

JUBILEE NUMBER.

Vol. IX.

January, 1918.

No. 50.

THE Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY
ROBERT ANDERSON.

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NOTES. REVIEWS. ILLUSTRATIONS.

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Contributions for the July Number should be sent to the Editor, Mr. Robert Anderson, 12 Belvidere Street, Aberdeen, not later than April 30.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

Cairntoul.

Angel's Peak.

Braeriach.

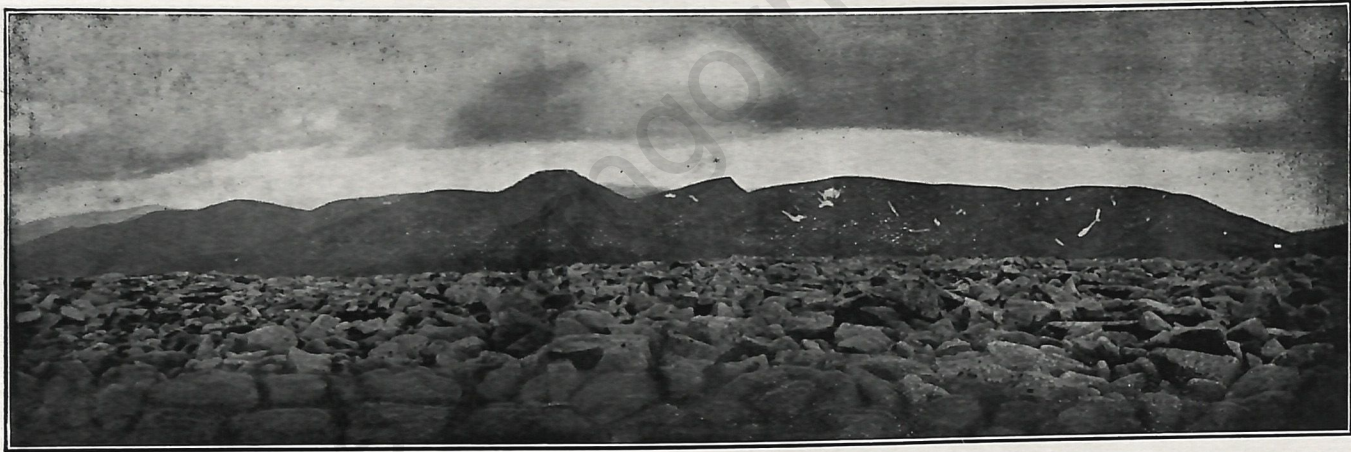


Photo by

PANORAMIC VIEW FROM BEN MUICH DHUI.

John Croll.

THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

Vol. IX.

JANUARY, 1918.

No 50.

Our fiftieth Number.

THIS being No. 50 of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*—the Jubilee Number—we may be pardoned a modest note of self-congratulation. To members of the Club it must be a matter of satisfaction that the *Journal* has been carried on regularly since it was started five-and-twenty years ago, and equally gratifying that it is still vigorous and flourishing. The gratification is heightened when account is taken of the exceptional conditions under which the *Journal* is produced. It deals primarily with the mountain range after which the Club is named—a comparatively small area, it must be remembered; while, at the same time, a Mountaineering Club in the north-east of Scotland can have only a limited membership. It must be borne in mind, too, that the walking faculty is not always accompanied by the writing faculty—it is matter of regret sometimes that men who have accomplished notable feats of walking among the mountains are wholly unable to furnish an account of their wanderings which, from the literary point of view, would be adequate or satisfactory, or such as to arrest attention. In all these circumstances, the editorial task of finding contributors for the Club Journal is occasionally a difficult one. It is all the more satisfactory, therefore, on

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the production of our fiftieth number, to reflect that material has been obtained for so many past issues, and that there is every prospect that for the future the supply will be found commensurate to the demand.

The first number of the *Cairngorm Club Journal* was issued in July 1893. The Cairngorm Club had been established four years before, in January 1889, antedating by a few months the Scottish Mountaineering Club, which was not started till December of that year; but the Cairngorm Club was much slower in setting up a Journal than was the younger Club. The *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* was begun in January 1890, and as three numbers a year are issued, its 50th number appeared a considerable time ago. Probably the institution of the *Cairngorm Club Journal* (published half-yearly only) was delayed in conformity with that inborn caution of the Aberdonian which demands some assurance of success before a novel enterprise is ventured upon. Anyhow, it was not until the Annual Meeting held on 28th February 1893, the Committee having then reported in its favour, that the publication of a Club Journal was agreed to; and, as has been mentioned, the first number appeared in the following July. It consisted of 56 pages, but the number of pages has fluctuated considerably, Nos. 4 and 5, for instance, consisting of 84 and 76 pages respectively. By the tenth number the average number of pages had become virtually 64, and this standard was maintained till the completion of Vol. IV. Then, the first flush of enthusiasm having passed away and contributions becoming scantier, the size of the number was gradually curtailed till the average became 48 pages (in Vol. VI). Since then, the number of pages in a single number has sunk occasionally as low as 36, but during the present editorial régime an endeavour has been made to keep it at 48.

The *Journal*, according to the Rules, is one of the agencies employed by the Club for carrying out its chief purposes, namely :—(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. How far these objects have been attained or aided by the *Journal* is not for us to say, but the occurrence of the jubilee of the *Journal* is an appropriate occasion for taking stock of what we have attempted, and for passing in review the more notable contributions to what may be termed roughly the literature of the Cairngorms which have appeared in our columns.

Of these the most conspicuous, as is only natural perhaps, are those dealing with the topography of the region. First and foremost among them must be placed the detailed and exact descriptive accounts of the Cairngorm Mountains, their prominent features, and the various routes to the several mountain tops, which Mr. Alex. Inkson McConnochie furnished to the first two volumes. They were supplemented, later on, by Mr. Alexander Copland's four articles on "The Horizon from Ben Muich Dhui"—a precise and painstaking enumeration of the hills visible from the summit of the monarch of the range, the value of which was immensely enhanced by the accompanying charts drawn by Mr. Copland himself. (We all hope that the project of transferring these charts to a permanent Indicator on the top of the Ben, as a memorial of their designer and of his many services to the Club, will be duly carried out at no very distant date). Useful in its way, too, was the "Outline View of the Cairngorm Mountains" originally contributed to No. 12 by the recently-deceased Mr. C. G. Cash ; and to Mr. Cash we were greatly indebted also for many articles

descriptive of ascents and observations in the Cairngorms, and particularly for the account of the Rothiemurchus forest fire of 1899—a fire which, for many years after, despoiled Loch-an-Eilein of much of its exquisite charm and beauty. Under the title of “Outlying Nooks of the Cairngorms,” the late Rev. Dr. Forsyth, the minister of Abernethy, furnished many interesting notes descriptive of little-known spots in the mountains, and into these notes he wove on occasion fragments of the legendary lore of the district. To specify other articles, many of them exceedingly useful as “guides” to persons making excursions similar to those described, would occupy too much space; it must suffice to name among numerous and esteemed contributors the late Rev. Dr. Hugh Macmillan (whose article on “The Larig Ghru” may be reckoned the “classic” exposition of the subject), the late Dr. James Macaulay, the late Mr. William C. Smith, advocate; the late Mr. A. M. Munro, City Chamberlain, Aberdeen; Rev. Dr. Thomas Sinton, Dr. Ernest A. Baker, Mr. A. L. Bagley, and Rev. George Williams.

The scientific aspects of the Cairngorms have not received in the *Journal* anything like the extensive treatment that has been accorded to the topographical, but they have not been altogether neglected. Perhaps the most important article of a scientific nature that has appeared in our pages is one on the botany of the Cairngorms by Professor Trail, comprising a detailed list of the flowering plants to be found in the Cairngorm area. The geology of the region has hardly been touched upon—certainly by no means fully or adequately—although the subject has been handled by the late Dr. Thomas F. Jamieson and the late Dr. John Milne; the many geological articles furnished by the former dealt with Highland districts outside the Cairngorms. Natural history, however, has received some attention, several of Mr. Seton P. Gordon’s studies of bird and animal life in the Highlands having appeared originally in the *Cairngorm Club Journal*. The philology of place-names, we regret to say, has been ignored almost wholly, save for

an all-too-brief article by Professor Watson in the last volume, and a list of place-names in Kirkmichael, Banffshire, compiled by Dr. John Milne. Two articles possess a historical interest—in relation to the Club at least—namely, Dr. Lippe's account of the inception of the Club given in the first number, and the survey of "Twenty-one Years of Our Club" which Mr. James Gray Kyd contributed to the issue for January 1910; and mention should not be omitted of a highly valuable contribution on "Ordnance Survey Maps of the Cairngorms," by the late Colonel Sir John Farquharson of Corrachree, ex-Director-General of the Ordnance Survey. Nor must we forget the two addresses to the Club delivered by the President, Mr. (now Viscount) Bryce, and subsequently published in the *Journal*—"The Preservation of Natural Scenery" and "Types of Mountain Scenery."

Although primarily concerned with the Cairngorms, as previously stated, the *Journal*, like the Club itself, does not restrict itself to that area, but publishes articles relating to mountains and mountaineering elsewhere. In this way it has dealt with the more prominent hills in Aberdeenshire and Banffshire, and also with many of the topographical features of the portion of Inverness-shire adjacent to the Cairngorms. As time went on, the area thus treated became more extensive; and the inclusion of Skye and the Cuillins in the excursions of individual members of the Club led to contributions dealing with rock climbing and climbing in snow, some of these latter recounting adventures in the Alps. The range of contributions was still further widened when Mr. William Garden furnished a description of an ascent of Mount Assiniboine, in North America; and since then we have had articles descriptive of Camping in Canada and of visits paid to the Rocky Mountains, the Yosemite Valley, the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River, etc.

While thus indicating the general nature of the contents of the *Journal* during the past quarter of a century, we are far from imagining, or desiring it to be imagined, that the subject of the Cairngorm Mountains has become

exhausted, so to speak—that the various features of these mountains have been delineated so frequently that nothing remains to be written about them. The very opposite is our conviction, for a study of the objects of the Club and a survey of the eight volumes of the *Journal* will show how much, how very much, yet remains to be done. We have already indirectly suggested lines on which further research might profitably be pursued; and doubtless to a new generation of mountaineers the Cairngorms will present different aspects demanding separate treatment. Some of the later articles in the *C. C. J.*, indeed, reveal that the point of view is already changing. There is apparent a disposition to conduct mountain climbing on less conventional and more independent lines, by evolving new routes and investigating places hitherto neglected. This is all to the good; and we are confident that descriptive accounts of the departures thus made will always be welcome to the pages of the *C. C. J.*

A word—and a brief one—as to the editorship. It has been the practice for the Secretary of the Club to act as Editor, and the arrangement has worked quite satisfactorily. As a result, there have been only four editors—really only three regularly appointed. The first, Mr. A. I. McConnochie, held the post down to the end of 1910—for the long period, that is, of eighteen years—and he has at his credit the first half-dozen volumes. We feel warranted, on this jubilee occasion, in quoting the commendation of his editorial services which was contained in the resolution adopted by the Club on his retirement from the Secretaryship (on leaving Aberdeen for Glasgow):—"As Editor of the Club's *Journal*, Mr. McConnochie also laid the Club under deep obligation: the standard of interest, variety, and range has throughout been well maintained—a task of no little difficulty in such a comparatively restricted sphere." Mr. McConnochie was succeeded by Mr. James Gray Kyd, but Mr. Kyd was soon called to London: he brought

out only two numbers (those for 1911). To him succeeded Mr. J. B. Gillies, who, however, had temporarily to relinquish the editorship on the outbreak of the war in August 1914, he having up to that date edited six numbers (1912-13-14). The present conductor of the *Journal* took over the editorial duties by way of friendly arrangement in a temporary emergency, and nominally as Acting Editor, but by the lamented death of Major Gillies, who was killed at the front in November 1916, the full editorship then devolved upon him.

A final word as to the present number. As befits the occasion, it has been largely increased in size, and it is a "special" number in this respect—that we have been favoured with articles by all the contributors of articles to the first number who now survive. They are three only—Viscount Bryce, Sir Hugh T. Munro, Bart., of Lindertis, Forfarshire; and Mr. James Rose, Aberdeen.* The number also contains articles by all the surviving editors—gratifying evidence of editorial amity; and among the other contents we may particularise the first part of an elaborate and interesting paper by Mr. John Clarke, one of our original members, who has made many valuable contributions to our pages.

* Of the contributors of Notes to No. 1, there are only four survivors—Mr. William Douglas, Edinburgh; Mr. William Cruickshank, now in Kirkcaldy; Mr. McConnochie, and the present Editor.

SOME WAR-TIME REFLECTIONS.

BY VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M., D.C.L., ETC.,
PRESIDENT OF THE CLUB.

HEARTY greetings to my fellow-members of the Cairngorm Club and to the *Journal* on the appearance of its Jubilee Number!

Unable to re-visit the Alps in war time, I have this summer been wandering among the mountains of Sutherlandshire and Perthshire, and along the delightful shores of Arran. Hills and glens are silent. All the young men have gone—many never to return. The faces of the women are sad. Seeing few anglers in the rivers, hearing hardly a gun upon the moors, one is reminded of Macaulay's lines about Etruria when Lars Porsena was marching his army on Rome—

Unharm'd the waterfowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

One tries among these lovely peaks and along the wave-resounding shores of ocean to forget what is passing in Flanders and France, in Macedonia and Palestine and Mesopotamia. But the contrast between the stillness and beauty of Nature, offering us her peaceful delights, and the flames of strife and hatred that have enwrapt the whole world, destroying the youth of many nations, seems almost as awful here as it does to those in the midst of battle, who have indeed little time to reflect upon it.

In the Highland straths, I have been struck by the improvement in the condition of the people since I first roamed the hills seventy years ago. The cottages are certainly better, and life is less hard. But there is still plenty to be done. Ruined farm houses and deserted crofts still speak of the unhappy days when, in the last century, some of the great landowners sent across

the sea or into the great cities so many of their humbler tenants. It is to be hoped that, following up the change of policy marked by the first Crofters' Commission, efforts will be continued to make more of the country available for human industry and habitation. Large stretches of the lower parts of deer forests might be planted with trees or stocked with sheep; some districts could carry more cattle. After this war is over, we shall need more than ever to develop to the uttermost all our natural resources, and to make Scotland a more attractive place, with a better prospect for the rural population, than it has been latterly for those who have gone far away—to Canada and New Zealand.

Wandering through these straths, and along the now lonely shores of the Western Sea, one thinks of those who have gone to fight to save our country and defend the cause of Right, and of those Canadians and New Zealanders, sons of Scottish emigrants, who have come to join their British cousins on the battlefield. They have been worthy of their sires. Their valour has been as great as when Mackintoshes and Mackays on the North Inch at Perth, Frasers and Macdonalds on the banks of Loch Oich, fought out their clan feuds with one another; and it has been used for a higher purpose.

