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Cairngorm Club Journal.

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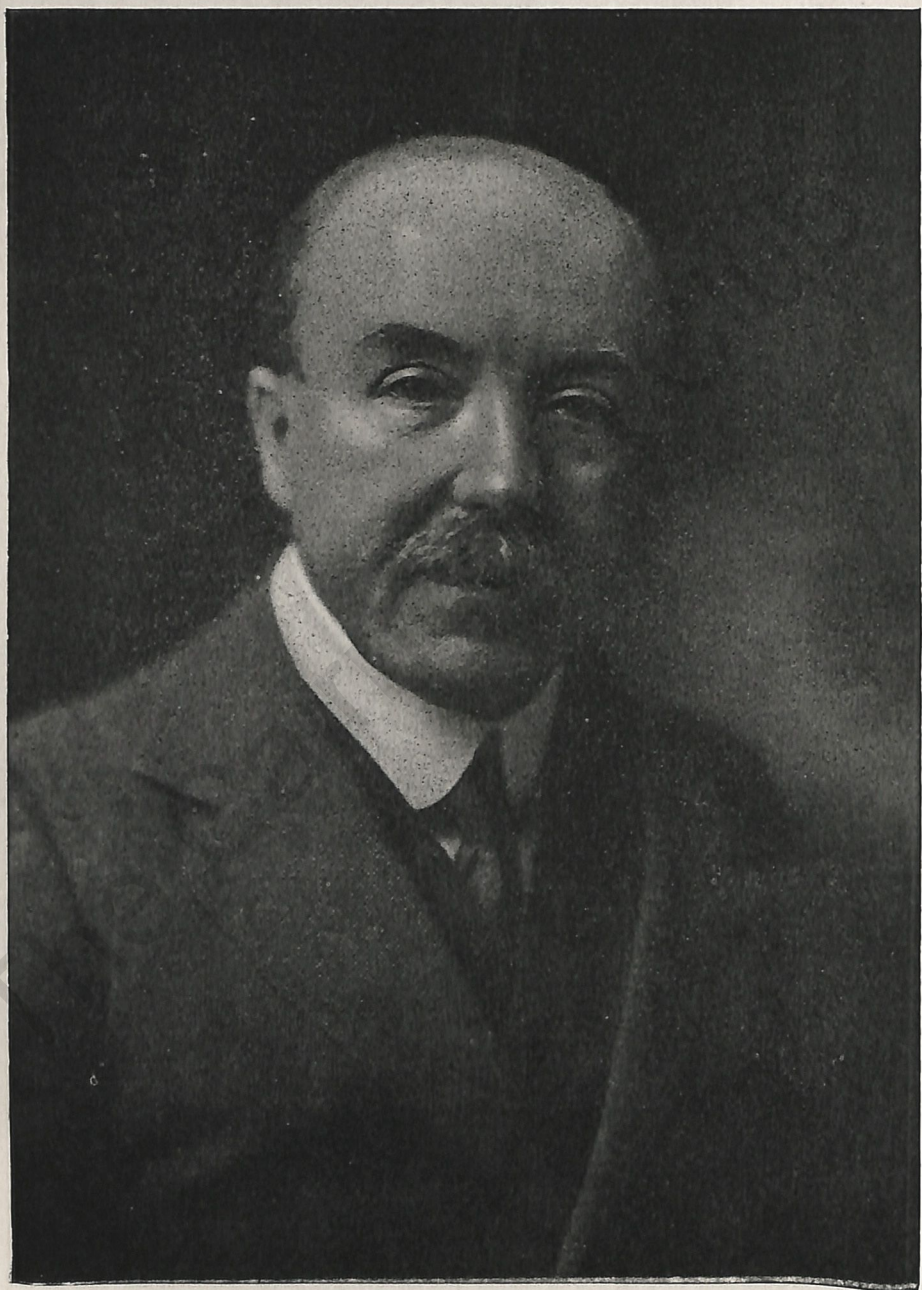
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DR. JOHN R. LEVACK,
CHAIRMAN OF THE CAIRNGORM CLUB.

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THE STUI BUTTRESS.

BY JOHN R. LEVACK.

STANDING on the summit rocks of Lochnagar on a clear day, the visitor is impressed by the splendid isolation of the peak. The ground falls steeply away from it on three sides; only to the south-west is the high level maintained for any distance beyond the mountain. In this direction the mass of the White Mounth almost equals in height the summit level of Lochnagar. On its northern side the White Mounth ends abruptly in a magnificent line of cliffs, which sweep grandly round the head of the deep corrie whose waters drain into the Garrawalt burn. These cliffs form the most arresting object in the foreground of the western panorama to be seen from Lochnagar. They curve round from the west side of Lochnagar for about a mile and a half, and have a height of approximately 500 feet. Exactly one mile south-west from Cac Carn Beag it will be noticed that the cliff projects forward into the corrie as a prominent nose or buttress. This is the Stui Buttress. It forms a steep and narrow ridge of rock running down to the floor of the corrie immediately to the west of Lochan nan Eoin.

It had evidently escaped the attention of mountaineers till Easter, 1908, when a party of the Scottish Mountain-

eering Club attempted to climb it under wintry and stormy conditions, but were defeated. Another party succeeded next day in reaching the top of the buttress after a stiff and exciting climb, and since that time many ascents have been made, both under summer and winter conditions.

In summer time, it is a simple scramble, but delightful on account of the change it gives from the everlasting grind of simple hill-walking, which is the ordinary form of mountaineering in the neighbourhood. The buttress can best be approached from Braemar. The simplest way is to drive (or walk) to Callater, and then follow the ordinary path to Lochnagar for nearly two miles to a point on the north side of Cairn Taggart where the path turns sharply south. Leaving the path here, one skirts the northern slope of the mountain at the 2,750 feet level till the western end of the cliffs is reached, rounding which, one gets a full view of the climb less than half a mile away, and the foot of the rocks is soon reached. Another way is to follow the Garrawalt stream, crossing the Dee from the road by the Invercauld Bridge, right up the glen to the Sandy Loch and past it to the Lochan nan Eoin. This is a toilsome trudge and is not to be recommended.

From the Ballater side the distance is greater, but the expedition is a very fine variation of the ordinary ascent of Lochnagar. Following the path from Allnaguibsach as far as the Meikle Pap, the route now lies round the north side of the Pap and into the great Corrie of Lochnagar. The burn is crossed as it issues from the loch, and the climber now goes round the north side of Lochnagar and up over the col between it and Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe. Descending into the corrie west of Lochnagar the Sandy Loch is passed, and the foot of the buttress is soon reached. After climbing it the return journey should be made over the shoulder of Lochnagar, and, if time permits, the summit cairn should be visited before descending by the "ladder" to Allnaguibsach.

At the foot of the buttress the slope begins very gently from the floor of the corrie up over heather-covered rocks. One mounts up easily, and the ground falls steeply on either side of the buttress. About half-way up the rocks become bare and the angle steeper, and at one point (about three quarters of the way up) if one keeps strictly to the true ridge, the rocks become nearly vertical, and the ascent is by no means easy. A way of escape here is, however, easily found by traversing round to the left (east). On this side the face of the buttress is well broken up, and the ascent is found to be simple. But even here, if the climber be of short stature, there is one step where the next hold is just beyond his reach, unless he trusts to grasping the luxuriant heather which clothes the rocks and pulls himself up. This method is, of course, not strictly orthodox, and should not be depended on, as a nasty fall and serious injury might result. It is not necessary to use a rope, but the leader, if he cannot get up by himself, can easily be "shouldered" up, and then he can turn and give a hand to the next man.

The buttress was climbed twice in one week last summer by the writer and his two boys. On the first occasion, we went up from the Invercauld Bridge along the course of the Garrawalt burn, and, on reaching the "nose" of the buttress, we turned it by holding round to the left; but, on the second occasion, we went by Callater and along the foot of the cliffs, and we climbed it direct, the tall member of the party leading straight up the "nose," while the others followed, greatly aided by the support of the rope.

Just above the "nose" a giant slab of rock projects horizontally outward over the west side of the buttress, which is here an almost vertical precipice, and the view looking down from this point into the corrie is most sensational and impressive. Above the "nose" the angle eases off and the climb quickly finishes. On more than one occasion several members of the Club have investigated the steep western face of the buttress, and

there is an inviting-looking cave high up on the face, into which they have, so far, not been able to climb.

Under winter conditions, when the rocks are coated with ice, and plastered with snow, the ascent of the buttress is a very different proposition from that met with in summer. Much step-cutting and clearing of the rocks from the snow and ice covering them requires to be done before a way up can be forced. It is not claimed that the ascent of the buttress under ordinary summer conditions is anything more than a simple rock scramble, but it is a pleasant variation of hill-walking, which I would strongly recommend to members of the Club.

SUMMER DAYS ON THE MOUNTAINS.

BY WILLIAM BARCLAY.

The Perthshire hills are bonnie, Schiehallion's steep and hie.

I.—BEN UDLAMAN AND ITS NEIGHBOURS.

I was in hopes that the thunderstorm which passed over Perthshire on the 12th of June would clear the air and drive away the thick haze that had lain over the hills for weeks, nor was I disappointed, for during the whole of next day the barometer was rising and by evening the Grampians all stood out sharp and clear. So as the morrow gave such promise of a fine day, I made up my mind for a trip to some of the Drumochter hills. The train service to Dalnaspidal and Dalwhinnie is very poor, and practically makes a one-day excursion to these hills impossible, so I had perforce to make other arrangements—a combination of train and cycle. Thus it was that, on the morning of 14th June, I alighted from the Highland mail train at Blair Atholl, and at once started on the 16½ miles ride up to Drumochter. It is a heavy uphill pull all the way, and the surface of the road was execrable, torn into deep ruts and covered with loose stones; but it was a lovely morning and I enjoyed the run immensely, though it entailed careful riding. Dalnaspidal was reached at 10.15, and here I left my cycle. I proposed spending the day on the hills to the west of the pass—twixt Loch Ericht and the railway line—starting at the outlying Geal-chàrn and following the main ridge over the summits of Marcaonach, Ben Udlaman, Sgairneach Mòr, and perhaps the Sow of Atholl if time permitted, and so back to Dalnaspidal.

Excepting Geal-chàrn, which lies to the north-west, these Drumochter hills are gathered round the deep and narrow Coire Domhain. The lesser heights of the Sow of Athole and the Boar of Badenoch form the eastern outliers of the group, and rise just to the west of the

railway line, the former by Dalnaspidal station and the Boar at the county march above the summit of the pass. Yet some people seem to have a notion that they stand one on either side of the line,* and I have heard such remarks when passing in the train. Even Bartholomew's reduced O.S. map places the Sow where Marcaonach should be. With the exception of the Sow of Atholl (or Meall an Dobhrachan, as it is called on the 6-inch O.S. map), which slopes steeply to east and west, and An Torc (or the Boar of Badenoch), which rises at a sharp angle on the east, these hills present great rounded contours, approached by gentle slopes covered with mountain berries, grass and short heather, and though the summit of Ben Udlaman is a bit stony, those of Marcaonach and Sgairneach Mòr are so wide and smooth that one could drive all over them.

Having stabled my steed, I proceeded on foot for three miles or until I was within sight of Drumochter Lodge. Here I left the road, crossed the railway line and the Allt an Tuire, and then the long ridge coming down from Marcaonach, and dropped down to the stream between this spur and Geal-chàrn. Four small cairns are visible on the crest of this latter hill, though the actual summit cairn is not seen from the road, as it lies about half a mile farther west. A shooters' path runs up the north side of the glen, but, as it was of no use to me, I simply crossed and struck up the blaeberry slopes, and was soon on the ridge by the four small cairns. Ten minutes more sufficed for the walk along the gentle rise to the summit (3,005 feet). Noon.

