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THE  
**Cairngorm Club Journal.**

EDITED BY  
HENRY ALEXANDER.

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ISSUED ONCE A YEAR.

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The Editor will be glad to consider any articles, notes and photographs submitted to him and, in particular, he hopes that members of the Club will send records, however brief, of any interesting excursions which they make, so that the "Journal" may constitute an adequate record of the activities of the Club.

47 Queen's Road,  
Aberdeen.





BEN MACDHUI FROM THE LUIBEG, MAY 11, 1924.

*M. J. Robb.*

THE  
Cairngorm Club Journal.

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INAUGURATION OF THE BEN MACDHUI  
INDICATOR.

BY ROBERT CLARKE.

THE outstanding feature of the Club's activities in 1925 was the erection and unveiling of the mountain indicator on the summit of the monarch of the Cairngorms, and the second highest hill in the kingdom. No more fitting memento could have been selected, and the Club is to be heartily congratulated on associating itself in such a happy fashion with the range from which it takes its name. The unveiling ceremony took place on Saturday, August 1, and was in every sense a complete success. A week earlier a building party, under the skilled and enthusiastic leadership of Mr. James A. Parker, had successfully erected the indicator. The attendant difficulties, especially those of transport, were far greater than those encountered in the similar erection on Lochnagar the previous year, and the most cordial thanks of the Club are due to Mr. Parker and all those associated with him in the laborious task—professional builders and Club members alike. The indicator, which is constructed of Doulton ware, and is an exact replica of that erected on Lochnagar, has been dedicated to the memory of that grand old mountaineer and Club member, the late Mr.



Alexander Copland, who did so much, by his wonderfully accurate pictorial panoramic view from the summit of Ben Macdhuì, his writings in this *Journal*, and otherwise, to foster a love of the hills among his fellows.

As in the case of the ceremony on Lochnagar, a general invitation to the public was issued for the unveiling. Considering the remoteness of the scene of the day's doings, and the fact that the holiday season was in full swing, it was a pleasant surprise to find, when the ceremony began, that almost as many people had found their way to the summit as had been the case on Loch-nagar. [A list of those present, believed to be absolutely complete, is appended at the end of this article.—Ed.] As was to be expected, a large proportion of these came from the Deeside end of the range, but contingents from Speyside helped to swell the crowd. The Larig also added its quota of, at least, one camping party, while the Corrou bothy in Glen Dee—which of recent years appears to have attained the dignity of a climbing hut—contributed a quartette of ardent young spirits.

Derry Lodge—redolent of happy memories to the older school of Cairngormers—was the Mecca of the Deeside contingent, the all-conquering motor car and motor cycle being the most favoured means of transport thither. From thence the party had to foot it by either Glen Derry or Glen Luibeg to the summit. Judging by the paucity of climbers encountered in my progress up the latter, Glen Derry must have got the popular vote, even though the Luibeg route was specified in the official “book of words.” It was not too inviting a morning as we set forth. Most of the high hills were cloud-capped, a sharp wind from the north-west was blowing, and there was a smell of moisture in the air which might eventually become much more than a smell. However, one is ever an optimist when hill expeditions are afoot, and one was doubly so on such an occasion as this.

It was my good fortune to have as immediate companions Dr. W. Douglas Simpson and his troupe of Boy Scouts—released, for the day, from the gentle task of



navvying at Kindrochit!—and up the glen we went in great spirits. An early discovery one makes about Scouts is that when they are out for any particular object they implicitly believe in attaining that object without the loss of valuable moments. In the bright lexicon of these nimble youths there is no such word as—halt! No grass gets the slightest chance to grow under their lightsome feet. All was well with us so long as the glen was being traversed, and one managed to hold them in talk and keep touch satisfactorily enough. But once the steep slopes of the Sron Riach were reached a distinct breach in our companionship set in, for up these they fluttered like a flock of yellow birds, what time Age ascended in the more sedate manner suited to his years and heart-beat! All ordinary traffic was speedily overhauled and left far behind by these roving blades. A strict regard for truth, however, compels the admission that—either out of compassion for their less ardent companion, or from the discovery that steepish hillsides can only be “rushed” in moderation—the pace of the two parties seemed to gradually synchronise as the top was neared, and we all reached the Sappers’ bothy together, delighted with our different methods of mountaineering!

Though the weather had brightened considerably during the ascent, a keen wind was blowing on the summit, and the shelter of the bothy walls was welcome in the interval prior to the start of the day’s proceedings. Quite a number of people were already here and also in the lee of the cairn, and it was very interesting to make the acquaintance of several men who had been keen lovers of the Cairngorms for many years, and who had come considerable distances from Speyside to be present. As the time approached for the ceremony to start the numbers on the top from Dee and Spey gradually grew till a company of nearly 140 surrounded the, as yet, veiled indicator. Most of the well-known Aberdeen and district Clubmen were there, as also numerous climbers from a distance, while many ladies—enthusiasts all—were of the company. One was specially pleased to see



the number of children of both sexes present—future stalwarts of the Club let us hope; while at the other end of the gamut were several hardy veterans whose love of the hills is still as keen as in the days of their far-away youth. One notable absentee from this group was Mr. William Porter, Woodside, whom only illness prevented being present.

Cameras were clicking on all sides, and the photographic record of the afternoon's happenings must have been very complete indeed. As a picture of masculine sartorial styles this must have an interest all its own. The garments affected by the "mere men" mountaineers were varied in the extreme, ranging from the kilt through the various nuances of plus-fours to what had a suspicious resemblance to that acme of contemporary male taste, the delightfully graceful Oxford "bags"! There was also keen competition in the head-gear class, but it was generally conceded that a well-known Aberdeen University lecturer had achieved real greatness with a pyramid-shaped nightcap with bright crimson edging, the exact replica of what his grandfather must have donned when he retired to his slumbers. But if there was variety in the covering of the heads, there was but one the hearts of those present—the Brotherhood of feeling in the Hills was the link that bound them fast together—and one could see at a glance that everyone was keenly interested in the ceremony that was about to begin.

A ring having been formed round the indicator by the Boy Scouts, Mr. William Garden, the President, in a characteristically genial speech, explained the reason for such a large gathering on the second highest mountain top in the kingdom. After expressing the Club's indebtedness to the Princess Royal for her permission to erect the indicator, and the general regret at the inability of Lady Maud Carnegie, her daughter, to be present to inaugurate it, he referred to the enthusiasm with which the Club had taken up the project, after the previous year's success with the Lochnagar indicator. He described the many difficulties that beset Mr. Parker and





UNVEILING THE BEN MACDHUI INDICATOR, AUGUST 1, 1925.

*M. J. Robb.*



his assistants ere the present one was erected, and amid applause expressed the deep gratitude of the Club to them all. No fewer than 77 view-points were shown on the dial, so that what could be seen, and was not shown, was practically negligible. After paying grateful tribute to the late Mr. Alexander Copland, who had done so much to popularise mountaineering in the district, and to whose memory the indicator is dedicated, he concluded by expressing the hope that long after those present had followed the setting sun the indicator would stand to commemorate their love for the Cairngorms—their own particular range of mountains. A modest and pawky reply from Mr. Parker was followed by a splendidly-phrased little speech by Mrs. Garden, who, to the accompaniment of loud cheers, cut the ribbon that held the cover over the indicator, and expressed the hope that it, like its big brother on Lochnagar, would prove a source of pleasure and information to all who went there. As a memento of the occasion she was presented with the silk covering, and she, in turn, distributed small pieces of the ribbon to those around. A vote of thanks to Mrs. Garden, proposed by the evergreen Mr. Walter A. Reid, brought the proceedings to a close.

After the ceremony we crowded round and admired the beautifully-finished dial and workmanlike pedestal. Unfortunately the distant view in most directions was largely blocked out by cloud masses, and thus the “pointing” powers of the indicator were not permitted much scope. In those limited portions of the sky which were clear, however, its help in picking up outstanding points was at once apparent; and its erection on this glorious plateau commanding such a magnificent prospect, and encircled by mountains of almost equal grandeur, should be the means of sending still more people to the hills to enjoy that grand sense of physical and mental elation which no other sport is capable of bestowing.

The afternoon was now wearing on, and the record company, after a final feasting of the eyes on a scene upon which many of them had gazed fondly and frequently



in past years, went their several ways, the Speyside-contingent heading for Rothiemurchus, while we of Deeside in one solid body, about 100 strong, descended by the Luibeg route to Derry Lodge. It was an interesting sight to see the long ridge of the Sron Riach punctuated with so many people making the best of their way to the valley—a sight that probably had never been previously witnessed, nor will be again. By this time wisps of mist were beginning to trail across the mountain's brow, ere long the low-lying clouds had completely swallowed up the summit, and taken it into their keeping, and Solitude once more stalked in undisputed possession of the scene. Our newly-born indicator, brought to life amid such happy auguries, was indeed to be "sleeping out and far to-night," but perchance the benign Spirit of the Mountain administered that solace which is never denied to those who seek her inner shrine.



## ERECTING THE INDICATOR.

### DIARY OF THE BUILDING OPERATIONS.

MR. JAMES A. PARKER has kindly furnished the following notes upon the various ascents and other technical details involved in the erection of the indicator on Ben Macdhui and they convey a vivid impression of the undertaking, the most ambitious and arduous enterprise of the kind yet achieved upon any Scottish mountain. The design of the indicator was executed by Mr. Parker, in part from the panorama prepared by the late Mr. Alexander Copland, but largely from original observations and calculations made by himself, and his name will always be associated with the work, for it is almost superfluous to say that without his expert aid as a topographer and enthusiasm as a mountaineer it would never have been carried through.

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*April 19, 1925.* J. A. Parker made the ascent alone from Derry Lodge, carrying a complete surveying outfit of plane-table, 5 inch compass, maps, binocular, etc., weighing in all about 14 lbs. Was rewarded with perfect weather conditions and a view in every direction of 50 to 60 miles, and was able, by direct observation, to verify the direction of 60 of the hills shown on the indicator drawing. Continuous hard snow from 2,500 feet up and about three feet in depth on the summit.