Never have we had more reason to be proud of Scotland. She has given freely of her best blood for us all—for freedom and a righteous cause. A dear old Aberdeen friend of mine—Dr. Angus Fraser—used to claim that without the sons of the Gael in the Scottish and Irish regiments, there would have been far fewer British victories. We must not disparage the valour of others among our countrymen—of the men of Lancashire and Northumberland, Sussex and Wales, and the London East-Enders too—all have fought well. But certainly there has been no valour more brilliant than that of Scotsmen. We love Scotland more than ever; we love her for her men and their magnificent spirit.

We, mountain-climbers, love her for her beauty also—

and no less in age than in youth. I have been among Alps and Apennines and Pyrenees, in the mountains of Norway and Hungary and Greece, in the Caucasus and the Rocky Mountains, the Andes and the Himalaya; but the landscapes of Scotland are no less grand and lovely to me now than they were seventy years ago. It is not size that gives perfectness of charm to a landscape, but variety of form, nobility of line, richness and depth of colour. We who delight in the mountains may say with Wordsworth to the end of our lives—

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.

20th September, 1917.

THREE NIGHTS ON THE CAIRNGORMS.

BY SIR HUGH T. MUNRO, BART.

AS I was a contributor to the first number of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*, the Editor has asked me to write something for the fiftieth number. I respond readily; but as my climbing days began upwards of forty-three years ago in the Alps, it is inevitable that anything I now write must be rather the reminiscences of a dotard than the experiences of an active climber. Nevertheless, I still aspire to stand on the summit of the only three "tops" in Scotland exceeding 3,000 feet in height which I have not yet climbed. Raeburn, Collie, Garden, and others, however, must combine to haul me up on a rope; otherwise the ascents will not be made!

I am minded to tell briefly of three night adventures on the Cairngorms.

At 8.45, on a lovely frosty morning in the month of February, I left Lynwilg—there were no hotels at Aviemore in those days. There are few more beautiful places than Rothiemurchus Forest, with its fine old Scotch firs and luxuriant heather, its open glades and glistening tarns, its views across Loch Morlich and Glenmore and over Strathspey to the Monadhliaths. But that same luxuriant heather makes uncommonly troublesome walking, and the numerous tracks are all shaped like corkscrews, and all apparently lead nowhere; and so it was 2.40 p.m. before the summit of Cairngorm was reached. By this time the mist was rolling over the top of Braeriach and creeping up the valleys to the south-west. I was well accustomed, however, to finding my way over the hills alone in all kinds of weather, and though I was soon in thick

mist I reached the top of Ben Muich Dhui without difficulty and without misgiving. But it was now 4.30. I dashed off down the hard-frozen snow in what I believed to be the direction of Loch Etchachan, and at 5 o'clock, having descended 1,000 feet, I found myself, just at the bottom margin of the mist, on the top of the precipices overhanging Loch Avon. Here was a pleasant predicament to be in! Long past sunset, dangerous cliffs all around, and the mist freezing to one's hair, beard, and clothes! The cold was so intense that I did not think it would have been possible to live through the night without moving, and yet there seemed little prospect of my getting out of my precarious position before it got quite dark. I had no flask with me and little food.

I dashed up a hard-snow slope, hauling myself up with the point of my axe, for there was no time to cut steps, crossed an intervening ridge, and again descended—only to find myself among even worse cliffs, and still above Loch Avon. A last look at the map and compass in the dim light, and another race up a long steep slope with the help of the axe. Time was too precious to stop and take breath even for a minute. A wide sweep round, and then, bearing to the left, an easy descent over snow that evidently filled the bed of a burn; and I was deeply thankful to find myself, at 5.45 on a dark night in early February, 3,100 feet above sea-level, on the shores of the frozen Loch Etchachan. After a tedious walk in pitch darkness I reached Derry Lodge at 8.30.

This was the first of many visits paid to Derry Lodge; and I should like here to pay a tribute to the kindness, hospitality, and courtesy of Donald Fraser, the late stalker. His daughter, too, was most assiduous in her attentions. She collected post-cards, and I have had the pleasure of sending her some from many outlandish parts of the world.

Fraser had, of course, as most of the Cairngorm Club know, many reminiscences of the Royal Family and of foreign princes, including the Kaiser, who had stalked

in Mar Forest. He told me that the finest rifle shot he had ever known was Prince Henry of Battenberg. On one occasion he was stalking with the Prince and had brought him in sight of the deer, but said—"We can't get within shooting distance." The Prince replied—"Surely you can take me to those peat hags." "Yes," Fraser responded, "but they are more than 400 yards away from the stag." "Take me there, and I will shoot it through the heart." He did so. Years after, in 1914, I had the honour of sitting next to Princess Henry at luncheon. As it happened, she had on a coat the buttons of which were made of deer's teeth taken from deer which Prince Henry had killed. I told her Fraser's verdict on her husband's shooting and I think she was pleased.

Fraser spent the long months of winter in mounting deer's heads. He had the opportunity of getting any number of the cast horns of stags, and, as he himself told me, he could usually make a much better and more symmetrical head than nature could produce, for as a rule the two sides of a stag's head differ very considerably.

Mrs. Fraser, when a child of twelve, accompanied by a girl two years older, walked from Braemar to some place in the Carse of Gowrie. Her parents had arranged that the two girls should spend two nights on the way. The first night was to be spent at the Kirkton of Glenisla; but as their route lay down Glenshee, this would have taken them out of their way, so they decided to go on to the next sleeping-place. When they reached it, however, they became ambitious of doing the whole journey in one walk, so they continued on, and did the whole fifty miles without a rest. I doubt if there are many members of the Cairngorm Club, or of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, who could do as much.

But this has very little to do with the Cairngorms or with mountaineering.

I will now tell of two other nights, this time voluntarily spent on the Central, and Eastern Cairngorms.

Once, a dozen or more years ago, I and a friend left Aviemore in the late afternoon of the 18th of June—Waterloo Day. We made our way through the Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Forests until, at about 10.30 at night, we found ourselves at the foot of what on the Ordnance map is called Fiacail Coire an't Sneachda. It is a narrow and steep ridge running up to the summit plateau, which, in spite of some snow lying about, was quite easy, and did not even suggest the rope. Here we got into a thin mist. As most members of the Cairngorm Club will know, the big pasture-like land extending from Cairngorm by Coire an't Sneachda to Ben Muich Dhui is an undulating moorland, across which it would be possible to canter a pony. The Cairngorms are, in fact, not true mountains, but rather a table-land which denudation has raised to the rank of mountains. And while no one would venture to compare them with the wild boldness of the Western hills, such as the Cuillins—*facile princeps*, the first among Scottish mountains—the Glencoe or the Donald mountains, for instance, not to mention many another range, the Cairngorms—the central range of the Grampians—have a certain reposeful grandeur, an indication of *strength*, which is unique in Scotland.

The original programme had been ambitious. I don't quite remember what we had meant to do, but I know our plan had included Beinn Mheadhoin and half the Eastern Cairngorms. We did not accomplish it. My friend did not like the very thin mist on the hills, and, although it had not been thick enough to make the use of the compass necessary between Fiacail Coire an't Sneachda and Ben Muich Dhui, my friend contended that it was not weather for a night on the hills, and that we had better seek a lower elevation as soon as possible. I gave in to him, but insisted on crossing the top above Coire an Sput Dheirg (4,095 ft.) and Sron Riach (3,534 ft.). The names and heights of these two subsidiary summits of Ben Muich Dhui are found only on the 6-inch map. The walk down the glen to Braemar

will ever linger in my memory. The short summer night—it was within three days of the longest day—was already past before we reached the glen. The unnatural midnight twilight had already given place to daylight. Suddenly a bird—a thrush, I think—began to sing, and in a few moments the whole country-side seemed to be alive with the songs of the birds. Great stags were all over the place, peacefully grazing by the roadside. I had a rather long walking-stick, and on one occasion I lunged out, saying—“Here! you get out of that!” and hit a big stag—a Royal—on the haunch. We reached Braemar about 4.30 on a glorious summer morning, and actually disturbed a dozen big stags feeding in the flower gardens in the centre of the village. With some trouble we woke up the people at the Fife Arms, and were royally entertained.

One more Cairngorm excursion I may perhaps be permitted to describe. One hot afternoon in July, Garden, Duncan, and I left Aberdeen by train. We dined at Ballater, and, later, drove up Glen Gairn to a point which I am now unable to indicate, but it was somewhere very near Loch Builg. Our first point was the big brae of Ben Avon. In turn, we topped all the summits of Ben Avon as well as of Beinn a' Bhuid. For an hour we lay down and dozed near the summit of Ben Avon, but, though the days were intensely hot, the proximity of a big patch of snow chilled the air, and we did not care to rest for very long. It was 5.30 the following evening before we reached Braemar, and I have still a vivid recollection of the rankness of the heather and the “glegs” in Glen Quoich; also of the luxury of a tepid bath, a plate of clear turtle, and a bottle of champagne at the Fife Arms that Sunday night.

ABERGELDIE TO THE SHELTER STONE AND
BACK.

BY JAMES ROSE.

Hail, Scotland ! my mother, and welcome the day
When again I shall brush the bright dew from the brae,
And light as a bird give my foot to the heather,
My hand to my staff, and my face to the weather.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

LONG before the fellowship of mountaineering clubs existed, there was a period when the cult of the Cairngorms, under the stimulus of royalty, became to a certain extent the fashion. The hills in the season were invaded by caravans of tourists, borne on the backs of hardy Highland ponies and shepherded by guides, abhorred of honest John Hill Burton. Lochnagar and Ben Muich Dhui were chiefly favoured by these excursionists, because it was considered the right thing to "do" them, and Upper Deeside became fashionable because the Queen lived in Balmoral. It was during that period, in the early seventies of last century, but in no sense actuated by the then prevalent incentives to climbing, that the expedition I am to attempt to recall took place. Lochnagar had several times been ascended (in the first instance by way of the Black Spout) by the three youths who were to form the exploring party, and the Cairngorms beckoning afar off invited to still greater achievements.

Much consideration of the distance which separated the three from their objective, and of the means at their disposal for getting there, ended in the decision that, since they must needs walk there and back, they must victual themselves for a tramp of several days, and as they had to be their own transport, their food supplies had to be ruthlessly reduced to a minimum. In the

days of which I write, handy camping and touring equipment didn't exist—at any rate, we knew nothing of it. The knapsack of these times was a crude abomination, but in one way or another we managed to bestow our provisions and other impedimenta about our persons. A botanical box, which is still in a serviceable condition, gave a fictitious scientific effect to our party, but contained nothing more botanic than well-packed sandwiches. For sleeping accommodation over night we relied, with a confidence we had reason to regret, on the Shelter Stone.

Our walk began in the neighbourhood of Abergeldie, and to shorten our mileage we made bold to keep to the south side of the Dee, and, instead of crossing at Balmoral, to hold our course through the forest of Ballochbuie. There are fine trees still in Ballochbuie, but axe and storm have made havoc among the giants we saw on that fine September morning. The Garrawalt and the picturesque view from the old Bridge of Invercauld were taken in the morning's work, and soon we were on the highway to Braemar, seeing for the first time Craig Clunie, the Clunie Stone, and the Lion's Face; and in the enjoyment of such scenery the miles passed quickly, and soon we were in Braemar.

The various points of interest under the direction of Brown's Guide were quickly noted, and no long time was spent in the village, for we were eager to catch the first glimpse of the Cairngorms, and above all of Ben Muich Dhui. This, as everybody knows, comes soon after one passes through Braemar, and from time to time the still distant object of our journey gladdened our hearts as we hastened along towards the Linn of Dee. Of course, we had to pause to admire the falls of Corriemulzie, in these days a much finer sight from the road than now. Vegetation of recent years has much obscured the view of the falling water, and the volume of the stream is not what it used to be. We curbed our desire to see the Colonel's Bed, and pressed on to the Linn and looked upon its seething waters for the first

time; nor did we resume our journey till some at least of us had essayed the foolhardy step across, and the still more critical step back again, which was then considered the tribute that youth had to pay to the memory of Byron. But the day was wearing on, and we had reluctantly to tear ourselves from the fascinations of the Linn, and our journey was resumed.

The country we were now entering was outwith the quaint guidance of Brown, who speaks in the vaguest way of the region we were now to pass through and in such a manner as to discourage the traveller from venturing into such a wild and inhospitable land. For long, however, we had been familiar with John Hill Burton's classic, "The Cairngorm Mountains," and his example and precept had been to a large extent responsible for the plan of our expedition. Soon we had passed the tract of wooded country which had to be traversed before we could reach the valley of the Lui, but we noted on our way the first of the pines of the aboriginal forest and the charming falls of the Lui. Custom can never stale the enjoyment of this beautiful approach to the Cairngorms, and if contrast is one of the elements of the picturesque, all who have walked the four miles of the lovely valley of the Lui must recall with no ordinary pleasure their first experience of this placid scene, so unlike the rugged grandeur that lies beyond.

The day was waning, however, and many miles of rough scrambling lay before us, so we pushed on, passing Derry Lodge without infringing its privacy, for it was then the height of the shooting season and the Lodge was in full occupation by the late Duke of Fife, then Viscount Macduff.

It was from this point that the counsels of the writer of "The Cairngorm Mountains" led us to shun the weary Glen Derry, and take the more direct, if somewhat more arduous route of Glen Lui Beg. All seemed going well, and we were already far up the glen, when a whistle and a shout made us call a halt, and speedily we were joined by two irate keepers, who said we must not

go farther that way—Glen Derry was open to us but the Lui Beg was barred. The prospect of having to retrace our steps at this late hour of the evening—it was then about six o'clock—was not one we cared to entertain, and the keepers, when they heard our plans, proved to be reasonable men, for as we had the look of innocent trespassers on the sanctuary of the deer, they offered no further objections to our continuing on our way.

They knew, too—what we then had little conception of—the long way that lay before us ere we could reach the precincts of the Shelter Stone. A question we put as we set off must have proved our harmlessness beyond a doubt. We asked—“Whereabout is Ben Muich Dhui?” Back came the astonishing reply—“Lord! that’s Ben Muich Dhui!” We were on its very slopes and did not know it!

All who have climbed the Ben from the Lui Beg will allow that we had no easy task before us, laden as we were and feeling somewhat our long trudge from Abergeldie. Suffice it to say, that after many a toilsome effort up those interminable slabs, that form a kind of giant’s stairway on this side of the mountain, we at last reached the summit, and had gone some way on our descent when, in the rapidly waning light, we caught a glimpse of water. Never did Greeks more gladly shout “Thalassa!” than did we give vent to our glee at the sight of what we took to be Loch Avon and the end of our day’s pilgrimage. On we hurried, but soon our mirth was changed to sorrow, for the loch we were approaching would by no process of reasoning fit into our conception of Loch Avon, and before long we had to make up our minds that we had only reached Loch Etchachan, and that Loch Avon lay yet in the distance.