Geal-chàrn is undoubtedly the best view point for the Ben Alder group of mountains, and I descended the western slope for some distance, so as to get a more comprehensive view of Loch Ericht. This loch is generally described as dismal, dreary, desolate, etc., such descriptions reiterating the words of Christopher North written a hundred years ago. Such is not my experience, and certainly on the present occasion on this gorgeous summer's day no one could associate Loch Ericht with

*"Scottish Pictures," by Samuel G. Green, D.D.

gloom—far from it. There it lay at my feet in its entire length, sparkling in the sunshine, the thin line of yellow shingle delineating its outline as faithfully and as sharply as in a map. Directly opposite, though away down nearly 2000 feet below me, lay Loch Ericht Lodge, from which another series of golden threads radiated over the moorland—and very useful lines of communication these are to the climber when he has designs on any of the distant peaks of this forest. Behind all this towered the great mass of mountains of which Ben Alder is the chief, with their corries and glens, ridges and lochans and snow patches. I was loth to leave such an enchanting scene, but time was short, so crossing over the summit I descended to the dip (2426 feet) between this hill and Marcaonach, and, passing to the left of a large stone man, rapidly ascended this easy slope, and was soon on the broad back of Bruach nan Iomairean (3175 feet)—a shoulder of the mountain. A walk eastward brought me to the summit (3185 feet) and in a few minutes more to the small cairn, which is not on the highest point but a short distance down the east slope. I was now directly above the Boar of Badenoch and at one end of the wide ridge which runs in the shape of the letter U round Coire Domhain. Ben Udlaman, the highest point of the ridge, and of the group, the cairn of which stood up boldly against the sky two miles away in the south-west, was my next point of attack. A fence runs west to the dip (2750 feet) and up the slope of Udlaman, passing along with one or two bends over the summit, and down the south ridge to Càrn Beag an Laoigh—in fact, following the Perth-Inverness county march.

There is so little of a dip and the walking is so easy that it took me only 40 minutes to pass from one top to the other, but I did not follow the boundary. The cairn which is to the west of the fence, is a large structure quite 10 feet high, and, while I was sitting beside it having my "piece," I could see away down Coire Domhain a Highland Railway train puffing with its load up towards the summit of the line. A haze had

come over the more distant mountains by now, but quite a lot of "old familiar faces" were still in view. Next to the Ben Alder family, Schichallion was the most dominant peak in sight all day. Then Ben Lawers and the Tarmachan groups showed up well, as did the great bunch of hills farther west at the head of Glen Lyon. Farragon, Ben Vrackie, Beinn a Ghlo, and the Cairngorms were all prominent, while from Geal-chàrn, the little Loch na Cuaich with its Meall above was a conspicuous object.

From the summit I followed the county boundary south to Carn Beag an Laoigh (2739 feet), which is only a rocky shoulder with a small cairn, and there I was nearly on the top of a fox before we noticed one another. Then I dropped down to the bealach (2600 feet), which is boggy, turned eastward and climbed up the long, smooth and gradual slopes of Sgairneach Mòr to the flat ridge, and so on to the summit (3160) with its small cairn.

I did not stop here, but continued in an easterly direction down the edge of Coire Cragach towards the Sow of Athole, and soon got on to a rough track which I followed to the dip, and then on to the southern slopes of the hill. Here I quitted the path and bearing to the left through deep heather, soon dropped down towards Dalnaspidal station, crossing the boggy bit on two small bridges. At 3.55 I picked up my cycle, and spun down to Blair Atholl, which I reached in good time for a cup of tea before my train arrived.

The whole of this ground is under sheep, yet I noticed great numbers of deer; every snow patch had its quota, and the fine little glen behind the Sow was full of them.

II.—CARN MAIRG.

On 8th July, one of the hottest days of the month, I paid a visit to that little-known and seldom visited group of hills lying to the north of Glen Lyon, known collectively on the maps as Carn Maing.

From the approach to the bridge at Aberfeldy three of the tops can be seen, their clear-cut profile towering over the intervening slopes. Visitors to Schichallion are familiar with the bunch of hills lying to the south, and just across the Gleann Mor, but few there are who make any closer acquaintance. Of course, Carn Maigr is not such a shapely, such an outstanding mountain, nor has it the same scientific or historical associations as Schichallion; neither is it so get-at-able, and that no doubt accounts for the fact that where one person climbs Carn Maigr, a score will ascend its more popular neighbour.

Starting in Beinn Dearg just above Fortingal and ending at Carn Gorm five miles away, the group flanks Glen Lyon on the north, and presents the following summits:—

Beinn Dearg (2000 feet contour).	Meall a Bharr (3250 feet).
Creag Mhor (3200 feet).	Meall Garbh (3250 feet).
Meall Liath (3261 feet).	An Sgor (3002 feet).
Carn Maigr (3419 feet).	Carn Gorm (3370 feet).

I had cycled up from Aberfeldy, so it was about 10 o'clock when I left the clean and tidy hamlet of Fortingal, with its ancient yew tree and neat thatched cottages that remind one far more of rural England than highland Scotland, and made my way westward towards the pass. Just at the bend of the road where the familiar view up the glen is obtained, I climbed the fence and tackled the steeply-rising slopes to the north between Beinn Dearg and Creag Mhor. The lower stretches are wooded, and I was grateful for the shade, so I mounted steadily upward, passed the deer fence, and slanting up to the right was soon on my first summit—Beinn Dearg and the end of the ridge which I hoped to follow all the way round to Carn Gorm.

From this top, a broad ridge which drops steeply to Glen Lyon, more gradual to the north into Munlinn Glen, runs westward for over two miles and rises into the two summits of Creag Mhor. So I proceeded along this peaty ridge and soon rose another 500 feet to a shoulder

of the crag, which is marked with a single upright stone and boasts two stone shelters. From here the whole of the Cairngorms were visible, from the Sgorans to Beinn à Bhuid and Ben Avon; Braeriach and Ben Muich Dhui streaked with snow. In the north-west now rose a green little conical top, half a mile away and separated by a slight hollow. The passage from the one to the other took me a quarter of an hour only, and the dip, like every other encountered during the day, was peaty. While the flanks of this east top of Creag Mhor were grassy and had an abundant crop of cloudberry and blaeberry, the summit was stony and crowned with a cairn.

The titular peak of the group now appeared in sight, lying a mile distant in the north-west, its square stony summit rising boldly across Glen Munlinn in striking contrast to the smoothly-contoured Meall Liath, its neighbour on the east. The stony ridge of Schichallion now shut out Sgoran Dubh from view.

It was another half mile due west, with a dip of about a hundred feet between, to the rocky top marking the highest point of Creag Mhor (3200 feet). No Cairn. From here every summit of the group is visible. My course was now northward, so I rapidly dropped down the 450 feet to the head of the Munlinn Glen, where the col is marked by a cairn. The usual peat bogs were encountered here, but, fortunately, thanks to the warm weather, they were dry and powdery. I now rose over easy slopes to the dip between Carn Maigr and Meall Liath; then I turned east to the small cairn on the latter top (3261 feet). This is a great rounded hill, with gently-sloping grass-covered sides. Loch Rannoch now appeared in view, and in the far north-west Ben Nevis was noticed. Retracing my steps to the col, another ten minutes found me on the top of Carn Maigr (3,419 feet). 1.5. The name is very appropriate, for it is nothing but a gigantic heap of stones.

It was a lovely day, warm certainly, and the flies were a bit of a nuisance, but then one does not mind these

trifles when one is able to sit on such a vantage point as this, and see for 50 miles in all directions, with not a particle of haze or mist, except in the extreme distance.

Just across the glen to the north Schichallion presented a sorry picture from this point ; all its comeliness had gone, and it appeared only as a long stony ridge slightly higher at the western end. I had neither the time nor the inclination, and perhaps not the ability, to identify all the mountains within range. It was sufficient enjoyment to sit feasting on the sight of them at will, first in one direction, then in another ; and the best part of two hours was thus spent lazily on the summit.

From Carn Mairg a long rocky shoulder juts out to the north-west, and from this a deer fence runs westward along the crest of the ridge to Meall Garbh. When I had gone about half a mile along this ridge, I descended a little on the south side towards Coire Eachainn, and there, by a nice little spring, sat down and had lunch, at the same time bestowing my benediction on the man who looks after wells on these hills and keeps them clean and tidy. The great peaty coire below me was alive with deer, a kestrel was stalking not far off, and a couple of golden plovers kept hovering around, while numberless sea-gulls were circling about overhead, and a solitary eagle passed rapidly northward.

Ascending again to the ridge, I followed the deer fence westward to where it bends sharply to the north to Meall a Bharr (3250 feet) with its two cairns, then west again past a slight dip and up over rougher ground to the summit of Meall Garbh (3250 feet). I again found two cairns here, the one by the fence being the march between the sporting proprietors.

It was now 4 o'clock, and Carn Gorm still seemed a long way off, with a small top—An Sgor—intervening, but as I had been blest with such a fine day, it seemed a pity not to complete the circuit, more especially as this is the most shapely peak of the bunch ; so, casting appointments to the wind, I resumed my westward march. Crossing a slight dip, I rose to a shoulder of

Meall Garbh ; then followed a greater dip—450 feet—to the col between this hill and Carn Gorm, which landed me at the base of the little top of An Sgor—a sort of protuberance of Carn Gorm. From here I had a grand view into the eastern corrie of this mountain, and I found it swarming with deer.

Ascending by the edge of this hollow, I soon was on the top of An Sgor (3002 feet) ; another slight depression faced me, and, beyond, a rise of 600 feet to the summit of Carn Gorm (3370) Cairn. 5 p.m., or one hour from Meall Garbh.

The nearer view to the west was now greatly extended, and I could look up Glen Lyon to where the loch lay deep between the mountains, to the conical Stuchd an Lochain, and the flat and massive Beinn Heasgarnich, backed by innumerable giants, the mere sight of which brought back pleasant recollections of bygone days, days of sunshine and days of storm, when I wandered oft-times alone among their rugged summits. At my feet on the north, almost the whole of Loch Rannoch was in view, but by far the grandest sight was quite close at hand, just across the glen to the south where the massive ridges and deep corries of the Ben Lawers range formed a most inspiring spectacle.

I descended to the road in Glen Lyon at Invervar, and wended my way down towards Fortingal, secure in the possession of another day of glorious memory.

III.—BEINN TULACHAN AND CRUACH ARDRAN.

My next trip was towards the end of July, and it was on a rather threatening morning that I paid a visit to the Braes of Balquhidder. From the station of that name I cycled up to the Kirkton, and on past Lochs Voil and Doine to Inver Lochlaraig. Leaving my bicycle at the farmhouse, I immediately “took to the hill.” The slopes of Beinn Tulachan rise directly from the roadside, and I was soon “peching” my way up through the bracken and rushes with which this hillside

is covered for quite a thousand feet or more. The ever-increasing vista southward offered ample excuse for frequent halts, many old friends popping up their heads, while just across the glen Stob a Choin (2839 feet) looked particularly imposing, and well merited inclusion into the select brotherhood of the 3000.

As I neared the crest I discovered that the mist had possession of all the higher peaks; Ben More and Am Binnein, Beinn a Chroin, and An Caisteal near at hand all had their caps on. The last part of the slope was very steep, but I walked along to the rocky knob, with its cairn (3099 feet) in sunshine, and had just one passing glimpse of the bold peak of Cruach Ardran to the north, before the mist again enveloped it. However, I dropped down to the short connecting ridge, and made my way up the shoulder of this hill; then, in driving mist, I swung round eastward to the west top (3429 feet), (small cairn), and thence, in a few minutes, more to the summit (3477 feet) of Cruach Ardran, with its large cairn.

