress. Really, one enjoyed the battle just as much as the white hares and ptarmigan which lobbed in and out of sight among the mist-wreaths. These creatures have far more sense than accept the quiet side of a mountain on a snow-day. The white stuff simply hurls over them as they squat in the open, head to wind. On Ben Lawers they moved very tardily, and more than once the stroke of an ice-axe might have deprived either bird or beast of life. But one was on no errand of destruction that day—and perhaps they sensed the fact.

In the scant breaks between the cloud-tides I noticed that the buttress was narrowing. Hitherto I had looked left and right across continuous snow, but now there was close on either hand the wall of gloom which is eloquent of deep abysses. The altitude felt greater too. Once the upper layers of cloud rent, and there was presence of white peaks across a narrow gulf. But never did I get a glimpse outward, or down to Loch Tay. Still heavier gusts, still denser snow-clouds, still more of blizzard drift hampered my actions. I rested a minute, bending over the ice-axe for breath, and straightened up to find the last trace of foot-prints erased, buried. Looking at the compass in such circumstances is always advisable. On a similar ridge I once met a party vigorously retracing their steps. "What's it like on the top?" I asked. The leader looked askance. "We're just going there," he said. "No, you're not," I replied, and a brief argument caused the production of a compass. The other fellows had lost nearly an hour by their about-turn, and were quite out of temper at their "absurdity." On Ben Lawers there was no such mishap—just because one was on the alert.

The long ridge which culminates in the cone of Ben Lawers is a draughty place at Easter, but who would exchange the whipping snow, the choking blizzard, the thundering gale, for the finest palm-court in the world? Certainly there was no "view"; but rambling on British hills has finer attractions than a mere wild welter of land, loch, and sea. Without an ice-axe, however, that ridge would have been a doubtful proposition, but by its aid everything became simple, and it was just a question of endurance and sticking to the correct line. Great towers of snow loomed through the mist, and in a few strides were surmounted. Then came a tremendous gulf into which the snow sheered. But these were mere practical jokes on the part of the mountain—little obstacles to scare away the timorous. At long last the great peak was tackled, but I was not really sure of success until a glance backward showed part of the cairn from which the snow had fallen. The last ten minutes gave rather a curious experience. To right and left were lines of curving blue snow, and between them a soft carpet of pure white into which one sank ankle-deep. I felt that this was a road of honour specially laid for the winter visitor to the heights.

With Ben Lawers conquered and behind, I trudged heartily into the gale, which was now rising to a veritable storm. A half-hour of steady work would carry me below the worst of the mountain, and I hoped for an early arrival at Fortingall. But it was not to be. For a moment the upper mountain blew clear, and I glanced behind, above, and around. This was indeed a narrow ridge, and deep to the right was a lochan half-filled with snow. Then the clouds shut with a vicious snap, and a tremendous squall of snow and hail made the ridge seem to rock. Progress was impossible. I drove the spike of the ice-axe deep into the hard snow, and bowed to the blast. The minutes came and went, but there was no diminution in either violence or sound. The squall seemed to rise to a crescendo of fury, and I was in danger of being hurled from my grip on the axe. Twice

the fury rose and tested my powers to the limit. As a third squall went on, I withdrew my anchor and let the storm hustle me over the edge. It was a wild glissade, but the only way out of the difficulty, and the angle of the descent was not so steep but I could control the rush. My retreat brought me down some thousand feet of easy slope in a few minutes, and down there, though the wind still plucked and the air was full of snow-dust, was comparative peace. Traversing above the lochan I soon found an easy descent to Lawers, and thence made my way down to Fearnan and over the pass to Fortingall.

#### OVER SCHIEHALLION TO KILLIECRANKIE.

My second day's excursion was to Blair Atholl, over the top of Schiehallion. The morning was clear and bright, and I wandered sedately up by the Keltney burn. Schiehallion, though 3,500 feet and more high, is an easy mountain to see and to climb. One cannot mistake its perfect pyramid nor the route up its ridge. There was a good deal of snow towards the top, but nowhere did it give trouble. By keeping to the edge, I found hard-frozen stuff, and when it came to a descent, I simply chose a line of deep, soft drift and cantered at any desired speed. My plan for the day had one serious error. I should have made directly for the head of Loch Tummel, instead of which I made across the moors to White Bridge, and then slanted down to the foot of the loch. The result was that at about seven o'clock I was whistling for the ferry opposite the Queen's View, and my map gave me no right to believe that I could trace the path across the moors to Blair Atholl in the dark. So it was that I came to the old Bridge of Garry, and walked up the throat of Killiecrankie in the gloom. It was nine o'clock when I reached the Bridge of Tilt Hotel. There was much in the day's ramble to apologise for—a late start, a dawdle over the mountain, and the uncertainty which led me the long way round by the Bridge of Garry. But no! that last needs no excuse,

for the gap of Killiecrankie in semi-darkness was a splendid sight.

#### LOST IN GLEN TILT.

My third day also suffered from a late start, but I deemed it proper to wait for letters, which of course didn't arrive. The morning was quite favourable, and I enjoyed the miles of soft road up to Forest Lodge. The waterfall about half-way up the glen was in fine order. Above Forest Lodge I passed for the first time into sheer wilderness, and met a snowstorm which provided distraction for some twenty minutes. The track was, of course, running with water; the white blanket soon sank down into the grass, disappeared, and gave no more trouble. The long trough of the Tilt seemed to run like a rapier into the heart of the mountains; I knew that the dark corrie opposite led up to Loch Loch. A sort of track seemed to clamber up the ridge to the south, which the map showed as a possible route to Beinn a' Ghlo.

The suspension bridge over the Tarf was a friend in need; otherwise I would have had to tramp miles up to the ancient fords in the upper forest. Now came the amusing part of the day: *I got lost*. Of course, the weather was to blame. A big snow-squall came sifting down the glen. One could see but a few feet ahead, and the path was broken into several independent pieces. Across a savage little burn was a good path which wound steeply—just as the col of a well-conducted glen should do. On Ben Lawers, two days before, I consulted the compass at every turn. Here it was ignored, for the snow had turned to chill sleet and I was loth to let wet and cold within my raincoat. In half an hour I was high above the deep glen, enjoying the scene thoroughly. Five ribbons of water slid down from the moor, wove in and out among crags, then burst into spray, which was sucked into great beds of scree. There were many deer hereabout—chiefly hinds and calves—and quite a lot of ptarmigan. Then, as I strolled

calmly along the drifts, dodging the water-courses and stony places, it was suddenly carried into my mind that the next swerve of the path was far more easterly than memories of the map had led me to expect. Thereupon came an unfolding of the map, and a recognition of error. But go back to the crossing—no fear! There was a possible slant over the hills which would serve very well, even if it did not save any time. Besides which, my hopes were fixed on a bed at either the Bynack shieling or at the Glen Geldie cottages, and these could not be far away. The Tilt—perhaps I should more correctly say the water which eventually becomes the Tilt—was finally crossed, just above the stream which comes down from Loch Tilt.

From this point, the going was downright nasty. The path was out of repair, and strips of snow lay in every hollow. I could never tell whether the hollow was a yard deep or merely a film of snow above some deepish pool, and the physical test of such things should always be used with caution. I trailed off here into the bog where young frogs flopped quite gaily, and out there over boulders which were often quite slippery. And here I had to consider whether it were better to leap on to a sop of wet grass, or grope round on the snow a few feet higher up. Still progress was made, and in the late afternoon I came to the Bynack level. But, though there were plenty signs of recent habitation, the cottage was closed. The bridge beyond had been sadly mishandled by the winter floods. It started well, but the last pair of supports lurched drunkenly out of perpendicular, and the sloping timber which connects with the grass-bank was entirely gone. The burn was running too deep to think of making a ford, and anyway the proposition of leaping from the bridge-end, even to a tiring man burdened with a heavy rucksack, did not seem difficult. Nor was it. At the Geldie, however, the foot-bridge was entirely missing—I saw its ruin about a mile down stream—but the riffles of a shallow pool some 200 yards back showed where the stream was fordable. The Geldie cottages were vacant—

had been for a year or more, I afterwards learned—so there was nothing for it but to continue tramping down the rough road towards the Linn of Dee. There was just sufficient light to see the great pool beneath the waterfall there, but when I reached Inverey the night was almost solid around. The march from Glen Geldie was not altogether loss. Though the clouds stretched a dark canopy from Braeriach to Ben Muich Dhui, the light poured through the Làirig Dhrù beneath, and touched its snows into flame. And one could not dispute that the sharp black cone which outlies Cairn Toul was fitly named the Devil's Point—there was a sinister, uncomfortable look about the place. I was struck, too, by the dead sterility of this upper shelf of Deeside, along which the road wound, mile after mile, apparently level.