*June 21, 1925.* The following party motored from Aberdeen or Ballater and ascended the hill by the Lui Beg route.—J. A. Parker, J. Murray, F. Fowlie, Roy Symmers, W. Garden, C. Robb, M. Robb, H. Butchart,



and E. M. MacGregor. Objects in view :—to select site for indicator, locate nearest water supply, test stones on summit as to their suitability for building, and see if Glen Derry path was good enough for pony transport. Weather on summit was of the very worst, viz., strong north wind with driving sleet and rain. Anything in the nature of careful work was impossible. The mason, Fowlie, said that the stones were suitable by merely looking at them from the lee side of the cairn, while four of the others rushed out into the open and, with the help of compass and the drawing, hurriedly fixed on a position for the indicator. Searching for water or anything else was entirely out of the question and the party retreated from the mountain by the Lui Beg route as fast as possible.

*July 5, 1925.* H. Alexander and J. A. Parker ascended the hill from Boat of Garten, by motor to Inverdrue, and thence via top of Lurcher's Crag to the summit. Weather perfect so far. The site selected by compass work on the 21st ulto was found to be correct, *i.e.*, the only part of the horizon that from it would be masked by the cairn was the middle part of the Ben a Bhuird ridge. The slopes of the hill near the summit were then carefully searched for water and the nearest source was found to be in the headwaters of the Garbh Uisge Mor about ten minutes due E.N.E. from the cairn and only 250 feet lower. The route to this source was carefully marked out by small cairns. The weather was still fine; but ominous clouds were banking up with heavy rain about ten miles off in the east. Nothing daunted the party then proceeded to the top of the Fiacail Ridge of Cairngorm and wasted a valuable hour descending it. At the end of which period the weather broke down and the three hours' tramp back to Inverdrue was done in drenching rain with a "shower" now and again. Boat of Garten was reached about 8.30 p.m. or roughly fifteen hours after it had been left in the morning.

*July 18, 1925.* Messrs. R. Leith, J. Massie Milne,



and W. Nicol set up a backwoods camp on the east side of Glen Derry about half a mile north of Derry Lodge.

*July 19, 1925.* J. A. Parker motored up from Braemar to Derry Lodge and with the three campers and W. Falconer, who was "week-ending" with them, ascended Ben Macdhui by the Glen Derry and Corrie Etchachan path, the object being to make sure that the path was good enough for pony transport and was marked by cairns so that it could be rigidly followed by the ponies in the densest mist. It was found necessary to repair the ford across the Glas Allt Mor and also to rebuild about fifty cairns and to erect about a dozen or so new ones. The source of water E.N.E. of the cairn was visited and found to be all right, although the snow in its immediate vicinity had disappeared. Weather so far had been very good but mist now came on and a compass course had to be set for the descent of the Sron Riach by which the party returned. The campers then treated the engineer to a magnificent tea at Derry Camp.

*July 20, 1925.* Two ponies with drivers, Innes, Jr., and Morrison, proceeded to the stables at Derry Lodge, along with the following materials for the erection of the indicator :

- The granite capstone in four sections.
- Four two-gallon petrol tins full of portland cement.
- Two bags each containing  $1\frac{1}{4}$  cwts. of clean sharp sand.
- A heavy bag of mason's tools.
- A tarpaulin eight feet six inches square.
- One pail.
- One shovel.

The total weight of which was about six cwts.

*July 21, 1925.* Messrs. Leith, Nicol, and Massie Milne, with the ponies and drivers, proceeded to the top of the hill with about one half of the above materials. Left Derry Lodge at 9.30 a.m. and got back at 6 p.m.

*July 22, 1925.* The same party made a second trip to the top of the hill with the remainder of the materials less one tin of cement. The ponies returned to Braemar and the officer in command at the camp sent the following very satisfactory telegram to the engineer at Aberdeen. "Parker Railway, Aberdeen. Everything scu-



cessful, all very fit but dry, Derry Camp." On receiving which the said engineer began to see things moving towards success.

*July 24, 1925.* Young Innes took the better pony, "Bob," to Derry Lodge in the evening and the other members of the "construction squad" reported at the Fife Arms Hotel, Braemar, having travelled from Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Nairn.

*July 25, 1925.* The first party, viz., the building party, consisting of the masons, Frank Fowlie (foreman), and Wm. Fleming and H. Butchart and Marshall Robb, left Braemar at 5 a.m. (4 a.m. G.M.T.) Reached Derry Lodge at 5.40 a.m. and the top of Ben Macdhuì via the Lui Beg route at 9.10 a.m. Ascent made through thick mist until well up the Sron Riach when the party emerged above the clouds and had magnificent views the photographing of which accounted for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours having been taken for the ascent. On arrival at the cairn a ration of hot coffee was served up after which jackets were thrown off and the work began. The materials were found to be undisturbed, and while the masons were busy working the other two ran out 1,000 yards of white linen thread down to the source of water in case mist might come on.

The second party, the slab carrying party, consisting of Dr. J. R. Levack, Dr. D. P. Levack, D. S. P. Douglas, and J. A. Parker, left Braemar at 7.55 p.m. with the Doulton slab and reached Derry Lodge at half past eight, where they joined forces with the three campers, Innes and the pony, "Bob." The latter was at once loaded up with the slab on one side and the tin of portland cement on the other to balance, and a few superfluous rucksacks on the top, and the party moved off via Glen Derry at 9.10 a.m. En route the party split up into three groups, namely, a fast pack who arrived at the summit at 12.15 p.m., a slow pack which arrived there at 1.15 p.m., and the pony party proper which arrived at 12.45 p.m. with the slab all safe and sound.





*H. Alexander.*

INSPECTING THE SITE OF THE INDICATOR, JULY 5, 1925.



*M. J. Robb.*

THE MASONS AT WORK ON THE SUMMIT, JULY 25, 1925.



The masons were found to have made good progress and expressed great satisfaction with their two labourers whom they said were much more efficient than the three that they had on Lochnagar.

Work on the indicator never ceased from the time that the masons arrived until the tarpaulin was placed over it in the afternoon six hours later. When the masons had placed the four sections of the granite cap they adjourned for a substantial mid-day meal and while they were enjoying that the engineer performed an abstruse orientation ceremony with a five-inch magnetic compass, there being no distant view. He also prepared and placed inside the central cavity in the cap a small bottle containing a record of the building parties' doings and the names of those present, not forgetting "Bob." The masons were then called first by the compass and again by a sight on to Ben Avon which was the most distant point visible. The masons then finished the pointing and the indicator was then covered up with sacking, straw and the tarpaulin and was securely roped up.

Over and the  
Doubtless slab  
was placed in  
position and  
finally checked  
true by compass  
and again by a  
sight on to Ben  
Avon.

This completed the labours of the parties but before they left a short masonic service was held at the indicator by Bros. J. A. Parker, P.M. No. 1 ter., F. Fowlie, I.P.M. No. 1269, and Bro. H. Butchart, D.M. No. 1 ter., who declared it to be "well and truly laid." Undoubtedly the highest masonic service ever held in Britain! The "cowans" present called the ceremony a "pagan rite."

The pony had not been loaded up and after a final perambulation of the summit, to make sure that no litter had been left, the final party left the summit at 3.20 p.m. The total time occupied by the erection of the indicator having thus been just over six hours.

w/

The weather which thus far had been ideal for working now showed unmistakable symptoms of going to pieces and did not look very rosy for the pony party when "Bob" struck work when only a few yards beyond the sappers' kitchen and apparently utterly oblivious to

things



a tremendous thunderstorm which was rapidly approaching! The pony's difficulty was apparently improper loading and thirty valuable minutes, if not more, were spent in reloading it in a proper, *i.e.*, a ~~systematical~~ *organized* manner after which there was no trouble.

Fortunately the thunderstorm almost avoided the Glen Derry route until about half past six, by which time the pony party was within half-a-mile of Derry Lodge. Braemar was reached at 7.30 p.m. But Innes and the pony did not get there until midnight and experienced the full force of the thunderstorm which was the worst experienced in the district for many years, and which, incidentally, washed the campers out of their tents and forced them to run to Derry Lodge for shelter.

#### SIGNATURES AT THE INAUGURATION.

In order to secure as full a record as possible of the company present on the summit of Ben Macdhui, at the inauguration ceremony on August 1, a note-book was kindly carried round by a Boy Scout, and everyone was invited to enter his or her signature. The following is a list of the signatures in the order in which they appear. Where no address is given Aberdeen is implied. An asterisk denotes a member of the Club. The list extends to 136 names. The list of those present at the unveiling of the Lochnagar Indicator on July 12, 1924, comprised 146 names.