A strong wind was blowing here, and it was bitterly cold, so I descended a bit on the lee side, and in a cleft in the rocks ate my frugal lunch. I hung about the summit for another half-hour in the hope of the mist clearing. Vain hope! All I got was a few fleeting glimpses into Strath Fillan, the houses at Crianlarich, and the white roads radiating from them being the most conspicuous objects. Then I scrambled down to the south-east, and in about 500 feet emerged from the mist. The summit of Beinn Tulachan was now enveloped, and its higher neighbours across the glen—Ben More and Am Binnein—never once showed face; indeed, there was now every indication of the day turning out wet. Descending over damp boggy slopes, I soon joined the Inverlochlarig burn, and followed its prattling course down the glen to the farm, arriving there just $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours after I left it. I had a short rest and a "crack" with the farm folks, during which time I demolished vast quantities of milk, and then started on my 50-mile cycle run home.

IV.—CARN AN RIGH AND GLAS THULACHAN.

I had another fine day earlier in the year to some of the Glenshee hills. Cycling from Blairgowrie up to the Spital, I proceeded (on foot) along Glen Lochsie till near the old lodge; then I climbed up one of the long ridges coming down from Glas Thulachan, and so on to the summit (3445 feet); 2 hours and 5 minutes from the Spital. From here I dropped down to a track I noticed straggling along the side of Mam nan Carn, and followed it to the base of Carn an Righ. By a cool little spring here I lunched while vast herds of deer watched me from the surrounding slopes; then I tackled the short braise, and was soon standing by the two cairns on the summit of the King's Cairn (3377 feet); 1 hour and 2 minutes from Glas Thulachan.

The view of the Cairngorms was splendid, from Ben Avon with its Barns right on to Sgoran Dubh. The Devil's Point stood out darkly at the near end of the Lairig, and the rocky peak of the Lurcher's Rock showed up just as boldly through the pass. Of course, they all carried a great deal of snow. As a matter of fact, it was the dear old Cairngorms that had lured me up here. I had been straining my eyes to see them in the far distance frequently of late, from the vicinity of my home, and I longed for a closer view. I was not disappointed.

The Beinn à Ghlos, of course, were also grand from this point, but Sgarsoch looked flat. A huge fire was raging in the Tarf valley, at the base of the latter. Falar Lodge was at my feet, and the green of its paddocks contrasted strikingly with the surrounding dullness. Just to the north Ben Uarn raised his speckled and stony crown; and, as I had spent an hour here, I was uncertain whether to cross Mam nan Carn (3224 feet) and climb these "Mountains of Hell" or not. But as I was yet a good way from the Spital, and even when I did reach that hostel, would still have 35 miles to cycle home, I thought I had better "ca' canny" and spare myself.

So I descended to the track again, and followed it for about a mile towards Loch nan Eun, disturbing numberless deer. Then I crossed between Glas Thulachan and the point marked 2794 feet on the map, and dropped down to the Allt Easgaidh, which I followed to the Spital. In another hour I mounted my steed, and, turning my back on the hills, proceeded homeward.

The Cairngorm Club

THE HEART OF THE CHILTERNNS.

BY W. PETRIE WATSON.

THE London-wards traveller by the Midland Railway who puts his head out of the window after leaving Bedford, (where so many of us, in the spring of 1915, were wondering what real war was going to be like), sees, on the southern horizon, a long east-to-west line of low ridges. Here and there they should be rather bold and abrupt, elsewhere undulating, or falling gently into the Bedfordshire plain. I am talking "by the map." I have not, myself, put my head out of any carriage window to discover these ridges. But the geography of the region and the railway map indicate that if the traveller acts in the manner described, and at the proper place, he ought really to perceive this line of ridges in the southern distance. Anyhow, the important point is that these ridges, whether so discovered or not, are, in the first place—the Delectable Mountains. The railway traveller, popping his head out of the carriage window, may, indeed, with good warrant, decide that he is really, then and there, "discovering" those Delectable Mountains which the excellent and pious John Bunyan "discovered" on behalf of Christian, the still more excellent and pious child of the glorious tinker's imagination. For Bunyan made many journeys on the south-going road from Bedford, and this road is not very far from the railway.

In the geography books, however, these ridges are the Chiltern Hills. But that is the way of the geography books. Neither the coral strands of India nor Afric's sunny fountains are properly located in the geography books. These brutish productions are fit for nothing but education. And the excellent Bunyan knew something better of the world than they are ever likely to teach. Indeed, he had his Delectable Mountains to discover somewhere, and why not among these Chiltern Hills, the only respectable ridges within hail of Elstow

and that Bedford prison where the Philistines put him because, even in that age, they couldn't speedily stone their prophets before raising their sepulchres? [It goes without saying that there is a worthy statue to Bunyan in the Bedford of to-day].

As a matter of fact, a parson of those parts has put up a readable little book in which not only the "Delectable Mountains" are discovered in the Chilterns, but likewise "Hill of Error" and "Mount Clear," with "Doubting Castle," "House Beautiful," and other features—not far away—of the country through which dauntless Christian passed, with many a hazard, towards Celestial City, for ever the dream of all of us who have to confess that we are sinners. To this little book I may return later.

All the same, one can have nothing to say about these Delectable Mountains to the mountaineer. Here is no game for him. His long-leagued ambitions must take themselves elsewhere. All their Ossas might be piled on all their Pelions, and then we mightn't be able to offer him a really good chance of working up his breakfast appetite. No; this thing can't be done. Altitude he must not look for here. Through some oversight the country was not originally planned that way. These be Mountains of the Moon, perhaps, or mountains of the imagination of tinker Bunyan. But mountains *qua* mountains they cannot be, until some suitable re-arrangement is made of the surface values of the earth as we know it. It is doubtful if they are even hills—hills such as the north-country man means when he speaks of such matters. I should think there isn't even a Brimmond in all the wide range of these Chilterns, straggling in an ill-compacted chain through four counties—Bucks, South Bedfordshire, North Herts and Cambridgeshire. And even where they may run to 700 or 800 feet high, it is scarcely a sheer, isolated, protuberance you will get. You may indeed discover some bold bluff, its "face" looking—say—to the north or to the east; but go the right way about tackling this steep and abrupt fellow, and you are pretty sure to find that you may have a most suave and

courteous introduction to him by way of t'other side of his face. He is probably the mere shoulder or abutment of a tableland piece of country, tapering away very gently indeed, on the reverse of the fierce and precipitous brow which he shows to the wintry north or the biting east. Such a hill—such a single-face hill—is one you encounter quite suddenly four miles out on one of the Hitchin-Bedford roads. Deacon Hill is its name on the map, and it looks quite a hummock, as bold as brass too, when you see it from the road. But climb from the road, and you find, from the top, that on one side you are looking along a stretch of country which runs level with your eye for miles in a southerly direction.

This is then no real, ardent, dour, uncompromising mountaineer's country. Yet, indeed, if these Chilterns be mere honorary mountains, or courtesy-title hills—by Dunstable way, where mayhap there have been honest, literal Scotsmen at the christening, they very rightly call them "downs"—one can say with great enthusiasm that in everything except altitude they are excellent value for an intelligent foot-slog through, let us propose, the country that lies between Luton in South Bedfordshire and Hitchin in North Hertfordshire. This is a mild adventure which might be done by taking a single ticket out of London of a morning, from St. Pancras to Luton, then pivoting the day on Ravensburgh Camp on the Beds-Herts border, and descending into quaint old Hertfordshire Hitchin in the late afternoon to catch the evening train for King's Cross. Besides seeing some country which is indeed a pretty provocation to poetry, and in some places reeks with ancient history, one is able, by this itinerary, to describe a fine large isosceles triangle. The two long legs of the affair will be the railway lines from London—Great Northern and Midland. The base will be a wavy (twelve or fifteen miles) meander in the heart of the Chilterns, and the apex of your isosceles triangle will, of course, "find itself" in the horrid Euston Road, where the houses look like mouldy

coffins set up on their ends, and the gardens in front of them like dank and sunken graves in sunless and forgotten burial-places.

Very well, having cheerfully set out from ugly Euston Road, there is everything to hearten and illumine the soul in this heart of the Chilterns, or, by your leave, in these Delectable Mountains of the glorious tinker of Bedford. You are but thirty or thirty-five miles from Charing Cross, but the land is wonderfully empty of everything except beauty. There are, to be sure, many hamlets, but they are graced with the superb charms of antiquity in a setting of tall elms and poplars, which is often as like antiquity as a tangible image can be. It is thoroughly diverse in contour, too, this country, with many a ten or fifteen minutes' gradient on its mazy woodland ways, and even on its excellent Hertfordshire roads (they have not the same road-making reputation in Bedfordshire, however). And you may emerge, more than once in a day's ramble, upon a high hog's-back, from which a far-extending prospect spreads away across the rather naked flats of Cambridgeshire, or over the more decently-clothed plain of South Bedfordshire.

But I imagine the most remarkable feature of this Chilterns country to a northern stranger must be the extraordinary number, extent, and aspect of the ancient, long-abandoned roads that "happen" almost everywhere. I know nothing like them in Northern Scotland, where the old roads, if they have not been absorbed into arable acres, have long degenerated into bramble and whin-choked pathways, or perhaps been given over to the fearsome uses of the "consumption dyke." In this quiet, heavily-timbered Chiltern country (but there are few real woods), there are miles and miles of these ancient roads, leading from nowhere to nowhere, and used, if at all, only in small sections by farmers to reach their outliers. And such roads! Some of them are wide, very wide—wider than the main highways of to-day. They have good, orderly, quick-set borders,

just like the roads in use to-day. They are level of surface. For considerable stages they are often as straight as an arrow, sited well for gradient—thoughtfully engineered, you might almost say. But—they are covered with close, thick, luxuriant grass.

Suppose you have left the high road of to-day for the delights of one of the many field-paths that criss-cross the country. You follow your field-path over a ridge and drop plump into one of the little woody valleys of the region. You coast a plantation and skirt a piece of remote wire-netted pasture, and then, as suddenly as you might fall into a hole, you emerge upon a wide, level, hedge-bordered roadway, intensely quiet, intensely empty, and covered with a heavy carpet of the greenest of green grass. Probably, if it is particularly wide, you have struck a section of the map-marked Icknield Way, which ran from East Anglia by way of Cambridge, Hitchin, Luton, and Dunstable, into Bucks, or even farther west, so far as I know. The authorities say that though this "Way" looks as Roman as one might think it possible to look, it is really British—that is, I suppose, pre-Roman. The tracks of modern highways have absorbed bits of it, but there are many miles of it which have yielded up the whole of their arterial importance, long, long ago, to the luxuriance of extra-green grass, which seldom seems to outgrow a curt lawn-like decency, and is rarely overspread or overpowered by the usurping bramble, briar, and thorn.

These abandoned roads are a romance to discover, and a delight to pursue. To a Scots habit of mind they might quite well denote an atrocious waste of good arable land, and a good two-handed Scots argument on agricultural economics might be conducted in the midst of them. But Fancy lingers in these old highways, discovering her most innocent happinesses in the delicious prospect of their green vistas. For she is well authorised to people them with many a strange pilgrim. It is quite certain that the Romans used them. They are, in truth, a vivid and substantial memorial of the fact that a busy, well-organ-

ised "social order" made several "appearances" in these regions long before the establishment of the social order of to-day.