#### STRUGGLING THROUGH THE LAIRIG.

The fourth day of the ramble involved the storming of the Làirig Dhrù, which I had been led to believe was no great feat in April. I was out of Inverey comparatively early, about eight o'clock, and rambled steadily along. The human element was elusive. There was a keeper in the timber near the opening of Glen Lui with whom I had a chat. He turned his telescope to the Làirig and commented that it was "sair black"; but that troubled me little. To-day's defeat might make to-morrow's victory, and anyway Deeside seen over the forest was a delectable place. Beyond Derry Lodge one enters into a glorious area. There is work here for a generation of artists and poets—yes, and of photographers. The twisted pines and stunted birches stand in all sorts of picturesque attitudes. They have conquered centuries of storms, of heaving wind, of rainfloods. They show the stress of a campaign which began when Britain knew nothing of civilisation. The scene suggests many a romance to the receptive mind.

Beyond the Lui Beg bridge I climbed to the open moor, and there right in front was the Devil's Point of yesterday, nearer at hand, but looking sinister and nasty as ever.



Then for half an hour I pushed through a shower of great white flakes, watching keenly ahead for the cairns or patches of track which were visible between the drifts. The distant world was lost. Then came clear air: the dark spire was right opposite, across the narrowed Glen Dee, and cutting up behind it was a gloomy gorge down which the Geusachan was bounding. Cairn Toul was visible just ahead, but Cairngorm was too steeply close to be visible. The dip of the Làirig seemed but a short distance away across the snow. The next hour or so—I had brought no watch with me, so my time-keeping is only approximate—was a horrid struggle. The snow lay deep in the coves, but every rib was black with broken stones. I stepped delicately on to the white mass, sounded a way across, and made a stride to the boulders. A few clinks here, and I was faced with another seam of soft white. The same tactics must have been needed ten score times before the path rose upward, and I had hopes of more and sounder snow and fewer ribs of rock.

But it was not to be. One trouble was simply exchanged for another. The sun had come out to watch my struggles and softened the snow-crust completely. My progress was reduced to wading thigh-deep through a horrible pasty mass, which reminded me of a venture off the beaten track in a Cornish clay mine. With great difficulty I reached the great boulder which is a landmark on the Làirig track. This was nearly level with the snow, and formed a splendid table for the meal which was long overdue. At Inverey I had only got scones and jam. No doubt meat was possible, but it is a long time since I abjured meat as a provision for walks over forest and mountains. The sun scorched me in genial blessing, and hat, gloves, raincoat, coat, came off in due order. This was simply glorious. The Garachory hung a line of black and silver in the snow-fields opposite, and away below the Dee slid down, down, down, to the dull, brown moors and the dismal grey of the glen. But it was the glory of the snow which cap-

tivated me. The rancorous Devil's Point was hidden behind the steep cliff of Cairn Toul, and from Cairn Toul the high ridge followed by the Angel's Peak, a dainty trident of snow, round to Braeriach. The afternoon light struck a glow from such snow. There were beams of silver, slabs of gold, great slopes of ivory. There were floating shadows of purple, delicate lines of pale blue, glorious mouldings of cream and grey. But king of all lights, king of all shadows, was the luminous blue which collected under the snow cornices, the great waves of which hung over the steep slopes and threatened the corries. Compared with Braeriach, Ben Muich Dhui, facing it across the pass, was a mere wall of silver-white, backed by a sky of deep azure.

I sat a while, lunching and drinking in all this beauty, probably thinking aloud—which is a bad habit among solitary rambles—"Who can believe that the Cairngorms are dull, dreary hills bereft of all colour and relief after such a scene as this?" The position was pleasant, and one's troubles seemed few. A couple of miles of snow-wading would bring me to the top of the pass. But was the pass so desirable after all! There was a well-marked line of retirement which had more attractions. I knew exactly the amount of energy which would carry me back to Derry Lodge or to Inverey. But a change came over the day. A thin cloud drifted along Braeriach and placed itself across the path of the sun. In a few minutes the temperature had tumbled considerably, and a sift of snow-flakes came down the air. I resumed some of the cast-off garments, and after a wait decided to attempt the pass. The chill might possibly render the going easier. I tramped steadily along, and found but few places where I sank knee-deep. At last one of the Pools of Dee was reached—a tiny slab of grey water beside a low snow-cliff. There was an eloquent depression in the snow farther on, which I skirted with care. A cold bath up here would be far from pleasant.

At long last the cornice at the top of the Làirig was

faced—a menacing curl which seemed about 30 feet in height. The nature of the snow had changed for the worse—a deep layer of soft pellets was laid over the older and sounder material. To surmount that cornice was a hard task single-handed. There was far more sliding backwards than I relished, and once a pretty big fragment broke off and threatened a sudden burial. Success was only won by pulling out great chunks of the soft white and pressing them firmly underfoot until the corridor rose high enough to reach the upper snow. At least half an hour was thus employed, and by this time the shadow of Braeriach was climbing apace up the wall-like Ben Muich Dhui. The far side of the pass was also corniced, but I selected a place next the main slope, and slipped down with only ten minutes' delay. After this I certainly expected fair going. There below was the trough of the Làirig, with the Lurchers' Rock, a stubborn sentinel, on the right, and Carn Elrick, a white wall, to the left. Away beyond one looked down the long snow shaft to the brown and green-blue of the larches and pines of Speyside, and further away to the moors, to the farm-lands, and to the distant sea. Here and there a line of white proclaimed high ground, beyond the gleaming blue of the Moray Firth.

But one's immediate business was the Làirig Dhrù, from which winter had filched the burn. I recalled the yarn of a mountaineer who, on such a day as this, crashed through a snow arch and provided his friends with much labour ere he was hauled again to the surface. Such a mishap would not be far from a tragedy to-day, so I coasted warily along the steep wall. The soft pellets, however, had other views, and again and again I slid downward in the midst of a tiny avalanche. But after severe struggles up, alternating with rapid slides down, I won through the steepest part of the pass, and found a line of moraine hills which offered safety even if the gaps between their tops were soft. Meanwhile the glow overhead had turned to rose, and one looked back through a softening veil to the hard-won pass. But more

IX. B

welcome was the sight of the burn escaping from its miles of snow-tunnel, and a steep slope which promised quick release from snow and toil. The Làirig path, however, swings clear of the water here, and for a mile or two there was a succession of soft drifts, mud-pools, hidden boulders, and all the wickedness a naturally bad path can muster after a winter in which torrents have been using its bed for a ploughing competition.

#### TROUBLE IN THE ROTHIEMURCHUS FOREST.

The most arduous portion of the way was indubitably behind, and, although walking without much spring, I felt far from uncomfortable. Victory was at hand, and a plume of white showed the whereabouts of Aviemore station. There was, however, quite a peck of miles still to cover. The first section, the upper forest of Rothiemurchus, was really fine. The level sun-rays picked out every fold and gully, every water-course and grass-tract, and filled with a soft glow the undergrowth of heather and bilberry, and diffused a warm light round the boles of the trees. At long last I came to the cross-roads and to the ruined stable by the pasture, and crossed the stream by a crazy foot-bridge. Five minutes' saunter beyond convicted me of error, for the next stream ran deep and impassable. Wherefore I returned and made a second cast, which discovered the Allt na Beinne bridge. From this point I expected trouble with forest roads. Baddeley on Rothiemurchus at even-tide is an earnest and depressing document. Few may pass where many are lost in the sylvan depths. But alas! there was no forest—just a wilderness of broken branches, dead stumps, and the wreck of a log railway. Still, Baddeley had served me well in other districts, and when I saw a dim light from a rough hut, enquiry was justly due to his memory. No; the lady could not direct me properly but her husband would be back from Aviemore in a few minutes, and would attend me down to the road with pleasure. When the "goodman" came home, however, I was pressed to a bit of supper, and a long talk about

bird-life in the forest followed, so that it was after eleven o'clock before my obliging host left me on the road to Coylum Bridge.

Arriving at Aviemore, I discovered the first passenger train to the south was not due till noon (it was Sunday), so that, as I had to be in England on Monday night at the latest, my intention of getting off at Kingussie in the early morning and making for the Corryarrick Pass and Fort Augustus, had to be abandoned.

I cannot claim that the walking tour here described brought out any particular lesson for brother-ramblers. It was merely a straight-ahead trip over easy ground; and I need not tell members of the Cairngorm Club how interesting it was. The cutting out of Corryarrick, however, spoilt the scheme. Possibly, when the war is over, one may be able to lay aside the burden of worry, and break again through the glorious mountain barrier which guards the Spey and the Dee. The route will quite possibly include the Spital of Glenshee, pass through Glen Geldie to the Feshie, twist south over the Minigaig and back again either by foot or rail over Drumochter, and then, at last, away west to Fort Augustus by Corryarrick. It is well to live in hope anyway.

## GLASGOW TO BRAEMAR.

BY THE LATE GEORGE BUCHANAN SMITH, M.A., LL.B.

