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*Photo by*

*W. T. I. Williamson.*

VIEW IN GLEN TILT :  
BEINN A' GHLO IN THE DISTANCE.

THE  
Cairngorm Club Journal.

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PSYCHOLOGY AND HIGH GROUND.

BY CHARLES DICKSON, M.C., M.D.

THIS subject having been raised recently in these pages, I have been asked to make a contribution from the Irish standpoint. In doing so, I find it necessary to lead off with some attempt at making my position clear, in the hope of removing any possible misunderstanding. Therefore, I must insist that these views are entirely personal, as all such views must be. They are also incomplete, for, as we all know, the deepest wells of feeling are unfathomable and not for the written, or even the spoken, word.

The editorial comment on Lord Morley's troubled reference to Irish landscapes contains the following question:—"But is there really this difference between Irish landscape, abstractly regarded, and other landscape?" I agree at once that there is not; and the key to this agreement is found in the words "abstractly regarded."

With the exception of such national nondescripts as are to be found, no doubt, in every country, I cannot visualise anyone in Ireland capable of regarding abstractly his own hills any more than I would expect him

to so regard his own mother. But why a stranger, in whom such abstraction is not only natural but almost inevitable, should discover some subtle difference between the landscape of Ireland and that of some other country outside his own, is difficult to understand. Of course we can realise why, in Lord Morley's case, he should miss "the associations of composure and peace."

It would be folly, however, for any Irishman to claim that his native hills mean more to him than those of Scotland may mean to a Scotsman; and therefore the matter resolves itself into an effort, inadequate though it may be, to indicate a personal conception of the bonds which, with the individual distinctions imposed by differences in nationality, unite the universal brotherhood of mountain lovers and decent men.

I pass by all purely physical considerations such as the exuberance born of deep breathing and a sound circulation, and that fine zest which comes with the summit accomplished. These are not the monopolies of that high company for which I write, but are shared also by "the unlettered and the lewd." Attention is directed rather to something infinitely more precious—something "intangible and remote, but with a bounteous overflowing of the spirit."

It must be confessed that this inspiration is not simple but composite, and it is difficult indeed to analyse. However, among those portions which it is possible to isolate must be mentioned that for which a parallel will be found in every land.

I never climb the Wicklow hills and cross their silent valleys without the proud feeling that here Holt gave desperate battle and brave men died in a lost cause, or there Miles Byrne kept his enemies at bay and when hope was dead escaped to France, serving for fifty years in the army of Napoleon le Grand. Then northward to Slieve Gullion and the memory of a beloved leader

who, as a boy, so often sought and found his strength there, leaving his native Newry to meet many a stormy dawn upon its summit, "filling his mind with vehement and beautiful thoughts." So the same tale is told in every barony within the four seas and to this in these latter days is added another—intimate and personal—such as we all know.

It was Uhland, as a modern writer has reminded us, who once paid the Rhine boatman a double fare because he had carried, unknowingly, the ghost of a dead comrade; and many of us will revisit those wide silent places with a sense of pilgrimage and pay our tribute in our own way to the presences which will people those hills and glens for us as long as life lasts. One will say:—"There I spent an April night shelterless and in sleet and storm, but cheered and sustained by *his* unconquerable spirit; does he know, I wonder, that this barren place has grown fertile with his fragrant memory?" Or, again:—"I was here with him who was later my staunch comrade in another field—and is dead; 'did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way?'"

Then can I drown an eye unused to flow,  
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night.

There are few healthy men who do not treasure vivid memories of instincts, almost predatory, which were kindled in them during boyhood among those hills where they grew to be men, and it is peculiarly satisfying to suckle the imagination with the thought that in such moods we are striking back to mountainy forebears. With those of us who are now, by the tyranny of circumstance, town dwellers, there is little risk of

Blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure,

but I am free to confess that when, by the favour of time and chance, I find myself once more in the high places of the earth, I have an unflinching sense of *homegoing*.

In conclusion, while I feel that no hill man worth the name can remain quite unmoved by the sight of high ground in any country, it is only upon the hills of his own land, as I believe, that he truly glimpses, be it only for a moment, that fugitive vision, less mortal perhaps than divine ; it is only in his own country that there come to him those rare moments of spiritual ecstasy wherein he hears "all the blended voices of history, of prophecy and poesy from the beginning."

DUBLIN July, 1918.

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AT THE MOUNTAIN'S BASE.

As if, at the world's edge, one sees no more  
 Time's landscapes heave ; so here, in rest and awe—  
 An awe most vast—the terraced peaks withdraw  
 Eyes from all level vision. Waters roar  
 And cream, adown a crevice ; while the hoar,  
 Gray rocks stand sentinel. The rook's deep caw  
 Through rough, serrated passes, like a saw  
 Most sage, breaks 'mid the silence. Mortal man, adore.  
 And bare the head ! For downward dip, and drift,  
 All lesser souls ; but thou the clear, cold beam  
 Scannest upon the golden, towering gleam  
 Of the swirled summit ! 'Tis a kingly gift—  
 A foretaste of the heaven that waits the bold ;  
 Rest on the height, amid the sun's spilt gold !

WILLIAM J. GALLAGHER.

—*Chambers's Journal*, Sept. 1917.

A TEMPEST IN THE LAIRIG.  
EXCITING JOURNEY THROUGH THE PASS.

BY JAMES A. HADDEN AND JAMES CONNER.

*[A very violent gale from the south-west, accompanied by heavy rain, prevailed in many parts of Scotland on Sunday, 6th October last, numerous trees being blown down and other damage caused. Two well-known members of the Club who essayed to walk through the Lairig Dhrù that day had a thrilling experience, which is narrated below. The story is very modestly told, no mention being made, for instance, of the fact that both gentlemen were bruised and cut by the buffeting of the storm to which they were subjected.—EDITOR.]*

Although members of the Cairngorm Club for more years than we care to remember, we had never gone through, or even entered, the Lairig Dhrù. Often had we expressed the intention of doing so, and more than once had we made tentative arrangements to carry out our design, but circumstances somehow had always compelled an adjournment. So time went on ; and, as we are now getting near an age when strenuous walking or hill work will have to be given up, we determined upon making the walk through the famous Pass ere it be too late. We definitely fixed upon the first week-end in October for the purpose, and agreed that weather at all events should not interfere with our intended journey ! So we despatched our bags to Braemar and made arrangements to follow them by way of Speyside.

Owing to an enforced late hour of starting and to the present reduced railway facilities, we could only reach Boat of Garten the first night. Next morning we enjoyed the walk to Aviemore, and later on the same day



a very pleasant stroll to Loch Alvie. Everything indicated decent weather conditions, although there was a decided divergence of opinion on this all-important matter between two "locals" we chanced to meet at different points. We fixed 7 a.m. for the start, and arranged to drive a part of the way to the Allt-na-Beinne Bridge. So far so good!

By the time that the hour of starting arrived—and, indeed, many hours before—the weather conditions had undergone a decided change for the worse. The wind howled round the hotel and lashed the windows with heavy rain. We thought of two friends who had experienced a somewhat similar day just a fortnight before; but they had reached the other side all safe and we had said we were to follow! The trap (a dog-cart) was at the door, and we boarded it about an hour behind scheduled time. Our driver informed us that he had seen "some" roads in South Africa, and he imparted this further item of information—that we would see "some" roads hereabouts before the end of our drive. We did! No wonder the vehicle we were seated on was the only one fit for such a journey. The axles and wheels of others had gone one by one, and the blacksmith and the cartwright were otherwise engaged nowadays!

After leaving the main road and entering the Rothiemurchus Forest, we began to see indications of the truth of our driver's remark. The force of the wind, too, began to be felt, and progress was soon reduced to a walking pace, our veteran "trekker" dexterously guiding the nag as it gamely threaded its way over the roughest parts, while the trap swayed and jolted in an alarming manner as the gusts of wind hit it, requiring firm holding on by us to escape being pitched out. An occasional glance over the shoulder satisfied the one of us in front that the other seated behind was still there. At length we were informed that the driving part of the journey on this side was over, and we descended. We bade our good friend the driver Adieu!

and we thought from his looks that he "had his doots" as to our subsequent progress. We had "burned our boats," however, and our "change" was at Braemar.

The sight of the beautiful bridge over the Beinne, erected by the Club and opened in August 1912, aroused within us feelings of gratitude to those whose wisdom and foresight had planned and carried out such a boon. The state of the Beinne here would have made a crossing under the former conditions, if not impossible, at any rate dangerous in the highest degree; but we had an easy crossing now, and were glad that we had more than the breadth of a plank or two to walk on, considering the force of the wind. The utility of the bridge was obvious in our case, and we fancy others, coming on the Beinne in flood, have been equally thankful for its existence. Had the weather permitted, we should have liked further time to examine and admire the structure. The rain had increased to "heavy," however, and the wind was acquiring the character of "gale." So with the Beinne sounding an ominous note in our ears we commenced the forward movement. Here we may say that, although we had provided ourselves with useful maps and a copy of that most admirable description of the route through the Lairig given in the *C.C.J.* (Vol. III., pp. 55-58), access to either was impossible, and we were thankful that we had long since adopted the latter as a mental map. We had noted while driving how accurately and clearly that article described that part of the route, and we should have found it equally accurate and serviceable through the Pass but for the abnormal weather conditions.

No difficulty, therefore, had we in getting on the right track "To Braemar," as a board on the side of the path indicates, but before we had gone 100 yards or so, we fully agreed with the expressed opinion of others who have preceded us that it is "an awful track in wet weather!" We were soon soaked to the knees owing to the length and condition of the heather, and to the

water running in streams along and athwart the path, under our boots and quite as frequently over them. At length we got out of the wood (in one sense) and into open upland moor ground; and here we first caught it! Before either of us could crouch, we were "downed" and lay holding on to the heather while the wind and rain drove over us with hurricane force. To rise until there was a lull to half-a-gale was impossible, and so we remained anchored until an opportunity offered to get a move on, only to result in our being speedily driven to earth (or stone) again. In this way we slowly battled on for some time, gaining a little headway now and then, but anything like substantial progress being greatly impeded. Never had we experienced the force of such a gale. Wet we were to the skin in spite of our Burberrys, and icy cold too; and we were not yet in sight of the top. The position was getting serious, and we felt it; and maybe that made us desperate, and perhaps even a little reckless. We could not turn, for such a force of wind behind would have led to disaster sooner or later, little or no warning being given of the approach of the blasts that brought us down. Access to watch, maps, or even to such refreshment as our knapsacks contained, was impossible. We had taken our time at leaving the Beinne Bridge at 9.40, and we reckoned that three hours would have elapsed since then. Occasionally the spindrift from the hillsides and pools came driving towards us in great white clouds like snowdrift and fairly blinded us, making progress impossible. At last we thought we were at the top of the pass, but found to our dismay it was only "the one before." Hereabouts, a remark from one of us that he wished we could see the Angel's Peak drew from the other the grim reply that we might see the angels first. We did not refer to the "Satanic" Peak! The risk of injury to limb was getting very apparent, and was brought vividly before one of us when the other, caught in one of the fiercest gusts, was seen spinning like a feather in an eddy of wind (and he was

the heavier of the two) and threatening a bad downfall at every step. His progress under different conditions would have elicited mirth and approbation for agility, but the situation was too serious for hilarity, and there were no two more thankful men than we when he came down, as he was bound to eventually, but without mishap beyond another severe shaking.