Here, perhaps, one finds the text on which to say something of the affluence of historical interest which this Chiltern country possesses. For instance, if you should traverse the "base" of your isosceles triangle by using the main road from Luton to Hitchin, you will, at the sixth mile from Luton, arrive at Offley. This is merely a sizeable hamlet to-day, but it was once a great king's capital. The present scribe freely owns that, before he became familiar with these regions, he may have heard of King Offa, as one hears dim noises in a dream. "Higher" than this, as the lawyers say in their arguments, he dare not put it. Offa, however, he has now found, might fairly enough claim a ranking among the junior, or understudy, Charlemagnes of history. It was the time of the Heptarchy, and Offa, by a few judicious murders, such as inevitably entered into the art of statesmanship in his day, got himself quite a formidable kingdom in these parts. Well, this Offley, this sizeable hamlet of to-day, was Offa's capital. Here King Offa had his palace, and there are traditions which affirm that it was rich and costly, though its site is quite conjectural now. His date was in the seven hundreds A.D.—200 years before Alfred of the burnt cakes, Alfred the Great. Offa gave Offley his name, and there is a phantom air of long-lost grandeur about the place. Its houses are widely scattered, just as if it once were very much bigger than it is to-day. There are many groups of vastly-antlered elms and sycamores, aloof and grave, exchanging whispered memories of things unknown to this generation. There are wide level park-like spaces, which seem to belong to a great precinct, where kingly sports may have been shown. And a mile or two away is Ravensburgh Camp or Castle (there is no stone-work above ground, however), which the authorities declare must have been ancient British in origin and had been

used successively by Romans, Danes, Saxons, and Normans. It is a gigantic fortification on a formidable site, and they say that Offa had his court in Offley, because Ravensburgh was at a handy distance.

These far-off matters are rather beyond the scope of this fugitive writing, but one ought to step over from Offley to look at Offa's stronghold, Ravensburgh Camp. It is a vast rectangular rampart, enclosing fifteen or sixteen acres. The greater part of this area is now cluttered up with tall plantation wood, but the glacis of the rampart still presents an aspect to marvel at. Nowadays, it lies in the heart of a thickly-wooded estate, with not a human habitation in sight. On two sides there are deep combes—ravines, gullies, canons—and, on the whole, one here gets as near an approach to the ruggedness and "terror" of mountain country, as these gentle Chilterns can anywhere pretend to. This, perhaps, explains why the Delectable Mountains have been "discovered" more particularly hereabouts. Here, at any rate, are a few ridges which might masquerade as miniature mountains.

"Sheep are pastured on every part of these downs," writes our parson-explorer of the Delectable Mountains, "and this is a fact of which Bunyan certainly took notice. For the whole scene on the Delectable Mountains is concerned with the Shepherds, Knowledge, Experience, Watchful, and Sincere. . . . Just before the two pilgrims [Christian and Hopeful] left their kind friends, the Shepherds, they were taken to the summit of another hill called Clear, and were bidden to look through the perspective glass and discover the gate of the Celestial City. . . . Perchance, Bunyan once himself stood breathless on one of the chalk ridges, and some friend bade him take a peep through a 'perspective glass' We may select any hill-top hereabouts as the prototype of Mount Clear, and one may suppose that Bunyan had simply in his mind's eye a view of the plain of Middle Bedfordshire as he had often seen it,

when he gave us the description of the Shepherds and their Delectable Mountains."

It will be seen that this modern discoverer of Bunyan's "sources" has the assurance to be rather precise about the topography of these visionary mountains. But it would hardly do to accept the whole of his "reconstruction." Bunyan's imagination was surely greater than these Delectable Mountains of the Chiltern country, and Celestial City is the dream of a devout soul as well as the creation of a sprightly fancy.

What we can be sure of is that the contour of these hills and the contents of many of their charming valleys were familiar to Bunyan's mortal eyes. He made regular journeys from Bedford to Luton and Hitchin. And if one ends this very slight exploration of the heart of the Chilterns at Hitchin, as originally proposed, one may pay a visit to a church of Bunyan's foundation there. One may even sit on a chair in the vestry of this church, given by Bunyan himself for the use of the pastor, though it is said that modern pastors have grumbled about its straight back and its hard bottom as less suitable to the comfortable doctrine of to-day than to Bunyan's uncompromising theology.

Of the grace, the charm, the antiquity of Hertfordshire Hitchin 'twere possible to write books. A high local authority, who is now engaged in that very labour, tells me that it holds its place among the first twenty towns of all England which are notable for the wealth of their mediæval and Elizabethian remnants, and I, who am no authority, am ready to believe it. There is certainly one street of the town where I am in great expectation of meeting the ghost of Chapman, poet-contemporary of Shakespeare and first great translator of Homer—the Chapman of Keats's "Silent upon a peak of Darien" sonnet. One is particularly encouraged to expect to meet Chapman in this street, partly because much of it is Elizabethian or older, and partly because Chapman lived in it.

Anybody who writes about these Chilterns may be expected to say something about the famous Chiltern "Hundreds," the Stewardship of which one accepts on finding that the House of Commons is not the great place it is cracked up to be. This Stewardship has always been a great mystery to the present scribe. Think of the number of politicians who have "accepted" it! Did each of them attach a postscript resignation of the "appointment" to his letter accepting the same, in order that the next poor fellow, seeking a way of escape from the House of Commons, should not be inconvenienced? A rare succession of Stewards these Hundreds have had too, to be sure! Think of—and—and—! Well, well, there are many ways of crowning the achievements of a proud parliamentary career. But our discoverer of the Delectable Mountains relieves me from the duty of saying anything about the celebrated Stewardship. For in his book I observe a note about another publication of his, "The Chiltern Hundreds," and a convenient synopsis shows that these Hundreds are quite a long way off—by "the valley of the Wyck," and "round Stoke Poges," far from this region, the real heart of the Chilterns.

So one need not bother about the famous Stewardship—at any rate, not until one's time for accepting it comes along, and this is a thing that really need not happen to anybody capable of judging from the newspapers what sort of place they have made of the House of Commons these days!

CLUB MEET AT MOUNT KEEN.

THE first official meet of the Club since the war was held at Mount Keen on Monday, 21st July. Perfect weather conditions prevailed, and there forgathered on the top the Chairman and sixteen other members and guests. Excellent arrangements were made for the transport of the party from Aboyne up Glen Tanner, and a merry party boarded the big wagonette which met the morning train from Aberdeen. The Chairman motored from Braemar with four other members, and, having seen everyone aboard the wagonette, preceded it to Glen Tanner House, where a courteous reception was met with from the Head Keeper. After a glorious drive, amid pleasant scenery of wood and waterfall, field and moor, the wagonette party struck the orthodox path from the roadside, and slowly mounted upwards. The Chairman's party, which was joined by a member and his guest who had walked over from Ballater, struck across the shoulder of Mount Keen, opposite the coach-house, and met the main party higher up. The member from Ballater, however, excusing himself on the grounds of age and laziness, stayed by the roadside and the burn, after giving a few words of caution to his youthful and energetic companion.

The weather was warm, and a somewhat toilsome ascent ended at the summit cairn, where a light breeze was much appreciated. The majority of the party took about an hour and a half to make the cairn, but at least one member accomplished the ascent in about three quarters of an hour. An old member and ex-chairman expressed his delight at not having lost his "hill-step" in spite of his seventy odd years. At the cairn a formal meeting was held and certain business was transacted, including the admission, *in absentia*, of two new members—Mr. John F. Cruickshank and Mr. William Mitchell. It was pointed out that, by their absence, an interesting ceremony had to be omitted, but would no doubt be

reserved for a future occasion. Business done, everyone turned to the gorgeous panorama which spread itself out all around. The superb clearness of the atmosphere permitted an extraordinary range of vision, and to attempt to describe everything seen would occupy pages. A brief *résumé* must suffice.

To the east could be seen the distant sea, and, with the naked eye, Girdleness Lighthouse was made out as a white speck against the darker background of sea and sky. North of this, a big fire, probably of heather, was blazing in the direction of Peterhead, its size indicated by an immense smoke cloud which was spread out all over that district. Nearer to us, Bennachie stood out clearly, forming a prominent and unmistakable landmark, as did Cloch-na-Ben further south. The Dee valley lay like a patchwork design, practically at our feet; the river was almost invisible, but several lochs stood out like burnished sheets of silver.

To the north, miles of country unfolded itself, and the Bin of Cullen was distinctly visible as a rounded dome on the horizon. To the left of this were the Tap o' Noth and the Buck of the Cabrach, while, far across the Moray Firth, the faint outlines of the Sutherland and Ross-shire hills were distinctly visible.

To the west, and much nearer us, the great mass of the Cairngorms stood out in relief, while prominent, of course, were the "steep frowning glories of dark Loch-na-gar." Keen discussion arose regarding the identity of several of the visible peaks, but Ben Avon, Beinn à Bhuirid, Ben Muich Dhui, Braeriach, Cairn Toul, and the Devil's Point were easily named.

To the south, range after range of hills were visible, and the sea beyond Montrose shewed as a blue grey line on the distant horizon.

The southern slopes of Mount Keen dip steeply into the upper reaches of the valley of the North Esk, and a fine view of its fertile pastures was obtained from the summit. A party of ladies from Brechin was met on the

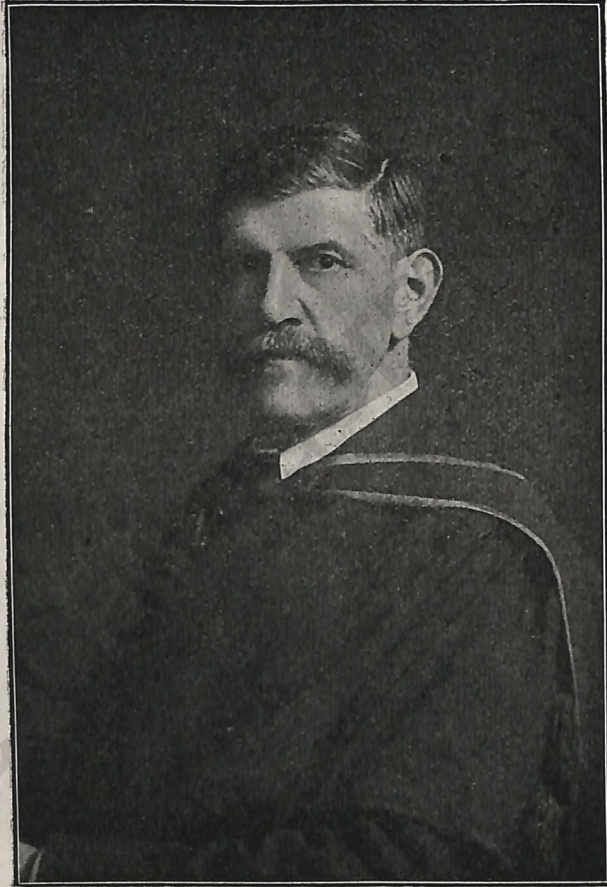
top of the hill. They had a stiff pull up, but were charmed with the view upon reaching the cairn.

A long and glorious hour was spent, after which the descent was made to the road. Two of the more energetic members, not content with one ascent, decided that, before returning to the road, they would traverse the hill immediately to the east of Mount Keen. This they did, joining the rest of the party further down Glen Tanner.

Mention must be made of the forethought of one of the lady members in bringing with her a huge basket of most perfect strawberries, which slaked the thirst of the whole party, and evoked blessings on the kindly donor.

The whole expedition was voted a complete success, and many wishes were expressed that we would soon meet again on a similiar and equally pleasant occasion.

DAVID P. LEVACK.



THE LATE PROFESSOR TRAIL.