J. A. Parker\*; G. Innes Laing; J. S. Abernethy, Fettercairn; George Laing; Malcolm Smith\*; A. Dickie Gorrod; Robert Clarke\*; Douglas H. Johnston; James McLeod; C. A. G. Savidge; R. F. Skinner, H. J. Morris and R. Crawford of the Dundee University College Rucksack Club; A. C. Gray, Boat of Garten; W. R. Scott; C. M. M. Murray; George W. Bower; J. E. Smith; W. W. Ross; W. Douglas Simpson; D. L. Macdonald, Braemar; D. R. Harper; T. L. Taylor; K. R. T. Matthew; D. M. Marr; J. A. McDougall; C. P. Skene; A. G. Nicol Smith\*; Murray Watt; Alistair Nicol Smith; Ed. W. Watt\*; Alice J. Watt; Herbert Smith\*, Glasgow; William Smith, Glasgow; Marjorie Watt; James Iverach\*; C. Mitchell, William Ewen, A. D. McHardy, Mrs. R. S. Bell, Jas. A. Salmond, and S. M. Bell, Ballater; G. R. Symmers; L. Welsh;



J. Bisset, Ballater; E. Cruickshank, Drumtochty; D. Mitchell, Auchinblae; D. M. Clark; Harold E. Young, (Climbers' Club) and D. C. L. Key, Blundellsands; Charles P. Moir, John Watson, and William Stewart\*, Alford; Arthur G. Hutchison; Harry D. Christie; Wm. Mitchell\*; Wm. Mitchell, Jr.: D. L. H. Hay, and J. H. Sturrock, Kilmarnock; D. Stewart; J. A. Nicol\*; J. Rennie\*; H. J. Butchart\*; Marshall J. Robb\*; H. D. Garden; Muriel Garden; Hugh S. Hunter, Braemar; William Garden\*; J. Lewis McIntyre\*; Geo. Grey Brown, and C. M. Lawrence-Smith, Banchory; Rev. S. J. Ramsay Sibbald, Glasgow; Miss Macleod, Cheltenham; Jean Macleod, Pearl Macleod, and Helen Macleod, Glasgow; G. S. Fraser\*: G. Robertson; J. F. Tocher\*; James McCoss\*; Iain D. Campbell\*, Banchory; Marjorie G. Brown; D. Lindsay; M. Sinclair; J. R. Leslie Gray\*, Edinburgh; Ian Struthers Stewart\*, Banchory; R. Leith, Jr.; Wm. A. Falconer\*; Mabel Stewart, Drumduan\*; C. P. Robb\*; Rev. Edward Miller, Cannes; Robert Leith\*; William Massie, Dyce; John Stewart, Glasgow; William Barclay\*, Scone; Jas. S. Finlayson, Perth; William Small, Scone; P. J. Fisher; A. M. Shirran\* and Mrs. Shirran\*, Braemar; George Lyall\* and Miss Lyall, Turriff; Charles Ludwig; D. Taylor; Mrs. Ross Mackenzie\*; H. G. Drummond\*; John R. Levack\*; Walter A. Reid\*; J. Massie Milne\*; J. B. Rennett; James Conner\*; Geo. P. Benzie; G. D. Allan\*; James A. Hadden; D. M. Milne, Kuala Lumpur; M. Moreau, Braemar; C. Bruce Miller; H. Grant Cumming, Grantown-on-Spey; Alex. M. Craig\*; H. Forbes MacIntosh, Braemar; Hugh Massie, Dyce; A. T. Lawson and Robert Lawson, Bradford; Hamish Hastings, Grantown-on-Spey; Gordon M. Dean; Thomas E. Anderson; Major Sir J. D. Ramsay, Lady Ramsay of Banff; N. A. Ramsay, Yr.; D. J. Ramsay and Miss MacGregor; C. Stirling; S. Smith; David Stewart, Yr.\*, Banchory House; and Miss E. Brand\*, Ballater.

[NOTE. One signature in the list was illegible, and had therefore to be omitted.]

The inscription on the Indicator will be found in the special plate at the end of this number. The Hon. R. Erskine of Mar, who is a well-known Gaelic enthusiast, has suggested the following Gaelic version of the inscription as more suitable to the genius of the spot:—

Tha an t-lul-seòlaidh so a'nochdadh suldheachadh nam beann is mò a ghabhas anharc orra o fhior-mhullach Bheinn Mhuic-duibh—sllabh a tha 4296 troidh air àirde—an uair a bhios sid mhath ann. Chaidh a chur suas mar chuimhne air Alasdair Copland, a bha uair 'na cheann-suidha air Cairngorm Club, Abareadhain. Is a J. A. Parker a thog an t-lul-seòlaidh so.



## THE GLEN DOCHART HILLS.

BY WILLIAM BARCLAY.

“Give me health and a day and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous.”

I CAN find no recorded account of these hills in any of the volumes of the *C. C. Journal*, so perhaps the following account of a walk undertaken in the early days of last summer, may be of interest.

When viewed from the north or south, the chain of mountains lying between Glen Dochart and Glen Lochay present to the observer three well defined masses, carrying on their crest six points which rise over 3,000 feet, and although the dips are somewhat formidable it is yet possible to visit all six tops in the course of a walk from Tyndrum to Luib or Killin.

Nearly half the day had already gone, in other words, it was eleven o'clock before the train arrived in Tyndrum, so that I made rather a late start for an excursion of the extent which I had outlined for myself; but as all my programmes are elastic, suited to the vagaries of the weather and the whims of a solitary wanderer, that did not matter very much.

Stepping over to the West Highland Railway Station I proceeded eastwards along the line for a mile and a half to the high viaduct spanning the Allt Gleanna a Chlachain above Auchtertyre. Immediately on crossing the bridge I climbed over the dyke and set my face towards the slopes of Creag Loisgte. These are grassy and quite pleasant to ascend. I proceeded leisurely up this hillside enjoying to the full the delights of perfect freedom, and ever and again stopped to cast a backward



glance across the valley to the stately peak of Ben Lui towering in virgin whiteness to the sky. The crest of the Creag was reached at a height of about 2,000 feet, and now the snow clad slope leading to the south top of Ben haluim rose before me. Half a mile of treacherous peaty ground, very wet from the melting of the snow had to be crossed before I reached this slope, but the next thousand feet were easily overcome and I was standing at the south end of the summit of Ben Chaluum, or as it is often called—the South Top, 3,236 feet. A few stones on top of a big rock mark this point. The higher peak of the mountain still rose a hundred feet above me and half a mile due north, the rocky gap between being packed full of drifted and frozen snow to a great depth.

From here the mountain falls to the east in a steep rocky corrie that gives rise to one of the headstreams of the river Lochay. It was 12.30 when I arrived at the south top, and after taking a photo or two, another 15 minutes saw me by the cairn on the summit of Ben Chaluum, 3,354 feet.

Half-an-hour was profitably and pleasantly spent here in studying and assimilating the view, and it was a sight worth travelling a continent to see. All the shapliest hills in Scotland from Ben Nevis to the Lomonds in Fife, and from the massive Cairngorms to the imposing twin of Ben Cruachan, and all the grand hills in the immediate neighbourhood—Ben Lui, Ben More, Ben Doran, Cruach Ardran, etc., etc., were ranged before me in winter's garb. Ben Nevis projected like an iceberg into the sky, and on the distant Cairngorm Mountains there seemed a tremendous depth of snow, for the glass failed to reveal one black speck. But it is impossible adequately to describe such a scene, and I'd rather lay the remembrance of it by to be drawn upon on some future day, perhaps when the vision is limited to a few yards and we sit cowering behind the cairn on some wind swept *view point*.

Meall Glas, the next point to be visited, stands nearly



three miles away in the east, but a vast gulf lies between, involving a descent of 2,250 feet, so I must needs be off.

The north face of Ben Chaluum is steep, and the upper part of its eastern front almost equally so. To-day this part of the mountain was wholly under snow, only an occasional black rock jutting out here and there, so I had to proceed with caution. But when I had descended a thousand feet or so I could move more rapidly. At 1.45 I reached the river and found it a goodly stream. Numerous relics of the ancient forest were much in evidence in the peaty ground here. While resting for a few minutes I was much impressed by some fine corries on Creag Mhor and Beinn Heasgarnich. From the river a steepish climb over grassy slopes and large snow beds brought me to the cairn on Meall Glas (3,139 feet) at 3.10. Fifteen minutes were spent here during which I recognised Cat Law above Kirriemuir, then I continued on my way to the peak at the north east end of the ridge—Beinn Dheiceach, 3,074 feet. There is but a slight depression between these two tops, and although they stand a mile apart the walk only occupied a quarter of an hour. While sitting here I was rather startled at the extent of heather and bog that separated me from the bridge at Auchessan, and decided it would be preferable to cross over Meall Chuirn and Sgiach Chuil, and then descend to the foot-bridge over the Dochart beside Luib station. As events proved I decided wisely.

Between Beinn Dheiceach and Meall Chuirn there is a drop of nearly 1,300 feet, but the slope opposite looked rather easy, so I acted instantly. At first the descent is steep, but I soon got down to the peaty ground, passing a large cairn, and surprising a solitary deer on the way. The dip was reached in half an hour and I was on the top of Meall Chuirn (3,007 feet) in another 35 minutes. There is a small cairn here, not quite on the highest point. I did not stop but passed south to the rocky peak of Sgiath Chuil (3,050 feet, approx. no-



cairn) at 4.45, and here on the last of my tops I sat down and had a short rest and finished my "piece."

The Cairngorms were still in view, and with the glass I recognised Ben Macdhui, Cairntoul, the Angel's Peak and part of Braeriach. Mount Blair and some of the hills above Clova, with patches of snow on them were also observed. Ben Nevis was not now seen. Of course Ben More, Stobinian, and Cruach Ardran were a constant source of delight and admiration during the whole day.

Descending to the lesser top, which is also rocky, I then dropped down to the moorland over which I made my way towards the footbridge by Inneschewan farm, and so to Luib station at 6.20, thoroughly well satisfied with my day on the Glen Dochart hills. A perfect day, plenty of sunshine tempered by a breeze, a far horizon, no flies, midges, or other temper trying pests. Of wild life I met ptarmigan on all the hill-tops, as well as plenty of hares, a few grouse on the lower ground, and one solitary deer—a wanderer. The whole ground is under sheep, and these hills are well seen from the Callander and Oban Railway.



LET US GO WANDERING.

Let us go wandering on the Banffshire hills,  
And see the banks of Avon once again ;  
To see the glen that passing summer fills,  
And feel the smell of birches in the rain.

To lie upon the haugh there half asleep,  
With purple gentians springing in the grass ;  
To hear the curlews and the shrill ' keep-keep '  
Of oyster-catchers as they pass.

We will have peace ; and as we dream  
The hours will cover up our discontent,  
Like the stony bed on which the Avon stream  
Ripples in merriment.

As we went wandering on that far past day,  
As fair a day as summer ere bestowed,  
Long years ago : yes, come what may,  
Let's up the Cabrach and away  
Across the Stepler Road.