By this time it was almost dark, and the way between the two lochs is not one in which “way-faring men, though fools, may not err,” but we did at last come in sight of the true Loch Avon, dimly visible, at a great depth below, from the brow of the steep descent to it. Big as is the Shelter Stone, it was but a pebble on

the beach where all the features of nature were on such a gigantic scale, and we had reluctantly to decide that we should get no shelter from the Clach Dian that night. We felt, indeed, that the lee side of any decently-sized boulder was preferable to further search for the object of our journey.

It was rather a cheerless bivouac we made, at a height of over 3000 feet. There were some feeble attempts to gather heather to modify the harshness of the underlying rocks, and in happier circumstances we should soon have been sleeping the sleep of exhausted nature. The cold wind, however, and the clammy mists that kept continually drifting across our comfortless resting-place made sleep impossible, through the weary hours of what seemed an endless night. At length a palid apology for dawn put an end to our miserable night watch, and we rose from our lair behind a big stone which had mitigated to some extent the rigour of the cold mists, straightened out our cramped limbs, and proceeded to take counsel together.

We were all agreed that the pleasures of a night on the hillside had been much over-rated, and that a succession of such nights, according to our original plans, was not to be thought of, but that we must at least, in fairness, interview the Shelter Stone before coming to a final decision.

Accordingly, in due time we descended to the level of Loch Avon and reached that imposing, but much over-praised "lodge in the wilderness," and found it untenanted that morning. The privilege of having it all to ourselves did not unduly elate us, however. We consumed a modest and very early breakfast, and tried to become enthusiastic about our surroundings, as they presented themselves on a raw and gloomy morning. Someone has spoken of "two in the morning courage," but three in the morning enthusiasm is about as rare a virtue, and none of us possessed it on that occasion. The long and the short of it was that we decided without a division that we should postpone our further ac-

quaintance with Loch Avon and its wonders to a more suitable season, and forthwith retrace our steps.

It would be unprofitable to enlarge upon our return journey. Many can fill in the picture. The day showed no signs of improvement—low clouds and no sunshine; and we had just got through the dreary and most uninteresting part of Glen Derry, when we met what was more common then than it is now—a large party of Braemar visitors, partly on foot and partly on ponies, and in charge of a guide. They must have made an early start from the village, and were no doubt flattering themselves that they would be first on the hill that morning when we hove in sight. The two parties soon met and we were bombarded with all sorts of questions which we endeavoured to satisfy.

The rest of our return journey was without incident of note until we had almost reached its end. The bridge at Balmoral had been crossed, and we were passing the Albert Statue, as evening was closing in, and a drizzling rain had begun to fall, when an outrider dashed past us, followed soon after by the Royal carriage with Queen Victoria out for her evening drive, which she took in all kinds of weather. Anon we were climbing the Distillery Brae, and, shortly after, our long and practically continuous two days' tramp came to an end.

Though our first visit to the Cairngorms had not met with all the success we had anticipated, the rebuff—which the mountains are so prone to administer to those who intrude upon their solitudes—served only in our case to whet our desire to learn more of the charm and mystery of the hills. The fact that it was the first visit makes it stand out in our recollections when the memories of more fortunate days—days more arduous, or fuller of incident—have faded or become blurred in the lapse of years.

BRAERIACH.

Morning red!
Night like a vesture shed
Round the dim feet of day.
Butterflies in the grasses!
Sunshine above the deep hill-passes!
Up and away!

Soft wind in the fir-trees,
Heather up to the knees
Of the birches. Far below
The delicious brown flow
Of the rapturous river,
Hill-waters that giggle and giggle forever.

Up and on!
The last fir-tree gone,
Only the heather under and over,
Only the call of the plaintive plover,
Across the corries only the roar
Of the stag on his rock-strewn floor,

Higher! Higher! Higher!
Till Braeriach—heart's desire—
The top of Braeriach's won!
Oh! the shroud of mist in the Larig Ghru
Can't creep to the hearts of me and you.
It's the top of the hill that has the view
And the cairn that keeps the sun.

ISOBEL W. HUTCHISON.

—“*Lyrics From West Lothian.*”

THE THREE GAICKS.

BY ALEX. INKSON McCONNOCHE.

THIRTY-ONE years have passed since I first made acquaintance with Gaick by an unconventional route. We were a party of three, bent on making the most of a little holiday, so on the day we left Aberdeen for Braemar we at once drove up from Auchindryne to Derry Lodge whence we set out for the top of Cairn Toul. The ascent and descent to the Derry took us seven hours and a half, which we then thought not bad in the circumstances. Next day our labours began in earnest, Cairn Toul having been included merely with the view of filling up to advantage an afternoon and at the same time putting us in good walking form. We drove to Geldie Lodge, where we took to our feet in our journey across Scotland. The peep down Glen Feshie was a relief compared with the treeless and monotonous appearance of Glen Geldie, but our course lay up the Feshie, along the right bank, to its source. High up, the river naturally becomes attenuated and winds about in an eccentric manner, necessitating frequent crossings, but at last we traversed Perthshire at its narrowest part between east and west, on its northern border with Inverness-shire. Very soon thereafter we stepped over the faint, yet quite distinct, track of the Minigaig Pass, of which more presently. Thence we held westward over a great tableland and so down the steep face to Gaick Lodge, an interesting and easy walk of nine hours and a half from Geldie Lodge—these details being given for the benefit of younger members. Next day we walked across to Dalwhinnie (five hours) by the lower end of Loch na Cuaich.

A few years ago, when on a visit to Glenbruar Lodge, I formed a little plan to "slip across" the mountains from the head of the glen, by the Minigaig

Pass, to Gaick Lodge, but there had recently been such a fall of snow that I allowed myself to be reasoned out of the beautiful idea ; all the same, my reward came later ! On another occasion, when at Dalnacardoch, I went up the glen of the Edendon Water and along the east shore of Loch an Duin to Gaick Lodge—a very easy route, indeed, with much to recommend it. But I still hankered after the Minigaig Pass, and three years ago came an opportunity. I walked up Glenbruar from Calvine, and as there happened then to be nothing to detain me at Glenbruar Lodge I held straight forward for Gaick Lodge—a distance of only nine miles, which, however, cost me nine hours' pretty stiff work, the crossing of a head stream of Bruar Water being also troublesome. Winter conditions prevailed ; the snow, which lay both deep and soft, would have turned most men, but I succeeded, though of course arriving considerably past the hour at which I was expected. That excursion has left a most pleasant memory.

Gaick is considered the wildest portion of all Badenoch—and that well-known district is characteristically Highland ; but even in Gaick there are distinctions. As a place-name, cleft or pass, Gaick is generally now confined to the upper part of the glen of the River Tromie ; and it is thus best known as a deer forest. Minigaig Pass is an old right-of-way, which extends from the Spey to the Perthshire Garry, the route being up Glen Tromie, thence on the heights to the east of Gaick (proper) into Glen Bruar. Minigaig simply means "Smooth Gaick," whereas the third Gaick, Gharbh Ghaig, is "Rough Gaick." The last is a deep, narrow gorge, now little frequented except by deerstalkers, leading from the south-eastward, on the right bank of Amhainn Gharbh-Ghaig, to Gaick Lodge. The Gaicks, curiously enough, have ever had an evil reputation and a sinister notoriety, which early developed into a detestation to which there is no parallel in the Highlands. Nowhere in all the north of Scotland have the supernatural and the traditional held such a powerful

grip of the natives ; and probably nowhere in corrie or glen has such a long-continued series of extraordinary fatalities been experienced. Gaick is by no means scenically repulsive to modern visitors ; indeed, quite otherwise ; yet, in the words of a Gaelic poet of the eighteenth century, " Black Gaick of the wind-whistling crooked glens ever delighted in enticing her admirers to their destruction." Sinton's " Poetry of Badenoch " has not a single song of happy days spent in Gaick when the women and children went up to the shielings.

In the early years of the thirteenth century the Comyns were lords of Badenoch and much else besides. About the year 1313 the lordship of Badenoch was included in the earldom of Moray ; in 1371 it was conferred on Alexander Stewart, the notorious Wolf of Badenoch, by his father, Robert II. Less than a century thereafter (in 1451) it was granted by James II. to the Earl of Huntly, remaining in the hands of the Gordons for nearly four centuries.

The forest of Gaick is bounded on the south by the Inverness-Perth march, and on the east and west respectively by the water-partings to the Feshie and the Truim ; it is included among the deer forests distinguished as existing from " time immemorial." John Taylor, after his vivid description of the celebrated Mar hunt, tells how " Wee went to the next Country called Bagenoch, belonging to the Earl of Engie, where hauing such sport and entertainment as we formerly had ; after foure or five dayes pastime, we took leave of hunting for that yeare, and tooke our iourney toward a strong house of the Earles, called Ruthuen." Evidently there had been no lack of sport in Badenoch in 1618, yet, notwithstanding, the Marquis of Huntly complained to the Privy Council that in 1617-20 certain persons came to his " proper forrestis in Badzenoch of Glenfishe, Galvik, Drumochter and Binzaldie, quhilkis forrestis were verrie weill replenist with store and plentie of all sortis of deir," with the result that they are " become barren of the saidis deir." Gaick was let as a " sheep

walk" in 1782 to Robert Stewart of Garth for nineteen years, and in 1804 for ten years to Colonel Gordon as grazing for cattle; in 1814 it was "restored" as a deer forest. It may be mentioned that the general quality of its heads is superior, while the Highland ponies there, bred by Mr. Edward Ormiston, have a great reputation.

When Gaick was pastured it was often stalked for deer. One of the sportsmen who paid it frequent visits was Captain MacPherson, tacksman of Balachroan, near Kingussie, famous in Gaelic song for his marksmanship. He was a friend of the fourth Duke of Gordon, and is the "celebrated deer-hunter" referred to in the following description of Gaick—a curious coincidence when his own fate is recalled:—"Its hills are smooth, steep, and bare, and such sheer declivities that the glen in great snow-storms is subject to terrific avalanches by which the deer sometimes suffer, and upon one occasion a herd of ten stags and hinds were suddenly overwhelmed in sight of a celebrated deer-hunter and gentleman of the strath, who was stalking them at the moment when the rolling volume of snow descended the mountain and buried them in its bosom."

Captain MacPherson went up to a little shieling, quite close to the present Gaick Lodge, in the last week of December, 1799, for a few days' hind-shooting, accompanied by four attendants. While they were all in bed an avalanche completely overwhelmed the shieling on 2nd January, 1800, and all instantaneously perished. This tragedy, the "Loss of Gaick," forms an epoch in local chronology, and has often been described in Gaelic prose and verse with curious variations in the details. Avalanches are still of no infrequent occurrence in Gaick; no fewer than fifteen deer were killed in 1884 by one in Gharbh Ghaig.*

The shieling in which Captain MacPherson perished had no good repute, for there Muireach Mac Ian, the famous hunter, experienced the last proof of the

* See "The Gaick Catastrophe" in *C. C. J.*, Vol. III., 192, 260, and Vol. IV., 117.

wonderful power of the Wife of Laggan's versatility in the black art. Its immediate neighbourhood was till recent years—the present writer had this “fact” verified by the late William Gordon of Inverdrue—the occasional haunt of the Washer of Gaick (see *C. C. J.*, Vol. V., 121).

The head streams of the Tromie—Amhainn Gharbh-Ghaig, from Gharbh Ghaig; and Amhainn Loch an Duin, from Loch an Duin—rise on the borders of Perthshire. The latter stream expands into Loch Bhradain, while the combined waters, after a run of about a mile, flow into the head of Loch an t-Seilich. The shooting-box of the forest is near the head of the latter loch, in a narrow gorge, with precipitous sides, the zig-zag pony paths being a wonder to dwellers in the plains. Loch an Duin, a narrow sheet of water, takes name from An Dun, a steep hill on the west side. This hill was the scene of Murdoch's most famous poaching adventure. He had got within shot of a hind, but as he took aim, lo! it was a woman; down came the gun, it was a deer once more. This went on for some time till, as the sun set he fired, and a deer fell. He was thereupon overpowered by sleep and seemed to hear a voice saying:—“Murdoch! Murdoch! you have this day slain the only maid of the Dun.” He jumped up and took to his heels, crying as he ran off:—“If I have killed her you may eat her.” Another good Gaick story is told of Murdoch. He saw a herd of deer, beyond shot, with tiny women in green, milking the hinds. One of the milkers had a hank of green worsted over her shoulder which a hind swallowed. The fairy—for, of course, it was one of the little green folk—then struck the deer with the leather band for tying its hind legs during milking, saying:—“May a dart from Murdoch's quiver pierce your side before night.” Murdoch prudently went off in an opposite direction; but in the evening he killed a hind with a hank of green worsted in its stomach.

Loch Bhradain has a story which is said to account for its name. A local hunter had acquired a litter of

dogs of a semi-supernatural character, but when the pups reached a certain age they were all, with one exception, removed by the real owner. He broke a leg of the one he left with the hunter; what Brodainn—for that was its name—could have done in the chase with the use of all its limbs can only be conjectured. The hunter set out for Ben Alder where there was a wonderful deer—a fairy, and white at that. This deer was duly roused and pursued by Brodainn as far as this Gaick loch, when in it plunged, the black dog after it—and neither has since been seen.

Loch an t-Seilich is the largest of the Gaick lochs; the name signifies the loch of the willows. In old maps, however, it appears as Lock Gaick, and even a local guide book of the middle of last century gives it as Loch-an-Gaic. Near its head is the Duke of Gordon's Well, the only place-name indicating the long connection of that family with the district.

Minigaig, in spite of its name, had a particularly bad reputation. Almost every year it claimed its victims, owing to the uncertainty of the weather on its storm-swept heights (2,700 feet); in winter it was extremely dangerous. Little wonder that the track from end to end is marked by cairns, long ago collapsed, which indicate that there some poor wayfarer succumbed, or was drowned in fording some of the streams. Mackenzie, a famous deer poacher, has left a name in these parts.

Many travellers have lost themselves on the heights of Minigaig; one party was four days in the mist, subsisting on what wild berries they could gather. The dangers of the supernatural were also to be dreaded; fairy knolls (Sitheans) are unusually numerous. The Raven's Corrie and the Sithean of the Black Dog—names of evil omen—were haunts of horrors which encouraged no lingering; yet the pass had at one time a hut where smuggled whisky was sold, which probably was indirectly responsible for more than one fatality on the ancient drove road. The name Mingaig Mountains has fallen into desuetude; it was applied to the hills on the county

march, and was a very convenient term, which unfortunately escaped the notice of the Ordnance Surveyors. The map, however, has two interesting names—Uchd a' Chlarsair, the harper's breast; and Uchd na h-Analach, the breast of the breeze.