In Memoriam:

PROFESSOR JAMES W. H. TRAIL, F.R.S.

Died, 18th September, 1919.

IN the death of Professor Trail we have lost an old and valued member of the Club. He had been a member for five-and-twenty years, and attended many of the Club's excursions, particularly those on Saturday afternoons. His presence was always welcome, for he was a delightful travelling companion, and his botanical knowledge was always at the service of his fellow-excursionists and was given freely and unaffectedly to all enquirers. The Club was very specially indebted to him for the complete and authoritative list of the "Flowering Plants and Fern Allies of the Cairngorms" which he contributed to the fourth number of the *C.C.J.* (January, 1895). We have had more than one request in recent years for that issue, but, unfortunately, it has been long out of print. The demand, however, shows how thoroughly the value of the article is recognised by those continuing the work of botanical research in our higher altitudes.

From an appreciation of Professor Trail by Mr. Alexander Macdonald, Durris, in the November number of the *Aberdeen University Review*, we take the following passage, illustrative of the Professor's personal charm as a travelling companion:—

His genial and friendly association with his men required no checks to keep up the proprieties. On a sunny wild sea-bank he might lie at lunch-time and discuss many themes of past and present life; and, though far from being a self-centred man, when opportunity presented he would tell of his experiences in his early travels in South America or in his innumerable wanderings in the home counties. He might discuss small-pox as it affected the savages of Brazil, or unrecorded features of our Scottish Alps. His knowledge of Entomology was extensive and accurate, and his familiarity with local History, Topography, Antiquities, and even Genealogy, may be put alongside that of specialists. Like all genial men, he enjoyed a good story, especially when humorous, and his excellent memory kept his store replete.

MR. JAMES CECIL DAVIDSON MACKIE.

Died, 8th August, 1919.

ONE of the younger members of the Club—he joined in 1911—Mr. Mackie served throughout the war, but was unfortunately “gassed” in September, 1918, and this, it is believed, accelerated the acute pneumonia from which he ultimately died. He was the elder son of Mr. James D. Mackie, advocate, Aberdeen, and was an M.A. and LL.B. of Aberdeen University. He was pursuing his legal studies in Edinburgh, and died in a nursing home there, at the early age of twenty-seven. An account of his war services was given in our last number (p. 251).

MR. GEORGE WOOD.

Died, 23rd November, 1919.

WE have also to record the death of Mr. George Wood, at one time an active member of the Club, which he joined in 1897. He resigned his membership a few years ago, however, and has died at the venerable age of 86. His long flowing beard made him conspicuous at Club excursions, and that feature rendered him prominent in a couple of photographs of the Club at Ben Aigan which appeared in Vol. V. of the *C.C.J.*

We are indebted to *Alma Mater* for the portrait of Professor Trail.

THE CLUB'S EXCURSIONS.

THE following list of the Club's excursions has been prepared—primarily, to satisfy several members who wished to know where the Club has been and what it has done, and, secondarily, to form a means of handy reference. A few of the precise dates are wanting, but that is of no importance. The Club started out by making three excursions in the year—on the days of the Aberdeen spring, summer and autumn holidays (May, July and September). The autumn holiday excursion was dropped in 1902, mainly because of the unfavourable weather that commonly marks that day. Saturday afternoon excursions were initiated in 1904. Beginning with three a year, they dwindled down to two and latterly to one. In 1910, under the chairmanship of Mr. John Clarke, the system of week-end meets was introduced, an Easter week-end meet being added to the spring holiday and summer holiday week-end meets. The object in view was that, in addition to official climbs, should such be arranged by the Committee, members attending the various meets might, to some extent, make their own selection both of days and of mountains to be climbed. (In the subjoined table the place of the meet only is given as a general rule, but in one or two instances the mountains ascended are also named). During the period of the war all meets and excursions were suspended :—

1889—9	July	.	.	.	.	Cairngorm and Ben Muich Dhui.
	(Autumn)	.	.	.	.	Lochnagar.
1890—5	May	.	.	.	.	Mount Keen.
	15 July	.	.	.	.	Braeriach and Cairn Toul.
	22 ¹ / ₂ September	.	.	.	.	Tap o' Noth.
1891	4 May	.	.	.	.	Morven.
	13 July	.	.	.	.	Ben a' Bhuid and Ben Avon.
	28 September	.	.	.	.	Ben Rinnes.

1892—2	May	. . . . .	. Lochnagar.
	11 July	. . . . .	. Ben Muich Dhuì and Cairngorm.
	26 September	. . . . .	. Mount Battock and Clochnaben.
1893—1	May	. . . . .	. Barmekin Hill and Hill of Fare.
	11 July	. . . . .	. Beinn a' Ghlo.
	25 September	. . . . .	. Bennachie.
1894—7	May	. . . . .	. Mount Keen.
	10 July	. . . . .	. Ben Alder.
	24 September	. . . . .	. Kerloch.
1895—6	May	. . . . .	. Sockaugh.
	13 July	. . . . .	. Cairn Toul.
	23 September	. . . . .	. Buck of the Cab- rach.
1896—6	May	. . . . .	. Broad Cairn.
	13 July	. . . . .	. Ben Vorlich and Stuc a Chroin.
	28 September	. . . . .	. Coillebharr and Lord Arthur's Cairn.
1897—3	May	. . . . .	. Ben Aigan.
	12 July	. . . . .	. Bei'n Mheadoin and Derry C'ngorm.
	(Autumn)	. . . . .	. Morven.
1898—(Spring)		. . . . .	. Ben Cleuch.
	12 July	. . . . .	. Ben Wyvis.
	26 September	. . . . .	. Bennachie.
1899—1	May	. . . . .	. Corryhabbie.
	(Summer)	. . . . .	. Cairngorm.
	(Autumn)	. . . . .	. Lochnagar.
1900—7	May	. . . . .	. Mount Keen.
	9 July	. . . . .	. Mount Blair.
	24 September	. . . . .	. Hill of Foudland and Dunnideer.
1901—(Spring)		. . . . .	. Lomonds of Fife.
	8 July	. . . . .	. Shichallion.
	23 September	. . . . .	. Bin of Cullen.
1902—5	May	. . . . .	. Clochnaben.
	(Summer)	. . . . .	. Ben Avon (aban- doned owing to bad weather).

1903—4	May	. . . . .	. Mount Battock —from Edzell (aban'ed owing to bad weather).
	18 July	. . . . .	. Ben Lomond.
1904—16	April	. . . . .	. Cairn-mon-Earn.
	2 May	. . . . .	. Coyles of Muick.
	4 June	. . . . .	. Bennachie.
	18 July	. . . . .	. Sgoran Dubh and Braeriach.
	27 August	. . . . .	. Brimmond Hill.
1905—1	May	. . . . .	. Lochnagar.
	3 June	. . . . .	. Cairn William.
	1 July	. . . . .	. Ben Aigan.
	17 July	. . . . .	. Ben Lawers.
	19 August	. . . . .	. Ben Rinnes.
1906—7	May	. . . . .	. Mount Keen.
	2 June	. . . . .	. Finella Hill.
	21 July	. . . . .	. Ben Iutharn Mhor.
	10 September	. . . . .	. Cromdale Hills.
1907—6	May	. . . . .	. Morven.
	29 June	. . . . .	. Tap o' Noth.
	20 July	. . . . .	. Glas Maol.
	31 August	. . . . .	. Ben Aigan.
1908—4	May	. . . . .	. Mount Battock (from Edzell).
	13 June	. . . . .	. Ord Bain, Rothie- murchus.
	18 July	. . . . .	. Cairngorm.
1909—3	May	. . . . .	. Cromdale Hills.
	5 June	. . . . .	. Ben Rinnes.
	26 June	. . . . .	. Cairngorm ("Comi'g of Age" Excursion).
	31 July	. . . . .	. Carmaferg (aban- doned owing to bad weather).
1910—	(Easter Meet)	. . . . .	. Ballater.
	(Spring Holiday Meet)	. . . . .	. Dufftown.
	14 May	. . . . .	. Carmaferg.
	(Summer Holiday Meet)	. . . . .	. Aviemore.
1911—	(Easter Meet)	. . . . .	. Braemar.
	(Spring Meet)	. . . . .	. Buck of the Cab- rach.

	(Summer Meet)	. . . . .	. Aberfeldy.
1912—	(Easter Meet)	. . . . .	. Clova.
	6 May	. . . . .	. Mount Keen.
	8 June	. . . . .	. Bennachie.
	(Summer Meet)	. . . . .	. Blair Atholl.
1913—	(Easter Meet)	. . . . .	. Dalwhinnie.
	19 April	. . . . .	. Hill of Fare.
	(Spring Excursion)	. . . . .	. Geallaig Hill.
	21 June	. . . . .	. Clochnaben.
	(Summer Meet)	. . . . .	. Braemar.
1914—	(Easter Meet)	. . . . .	. Braemar (Beinn a' Bhuird and Ben Muich Dhui).
	(Spring Holiday)	. . . . .	. Lochnagar.
	(Summer Meet)	. . . . .	. Dalwhinnie (Ben Alder).
	27 June	. . . . .	. Ben Rinnes.
1919—	4* May	. . . . .	. Lochnagar.
	21 July	. . . . .	. Mount Keen.

*An official excursion, arranged by the present Chairman.

NOTES.

AN important advance in the proposal to construct a road through Glen Feshie (see the Club's memorial, pp. 255-56), has been gained in the favourable report of the Rural Transport (Scotland) Committee. This THE PROPOSED Committee was appointed by the Secretary for Scotland in GLEN FESHIE February, 1918, to consider and report upon (1) the rural ROAD. areas in Scotland which are most in need of transport facilities for the promotion of agriculture, forestry, and rural industries; and (2) the means of improving communication in these areas, with special reference to new or improved roads, etc. The report of the Committee (of which Sir T. Carlaw Martin was Chairman) was issued in July last; and amongst the Committee's recommendations was the construction of a new road between the Linn of Dee and Feshie Lodge. This is exceedingly satisfactory, for the report of such a Committee cannot be ignored; and though the carrying out of this particular recommendation may be delayed, the eventual construction of the road may now be regarded as assured.

The report of the Committee as regards the Glen Feshie road is in these terms:—

In connection with the proposals for the opening up of Deeside there was submitted a scheme for the making of a road between Deeside and Speyside by Glen Geldie and Glen Feshie, the construction of which would bring Kingussie within 32 miles of Braemar by road. The project differs essentially from most of those which have been investigated by us in that it proposes the making of a through route with very little local traffic—for there is practically no population on the route—but not as connecting an isolated district at one end with important centres, as is the case with the proposed cross-country railways in Ross and Sutherland. Its advocates claim that it would complete a line of roads connecting the east coast at Aberdeen with the west coast at Fort William. Its detractors say that it would serve no other purpose than to enable motorists to make a new circular tour. We do not think that this criticism does justice to the scheme. The road would not be unlike the road up Glenshee between Blairgowrie and Braemar. It may be said that there is no particular need for this road, that the railway goes up Strathmore to Aberdeen and then up the Dee Valley. Yet the Cairnwell road is one of the most interesting in Scotland; a fair amount of traffic goes on it, and a coach runs daily in summer. Any arguments in favour of the Cairnwell road as connecting different valleys apply with greater force to the proposed Kingussie-Braemar road.

One of the ways of developing the Highlands is by opening them up to tourist traffic, and it appears to us that the process should begin with the

Central Highlands, which are more accessible to the east coast and the midland part of Scotland than the country west of the Great Glen. We should be inclined, then, to classify this road with the road which we propose elsewhere connecting Glen Affric with Kintail; and for similar reasons recommend its construction.