## FROM MT. BLANC TO THE MEDITERRANEAN.

BY A. LANDBOROUGH THOMSON.

"THE Graian, the Cottian and the Maritime Alps." It was formerly for us no more than a jingle half-remembered from some schoolbook. It carried no conviction: one does not really believe in these things until one has seen them! Last summer, however, we decided to explore the region. We had a desire to break what was for us new ground, and the rate of exchange seemed to provide a favourable omen for a visit to the French Alps. The actual programme decided upon, moreover, was for me the execution of a long-cherished plan.

One spring, several years ago, I had stood on the heights above the Riviera, where the Alps reach the sea. From there I had seen a great succession of ranges over-topping each other northwards and receding dimly towards the central mountain region which I already knew. From that moment there had dated a desire to traverse the intervening region, to set out from the central Alps and to walk southwards until the sea lay below me. Every mountaineer knows the feeling; the goal that some former impression has made infinitely desirable; the thing, be it a climb or a mere pedestrian expedition, which demands to be done. The project had acquired in my mind the character of a romantic pilgrimage. Nice is perhaps scarcely a holy city, but the real goal was the Mediterranean lapping the last spur of the Alps.

The starting point was to be the neighbourhood of Mt. Blanc. My former visits to the Alps for climbing



or walking had had their south-westward limit at the southern extremity of the Mt. Blanc range, where one may cross the Col de la Seigne and so into Italy by the Allée Blanche. Practically, the convenient railway terminus of Bourg-St.-Maurice, half a day's march from there, was to serve our purpose. From it we were to go southwards until we found ourselves on the direct seaward slope.

We were to go on foot, of course, as pilgrims should, for one does not acquire merit by vehicular progression. The excursion was indeed to be a walking-tour of the good old-fashioned kind. Climbing equipment would not be needed. Nothing was to be taken which would not go in the rucksack. We were to be free from forwarded luggage, from hotel reservations, and from everything else liable to mar the careless pleasure of the open road. We were not to linger in pleasant places nor to deviate for supplementary excursions: this was a condition which limits of time imposed. We were to walk the whole of the way, or else the particular plan was to be regarded as abandoned. Strange to say, all these good resolutions were on this occasion faithfully carried out!

Thus it was that my wife and I left London on 14th August, 1925, already clad for walking and carrying nothing but our rucksacks, and reached Bourg-St.-Maurice the following forenoon. We had only to walk out of the station and our pilgrimage had begun. The hills rose grandly all round us, a hot sun shone in a clear sky, and the road lay before us for a fortnight.

A mere seven miles was all we expected to do in what remained of this first day. It seemed long enough, however, uphill in the heat, with unaccustomed loads and with muscles soft from city life and cramped by the train. The way lay southwards up the Val d'Isère, the stream on our right, and the Little St. Bernard road soon branched off on our left. We found quarters, perhaps the least comfortable of the whole tour, in the hamlet of Ste. Foy.



Next day we were still breaking ourselves in gently, and had only thirteen miles to do in order to reach the head of the valley. The weather was fine and hot, and the scenery was magnificent. The sides of the valley rose steeply, here in pine-clad slopes and there in precipitous crags, with strips and shoulders of pasture everywhere interspersed: at places waterfalls descended or the ends of glaciers hung over the crests, and snow-covered summits showed themselves behind. For most of the way the road wound along the eastern side some distance above the stream, ascending gradually. We lunched at Tignes with only four miles to go. Above that the valley rose in a steep step and then became a stony defile. Presently it opened out into a beautiful green cup formed at the confluence of two streams, and there lay the village of Val d'Isère. After depositing our rucksacks we had time to wander a little, and to sit on a slope above the village admiring the peaks of the Vanoise and Tarentaise while the shadows lengthened across the floor of the valley and up its eastern side.

Next day we could no longer idle on our way. The road at present comes to an end at Val d'Isère, and, starting early, we struck up a steep path across pastures and through woods to reach the higher slopes. The ascent then eased and the way led up a side valley to the Col d'Iseran. The Route des Alpes, which at present avoids the blind valley of the Val d'Isère, is, in time, to cross the pass, and will, it is said, there be the highest motor road in Europe (9085 feet). The survey stakes were already in the ground and on the summit a little inn was about to be opened in anticipation. A new range of Graian peaks was visible to the south, but as time pressed we cut quickly down a steep grass slope into a little valley and soon afterwards halted for food beside the stream. The valley then took a sharp turn and two sudden descents, taking us into the main valley of the Arc at Bonneval, an uninviting village which is the end of the road on this side of the pass. We walked through without stopping, as the afternoon was wearing



on and we wished to do another dozen miles that day. The way lay down the level valley, and at dusk we reached the pleasant little town of Lanslebourg, where the Mt. Cenis route comes over from Italy. We reckoned it a twenty-seven mile day.

The following stage was theoretically a short one, sixteen miles down the valley to Modane. Actually it seemed a long one. For one thing, we were feeling the effects of the first serious exertion and had not acquired our "second wind," or rather its muscular equivalent. For another, the valley descended abruptly at Termignon, at the end of an hour or so, and after that the heat at the lower level in the middle of the day was great. Finally, a name "L'Esseillon" on the kilometre-stones, which for long stayed us with visions of an inn, an omelette and red wine, proved to belong to a barren fortress, of picturesque but unsatisfying appearance, on the opposite side of a deep gorge; we had perforce to make some biscuit and chocolate suffice. In the afternoon we reached Modane, the tunnel-terminus, just in time to escape a thunder-shower.

Ten more miles down the valley was the first part of the next day's programme, and we lunched at St. Michel-de-Maurienne. Here our route joined the present one of motors following the Route des Alpes and coming up the valley from Chambéry. With them, we had now to strike across to the south—since Bonneval the trend of the mountains had been forcing us westwards—by the Col du Galibier. The afternoon gave us a long pull uphill. The road zig-zagged continually to get an easier gradient, and wherever possible we cut off the bends. We cut off one too many on the higher slopes: our road did not come back as expected, but, as we afterwards found, continued round the shoulder of the hill to take a new direction. We persisted for some time until our error was fully apparent, but were luckily able to follow a pleasant path round the shoulder without losing altitude, eventually rejoining our road several miles ahead. The



last few miles were downhill, as the Galibier route does not begin in its proper valley, which is steep and narrow in its lower reaches, but climbs into it some distance up. We spent the night at Valloire, twenty-two miles from Modane.

Valloire is only half-way up the long ascent from the Maurienne to the Galibier Pass. The first part of the next stage was thus still uphill, at first gradually up the open valley, and afterwards in zig-zags up steep slopes. The old road, of which the derelict sections near the top will soon become merged in scree, crosses the path at a height of 8725 feet, but as rain had come on we kept to the improved road which pierces the ridge below the pass by a tunnel over four hundred yards long. So we passed from Savoy into the Dauphiné. The great peaks should have burst upon our view, with the Meije just opposite, but unhappily the weather hid all this from sight. The rain soon stopped, but the low clouds obstinately remained as we made the steep descent. The road follows an astonishingly tortuous course in order to avoid severe gradients, and the pedestrian can cut off many of the bends by running down the grassy slopes. Despite the late date we could see something of the great variety of flowers for which the locality is noted. At the bottom the route turns south-eastwards down the Guisane valley after joining the road that comes over the Col du Lautaret from Grenoble. We stopped at Le Monetier, twenty-two miles from Valloire, and, as the inn itself was full, we were billeted in an empty house.

Next day we walked the remaining ten miles down the valley, to its confluence with the Durance at Briançon, and had the afternoon to spend in idleness there. Briançon is a picturesquely fortified town with a superb situation. It seems to stand on a hill blocking the valley. Actually the hill consists of two approaching shoulders, one from each main wall of the valley, and is cleft by a narrow gorge. On one half stands the town, itself fortified, and on the other a citadel, a little



bridge connecting the two: on the surrounding heights are numerous outlying forts. The narrow streets of the town are of extreme steepness, and in a gutter in the centre of the chief one a stream of clear water races down. From the upper battlements the view is magnificent, particularly north-westwards up the valley whence we had come and south-westwards down the main valley where we proposed to go.

The Route des Alpes makes an eastward detour among the Cottians after Briançon, but we decided to follow the direct if probably less interesting route down the Durance, and so to reach Guillestre, where the valley bends westwards, in one day instead of two. The weather, as luck would have it, now interfered for the first time with our plans. An hour out it began to rain, and soon heavily. We sheltered until it abated a little, then went on in our water-proofs. The abatement was short-lived and a steady downpour for the rest of the day seemed all too likely. Eight miles from Briançon, therefore, at the village of L'Argentière, we decided that where we had lunched we must also dine and sleep.

It rained itself out in the night, and we set off early to make up again on our programme. If we could do the remaining thirteen miles of the walk to Guillestre while the day was yet young, the next stage, the seventeen-mile crossing of the Col de Vars, could still be done before night. This we did, and in all it was one of our best days and graced by perfect weather. Above Guillestre the road to the pass winds in narrow bends up a steep shoulder. From this a splendid view is obtained, looking back up the valley of the Durance to the Écrins, the Ailefroide and Mt. Pelvoux. There is an indicator here with a coloured sketch-map in the centre, a diagram of the view round it, and named directional lines in an outer ring. Towards the summit (6940 feet) the route is fairly level, but on the other side the descent is steep and the road rough and tortuous: few cars appeared to use this section. St.-Paul-sur-Ubaye, at the foot of the pass, was our stopping-place, and



accommodation was found despite the fact that the hotel has ceased to exist.