Courage, faint heart, press forward to the hill!  
The ridge looms dark? It only hides the day.  
Wait for the dawn to come? O forward still,  
And meet the sun half-way!

[Mr. George Buchanan Smith, M.A., LL.B., the eldest son of Sir George Adam Smith, the Principal of Aberdeen University, was a second lieutenant in the Gordon Highlanders, and (as chronicled in the *C. C. J.*, Vol. viii., p. 174) fell while leading his platoon in the first charge of the memorable advance on Loos on 25th September, 1915. He was a member of the Cairngorm Club and an ardent mountaineer, and in the brief span of his life of twenty-five years he had made many long and arduous "tramps," by night as well as by day, in all kinds of weather, sometimes in company, often alone. He had ranged over the greater part of Scotland, but more especially in the regions round Glasgow, in Western Inverness, Arran, Argyleshire, Skye and the Islands; and he had also walked in the English Lakes and in the Pyrenees. Many records of his climbing and his long walks were found in his papers, and these are appended to an exceedingly interesting Memoir of "G. B.," as he was styled by his friends, written by his father, but printed for private circulation only. Though in the main these records are merely brief indications of the routes taken and the heights attained, they are vivaciously written and instinct with humour, and they exhibit as well quick observation and a keen appreciation of natural features and of scenic beauties. "His long tramps," says his father, "started him to write verse"; and nearly all his verses—of which his family were ignorant till after he was gone—were "about his roads, his hills, and his lonely bivouacs in the heather."

One specimen is furnished in the lines quoted above, and a fuller example is given elsewhere in this issue. We have the special permission of Sir George Adam Smith—our readers will doubtless share our gratitude—to reproduce the following vivid account of a six days' walk from Glasgow to Braemar which young Smith made in the spring of 1911.]

#### BEN LOMOND.

First day, 25th March. (Previous "Il Trovatore" and packing, not to bed till 3.) No breakfast, left Bowmont Gardens [?] a.m. Canal Road, Canniesburn Toll, Bearsden (good folk going to business), Drymen—royal feast off dry oatcakes bought here. The day was cold, but bright and clear. Beautiful woods and hedges in Buchanan country between Drymen and Balmaha. But what a long and weary way from Balmaha to Rowardennan!—late afternoon. Great tea there soon bucked me up, and I started up Ben Lomond. Long grind. Tarbet looked beautiful. Clear air gave fine view towards south. Absolute quiet. In fancy distinctly heard University chime. Top (3192) all snow-covered. Sun nearly set. Glorious over Western hills. Down N. slope, big corrie looked fine, and the Trossachs. Setting sun made magnificent patches of colour in the rocky stream-beds. Bounded downwards. Reached loch-side a little after dark, and then a weary tramp to Inversnaid, on a path—but what a path! Ferryman at Inversnaid drunk, so no Ardlui that night. Arrived Inversnaid about 8.30. Feet very bad near Glasgow, but now getting into form. Waterfall beautiful by night.

#### BEN-A-CLEE, ETC.

Second day, 26th March. Left Inversnaid and ferried across loch. A perfect day, light wind and bright sun. The loch was a beautiful deep blue, and Ben Lomond glittered in its dazzling white. The shape of the mountain here was splendid. The whole thing was massive and fairy at once. Legged it along the railway sleepers

past Ardlui to the Dubh Eas, which runs to the west right into the moors. They seemed never-ending, but at last I caught the ridge of Ben-a-Clee. The E. side of the Falloch was grand with its waterfalls. A stiff pull up Ben-a-Clee and a biting cold wind at top (3008). Stayed but a little and pushed on for Ben Lui, wind freezing. New vigour with the hope returned, and I was blown up Ben Lui like a feather (3708). Glorious prospect; darkness gathering, heavy with clouds in the East and sweeping slowly over the mountains one by one. Ben Lomond still dominated the S., but seemed leagues away. The hills of the N. were all white and indistinct, but in the W. the sun setting over Cruachan flamed a gorgeous red. Ben More of Mull and Jura lay calm and shapely as ever. Cruachan seemed a vast restless wilderness of wild peaks, less snow here than elsewhere. The Atlantic glittered. An apple on the top—the white corrie was splendid—and then with great leaps to the saddle. Just here the sun set. Shadow universal. Pushed on for Beinn Oss (3374), mist coming up; from its top saw my road clear to Beinn Dubh Chraige, and marked some wicked cliffs of the descent. Dusk changed to dark as I climbed Dubh Chraige (3204). Mist settled on top just as I left it. Slowly and cautiously crept down into Allt Gleann Achrioch, wandered a great way among woods, elusive light vanished, lay down to sleep, but felt a cut stone—railway viaduct—and so to Tyndrum Hotel at 11.30. Hospitable hostess. Great day—two or three together, in fact!

#### BEINN ODHAR AND GLEN LOCHAY.

Third day, 27th March. Slept long and started late. A most perfect day. Little wind, bright sun, blue sky. Restocked knapsack in Tyndrum. From Bridge of Orchy road [?] straight up Beinn Odhar (2948). Fine view, especially towards Loch Awe. Ben Doineann was glorious. The Northern hills lost themselves in range after range of snow. Dropped down to a saddle (about 1300), and then up Beinn Chaorach (2655), snow



here deep and very soft. Ptarmigan and hares. Along the ridge to Carn Chreag (2887), very soft going. Beinn Chaluim to the S. recalled a fine winter's day in 1910. Splendid gullies run down from here into the head of Glen Lochay. Another drop of about 400 feet to the saddle, and then a long pull up Creag Mhor (3305). Loch Lyon seemed wild and beautiful to the N. Killin seemed farther and farther away. A ripping series of glissades from Creag Mhor to the col at 2250, splendid snow, some ice patches and some bad rocks. Whizzed down like lightning. Now a long pull up the ridge of Beinn Heasgarnich. Heavy black clouds were rolling up from N. and E. Sun set by Ben Douran. Glen Lochay and road seemed nearer, mist settled over Beinn Heasgarnich, kept on, and reached top (3530). Then a wild dash over the high snowfields through the dusk and bounded down side of Glen Lochay, and found a track at dark. It seemed to cross the Lochay, so I forded, and then found I had to cross back again by tottering single-cable suspension bridge. Long tramp through night along the road, with the Lochay roaring on my right. The S. hills stood up grandly against the stars. Woods, fields, farms, and so into Killin at midnight, where I found Wordie sleeping in his bed at the hotel.

#### BEN LAWERS.

Fourth day, March 28. Good sleep and filling breakfast, then owing to scantiness of resources evaded tip-seeking waiters, and followed road on N. side of Tay past Milton Morenish, and then took hill road. Hot beneath, we soon got into cold winds. Much snow on Beinn Ghlas, and near the top mist, which never rose again till we dropped into Glen Lyon. From top of Beinn Ghlas (3085) had a little difficulty in getting on to Ben Lawers ridge in the mist. Found it and were forced to go slow and use our axes most way to top (3984). Cold winds and sleet. Cairn all but 6 or 7 feet beneath surface of snow. Mist was getting thicker—we could not go quickly, so decided reluctantly not to go on to

Meall Garbh and Meall Gruaidh. We made almost N. for the glen that runs into Glen Lyon—very wet we were, and it was still very cold, but we put on a great pace (so it seemed, for we were tired) down Glen Lyon, majestic and dark, and ran about last mile to Fortingall Post Office, reached at 8 exactly, and sent off a telegram summoning Beppo. Then more leisurely, night very cold, along road, swindled for a lemonade . . . past a dark forest on the right, and then to the rarest and homeliest and plainest and jolliest little inn at Coshieville. Large company gathered to speed gamekeeper going to Canada. We dined off cold mutton (certainly braxy, but very good), eggs, scones and tea; above us the sounds of song and dance. We too tired to move; later huge, tall Highlanders came and drank solemn gallons neat. To bed.

#### SCIEHALLION.

Fifth day, March 29th. By the preprandial morning sun we saw to what a little corner of Paradise we had come in the night. Paying a very modest bill, we took the N. road up a very beautiful Perthshire glen—sun was bright, and though winds cold, yet everything cheery—birds a-hollerin'. After two miles got to the path, made towards Schiehallion. Followed this—it's a good path, and saves a lot—until about 2000 contour, when the mist that had been covering the hill higher up and all the hills to the S. descended. Up and up, with fierce winds and snow driving—great snow wreaths and snow crystals. Then the slope eased off, and we seemed to walk for miles along a flat ridge (it is not far really), at last the ridge climbed again, and we reached the top (3547), nor waited long—much rain and cold. Descended almost straight down N.E.—one short, good glissade—to the Allt Strath Fronan, and—O joy!—sunshine and a little warmth. Crossed the road and went down Allt Kynachan—my tendon Achilles squealing, so I took off my boots and limped barefoot till we crossed the road again. Then decency. Down past Kynachan to where

"ferry" is marked on map. But ferry, we were told, was none, instructions to shout, wild thoughts of wading—swimming! Instead we shouted—Wordie and I, we did shout. At length, a brawny, hairy man, tending bees on a hill on N. side of Tummel about a mile away, descended; and at that moment we—blind fools—saw a boat on *our* side, hidden under willows. He took his boat on the opposite side—the obvious one—rightly very surly. "No, he was not a ferryman, and this was not a ferry!" Up through woods, now really *hot*, to Grennich [?], and over the moor path, stumbling and running, to Struan, well after dark, where we found Beppo in a queer, rambling hostel, with a canary and no air.