The length of the proposed road from Linn of Dee to Glen Feshie Lodge is 17 miles. At present there is a rough road from the Linn of Dee up to Glen Geldie Lodge, which would have to be rebuilt for modern traffic. From Glen Geldie Lodge to Glen Feshie Lodge there is only a track or path. From the latter lodge to Kingussie there is a fair road which would require to be strengthened, as would also the section of road between Braemar and the Linn of Dee. The cost of constructing the 17 miles of new road was estimated at pre-war rates at, roughly, £50,000. It is suggested that the proposed road should be so laid out as not to interfere with the carrying out of works for the improvement of the River Feshie.

* * * * *

Though it may appear to some to be a retrograde step to suggest the imposition of a toll, we see no reason why one should not be levied upon motorists using a road of this description for touring purposes. The maintenance of such a road running through a district with little or no population would impose a heavy burden on the local authorities, which they would be unwilling to bear without assistance from outside sources. The tax we suggest would form one such source, and in return therefor the tourist would have the advantage of a route of great scenic beauty which would represent a saving to him of 37 and 52 miles as compared with the shortest existing routes between Deeside and Speyside, viz., those *via* Tomintoul and Pitlochry respectively.

The passage dealing with the Glen Affric road referred to above is as follows:—

Among the possibilities of realising the assets of the Highlands is the development of a tourist industry, such as brings wealth to Switzerland, Tyrol, and the Black Forest. On the whole this is a surer and more stable source of wealth than preserving them for the recreation of the minute minority who are rich enough to afford to rent a deer forest. Moreover, throwing the Highlands open to the tourist is not incompatible with retaining the more modest and less exclusive kind of sport, viz., fishing. This particular district induces our reflections of this kind because it contains Glen Affric, which may be accounted the most beautiful mountain glen in Scotland—indeed, of its kind, perhaps as beautiful as anything in Europe.

LECTURES ON mountains and mountaineering are by no means uncommon nowadays, and it has been a pleasure to listen to lectures by such recognised experts in mountaineering as Mr. J. A. Parker, Mr.

A SERMON William Garden, and Dr. Levaek, all three prominent
ON members of the Club. A sermon on the subject, however,
LOCHNAGAR. even if classified as a Sunday evening lecture, is rather rare—so rare, indeed, that there is a tendency to regard it as a trifle sensational, more particularly when advertised under the fantastic title of “The steep frowning glories of dark Lochnagar.” A sermon (of

lecture) on this theme was delivered in Trinity Congregational Church, Aberdeen, on a Sunday evening in August last, by the Rev. Frederick J. Japp, the pastor of the church, and formed the first of a series on "Holiday Landscapes," being followed by lectures on "The Rock-Hewn Grandeur of the Linn of Dee," "A Memory of the Muir of Dinnet," and so on. May one frankly own to a feeling of curiosity as to how Lochnagar would be dealt with from the pulpit? And may confession also be made that, while not to be included among those (if any) "who came to scoff and remained to pray," we were agreeably surprised by the preacher's treatment of the subject, and specially impressed by his striking powers of extempore address and his fervent eloquence? While that was so, we are constrained to add that there were disappointing features in the discourse, and that everything that Mr. Japp said could not receive endorsement. Possessed of a remarkable rhetorical faculty, he described Lochnagar and the view from its summit with a profusion of phrase that was enviable; but it struck us none the less as a waste of words to give details of the drive up Glenmuick and the long preliminary walk before "The Ladder" is reached. Then he laid far too much stress on the importance to be attached to Lochnagar from the accidental fact that Queen Victoria lived so long under its shadow; and, while admitting, of course, the special beauty and grandeur of Lochnagar, we must dissent entirely from the extravagant claim of its supremacy over all other mountains—the Alps even—which Mr. Japp seemed to set up. We felt more in accord with his treatment of mountains generally, particularly his exposition of the appeal they make to the eye and the mind, the sense and the soul, and his apposite allusions in this connection to Ruskin and Dante. How the inevitable "application" which forms the customary conclusion of sermons could be worked out from a discourse on Lochnagar may appear puzzling to the mere layman, but any difficulty in the matter was got over by the preacher very speedily and with considerable ingenuity. Mr. Japp had described mountains as symbolic of the divine and the eternal, and so it became comparatively easy to link them up with the spiritual life. The particular "message" of Lochnagar was made to consist of—the call, the conquest, the crown; its application, of course, is obvious. A minor feature of the service was the exceeding appropriateness of the passages of Scripture selected as the lessons, and of the hymns that were sung.

R. A.

AN interesting article, "Plant-Hunting in the Cairngorms," appeared in the *Aberdeen Free Press* of 3rd September: the initials appended, "A. M.,"

easily identify the writer with the author of the article,

THE FLORA OF THE CAIRNGORMS. "On the Rising Road," in our last issue. The botanical research described was conducted by the writer and some friends at Loch Kander, Craigendall, the Coyles of Muick, Glasmaol, and Ballochbuie. That it was exceedingly successful may be gauged from the following summary of the results attained:—"Some experience convinced us that the corries facing east or north are by far the most prolific, and that a trickle of water at least is a decided advantage in the quest. We thought ourselves lucky in our search, and with reason, for we secured almost all the leaded-type species in the alpine floras,—ferns, saxifrages, orchids, willows, club-mosses, and ceras-

tiums, not forgetting the extremely rare mountain gentian. In the King's forest the white ling was quite abundant on the way to Lochnagar, and the dwarf birch—*Betula nana*—shook out its lovely dark round leaves among the heather tops. *Linnaea borealis* is there also in some secret spots. A strange phenomenon, long known to botanists, is the occurrence on the high mountains of plants that are nowhere found below except along the wild sea cliffs. There are several such, like the sea-pink, the rose-root sedum, the purple mountain saxifrage, and the maritime plantain. Their presence in those two habitats, so extreme in elevation, has been the subject of varied speculation. Probably the explanation is to be found in the fact that in such sites they have more room to vegetate, whereas in intermediate positions the dense population of grasses and herbs has crowded them out. Is it not the same with human tribes, where the seaboard fringe and the mountain ridge afford homes for the earlier races? Postulating that "Since the intensity of the sun's rays increases with the elevation in mountain districts, the effects of light must be apparent in the colouration of flowers," the writer proceeded:—"No one at all familiar with hill plants has failed to notice the marvellous hues which the alpine flora displays. The brilliance of the saxifrages, which are on the whole the feature of the spouts and gullies, is something to admire by the hour and carry along through life. Especially beautiful and appealing in their soft shades of leaf and flower are the clumps of *Saxifraga aizoides*—the yellow mountain saxifrage—which often form lovely cushions and carpets by stony rill or pebbly marsh. The Wordsworthian enthusiast has not yet come along to lift this lovely plant to the rank of nobility, but we are sure that he is on the way. The harebell, too, which has had its fair share of notice, reaches a great elevation, and wears a colour more attractive than when found at lower levels. Here it does not carry a carillon of bells, but only a single large widely-companuate bloom, altogether striking in its bearing. You may find the *Angelica* 2,500 feet above sea level, and the *Trientalis* almost as high, though it is too late in August for flower, but the large pure white petals of the knotted pearlwort more than make up for that."

THE Club is greatly indebted to Mr. James A. Parker for an exceedingly pleasant evening (19th November), when he delivered the lecture on "The Scottish Alps," prepared by the late Mr. W. Lamond Howie, illustrated by about 140 of Mr. Howie's photographs. Mr. Lamond Howie was aptly described by Mr. PHOTOGRAPHS. Parker as "a photographer who climbed, not a climber who photographs." He had all the zest of a mountaineer combined with the enthusiasm of a skilled photographer; hence his photographs were not mere reproductions of mountain scenery, but were pictures taken from view-points skilfully selected so as to produce artistic effect. This artistry was otherwise displayed in the exquisitely beautiful pictures of clouds, of sunset, and of moonlight, which one would be well warranted in terming "magnificent"; and it was none the less revealed in the really wonderful pictures of snow scenes on the Ben Nevis and Cairngorm ranges. Dr. Levack, who presided, described Mr. Lamond Howie as the pioneer of mountain photography in Scotland, and said his photographs produced feelings of admiration and despair—it was not possible for anyone to take

photographs like Mr. Lamond Howie. He bequeathed all his slides, about 800 in number, to the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and Mr. Parker had obtained a selection of them for exhibition in Aberdeen, and had also transcribed Mr. Lamond Howie's accompanying descriptive lecture. The lecture, it should be added, was no jejune affair, but was an admirable exposition of mountain scenery, animated by a fine feeling for nature, and containing not a few passages of truly eloquent description. A collection was taken in aid of the fund for the maintenance of the Allt-na-Beinne Bridge, and amounted to the gratifying sum of £6 : 9/-.

A DISTRESSING and fatal accident occurred in Skye, on 8th September, Captain W. E. Elliot, M.P. for Mid Lanark, having the great misfortune to lose his newly-wedded wife, and having himself a narrow

FATAL
ACCIDENT ON
THE CUILLIN
IN SKYE.

escape from death. Captain and Mrs. Elliot, who had been married only a fortnight before, left Sligachan Hotel on the morning of Sunday, the 7th, and walked up by the Red Burn to the foot of the west ridge of Bruach na Frithe. Here they left their rucksack and went up the

hill by what is considered the easy tourist route of Bruach na Frithe. They got into mist, however, lost their direction, and wandered southward in the direction of the Castles, part of the main ridge. They eventually reached the top of a gully leading down from the ridge to Harta Corrie, and attempted to descend it. This gully is a simple scree slope on the Coire Mhadaidh side of the ridge, and is similar in character on the Harta Corrie side for a considerable distance, but near the foot of the cliffs there are several pitches in it, down which it is not easy to find a way. Captain and Mrs. Elliot descended this gully for some distance, when darkness overtook them, and they had to spend the night on the rocks. Next morning, they continued their descent, and, near the foot of the rocks, Mrs. Elliot, who was a little distance above her husband, slipped in her steps and fell, knocking Captain Elliot from his holds, and both fell to the bottom of the rocks, a distance of between 20 and 30 feet. Both were seriously injured about the head, but, apparently, were not rendered unconscious. Captain Elliot, who is a medical graduate, recognised the serious nature of his wife's injuries, and saw that it was impossible to get her down to Sligachan. He made her as comfortable as possible, and hastened down the Corrie for help, arriving at Sligachan at 1 p.m., four hours after the accident happened. He was in a state of collapse from loss of blood and exhaustion, but quickly rallied, and was able to give a very accurate and detailed account of the accident, and where Mrs. Elliot had been left.

A search party was quickly organised, and an advance party of it left the hotel half an hour after Captain Elliot had arrived, carrying blankets, hot coffee, and brandy. In another half-hour the main search party of fifteen left the hotel, carrying a stretcher and other appliances. The night of Sunday had been dark and misty, but the rain held off. At dawn, however, the weather fairly broke down, and it rained very heavily, and blew half a gale, so that practically every visitor was in the hotel; and all of them, climbers and non-climbers, volunteered to render assistance. Among those staying at Sligachan were five members of the Cairngorm Club, including the Chairman, an equal number of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and

several members of the Alpine Club, including the Secretary, Mr. Mumm; and all these, and other visitors, including Professor Cushny, of Edinburgh, offered help.