Of the three Gaicks, Gharbh Ghaig is the one which was of old most dreaded by both natives and travellers, though it was the shortest. There are many gorges in the Highlands much more "fearsome," but none certainly with such an evil name. Yet the Comyns had their "road" through it; indeed, the only place-name they have left in Gaick is Rathad nan Cuimeinach, which indicates the Comyns' Road to Atholl. In Gharbh Ghaig there are two "dales," Dail Gharbh Ghaig and Dail a' Mhorraine, but the latter probably dates from before the appearance there of the Comyns. Their rapacity and cruelty made them hated in Badenoch, while their treachery is referred to in a well-known and unflattering Gaelic couplet. The outstanding tradition of their connection with Badenoch concerns Lord Walter, who seems from various accounts to have been the most repulsive member of a particularly odious family. Returning from Atholl by Gharbh Ghaig, he broke his neck as his horse stumbled when crossing Leum na Feinne. The riderless horse went on to Ruthven Castle, and so an alarm was raised. When the body was found two eagles were feasting on it. The mothers of two of the maidens whom he had ordered to take part, *in puris naturalibus*, in a reaping contest at Ruthven which he was on his way to witness, saw avenging angels in these birds.

LOCHNAGAR IN 1917.

BY ALEXANDER MACDONALD, M.A.

FOUR time-expired descendants of the old fighting race, many of whose ancestors had lived through stirring years of foray and rebellion at Braemar, touched by the finger of passing great events, conspired to make a day's pilgrimage to the nearest cradle of their "forebears" and to crown a long overdue holiday by a last ascent of Lochnagar. The day proved the finest in the end of July—a day of brightness and clear vision, when all the inspirations of scenery and history flowed in upon the mind.

A halt was made at Mains of Monaltrie; and, as we sat and gazed across the valley at the twin corries of Lochnagar and the sky-pointing peak of Cac Carn Beag shooting up betwixt them, it seemed that time had rolled back and fixed itself at the very minute where it had been through childhood's days, and, for all that we then understood, since the world began. There lay the same immovable landscape, every feature of which was as permanent and lovely as a picture, for of all the aspects of Lochnagar none surpasses this. It is neither too distant nor too near, and the fine lineaments of the great mountain are seen to the best advantage. The view is not even surpassed by the remarkably fine view obtained as, after swinging round Glen Gairn at Rinloan, you walk down to Crathienaird and the North Deeside road—a view on which a friend is wont to expatiate. It seems strange that the standard picture should confine itself to the snow-clad spouts above the tarn of the east when such visions of extensive grandeur as those indicated are to be had.

But it was the dread and silent immutability of the scene that made itself felt beyond all other impressions. It brought vividly to mind the great phrase of "the everlasting hills," and persuaded us that there was no

other with a deeper meaning or whose force was more telling at the present time. Change and decay, evolution and renewal, are in all other things; but the hills, like Ossian's sun, are for ever the same.

It is so with all our hills, but the cogency and magnitude of the truth increase when we come into contact with the greater and more noted of our mountains; and, though there may be higher peaks and older bed-rocks, we do not think that any county holds a hill whose name and fame can equal that of Lochnagar. As it was in Byron's day, as it was since the great Ice Age, so it remains—constant in all its factors.

The ancient garment of plants from hillfoot to summit varies only in its seasonal change—the heaths and ferns, the lesser cow-wheat, the club-mosses and the dwarf-willows, the various sedges, and the polytrichum among the topmost rocks, are each at their proper station in spite of winter frost and summer drought, like soldiers on a deathless watch! Not a pocket is empty, not a plant fails to produce seed after its kind.

The insects of the various levels proclaim their everlastingness, even the slightest of them and the most despised. No tiger beetle or hunting spider is awaiting. The screaming swifts that make their nests 4000 feet up in the spouts of the "steep frowning" cliffs are as lively and keen on their work as their forerunners were a hundred thousand years before a round hut was seen in the Dee Valley. The snow-bunting flits away ere you can mark his peculiarities, but you cannot doubt his personality, for no other small bird frequents this alpine wilderness. The red deer on the verge of the plateau continue to browse on the bilberry and sedge-leaves, warily sniffing the breeze every few seconds.

The panorama of Scotland is still the same—the great Cairngorms on the west, the dim and distant Sutherland peaks, and the pointed hills of Aberdeen and Banff. On the east the lesser Grampians stand out in some relief, and the Stone of Clochnaben behind Mount Keen seems almost within touch of a walking stick, while

the smoke on the horizon at the river mouth goes up as of old. Towards the south-east there are broad-backed ranges with terraced ridges that speak of ice-plough and river-fretting, and in chain beyond chain and peak beyond peak rise the mountain-lands of Forfar, Perth, and Argyle. There they lie in an eternity of calm self-assertion, hard as the facts of life and sure as science itself. You may play around them with your poetry and philosophy: they will endure generations and schools of these things unmoved and unaltered. The winds of heaven play around the peaks as they have done since time began. The clouds above show some variation, yet it is but a stage-army deception. Watch them a little and you will resolve them into a few eternal elements. At bottom they are but wind-driven mist, as they were when the morning stars sang together. It is a sight beyond ecstasy: it has delighted every age.

But there was something else to note as the thin line of sexagenarians panted up "the ladder"—grown so much steeper since their last ascent! They made but a poor, broken show. The ranks that used to be crowded with the young and the promising—the flowers of the forest and the hope of the nation—where are they? Will they return in any numbers to nourish in their brain and muscle the forces of the future? Those protagonists of the better days to come, whose playground and training-field these mountains were, are gone, called away by the holiest of summonses to all but certain destruction. They have exchanged the mightier pen for the sword of decision, and have gone back hundreds of years in the march of intellect, laying upon their country's altar the gift of life itself. We miss them on the hillpath. We shall miss them for all the lone years that remain to us. Their country will miss them, but she will never for one hour of all the future forget them—Wallace and Bruce, and the brave young lads of the Great War.

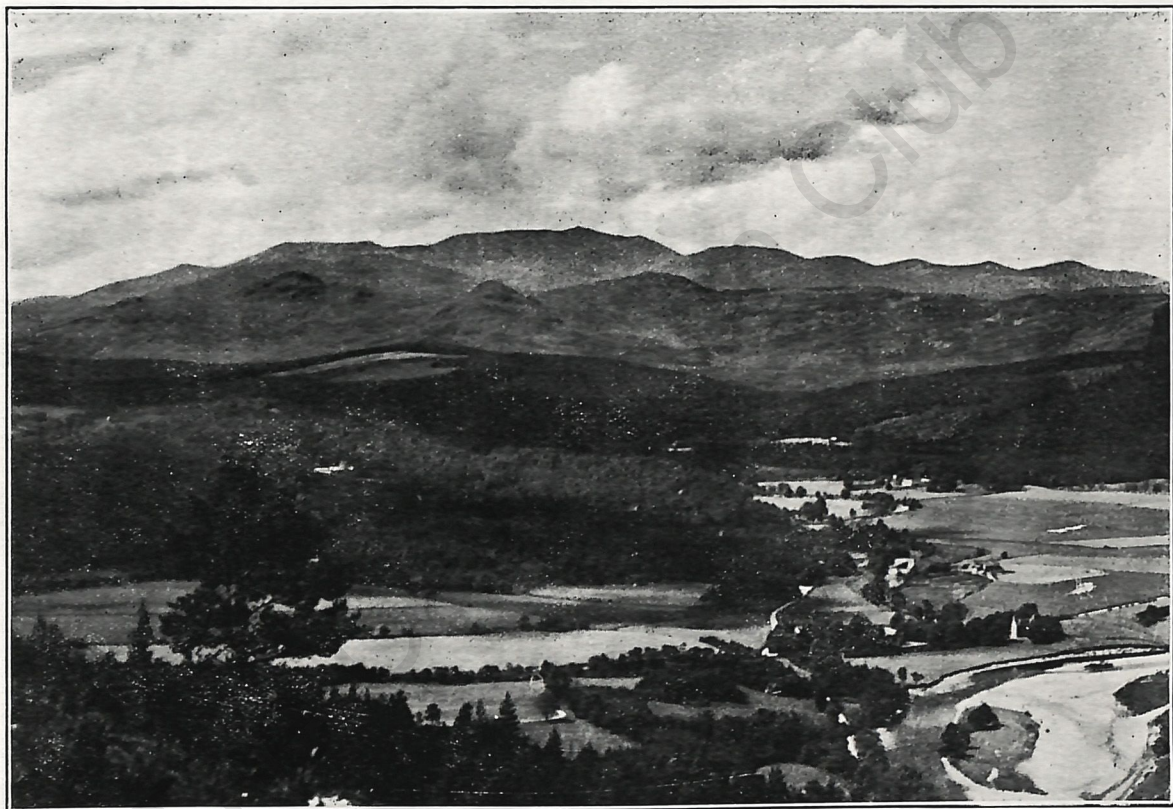


Photo by

LOCHNAGAR FROM CRAIGENDARROCH.

A. J. Wood.

COMPANIONSHIPS OF THE HILLS.

BY JAMES GRAY KYD.

THERE is an increasing school of modern authors devoted to the delineation of Nature, with whom the charm of the mountains, quite apart from the sport of mountaineering, holds a prominent place. In recent times mountains have lost a great deal of the terror which they were wont to strike into the hearts of our ancestors, and in days before the war an ever-greater number of men visited the mountains year by year, not merely for the love of climbing, as such, nor for the scientific or artistic interest which mountains yield, but mainly on account of the subtle and elusive attraction of the high places of the earth. I suppose it can be contended with some force that this appeal is largely physical, and is simply the yearning of a tired frame for the higher, purer air, far from the contaminations caused by modern civilization. No doubt change of environment and altitude and atmosphere produce physical effects; but is not the wonderful charm of the hills based upon something fuller and deeper than mere physical refreshment?

To every member of the Cairngorm Club, doubtless, the question has been addressed, at one time or other—"Why do you climb the mountains?" If other members have had the same experience as myself, they will have been asked the question many times. I have found it difficult to satisfy either myself or my enquirers why I climb the mountains. One can expand, at length, upon the joy of overcoming nature, of physical well-being produced, of the scope for botanical or geological research, of the beauty of the wild life of the mountains and the valleys; but, after all our exposition, we seem to

touch merely the fringe of the subject. Even did I feel myself competent to write an *apologia* for mountaineering, I should not choose the pages of this Journal for a medium, as I have no wish to fill the not unfamiliar rôle of a preacher to the converted; but in these latter days mountain rambles seem to possess a new and tender charm.

Comradeship formed on the mountains is a much more intimate relationship than the friendship of society or of the market-place. When one is brought into contact with a congenial soul amid the plain facts of Nature, untrammelled by the artificialities of town life, our sympathies seem to weld much more closely into the fabric of our friend's nature. Perhaps thus it is that we feel the loss of our mountaineering friends more acutely than the hard losses among our friends of the plains which we have all sustained.

It is Robert Louis Stevenson, I think, who says that every place is sanctified by the eighth sense, Memory. We all have memories of great days on the mountains when, perhaps with a single companion only, we braved the tempest and worked our way through storm and mist to the summit. Such memories the hills always have had, but this new tender memory which will live for ever is the memory of those of our companions who are no longer with us on the hillside in the flesh.

We shall have their comradeship in storm and sunshine, in snow and verdure; the hills will still hold in their silence the glorious memory of our friends of other days. Our beloved hills will be fuller of sacred spots—sacred to the memory of our fellowships of the hills. I shall never see the sun rise on the eternal hills without recalling a glorious spring morning when, with one of our clubmen who has fallen, I saw the first rays of the eastern sun flushing the white peaks of our Deeside Hills.

The memories which the hills now have for us were brought home to me during a hurried visit to the Hills of Home last summer. I had a day or two at Stonehaven, and, with the aid of a cycle, I wended my solitary way up the deserted glen of the Slug Road. Leaving the cycle in the heather at the roadside, I walked up the gentle slope of Cairn-mon-Earn, and as the peaks unfolded themselves from the summit, the realities of the memories which the hills hold was borne in upon me. Hardly a hill or valley in the whole extensive prospect but held the memory of some of our members who have laid down their lives that these same hills, and all they mean to us, might be kept free from a foreign foe.

Yestreen I wandered in the glen ; what thoughts were in my head !
There had I walked with friends of yore—where are those dear ones fled ?

Looking westward towards our own Cairngorms, I could picture, as if it were but yesterday, how in 1900 Austyn Fyfe introduced me to the Rothiemurchus ascent of Ben Muich Dhui, and how his precise knowledge of the great summit plateau stood our little party in good stead in the dense mist which enveloped us ; and I could see, in my mind's eye, Meff doing one of his sensational climbs on the Shelter Stone Crag, or McLaren lightly skimming over the white slopes of the snow-clad hills, as I had so often seen him do on ski.

Ever will the Sluggan Glen up there in the west be associated with our joyful and happy Secretary, J. B. Gillies. I well recall our spring meet at Braemar in 1911, and how, after we had scattered ourselves over the Eastern Cairngorms, Gillies cheered us all as we wended our weary way down the snow-clad glen on that glorious evening of Easter Sunday. He will ever remain young in our hearts. Peaks all around me recalled climbs which Dunn, and Ellis, and Lyon had brightened by their happy natures. Whether we, as a Club, erect a Cairn of remembrance to those gallant men or not, the hills themselves will be to us their everlasting memorial.

It is on the mountains that we get a true perspective of the present terrible times ; but it is also from the heights that in this great hour preludeing the dawn we catch the first glimpses of the glorious day which must soon break upon a ravished world. The hills remain steadfast and majestic ; the streams still sing their restful song throughout these dark days. In the contemplation of the one, and soothed by the music of the other, we realise—probably more fully than under any other conditions—that the purpose of the Creator still winds on in its predestined course. In the sorrow of loss and the ever-present anxiety for those dear to us, we find, perhaps as never before, the truth of Longfellow's lines:—

If thou art worn and hard beset
With sorrows that thou wouldst forget,
If thou wouldst read a lesson that will keep
Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep,
Go to the hills !

FORT WILLIAM TO SKYE.

II.—ARISAIG, MALLAIG, AND BLAVEN.

BY JAMES B. NICOL.