## CAIRN EELAR AND INVEREY.

Sixth day, March 30th. Three of us. Could the weather have threatened worse for the long day we had before us? Left Struan about 10. Rain falling and mist down the valleys. Met the Oldest Inhabitant. "Try not the pass," the old man said. Said we: "Don't talk through the back of your head, you're a bore. Excelsior!" We took the track by Calvine (the Glen Bruar Lodge road), about three miles, and then it joins Glen Bruar. Rain ceased. Left the track below the Lodge—what a fine, spacious glen of happiness is this!—and toiled very painfully up Beinn Dearg, very stiff after yesterday. Soon got on to snow, which we never got off till sunset (except for isolated boulders). Lunched by cairn at top of Beinn Dearg (3304). Northward lay our path through a naked waste of snow, plain and mound. The sun had appeared, and was beating down on us. We started off; snow everywhere soft and deep, often above, usually below the knee. Very tiring trudging, even with our goal, Carn an Fidhleir (Cairn Eelar) in front. Glad it wasn't mist! Now believed old man's story of shepherd wandered here to death. Plunged up and down the ridges and in and out the mounds, and at last got to shoulder, and, after a rest, to

summit of Carn an Fidhleir (3276). Had to give up idea of An Sgarsoch. Noble view to N. and W. (through the intervals of cloud) of the great, heavy snow Cairngorms and the long, twisting, deep glens, the Feshie. What a wilderness we were in the midst of—never in Scotland have I felt it so—and it was very cold by now. We went straight down—good glissading—to the Geldie, and off the snow; sunset, wet, heavy bogs and mosses, at last the Geldie, and by more moss and bog to road on N. side opposite Geldie Lodge. Then long tramp through the night. What a road! Abominable! Joined Gen Tilt road, then over the Dee—loud cheers!—then Linn of Dee, then horrible sinking of heart—had we passed Inverey?—lights ahead, all very tired. Beppo sacrificed as courier, knocked at light, conducted by old wife to dark cottage: bang, bang, bang! At last the good woman, most kind, and supper of eggs, cold mutton. Catholic, lithographs of popes and saints—all to bed gloriously tired.

Friday, March 31st. All slept in, and had breakfast about noon; then sudden realization of when the motor bus left Braemar. Walked and ran, ending with breathless spurt through Braemar; just caught bus, so to Ballater, and tea with Mr. Stanley Turner, and so by train home.

It was a glorious seven days' tramp. Easter's the time!

## CURVATURE AND REFRACTION :

NOTES AS TO OBSERVATIONS FROM THE BLUE  
HILL, ABERDEEN.

BY G. GORDON JENKINS, C.E.

IN the *Cairngorm Club Journal* for July, 1895 (Vol. I., pp. 265-7), there is an excellent article by Rev. Robert Semple dealing with the "Distance of the Visible Horizon," which included a table as the basis for calculations. In this table, however, no allowance was made for refraction. Professor Rankine, who ought to be an authority, states that the effect of refraction varies from  $\frac{1}{10}$ th to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the allowance for curvature of the earth, and that  $\frac{1}{8}$ th would be a general average. Scientific authorities generally agree that this is the nearest approach to an average allowance for atmospheric refraction, and this is confirmed in the "Account of the Principal Triangulation of the Ordnance Trigonometrical Survey of Great Britain and Ireland" by Lt.-Colonel H. James, R.E., 1858. The effect of the earth's curvature is to make a distant object appear *lower* than it would be seen to be were the earth flat. On the other hand the line of sight—that is, the line along which the light proceeds from the object looked at to the eye of the observer—is not perfectly straight, being rendered slightly concave downward by the refracting action of the air, thus making the object looked at appear *higher* than it really is, and consequently visible at a greater distance than if the sight line were a straight one. To this extent, varying with the density and temperature of the air, the effect of the earth's curvature is partly neutralised.

Refraction is greatest early in the morning, diminishes till 10 a.m., is nearly constant till 4 p.m., and then begins to increase. Great variation sometimes occurs over ground which is passing from light to shade, or *vice*

*versa.* It will thus be noted that with such a fluctuating quantity, as to the effects of which there is a variety of opinion, it is impossible to tabulate what allowance has to be made except as an approximation. While this is so, refraction cannot be ignored altogether; and this article is based on the assumption that, as a fair average, in estimating the distance of the visible sea horizon one-sixth is to be deducted from the allowance for the earth's curvature.

With this allowance for refraction, the heights corresponding to various distances of the visible sea horizon may be calculated from the formula:—

$$\text{Height in feet} = 0.556 \times (\text{distance in statute miles})^2$$

which gives the results tabulated at the end of this article.

In order to work out the combined effect of both curvature and refraction on a different allowance from that just assumed, one has only to square the distance in miles and multiply by 0.611 in the case of  $\frac{1}{12}$ th, by 0.600 for  $\frac{1}{10}$ th, by 0.572 for  $\frac{1}{8}$ th, by 0.530 for  $\frac{1}{6}$ th, and by 0.500 for  $\frac{1}{4}$ th, instead of by 0.556 as in the above formula.

To demonstrate in a practical way the effect of curvature and refraction, it is proposed to apply the figures in the table to some of the hills noted in the article on the Blue Hill by the late Dr. Alexander Cruickshank and the late Mr. Alexander Copland which appeared in the first volume of the *C.C.J.* (pp. 29-45).

Morrone may be selected to illustrate how the table is applied. To begin with, in order to ascertain whether a certain hill is visible or not, one has to draw a straight line on a map from the point of vision to the selected hill, and note the prominent heights lying between. Between the Blue Hill and Morrone there are two such intervening heights, viz.—Baudy Meg and Knockie Branar; and it will be found that the straight line from the Blue Hill to Morrone passes over the first prominent height—viz., Baudy Meg—a little to the north of its summit at a point about 1510 feet above sea level, and over the second height—viz., Knockie Branar—a little

to the south of its summit at a point about 1900 feet above sea level. All the data can now be stated :—

1. The Blue Hill, the point of observation, 480 feet high, to top of Cairn.
2. Baudy Meg, at a height of 1510 feet and 27 miles distant.
3. Knockie Branar, at a height of 1900 feet and 33½ miles distant.
4. Morrone, 2819 feet high and 50 miles distant.

The next step is to reduce the levels of Baudy Meg, Knockie Branar, and Morrone relatively to a line drawn through the top of the Blue Hill tangential to the surface of the earth. This is done by deducting from the height of each hill the height given in the table corresponding to its distance from the Blue Hill, and then deducting the height of the Blue Hill. Thus :—

	Baudy Meg.	Knockie Branar.	Morrone.
	Feet.	Feet.	Feet.
Height - - - -	1510	1900	2819
Less height in table - - -	405	615	1390
	<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
Less height of Blue Hill -	1105	1285	1429
	480	480	480
	<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
Reduced level - - - -	625	805	949

Then, by proportion, we ascertain that the reduced level of the line of vision from the Blue Hill over Baudy Meg will, at Knockie Branar, be :—

$$\frac{33\frac{1}{2} \text{ miles}}{27 \text{ ,,}} \times 625 = 769 \text{ feet.}$$

This is 36 feet lower than the reduced level of Knockie Branar, and therefore the observer on the Blue Hill will see the upper 36 feet of Knockie Branar over the top of Baudy Meg, and Knockie Branar is therefore the dominant height.

In a similar manner we find that the reduced level of the line of vision from the Blue Hill over Knockie Branar will, at Morrone, be :—

$$\frac{50 \text{ miles}}{33\frac{1}{2} \text{ ,,}} \times 805 = 1211 \text{ feet.}$$

But the reduced level of Morrone, as above noted, being 949 feet, Morrone is not visible by 262 feet.

An examination of the diagram which accompanies this paper should make these calculations quite clear.

In the Cruickshank-Copland panorama and relative list, not only is Morrone said to be visible from the Blue Hill, but there are four other hills in the gap between Lochnagar and Beinn Bhrotain, viz :—Creag Liath, Carn Fiaclan, Carn Cloich Mhuilinn, and Carn na Drochaide—which are incorrectly noted as visible. The last is evidently drawn out of its true position, which is almost exactly in a line to the summit of Beinn Bhrotain, instead of (as shown) considerably to the south of that line, and appearing as a sky-line hill, which it is not.