Each got into his hill clothes, sufficient food for 24 hours was arranged for in case of a night out, maps, ropes, compasses, and aneroids were taken, and the party set out. By this time all the burns were torrents, and the route up Harta Corrie was by no means easy, and was often dangerous. Arrived at the foot of the rocks, the party spread out, and for a time were unsuccessful in their search; but Mr. S. F. M. Cumming, of Edinburgh, who had climbed a ledge above the floor of the Corrie, saw, by means of binoculars, the object of the search lying on a steep scree slope close to the cliffs. He signalled by his arms to the rest of the party, for his shouts could not be heard owing to the noise of the countless streams and waterfalls. The medical members of the party quickly found that the poor lady had been dead for hours. She had been terribly injured about the head, and had died from exhaustion and exposure. The body was wrapped in a blanket, and bound with one of the ropes carried by the party, and was carried down the corrie for a short distance. It was ultimately decided, however, to leave the body all night near a prominent rock, and recover it next morning, as it was advisable to get the search party off the hill before darkness fell.

Next morning two gillies were sent out with ponies, and, accompanied by Major Bradley, one of the search party, they brought in the body.

This very regrettable incident must not be classed as a mountaineering accident. Neither of the parties was equipped for climbing. They went for a stroll up Bruach na Frithe, having left their rucksack at the foot of the hill. They had neither coats nor waterproofs, no food, no rope, and the lady was scantily clad, and had on shoes with fairly high heels and no nails on the soles. They had no knowledge of the ground; otherwise they would not have ventured from the Castles into Harta Corrie. It is an accident which is to be greatly regretted from every point of view. J. R. L.

IN the month of August last I had the pleasure of accompanying an aged relative of mine—Mr. Robert McGlashan, late farmer of Dunfallandy—to the summit of Ben Vrackie. He has spent all his life

AN AGED HILL-CLIMBER. under the shadow of the hill, and is now in his 87th year; and, as more than half a century had elapsed since his last ascent, he expressed a desire to once again “sit on the top,” so I gladly complied. We did not ascend by the path either, but left the road at Kinnaird, just beyond Moulin, and made our way over the moorland direct for the south-running spur, which we climbed and followed round to the summit. Mr. McGlashan carried himself like “a young ‘un,” and showed no more signs of fatigue than I did, but was rather annoyed when I insisted on going home by the path instead of through the annex, as he desired. W. B.

A RECENT communication to the press by Canon Rawsley contained the pleasing information that Lord Leconfield, the lord of the manor, has placed Scafell Pike, subject to any common rights that exist, under the custody of the National Trust for the Preservation of Natural Scenery. His lordship has made this gift in honour of the men of the Lake District who

fought in the great war, and in thankful memory of the men who gave their lives in the struggle. Scafell Pike is the highest mountain summit in England (3,210 feet)—Snowdon being ruled out as being a Welsh mountain. It is situated on the Westmoreland border of Cumberland, about fifteen miles from Keswick.

A PROPOSAL to construct a carriage road over Styhead Pass, in the English Lake District, has been definitely rejected by the Cumberland County Council. The road was intended to connect Wasdale

STYHEAD PASS. near Scafell, with Borrowdale, near Keswick, and would have been driven through some of the finest mountain scenery in England. Mountaineering clubs were naturally up in arms against the project; and we may rejoice with them that their opposition has materially contributed to the defeat of the proposal.

THE bonfires in the north on Peace Day (19th July last) were comparatively few and insignificant, as contrasted with the displays on the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897 (See *C. C. J.*, II.,

PEACE DAY 168, 186), the coronation of Edward VII, 1902 (IV., 117), BONFIRES. and the coronation of George V., 1911 (VII., 121). A

proposal was mooted in Aberdeenshire to arrange for a consecutive chain of bonfires, but it was found impracticable to carry out any such general plan, and it was ultimately left to the Parish Councils to organise bonfires, with a general recommendation "that, where possible, the bonfires should be so placed as to be seen from each other, and over as wide an area as possible." The Parish Councils did little or nothing, however, and such bonfires as there were formed part of town or district celebrations, provided in most cases by popular subscription. In very many cases flares and fireworks were substituted for bonfires, possibly because easier to arrange for, and involving much less labour. Bonfires, in fact, taken all over, constituted a very small item in the celebrations. This was due partly to a somewhat general feeling of apathy as regards both the peace itself, and rejoicing at its conclusion; and it was also attributable in many places, and especially in Upper Deeside, to the danger to which woods and forests would be exposed owing to the very dry nature of the heather on the hills consequent on the prolonged drought of the season. The number of bonfires on hill-tops was, accordingly, exceedingly limited, and in the Aberdeen newspapers mention was made only of the following:—

Beauty Hill, Udney; Hill of Dudwick, Ellon; Balquhindachy, Methlick; Hill of Culsh, New Deer; Turlundie Hill, New Pitligo; Barra Hill, Bourtie; Hill of Scars, Jericho, Inch; Hill of Ordley, Auchterless; Breagach Hill, Strathdon; Gallows Hill, Conryside; Tillypronie; Knock Hill, Logie-Coldstone; Craighdu, Coull; Glentanner; Knock Hill, Grange; Balloch Hill, Keith; Bin Hill, Cullen; Craibeg, Kingussie; Bogies Hill, Johnshaven.

Nearly as many bonfires were lit on much lower eminences or "on the level," practically; for example:—

Hutcheon Park, Turriff; Cairnhill, Rosehearty; West Braes, Portsoy; Princess Royal Park, Duftown; Upper Mains, Aberlour; Blackhillock, Knoekando; The Square, Tomintoul; The Square, Grantown; The Golf Course, Nethy Bridge.

THE thirty-first Annual Meeting of the Club was held in the Office of the Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. John A. Nicol, 189 Union Street, Aberdeen, on 18th December, 1919—Dr. John R. Levack, the Chairman of the Club, presiding. It was preceded by a Special General Meeting, duly called, at which three resolutions embodying alterations in the rules of the Club were unanimously agreed to. By these alterations three

ANNUAL
MEETING.

Members of the Committee must retire annually, remaining ineligible for re-election for a year; the entry money is raised from 5/- to 7/6 and the annual subscription similarly increased from 5/- to 7/6; and the annual subscription of minor members is correspondingly raised from 2/6 to 3/9. At the Annual Meeting, the Treasurer's Accounts for the year 1919 were submitted and approved. They showed a credit balance of £34 : 6 : 6, and the expenditure included a sum of £2 : 11 : 6 to square the debit balance on the Allt-na-Beinne Bridge Account, arising from the cost of repainting the bridge. On the motion of Dr. McIntyre, seconded by Mr. Alexander Simpson, the Secretary and Treasurer was voted a honorarium of £15 : 15/-. The President, Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were re-elected. Putting in operation the new rule with regard to the Committee, it was decided to "retire" the two members who had been longest on it—Messrs. William Porter and James A. Hadden—there being a third vacancy owing to the death of Mr. John McGregor. The remaining members of the Committee were re-elected, along with the following new members—Messrs. T. R. Gillies (the late Chairman), James McCoss, and Marshall J. Robb. It was intimated that a New Year Meet was to be held at Braemar from 29th December to 5th January; it was agreed to hold an Easter Meet at Crianlarich; and it was remitted to the Chairman and the Secretary to arrange excursions on the spring holiday and the summer holiday, and also to arrange Saturday excursions.

The following have been admitted members of the Club:—

NEW	Miss Edith Davidson, 414 Great Western Road, Aberdeen.
MEMBERS.	Mr. G. C. Grant, 76 Rubislaw Den North.
	Mr. Robert Leith, 90 Irvine Place.
	Mr. Robert Littlejohn, 19 Westburn Drive.
	Mr. A. C. W. Lowe, "Colwyn," Buckie.
	Mrs. Florence Lowe, M.A., "Colwyn," Buckie.
	Mr. R. P. Masson, M.A., LL.B., 43 Westburn Road.
	Mr. William Nicol, 6 Burns Road.

The membership of the Club stands at 153.

REVIEWS.

THE SEARCHERS. By John Foster. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 7/- net.—As we mentioned in our last issue, Mr. Foster makes Speyside part of the “locus” in his new novel, “The Searchers.”

A
CAIRNGORM
NOVEL. There are scenes, thrilling enough scenes, in Edinburgh, Italy, and London, but the hero's home is in a glen—Gleann Ciuin, the Quiet Glen—which “hides near where three noble Scots counties join hands,” and from the uplands of which “the lonely corries that neighbour the high tops of the Cairngorms” are visible. Moreover, the final incidents of the story occur in the “Larig Ghru”—“The Forbidding Pass,” our author terms it. We are introduced to “the Chanter Corrie”—somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Gharb-choire evidently—named after an outstanding rock-pillar in the centre of the hollow, shaped not unlike the chanter of the bagpipe; and several sensational scenes are here enacted. The evil genius of the plot is endeavouring to escape by way of the Larig, but is trapped at the entrance to the Chanter Corrie, and an exciting chase ensues, ending, of course, in the scoundrel's capture, but only after he has killed a disgruntled “comrade,” who has tracked him, by toppling a boulder on him as the latter is climbing a rock-face. This *denouement* is followed by the recovery of the long-lost part of a mysterious document, which gives the clue to the whereabouts of a treasure hidden “among Greate Mountaines and Rockes Past Belief, a Toyle to encounter”—in the proximity of Sron na Leirg.

Such in brief is the story, which is capitably worked out, with much ingenuity and plenty of adventure; but the main interest in the book to mountaineers lies in the excellent delineations of the scenery of the Cairngorms, and particularly of the grim and desolate features of the “Forbidding Pass.” Mr. Foster exhibits remarkable felicity in his word-pictures, which are suffused with keen appreciation both of natural beauty and of the grandeur of mountains and wild places. We quoted two passages in our last number, and we may here give another, descriptive of a night scene in the Larig:—

“Great mountains now loomed up, tier upon tier, on every side, far as the eye could reach, the moonlight lending their misty masses a strange and spectral glamour. There was beauty and terror in the Pass as I beheld it that night—beauty in the moonbeams etherealising the stark masses of the mountains; terror when the icy brilliance of the night, suddenly tarnished by passing clouds, dissolved into a leaguer of inky shadows and the wild dark setting suggested Walpurgis Night on the Brocken. To me the mists seemed to be weaving and unweaving sombre alleys and hiding-places where evil, secret things and unspeakable creatures of eld could hide and linger. The Forbidding Pass earned its name. I peopled its recesses with a thousand lurking presences and things unutterable, deadly legacies of ancient peoples and their unholy primordial rites; and these fantasies were

aided by a Voice, the strange, steady, tireless harping of the wind, which is rarely still in the high places of the Cairngorms, now like a long sigh through swaying pines, now like the wash of seas on distant shingle; now pretending to die down, now rising again in a derisive halloo through the funnels of the ravines; never at rest." R. A.

MAP-READING MADE EASY. By Captain G. C. Esson and G. S. Philip, F.R.G.S. London: George Philip and Son, Ltd.—The excellent article on "Map-Reading," which appeared in the *C.C.J.* for July, 1912 (Vol. VII., 154-63) gave much practical advice

MAP-READING. on how to interpret and use maps—a matter of great importance to hill-men. The work before us is well

calculated to serve the same purpose. It is of quite a simple character, being, indeed, primarily intended for schools, as a supplement to geographical instruction; but the information furnished, if in a sense elementary, is none the less essential. Here, children—and even "children of a larger growth"—may readily learn what contour lines are and what they represent, and become able to "visualise" concave and convex slopes, spurs, and salients, valleys and re-entrants, to calculate distances, and to determine the nature of the ground intervening between one point and another. A valuable section of the work is devoted to "Direction," in which instruction is given as to "setting the map," and ascertaining the relative position of places by making bearings. The authors state in their preface that "Map-Reading is a subject that has been strangely neglected in this country—a fact that was brought home forcibly by the war to thousands of men, who, in order to become officers or efficient N.C.O.'s or soldiers, had to be proficient in it." Some of the instruction in the latter portion of the work almost makes us think that they had an eye to the ultimate military training of a number of their pupils. Be that as it may, however, the work can be welcomed as an admirable manual on Map-Reading. R. A.