NEXT morning I awoke with the sound of rain dashing on the window-panes, and, on pulling up the blind, I found the High Street swept with fierce gusts of wind and driving rain. My programme, so far as Fort William was concerned, was completed, and with this sudden change for the worse in the weather, I at first felt at a loss whether to wait for an improvement, which might mean several days, or to take the first train homeward. On consulting mine host of the inn, however, he suggested a trip by train to Arisaig, on the west coast, to fill in time: if the rain ceased, as he thought it might, I could proceed—if not, I could but return at night. Collecting my chattels hurriedly, I made for the railway station, and within half-an-hour of making my decision, I was steaming out of Fort William for the west coast. Passing Inverlochry Castle and crossing Corpach Moss at the top of Loch Linnhe, the line turns westward along the northern shore of Loch Eil; then, gradually rising, it passes at a considerable height the north end of Loch Shiel, on the shore of which could be seen dimly through the mist and drizzling rain the monument erected to commemorate the landing of Prince Charlie in 1745. Thereafter, Loch Eilt, Loch Ailort, and Loch nan Uamh were passed in quick succession, until, about 11.30, Arisaig was reached. The mist, which had hung about us at the higher levels, lifted, and as the rain had nearly ceased, I decided to alight and walk to Mallaig, a distance of 10 miles. My route now lay close to the sea-shore; at times—the tide being low—I made short cuts across sandy bays, where the sand was composed largely of comminuted shells of a beautiful colour. At other places the road passed over narrow rocky pro-

montories, to descend again before long to the sea-shore. In places, too, the green turf came down close to the high-water mark, while the rocky foreshore was covered with a gorgeous mass of golden-coloured seaweed. After a short detour inland, the road approaches the sea again near Loch Morar. The sea loch or bay is most picturesque, but, unless one happens to be aware of it, the inland loch might be passed unwittingly, as it is invisible from the road.

On reaching the bridge over the Morar river, your attention is arrested immediately by the Falls of Morar, which are situated a few yards above the bridge. Although these falls are of very moderate dimensions—some 20 or 30 feet in height—the mass of bright green water which pours over the ledge of hard rock and breaks up into a foaming cataract below forms a very beautiful feature. Then, ascending the road past the falls and climbing a low mound—apparently a moraine hillock—the inland loch bursts on your view in all its glory. It is about a dozen miles in length and is surrounded on all sides except the west by high hills—the hills of North and South Morar. To the west a number of islands, covered with clumps of Scotch fir, dot the surface, their bare rocky sides polished and rounded, as when the ice-sheet melted and left them exposed. Apart from the great beauty of the loch with its surrounding hills, Loch Morar is remarkable as affording an instance of a loch lying in a true rock basin—*i.e.*, a basin which has been scooped out by intense glacial action. It is further remarkable for its extraordinary depth, amounting in places to no less than 1,050 feet, which, according to Sir Archibald Geikie, is “the deepest known hollow on any part of the European plateau except the submarine valley which skirts the southern part of Scandinavia.”*

From Morar onward the road partakes largely of a switch-back character and seems to revel in gradients

* See “The Scenery of Scotland” by Sir Archibald Geikie (2nd ed.), p. 240.

until, as Mallaig is approached, one experiences the feeling of dropping down on the village. Mallaig is a curious medley of incongruous elements, old and new, rich and poor. Railway station, harbour, and fish-curing yards jostle each other in a veritable jumble. The village church—one of those “neat Gothic structures,” built in the latest improved re-inforced concrete manner—meets one at the entrance, but is quite dwarfed in appearance by the Station Hotel—a huge, aggressive building of red stone and pink harling, which dominates the whole place. In front of the hotel is a double block of tenements for railway servants—buildings unobjectionable in themselves but wholly out of place in such a situation, and apparently erected there to obstruct the view seaward from the lower windows of the hotel. The harbour is a busy place during the fishing season and boasts of a new concrete pier, wooden wharves, and all the latest appliances for dealing expeditiously with the fish traffic.

Railways and roads end at Mallaig. A rough footpath leads out of it northward for a short distance, but, with this exception, there is no means of exit unless by sea or by retracing one's footsteps. I had now reached a dead-end, and my next problem was how to get out and where to go. My inclinations pointed to Skye, but communication with the island is at present restricted, as since the beginning of the war the usual passenger steamer from Mallaig has been withdrawn. I was fortunate, however, in securing, as a special favour, a passage in a boat to Loch Alsh—though “that is another story,” to use the Kipling phrase; a story not to be recounted here. I shall say nothing, therefore, of the voyage through the Sound of Sleat, or of my experiences in being ferried across from Kyle of Loch Alsh to Kyleakin in Skye. Arrived at Kyleakin, I set out at once for Broadford, eight miles distant. Barely two hours of daylight remained, and already the evening mists were gathering on the hill-tops as we crossed Loch Alsh. A good view of Raasay and the

Quiraing was obtained as the sun was setting, but before long these and all other features of the landscape were blotted out completely in the gathering gloom. The road—not a very good one, I may say—was lonely and unfrequented, except at the clachans of Breakish, where the villagers were collecting cattle and driving them homeward preparatory to closing up for the night. Scarce a traveller was met on the whole road, while, as darkness fell, a fine drizzling rain came down, which, besides damping the clothes, depressed the spirit. Keeping up a steady pace, I pressed forward, and at last, at 9 p.m., on turning a corner had the satisfaction of reaching the inn. Here, in marked contrast to the districts farther east, little or no restrictions appeared to be put on lighting at night. An acetylene gas installation was in full blast, and illuminated not only the interior but a good part of the exterior of the building.

GLEN SUARDAL AND LOCH SLAPIN.

Although I had frequently considered the possibility of crossing Scotland from Aberdeen, I had on this occasion made no preparations beforehand for a visit to Skye, and in consequence my notions of the geography of this district were somewhat vague. It must also be borne in mind that, owing to the mist and the darkness on the night of my arrival, the features of the country were completely hidden, and I had little conception of my whereabouts. My surprise may be imagined, therefore, when, on going out next morning before breakfast, I found immediately to the south of the inn, and at a comparatively short distance, three large conical hills of a decidedly red colour, and which, on investigation, I discovered to be the Red Hills of Skye. After a hurried breakfast, I set out for Loch Slapin, which lies about six miles south-west of Broadford. My road led me through Glen Suardal, a wide grassy valley, bounded on the east by a range of low hills crowned with rocky escarpments and on the west by the Red Hills. At first its direction is about due south, but

gradually it trends more towards the west until it assumes the form of a quadrant encircling the Red Hills and gives one a very comprehensive view of these striking eminences. On the northern face of each a large corrie has been scooped out, and this seems to terminate near the base of the hill in a flat basin, over the edge of which a small stream falls, eventually reaching the sea at Broadford. In the bright morning sun the red colour of the hills was most noticeable: not a particle of vegetation was apparent; and their steep, sloping sides seemed to be composed of loose broken stones. Unlike the Coolin Hills, these three cones are of granitic formation and differ from the Coolins as much in appearance as they do in structure.

Before proceeding more than a mile or so, the road surmounts the shoulder of a hill, and here another surprise awaited me, for, on reaching this point, a more striking hill suddenly made its appearance—this time of a dark blue, almost purple, colour. At first it occurred to me that here at last were the Coolin Hills, but, on referring to my map, I discovered it to be Blaven (the blue hill), belonging to the same formation (gabbro), but lying to the east of the Coolins. In striking contrast with the regular cones of the Red Hills, Blaven has the appearance of a long high ridge, the knife-like edge of which has become split and serrated, resembling a gigantic saw. At my first view of it, little of its form could be made out except its jagged outline, but on a closer view from the high ground above Loch Slapin, it, too, was seen to have a large corrie scooped out in its northern face. About half-way down Glen Suardal are the workings and deserted worksheds of a marble quarry. A tramway connected the works with a landing-stage in Broadford Bay, and a considerable amount of money has been spent in buildings, but apparently the venture was unsuccessful and the work is now abandoned.

Immediately beyond the marble works, the road passes the old pre-Reformation church of Cill Chriosd—

a ruined edifice perched on the top of a small conical hill. Although the roof of the church is gone, the side walls and gables are in a good state of preservation. The stone used seems to be granite—possibly from the Red Hills—and the square-headed windows and doors are finished on the outside with a plain splay; elsewhere the work is quite simple. In the churchyard were many old tombstones of very simple character; but the more modern monuments, although much longer and more pretentious, felt strangely out of harmony with their surroundings. One of the later monuments commemorated a family of the name of MacKinnon, and it was interesting to read that several of the members of this old family had reached positions of distinction in far distant parts of the Empire. Encircling the church to the south and west is the Loch of Cill Chriosd, a sheet of water which seems to have been of much greater extent in former times, but is now very much reduced and overgrown round the margins with masses of tall reeds and bulrushes.

A short distance farther on, I was tempted to try a short cut over some low hills, but, as one frequently discovers, these short cuts seldom effect much saving; yet the digression this time was not altogether fruitless, as it led me amongst the sites of some old buildings, which were quite probably connected with the "Site of St. Bridget's Chapel" marked on my map. A stone circle is also said to be near this place, but of it I found no trace. From these scattered remains we may infer that the population of Glen Suardal in earlier times must have been very considerable; nowadays there are only a couple of farms, one at each end of the glen.

Crossing now over a steep hill, I suddenly came in full view of Loch Slapin and Blaven. The loch, which lies almost north and south, is about $4\frac{1}{4}$ miles in length and $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in breadth near the sea, but at Torran it contracts to a quarter of a mile and then expands again slightly towards its northern or upper end. Looking southward from my elevated position to the opposite

side of the loch, the long peninsula of Strathaird was seen extending for a distance of 9 miles to the horizon. Directly opposite, to the west, rose the great central mass of Blaven, "the hill of bloom," its jagged ridge—now only some 3 miles distant—towering up in the centre to 3,042 feet and sloping downwards slightly towards each end. The large corrie on its eastern side could be very clearly observed: several well-marked gullies were seen grooved into the back wall from the ridge downwards; and, as noted at the Red Hills, a small white streamlet trickled over the tip of the corrie and made its way down to the sea.

One of the most remarkable features which impresses a visitor to these hills for the first time is the extraordinary diversity of colouring which may be seen within a comparatively brief space of time. Soon after my arrival, dark-coloured clouds could be seen gathering to the south and floating up Strathaird, and as they drew nearer, the colour of the water seemed to change from its usual green to that of lead; then, as the mist settled on the top of Blaven, its colour deepened from its normal purple to an intense indigo, approaching black in places, and gave the whole hill, but especially the corrie, a most gloomy and forbidding aspect. A thicker cloud now floated over the face of the hill and for a short time blotted out its features, but before long it passed: the mist lifted, the sun broke through, and the brilliant purple again made its appearance. In the foreground, the cultivated fields about a small farm on the opposite shore of the loch, supplied bright patches of green and yellow; the pasture lands along the shore contributed darker greens and browns, while away to the right the outlying peaks of the Red Hills, with their warm bright reds, gave the effect of the afterglow of an autumnal sunset. Seldom in so small a compass can such a variety of colour be observed.

In a hollow on the east side of the loch lies Torran, a small, scattered township of about a dozen houses with a school and post-office. A goodly array of children's

heads popped round sundry walls and gables as I passed, but the general appearance of the place was uninviting. The head of the loch is about two miles farther north than Torran and in order to shorten this detour, a ferry takes passengers across from Torran to the farm on the opposite shore. This road round the loch is one of the routes to Loch Coruisk, a loch I have long wished to visit, but although so near, I found it would be impossible to include it in my programme on this occasion, and I had reluctantly to defer my visit meantime. For a time I lingered on the top of a hill which is said to be the "Site of a Dun," but of such, few traces could be observed; and then, bidding farewell to Loch Slapin and Blaven I turned, and walked back leisurely to Broadford. Next morning I crossed in a cargo steamer to Kyle of Loch Alsh and from thence took train for Aberdeen. This was eventually reached, late the same evening, after several tedious delays on the Highland Railway system.

BENNACHIE.

BY CHARLES MURRAY.

There's Tap o' Noth, The Buck, Ben Newe,
Lonach, Benrinnes, Lochnagar,
Mount Keen, an' mony a Carn I trow
That's smored in mist ayont Braemar.
Bauld Ben Muich Dhui towers, until
Ben Nevis looms the laird o' a' ;
But Bennachie ! Faith, yon's the hill
Rugs at the hairt when ye're awa' !

Schiehallion—ay, I 've heard the namé—
Ben More, Ben Lomond, Arthur's Seat,
An' a' the ither hills o' hame,
Wi' lochans-leamin' at their feet ;
But set me doon by Gadie side,
Or where the Glenton lies by Don—
The muir-cock an' the whaup for guide
Up Bennachie I'm rivin' on !

Syne on the Mither Tap sae far
Win'-cairdit clouds drift by abeen,
An' wast ower Keig stands Callievar
Wi' a' the warl' to me, atween.
There's braver mountains ower the sea,
An' fairer haughs I've kent, but still
The Vale o' Alford ! Bennachie !
Yon is the Howe, an' this the Hill !

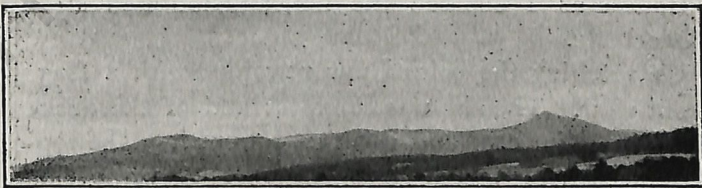


Photo by

G. Cruickshank.

BENNACHIE FROM KEMNAY.

REMARKABLE VIEW FROM BRIMMOND.

BY JAMES A. PARKER.

ON Sunday, 5th August last, Aberdeen was smothered all day under a dense mass of sea fog brought in from the North Sea by a light easterly wind, and accompanied by a gentle drizzle for the greater part of the day. Towards evening the fog became thinner, with signs as if the sun might break through, and as I thought that it might be possible to get beyond the fog by walking a short distance westward, I set out, shortly after six o'clock, for the Brimmond Hill.

The farther west I walked the more promising became the weather, and, after passing the rise at Fairley House, I dropped suddenly into a valley of brilliant sunshine between Cloghill and Brimmond, with dense fog on my right and on my left a beautiful view of the Hill of Fare standing up above a bank of white fog which covered the low ground in the vicinity of Garlogie. The top of Brimmond was quite clear, with dense masses of fog breaking against its eastern slope. I at once saw that there was a good chance of seeing the "Brocken Spectre,"* and by climbing the final slope of the hill just on the east edge of the sunlit portion, I was rewarded by seeing a seemingly gigantic shadow of myself cast on the fog and surrounded by a fairly good halo of prismatic colours. The "Spectre" kept pace with me as I climbed the hill, and imitated all my movements.

On reaching the cairn I was rewarded with a magnificent view. The sky was cloudless and of the deepest blue. To the east and 200 feet lower than the top of the hill, there was a great expanse of white cloud, stretching away as far as the eye could see. This mass

*See *C.C.J.*, Vol. I., 84; *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, Vol. III., 85-94.

of cloud abutted against the eastern slopes of Tyrebagger, Elrick, Brimmond, Clog and Kings Hills, the summits of all of which were clear. Through the gaps between the hills small masses of cloud crept stealthily, only to be dissipated by the heat of the sun's rays on reaching the western side. The valley of the Dee was filled from side to side with an immense mass of fog which reached apparently as far as Crathes, with an overflow to the north covering the low ground from Culter to the Loch of Skene. In the Don valley a similar bank of fog reached as far as Kintore. In the west there was a magnificent panorama of hills, while those on the south side of the Dee looked unusually imposing on account of the mantle of cloud that hid their base.