We were now in the region of stones, and here the track has been described as being difficult to follow "notwithstanding the aid of a large number of direction cairns." We were most grateful for these cairns, and only regret that, owing to weather conditions, it was impossible for us, as good hillmen, to add a stone to each cairn. We had temporary shelter from the full force of the wind while creeping up here, and made steady if very slow progress, but the necessity of presenting the crown of the head to the blast prevented any observation of the surroundings, although there was indeed little except driving rain and cloud to be seen. Occasionally the precipices glistened for a minute and were then obscured, but the thunder of the torrents all round and the shriek of the wind were ever in our ears. It was not long before we discovered that we had been drifting unconsciously too far to our right, for, sometime after we got over the top of the Pass and towards what we believed to be the Pools of Dee (pools there were everywhere and of all sizes), while plunging and battling still against a high wind—though not so strong now that we were getting to a lower level—suddenly we found ourselves in a glack, with a raging, swollen stream in front of us, and no prospect of a crossing unless we retraced our steps towards the Pools! The day was getting on and we knew we were a considerable distance from Derry Lodge. Wetter or colder we could not be. We retraced our steps for some distance, but on second thoughts decided to follow the course frequently taken in such circumstances—plunge into the stream and wade across, with boots and stockings on. We did so, and

icy cold the water was ; but we soon found ourselves faced with the necessity of taking a second and similar plunge, which we did. We have since fixed our position here as at the point on the Cairngorm Club Map, 1895, where the Allt a Choire Mhoir joins the Dee. We had got to the right of the latter and come down as far as the Allt a Gharbh Choire which we first involuntarily crossed, and then we had to cross again to the proper side of the Dee! Soon we had still "another river to cross"—this time the Allt Clach nan Taillear, a swollen turbulent stream with not a trace of a stepping-stone to be seen.

Here, however, we seemed to get on the right rails again. Although cold, wet, and weary, we made better headway, and eventually we sighted some trees and verdure in the distance. Soon after we descended to a foot-bridge, crossed the Luibeg Burn, and finally reached Luibeg Cottage, where we made the acquaintance of that excellent couple, Mr. and Mrs. Macdonald, who provided us with a most grateful cup of tea and a momentary heat at a cheery log fire. Then we made across the bridge to Derry Lodge, where we found our trap in waiting, along with the surprised driver thereof, who admitted that he never expected us to "come through." Our feelings of thankfulness were, if possible, increased when he produced two huge warm coats, very thoughtfully sent by our good hostess of the Invercauld Arms, Braemar. The drive to that most excellent of Highland hotels was undoubtedly a cold one in our condition, but what it would have been without the comfort of those coats we shiver to think. Arrived there, needless to say we were soon in clover (i. e., hot bath—very hot); and later, seated before ample fare, we became almost forgetful of this our first experience of the Làirig Dhrù.

At several points of our exciting journey we vowed that never again would we venture into that region—others before us have made a similar vow, we believe.

Now, however, after a week or two of home comforts, we have forgotten our first experience to some extent, and we are not so sure that we will keep that vow—just as the others have failed to keep it. Should we change our minds, we shall hope to be able to give a different and a better account of our second excursion.

May we sound a warning note to those who enter the Pass from the Aviemore side for the first time, as we did? Keep to the left, even to the shoulder of Ben Muich Dhui, if your objective is Derry Lodge; otherwise, you may find yourself well on the way to or actually arrive at the White Bridge by holding through Glen Dee. Might the Club not face the expense of a guiding post about the point between the Pools of Dee and the Allt a Choire Mhoir?

FROM BRAEMAR TO BLAIR ATHOLE *VIA*  
GLEN TILT.

BY W. T. H. WILLIAMSON, B.Sc.

ON a Saturday afternoon towards the end of July our party of four set out from Ballater for our long-talked-of pilgrimage through Glen Tilt. The first sixteen miles were covered most unromantically in the G.N.S.R. motor 'bus. Weather conditions were anything but cheering, for the persistent drizzle which had greeted us at Ballater increased in intensity to a regular downpour as we approached Braemar.

Nothing was visible of "the finest glen scenery in the Highlands," as, with heads down to meet the driving rain, we wearily trudged along the five miles from Braemar to Inverey. There we were much fortified and cheered by an excellent repast. We would fain have tarried a while longer in the hospitable company we found there, but, the rain having ceased and the evening being already far spent, we must needs on.

At the Linn we stopped to survey the rushing waters, for the Dee was rising rapidly. The walk up Glen Dee was delightful. The evening air was soft and balmy after the rain, and, although the hill-tops were still shrouded in mist, the aspect of the lower landscape in the waning light was particularly charming. By the time the White Bridge was reached darkness had fallen, and shortly after it began to rain again. It behoved us, therefore, to find shelter for the night, and in our haste to do so in the pitch darkness we lost the path. But after divers wanderings through bogs, water-holes, and such-like humid ground, we stumbled upon, rather than arrived at, a "lone shieling," and there we proceeded to make ourselves comfortable for the night.

We awakened from a sound and dreamless sleep to a vivid demonstration of how that part of the country

achieves its annual rainfall of 40 inches. Water poured from every hillside, and the burns between the slopes were roaring torrents. To proceed further in such weather was deemed absurd, so we decided to remain where we were. Immediately upon this decision being taken, however, the question of the commissariat became an urgent one. We had expected to reach Blair Athole that night in time for an evening meal, and our supplies had been laid in accordingly. The provisions on hand were carefully divided out in definite rations to furnish the necessary number of meals ahead of us. But when that had been done we looked with dismay on the prospect of the morrow's long tramp on such a meagre allowance of internal combustion fuel. Many proposals were brought forward for replenishing the larder, but ultimately this was successfully accomplished to the satisfaction of all by a happy discovery on the part of the foraging party, and we no longer "bitterly thought of the morrow." We could not have been more fortunate had we received a literal response to Falstaff's invocation—"Let the sky rain potatoes," and at the proper hour we were able to give the invitation—"Come, we have a hot venison pasty to dinner."

Rain continued to fall until evening, and then the lifting clouds gave some promise of a better day to follow. Our horizon, which throughout the day had been severely circumscribed, was now extended to where the higher hill-tops were just emerging from the enveloping mists. In the clear evening atmosphere every object within our range of vision was sharply delineated. Away down the glen a large herd of deer was calmly browsing on a stretch of green sward, while another but smaller herd on the opposite hillside was evidently clearly aware of the presence of the only human beings in sight.

In the morning, the promise of the previous evening being fulfilled, we continued our journey. When opposite Bynack Lodge we had, looking northward, a very fine view of the Cairngorms. The Devil's Peak and



Cairngorm of Derry stood out bold and prominent, while beyond Carn a Mhaim the morning mist still enshrouded the top of Ben Muich Dhui. Some discussion arose in the party as to whether the latter hill was really visible from this point. On the one side mathematical demonstration from the Ordnance Survey map was brought forward as proof that it could be seen, but the other section, believing strongly in appeal to authority, disallowed proof of this nature. None of the party being an admitted authority on the topography of the neighbourhood, the matter reached a deadlock, and the journey was resumed without the point being settled.

The path across the watershed was very wet, but we soon gained firmer ground where conditions were better. Already the sun had broken through the clouds, and by the time we were crossing the small stream from Loch Tilt the full force of its rays had completely dispelled the morning mists, and the sky was almost cloudless. Looking down Glen Tilt we could see the green slopes of Beinn a'Ghlo in the distance, and we were fortunate in securing a good photograph of the view from this point. Conditions were ideal for walking. In the brilliant sunshine the Glen was looking its best. The verdure, always richer than that on the other side of the watershed, was richer than ever after the recent rains, while every plant still harboured a supply of sparkling rain-drops, and every mountain rill, full to the brim, was singing its loudest. We had not seen a rabbit since we left a much lower altitude in Glen Dee, but here every now and then one would dart across our path. Butterflies (mostly the dark green fritillary) flitted hither and thither on all sides, while heather linties kept us company in our progress down the Glen. Soon the Tarf was reached, and right glad were we that a bridge spanned the stream, for in its flooded state no easy crossing would otherwise have been afforded us.

Opposite the point where the An Lochain joins the Tilt we called a halt for lunch. While that meal was in

progress, it was observed that there was a beautiful halo surrounding the sun. There is a popular belief, especially among sea-faring men, that these halos, whether round the sun or the moon, portend a storm of some sort, and recent scientific investigations seem to point to this belief—unlike many popular ones—having some foundation in fact. Certainly on this occasion the appearance of the halo was followed by a cyclonic disturbance. For, as we proceeded down Glen Tilt, the sky became clouded and got greyer and greyer until, on our arriving at Forest Lodge, it was distinctly lowering and threatening. Soon after passing this place rain began to descend in torrents, and throughout the remainder of our journey we were accompanied by a downpour.

The lower part of the Glen, though fuller perhaps of softer beauty, appeared somewhat dismal compared with the part traversed in sunshine, and little could be seen of the view ahead of us, which we understood ought to be rather fine. The dripping trees by the roadside afforded us little shelter when later in the afternoon we stayed our progress for some refreshment. In spite of all this we held cheerfully on our way, believing that "to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive." Later on, however, the question of our arrival took on a more serious aspect, for, having some distance back chosen the more inviting of two paths, we found ourselves wandering in the grounds of Blair Castle, and doubt arose in our minds as to the shortest way thence to Blair Athole station, which we wished to reach in time to catch the 5.15 train to Pitlochry. Presently we began to meet groups of school-children, of whom we made enquiries. Our questions were sometimes answered by looks of blank astonishment, but we finally learned that the distance lay somewhere between "a wee bittie" and "nae far." Our minds were soon at rest, however, for, on rounding the next corner, we beheld the entrance gates about fifty yards off and the railway station immediately beyond them. We had arrived!