INVERA'AN: A STRATHSPEY PARISH. By Hamilton Dunnett, M.A., B.D., minister of the parish. Paisley: Alexander Gardner.—The parish of Inveraven, or Invera'an, as the name is locally pronounced, has a remarkable duality. It was described in a Presbyterian Commission two centuries ago as consisting of "the countries of Glenlivet and Inveraven"; and Mr. Dunnett has improved upon this by adding—"As it is a parish of two localities and two rivers, so it may be said to have exercised two loyalties, one to the King and one to the chieftain, to have included two ancient families, the Gordons and the Grants, to have professed two religions, and to have pursued two industries, the cultivation of the land and the making of whisky." The two rivers are, of course, the Spey and the Aven; a third river gives its name to Glenlivet. The parish is enclosed by hills, Benrinnes and Corryhabbie, for instance, being on its northern boundary; but Mr. Dunnett is apparently content to dismiss the hilly character of the region by simply remarking that among the main features of the parish are "one large hill and many smaller hills." His work is devoted to a historical account of the parish, particularly of the "troubled times," 1630-1648, the conflicts between the Catholics and the Reformers, the battle of Glenlivet, and so on. There are chapters, too, treating of the social life of the people, and these

are exceedingly interesting ; special mention may be made of those dealing with "The Speyside Freebooter" and wood-floating on the Spey. R. A.

BURROW'S GUIDE TO NORTH WALES. By Percy J. Piggott. Ed. J. Burrow and Co., Limited, Cheltenham and London.—Designated on the

title-page "A practical handbook for the tourist by railway or road," this work seems eminently suited to be a serviceable companion to anyone visiting North Wales, and

GUIDE TO NORTH WALES. making a tour of that exceedingly picturesque and interesting region. Information is furnished regarding all the

places worth seeing, how to get there, hotels, trains, etc. To mountaineers in particular the Guide may be recommended, for a section on "Mountain

Walks and Rock Climbs," by Mrs. Dora Benson, occupies a fourth of the little book. The various routes of ascending Snowdon, Cader Idris, etc.,

are carefully described, as are also the descents. The book is profusely illustrated.

To the November number of the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* Dr. Alexander Bremner, of Aberdeen (author of "Physical Geology of the Dee

Valley"), contributed a note-worthy paper on "A Geographical Study of the High Plateau of the South-Eastern

PLATEAU OF THE S.-E. HIGHLANDS." This plateau extends from the ridge of Carn na Caim overlooking the Pass of Drumochter to beyond

HIGHLANDS. Mount Keen, a distance of fully fifty miles—a stretch of country, the greater part of which is contained within the

2000 feet contour line, and which forms in actual area (about 500 square miles) the most extensive mass of high ground in Britain. Physically,

the plateau falls into three divisions; and dealing first with the western section—stretching from Carn na Caim to the Tilt—Dr. Bremner discoursed

on the denudation that has taken place over plateau and valley alike, and the alteration in drainage caused by certain rivers "capturing" adjacent

streams. A well known instance is the capture of the Upper Geldie by the Feshie, and Dr. Bremner is of opinion that, similarly, the upper Tarf was

captured by the Tromie, and so the whole drainage of the area west of the Gaick lochs was diverted to the Spey. The capture by the Tilt of the

Tarf, or rather of the Tarf basin, he regards as "one of the clearest, most typical, and most impressive cases of river capture hitherto recorded—

certainly the most impressive in the British Isles." The geological features of the central section of the plateau—from Glen Tilt to the Glas Maol ridge

and the Callater burn—and of the eastern section—from the Glas Maol ridge to beyond Mount Keen—were then expounded, the remarkable

contrast between the two regions being emphasised. The ridges and all the highest summits of the central section are on the strong quartzites, and so

offer resistance to denuding agents. On the other hand, the well-opened valleys, low divides, and gentle slopes to the north-east of Glen Clova,

in the eastern section, indicate "an old land surface worn down to comparatively featureless uniformity by prolonged denudation." Dr.

Bremner proceeded to treat in detail of river encroachments in this area and of the "hanging valleys" which are a characteristic feature of the high

plateau, and concluded with some exceedingly interesting remarks on the "human geography" of the region, particularly the way in which it has

controlled communication. The chief lines of communication had, almost of necessity, to skirt the plateau area and converge on Perth and Aberdeen; "to this is due much of the importance of these towns, particularly of Aberdeen, as trade centres." On the matter of depopulation, note may be made of a sensible observation—"It would be interesting to have, not a jeremiad over the depopulation of our Highland glens, but an exact record of its causes and extent and of the stages by which it has taken place."

IN our last issue, Mr. J. H. Bell gave an account of "Three Days on Braeriach" spent in company with a friend, Rev. R. P. Dansey; and in the October number of the *Scottish Mountaineering Club*

"SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL" some others in an article titled "A Tramp between Lochaber and the Cairngorms." Among the accompanying illustrations is a fine one of Cairngorm from a point looking over Loch Avon. Mr. James A. Parker has an

article describing the ascent by him and Mr. William Garden and "an initiate" of Bidean Choire Sheasgaich, which he terms "one of the most un-get-at-able hills in Scotland"; it is situated on the watershed of Scotland, about five miles west from the head of Loch Monar, in Ross-shire, and boasts a height of 3,102 feet above sea-level. Among the other contents of the number is an introductory article in which various mountaineering experiences are dealt with in a "contemplative and reminiscent mood," and an appreciative notice of the late Sir Hugh T. Munro. Dr. Levack furnishes an account of the Easter Meet of the Club at Braemar last year, and Mr. Walter A. Smith, in a letter to the Editor, suggests that steps be taken (perhaps in conjunction with the Cairngorm Club) for the erection of a footbridge over the Eidart.

A CURSORY survey of the interesting features of Yorkshire scenery forms the introductory article to the *Rucksack Club Journal* for 1919, and its author,

"RUCKSACK CLUB JOURNAL" Mr. J. H. Entwisle, does ample justice to his subject. Yorkshire is hilly rather than mountainous, there being few conspicuous peaks, and its rivers are "the heart and source of its beauty." The county, moreover, challenges comparison with any other county in Britain in two respects—

the number, beauty, and variety of its waterfalls, and of the remains of its great religious houses. Mr. Ernest A. Baker, in an article on "An Eyrie in Cowal" (in Argyleshire), incidentally notes that "Eagles increased in numbers in this locality during the war, and so did buzzards, ravens, and other raptorial birds." Another incidental note in another article may be quoted:—"In the course of joyous trappings among the hills for years, I have noticed many changes, but in nothing perhaps so much as the drinking habits of mountaineers. Forty years ago it was rare to find a party of mountaineers without at least one spirit flask. Whisky was necessary to keep out the cold and fortify us for the rigour of the game." The abandonment of the carrying of spirits is equally noticeable here in the north. There is a complimentary allusion, by the way, to Mr. G. G. Jenkins's "Hill Views from Aberdeen," accompanied by an illustration of his method—a diagram showing the mountains visible from Carnedd Dafydd, in Wales.

WE are indebted to the courtesy of the French Alpine Club for several recent numbers of "La Montagne," the monthly journal of the Club. They demonstrate alike the activities of the Club and the excellence of the journal itself. The former are markedly manifest in the annual report, the report of the annual meeting, and the "Chronique" of the Club, all of which are conspicuous features of the May-June number. This number also contains an elaborate article on a map of Gavarnie and Mont Perdu, in the Pyrenees. From the July-August number we learn that the name "Aiguille Foch" has been given to a peak in the Alpes Cottiennes—"a name which will consecrate in the Alps the glorious success of our arms and will pay proper homage to the illustrious Generalissimo of the Allied Armies." One of the two peaks of L'Argentera, the highest mountain of the Alpes Maritimes, is also to be known in future as the Pointe Garibaldi, being so named after General Garibaldi. The mountain is visible from both France and Italy, and its new appellation will doubtless contribute to the concord between the two countries.

THE 1919 issue of "The Annual of the Mountain Club of South Africa" is, as usual, replete with articles dealing with mountain-climbing in South Africa, accompanied by numerous photographs and maps, excellently reproduced. The opening article, "New SOUTH AFRICA MOUNTAIN CLUB'S ANNUAL. Peaks and Old," deals principally with the Buffels Hoek Kloof, which, it appears, offers inducements alike "to the climber, and to the prowler who dislikes climbing"—for the former there are peaks of all sorts and sizes, easy, moderate, and difficult; for the latter there are kloofs, "some of them Liliputian and most beautiful, others rugged and on the grand scale." Other articles deal with the Zonder Einde Mountains, Snowdon (Cape Colony), and Birds of the Cape Peninsula. There is an interesting account of the Natal National Park, situated at Mont aux Sources, and embracing an area of 24 square miles and twelve peaks of heights between 4,680 feet and 11,050 feet.

DO any of our readers peruse—and, as an inevitable consequence, enjoy—the "Rural Talk" between "Mains" and "Hilly," written in the local dialect, which appears regularly in the "Weekly Free AN ABERDEEN- SHIRE HILL VIEW. Press"—has done so now for a great number of years? One day last summer, "Mains" appeared at Hillside to see if "Hilly" "wis ony on for a turn oot th' hull wye." The latter was nothing loth. "Richt owre th' tap o' th' hull, say ye?" he asked; and "Mains" replied—"Jist that, for we can see aboot's better there nor traikin' aboot th' fit o't." The two worthies duly reached the top of the hill, which we may readily surmise to be some eminence in the Ythan Wells region; and then this colloquy ensued:—

H.—Noo we'll sit doon here amo' th' hedder an' tak' a leuk aboot's. Th' hulls are winnerfu' clear the day, an' we can see them a' laid oot afore's like a pickter.

M.—We div that. Here's wir aul' freen' Bennachie, aye seen faur- ever ye gyang. An' there's th' hull o' Culsamon', an' Foudlan' an' a hantle idders.

H.—Ay, ay, an' there in th' wast ye can see th' Buck, th' Tap o' Noth, Benrinnes, an' mony anidder 'at I canna name. We wid need a map here, Mains.

M.—Fat raelly stricks me isna th' names o' th' hulls sae muckle's th' grandur o' th' scene. Th' hulls in th' backgrun': th' wids an' hedges, th' ribbon-like watters here an' there, an' th' green fiedles: th' hichts an' howes, th' heath an' th' moss, a' throu' idder, mak's a pickter sic as never a painter eud pit on paper. Man, it's gran', an' gin I hid edder th' skeel o' a drawer o' pickters, or o' a poet, I wid pit it a' doon for ye. Bit Aw'm jist Mains, an' I reckon Aw'll be een o' them 'at Gray speaks about, "Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest," for it'll never be my preevilege t' ley' ma thochts for th' gweed o' idders.

H.—Man, Mains, ye fair astonish ma. I never saw ye leukin' sae like a man o' eloquence as ye wis this meenit.

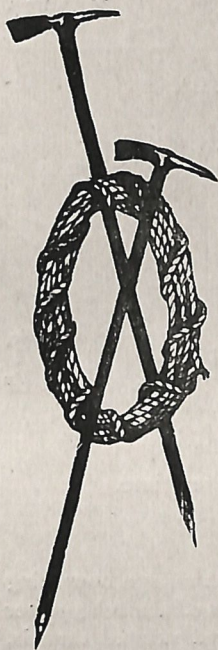
The Doric does lend itself — in capable hands — to effective description, doesn't it?

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