It was now about eight o'clock (summer time), and, being averse to return into the fog any sooner than was necessary, I resolved to remain on the hill top until sunset, and enjoy all the sunshine that was to be had. As the sun neared the horizon, the sea of cloud lost its brilliant white colouring and became a cold grey. Finally, the sun set shortly after nine o'clock behind the left flank of Bennachie, and as it was just vanishing the last ray of direct light from its upper edge turned bright green for a second, then faint blue, and vanished—the Green Ray of romance.*

I had thus been "above the clouds" and seen the Brocken Spectre and the Green Ray—all within an hour, and well within the "twal' mile" limit; and it was with a feeling of some slight satisfaction that I left the summit and found my way homeward through a wetting fog, which was so dense that I could seldom see farther than 50 yards in any direction.

*See *C.C.J.*, Vol. VIII., 130.

THE MOUNTAINS IN LITERATURE—I.

BY JOHN CLARKE.

FEW things are more remarkable in the development of thought and feeling than the change—transformation, it might better be called—of attitude toward the objects and aspects of the external world. What is known as “the feeling for nature” is of comparatively recent growth.

There was a time when meadow, grove and stream,
The earth and every common sight

attracted small notice, evoked little feeling, were contemptuously passed by, or at best employed to point a simile or a moral, possibly were condemned as a snare and a delusion. For us the study of nature as a source of beauty, instruction, and refined enjoyment, apart from the purposes of science, has become a passion and a cult. Mountain and river, tree and flower, bird and beast, cloud and sunshine, hail, snow and vapour, the storm, the fire, and the music of the universal frame in some subtle way reflect man's mind and mirror his thoughts. In literature, sacred and profane, images of the kind stand recorded for our instruction. It is to books we must go to learn what each age has felt and spoken. Mountains are but a part of the wider realm which embraces all creation, animate and inanimate. While forming our special topic for the moment, they are at the same time illustrative of sentiments that extend far beyond them and ramify into every corner of nature's domain.

THE SENTIMENTS OF THE 18TH CENTURY.

Two characteristic views from the centuries preceding our own will serve as examples of what men used to think and were not ashamed to say. No longer ago

than 1773, Dr. Johnson, the embodiment of all that was authoritative in the world of letters, was able to write of the mountains west of Inverness:—

They exhibit very little variety; being almost wholly covered with black heath, and even that seems to be checked in its growth. What is not heath is nakedness, a little diversified by now and then a stream rushing down the steep. An eye accustomed to flowery pastures and waving harvests is astonished and repelled by this wide extent of hopeless sterility. The appearance is that of matter incapable of form or usefulness, dismissed by nature from her care and disinherited of her favours, left in its original elemental state, or quickened only with one sullen power of useless vegetation.

Another Englishman, Rev. William Gilpin, Prebendary of Salisbury, travelled in Scotland in 1776. He came furnished with a ready-made theory of the picturesque, and whenever he found erring lines in nature, he had, he confessed, a great propensity to bring them into conformity with his own scheme of things. Blemishes, he thinks, are particularly conspicuous in a mountain, which “rearing its opakeness against the sky, shows every fault both in its delineation and combination with great exactness.” He was good enough to approve of some of the southern hills; but

As in history-painting figures without drapery and other appendages make but an indifferent group, so in scenery naked mountains form poor composition. They require the drapery of a little wood to break the simplicity of their shapes, to produce contrasts, to connect one part with another, and to give that richness in landscape which is one of its greatest ornaments.

Arthur's Seat appears still as odd, mis-shapen and uncouth as when we first saw it. It gave us the idea of a cap of maintenance in heraldry; and a view with such a glaring feature in it can no more be picturesque than a face with a bulbous nose can be beautiful.

A dozen years earlier the great iconoclast, J. J. Rousseau, had begun his demolition of the mediæval idols. Had our worthy countrymen but known it, the seeds had already been sown of that romantic movements whose ideals have done so much to dictate the sentiment of our own day. Even in the eighteenth century Nature was at last coming into her own.

THE 19TH CENTURY.

For the reverse of the picture we turn to the fourth volume of "Modern Painters," written in 1856; the subtitle is "Of Mountain Beauty."

To myself [says Ruskin] mountains are the beginning and end of all natural scenery; in them and in the forms of inferior [*i.e.*, less elevated] landscape that lead to them, my affections are wholly bound up; . . . if scenery be resolutely level . . . as in Holland, or Lincolnshire, or Central Lombardy, it appears to me like a prison, and I cannot long endure it. . . . There is not a wave of the Seine but is associated in my mind with the first rise of the sandstones and forest pines of Fontainebleau; and with the hope of the Alps. . . . If there be *no* hope or association of this kind, and if I cannot deceive myself into fancying that perhaps at the next rise of the road there may be seen the film of a blue hill in the gleam of sky at the horizon, the landscape, however beautiful, produces in me a kind of sickness and pain.

He considers the feeling to be, to some extent, an idiosyncrasy, but we fancy it expresses, not at all inaccurately, the sentiment of many a Scot who in the plains of England or of Flanders hungers for the mountain shapes and shades, and lifts up his eyes in vain.

But literature does not begin with Ruskin or with Rousseau. We must hark back many centuries ere we reach its sources and discover with what eyes the earlier ages regarded the mountains, and nature in general. The full treatment of the subject would demand encyclopædic knowledge, nothing less than familiarity with world literature, and a volume or more in which to set it forth. With limited space and still more limited knowledge, the aim must be a good deal less ambitious. The design of this brief review will be rather to suggest than to exhaust. The most that can be attempted is to recall a few of the scattered fragments of literature and to extract from them some lessons that may enable us more easily to pursue the further study for ourselves. If we can point to veins of rich ore, it may safely be left to mountain-lovers voluntarily to work them for their own profit. Our illustrations will be drawn from three main sources—the Bible, the classics and modern literature. Taken together, these cover a wide range of place and time; and they are of perennial interest.

Mountains stand for so many things in fact and in symbol that it becomes extremely difficult to devise a scale of relative importance among them. Even historical continuity is hardly to be found, though with the nineteenth century it becomes a little more evident.

As geographical features, mountains dominate every other characteristic. They constitute the "build" of a country, determine its rivers and their partings, its fertility, its divisions, its cities, its industries, its boundaries, its means of communication, and a hundred other details affecting the life of its inhabitants. Metaphorically no less than physically, they stand for the highest endowment of nature—in a very special sense, they *are* nature, for everything else depends on, and follows from them. Their significance was of old but faintly perceived. Even at the present day geographical knowledge, in any comprehensive sense, whether of mountains or other determining features of the world and its parts, remains embryonic. What then can be expected of the pre-scientific ages? Thus it is that the imaginative, or more frequently the fanciful, is found to have usurped the place of the real and actual. All sorts of imaginative and symbolic ideas became attached to mountains, their content being derived from experience, from national character, or from intellectual and spiritual insight. Such ideas are of varying value: some uplift and inspire, others depress and terrify. Only within a century or little more have scientific knowledge and the growth of artistic appreciation combined to interpret nature more adequately and to determine more fully her place and function. The mountains have especially gained thereby. They have fallen into their position in the general scheme of things, and have obtained a place and function more fitting to their rank and dignity.

THE BIBLE.

In the Bible references to mountains and hills are to be numbered by scores, if not by hundreds. The Promised Land, as compared with the sandy plains of Egypt and

the desert, was a land of hills and valleys drinking in the rain from heaven—the mountain of the Lord's inheritance. Jerusalem, the centre of national worship and reverence, was a city set on an hill, to which the tribes went *up*. The early associations of the giving of the Law were with the mount that could be touched and that burned with fire, and as the place of manifestation of the Divine Presence it extended into the deepest spiritual experience of the great men of the nation, Moses, Elijah, and the prophets. Another mountain was consecrated as the scene of the Transfiguration, and it was on "the mount called Olivet" that the closing scene of the Divine ministry was enacted.

To the Hebrew the mountains were an enduring proof of the omnipotence of God in creation, and of His power to alter and destroy. At the same time they symbolised stability and eternity. But above and beyond mere physical permanence was the mercy of the Lord—"the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed." With merciful protection is combined righteousness "like the great mountains." But desecrated and profaned, the hill became a high place, the abode of idols, the scene of the worship of false gods: to eat, to sacrifice, upon the mountains is, in the eyes of the prophets, comparable in heinousness to a breach of the moral law. The promises of deliverance are ushered in by the messengers upon the mountains and the establishment of the mountain of the Lord's house upon the tops of the mountains. The prevalent association is with help, safety, protection, more rarely with danger as from the unknown or from the wild beasts of the forest. Once or twice the far-off echo of the romantic note can be caught, the mountains and the hills break forth into singing and the trees of the field clap their hands. The exquisite nature picture of the 65th Psalm is painted on a background of mountains set fast by God's strength.

CLASSICAL WRITERS.

The classical nations shew much less appreciation of what we have come to regard as the true character of mountains. The Greeks may be said to have specialised in only one or two departments of nature, the sea, in which they perceived freedom and strength; and the winds, more of which they personified than the points of the compass they could name. The shifting and uncertain character of these elements was to some extent a reflex of their own. The mountains were so far above them that they are thought of chiefly as the abodes of the gods. The poets derived their inspiration from Helicon and Parnassus, the haunts of the Muses. But beyond that the Greeks seem to have attached to mountainous regions associations chiefly of alarm or danger. Hills were difficult and dangerous of passage; under certain circumstances, however, they might prove so to an enemy and thus form a defence. From them came storm, fog, and cold, savage beasts, and more savage men. The picturesque aspect was not wholly missed. A peak whose sides were clothed with shaggy woods seems to have been the form most highly esteemed, where shape, colour, and motion were combined in endless forms that could scarcely fail to move an aesthetic nature. Motion is said to have formed an essential part of the Greek idea of beauty, and this we can readily believe. Shelley among English poets shows a similar characteristic. The Greeks exhibit no real love or comprehension of mountains. Mr. N. E. Young, in "The Mountains in Greek Poetry," points out that the Cyclops (in Theocritus) "seems to regard the mountain (*Ætna*) as an ice-box providing him with cool water."

The Roman was a much more prosaic person than the Greek. In matters of artistic import he borrowed wholesale from the latter and had scarcely a mind to call his own. Sir Archibald Geikie, in "The Love of Nature Among the Romans," confirms the prevalent impression that the Romans as a people were insensible

to the solemn majesty of the mountains. Lucretius says, he says, the only one of the poets of the golden age who appears to have climbed mountains and to have taken pleasure in their ascent. Even in his case the evidence is, we fear, not very convincing. He was interested, to be sure, in clouds, echoes, and similar manifestations, but possibly "the eager attention and curiosity of a man of science" was the ruling motive in his concern for mountain phenomena. The prevalent feelings of his countrymen toward mountains were, at any rate, dread and abhorrence. Livy has, in a well-known passage, left us a description of Hannibal's crossing of the Alps, which, if a little overdrawn, makes one almost shudder. He seems to have felt that he was getting at the great enemy of his country by magnifying the terrors and horrors which the Carthaginian had to overcome in order to reach Italy!

The whole ascent was blocked with snow, the army advanced at snail's pace, revulsion and despair showed in every face The shorter and steeper descent into Italy was still more difficult. Every path was down a precipice, narrow and slippery. Steadiness was impossible; a false step and there was no recovery—down tumbled man and beast in one indiscriminate mass. One rock took four days to blast; the sumpter cattle were almost famished, for the snow buries grass no less than men. It was long before they reached a region "worthy of" human care and tillage.

Another writer describes in verse the same passage of the Alps:—

Here everything is wrapped in eternal frost, white with snow, and held in the grip of primeval ice. . . . Deep as the Tartarean abyss of the underworld lies beneath the ground, even so far does the earth here mount into the air, shutting out with its shade the light of heaven. No Spring comes to this region, nor the charms of Summer. Mis-shapen Winter dwells alone on these dread crests, and guards them as her perpetual abode. (Geikie, *o.c.*, 283).

If these may be taken as fair samples, Sir Archibald Geikie's conclusions are inevitable: it is astonishing that the mountains of Italy "have received such scant and unappreciative treatment in Latin literature"; the brief references that are made "not unusually include some accompanying epithet of disparagement." One has a

little more sympathy with another outcome of the dread of wild mountain scenery which the Romans exhibit—to wit, the votive offerings to local deities found in some of the higher Alpine passes, to propitiate divine favour or record gratitude for dangers surmounted. For even yet a characteristic mood of the mountain is his resentment against the desecration of his private sanctuaries; and by mist, tempest, lightning, and avalanche he wreaks vengeance on the sacrilegious intruder.

A DICTIONARY OF DEESIDE.—I.

BY ROBERT ANDERSON.

IN the enumeration of guide-books to the Cairngorm Mountains,* mention should not be omitted of a "Dictionary of Deeside," although it is not to be classed as an "early" guide-book, and hardly as a guide-book at all, its range, moreover, being limited, as its title indicates, Deeside alone being treated, to the total exclusion of Speyside. It was published by the Aberdeen University Press in 1899, and was a rather solid volume of 279 pages, bound in yellow-coloured boards, while on the outside cover were depicted several Deeside views—the Linn of Dee, Lochnagar, and Balmoral Castle—along with the Aberdeen County and Municipal Buildings. The author was Mr. James Coutts, M.A., a native of Braemar, who had a somewhat erratic career. After being in business in the north and in Edinburgh, he took Arts classes at Glasgow University, eventually graduating M.A., and he was Registrar of the University from 1886 till 1905. He then became proprietor of the *Peterhead Sentinel* and edited it for a few years, but failed to resuscitate what before his time had become a moribund newspaper. In 1909 he brought out a History of the University of Glasgow, a large volume of very considerable merit, and now the standard work on the subject. He died in 1913 at the age of 61, being at the time of his death Clerk to the School Board and Inspector at Folda, Glenisla, near Alyth.

Mr. Coutts, being a Braemar man, was (as he stated in the introduction to his "Dictionary") familiar with Deeside and had instructed himself in its history besides, and so he was fairly well-equipped for producing a book on the district, which he says he gradually felt impelled

* See "Early 'Guides' to the Cairngorms," *C. C. J.*, VIII., 207-14.

to do. Whether there was a public demand sufficient to warrant the enterprise may be doubted. By the time Mr. Coutts's plans matured, Mr. A. I. McConnochie had occupied the field with his well-known books—"Ben Muich Dhui and His Neighbours" (published in 1885), "Lochnagar" (1891), "Deeside" (1893) (with which the "Deeside Guide" was incorporated two years later), and "The Royal Dee" (1898), this last being the best of the bunch, having less of the detailed character of a guide-book about it, and, freed of this restriction, being more animated both in matter and treatment. It came to be a question, then, whether another guide-book to Deeside was needed; but Mr. Coutts put the question to a practical test, justifying his undertaking in this wise:—

I may say that one who has lived a long time in a district can hardly fail to know some things—and these not always useless or uninteresting—in a manner in which they can scarcely be known to those who are only occasional visitors. I may also explain that I had become pretty familiar with most of the localities of the country, and had acquired an appreciable amount of historical and miscellaneous information about them, without ever intending to submit a book on Deeside to the public. The idea of doing so afterwards sprung up in my mind, and I must abide the result of the wisdom or folly of the venture. Whatever may be the fate of the book, it has been a pleasure to me to revisit the old familiar scenes and to look up those with which I was previously not so well acquainted. There are few places comprised in the work that I have not visited and inspected for myself.