Next day the rain was on again, a drenching down-pour that continued all morning. After lunch it was less heavy, and we set out in water-proofs and were soon rewarded by its ceasing altogether. Fortunately, too, the programme was only a thirteen mile walk to Barcelonnette, for which half the day sufficed. At first the road lay beside the stream at the bottom of a picturesque gorge, but later the valley became level and wide, and the air was scented by the lavender which was growing in great abundance among the stones along the banks. The Ubaye was swollen in flood after the heavy rains, and at several points the road was obstructed by fallen stones, loosened by the wet, or by the overflow of tributary streams. Luckily we had pressed on for fear of renewed bad weather and so got in betimes: later on motorists and bus-passengers arrived from various directions in much greater numbers than the place could hold.

There followed our third and last wet day. We had only one more march, but it was to be a long and, we hoped, very fine one, so we made no attempt to proceed. Thus we stayed a day and a second night at Barcelonnette, filling in the time between meals with short walks in fair intervals, and, incidentally, seeing an Osprey hawking up and down the river. Speaking of time, the town clock here, like some others in this region (made in Briançon), strikes each hour twice over, with an interval of a minute or two. The first chime is presumably a warning, and one is ready to count the strokes of the second: as to which indicates the hour correctly we are not quite clear!

The evening had promised a change for the better and the morning happily brought realisation. We breakfasted early and set out to break the back of a long day before the first halt. The road went southwards, later turning eastwards, up the bottom of a grand ravine with sides precipitous in many places.



Here and there falls of rock or earth induced by yesterday's rain had blocked the road, although a few cars got across later in the day. Then the valley opened out and led southwards, becoming steeper, then more level, and finally very steep for a long final pull up which the road wound. After eighteen miles uphill, in all, we were on the top of the Col de Cayolle (7715 feet), and astride the chief western rib of the Maritime Alps. We unpacked the lunch from which we had for some time been refraining with difficulty, and sat down to appreciate our position.

The pilgrimage was in its essential accomplished. We were at the top of the direct seaward slope. Hitherto every valley we had crossed, or gone up or down, had been one whose waters flowed ultimately westwards to the Rhone: the stream at our feet flowed southwards and south-eastwards to the sea. Whether we saw the sea or not is a moot point. We considered this to be a theoretical possibility, and a distant haze to the south may or may not have been it. In any event the condition we had set ourselves was satisfied.

It remained but to complete the day's march, still not half done although now all downhill, in order to reach the railway. We had originally meant to spend the night at Entraunes, a dozen miles nearer, but were now anxious to make up for lost time. The road is wonderfully engineered down the first steep slopes, but we were able to cut off many of the bends. Then we were in the valley, and four hours of following it, latterly through scenery of fantastic barrenness, brought us to our goal at Guillaumes. We had covered forty miles by the stones that day, to our no little satisfaction, and two hundred odd since we had left the train at Bourg-St.-Maurice at a date that seemed distant, so full had the interval been of experience and impressions and of the substance of pleasant memories.

From Guillaumes a light railway connects with trains for Nice at Pont-de-Gueydon. In the event, next day,



we went the whole way in a motor coach, of which journey the least said the better. Had we known of the wonderful red gorges just below Guillaumes, imperfectly seen as they were, we should certainly have done another day on foot. Further down we were tempted to linger by a glimpse of the old fortress village of Entrevaux, rising in an angle of the Var and approached by a draw-bridge across the stream. Lower still there are again great limestone gorges at the bottom of which the road and railway run beside the stream before finally emerging on the littoral. But past all these things we were merely transported, and they do not properly belong to this tale. As we descended the pines gave way to olives, and these in turn to vine-yards: the vines finally to oranges and lemons, and the last stretch of road was bordered by eucalyptus and bamboo. As evening drew near we reached the sea-front at Nice.

After the joy of energy, the joy of relaxation. We had two days of that at Nice, idling in the heat, bathing prolongedly in the Mediterranean water, and basking in the sun on the shingle for as long as we thought our skins would stand. On the second evening we took train *via* Marseilles and were back in London the next night.



## THE SHELTER STONE VISITORS' BOOK.

BY JAMES L. DUNCAN.

THE Shelter Stone of Loch Avon is a place probably familiar to most of the readers of this *Journal*. It is certainly well known to all lovers of the Cairngorms, a large number of whom have passed nights, which doubtless they look back on with pleasure, within its walls. Others often make it the goal of a day's tramp, after a visit to Ben Macdhui or Cairngorm. They cannot do better, for it brings them into surroundings of grandeur, unrivalled in this part of Scotland. Whether the sun is shining and the hill tops are mirrored in the blue waters of the Loch, or whether they be swathed in mist and the effect is one of sombre gloom, the scene is always impressive.

It was to obtain a record of those who visited this spot that a party of us left a visitors' book there in August 1924. For protection, we left it inside a tin which had inscribed on it in large letters VISITORS' BOOK. We placed the tin on a conspicuous ledge in the outer passage of the shelter where it could not fail to be seen. Returning a year later, we were very gratified to find the large number of pages which had been filled with names and accounts of experiences. The book itself did not seem to have suffered from damp during the winter. The names and accompanying notes made extremely interesting reading. Perhaps the most interesting thing was that within the year (that is from 14th Aug., 1924, to the same date in 1925), there had been over one hundred and fifty visitors, including two dogs. Many of the visitors were Aberdonians, no



doubt including a considerable number of members of the Cairngorm Club. Others came from more distant places including a party of students from Edinburgh University, who had stayed a night there. One gentleman, from the United States, talked of the shelter as a "cavern." A considerable number of the visitors had stayed overnight, enjoying varied experiences. One of them describes a meal eaten at 2 a.m., consisting of tea which had a funny taste and sandwiches of a paraffin flavour. It is a matter for regret that the *genius loci*, the famous Ferla Mhor, has not thought fit to sign his name, but perhaps he only haunts the higher regions.

During 1924, after the fourteenth of August, there had been twenty-five visitors, the last of them being on the last day of September. Thereafter the Shelter Stone remained unvisited until the following year brought its first visitor on the seventh of June. During the intervening months no one had attempted to make his way over that rough stony country, held fast in the grip of winter. From that date onwards, however, there had been a steady flow of visitors mostly in July and August. The last visitors of all, before our appearance, had assiduously collected a carpet of heather for the inner chamber. They had also left a number of cooking utensils and some cocoa in a tin. Theirs is an example which might well be followed by others.

I think the book may justly claim to have served its purpose of giving an interesting record of those who enjoy the "sweetness of the mountain air." Certainly there is no better exercise than a long day's tramp, while to camp out amid such surroundings has all the spice of adventure and romance.

a. J. Macdonald gives the dimensions as rough 44 ft in length, 21 ft in breadth & 22 ft in height, which allowing 12 cubic ft. to the ton would make its weight 1700 tons. Dr William Gellie, who measured it the Stone in Aug. 1924, made its dimensions 43' by 20' by 22' & sample of the stone itself, subsequently examined in London, showed a specific gravity of 2.58, grammes per c.c. which gives 1361 tons as the weight of the block.

From S. H. G. Guide.



## THE BEN MACDHUI GIANT SPECTRE.

AT the last annual dinner of the Club, of which an account appears elsewhere in this number, Professor J. Norman Collie, F.R.S., the Honorary President, related an experience which befell him when climbing alone on Ben Macdhui over thirty-five years ago. He was returning from the cairn in a mist when he began to think he heard some other thing than merely the noise of his own footsteps in the snow. For every few steps he took he heard a big crunch, and then another crunch, as if someone was walking after him, but taking steps three or four times the length of his own. He said to himself, "This is all nonsense." He listened and heard it again, but could see nothing in the mist. As he walked on and the eerie "crunch, crunch" sounded behind him, he was seized with the most tremendous terror. Why, he did not know, for he did not mind being alone on the hills. But the uncanny something which he sensed caused fear to seize him by the throat. He took to his heels and ran, staggering blindly among the boulders, for four or five miles, nearly down to Rothiemurchus Forest. That was an experience which made him feel that on no account would he ever venture back to the top of Ben Macdhui alone.

About twelve years later he told this story to the late Dr. Kellas, and found that he had had a weird experience at the top of the same mountain about midnight one month of June. Dr. Kellas saw a man come up out of the Larig and wander round the cairn, nearby which Dr. Kellas's brother was sitting. What surprised him was that the man was practically the same height as the cairn, which was at least ten feet high, and that it was not an ordinary thing for people to wander alone on the top of Ben Macdhui at midnight. The man descended into the Larig. When Dr. Kellas asked his brother, "What on earth was that man doing walking round the cairn?" the brother replied, "I never saw any man at all."

A good many years after that Mr. Colin Phillip met an old man, living at the edge of Rothiemurchus Forest, who knew the Cairngorms very well. When Mr. Phillip told this man Dr. Kellas's story, he was not the least bit surprised, but simply replied, "Oh, aye, that would have been the Ferla Mhor (the Big Grey Man)



he would have been seeing." "That is the end of the story," said Professor Collie. "Whatever you may make out of it I do not know, but there is something very queer about the top of Ben Macdhui, and I will not go back there again by myself, I know."

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The publication of this story in the press led to a flood of interviews and correspondence which continued for some weeks, the heading "Ben Macdhui Ghost," or "Ben Macdhui Spectre," becoming a familiar one in the newspapers. Some writers scouted the suggestion as absurd and ascribed Professor Collie's experience to a fit of nerves; others recounted weird feelings which had come to them in the mist or recalled tales of ghostly armies heard or seen on the Barmekin at Echt and the Brimmond Hill; and others again described mysterious music which they had heard on the Cairngorms and which proved to be due to the sound of the wind rising and falling in gullies. No further light, however, was thrown upon Professor Collie's adventure and the matter is chronicled here and left to the judgment of the individual reader. There are two other legends of this character connected with the Cairngorms. One relates to the spectre with a bloody red hand who haunts Glen More, and the other to a ghost who haunted Bynack and who was shot with an arrow, after which he disappeared.