## GLEN GAIRN.

VISITORS to Ballater will be familiar with a picture post-card depicting the view looking northward from the Bridge of Gairn. The scene is a very picturesque one—of the character commonly termed “romantic.” The channel of the river here is narrow and tortuous, and the spreading branches of the trees which line the banks on each side approach so closely as almost to completely screen the stream and form a continuous background. Such a conjunction of water and foliage is always charming, and thus the Bridge of Gairn is to Ballater visitors an attractive spot and “popular” accordingly.

The scene described is rather adventitious; it is not at all representative of the river. It might be termed, indeed, the river's sole beauty-spot. The Gairn owns the distinction of being the largest and longest tributary of the Dee, rising near the top of Ben Avon at an altitude of 3550 feet,\* and wending its way twenty miles east-south-eastward till it joins the Dee about a quarter of a mile below the bridge just mentioned. But it cannot be called a picturesque river. It is simply a Highland stream, flowing for the most part over a stony bed and furnishing that pleasing music which has happily inspired a contemporary novelist, in describing a similar stream in Perthshire, to remark that “the sound of running water is the sweetest in nature.” It has no particular features—no conspicuous linns or rocky gorges, nothing of

\* Between the summit of Ben Avon and Clach a' Chuitseich rises Allt an Eas Mhoir (the burn of the big waterfall). It is the principal head stream of the Gairn, another rising near the Quoich, with Craig na Dala Moire on its left and Craig na Dala Bige on its left bank. Cairn Eas (3556 feet) is to the north of Craig na Dala Moire and to the east of Dubh Lochan.—Monograph, “The Cairngorm Club Excursion to Ben a' Bhuid and Ben Avon, 13th July 1891,” by Alex. Inkson McConnochie.

## The solid roar

Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse ;  
nor is any special charm contributed to it by the character of the region through which it runs.

There is, it is true, a certain element of the picturesque in the lower portion of Glen Gairn. For four or five miles up from the bridge the river flows through a narrow valley enclosed by hills, the valley being dotted with farms and the lower slopes of the hillsides clothed with birches, those most graceful of trees ; and the scenic effects are not inconsiderable. A road runs on each side of the valley, both roads being of the "switchback" order, with steep gradients and corresponding declivities, and from the crests of the "switchbacks" one may obtain a number of pleasing views. These roads, penetrating a glen with many turnings, are alluring to a pedestrian. One or two walks along them were specified in a former article,\* and it may here be added that the road on the east side of the glen (the left bank of the river) leads to Morven Lodge, at the base of Morven, and also, by a diversion through Glen Finzie, to Tornahaish, in Strathdon, while from the road on the west side, a road strikes off at Rinloan, and, crossing the Gairn by a General Wade bridge, also leads to Tornahaish and to Corgarff: the walk to Strathdon by either route—from Deeside to Donside, that is—may be warmly recommended. At Rinloan, however, whatever scenic qualities may be attributed to the Gairn or to Gairnside come to an end. Beyond that, the glen possesses very little attraction in the way of picturesqueness.

Nevertheless, for the purpose of seeing what it is really like, and also of having a good walk, I set out one day last summer to "do" Gairnside. The glen begins at Loch Builg—to be precise, a little below that rather dreary-looking sheet of water ; the river Gairn, prior to passing below Loch Builg, is simply a streamlet coursing down the slopes of Ben Avon. How to get to

\* *Delectable Days on Deeside*, "C.C.J.", viii, 16-17.

Loch Builg? There is a road to it striking off the north Deeside road a mile or so beyond Balmoral, but as this road goes first to Rinloan, one would have to walk to Loch Builg from Rinloan and walk back the same way. Not good enough! I took, instead, the road (about a mile farther west) leading alongside the Feardar Burn, better known as the Aberarder road—incidentally getting introduced thereby to an old mission church of the existence of which I must confess to having been ignorant. I have a suspicion that I went too far along this road, but, making inquiries at the first farm-house I came to, I was directed to a most charming “green road”—a roadway of springy turf, delightfully elastic to the tread, skirting the edge of a birch plantation.

All too soon this road emerged from the plantation and lost its fine properties, becoming rougher and rougher as it ascended one hillside and, crossing a dip in the ground, wound up another hillside in front. The ascent of the second hillside was made by two lengthy traverses, lined by walls now very much broken down. I had been advised to “take the hill” at these “dykes” and make for a deer fence, and so save a couple of miles. I have no doubt the advice was sound, but I was not concerned about saving time or distance and so kept to the road. To make the story of a long walk short, the road, I may say, is one running on the east side of Culardoch, and was laid out about 1880 as a substitute for the Bealach Dearg road to Loch Builg on the west side of the hill, when that road was closed and included in an extension of the Invercauld deer forest which was then made. For miles the road runs more or less alongside the aforesaid deer fence—or the deer fence runs alongside it—and to the right of the road is an extensive valley, evidently of peat; Monaltrie Moss is the name on the map. The whole region around is wild and lonely in the extreme, the principal relief to the prevailing monotony of the scenery being Loch Builg, seen a long way off, with the eastern summit of

Ben Avon towering above it. But the day was fine and bright, though the wind was a trifle tempestuous, and the walk accordingly was highly pleasurable.

In due course, I reached Loch Builg—or, rather, the road from it leading down Gairnside: I did not bother going up to the Loch itself, though it was no great distance away. The Culardoch road along which I had been walking for four miles or so gradually dips into the valley, crosses the Gairn by a bridge, and, rising a little, joins the Glen Gairn road just beyond the last of the four lochans which lie to the south of Loch Builg. I was thus placed on the left bank of the Gairn, and very soon the road brought me close to the river, here a stream of no great width or depth. Given a sunny afternoon, however, it is a delight to walk alongside a rippling river, even if its course be only, like that of the Gairn, through low, bare, brown hills of no character. There is refreshment in the mountain air, an exhilaration of spirit is induced as well, and one insensibly becomes buoyant and cheerful, forgetful of the world and all its cares. The miles may seem long, but no tedium is felt; the distances covered but enhance the enjoyment experienced.

“Landmarks by the way” down Gairnside are few and far between. You walk right past the front of Corndavon Lodge, with its backing of pine trees—the solitary plantation in the upper reaches of the Gairn. At Daldounie you swing from the left to the right bank of the river, crossing by an iron girder bridge, the imposing character of which strikes you, so incongruous it seems in this remote and little traversed region; you may learn later that this was the bridge erected over the Gairn near Ballater to carry the projected extension of the Deeside Railway. After crossing it, the road ascends the hillside and you lose sight of the river for some time. At this stage of my walk, evening began to set in. The light faded, the glory of the day vanished, the expanse of brown moorland hills before me became almost dreary,

assuming a sombre and somewhat melancholy aspect. Soon after, Gairnshiel Lodge (opposite Rinloan) came into view afar off. I had just noted it when the road took a sudden bend backward and I appeared to be walking away from Gairnshiel—proceeding up the glen as it were, instead of down. I was momentarily puzzled, and, asking for an explanation from a passing native, was hardly comforted by his indifferent reply:—  
 “Ou aye, there’s a short cut to Rinloan if ye’d only kent far to tak’ it. Ye’re owre far past it noo, onywe!” The long round brought me at last to Rinloan, however; and from this the course onward was clear—right along the “switchback” to the Bridge of Gairn.

Perhaps it may be well (for others inclined to follow in my footsteps) to set down the distances given on a notice-board at Bridge of Gairn:—Gairnshiel, 5 miles; Corndavon Lodge,  $10\frac{1}{2}$ ; Loch Builg,  $13\frac{1}{4}$ . The distance from the beginning of the Glen Feardar road to Loch Builg may be reckoned at 9 or 10 miles.\*

A.

\*For further particulars about Glen Gairn reference may be made to “A Week-End in Glen Gairn,” by William Skea in *C.C.J.*, ii., 321; and “The Royal Dee,” by Alex. Inkson McConnochie, p. 82.

## THE SOUTH DOWNS.

By D. A. MCGILLIVARY.

Green Sussex fading into blue,  
With one grey glimpse of sea.

—Tennyson.

“THOUGH I have now travelled the Sussex Downs upwards of thirty years,” wrote White of Selborne, “yet I still investigate that chain of majestic mountains with fresh admiration year by year; and I think I see new beauties every time I traverse it.” To-day, of course, we read the old naturalist’s enthusiastic tribute with an indulgent smile. The Downs are very beautiful, but they are neither majestic nor mountainous, as we apply the terms to the giants of Deeside, Speyside, or Lochaber. In Downland there are no towering peaks wreathed in mist, no wild deep heather glens, and no brown and foaming Highland burns. To the Northern eye, the Downs present—at first sight—merely a picture of grassy uplands and green valleys, but they have a beauty of their own, and the more you know of them, the more you have to confess their charm.

The South Downs is the term applied to one of the ranges of chalk hills that run from Wiltshire through the Southern counties. This range stretches along the lower part of Sussex like a long undulating rampart, some sixty miles in length, rising on the northern side to a height of between 600 and 800 feet. It is on this side that the Downs may perhaps claim to be regarded as mountains, for they rise from the valleys with surprising steepness. On their wind-swept crests, the climber will find a springy turf, fragrant with wild thyme, that makes walking a sheer delight; and the air has a wonderful purity and freshness. Richard Jefferies, surely the best of judges, writes:—



But the glory of these glorious Downs is the breeze. The least climb, even a hundred feet, puts you on a plane with the atmosphere itself, uninterrupted by so much as the tree-tops. It is air without admixture. Lands of gold have been found, and lands of spices and precious merchandise ; but this is the land of health.

There are few trees on the upper slopes, but along the foot of the Downs is invariably a thick belt of woodland. Scattered along the ranges are the remains of a score of great earthwork camps, built centuries before the Roman set foot on English soil.

The pedestrian who wishes to explore the Downs cannot do better than pitch his camp at Worthing. There he is at the "half-way house" of the South Downs; he is, roughly speaking, midway between Beachy Head and the Isle of Wight; he is within easy reach of two of the most famous camps; and he can tramp miles eastward or westward as the fancy takes him. Worthing itself has an old-world atmosphere, free from the Brighton flavour of Jews and jewellery, and its wooded surroundings are very charming. Within a few miles is, as Swinburne saw it, "sun-bright Lancing;" Shoreham, with its famous bridge beloved of artists; Sompting, whose church has the only authentic Saxon spire in England; Tarring, with its twelfth-century houses and palace of Thomas A' Beckett; Storrington, where Francis Thompson resided for a time; the "Roadmender's" country; and Arundel, where George MacDonald ministered at the Congregational Chapel from 1850 to 1853. But more interesting than all these—to the nature-lover at all events—is Broadwater, just on the outskirts of Worthing, for in the cemetery here a plain white marble cross marks the sleeping-place of Richard Jefferies. A few miles away is Goring, where he spent the last months of his short life.