Attention may here be incidentally directed to several instances of what appear to be inexactitudes in the drawing of the panorama referred to. Cock Cairn is shown as lying to the left, or south, of a line to the summit of Mount Keen, whereas it lies to the right, or north, of that line. Besides, Cock Cairn does not appear as a sky-line hill from the Blue Hill (as mistakenly shown on the panorama), wanting about 60 feet in height to be seen over the north shoulder of Mount Keen. But the Gathering Cairn, a prominent spur stretching out northward from Braid Cairn (shown on the panorama, but not named), is a sky-line hill.

According to calculations deduced from the table subjoined, Creag Liath (over the north shoulder of Cairn Leughan) is invisible by 76 feet; Carn Fiaclan (over the south shoulder of Cairn Leughan) by 107 feet, and Carn Cloich Mhuilinn (exactly over the summit of Pananich Hill) is not seen by as much as 813 feet, and even if the earth were flat, only 71 feet of it would be visible.

If these calculations are correct as an average of the allowance to be made for refraction, one is driven to the conclusion that there is only one hill-top visible beyond the Pananich-Cairn Leughan ridge (and one not noted in the Cruickshank-Copland list), viz., Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe, quite a distinct peak lying to the north of Lochnagar, 168 feet of which (over the summit of Clochan Yell) is visible from the Blue Hill. At any rate, if there be any other distant hill visible beyond the



Pananich ridge in the gap between Lochnagar and Beinn Bhrotain, it is up to members of the Cairngorm Club to rope in the lost mountain and demonstrate its visibility. It occurred to me that some mountain near the head of the Geldie might possibly come into view, but that does not seem at all likely, because I find that the two most prominent mountains in that locality—Carn Ealar and Carn an Fhidheleir Lorgaidh—would require to be at least 1122 and 1682 feet higher respectively to come into view.

The following is a note of the extent visible from the Blue Hill of a few of the sky-line hills, of which little more than the summits are seen :—

1. Mount Keen (over north shoulder of Braid Cairn ridge) . . . 106 ft.
2. ,, north shoulder (over Cock Cairn and Gathering Cairn ridge) . . . . . 65 ,,
3. Meall Coire na Saobaidhe (over Clochan Yell) . . . . . 168 ,,
4. Beinn Bhrotain (over south shoulder of Carn na Drochaide) . . . 355 ,,
5. Cairn Toul—south shoulder (over Bruach Mohr) . . . . . 130 ,,  
(The summit is not visible by 279 feet)
6. Tap o'Noth (over Knock Saul) . . . . . 237 ,,
7. Hill of Mormond—west top (over Hill of Dens) . . . . . 51 ,,  
,, east top (over west shoulder of hill of Dudwick) . . . . . 54 ,,
8. Hill of Garvock (over west shoulder of Clochna Hill) . . . . . 80 ,,

So far, we have been dealing with the visibility of objects at higher elevations than the point of observation. Let us now work out two or three examples where the objects are at a lower level.

(a) *Can the Blue Hill be seen from Morrone?*

On referring back to page 29 it will be seen that the reduced levels are :—

Morrone	Knockie Branar	Blue Hill
Feet	Feet	Feet
949	805	0

And the distance from Morrone to Knockie Branar is  $16\frac{3}{4}$  miles, Knockie Branar being 144 feet lower, per reduced levels. Therefore, on the line of vision being produced over Knockie Branar to the Blue Hill, the total fall would be

$$\frac{50 \text{ miles}}{16\frac{3}{4} \text{ ,,}} \times 144 = 430 \text{ feet}$$

This, deducted from the reduced level of Morrone,	949 feet
	less 430 ,,

brings out that the Blue Hill is not visible from Morrone by 519 feet

- (b) *From the Blue Hill, 480 feet above sea level, how far off will a ship be when its topmast flag, 75 feet high above sea level, is just seen over the horizon?*

Per table, the sea horizon for 480 feet is distant	. 29½ miles
,, 75 feet beyond the horizon	. . . 11½ ,,
	41 miles

- (c) *Seen from the top of Mount Keen, does the top of the Blue Hill appear to be above or below the visible sea horizon?*

Mount Keen is 33 miles from the Blue Hill, and being 3077 feet high it is visible, per table, at a distance of about  $74\frac{1}{2}$  miles from its sea horizon. From the same point (the Mount Keen sea horizon), the distance to the Blue Hill is  $74\frac{1}{2} - 33 = 41\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and per table, would be seen if it were

. . . . .	957 ft. high
But the Blue Hill being only	. . . . . 480 ,, ,,
	477 ft.

it is therefore not visible above the horizon by

Accompanying this article is a diagram shewing a section in a straight line from Morrone to the Blue Hill, and continued out in the same line to beyond the sea horizon. The hill-tops, etc., with the elevations taken from the Ordnance Survey levels, are plotted above a curved datum line, which represents the curvature of the earth corrected for the effects of refraction; and the heights are exaggerated to the extent of about 42 times greater than the lengths. One may not be prepared to vouch that the principle of largely increasing the scale for the heights which universally prevails in engineering sections with a straight datum line (the combined effects of curvature and refraction being eliminated), can be applied with mathematical accuracy to this section, having its datum line curved—not quite, but very nearly—to the circumference of a circle; but this may be said—that the method is sufficiently correct for all practical purposes, and that the present writer has for a considerable time used it as a rapid and graphic way of ascertaining whether certain distant objects can be seen or not, subsequently, if need be, verifying its accuracy by calculation.

Some one, not unnaturally, may ask why the line of vision from the Blue Hill to Morrone is not shown curved downward to the extent of one-sixth of the



earth's curvature, or 278 feet, for the effect of refraction. The answer is that, as above noted, the datum line is corrected to the necessary extent, so that, for convenience, a straight line of sight can be used in the diagram for determining what summits intervene to obscure the view.

If it is wished by those of an inquiring mind to go into the calculations herein given, this diagram, with its detailed dimensions, will enable the various stages of the process to be followed, and will also enable the principles enunciated to be applied to other cases. Apart from that, however, the section pictorially indicates how the effect of the earth's curvature, partly neutralised by the effect of refraction, lowers the visibility of distant objects, this lowering effect, in the case of Morrone at 50 miles from the Blue Hill, being to the extent of 1390 feet compared with a level line as a tangent to the earth's surface at the latter point.

The state of perfection to which science has brought the art of measuring heights and distances may be inferred from the accuracy of the long-range gunnery on land and sea during the present war. Objects—say, 20 miles away—can be accurately hit although they are invisible to the gunner, whose direction of fire may be obtained only from a telephone message or a “wireless” from a flying machine, giving the position (on a map divided into numbered squares) of the spot required to be struck. Not only do the questions discussed in this article come into play, but also the angle of fire horizontally and vertically, as well as the trajectory of the bullet or shell.

This contribution touches only the fringe of the complex calculation of the diameter of the earth, etc., on which the data of the formula herein given are based; but if it serves to direct attention to the general principles of a subject of much practical importance in mountaineering, and helps to make them clear, even to a limited extent only, the author will be rewarded for any little trouble he has taken in placing the matter before the

members of the Cairngorm Club. He would like to add that his thanks are due to Mr. J. A. Parker, C.E., for the great trouble he took in revising the rough draft of this article, and for the valuable alterations he suggested towards putting it in the shape it now takes; and also to Mr. William W. Fyvie, Aberdeen University, for kindly checking the figures dealing with Morrone.

TABLE OF HEIGHTS AND DISTANCES CORRECTED FOR CURVATURE AND REFRACTION.

Distance	Height	Distance	Height	Distance	Height
Miles	Feet	Miles	Feet	Miles	Feet
1	.556	31	534	61	2069
2	2.22	32	569	62	2137
3	5.00	33	605	63	2207
4	8.90	34	643	64	2277
5	13.90	35	681	65	2349
6	20.02	36	721	66	2422
7	27.24	37	761	67	2496
8	35.58	38	803	68	2571
9	45.04	39	846	69	2647
10	55.60	40	890	70	2724
11	67	41	935	71	2803
12	80	42	981	72	2882
13	94	43	1028	73	2963
14	109	44	1076	74	3045
15	125	45	1126	75	3127
16	142	46	1176	76	3211
17	161	47	1228	77	3296
18	180	48	1281	78	3383
19	201	49	1335	79	3470
20	222	50	1390	80	3558
21	245	51	1446	81	3648
22	269	52	1503	82	3738
23	294	53	1562	83	3830
24	320	54	1621	84	3923
25	347	55	1682	85	4017
26	376	56	1744	86	4112
27	405	57	1806	87	4208
28	436	58	1870	88	4305
29	468	59	1935	89	4404
30	500	60	2002	90	4503

NOTE.—The distances are in statute miles of 5280 feet, from the point of observation to the sea horizon, corrected for the effects of refraction. The heights are the heights of the points of observation in feet above sea level.