#### RECORD-BREAKING MOUNTAINEERING.

IN the last issue of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*, some account was given of the rival parties of English peak-baggers who came up to Scotland by motor and climbed all the four-thousanders in one day, that is, Ben Nevis and its two eastern outliers, Carn Mor Dearg and Aonach Beag, and the four central Cairngorms, viz. Cairngorm, Ben Macdhui, Cairntoul and Braeriach, all within 24 hours, including the time taken in motoring from Fort William to Loch Morlich. At Whitsuntide this year another freak record of this kind was established, when a party led by Dr. Hadfield of Cavendish Street, London, ascended the three highest mountains in Wales, England and Scotland in one day. They began with Snowdon, went on to Scafell, and finished with Ben Nevis, all within 22 hours 10 minutes. They were motored from Wales to Scotland by Mr. H. P. Cain, president of the Rock and Fell Climbing Club.



## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

### THE ANNUAL MEETING.

THE 37th annual meeting took place on Saturday, November 28th. Mr. William Garden, President, in the chair. The Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. John A. Nicol, advocate, in his report stated that the membership now stood at 216, a considerable increase over last year, and that the finances were in a much better position, a debit balance of £6 15s. 9d. at the beginning of the year having been converted into a credit balance of £28 16s. 5d. The report was adopted. It was stated that there was a sum of £55 on deposit receipt to the credit of the Ben Macdhuil indicator fund.

The cordial thanks of the club were given to Mr. James A. Parker for the great trouble taken by him in planning and erecting the indicator on Ben Macdhuil. In this thanks were associated with Mr. Parker, his two workmen, Messrs. Fowlie and Fleming.

The following office-bearers were elected: Hon. President, Prof. J. Norman Collie, LL.D., F.R.S., of the Chair of Organic Chemistry in the University of London; President, Mr. William Garden; Vice-presidents, Messrs. T. R. Gillies, advocate, and Walter A. Reid, C.A. To replace the three retiring members of Committee (Messrs. Conner, Drummond, and Parker). Messrs. David S. P. Douglas, Alexander Simpson, and James M'Coss were appointed. Mr. Henry Alexander was re-appointed editor of the *Club Journal*, and Mr. John A. Nicol was re-elected Hon. Secretary and Treasurer.

Some discussion took place regarding the steps that might be taken to attract juvenile or associate members to the Club. It was pointed out by the Secretary that as a matter of fact there was probably more young people in the Club at the present than ever before, and they could pick quite a good Rugby fifteen from them. The matter was remitted to the Committee.

### THE ANNUAL DINNER.

THE annual dinner, which followed, was attended by a company of over 100 members and friends. Mr. William Garden, the President, was in the chair and, in giving the toast of "The Club," observed that, though he was the thirteenth President, he was not



superstitious. The Club was the fourth in size among British mountaineering clubs, having been founded in 1889. Referring to the attractions of mountaineering he said that it had been statistically proved that mountaineers lived long, and that they were able to indulge in their sport, at anyrate to a moderate extent, longer than most other sportsmen. Mr. Naismith had showed that men who joined the Alpine Club probably added from four and a half to five years to their lives.

No better antidote existed for busy men and women than the freedom of the hills, where they came up against Nature and were always expectant of some unknown difficulty to be surmounted. Who was there among them who had not at some time or another desired to discover something of the unknown, and, like Ulysses, "to sail beyond the sunset and the baths of all the western stars?" Mountaineering was a sport which helped them to throw off their cares just as Christain threw off the burden of sin in Bunyan's famous allegory.

Speaking of those critics who asked why he climbed hills, getting soaked and tired and obtaining no view owing to mist and clouds, he said the only thing to do was to be sorry for these people and for what they missed in life, and to endeavour to try to persuade them to try mountaineering themselves. In Murray's Handbook of Switzerland (1854) it was stated to be "a somewhat remarkable fact that, while the ascent of Mount Blanc was attempted by few, a large proportion of those who have made the ascent are persons of unsound mind." What a change had taken place since then!

Professor Collie, the Honorary President, in replying, said that the Cairngorm Club was not only extremely virile and active, but was most fortunate in having practically at its door some of the finest mountains in Scotland. The Cairngorms were unlike other Scottish mountains, having characteristics all their own. They did not find peaked tops there, as in the western hills, but great, magnificent masses of flat tops cutting down into beautiful corries, and in these corries they would find beautiful lochs. The mountains sloped into lovely valleys, with pine woods that could not be equalled elsewhere in Scotland. Professor Collie proceeded to describe his experience on Ben Macdhui when he encountered the Ferla Mhor (see p. ).

Mr. James A. Parker, giving "The Guests," appealed to climbers to help in the campaign against litter on the hills and suggested that there might be adopted as the refrain of a club song these lines (with apologies to Longfellow):

Leave no litter lying on the hills ;  
For empty tins and tangled strings  
And paper bags are not the things.  
To scatter where the bunting sings.



During the evening Dr. J. R. Levack exhibited a number of lantern slides, illustrating the building of the Ben Macdhuì indicator and the President showed a series of Norwegian slides. The musical programme was contributed by Mr. Alec Nicol and Mrs. A. Nicol and the Misses Skakle, while Mr. Robert Clarke recited W. A. Mackenzie's poem on Aberdeen.

#### NEW YEAR MEET, 1926—BRAEMAR.

THE New Year Meet of 1926 is memorable particularly for the Lochnagar climb on the second day of the year. Conditions were simply excellent. The heavy snowfall of November and December did not leave so much snow in the corries as might be expected. Besides, the snow did not pack which it usually does prior to the month of February. As a result this spring will show a distinct shortage of snow and the wells and springs of the valleys may not be sufficiently fed to provide for the demands throughout the ensuing summer. On this occasion there was generally a complete snow covering from the forest upwards, with considerable snow fields, sometimes of frozen snow which eased the effort of the climb. The times were—Dantzic Bridge (now Garrawalt Lodge) to the top  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours—descent by same route 1 hour 40 minutes, which allowed time for an excellent tea at the Lodge, when daylight had just gone, and the conveyance had just arrived to carry us to Braemar.

On the summit there was practically no wind and the sun shone through the clouds as the party reached the top. The indicator was stripped of its covering of frozen snow and a wonderful panorama lay in front of the party on all sides—including a peep of the Pentland Hills. The well near the top was completely hidden with a snowfield about 10 feet deep or more. The giant Cairngorms in the distance were magnificent as the atmosphere became perfectly clear. They were Braeriach with its majestic north-west corries in the sunlight, Ben Macdhuì in the shade, Cairn Toul, Beinn a' Bhuird and Ben Avon with finely chiselled edges. Benachie as usual on the other side showed up in solitary state. During the descent a snake-like mist appeared to occupy the whole length of Glen Slugan, right to Invercauld. This mist, however, had disappeared before the party reached the forest. The colours and tints were exceptionally fine—a prevalence of green rays in the rainbow to the north. On the descent one had seen frequently at the New Year time pink tints on the northern giants, but on this occasion green prevailed all over. The party felt as of one mind that the beauty and charm of the climb were unsurpassable. With eyes scarcely able to grasp the magnificence of the picture, one realised that a winter climb of Lochnagar in





*W. Malcolm.*

THE TOP OF THE BLACK SPOUT, JANUARY 2, 1926.



THE LOCHNAGAR INDICATOR, JANUARY 2, 1926. *E. V. Haigh.*



such conditions was indeed worth achieving. The party who did the climb were Major Charles Reid, E. V. Haigh (of the Rucksack Club), W. M. Alexander, R. Sellar, D. Douglas, W. Malcolm, G. P. Geddes and Walter A. Reid (Vice-President), Dr. McIntyre was also seen on the top.

On New Year's Day Sellar, Geddes, McIntyre, Haigh and C. Reid tramped by the Slugan to the Quoich en route for the north top of Beinn a' Bhuid. They were fortunate in finding a snow bridge over the Quoich, with a fine snow cornice on the steep banks of the river. Snow and thick mist made three of the party decide to turn back, but two of them reached an altitude of over 3,000 feet and finding the mist becoming more dense also turned back. All the party reached the hotel before dark.

On the 3rd January, Malcolm, Haigh, Geddes and Douglas made an early start for Ben Macdhui, but unfortunately the weather broke down. They picked up Mr. Robert Clarke at Linn of Dee en route. It was then realised by the party, specially when it was found that the car could not get within three miles of Derry Lodge on account of the snowdrift, that a less ambitious plan would have to be followed. Cairn Mhaim (3,328) was selected. The snow was generally favourable though a few hundred steps had to be cut. In thick mist the top was reached at one o'clock and, of course, no view was obtained. The return journey was made by Lui-beg.

The rest of the party at the meet were Mrs. Godfrey Geddes, Miss Elma Milne and Mr. George Duncan. All were a merry crowd and the time passed quickly with an impromptu entertainment on Hogmanay, curling on the Braemar pond, and inspecting the excavations done by Dr. Douglas Simpson and his Scouts at Kindrochit Castle. The New Year was brought in with the usual ceremony and the health of Mr. and Mrs. Gregor of the Invercauld Hotel was heartily pledged. During the three days many stags were seen, also the solitary snow bunting, crows, ravens, ptarmigan, and grouse. Telegrams were exchanged with the Scottish Mountaineering Club at their meet at Tyndrum—Mr. J. A. Parker (President). As the party motored down the valley towards Ballater on Monday afternoon, the sun broke through the clouds and Lochnagar appeared in its full winter glory to bid us "au revoir."

The colours of the Club, in its tie of gold and dark brown are now popular and well in evidence. A tramp over Lochnagar is at best as interesting as a round of golf on one's favourite links. But the climber's eyes often look upward, while the golfer must "aye keep his eee on the ba'."

W. A. R.



## EASTER MEET, 1926—CRIANLARICH.

THE Easter Meet was held at Crianlarich, Perthshire, and was a great success. This delightful mountaineering centre is a most convenient one for well over a dozen peaks of 3,000 feet and over, are close to and within easy range of the hotel.