It is difficult to decide under which weather conditions the Downs look at their best. One recalls a fresh morning of wind, sunshine, and shower in late May, when the cloud-shadows went racing across the slopes; a June evening when the valleys were flooded

with a soft light, and no sound broke the silence but the tinkling of sheep-bells and the calling of the cuckoo from a distant copse; or, again, a day of storm when the Northern Downs loomed up dark and grim against a lowering sky. It was on a May morning such as I have described that a friend and I set off from Worthing to climb to Cissbury Camp. The path led up through leafy lanes, overhung with wild roses and honeysuckle, but we were soon clear of the woodland and out on the open Downs, and an easy ascent took us to the summit. A heavy shower had just passed over, and, looking southward and seaward, the country lay for miles below us in a wonderful radiant light—a panorama of wood and meadow, hidden villages marked by church spires peeping above the trees, red-roofed farm-houses, and, beyond, the blue waters of the Channel. There was a glorious sweep of coastline from the white cliffs of Beachy Head to the Isle of Wight, with town after town along the sea edge. Swinburne has painted the picture:—

Higher and higher to the north aspire the green smooth swelling  
unending downs;  
East and west on the brave earth's breast glow girdle-jewels of  
gleaming towns,  
Southward shining, the lands declining subside in peace that the sea's  
light crowns.

Cissbury Camp (603 feet) must be a joy to the antiquarian. There are Roman camps—we all know them—where you walk by faith and not by sight and blindly take the guide's assurance that the site of the camp *is* there. But Cissbury does not come within that category. Here is a massive encircling rampart in a wonderful state of preservation, rising in places 40 feet above the surrounding fosse. It encloses an area of 60 acres and the earthworks are believed to be older than Stonehenge. The ancient Britons who built this gigantic fortress knew what they were about; modern engineers could not have selected a site better fitted for defence. The absence of water strikes the observer; there are no streams in the vicinity; and the

occupants of the camp must have obtained their supply from artificial dew-ponds. Here, at least, the dark-browed men, as they peered over the ramparts with fierce eager faces, were safe from any foe. Britons, Romans, and Saxons have vanished, but Cissbury still rears its head in defiance of the centuries.

Two miles and a half north of Cissbury Camp, the equally famous Chanctonbury Ring (814 feet) stands out boldly on the sky-line. We made the ascent by way of the Findon valley, passing through the picturesque village of Findon, so embowered in trees as to be almost invisible from the Downs above; a narrow lane to the right led up to the Ring. The summit is crowned by a dark clump of trees—seen for miles around—planted in 1760 by one of the Gorings of Wiston, who lived to see them flourishing nearly seventy years later. Looking northward, we had a magnificent view of the Sussex Weald, stretching from Kent to Hampshire, with the Surrey Hills on the horizon. The Weald, 800 feet below us, was like a gigantic garden, thus described by a Downland poet:—

Below, to northward, the blue counties lie,  
With fold on fold of meadow-land and plough,  
Bright water, darkling woods, and shining spires,  
With loitering lanes and free adventurous roads;  
While south, a dream horizon melts around  
The wide blue sea.

It is very lonely on these upper Downs. You may tramp for miles and see no one but a solitary shepherd, as gnarled and weather-beaten as an old thorn tree. If he is of the true Sussex breed, he will carry the famous Pyecombe sheep-crook. In these peaceful solitudes war, or the mere thought of war, ought not to intrude, but as we came down homewards in the evening light, aeroplanes were flying like great birds to their roosting-place at Shoreham, and out at sea a silver airship was keeping watch and ward over the Channel. So that the dark shadow crossed even the happy sunlit Downs.



*Photo by*

*Mrs. R. M. Williamson.*

**THE FERPICLE GLACIER AND HOTEL BRICOLLA.**

## THE COL DU GRAND CORNIER.

BY R. M. WILLIAMSON, M.A., LL.B.

THOSE who know Arolla, one of the choicest pearls in the chain which binds mountain lovers to Switzerland, will remember that less than an hour after passing Evolène they reach the small village of Haudères, where the driving road ends, and where those bound for Arolla swing sharply to the right and enter a gorge dominated on the left by the Dents de Veisivi. In the village and just before crossing the stream descending from the Ferpècle glacier a rough path turns off sharply to the left, and, winding through larches, brings the wanderer in a little time to the attractive little Ferpècle inn, more like a toy chalet than an inn. One might spend some days in that attractive haven. As it is, it yields us comfort and solace before entering on the more tiring part of our journey, for we presently get above the trees, there is no shade, and the sun is overhead. The view is, however, one of extraordinary beauty. The great Ferpècle glacier is straight in front, to the left is the Dent Blanche with its terrific western sweep of precipices, while on the right is the great mountain mass separating the Ferpècle glacier from the Arolla valley, and on the sky line the spotless mantle of the Wandfluh. Scarcely a soul is to be seen save a herd boy or a haymaker, for we are now in a back water, the procession of men and mules having set its face towards Arolla.

Our destination for the day is the hotel on the alp Bricolla at the height of 8,000 feet, which we reach at one o'clock. It occupies a fine situation on the edge of a cliff, a thousand feet above the spot where the Ferpècle glacier and the glacier du Mt. Miné unite. To the South is the great snowfield which one crosses on the way to Zermatt, but the most dominating feature is the Dent

Blanche, now so near, and from this side looking as sinister as the Matterhorn does from the Staffel alp.

When happier times return the hotel Bricolla should be full throughout its brief season. It is four hours from Evolène and ten hours from the nearest railway station, but within twenty minutes of our arrival a lunch was provided which would have brought no discredit to a Strand eating-house. There were no other visitors in the hotel, and Madame had no notice of our expected arrival. The hotel Bricolla is on this occasion, however, only a halting place on the way to Zinal by way of the Col du Grand Cornier, the depression between the Dent Blanche and the Grand Cornier first crossed in 1864. The sunset seen from this crow's nest was almost fearsome in its beauty, and the pink of the alpine glow on the snow-peaks was very striking. In the night a storm of wind arose which shook the hotel to its foundations and roared along the passages, suggesting that only a slightly stronger puff was needed to lift the whole building and deposit it on the glacier below.

At a quarter to three on 15th July, 1913, we were roused, and by half past were off in darkness and mist, but the latter gradually cleared somewhat, and as the sun got up a wonderful panorama was presented on all sides, particularly towards Arolla, the Aiguille de Za shooting up like a giant's finger, but ever and anon hidden by swirling mist which came billowing up from the great cauldron between us and the Bertol hut. In about an hour we reach the glacier and are tied up. One of the photographs shows the view westward from this point. We are now close under the Dent Blanche on the side which few attempt to climb unless they have tired of life. It was when ascending this side that Mr. Glynne Jones and three guides perished in 1899.\* They are all buried beside each other in the little churchyard at Evolène. I asked the leading guide if he could point.

\* See *C.C.J.*, iii., 125.



*Photo by*

*Mrs. R. M. Williamson.*

LOOKING WESTWARD FROM COL DU GRAND CORNIER :

THE AIGUILLE DE ZA ON THE LEFT.

out the place where the fatal slip was made. He pointed far up and then nodding his head towards his companion said, "His brother was one of them."

About seven o'clock we reached the Col (11,628 feet). Looking down the other side I must say I was somewhat taken aback. So far as the eye could judge the descent was perpendicular, but the guide said it was a staircase. The middle of the Col was topped by a cornice of ice which made descent at that point impossible, but slightly to the left a way was found down which we moved cautiously, one at a time. A welcome shelter was also found from a bitter wind which seemed to be searching every vital, and here, in somewhat uncomfortable quarters, we disposed of second breakfast. The staircase proved easier than it looked from the top, and in due time the glacier was reached and we steered in the direction of the Mountet hut. We were presently brought up, however, by a yawning crevasse which seemed to stretch across the glacier as far as the eye could reach. The guides explained that no one had crossed the Col that year, and that the year before there had been a snow-bridge at the point to which they had led us, but that it must have been destroyed. We now made a long sweep to the right. The snow was soft and the going heavy, but we ultimately reached a place where it was thought the crevasse could be negotiated, just under the cliffs of the East arête of the Dent Blanche. Here we came to close quarters with the crevasse, and the colours in its depths were indescribable. They seemed to riot for the mastery and brought to mind the poet's description of the snake:—

Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue,  
Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,  
Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barred.

A fairy seemed to be inviting us to enter her wonderful ice palace and to leave for ever the heat and glare of the day, but it was no place either to discuss Keats's poetry or the number of centuries which would elapse before



the glacier would re-deliver us to the world if we entered it here. Overhead depended a number of icicles, any one big enough to carry off the whole four if it fell on us, and they seemed to be in a state of unstable equilibrium, judging from the wreckage lying about. In some way which I never quite understood we surmounted that crevasse, zig-zagged round some others, and were soon at the Roc Noir basking in the sun which now fought his way through the clouds. Sir Leslie Stephen, who cannot be accused of using exaggerated language, says that the circle of mountains of which this spot is the centre yields one of the very noblest prospects in the Alps—Lo Besso, Zinal Rothorn, Trifhorn, Gabelhorn, Dent Blanche, Grand Cornier, and Bouquetin. Unfortunately for us, the mists refused to clear sufficiently to let us see its full glory.

The guides counselled staying at the Mountet for the night, but we decided to push on to Zinal. The walk down the glacier Durand was at least cooling for the feet, for the slush lay deep. That was followed by a tiring walk over the moraine, redeemed, however, by an almost dazzling view of the Weisshorn, surely the most faultless of mountains. We arrived at Zinal about two o'clock, having been out ten hours and a half. The rests did not exceed half an hour, and considering the state of the snow and the time lost through searching for a way across the crevasse the guides said the time was good. Zinal is changed since Sir Leslie Stephen could write that the arrival of himself and two companions with two guides rather more than doubled the resident population.

A good rest before dinner, followed by twelve hours' sleep, enabled us to enjoy the walk next morning down the valley to Vissoye, one of the most delightful walks of which man can dream, when the dew is on the grass and butterflies of all sizes are disporting themselves in the sunlight.

## THE MOUNTAINS OF MACEDONIA.

BY REV. J. F. SHEPHERD, M.A. (OXON.)