COILE-MHROCHAN.

At dusk I flung my knapsack on the heath,  
I made my bracken bed, I supped, and soon  
As daylight faded from the glen beneath,  
Cool winds among the firs were rising fast,  
Stirring the sleeping branches till they cast  
Black limbs athwart the silver moon.

How can I tell the thousand balms that rose,  
From the dew-sodden earth that took their flight,  
That round me hovered during my repose ?  
Oh, could I thus for ever wake and sleep,  
Lie thus in endless joy, and breathe deep, deep,  
The incense of this April night.

Now can my spirit scan mysterious things,  
And know why still the Dryad haunts the glade,  
Why fearlessly from tree to tree she springs,  
But sometimes venturing to the forest's verge,  
Will falter and a timid step emerge,  
Then panting seek her leafy shade.

Her nature nurtured with that self-same force,  
The smells of dewy earth which round me rise,  
Of fragile hyacinth, of nutty gorse,  
Of pine, of tender grasses, is too frail  
To face a ruder world, so shrinks the gale,  
And in her sheltering coverts lies.

So speeds the night, with perfect quiet blest,  
Till slow the sable heavens pale to blue,  
The westward peaks flush rosy at the crest,  
Then eastward bursts the burning, headstrong sun—  
Away with dreams—hot to the mountains run,  
The Dryad leave, the Oread pursue.

GEORGE BUCHANAN SMITH.

### In Memoriam.

LIEUTENANT AUSTYN J. C. FYFE.

Killed in Action, 23rd March, 1917.



WE have again to mourn the loss of three members of the Club, whose lives have been sacrificed in the defence of their country in the great war which is still raging. One of the best-known of these was Austyn James Claude Fyfe, the third son of the late Mr. James S. Fyfe, Manila. His mother was a daughter of Principal

Brown, and he was thus a nephew of ex-Lord Provost Sir David Stewart of Banchory. Prior to the war, he was on the staff of the Northern Assurance Company at their head office in Aberdeen, and was highly qualified in actuarial work, having written several papers on the subject, notably one on insurance statistics affecting women. In 1915, he felt it his duty to offer his services, and he received a commission in the Aberdeen Territorial Artillery. He went out to France over a year ago and was detailed for trench mortar work, proving himself a keen and capable officer. He was 39 years of age.

Austyn Fyfe was an enthusiastic mountaineer, and became a member of the Club six years ago ; he was also

fond of ski-ing. Music, however, formed his special interest. He had a wonderful musical gift, and was able to play anything from ear with a master touch, while he composed a good deal, among the best-known of his compositions being "Three Songs" and "The Rover." For several years he acted as musical critic for the "Aberdeen Daily Journal," and he was also for some time organist of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church. Requiem Mass for Lieutenant Fyfe was sung in St. Margaret's on 11th April, and a short tribute to his memory was paid by the Rector, who said he would like to assure the friends who were present how much they had valued Austyn Fyfe, not merely for the work he had done for the Church, but for his character, which showed to a wonderful degree two Christian virtues as rare as they were beautiful—the graces of modesty and simplicity.

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CAPTAIN ROBERT J. A. DUNN.

Killed in Action, 23rd April, 1917.



Captain Dunn, of the Gordon Highlanders, was a son of the late Mr. John A. Dunn, boot and shoe maker, Aberdeen, and of Mrs. Dunn, 5 Queen's Road, and was in his 34th year. He was manager of the west-end branch of the important business founded by his father, and was beginning to take an active part in the business life of the



city when the war broke out. He was married to a daughter of Baillie Beveridge, and is survived by his widow and one child. As a former Territorial, he rejoined the forces shortly after the outbreak of war, and took a commission in the Gordon Highlanders. Captain Dunn, who was a most capable officer, went to France in the autumn of 1915, and subsequently saw much heavy fighting with his battalion, notably the attacks on High Wood and Beaumont-Hamel. From these actions he emerged scatheless. In the Arras battle of 23rd April he was not so fortunate, however, as he was wounded in the leg almost immediately he got over the parapet. Stopping only to have his wound bound up, he went on with his men and was killed by a machine-gun bullet in front of the German wire. Announcements were made after his death that he had been mentioned in dispatches and promoted from the rank of Lieutenant (acting Captain) to that of Captain.

Captain Dunn was educated at the Aberdeen Grammar School, and took a leading part in all forms of sport connected with the school. He especially excelled as a Rugby Football player, and had the distinction of acting for a few years as captain of the Former Pupils' Club. Rowing was another of the favourite pastimes in which he came prominently to the front, and he held for some time the sculling championship of the River Dee. He was a good chess player and an enthusiastic member of the Cairngorm Club, of which he became a member in 1911. He was one of the small party of personal friends who frequently made week-end motorcycle runs to Inverey, and from there explored the hills. An appreciation of Captain Dunn in the "Aberdeen Grammar School Magazine" contained this sentence—"He was a fine walker, and the writer has pleasant memories of a climb with him on Lochnagar many years ago, and a long walk on the Ross-shire hills more recently."

CAPTAIN JAMES ELLIS.

Died of Wounds, 24th April, 1917.

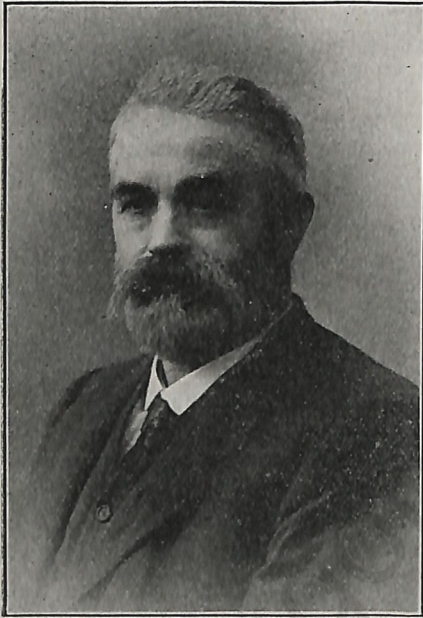


Captain Ellis was an officer in the Gordon Highlanders, being promoted to the rank of captain in September last. Before the war, he was associated with his father, Mr. John Ellis, in the important business of Messrs. Ellis & McHardy, the well-known coal merchants in Aberdeen. He was only 25

years of age. He had been a member of the Club since 1912. In addition to mountaineering, Captain Ellis took a keen and active interest in rowing, being an enthusiastic member of the Aberdeen Boat Club and having rowed for several years in the championship crew. He was also interested in football and motor-cycling.

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SIR ARTHUR HENRY GRANT, Bart. of Monymusk, the last of our honorary members, died at 15 Sloane Court West, Chelsea, London, on 1st March last. He was elected an honorary member on the occasion of a Saturday afternoon excursion of the Club to Cairn William on 3rd June, 1905, when he courteously acted as guide to the party and entertained them to tea at Pitfichie (See *C. C. J.*, v., 56-7).



We subjoin a portrait of the late Mr. William Alfred Hawes, one of the original members of the Club, of whom an obituary notice appeared in our last issue. The photograph from which the portrait is taken unfortunately arrived too late to permit of the illustration accompanying the notice.

*[The second part of Mr. James B. Nicol's article on "Fort William and Skye" is held over meantime.]*

## NOTES.

IN his speech at the unveiling of the Mountain Indicator on Brimmond, Sheriff Laing dropped a hint that the Cairngorm Club might erect a similar

Indicator on Lochnagar in memory of members of the Club who have fallen in the war. It may be advisable to mention that a suggestion of a memorial was put forward about a year ago by one of our own members, only the proposal he made was a commemorative Tablet recording the names of the fallen, to be placed on Cairngorm. The suggestion was informally communicated to the Committee of the Club, and the general feeling was that consideration of the matter might very properly be deferred until the war is over. It must be borne in mind, besides, that the Club has a project in hand to erect an Indicator on Ben Muich Dhui as a memorial of the late Mr. Alexander Copland—a heavy undertaking, progress with which has been suspended for the duration of the war.

REFERENCE has been made elsewhere to the sad fact that three additional members of the Club have lost their lives in the war; here we may congratulate other three members on earning distinction.

THE CLUB AND MILITARY SERVICE. Captain (temporary Major) Eric W. H. Brander, Gordon Highlanders, and Captain J. V. Lorimer, Army Service Corps, have been mentioned in dispatches; and Captain W. L. Cook, of the 4th Gordons, received from the late Tsar of Russia—whom Russian revolutionaries now designate “Nicholas Romanoff”—the Order of St Anne (Third Class), in recognition of the work he accomplished while on special service in Petrograd. Captain Brander has also been gazetted a Staff officer. Lieutenant (acting Captain) J. C. Duffus, R.F.A., has been promoted Captain.