Members present:—W. Garden (President), W. A. Reid (Vice-President), Mrs. Henderson, Mrs. Levack, Miss E. Stewart Warren, Miss Ruth Warren, Messrs. D. S. P. Douglas, W. W. King, Paisley (with guest C. S. Perry), J. R. Levack, J. W. Levack, J. L. McNaughton, and James Watt, Edinburgh.

By the evening of Thursday, April 1st, most of the members had arrived. On Friday the President, Miss E. Stewart Warren, Miss Ruth Warren, Messrs. Reid, Douglas, J. R. Levack, J. W. Levack and Watt climbed Ben More (3,843 feet) by its N.W. shoulder, a stiff, uncompromising grind up a grass and boulder strewn slope of 3,300 feet, the last 500 feet being in mist and rain. Very little snow was encountered. After a short stay at the cairn, four of the party, the Misses Warren, J. R. Levack and J. W. Levack, descended by the northern slope of the mountain to the road, steering by compass, as the mist had increased down to 1,500 feet from the summit. Below the mist, magnificent views were obtained, the weather in the valley being brilliant and sunny. The rest of the party—the President, Messrs. Reid (Vice-President), Douglas and Watt, went down the south side of Ben More to the col between it and Stobinian and then climbed this second peak, the twin of Ben More and only 16 feet lower than it. They then returned to the col and contoured round the west side of Ben More, and so down to the road at Ben More farm. Mr. McNaughton and his sister, Mrs. Henderson, followed the Ben More party about half way up the hill and then returned home.

Saturday morning was dull, and rain threatened, but it was much milder and soon cleared up, leaving a thick heat haze. Mr. McNaughton, Mr. Watt and Mrs. Henderson climbed Cruach Ardran (3,477 feet) from the corrie.

There was little mist, but the distant view was poor, owing to the haze. The President, and Vice-President had to leave for home for business reasons, and the rest of the Ben More party thought they should take a day off, after their strenuous exertions of the day before. So they motored to Loch Awe, lunched with friends at the hotel, and then visited the Falls of Cruachan and the Pass of Brander. A delightful day was spent and the party returned to Crianlarich in the evening.

Sunday morning was calm and misty, but the barometer had risen a point, and, as the morning wore on, it was evident that the day was going to be very fine. Consequently, a party of seven,



Mrs. Levack, the Misses Warren, Messrs. J. R. Levack, J. W. Levack, Douglas and Watt motored to Loch Awe Hotel, with the intention of climbing Ben Cruachan. Mrs. Levack remained with friends at the hotel, and the others set out from the hotel along the high-level path which skirts the mountain side for about three miles, and well above the loch, till it reaches the Cruachan burn, as this emerges from the main corrie of Cruachan.

The views from the path across and down the loch were superb. The writer has rarely seen a deeper blue on any Scottish loch than was seen that Easter morning. The route now followed was northwards along the floor of the corrie to the foot of the steep slope leading up to the main ridge of the mountain. By this time the day was gloriously fine, only the sun was becoming rather hot and the breeze had died away. A very stiff pull up the steep slope landed the party on the rather narrow main ridge, about a third of a mile east of the main top. A few minutes halt was made to take in some of the details of the amazing panorama now visible to the north. With the single exception of Ben Nevis, which was veiled in mist, all the high tops, near and distant, were visible. Down below in the foreground and running northwards from the foot of the mountain lay the whole length of Loch Etive, backed grandly by Ben Starav and the Buchailles, leading to Glencoe, all sunlit and gorgeous, while southwards the whole 23 miles of Loch Awe showed clearly from the ridge. Away to the west the sea sparkled and shone, and all the islands looked glorious.

But the party was still a little distance away from the main top, with a "bad step" intervening. This step is a gap on the ridge due to a fault in the rocks. One has to climb down some slabby rocks very carefully on the left to pass it. The difficulty was easily passed and the party hurried to the main top (3,689 feet), arriving there at 4.35. Faint wisps of mist were beginning to wreath themselves about the topmost rocks and the Taynuilt peak of the mountain, Stob Dearg, was almost hidden from view. The lateness of the hour prevented any halt and the party hurried down southwards to the col between Cruachan and Meall Cuanail. Here a good rest was taken and the party then made a rapid trek down into the Cruachan Corrie. Two of the party hurried on ahead and along by the high level path to the hotel, while the ladies, Levack, Sen., and Watt walked leisurely down the path by the Cruachan Falls to the road, where they were picked up by Mr. Douglas, who had come along from the hotel with his car. The party then motored back to Crianlarich and dined rather late. They were not the last to return to the hotel, however, for Mr. McNaughton and his sister had spent the day on Ben Lui and did not return till very late.

Mr. King and his guest, Mr. Perry, climbed Ben Chalum,



walking from the hotel and along the uninteresting ridge leading to the top, from which they had clear and expansive views.

On Monday Mr. King and Mr. Perry climbed Ben More by the N. W. ridge and corrie. They had some fine cloud effects on the summit. Mr. McNaughton and Mrs. Henderson also climbed Ben More on Monday and were prevented only by want of time from completing the ascent of Stobinian.

All the members enjoyed the Meet. Everybody was in good humour, the hotel was most comfortable, and the service left nothing to be desired. Last, and most important, the weather was almost perfect.

J. R. LEVACK.

#### MAY HOLIDAY—LOCHNAGAR.

ON Monday, 3rd May, the Aberdeen Spring Holiday, the Club had a very enjoyable excursion to Lochnagar. Although mist covered the plateau all day the weather was dry and very favourable. The party, numbering seventeen, under the care of the Secretary, Mr. J. A. Nicol, went by train to Ballater and motored to Allnaguibhsaich.

Nine of the party ascended by the Ladder and the edge of the cliffs, and descended by the Glasallt. The other eight crossed the Meikle Pap Col, and descended to the "loch." It was quite warm and clear of snow down in the corrie, but most impressive as one looked up to the snow-filled gullies disappearing into the mist. This party ascended to the foot of the Black Spout where it was found necessary to rope up at once, as the snow was found, unexpectedly, to be in quite an icy condition, and stretches had to be cut. On every bit of vegetation on the rocky ledges the most beautiful fog-crystals were forming. The Black Spout at this season of the year, when the snow is getting less, is not now quite so easy as it used to be, owing to a fall of rock about half way up on the left side, which is in a very loose condition, and there is now what may be called a "bad step" on the right side where the route has to be followed. At the head of the Spout the snow was quite vertical, but a way was found, as is usual, at the right side where the party got through without very much difficulty. At the summit the indicator was found to be in good condition, but of no use that day as the mist only rolled away sufficiently to give a view of the Lochan Eoin for a few moments.

The top of the Douglas-Gibson gully looked most magnificent with its cornices, icicles, and vertical slab. This gully has never yet been climbed. At the head of the Red Spout there were two very curious snow caves formed presumably by wind in the bergschrund.



The Black Spout party included three ladies, Mrs. Ross Mackenzie, member, Mrs. Alex. Booth, and Mrs. J. McCoss. After motoring back to Ballater, the company had tea, and returned to Aberdeen by the evening train.

J. M'COSS.

#### SATURDAY AFTERNOON EXCURSIONS.

IN June, the Club held two afternoon excursions, on the 12th to Clochnaben, and on the 26th to Bennachie. In each case the party motored from Aberdeen and in the case of the Bennachie excursion the hill was traversed from the Garioch side to Kemnay.

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#### "ABER" IN PLACE NAMES.

GAELIC enters so largely into the place names of the Cairngorms, as of the Highlands generally, that anything relating to Gaelic language and philology is bound to be of some interest to hill-lovers, though they may not be exact students of this branch of learning. Attention may therefore be drawn to *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, the new publication of the Celtic Department of the University of Aberdeen. In the committee of management are two members of the Cairngorm Club, Mr. W. M. Alexander and Mr. George Duncan. The majority of the articles in the opening issue, which has just appeared, relate to linguistic and archaeological subjects, somewhat outside the scope of hill climbers, but the paper by Mr. F. C. Diack upon "Aber" and "Inver" in place names is of great interest to all roamers of the Highlands. Mr. Diack disputes the common theory that "Aber" means the mouth of a river, and suggests that it is an old Gaelic word meaning "marsh," now obsolete in Scottish Gaelic but still surviving in Irish Gaelic. This view is supported by a great body of material gathered by Mr. Diack in his long researches into the Gaelic place names of Deeside and other parts of the country, but we have space to mention only two points. Aberdeen is Abar-Dean "marsh of the Don," and Aberarder in Crathie is "marsh of the Ardar," descriptive of the flat, boggy tract in the upper part of the Fearder burn, the actual mouth of the stream being Inverardar, now Inver. Mr. Diack's paper opens up a most stimulating field of inquiry and discussion.



## EXCURSIONS.

IN response to the Editor's invitation to send notes upon old climbs, however familiar, I write a few lines upon an outing to Clochnaben on the last Saturday of April. It is more than

CLOCHNABEN thirty years since I first did Clochnaben, on that  
IN occasion walking from Banchory and taking the  
APRIL. hill en route for the Cairn o' Month and Fordoun.