“THERE is doubtless a tendency at times to find in landscape a reflection of our own moods and feelings, but the sentiment evoked is one wholly imparted by ourselves.” So runs a note in the last number of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*. I wonder whether in this I can find the full explanation of the fact that the Macedonian landscape, whether of hill or plain, was for the most part to me intensely wearisome and depressing. Was it really the landscape, or was it myself?

It is true that I visited Macedonia in time of war, and as I gazed on those mighty, awesome Belashatza Mountains, I knew that they were a barrier to our men far more formidable than the Bulgarian army. I knew, too, that that vast Struma Plain was the home of myriads of mosquitoes, carrying in their erratic flight the malaria poison. Moreover, it was impossible not to remember that this land had been for centuries the scene of strife and suffering. I suppose that all this must have been in one's subconsciousness, even when one was trying with most impartial judgment to estimate and appreciate how much of beauty and grandeur there was in the landscape. It is possible, therefore, that my verdict may have been only the expression of feelings and memories in my own mind; and yet I scarcely think that this is the whole explanation. I think that the landscape of Macedonia, or as much of it as I know—the part in British occupation—really is wearisome and depressing. The fact is that Nature seems not to have made up her mind what she really wanted there—whether a reproduction of the English Fen country, or something of the character of the Scottish Highlands. Consequently, she has produced both, and scarcely a bit of anything else.

There are many hundreds of square miles of perfectly flat country. The most appalling area of this kind is that through which the Vardar flows. My first sight of this was in the month of March, when, from a slight eminence, I looked out over a hundred square miles of clay! How flat that plain is will be understood when I say that even the Vardar itself cannot find a permanent channel in its course over it. As one travels over it by train, one crosses channel after channel which at one time or another the Vardar has chosen. This Vardar Plain is unquestionably the dreariest expanse of country in Macedonia. There is nothing to relieve it. As one gazed away west, one saw, forty miles away, the Niausta Mountains, but they were too distant to help the landscape. Their ridge was a singularly level one, and even when the sun was shining from the east the mountains somehow remained dark, unrelieved by any variation of colour. Truly, as one looked due west there was no spirit of happiness in the view. And yet from this very same standpoint (the slightly rising ground on the east side of the plain), I saw two sights of most thrilling beauty.

The first was the view of the hills to the east in the light of the setting sun. There was nothing specially noteworthy in the hills themselves. Their height was from 1000 to 2000 feet. Their colours, however, seen in the reflected light of the evening sun, were superb. The varied shades of purple and brown were delightful, and surrounding all was that "pinkiness" which one has often seen in coloured representations of Japanese landscape, but which one had hitherto imagined was mere licence on the part of the artist. The other ever-memorable sight was away to the south-west, where the mystery mountain, Olympus, lifted its head 9500 feet to the sky. I little wonder that the Greeks regarded Olympus as the abode of the gods. It was over sixty miles away, but it was vastly impressive. Usually it presented itself as a mountain summit floating in the air, but almost invariably, when it was visible at all, it

was bathed in a bright light. This was due, of course, to the fact that there is for the greater part of the year a snow cap; but, unquestionably, the effect as seen from a distance is most mysterious. This is heightened by the fact that the mountains to the right of it, the Niausta Mountains, are, as I have said, usually in the shade, dark and sombre; and this applies almost equally to Pelion and Ossa on the left. Sometimes, on exceptionally clear days, one was able to discern a certain amount of detail on Olympus, and then it was very easy for imagination to create a crystal city floating in the heavens, and to believe that the Greeks were right in their thought of this mountain. Sometimes it made its appearance suddenly, and often this sudden appearance was of but short duration. This, of course, was easy of explanation; but it seemed to add to the mystery of the mountain. Later I had the pleasure of passing in the train under the shadow of Olympus, and I was as much impressed by this sight of it as by the distant one, though in a different way. A gradually rising plain separates it from the sea, and then the mountain suddenly rises sheer up, a huge mass of rock, cleft here and there by mighty chasms.

This sudden rising of Olympus from the plain is quite characteristic of the mountains of Macedonia. There is very little merely undulating or moderately hilly country. It is all either monotonous plain or mountainous. This is true of the mountains on the Struma front and the Doiran. On the former, the Beshik Mountains rise quite suddenly from the Langaza Plain, and drop as suddenly on the other side to the Struma Plain. On the latter, the Doiran Lake lies in the middle of a plain surrounded by hills arising quite abruptly out of it.

The journey to the Struma front from Salonika is one never to be forgotten. The road itself, the great Seres road, is a marvel of engineering. Leaving Salonika, it makes straight for the first range of hills, the western spurs of the mountains running down into the Chalcidic

peninsula, the highest points of which are Mounts Chortiatsi (3542 feet), and Kotos (3936 feet.). These hills; at the point where the road crosses them, form no particular barrier, for at no point do they reach a thousand feet in height, and, moreover, nature has obligingly furnished a convenient pass at the desired spot. Descending these hills, we come to the Langaza Plain, and for about eight miles we are again on perfectly flat country. Then the climb begins up the Beshik Mountains. After only a mile or two we have ascended almost 2000 feet, and the rise still continues, though more gradually, until we reach Lahana, 3000 feet. The twistings and turnings of the road over this stretch are quite indescribable. At places the road has been cut out of the shoulder of a hill, and runs round curves so abrupt that one despairs of one's life as the car rushes on. Sometimes the road one has just traversed is in front, and here, there, and everywhere are bridges, cuttings, embankments. At last the highest point at Lahana is reached, and soon one has a wonderful view of the eastern part of the great Struma Plain, with Lake Tahinos. The Plain itself varies, of course, in width; but opposite Seres it is about 15 miles across, and is as flat as the Vardar Plain. On the other side is a glorious range of hills, which rise occasionally to a height of over 6000 feet. These hills, possessing various names at various parts, run with but one break along the Bulgarian frontier to Serbia, and rarely fall below 4000 feet. The one break is the famous Rupel Pass, about the middle of the range, through which the Struma comes down. As one looks on the scene from the vantage ground near Lahana, it is the plain rather than the opposite mountains that attracts one's attention. One can see the Struma winding wearily and uneventfully along the plain, and for the rest it is a wilderness. There are but few trees, and they are small, and there are acres of coarse grass and scrubby bushes. Doubtless it is the thought of what this country might be which

makes the landscape here so wearisome. This plain should be one of the most fertile and beautiful places on the earth; but Nature herself seems indifferent. Nevertheless, this is not one's first impression as one views the landscape. There is always a fascination in a vast extent of country seen from a height, and certainly that is so in this case. One's first feelings were of wonder, and even admiration; but gradually and, I think, inevitably there followed the feeling of disappointment.

I cannot say this, however, of the view I had on the Doiran front. Here I climbed the Baccilli Hills above the railway terminus at Karamudhli—between 2000 and 3000 feet—and from this point the landscape across the valley to the Belashatza hills was thrilling. The valley was comparatively narrow, and the hills, in all their majestic power, were near. They went up precipitously to a sharp and jagged ridge, which for by far the greater part of it was over 4000 feet and occasionally reached 5000 feet. I have no qualifications to make here. The scene was one of absolute grandeur. One who had travelled much told me that it was one of the greatest scenes in the world. I am quite prepared to believe it. Huge headlands of rock to one's right and left, shapeless and terrific, the mountains in front, and a lovely valley below in which Nature seemed to have lavished the gifts she had begrudged elsewhere—this was a scene of great splendour and very satisfying. A short walk along the ridge to the left took one to an entirely different scene, but one scarcely less beautiful. Here was Lake Doiran, surrounded by its hills, and giving an impression of placid beauty far different from Lake Tahinos.

To say, therefore, that there is no glorious landscape in Macedonia would be most untrue. The country generally, however, is disappointing and wearisome. Nature seems most to have desired monotonous plains, but when she thought of hills she made them very wonderful and very mighty.

## In Memoriam :

LIEUT.-COL. GEORGE ALEXANDER  
SMITH, D.S.O.

Killed in Action, 28th July, 1918.

We share with his many personal and professional friends the great regret felt at the death of Lieutenant-Colonel George Alexander Smith, D.S.O., Gordon Highlanders, who was killed in action on 28th July last while directing an operation by his battalion (which was successfully carried out). He took up an exceedingly exposed position on the top of a hill, where he could watch the progress of his men. As the Major-General commanding the Division subsequently wrote—"A less fearless man would have selected a more covered place." The gallant Colonel was killed by the splinter of a shell.

Lieut.-Col. Smith, who was an advocate in Aberdeen, joined the Cairngorm Club in 1911, and was present at several of the later outings of the Club. He had a highly meritorious record of service in the war. He had been an enthusiastic Volunteer and Territorial Force officer, and when the war broke out he held the rank of Major in the 4th battalion of the Gordons. He was actively engaged in many of the operations on the Western front, participating in particular in the big retreat at St. Quentin; he was one of the few officers of his battalion who went through that arduous and dangerous movement unscathed. A thoroughly capable officer, Lieut-Col. Smith had the complete trust of his men. He was twice wounded, was awarded the Distinguished Service Order, and was twice mentioned in despatches. For a time he was Lieutenant-Colonel in command of the 8th battalion of the King's Own (Royal Lancaster) Regiment, but latterly had returned to the Gordon Highlanders, being gazetted second in command of a battalion. On several occasions he was offered staff appointments, but he refused them, preferring to serve as an active combatant.

## CHARLES RUXTON.

Died, 28th November, 1918.

Senior members of the Club will have learned with regret of the death of Mr. Charles Ruxton, a well-known advocate in Aberdeen—one of the ablest lawyers in the city. He was an original member of the Club and was elected a member of the first Committee, and in that capacity he rendered considerable service in the preparation of the rules and in the initiation of the Club's work. He was a noted walker—"a stalwart of the stalwart, setting a pace with which few could keep up," writes a correspondent—and he was also an enthusiastic mountaineer; and these qualities indubitably pointed him out as the most fitting successor to the late Mr. Alexander Copland as Chairman of the Club. He became the second Chairman, holding office for the year 1891-2. Mr. Ruxton was present at the first excursion of the Club—to Cairngorm and Ben Muich Dhui on 9th July, 1889; and as Chairman he presided at a very memorable excursion to Beinn a' Bhuid and Ben Avon on 13th July, 1891. He subsequently became a member of the Alpine Club and his connection with the Cairngorm Club ultimately ceased.

The obituary notice of Mr. Ruxton in the *Aberdeen Daily Journal* contained the following interesting passage regarding his mountaineering tastes:—

As in business, so in his pleasure, Mr. Ruxton seemed to put his whole heart and soul into what was before him. An enthusiastic mountaineer, he was a member of the Cairngorm Club and the Alpine Club, and varied excursions in the Scottish Highlands with visits to Switzerland in his summer holidays. Every season for many years he and a select number of friends were wont to go to Switzerland, there to engage in mountaineering or, in later years, in long walks. He never lost his fondness for those walks, in his case rendered the more enjoyable because of his great love for nature generally, and for botany in particular. Few in Aberdeen had a more extensive knowledge of Alpine flora.