THE man who planned the bridle-path to the summit of Ben Nevis died at Fort William on 10th January last. He was a Mr. Colin Livingstone, one of the few remaining old parochial schoolmasters, and had

THE BEN NEVIS BRIDLE-PATH. lived to the patriarchal age of 89. The bridle-path was constructed by the Scottish Meteorological Society in 1883, when the now abandoned Observatory was erected. An article descriptive of “Life and Work at the Observatory,” appeared in Vol II. of the *C.C.J.*, and the author (Mr. John S. Begg), in referring to his first ascent of the Ben by the new route, mentioned that, not being in good form, he “cursed the apparent endlessness of that stony bridle-path, with its successive zig-zags up the mountain-side.” But many of us have had good reason to act in the spirit of the General Wade couplet and bless the (to most people unknown) designer of the path up Ben Nevis, un-

comfortably "stony" though it be in its higher section. Searching among some mountaineering literature lately, we unexpectedly came upon a little pamphlet on Ben Nevis Observatory, dated 1883 (price 1/-), which every person who chose to use the path was expected to purchase, "by way of annual ticket for the use of the road." The pamphlet gives a succinct account of the establishment of the Observatory and the erection of the Observatory buildings, and incidentally states that the route of the bridle-path—6 feet wide, with gradients nowhere exceeding 1 in 5—was suggested by Mr. Colin Livingstone, and the construction of the road (as well as the Observatory buildings,) was intrusted to Mr. James M'Lean, Fort-William.

A SLIGHT incident in the ecclesiastical status of Aviemore may be noted—of some interest to such mountaineers as concern themselves with local details of places visited. On 2nd March last, the Court of

ECCLESIASTICAL Teinds disjoined the district of Aviemore from the parish of Duthil, and annexed it, *quoad sacra*, to the parish of Rothiemurchus, and at the same time transferred the glebe of Rothiemurchus from the minister of

the united parish of Duthil and Rothiemurchus to the minister of the parish of Rothiemurchus *quoad sacra*. It may come as a surprise to some readers that Duthil and Rothiemurchus form a united parish, the union having taken place as long ago as 1625. The Spey is the boundary between the two. Rothiemurchus was constituted a *quoad sacra* parish in 1859. Rev. Donald M'Dougall, who has been minister of Rothiemurchus for over forty years, has demitted his charge owing to advanced years and failing health. Mr. M'Dougall was an esteemed contributor to the early volumes of the *C.C.J.*

THE reversion of deer forests to sheep grazing which some "authorities" declare to be impending seems actually to have begun. A part of Invercauld Forest near Loch Bulig has been again let for sheep this season, and the upper part of Glen Clunie (part of Glencallater Forest) has now been let for sheep. It is a number of years since sheep were removed from these glens to give place to deer.

A NEWSPAPER correspondent recently returned from "somewhere in France" tells a story of a visit paid by Viscount Bryce to the trenches. An officer was sketching out a little trip along the front which he proposed to make with the distinguished visitor the next day, but, suddenly remembering that Lord Bryce is 78, suggested that perhaps the programme involved too long a walk. His Lordship at once answered that, as an old Alpinist, he would undertake to walk against his much younger friend, himself, by the way, an Alpinist of some distinction. And when next day the two returned to camp, after trudging through trenches for many miles, the younger man had to confess that he was very much more done up than his companion.

WAR correspondents at the Austro-Italian front furnish from time to time further illustrations of the exceptional features of the campaign there being carried on, to which reference was made in a Note in our last issue. The general nature of the Italian task was thus summarised by Dr. Mario Borsa, writing from the Italian

MOUNTAIN WARFARE. General Headquarters, January 31—"We had to fight the

Austrians, but, above all, to overcome the almost insuperable difficulties of the ground—steep mountains from 8,000 ft. to 12,000 ft. high, covered with thick woods, snow and glaciers, bare rocky walls like the dreadful Gate of the Dolomites, and the rugged, waterless, inhospitable Carso, with its deep, crater-like depressions, its sharp stones, and dark-brown peaty earth." Wintry weather presented its own difficulties, but also created aspects of landscape which Dr. Borsa did not overlook. "Under their thick white coat," he wrote, "mountains and upland valleys have a peaceful fascination which makes the immediate realities of war almost inconceivable. Roads are screened by the fences of snow thrown up on both sides; pine trees and fir trees, half buried, bend their heads under a heavy snow-cap; villages are silent and invisible. A sense of rest and oblivion weighs over this calm harmony in white, so that the sharp bursting of a shell here and there comes almost as a desecration."

WE have received the annual report, list of members, &c., of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. In consequence of the war, no Club meets were arranged during the past year, and it has also been decided to

YORKSHIRE  
RAMBLERS'  
CLUB.

postpone the publication of the Club's *Journal* for the present. Four members of the Club have been killed in action. The Club, we observe, has a library embracing over 170 volumes of mountaineering literature.

## REVIEWS.

STUDENT AND SNIPER-SERGEANT: A Memoir of J. K. Forbes, M.A.  
By William Taylor, M.A., and Peter Diack, M.A. London: Hodder &  
Stoughton.—Of the many recently published memoirs

“STUDENT AND SNIPER-SERGEANT.” of brilliant young men who have fallen in the war, this one claims special notice in the *Journal*, for John Keith Forbes was at one time a member of the Club and had made many excursions in the Cairngorms. A son of Mr. Alexander Forbes, schoolmaster—also a former member of the Club—he acquired, early in life, the habit of taking long walks in the country, sometimes in company, but generally alone. When he was only nine years old, he disappeared from home one morning and did not return till dusk, having walked from Aberdeen to the Hill of Fare and back, a distance of thirty miles. A year later, he made his first acquaintance with “the real mountains,” during a holiday spent in the Cabrach district. At fourteen, he accompanied his father, a brother and a friend in a ten days’ tramping tour up Deeside to Ben Muich Dhui, then across to Blair Atholl and down the Tay to Dunkeld. On account of his youth, he was allowed to set the pace, but—as so frequently happens—his pace was too fast for the seniors and he had repeatedly to be called back. Later on, when a student at the University, and afterwards a teacher at Rathven public school, near Buckie, Forbes did a deal of walking and climbing by himself; and some striking experiences in these solitary rambles may be quoted:—

With bicycle and bag he vanished to the West after a strenuous military camp at Barry. He was heard of in the lighthouse at Lismore, and then among the wilds of Argyle and Inverness. Towards the end of the tour, he left a clachan near Stromeferry about five o’clock one morning, pushed and carried his bicycle some miles till riding became possible, rode straight ahead till dark, slept an hour or two on the hill-side, passed Tomintoul at dawn, and breakfasted at Kincardine o’Neil, on Deeside. He had done fully 140 miles—no small feat, considering the load he carried (tent, water-proof sheet, etc.), and the kind of road he had to cover.

Another time he made a tour alone to the Cairngorms; and, though the details of it are mostly unknown, one incident remains. To save a detour which would have required more time than he could spare, he crossed the Dee—at the time swollen with ice-water and lumps of melting snow—with his clothes bundled on his head!

Skye, once visited, remained his dearest hunting-ground. . . . He had gone up a gully once, and, many hundreds of feet above nothing, came exhausted to an overhanging cornice, where he had to remain for twenty minutes, half-sitting, half-hanging by his finger-tips, till he gathered strength and wind enough to twist himself over the last lift. He confessed that his thoughts during the interval were of the most serious kind, and, for the time, determined him to keep safer paths. But he had several narrow escapes of the same kind, though he said little about them.

The book, however, is more, very much more, than an account of mountaineering experiences. Forbes, who was of a deeply religious nature,

ultimately resolved to enter the ministry, and was studying at the Aberdeen U.F. Church College when the war broke out. He enlisted as a private in the 4th Gordons, and went over to France with his battalion in February 1915, and he speedily found himself in the trenches and the fighting line. He came to be recognised for his extraordinary reliability as a guide especially at night, and he organised and trained a section of "snipers" in order to "utterly confound the German crack shots," being appointed Sniper-Sergeant for the purpose. In this important work, we are told, he rendered service "acknowledged to be most valuable by the best authorities on the Staff." Unhappily, in an engagement on 25th September 1915, he was struck by a shell which exploded, killing him instantaneously.

This Memoir delineates a striking personality, endowed with great aptitude and a character of exceptional forcefulness; and it is abundantly evident that in Forbes's case a career of much promise and certain distinction was prematurely cut short. His reflections on the war and on the spiritual and other problems involved give the book a distinctive value.