It was perhaps to differentiate his work from existing guide-books that Mr. Coutts gave it the form of a dictionary or gazetteer, Deeside places being described in their alphabetical order; though he confesses to having been influenced by "precedents in the case of the Forth and Clyde." Possibly also the appearance a few years before of the Dictionaries of London and Paris by Charles Dickens, Junior, may have contributed to the adoption of a form which we can only regard as unfortunate. There is a familiar story of a man reading a dictionary straight through and declaring that he found it highly interesting, but to most of us a dictionary is repellent rather than attractive, and, as a general rule, it is used simply for

reference and not for perusal. The repugnance entertained for a dictionary attaches, more or less, to all works based on an alphabetical order of the subjects treated; the very appearance of alphabetical arrangement—as in a gazetteer, for instance—is an indication that the work is intended for reference only, or at any rate mainly. Mr. Coutts's book, we suspect, suffered from the mere fact of its being styled a Dictionary. That title did not appeal to readers wanting a narrative about Deeside, and, on the other hand, the number of readers content with a mere reference-book to Deeside—or what appeared such from its very designation—was exceedingly limited. Those in quest of the history of Deeside or of information of a guide-book character would turn to existing books for either the one or the other, probably doubtful about getting what they wanted in a Dictionary—Gazetteer would have been a happier and really a more appropriate title. Owing to the various causes just indicated, Mr. Coutts's work had a small circulation and remained comparatively unknown. So much was this the case that a leading bookseller in Aberdeen (no longer with us, so the story may be told), on being asked for a copy of the "Dictionary of Deeside" a year or two after its publication, sent a hurried message to the present writer enquiring whether there was such a book!

The "Dictionary of Deeside," it must be confessed, is rather a superfluous work. It does not add materially to our knowledge of the district, and it is not calculated to supplant the works that preceded it, or even in any conspicuous way to supplement the information they contain. It is less of a guide-book than some of its predecessors, it is true, devoting considerably more attention to the history of the district and its leading families, notably the Farquharsons, but such new features as are introduced are not sufficiently distinctive to give the work a special individuality. The dictionary form, as has been hinted, is a drawback, particularly on a perusal of the book straight through. Repetitions are inevitable, and they become irritating. For example,

there is more than one protest against Ben Muich Dhui and its neighbours being termed the Cairngorm Mountains instead of the Monadh Ruadh (Red Mountains), and we are informed twice at least that three of them "overtop" all other mountains in the United Kingdom except Ben Nevis. Some of the repetitions, besides, have curious results. A better account of Balfour is to be found in the article on Birse than in that on Balfour itself; and while the Colonel's Bed is referred to in both the Ey and Inverey articles, the fullest story of the "Black Colonel," after whom it is named, is given in the section of the Braemar article devoted to the Farquharsons. On the other hand, not every place receives separate specification, and so the dictionary idea is not fully carried out. To learn about Alltanour (Alltanodhar) and the Connie, we have to turn to Ey, while the Chest of Dee is not so much as mentioned—even the Dee itself is not the subject of an article; presumably it is to be regarded as included in the general sketch of Deeside which precedes the alphabetical arrangement. Exception might also be taken to the occasional (and not infrequently long) digressions on somewhat irrelevant topics, such, for instance, as the Court Book of the Barony of Leys—and yet this particular digression is rendered interesting by an allusion to the burning of pine chips on the hearth in order to supply light instead of candles or lamps, the author adding that he had seen this method of lighting in use in Braemar.

In another digression we have a curious suggestion why Crathie, so inferior to Braemar in every respect—size, population, and natural features—was given precedence in the naming of the united parish (Crathie and Braemar). "Protestanism" (says Mr. Coutts) "prevailed more and earlier in Crathie than in Braemar, where a considerable section of the population still adhere to the old Catholic religion, and as parish affairs were formerly church affairs, this seems to be the reason why Crathie came to be put first." This is mere ingenious speculation, however, as it is not even known when

the two parishes were united. Mr. Coutts was perhaps on safer ground in reminding us, somewhat cynically, that one of the ministers of the united parish "left a song behind him though all his sermons have perished," the reference being to Rev. Murdoch Maclennan, who is credited with having written the well-known satirical verses on the battle of Sheriffmuir, beginning—

There's some say that we wan,
And some say that they wan,
And some say that nane wan at a', man.

A similar touch of cynicism may be detected in the observation—"Sooth to say, few of the parish institutions have shown greater signs of growth within the last twenty years than the churchyard [of Crathie], a forest of new tombstones having arisen and an additional piece of ground having been annexed." Many of these tombstones, as mentioned by Mr. Coutts, were erected by the late Queen Victoria in memory of old servants and others.

The book abounds in "asides" like those just mentioned—clever and suggestive little remarks, terse in style and pungent in expression, sometimes a trifle ill-natured, but almost always amusing in their way, though the endeavour to appear "smart" is only too evident. Probably this straining after effect is responsible for the ridiculous statement that one may see most of the chief buildings and objects of interest in Aberdeen in half an hour's walk, while the criticism of Mar Lodge (the new structure) as "a hypertrophied shooting-lodge," which "presents altogether rather a whimsical appearance," may be attributed to the same disturbing cause. Many of Mr. Coutts's comments take a sarcastic form, and perhaps his most satiric touch—amply warranted—is when, having mentioned that "Some time ago, one of the four chiefs who appeared at a Braemar gathering was greeted with loud applause when he pointed out that the four chiefs could march on their own ground from the Forest of Birse to the Pass of Killiecrankie," he dryly remarks—"However, the author of the saying has

since made it impracticable." At times sarcasm is abandoned for treatment more frankly humorous, though occasionally the humour is rather forced, as in this passage—"Aberarder has no old castle for antiquarians to ponder or puzzle over, but there are considerable remains of private distilleries." Commenting on the steep rise of the road on each side of Coilacreach, Mr. Coutts very properly calls attention to the fact that the road might easily have been engineered to pass along the braeside in an almost level line, "but" (he must needs add) "it looks as if the engineer who planned the road could not resist the temptation of making for the public-house." Which reminds us that some twenty years ago or so the purchaser of buns or biscuits at Coilacreach would receive them in a paper bag on which was printed—"It is more difficult for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than a well-trained horse to pass Coilacreach." This sentence was professedly quoted from the "Aberdeen Free Press, 1893," though whether the quotation was really genuine or simply an audacious invention (as is more likely), we were never able to discover.

HYMN FOR HIGH PLACES.

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Proprietors of "Punch.")*

In darkened days of strife and fear,
When far from home and hold,
I do essay my soul to cheer
As did wise men of old ;
When folk do go in doleful guise
And are for life afraid,
I to the hills will lift mine eyes
From whence doth come mine aid.

I shall my soul a temple make
Where hills stand up on high ;
Thither my sadness shall I take
And comfort there descry ;
For every good and noble mount
This message doth extend—
That evil men must render count
And evil days must end.

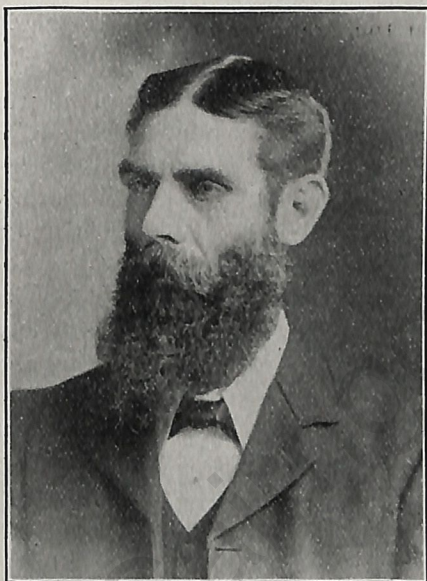
For, sooth, it is a kingly sight
To see God's mountain tall
That vanquisheth each lesser height
As great hearts vanquish small :
Stand up, stand up, ye holy hills,
As saints and seraphs do,
That ye may bear these present ills
And lead men safely through.

Let high and low repair and go
To where great hills endure ;
Let strong and weak be there to seek
Their comfort and their cure ;
And for all hills in fair array
Now thanks and blessings give,
And, bearing healthful hearts away,
Home go and stoutly live.

—*Punch*, August 22, 1917.

In Memoriam.

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



THE death of Mr. C. G. Cash on 21st August of last year, came as a great shock to most of his friends; a devoted lover of the mountains and of nature generally, his stalwart figure, his never-wearying step, gave one the impression of robust health and the feeling that here was a man with the sure promise of many years of active life before him. But *dis aliter visum*.

Long vacations spent for a succession of years at Inverey and Inverdrue gave him a familiarity with, and a knowledge of, the recesses of the Cairngorm Mountains almost unequalled. "The wind on the heath," be it on the low ground or the high, never called on him in vain; he was a typical mountaineer—animal life, especially on the heights, had for him a charm which was irresistible, while botany and geology added to the pleasures of the day's outing. To those who had never exchanged speech with him he might have given the impression of some slight reserve; he was actually one of the most genial of men, and at the same time one of the best informed. He made maps, ancient and modern, one of his particular studies—indeed, was an authority on the

subject ; much of the knowledge thus acquired he applied with effect on his varied excursions and investigations. Meeting with kindred spirits, he was communicative of his rich stores and was ever ready to help in nature studies. An ideal companion on the mountains and in the glens, no point of interest was passed by without recognition and remark, yet he could be eloquently silent when the grandeur of the scene was beyond words.

Cash wrote much on the topography of Scotland ; in him the Ordnance Survey had a keen but appreciative critic. Our Club *Journal* was often enriched by his contributions ; its first editor has a great debt to acknowledge both in that capacity and otherwise. Cash had a quarter-of-a-century connection with the Royal Geographical Society of Scotland (he died a member of its Council), but it was through the Scottish History Society that he produced his monumental work. The title-page of "The Bibliography of Scottish Topography" has two names as authors, but it is no secret that the great burden fell on Cash. Two sentences from a review, written by Lord Guthrie in the *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, may well be quoted here :—"Thereafter (1909) Mr. Cash worked single-handed at an undertaking so immense that it might well have absorbed the labours of a large number of workers. . . . The result, contained in 705 clearly but closely-printed pages, represents an amount of patient and highly skilled labour for which Mr. Cash will never get credit from the public, because it can only be appreciated by those with some experience in such work." Doubtless the President of the Geographical Society, like many of us, looked for further literary work from Cash ; alas ! he died the same month as the review appeared. A. I. M.

Mr. GEORGE B. ESSLEMONT, late M.P. for South Aberdeen, who died on 2nd October 1917, had been a member of the Club since 1890.

NOTES.

A HEAVY rainfall on Upper Deeside in the summer of 1916, with the consequent flooding of the Dee, afforded the opportunity for a picturesque description by a correspondent of the *Free Press*, the substance of which was reproduced in our issue last January in a note titled "The Linns in Flood." A similar occurrence last summer engaged the attention of another correspondent (also, like the former, a member of the Club, we understand), the following communication from whom appeared in the *Free Press* of 1st September:—

"The valley of the Dee at Braemar on Wednesday [August 29th] was like a lake, and to the visitors, who had been complaining of a week of rain, there was given the consolation of seeing the streams in unusual flood. . . . The Clunie was a splendid sight from the bridge at Braemar. At the Linn of Dee the water was up to the spring of the arch, covering all the rocks below the arch and filling the space from one pier to the other. Not for many years has such a flood been seen. All the ordinary features of the river at the Linn were obliterated. Usually a fall is seen where the salmon jump; below this there is a circular pool with a whirl of water; and below this again a quiet pool where salmon can be seen lying. On Wednesday all these distinctions were gone, and there was one tumultuous mass of water from the bridge down to the end of the Linn. The Lui was also in great flood. It covered part of the flat ground above the Black Bridge, near the conical moraine which is such a familiar feature of the glen. At the Falls of the Lui the scene was magnificent.

"Nowhere, perhaps, was the grandeur of the Dee more marked than at Inverey, at the point, a little beyond the hamlet, where the road runs close to the river. Mr. Charles Robertson, one of the oldest men in Inverey, remembers once seeing the river over the road at this point. On Wednesday it was not so high as this. But it was far above the stones and its ordinary bed and well up the grassy banks—a very different river from the one you wade across in dry weather. The scene at this point, with the great broad stream sweeping down full from bank to bank, was in some ways more impressive than the cataract at the Linn. The Ey was in flood, though not in quite the same proportion as the Dee or the Lui. The Quoich ran in a dozen branches or more through its delta where it joins the Dee, and here the valley became more like a lake than a river, the waters being up over the haughs at Allanquoich and Allanmore, and stretching from one hillfoot to the other. The junction of the Clunie and the Dee at Braemar was a lake, and much of the flat ground at Braemar Castle and Invercauld was under water. Viewed from one of the hills the spectacle was an extraordinary one. . . ."

THE rubric does not refer to the losing of one's whereabouts at the Shelter Stone—which sometimes does occur—but to the loss “at or near the Stone,” as a criminal indictment would phrase it, of

LOST AT THE a small silver flask, which was accidentally left behind by
SHELTER STONE. a Club member who visited the Stone in August last.

Perhaps this notice may attract the attention of some wanderer in the region, who—should he be so fortunate as to find the flask—would greatly oblige by communicating with the Editor.

A MEMBER of the Club who visited Speyside last summer reports that the bridge over the Allt-na-Beinne Moire, erected by the Club in 1912, is “in excellent condition” after five years' exposure. The cement of the piles has a few surface cracks and the iron work is beginning to scale, but painting and a little pointing would remedy these defects. The Allt-na-Beinne has been rightly described as “a warrior.”

“On this occasion,” wrote the member referred to, “a freshet was on, the water had an angry look and colour, and the stream would have been a very formidable proposition to tackle on foot; it is some 45-50 feet broad; as seen, perhaps 3 feet of average depth, and distinctly rapid. In full flood it is said to rise to 10 feet.” The sawmill and the light railway in the neighbourhood have been removed.

[The Committee of the Club has arranged for the painting of the Beinne Bridge being undertaken as soon as practicable.—ED.]

A CAMP for German prisoners has been formed about a mile from Nethy Bridge. The men are employed in the vicinity—in the Dell Nursery, at the sawmills, in the forest, and on the farms. Numbers of them are engaged felling timber in the Lettoch plantation, and in connection with this work they laid four miles of rails from the plantation to a new siding on the railway about 300 yards from Nethy Bridge Station, the rails being formed of trees in lengths of about 30 feet each.