## The Club and the War.

The arrangement of an armistice between the Allies and Germany on 11th November last may be regarded as terminating the Great War that has raged for the past four years; and although the men who volunteered or were subsequently conscripted may not be released from military service for some time to come, the chances of their now being called upon to engage in actual warfare are exceedingly remote. The names of members of the Club who joined the Forces have been given in the *Journal* from time to time, and we always have had in view the presentation—when the war was over—of a complete ROLL OF HONOUR. By the time the armistice was arranged, however, the greater part of the present issue of the *Journal* was already in type, and the publication of the Roll of Honour must therefore be deferred till next number (July), by which time, it may be hoped, a definite peace will have been concluded. So far as our notes go at present, no fewer than **37** members of the Club were engaged on military service in one form or another—a highly creditable proportion out of a Club of 140 members, many of whom, moreover, are now far past the military age. Unfortunately, **nine** of the number fell in the fighting, nearly all of whom belonged to the younger and more energetic section of the Club. We all greatly mourn the loss of this little band of heroes, and fondly cherish the memories of our association with them. In addition, five of our members were wounded. Three members gained the Distinguished Service Order; one the Military Cross.

Now that the end of the war is in sight, we may look forward to an early revival of the Club's activities. By general consent, the Club has been practically in abeyance since hostilities began, but pre-occupation with war affairs will soon cease and normal conditions of life be

restored. In these circumstances, the resumption of the Club's excursions before long may be confidently anticipated. The suggestion has been made, indeed, that, among the prospective demonstrations on the eventual conclusion of peace, a special excursion of the Club might fittingly be included; and doubtless such an excursion would be joyfully welcomed and taken part in with heartiness. In the meantime, however, the Club has to set about re-organising itself, and, in particular, to find that essential requisite—a vigorous and enthusiastic Secretary.

As will be seen from the account of the last annual meeting given on p. 210, Dr. John R. Levack has been elected Chairman for the ensuing year, and Mr. T. R. Gillies Treasurer. The appointment of a Secretary was postponed, the view being that the selection of a suitable person for this important post should be taken up, along with other details of re-organisation, on the return of the members engaged on military service. In the meantime, Mr. Gillies will act as interim Secretary. The Committee have in view the resumption and extension of the Club's activities by arranging for a larger share of the management of its excursions passing into the hands of the younger members, and by taking steps to make the attractions of the scenes of the Club's excursions known to a much wider circle.

\*.\* In order that the Roll of Honour may be as complete and accurate as possible, the Editor would be greatly obliged by members who have been on service furnishing precise particulars of their rank, promotions, services, etc., at their earliest convenience. Similar information from other sources will also be welcome.

## NOTES.

The *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, in a friendly notice of our last number, said Mr. John Clarke, in his article on "The Mountains in Literature," had omitted one suggestive allusion, expressed in Sir William

SIR WILLIAM Watson's desire to be

WATSON                    Among the moody mountains where they stand

ON                            Awed by the thought of their own majesty—

MOUNTAINS. "the feeling aroused by mountains in one who is only feeling his way into touch with nature." There is a very

obvious answer of course. Mr. Clarke was dealing with past writers, the "classical" exponents in literature of the beauty and glory of the mountains. To have extended his survey to modern authors would have taken him too far afield: had he cited Sir William Watson, he would have been bound to cull "suggestive allusions" from many other contemporary poets. We cannot help thinking, moreover, that had Mr. Clarke quoted from Sir William Watson, he would have selected much more appropriate and expressive passages than the one chosen by the *Journal* writer. Exception might be taken, indeed, to the interpretation put by the critic upon the lines he himself quoted. They occur in a sonnet entitled "In City Pent," which expresses the delight of escaping from "the world's pursuit and Care's access" to the mountains, the sea, and the forest, and reveals a full appreciation of nature and not merely "feeling the way into touch" with it. Elsewhere in his works, at any rate, Sir William Watson abundantly demonstrates his susceptibility to natural scenery and his faculty for describing it felicitously, notably in "Wordsworth's Grave" and in the lines on the burial-place of Matthew Arnold, in which he makes the discriminating criticism of Arnold—that

Though with skill

He sang of beck and tarn and ghyll,

The deep, authentic mountain-thrill

Ne'er shook his page!

This "authentic mountain-thrill" is distinctly preceptible in his own "Lakeland Once More"—

Mere under mountains lone, like a moat under lowering ramparts;

Garrulous petulant beck, sinister laughterless tarn;

Haunt of the vagabond feet of my fancy for ever reverting,

Haunt of this vagabond heart, Cumbrian valleys and fells;

You that enchant all ears with the manifold tones of silence,

You that around me, in youth, magical filaments wove;

You were my earliest passion, and when shall its fealty falter?

Ah, when Helvellyn is low! ah, when Winander is dry!

The feeling for nature here so manifestly exhibited rises to a higher strain in "The Mountain Rapture" in the volume titled "New Poems"—

Contentment have I known in lowlands green,  
 A quiet heart by mead and lisp'ing rill,  
 But joy was with me on the cloven hill,  
 And in the pass where strife of gods hath been ;—  
 Remembrance of that ecstasy terrene  
 Whence leapt the cataracts ; an eternised thrill,  
 Coeval with the paroxysm that still  
 Writhes on the countenance of the seared ravine.  
 These peaks that out of Earth's great passions rose,  
 Wearing the script of rage, the graven pang,  
 The adamantine legend of her throes,—  
 These are her lyric transports ! thus she sang,  
 With wild improvisation,—thus, with clang,  
 Of fiery heavings, throbb'd into repose.

R. A.

It is difficult to say what part of the western shore of the famed Loch Eck presents the most beauties ; perhaps it is Bernice Glen. Guarded on the south side by Beinn Mhor (2433 feet) and on the  
 BEINN BHEAG. north by Beinn Bheag (2029 feet), its hills, picturesquely tree-clad along the loch, seem particularly green, while numerous crags are prominent on their slopes. The sturdy larches and firs near the foot of the glen are succeeded by alders, birches, and rowans, alders especially persistently following up the smaller burns. Near the loch shore holly trees are plentiful ; on the descent we found many of them (in August) with great clusters of red berries, while on some twigs there was at the same time green ripening for Christmas—a proof of the mildness of the climate.

Bernice Glen may be regarded rather as a long corrie than a glen ; seen from the other side of the loch it is a distinctive cleft between the mountains. Sheep are masters of the position, but a few Highland cattle graze on the slopes and an occasional red deer wanders thus far to the "low country." There were also some cows and their followers, "put out to grass" for the season and there left to their own resources. The ascent from Bernice is short and steep, the loch standing at only 67 feet above sea level.

Beinn Bhreac, a minor summit, is first tackled ; thence one proceeds between rather imposing rocky knolls to the small cairn which marks the summit of Beinn Bheag. The water view has particular attractions, having Loch Long on the east and Loch Fyne on the west. A procession of cloud shadows on the hills to the eastward was one of the features of the view ; earlier in the day these hills had two distinct bands of mist which gradually disappeared into film-like tags. A few plump hares were seen ; we amused ourselves by watching the attitude of a rabbit which for five minutes looked steadily in one direction unmindful of all else ; it suggested the appearance of a certain Cinema notoriety. A big patch of flowering thistles received much attention from bees ; on one we observed a bee and a fly close together moving about. Would the former make an end of the fly when

they should actually come in contact? No, indeed; the bee ignored its presence. The descent was made directly towards the loch, and gave us some anxiety for our four-footed companion, so steep was it in some parts. Only once, however, did "Demon" require to be taken in hand. Bracken flourishes only too well on these slopes, and is often a hindrance to the hill-climber, but all the same there is much fine pasture. The loch reached, the bee and fly incident was recalled, but the end this time was tragedy. A species of daddy-long-legs skimmed over the water, at last all but touching it; a hungry and watchful trout did the rest—A. I. M.

THE visitor to Stirling should not leave the City of the Rock without devoting a day to Sheriff Muir, an excursion which will add materially to the pleasant recollections of his sojourn. Let the muir road SHERIFF MUIR. be entered either from Logie Church or from the Great North road short of Bridge of Allan, no matter which; even the hillman who rarely has a good word to say of public roads for walking will be delighted with the ancient and (in parts) somewhat neglected thoroughfare leading through the battlefield. At the start, Dumyat, that prominent western summit of the Ochils, engages no little attention; by and by one remarks that the northern slopes of the Ochils are as unpretending as the front to the Forth is bold and picturesque. The northern side is pastoral; there "shepherd lads on sunny knowes blaw the blythe fussle," but the home-made "fussle" is not to be heard now, or even seen in a museum! We were not particularly fortunate in our observations of animal life; numerous lapwings and wild bees were the outstanding features. At the outset there was "a fly in the ointment," for on the lower ground and where the road was tree-lined there was a veritable plague of flies clustering tenaciously around us. But on the open muir—and the muirland extends for miles in length and breadth—"the wind on the heath, brother," left them behind; then one enjoyed life to the full, the while recalling Borrow and his gipsy.

After thus wandering for hours, a jug of milk from the uppermost farm served instead of Omar's "flask of wine," as accompaniment to our simple lunch, after which there was no resisting a stroll to the top of Pendreichmuir Hill, a very minor summit of the Ochils. Small game for a Cairngormer, some may say; but a hillman's pleasure is not measured by altitude alone. This top is well defined by a long boulder that, ages ago, had there parted company with its conveyance. The view need not be minutely detailed, but mention must be made of Ben Lomond, the Gargunnoch Hills, Craigforth, Stirling Castle, and the Wallace Monument. The memorial erected on the site of the battle of Sheriff Muir is a wonderful conception, and that is all that need be said about it here. The descent to Bridge of Allan had at last to be made, the densely-wooded glen of the Wharry Burn plainly indicating the route for us. It recalled another Ochil glen which we had explored the previous week—that of Alva on the south side—and though much inferior to it, yet is a long gorge not to be missed when one visits Bridge of Allan or the battle-field.—A. I. M.

THE following record of good walking was chronicled in the *Aberdeen Daily Journal* of 13th September:—"Two young cadets on leave, carrying

GOOD WALKING. packs weighing 12 lbs. each, accomplished a smart piece of walking on Tuesday of this week [the 10th]. Leaving Avie- more at 5 a.m., they crossed the Cairngorm Club Bridge at 6 a.m., passed the Linn of Dee at 1 p.m., and reached Braemar at 2.15 p.m., the distance covered being 28½ miles. The Làirig was heavy and very wet under foot."