R. A.

SELECTED LIST OF BOOKS ON MOUNTAINEERING. Compiled by LeRoy Jeffers, F.R.G.S., New York Public Library, 1916.—This is a catalogue (46 pp.) of the books dealing with mountaineering which MOUNTAINEERING are available for reference use in the Central Library LITERATURE. Building, Fifth Avenue, New York, the Library having become the custodian of the library of the American

Alpine Club and a depository of printed material of the organisations constituting the Bureau of Associated Mountaineering Clubs of North America. Such a Catalogue is mainly of service, of course, to members of these Clubs and to New York residents, but it has an interest to mountaineers elsewhere, if only as an index to the works relating to their pastime and to mountains generally, in all their aspects. The works specified in the catalogue are numerous, and they are fairly representative of mountaineering literature. There are books here dealing, not only with the American, Alaskan, and Canadian mountains, but with the Alps, the Dolomities, the Caucasus, the Himalayas, the Andes, the Cordilleras, etc.; books by writers of many nationalities—American, British, French, German and Italian. The dates of publication indicate the enormous impulse which has been given to mountaineering literature during the past sixty years—since 1856, when Will's "Wanderings Among the High Alps," was published. But there are not lacking many old books—the oldest, we think, being J. J. Helveticus Scheuchzer's "Sive itinera per Helvetiae alpinas regiones" (1723); among others we note Gruner's "Natural History of the Swiss Glaciers" (1770) and de Saussure's "Voyages in the Alps" (1786-7). English climbers and writers are well represented—from Whymper and Mummery down to the Workmans and the brothers Abraham; but Scotland's representation is almost confined to Burton's "Cairngorm Mountains," Sir Archibald Geikie's "Scenery of Scotland," not being included. We are glad to find the C. C. J., in the Catalogue, and also the names of several of our contributors.

R. A.



WHAT is known in the Highlands as the Loss of Gaick, or the Gaick Tragedy, has been alluded to once or twice in our pages (see *C. C. J.*,

THE LOSS OF GAICK. account of Gaick and of the incident that has made it famous was given by Mr. Henry Alexander in the February number of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*.

Mr. Alexander walked from Kingussie to Gaick Lodge one night in June last year, and incidentally discovered (as others of us have done before) that "sleeping out of doors is greatly over-rated"—he tried it, but the night was bitterly cold, and he was glad to get up and move on, a not uncommon experience. Gaick is a very wild place, surrounded by steep hills, and here in the first week of January 1800, (or the Christmas of 1799, old style—"the last Christmas of the century"), Captain John Macpherson of Ballochroan, "the Black Officer," along with four men who accompanied him to shoot deer, perished in an avalanche which descended on the bothy or hut they occupied. This is the only case recorded in the Scottish Highlands of a hut and its occupants being overwhelmed by an avalanche. Interest accordingly attaches to the incident for that reason, and it has been augmented by the legends that have sprung up, the avalanche, in the Celtic imagination, being a judgment on the Black Officer for his excess of zeal in recruiting, by which Speyside and Badenoch had been depleted of many young men. The story, besides, has its dramatic and poetical versions, Gaelic and English, so that, as Mr. Alexander says, "what with fact and myth, tale and verse, the Loss of Gaick became one of the great legends of the Highlands." Of both the historical and legendary parts of the tragedy Mr. Alexander has given us a capital account, drawing upon many sources for a narrative that is complete and satisfying.

As to the other contents of the number, Rev. A. Ronald G. Burn—under the title: "Out of the Golden Remote Wild West," a phrase borrowed from Swinburne's "Hesperia"—furnishes the first part of a discursive account of a survey of sundry hills in the neighbourhood of Loch Arkaig and Glen Dessary, West Inverness-shire, made apparently for the S. M. C. "Guide Book." The total number of tops climbed was 68 in twenty-five week-days (net), all the hills but two being over 3000 feet high; and "no off-days were taken, and none needed or desired." "Some" walking, to adopt the latest Americanism. Mr. J. H. Buchanan contributes pleasant and pleasantly-written "Memories of Skye." He is particularly enthusiastic in praise of Blaven. "Who will dispute," he asks, "that Blaven is one of the most splendid in the group of mountains where each one has an individuality of its own, and stands in its primitive strength like some Viking hero of old?"

PROBABLY to north-country readers the most interesting items in the June number of the *Journal* are two relating to the Shelter Stone at Loch Avon.

THE SHELTER STONE. One is a reprint of an article descriptive of a visit to the Cairngorms, contributed to the *Scotsman* by Mr. Walter A. Smith in 1875, the narrative including an account of a night spent under the Shelter Stone; and this article is followed by a reproduction of a stirring episode located at the Shelter Stone which occurs in Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's novel, "The Wolfe of

Badenoch," a work of still more ancient date. The hero of the romance was nearly killed by two or three mountaineers who, acting as his guides, led him astray into the Loch Avon wilds, and then attacked him at the Shelter Stone. Mr. Smith and the friends who accompanied him also had their adventure, for, when they occupied the "shelter," it was invaded by mountaineers—only they were bent on nothing more alarming than fishing in the loch. There is, of course, no comparison between the two incidents, but comparison otherwise is inevitable, for one can hardly fail to contrast Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's elaborate description of the Loch Avon scenery, particularly his accentuation of its awesome aspects, with the modern and more attractive presentation of the picturesqueness of the region, even with all its wild features, which Mr. Smith furnishes. The two papers are supplemented by an illustration of the Shelter Stone.

Rev. A. Ronald G. Burn continues the account of his energetic "bagging of Munros" in West Inverness-shire, and tells a number of delicious stories credited to a Celtic Munchausen of the name of "Kenneth of the Shieling." Dr. W. Inglis Clark contributes a spirited account of a winter walk from Killin Junction across the pass by the side of Craig M' Ranaich to Kingshouse, incidentally using a phrase that puzzles us. Mentioning the extraordinary way in which he was dressed, he says the words of an old Scots doggerel, heard by him in his youth, came to his mind. Referring to two women who, in face of a storm, had to reach Aberdeen, it ran thus—"They row'd their legs in straeen rapes, Magurkies on their heads for keps, And, buskit ower like twa bee-skeps, Set aff for Aberdeen."

What are "magurkies"?

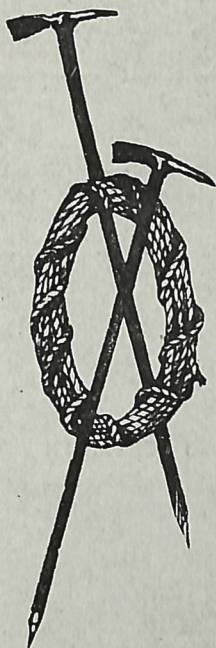
As we go to press, a local philological expert informs us that the magurkie was a head-covering made of straw, identical (save as regards the material) with the close-fitting worsted mutch of bygone days. It was worn by persons engaged in peat-working in the moss. The term is still known on Deeside.

MR. E. ALEXANDER POWELL, the American journalist and author, has just written a book, "The End of the Trail," descriptive of a motor-car tour through the Pacific Coast States, from New Mexico to British Columbia. The Cascade Mountains are a noteworthy feature of the scenery in Oregon and Washington; and Mr. Powell declares them superior to the Alps.

He says:—

Nowhere in Switzerland do I recall a picture of such surpassing splendour as that which stood before us, as though on a titanic easel, as we looked up the vista formed by the fragrant, verdant Hood River valley toward the great white cone of Mount Hood. It is, indeed, so very beautiful that those Americans who know and love the world's white roof-trees can find scant justification for turning their faces toward the Alps when here, in the upper left-hand corner of their own country, are mountains which would make the ghost of the great Whymper moan for an alpenstock and hob-nailed boots. This startlingly sudden transition from orchards groaning with fruit to dense primeval forests, and from these forests to the stately, isolated snow peaks, is very different from Switzerland, of course. Indeed, to compare these mountains of the Pacific North-West with the Alps, as is so frequently done, seems to me to be a grave injustice to them both. The Alps form a wild and angry sea of icy mountains, and we have nothing in America to which they can be fittingly compared. The Cascades, on

the other hand, form a great system of lofty forest-wrapped ranges surmounted by the towering isolated peaks of snowy volcanoes, and Europe contains nothing to equal them. I am perfectly aware, of course, that the very large number of Americans who spend their summers in the ascent of the orthodox Swiss peaks—more often than not, if the truth were known, by means of funicular railways or through telescopes on hotel piazzas—look with scorn and contumely upon these mountains of the far Nor' west, which they regard as home-made and unfashionable and vulgar and not worth bothering about. Perhaps they are not aware, however, that no less an authority on mountaineering than James Bryce (I don't recall the title that he has taken now that he has been made a peer) said not long ago, in speaking of these sentinels that guard the Columbia—"We have nothing more beautiful in Switzerland or Tyrol, in Norway or the Pyrenees. The combination of ice scenery with woodland scenery of the grandest type is to be found nowhere in the Old World, unless it be in the Himalayas, and, so far as we know, nowhere else on the American continent." Which but serves to point the truth that foreigners are more appreciative of the beauties and grandeurs of our country than we are ourselves.



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