THE liability of the haugh lands of the Spey to flooding has revived proposals for their drainage and improvement, and in connection therewith currency has been again given to the old but unveracious story that the Spey has the most rapid flow of any river in the country. Mr. Cecil H. Roberts, the Aberdeen water engineer, hastened to deny it, maintaining that the credit of being the most rapid river of importance in this country really belongs to the Dee—a contention, by the way, which finds its due place in Mr. A. I. McConnochie's books on “Deeside” and “Strathspey.” “The average rate of fall of the Dee over its entire length of about 87 miles,” wrote Mr. Roberts, “is four times that of the Spey, and even if the high fall of the Dee in its upper reaches, viz., about 1250 feet, be left out of comparison, the average fall would still be nearly twice that of the Spey”; and he demonstrated this by a table showing the average rates of

fall of the two rivers from point to point. Thereupon, Mr. G. Gordon Jenkins, C.E., claimed supremacy for the Findhorn, as shown by the following table :—

	Average fall in feet per mile.	
	On total length of river.	From mouth to 1250 feet contour.
Findhorn.....	50	27 $\frac{3}{4}$
Dee.....	46	16 $\frac{3}{8}$
Don.....	24	17
Spey.....	—	11 $\frac{1}{2}$

“If I am right in my premises,” said Mr. Jenkins, “it is abundantly clear that the Findhorn—a noble and picturesque river—is an easy first in regard to rate of fall, both as judged by the standard of total length and also excluding the precipitous head waters.”

LORD SANDS, giving judgment in the Court of Session in a case relating to a right of way at Glenluce, Wigtonshire, propounded the question—

How did rights of way begin? “Few of them,” he said, “could be primeval paths older than private property in land, and express grants of rights of way must have been exceedingly rare. The law, however, fortunately, was not troubled by such subtleties. All that was required to prove a right of way was that the road should have been used by the public as of right for forty years.” Mr. H. P. Macmillan, K.C., in an article on “Rights of Way” in the October number of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, says :—“The origin of many of the Scottish rights of way is a matter of ancient history. Some of the most famous trace their existence back to the times before the beneficent advent of General Wade, when their rough tracks served as the only means of passage from one part of the country to another, and many of them are old drove roads.”

THE twenty-ninth annual meeting of the Club was held at 14 Golden Square, Aberdeen, on 28th December, 1917—Mr. T. R. Gillies, Chairman of the Club, presiding. The Treasurers’ accounts for the

ANNUAL MEETING. year 1917, showing a credit balance of £37 1s. 1d., were submitted and approved. The office-bearers were re-elected, in accordance with the policy of not disturbing the existing management of the Club’s affairs during the continuance of the War, it being agreed to leave all questions regarding future arrangements to be dealt with by the Committee, should circumstances during the year warrant such action. The membership of the Club was reported to be 133. The following were admitted members :—

Mr. James B. Nicol, 367 Union Street.

Mr. Richard Devenick Winsloe, Frodsham, Cheshire.

Miss Mabel Stewart, Banchory House.

The following were admitted as associate members :—

Mrs. Levack, 10 Golden Square.

David P. Levack, 10 Golden Square.

John W. Levack, 10 Golden Square.

We are happily relieved in this number of the mournful duty of recording the deaths of fellow-Clubmen in the war, and have the pleasure, on the other hand, of congratulating several who have worthily gained

THE CLUB distinction. Captain J. Bruce Miller, Royal Engineers, AND MILITARY has been awarded the Military Cross; and Major (Acting SERVICE. Lieut.-Colonel) George A. Smith, who was awarded the D.S.O. two years ago, was "mentioned" in Sir Douglas Haig's latest dispatch. Captain Charles Cook Reid, Gordon Highlanders, has been gazetted Acting Lieut.-Colonel (at the age of 27), and has also been mentioned in dispatches; Captain J. C. Duffus has been promoted to be Acting Major in the Royal Field Artillery; and Captain A. M. Wilson, of the Gordon Highlanders, has been promoted from a flying officer of the Royal Flying Corps to an Adjutancy. Lieutenant Alexander Emslie Smith, Jun., is acting as a recruiting officer in Aberdeen.

A correspondent obligingly reminds us that Mr. Colin Livingstone, of Fort William, whose death was recorded in our last issue, was a contributor to the *C. C. J.*, being the author of an article entitled "A Mountain Journey" which appeared in Vol. V. (pp. 69-74). The journey described was one made in Arisaig half a century ago.

As the outcome of a correspondence in the Aberdeen papers, the "words of an old Scots doggerel" quoted by Dr. W. Inglis Clark in an article in the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, referred to in our last number (p. 47), were traced to a ballad, "The Cantie Carlie," dating from about 1767, reproduced in "A Garland of Bon-Accord," published in 1886. The version there given is as follows :—

They row their legs wi' strae rapes,
Magirkies on their heids for caps;
They're busked up like twa bees' scapes,
And on to Aberdeen.

REVIEWS.

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SCOTTISH TOPOGRAPHY.
By the late Sir Arthur Mitchell, K.C.B., and C. G. Cash, F.R.S.G.S.

In two vols. Edinburgh: Scottish History Society.—
BIBLIOGRAPHY enormous is the labour involved in cataloguing books dealing
OF with a special subject or a particular district of country.
SCOTTISH Perhaps only those who have attempted the task, even on a
TOPOGRAPHY. small scale, have any idea of the patient industry required,
the time and energy that have to be expended, the
sacrifice of leisure that must be made. To prepare a bibliography of the
topographical works for a single county would be a formidable enough
undertaking. What is to be said, then, of a compilation that deals with
the whole of Scotland? Its preparation is of the nature of a highly ex-
ceptional feat, the accomplishment of which evokes spontaneous and
unstinted applause. "Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!"

The idea of a bibliography of Scottish topography originated with Sir
Arthur Mitchell, who accumulated numbers of titles and valuable notes for
the purpose. But the task of giving this collection shape and coherence
and comprehensiveness became too great for Sir Arthur in his declining
days, and it fell to Mr. Cash to assume the task, and to prosecute
it to completion, the resultant labour extending over several years. [We
share the regret more fully expressed elsewhere in this number at the
death of Mr. Cash, which occurred since this notice was written.] We
are perhaps not far wrong in assuming that Mr. Cash is to be credited with
the lion's share of the two volumes now published, and specially with the
systematic compilation and arrangement adopted; in assuming, in short,
that the work is practically an individual and independent production of
Mr. Cash's. He has given us a list which is noticeable for its thorough-
ness and exactitude, and which must commend itself to all interested in the
class of books dealt with. The list is arranged in two main divisions,
Topographical and Topical, according to places and according to subjects.
In the Topographical division, general descriptions of Scotland are assigned
the first place, after which we have an alphabet of counties and of three
territories not limited by the boundaries of a single county—to wit, the
Borders, Galloway, and the Highlands and Islands—and then an alphabet
of places within each county, the topographical works relating to the
several counties and places being arranged in the alphabetical order of
authors' names. In the case of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, sub-
divisions have been used, this arrangement bringing together in groups all
books having a common topographical reference. Then, as many books
deal rather with a topic than with a place, a second main division is created
(constituting practically the second volume), in which such books are
placed under an alphabet of Topics, the "topics" embracing Antiquities,
Architecture and Art; Clans and Families, Ethnography and Folklore;
Communications (sub-divided into Bridges, Canals, Ferries, Harbours,

Railways, Roads, etc.); Industries, Maps, Place-Names and so on. This brief account of the work may convey some idea of the immense labour expended in its preparation. The ramifications of bibliography are extensive, and doubtless Mr. Cash has not exhausted the sections into which his catalogue may be sub-divided. Possibly, too, Mr. Cash's list, comprehensive as it is, may not be complete; and not the least valuable results that may be anticipated from its publication may be the discovery of works that have escaped his notice and the impetus that may be given to the production of topographical works which yet remain to be written. We may well be grateful in the meantime, however, for what Mr. Cash has accomplished, both in the preparation of the general list of topographical works and in the distribution of specific works under topical headings. By his arduous labours he has achieved a distinct success: his work must remain for long the "authority" on the subject, an invaluable handbook of reference.

It would unduly extend our notice to enter on any detailed examination of this compendium of Scottish topographical works. Its value may readily be tested by a scrutiny of the works enumerated which relate to Aberdeenshire—say—or to the Cairngorms. Any such scrutiny, however perfunctory, will at once show that the list is exceedingly comprehensive—exhaustive, one might almost add. Incidentally, it is particularly pleasing to us to note the frequent citation of articles which have appeared in the *C.C.J.*—very many of them, by the way, written by Mr. Cash himself—and articles, too, by many of our contributors which have appeared elsewhere, for one of the conspicuous merits of the bibliography is that it includes a great deal of miscellaneous writing which, though not taking the form of published works, and too often dismissed as of minor importance, is nevertheless of considerable value for topographical purposes. Among items thus "recovered" may be mentioned the now almost forgotten monographs on Morven, Mount Keen, Tap o' Noth, and Benrinnes, issued by the Cairngorm Club in its early days. As to the sectional divisions, it must suffice to state in a general way that they have been particularly well done, but we cannot avoid calling special attention to the large amount of new and original research in the section devoted to Maps. Only one regret has to be expressed—that the circulation of such an important work is severely restricted by its limited issue to the 400 members of the Scottish History Society.

R. A.

HILL VIEWS FROM ABERDEEN, with Articles, Maps, Diagrams, and Scientific Notes. By G. Gordon Jenkins, M. Inst. C.E. Aberdeen: D.

Wyllie & Son.—Two articles in the last number of the

HILL VIEWS FROM *C.C.J.* constitute the first half of this work—Mr. Jenkins's

contribution on "Curvature and Refraction" and Mr.

ABERDEEN. Cruickshank's on the "Mountain Indicator on Brimmond," and they are accompanied by reproductions of

the diagram Mr. Jenkins furnished illustrative of his observations on curvature made from the Blue Hill and of the Chart of the view from Brimmond which he drew for the Indicator. In addition, Mr. Jenkins gives us descriptive accounts of the hill views obtainable from the

Covenanters' Faulds near the Bridge of Dee, from the summit of Carmaferg, near Aboyne, and from minor hill-tops and standpoints. These are supplemented by various "indicator" diagrams, and particularly by a Chart of the magnificent mountain view to be got from the Blue Hill. The little work is deserving of the highest commendation, and mountaineers especially ought to be grateful for this valuable *aide mémoire*. Mr. Jenkins not only possesses a thorough knowledge of the hills but a sympathetic appreciation of the many admirable views his diagrams and charts enable others to enjoy, and he writes of walking and mountain-climbing with an enthusiasm that is delightful. Viscount Bryce, in an interesting preface, directs attention to the very notable fact that few cities in Great Britain are so fortunate as Aberdeen in possessing, within easy reach, eminences which afford views "charming in their varieties of upland and cultivated ground, with the broad stretch of sea on one side and distant summits on the other." Aberdonians are under a debt of gratitude to Mr. Jenkins for this handy guide to the eminences and to the views which they command.

R. A.

The "Mountain Indicator on Brimmond" and the Index Chart in the last number of the *C.C.J.* were also reproduced, with some additional matter, in a *brochure* issued by the Stoneywood Literary Guild.

IN the October number of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* Dr. Ernest A. Baker begins the first of a series of papers under the title of "Scansorial Gleanings in Belles-Lettres." His

"SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN-EERING CLUB JOURNAL." intention, apparently, is to make a selection of passages from climbing literature "where a poet, a humorist, or some other genius has touched on climbing in a way that is vital or amusing, whether consciously or unconsciously so." In this instalment he gives us extracts from Defoe's "Tour," "The Life and Opinions of John Bunce" ("perhaps the choicest example of unconscious humour in the English language," he says), Kingsley's "Two Years Ago," Meredith's "Beauchamp's Career" and Neil Munro's "John Splendid." Mr. H. P. Macmillan, K.C., has a brief paper on "Rights of Way," and the editor, Mr. F. S. Goggs, cites from Tennyson numerous passages to establish the thesis that the great Victorian poet possessed the spirit of the mountaineer.

WE are sorry to observe, from a note appended to an editorial apology for the delay in the issue of the 1916 number of the *Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club*, that the editor himself, Mr.

"FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB JOURNAL." William T. Palmer, has completely broken down under the strain caused by Recruiting Office duties and the editing of the *Journal*, and has apparently relinquished the latter task—for the present at least, and for what we hope will be a very brief period. The number contains "In

Memoriam" notices of three members of the "F. and R. C." who have fallen in the war and the names of seven others. For one of the former, Siegfried Wedgwood Herford, it is claimed that "he was the greatest rock climber England has yet produced," and certainly for a youth of 26 he had accom-

plished a surprising number of climbing feats. Of another, mention is made of the somewhat singular fact that he joined up partly from "the desire to wipe out the ignominy of inheriting a German name" (Oppenheimer). If we find the number less interesting than usual, that is doubtless due to so many members of the Club being engaged in military service or other patriotic work. The majority of the articles relate to the Lake district of England, and two of them are of general interest as showing the risk of climbers even in that region being swept down by avalanches—avalanches of soft snow which might easily prove dangerous. "A Note on Photography in Switzerland" contains a number of hints of value to amateur photographers elsewhere.

Two papers read before the Rucksack Club, a mountaineering club having its headquarters in Manchester, constitute the most noticeable features of the Club's *Journal* for 1917. They both deal with Kinder Scout, a portion of the High Peak of Derbyshire, one treating of its history, antiquities, and literature, the other of its geology. The writer of the former alludes to the fact that about 1830 the greater part of the Scout was parcelled out and allotted to the contiguous lands of the surrounding owners, but instead of sharing the "indignation" which this circumstance arouses in many minds, he regards the situation with complacency. He takes the sensible view—which some of us also hold—that "the mountaineer and the moorland lover are the owners of our highlands in a much more real sense than are the nominal owners." It really comes to this, he says—"The moors are preserved by their nominal owners, at great trouble and some expense, in order that the wilderness and solitude, the sanctity of the wastes, may be kept inviolate from the vulgar and the vandal, what time we, with the 'owner's' kind permission, step in to enjoy our natural heritage, without the trouble and expense entailed by matters of 'ownership'." Nevertheless, it was only by the intervention of a Footpaths Society that some rights of way in the Peak district were preserved. Several minor papers and In Memoriam notices of Club members who have fallen in the war make up the number.



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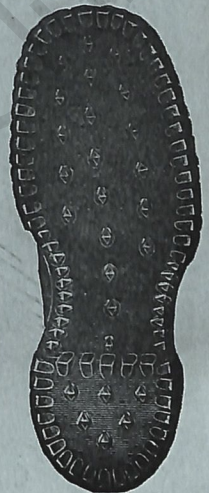
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