SOME tourists who reached the top of Ben Nevis in September reported that the Observatory on the summit is rapidly falling into a ruinous state.

VANDALS ON BEN NEVIS. The doors and windows have been damaged, and some of the woodwork has been ruthlessly torn away, evidently to make fires. Through openings thus made, rain and snow have found an entrance, and damp and decay are fast destroying the interior of the apartments.

A CORRESPONDENT, writing to the *Aberdeen Free Press* on 5th September, mentioned that he had picked up at a bookstall a poem by Rev. George

LINES ON BENNACHIE. Meldrum, published in 1838. It is titled "Association, or the Progress of Feeling," and consists of a long poem in four books, running to 120 pages, and written in the style of Young's "Night Thoughts." The correspondent reproduced the following address to Benochie (as the poet spelled it):—

"Yon mountain far remote, that proudly rears  
Its lofty peak above the adjacent hills,  
Rising in grand proportion to the view,  
I loved to look on—at the peep of dawn,  
Glistening in the sun's earliest rays; at noon,  
When gaily changing into various hues;  
At eve, when fading into dusky shade.  
In manhood I delight in it; old age  
Could not efface my joy; when the cold earth  
Shall lie upon my breast, that mountain still  
Shall look upon my tomb, and o'er the sweet  
And fertile vale I loved thro' life so well!"

DURING the progress of the survey of the boundary between Alberta and British Columbia, a region containing some of the loftiest peaks in Canada

NAMING THE ROCKIES. was encountered not far north of the United States boundary. A number of these peaks have been named by the Geographical Board after Canadian and Allied Soldiers of distinction, and travellers through the Rockies may now try to climb such heights as Mount Currie, Mount Turner, Mount Morrison, Mount Mercer, Mount Watson, and Mount Bishop. The genius of Sir Douglas Haig is commemorated in a peak 11,000 feet high, and the names of Marshals Foch, Joffre, and Petain are given to peaks of almost equal elevation. King Albert and Queen Elizabeth of Belgium are also remembered, as is, too, General Leman, the gallant defender of Liège.

THE thirtieth annual meeting of the Club was held at 14 Golden Square, Aberdeen, on 20th December, 1918—Mr. T. R. Gillies, Chairman of the Club, presiding. The Treasurers' accounts for the year 1918, shewing a credit balance of £33 16s. 2d., were submitted and approved, and it was agreed to invest the standing amount of life members' subscriptions (£16 6s.)

ANNUAL MEETING. in War Savings Certificates. The President and Vice-Presidents were re-elected; Dr. John R. Levack was elected Chairman; and the Council was re-elected, with the addition of Mr. James Rennie in place of Dr. Levack. Mr. John Clarke moved that the appointment of a Secretary be left in abeyance until the Club is fully constituted by the return of members at present on military service, and that Mr. T. R. Gillies be appointed Treasurer and to act also as Secretary *ad interim*. This was agreed to. On the motion of Mr. Gillies, Mr. Robert Anderson was specifically elected Editor of the Club's *Journal*, the view entertained being that, for the present at least, the editorship should not be combined with the secretaryship.

Dr. Levack, having taken the chair, moved that a vote of thanks be awarded to the retiring Chairman—Mr. T. R. Gillies—for his services during the past six years, and the motion was cordially agreed to. Mr. William Garden gave notice of a motion to the effect that three members of the Committee should retire annually, to be ineligible for election for a year. Some desultory conversation ensued as to the resumption of the Club's activities on the prospective conclusion of peace, a special "peace" excursion being suggested; and suggestions were also made as to carrying out an educational mountaineering propaganda by means of lectures with lantern illustrations. A general remit was made to the Chairman and the interim Secretary to consider these and other suggestions. Attention was also called to the erection of a bridge over the Eidart; and in this connection Mr. John Clarke moved that a remit be made to the Chairman and the interim Secretary to make representations to the Road Board in favour of the construction of the proposed road through Glen Feshie. This motion was agreed to.

The following were admitted members:—

Mr. Alexander Edward, bank agent, 21 Market Street, Aberdeen.

Mr. James Grant, 25 Albert Street, Alexandria, Dumbartonshire.

The following were admitted as associate members:—

Mrs. Garden, 23 Albyn Place, Aberdeen.

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

J. Norman Milne, Cressbrook, Queen's Road, Aberdeen.

The membership of the Club now stands at 138.

## REVIEWS.

INSPECTING a bookstall one day last summer for literature suitable for holiday reading, we espied a cheap reprint of Mr. Hilaire Belloc's "The Path to Rome." The title was not inviting, suggestive as MR. BELLOC'S it is of conversion to the Roman Catholic Church or of "PATH TO confirmation in what Mr. Belloc invariably terms "the ROME." Faith." But suddenly there came a recollection that the book was of quite a different nature and was really a narrative of a walk to Rome including therein accounts of mountain ascents, so it was purchased and was duly read—read very greatly to edification and with a good deal of pleasure as well. Mr. Belloc, it seems, made a vow to go on a pilgrimage from Toul, in Northern France, to Rome in something like a straight line, to walk all the way and take advantage of no wheeled thing, to "sleep rough" and cover 30 miles per diem; and "The Path to Rome" is the story of how the vow was accomplished. It consists of a series of lively incidents, told most vivaciously and with evident enjoyment of the "vagabondage" described. Mr. Belloc travelled down the valley of the Moselle, across the Vosges and the Jura, and so into Switzerland. He failed, however, to get into Italy by the Gries Pass owing to a snowstorm, and, turning back to his chagrin, he had to make a detour by the (to him) commonplace route of the Furka Pass and the St. Gothard. Descending the valley of the Ticino, he reached Como and then Milan, surmounted the Appenines, and arrived at Rome well within the time he had allotted himself. He walked all the way except on two occasions when he was obliged, mainly from fatigue and shortage of money, to have recourse to brief railway journeys, which he naively excuses on the plea of "taking discount" off a walk of over 700 miles: "may a man," he asks, "not cut off it, as his due, 25 miserable little miles in a train?" Mr. Belloc had many strange experiences on his adventurous way, and these he narrates with charming *abandon* and with a philosophy and humour never discouraged by untoward circumstances. The book otherwise is exceedingly and amusingly discursive. We are treated to innumerable digressions—piquant reflections on men and things, on life, society, and manners, on literature, politics, and religion; reflections which occurred to him as he plodded along or lay under the open sky and the stars, or were evoked by the kind of people he met and the varying reception accorded him. Many of these digressions are intensely droll, others are extremely caustic; the literary workmanship is always delightful. Mr. Belloc, too, has an eye to the picturesque, a keen appreciation of mountain scenery. As a sample we may quote the description of his first view of the Alps as seen from the heights of the Jura, 50 or 60 miles away—

"There, below me, thousands of feet below me, was what seemed an illimitable plain; at the end of that world was an horizon, and the dim bluish sky that overhangs an horizon. There was brume in it and thickness.



One saw the sky beyond the edge of the world getting purer as the vault rose. But right up—a belt in that empyrean—ran peak and field and needle of intense ice, remote, remote from the world. Sky beneath them and sky above them, a steadfast legion, they glittered as though with the armour of the immovable armies of Heaven. Two days' march, three days' march away, they stood up like the walls of Eden. I say it again, they stopped my breath. I had seen them . . . . Up there in the sky, to which only clouds belong and birds and the last trembling colours of pure light, they stood fast and hard; not moving as do the things of the sky. They were as distant as the little upper clouds of summer, as fine and tenuous; but in their reflection and in their quality as it were of weapons (like spears and shields of an unknown array) they occupied the sky with a sublime invasion: and the things proper to the sky were forgotten by me in their presence as I gazed." R. A.

THE October number of *The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* is largely reminiscent, the authors of most of the articles recalling walking and climbing experiences of former days; but it is none the less interesting for all that, and the articles themselves are such as to inspire on the part of the reader a desire to visit the scenes described—surely the best commendation of the success achieved by their writers. The veteran Sir Hugh Munro furnishes "Reminiscences of a Solitary Walk in Early Club Days"—a walk (in 1899) from Inverie in Knoidart to Loch Hourn, on to Glenquoich, Invergarry, and Fort Augustus; thence (by steamer to Drumnadrochit) through Glen Urquhart and Strath Glass to Glen Affric; and then across Scour Oran and a few other summits to Glenelg. Dr. Levack describes the excursions of himself, Mr. J. A. Parker, and Mr. William Garden during "A Weekend at Inchnadamph," in Sutherlandshire, in May 1913, in the course of which Ben More, Stac Polly, and Suilven were respectively "bagged." And Mr. J. G. Stott, in "A Chronicle of the Old Men," cleverly adopting the archaic style of the old chroniclers, recounts how a party of "ancients" in "bygone days" essayed the ascent of the "Mountain of the Fawns," a noble mountain on the marches of Lorn but "difficult and horrent of aspect," and failed in the attempt, to their great disappointment and disgust. Of the other contents of the number, it will suffice to specially mention an article on "Robert Browning," in which the Editor, Mr. F. S. Goggs, exhibits, by abundant and apposite quotation, the influence which mountains had upon Browning, as reflected in his poetry.

IN the September number of the *Alpine Journal* we have abundant evidence of the power and consolation of the mountains, which these last few years have made very real. The first article to which we turned on opening this number of the Journal was one entitled "ALPINE JOURNAL." "Mountaineering as a Religion." The author deals with a subject which has interested us for several years. A much deeper attraction than mere physical recreation draws us to the high places

of the earth. In parts the article reaches a level worthy of the theme, but "the large Religion of the Hills" produces emotions that cannot be expressed in words. Professor Norman Collie contributes a charming article on "The Island of Skye." Incidentally, he tells us that he was first drawn to climb by seeing two mountaineers scaling a rock face of one of the pinnacles of Sgurr nan Gillean. The article is supplemented by some exquisite illustrations, and altogether it is a delightful contribution to the ever-growing literature of the Coolin. Various other reminiscent and historical articles go to make a very interesting number of the journal. A particularly readable article is that telling of a "Roundabout Ramble from Champex to Chamonix." The number contains the almost universal but none the less pathetic notices of mountaineers who have fallen in the field of battle.

J. G. K.

THE number of the *Rucksack Club Journal* for 1918 deals with climbs in regions unfamiliar, we suspect, to members of the Cairngorm Club. There are articles, for example, on Laddow; Cwm Eigiau and "RUCKSACK Club JOURNAL." Carnedd Dafydd, in Wales; and the Skiddaw country, in Cumberland; and for mountaineers visiting and exploring these places much valuable information is afforded. Particularly useful to them must be the diagram of the hills visible from Carnedd Dafydd; and all of us can appreciate the remark of the author that he found the drawing of it "a pursuit of absorbing interest."

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF SCOTLAND. One-Inch Map, Sheet No. 74. 2/6.—Those members of the Club who take an interest in geology will welcome the appearance of this sheet, as it completes the geological map of the Cairngorms. It is colour-printed the same as Nos. 64 and 65, which were noticed in the *C.C.J.* for July 1913. Sheet No. 75, which deals with the Tomintoul district, is unfortunately one of the older hand-coloured sheets, the cost of which (19/3) is prohibitive. Sheet 74 includes the valley of the river Spey from Loch Insh to Grantown-on-Spey, the Dulnan, and about fifteen miles of the Findhorn. It contains Beinn Mheadhoin, Cairngorm, and parts of Ben Bynac, Braeriach, and Sgoran Dubh. We notice that two new surface signs have been introduced on this sheet, viz:—"Disintegrated rock in situ on mountain tops," and "Dry Valleys mainly of glacial origin."

THE GEOLOGY OF MID-STRATHSPEY, AND STRATHDEARN. By L. W. Hinxman and others. 2/6.—This is the Memoir of the Geological Survey of Scotland in explanation of Sheet No. 74 referred to above. Apart from the highly technical portions, it contains a very considerable amount of general information which should be of interest to those who are not experts in geological matters. Glacial phenomena are dealt with in great detail, a special feature of interest being the descriptions of the various dry valleys which were overflow or marginal channels through

which the waters held up along the retreating glaciers escaped. There are several very fine examples of such channels at the north end of the Mam Suim ridge of Cairngorm, by which the marginal water of the Glen More glacier escaped into Strath Nethy. The Memoir is illustrated with eight photographs and a number of diagrams and sketch maps.

A TEACHER, in a recent communication to the *Times Educational Supplement* on "The Psalms in School," contended that the one necessity

for Bible study is the belief that the words have a meaning, not a magic; that their virtue is in their thought, not in mere utterance. He cited as an illustration of his argument the familiar passage, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," which he said he had heard hundreds of boys repeat, but had never yet found a schoolboy who could tell him why the psalmist looked to the hills for help. The teacher himself, however, seemed in a quandary as to what was the precise thought in the poet's mind. He first suggested the primitive idea that mountains were the great barriers which marked the ends of the earth, as in the myth that beyond Atlas the world ceased; and that, accordingly, the psalmist may have meant what Isaiah repeats, "Hast thou not known that the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not nor is weary?" But this interpretation, he found, did not satisfy Christina Rossetti, whose cry is

"The hills are crowned with glory, and the glow  
Flows widening down apace,  
Unto the sunny hill-tops I, set low,  
Lift a tired face:  
How tired a face, how tired a brain, how tired  
A heart I lift, who long  
For something never felt but still desired,  
Sunshine and song."

"She thinks of the hills," was the comment of the teacher, "as the abode of sunshine, for the sun gleams on the peaks in the morning and lingers on the mountains as he sinks to rest. Such is the poet's explanation, and what one poet finds in another duller folk may well accept as truth." So far from accepting it, the writer went on to make other attempts at elucidating the poet-psalmist's meaning—such as, that in an Eastern country, where the far-stretching plains have many dangers, shelter or escape may be found in the hills; and that the cry for help—in the revised version, the phrase becomes "From whence shall my help come?"—"is the cry of a spirit whom the sight of the hills overwhelms. They are the eternal hills, and they remind man that he is but for a moment." This leads up, of course, to the declaration of the psalmist's faith in the verse that follows, "My help cometh from the Lord of Hosts that made heaven and earth"; and so, as our writer puts it, "the thought of the poet is then the same as that expressed in the psalm which Stevenson loved in the Scots version:—

“But yet the Lord that is on high  
Is more of might by far  
Than noise of many waters is  
Or great sea-billows are.”

The article, notwithstanding its confused exegesis, was of a highly stimulating character; and there is certainly much to be said for the writer's ultimate conclusion—“What I urge is that there be explanation [of the meaning of the psalm]: the psalm should not be in the mind of your pupils as a tongue's murmur.”

NOTE may be taken of another interpretation of the poet-psalmist's aspiration. A section of a recently published volume of poems, “The Gutter and the Stars,” by Captain INTERPRETATION. Eliot Crawshay Williams, is devoted to “Desert Songs.” One of these is titled “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,” and is dated from Bir el Mazar, Egypt. It runs as follows:—

“My help cometh from the hills;  
To them I turn as to a God-built shrine,  
And this poor spirit of mine,  
Famished and parched unto most sore distress  
Bows done to bless  
The everlasting hills.

“God reigneth in His hills,  
Over the plains and sea a plague is spread,  
Horror and ruin red  
Possess man's dwellings, and his soul is stricken;  
But ye stand there to quicken  
All that is left of love and beauty and light  
Calm and unchanging as the star-strewn night,  
My wondrous hills.”

THERE was an interesting article, “Of a Map, and Walks,” by Mr. A. D. Godley, in the *Cornhill Magazine* for August. It described walks about Oxford, principally on the Downs, the Chilterns, and the A STRENUOUS Cotswolds, undertaken apparently in the 'seventies and WALKER. 'eighties. Mr. Godley expresses regret that walking has gone out of fashion, “crowded out” by hockey, golf, and lawn tennis, and especially by the bicycle; he complains, too, that much of the attraction of the Oxford country has vanished past recall—some of the nearer country which was then rural is now suburban. Mr. Godley thinks it possible that walking may be revived, the cult of games meanwhile having fallen from its pride of place; but he is afraid that, with the threatened “return to the land” and more extensive cultivation, the country will lose something of its charm. Incidentally, the article contains the following entertaining sketch of a strenuous walker:—“C. dearly loved a long walk. I do not think that, traveller though he had been, he cared greatly for scenery and the common objects of the country: it is certain that he would

not stop merely to admire the picturesque. Always the motive uppermost seemed to be the carrying out of a preconceived plan. To walk with him therefore was strictly a business proposition. A certain distance must be covered, a certain route followed: certain sights, adjudged previously worthy of observation, must be duly seen, noted down with proper chronicle of time and place on an otherwise immaculate shirt-cuff, and the notes afterwards transferred to a manuscript volume known as the Book of Jasher, which is happily still extant. To walk with C. was like going by rail. You took a ticket, as it were, and thereafter had no option in the matter. You were then bound to a time-table: due—if return was actually by rail—to arrive at the station neither after the train nor yet before it, but simultaneously with its appearance; and if this exact coincidence involved a “double” of a mile or so at the end of a twenty-mile walk, why, “doubling” was regarded as a part of the game; not running, *bien entendu*—to run would have been a confession of miscalculation, and therefore absurd. Above all, the chosen route must be followed, without mutability or shadow of turning. If nature or art interposed obstacles, so much the worse for them. It is on record that C. and a friend of like temper, returning to Oxford from a distant excursion by a route supposed to cross the Thames by a bridge, found themselves confronted, in consequence more probably of the error of a map than of a convulsion of nature, by the unbridged river running bank-high. It was possible indeed to make a detour; but no such detour was in the prearranged scheme. Accoutred as they were, they plugged in; and I have no doubt that C. at least reached home, if not absolutely dry yet not visibly moistened by his enterprise.”

Two years ago we noted the initiation of the “Bulletin of the Associated Mountaineering Clubs of North America,” and a copy of last year’s Bulletin which has been sent us shows a considerable expansion of the Association and also of the Bulletin. The associated AMERICAN MOUNTAINEERING CLUBS—clubs and societies now number 22, comprising a total individual membership of over 20,000. The membership consists of two classes—active mountaineering and outdoor clubs, and those having common aims in the development and protection of the scenic regions of America and of their bird and animal life. Among the latter fall to be included the National Parks Service, the American Museum of Natural History, the National Association of Audubon Societies, and the American Game Protective Association. Of mountaineering clubs proper the Appalachian Mountain Club of Boston has the largest membership—2001, but it is nearly approached by the Sierra Club of California, San Francisco (with a southern section at Los Angeles), the two sections having a combined membership of 1883. There is also a Hawaiian Trail and Mountain Club, which “constructs and maintains mountain trails, and conducts Sunday walks and climbing excursions on the various islands.” Saturday and Sunday walks and holiday excursions are the main purposes of most of the clubs, and many of them issue individual publications. A new and interesting feature of the Bulletin itself is “Notes on our Scenic Wonders,” a record of National Park extensions, made and desiderated, contributed by Mr. Le Roy Jeffers, the Secretary of the Bureau of Clubs.

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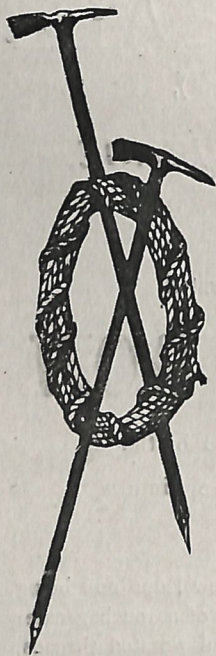
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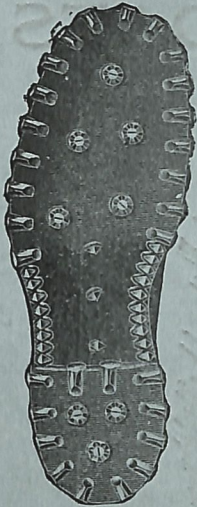


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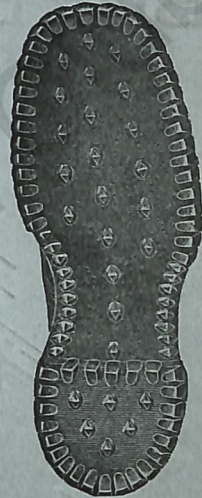
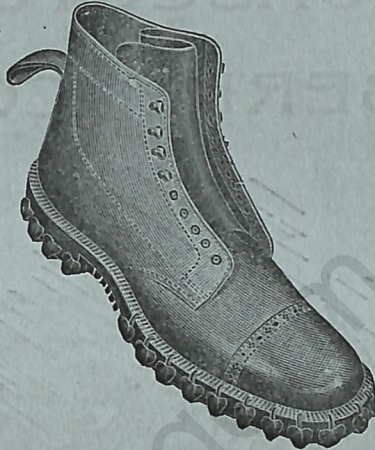
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