Nowadays with a motor car the excursion is a very simple one indeed. A friend motored me out to a point on the Glen Dye road near Scolly's Cross, where we left the car, and about an hour and a half's walking took us over Threestane Hill and Mount Shade to the top of Clochnaben. On the top of Threestane Hill is a small granite tor with two smaller boulders lying a few yards away on either side and these, I suppose, give the name to the hill, which, truth to tell, is hardly a separate top at all, but simply a shoulder of Mount Shade. In the hollow between Mount Shade and Clochnaben we came upon a herd of deer and later in the afternoon a large herd, numbering some fifty, was seen on the south of Clochnaben. When Sir John Gladstone made Glen Dye into a deer forest, some twenty or thirty years ago, he imported some Canadian wapiti to interbreed with the native deer and this strain is still detectable in some of the antlers. A keen north wind was blowing on the top, but we found shelter on the lee side of the rocks and sat for an hour or more in the sunshine. When we arrived, the view to the west was obscured by rain showers. Before we left the top, these had cleared and a magnificent prospect presented itself of the Cairngorms, glistening white in a mantle of fresh snow. With a glass one could look right into the corries of Beinn a Bhuird and to the left was what we took to be the Coire Sputan Dearg top of Ben Macdhui with the main top, all white, behind, and to the left of this again just a glimpse of still more distant cliffs and snow, possibly the Garbh Choire cliffs of Braeriach. At first glance we could not see Lochnagar, it seemed to be hidden by Mount Keen: but suddenly with the glass it came in sight just over the left shoulder of Mount Keen, not the whole face of the mountain, as in the familiar view from Deeside, but just the top of the cliffs and the Cac Carn Beag, all pure white. The sun was shining upon Lochnagar and not upon the nearer hills and this made the view all the more striking. As the afternoon was



still young, we did not descend straight to the car but proceeded some two miles along the ridge towards Mount Battock, over the ground which is notorious for its peat hags, and then dropped down towards the Dye and back by the Bridge of Dye, always a lovely spot, with the rocky peak of Clochnaben rising in the west. A feature of the day was the exquisite green of the young foliage on the larches. It is always a pleasure to visit the Glen Dye district, and see the splendid woods and plantations with which Sir John Gladstone is enriching the country. On the east side of the road, near Scolly's Cross, there is a fine planting of larch, Sitka spruce and Douglas fir, all growing magnificently, and also an interesting planting of larch and beech interspersed, while on the far side of the Dye at the Bog of Saughs a large area has just been planted. Enterprise like this, if general, would soon make a different and richer Highlands.

H.

THE hill road called "The Cryne Corse" is the eastmost of the old roads across the Mounth, or, at least, of such of these roads as cross the hilly part of the Grampians. It provides

THE one of the best afternoon excursions which are CRYNE CORSE. available from Aberdeen. Formerly a route of considerable importance, as being the direct connection between the Howe of the Mearns and lower Deeside, it still retains signs of long since vanished traffic. The route cannot be better summarised than in the following words, quoted in one of the Spalding Club volumes from a document of the early part of the 17th century: "Craiyincrosse Monthe layes from the Church of Sanct Palladius vulgarly called Pade Kirk in the Mearnes to the Mylles of Drum." To make an afternoon walk of the Cryne Corse you can take it in the opposite direction, and instead of making for Paldy Kirk (Auchinblae) go to Carmont Station: train to Crathes at 1 p.m., return from Carmont at 7.15 p.m. This walk is some nine miles from station to station. The walking directions are as follows:—From the bridge at Crathes you make for the bend in the Slug road at Spyhill; thence by the peat road to the moss on the top where you hold to the left and with some care you can discover the old track which goes down to the Cowie Water in almost a straight line. Watch for a piece of so-called "Roman" stone paving on this part of the road. Two burns are crossed at the foot of the brae, then the Cowie, and thence you go up past the ruined buildings of Lady's Leys. Near the top, where you begin to look down into the Howe of the Mearns, the tracks divide. You take the left hand one which leads down the hill to Tannachie, about a mile from Carmont. The whole walk can be comfortably done between the trains mentioned. With regard to the variant spellings of the name, it may be of interest to add that "The Cryne Corse," as above, is the form which Mr. Alex. Macdonald, M.A., who has an unrivalled



knowledge of the district, gives as the correct one; he states that old speakers pronounce "Cryne" in two syllables, and this is confirmed by the spelling of this word in the Spalding Club reference. W. M. A.

REFERRING to my footnotes on page 260 of Vol. X of the *Journal*, I climbed Lochnagar on the 2nd August last, and owing to very favourable conditions in the south, was fortunate to

THE see both the Isle of May and Arthur's Seat. The  
HORIZON line of sight for the latter crosses the eastern  
FROM shoulder of the East Lomond at a point about one  
LOCHNAGAR. and a half miles east from the summit of that hill.

According to the late Mr. Gordon Jenkins' rule fully 500 feet of the upper part of Arthur's Seat should be visible and this seemed to be about right. The Moorfoots which, with perfect visibility, should form the background, and probably a bad one, were obscured by a slight haze with the result that the outline of Arthur's Seat stood out quite clearly against what was in effect a "sky background." J. A. PARKER.

TWO men, the veteran and the novice, had a most enjoyable and refreshing walk over the Beinn a Ghlo tops, in the early days of last July. The weather was perfect for tramping,

THE though the views were limited in most directions.  
ROUND OF That obtained of the Cairngorms, however, was  
BEINN A well worth the loss of all the rest, and the novice  
GHLO. could hardly be dragged away from the entrancing  
sight.

On leaving Blair Atholl they proceeded by Glen Fender's steep brae to Loch Moraig, and along the Shinigag road (which they found much improved) by the base of Carn Liath. Leaving the road they skirted the slopes of that peak by an old peat track till it ended in the moss. There was no trouble last year in drying peats. A bee line was then made over the moor for Airgiod Beinn, whose shapely cone rose directly ahead. It was here that a fine little hill on the left, Beinn Beg (2,500 feet), and one rarely climbed by parties "doing" the Beinn a Ghlos', claimed the attention of the veteran, while the novice proceeded eastwards alone. Forces were united again on the lower slopes of Airgiod Beinn, and the combined party rapidly mounted this stony slope and so over the summit (3,490 feet) and along the great hog-backed ridge to the crest of Carn nan Gabhar (3,671 feet) with its three large cairns. A slight detour was made to the top of Coire cas-eagallach where lunch was "served." The south end of Loch Loch lay placid and unrippled 2,000 feet below, while the lonely Falar Lodge was also in view. Re-crossing the summit the climbers proceeded to the Bealach au Fhiodha (2,893 feet) where the last snow patch of the season lay, then up the short distance to the summit of the middle peak of the



group with the long sounding name, Braigh Coire Chruinn Bhalgairn (3,505 feet). Ten minutes were spent here directly opposite the Kite's Cairn (3,159 feet), (Carn Chlambain, of the maps) whose long red scaur was very noticeable, and this was duly impressed on the mind of the novice as a sure means of identifying this mountain, even from long distances. They then set off down the long slope to the Cromalton Pass (2,550 feet) and up the other long and tortuous ridge to the summit of Carn Liath (3,193 feet) with its large cairn. This is the most popular peak of the Beinn a Ghlos, and many visitors there be who get no farther. Half-an-hour was profitably spent here, surveying the landscape o'er, 'ere a descent was made to the road near Loch Moraig, and so down the glen to Blair and a welcome tea, for Beinn a Ghlo is a "dry" mountain. J. S. F.

LAST July the Editor met a party of four young Englishmen on the Ben Macdhuì-Cairngorm plateau, and, finding that they were doing a weeks' camping and climbing, he asked them to send a note of their doings when they returned south. They have done so and the Editor will perhaps be excused if he says it is a pity that the CAIRNGORMS. Club members are not equally responsive to the invitation to contribute short notes:—

We arrived at Aviemore at 8.40 on Saturday morning, and having bought bread and other things, set off through Rothiemurchus. We had some difficulty here, losing the path completely, and having about twenty minutes rough going through thick heather. We struck the Larig in the end, and then climbed left over the Lurcher's Crag, and over the ridge beyond, dropping down to the Shelter Stone about 5.30. We found this in good condition and very comfortable.

*Sunday.* We climbed the north side of Loch Avon, and up Cairngorm, then over Cairn Lochan, and so to Ben Macdhuì. Down by Loch Etchachan to the Shelter Stone.

*Monday.* Climbed Beinn Mheadhoin, and then right down to Derry Buin and Linn of Dee, and so to Braemar, where we fixed up after some trouble.

*Tuesday.* Visited Invercauld, and falls of Garbh Allt.

*Wednesday.* Drove to Callater, and climbed Lochnagar.

*Thursday.* By fording the Dee (no difficulty), we visited the Linn of Quoich.

*Friday.* Followed the Dee right up past Linn o' Dee, to the bothy north of Devil's Point. Good fire going and pleasant company. (Two campers from Edinburgh.)

*Saturday.* Climbed Devil's Point, then along the ridge and up to Cairn Toul. Over Angel's Peak and up to Einich Cairn. Over to summit of Braeriach. Then dropped down to Loch Einich. Very steep descent, which took us some time.



*Sunday.* Followed path along Loch by west bank of Loch Einich, and so up Sgor Gaoith, and over Sgoran Dubh. Here we were in cloud for first time, but only for about 15 minutes. Then over the Creag Dubh, and then troublesome descent to Lochan Eilan, and so to Aviemore.

*Monday.* Left Aviemore 9.40, arrived back in Crewe 7.40. I might add that we all come from different parts, but work brings us together at Crewe. We are :—R. F. Farnell, 24, Prestatyn, N. Wales, D. H. Stuart, 24, Croydon, London, D. G. Ritson, 19, Stockport, and G. R. Keat, 19, Wimbledon London.

ONE August morning a party consisting of three Levack's, accompanied by two ladies, set out by car from Braemar, at 8 o'clock, for Derry Lodge. About an hour later another party EXACT of two Reid's, also accompanied by two ladies, MEETING ON started from Grantown-on-Spey, motoring to the BRAERIACH. upper bothy on Loch Einich, after receiving a telephone message that the Braemar party had set out. The objective of both parties was to reach the summit of Braeriach at 2 p.m. It was seen that all above 3,000 feet of Braeriach was enveloped in mist and two of the Braemar party did not go higher than the Pools of Dee. The other three, however, continued the ascent by the south west shoulder.

From Loch Einich the steep ascent for the first hour was made in broiling heat and the imposing outline of Sgoran Dubh formed part of a beautiful panorama. Soon we were in the mist, and with little difficulty the edge of the plateau was reached. To traverse the flat mile to the cairn was less easy, when one could not see twenty yards ahead. The party extended to 20 or 30 feet intervals and proceeded in single file, guided by compass bearings. A tract was made every fifty paces or thereby and a fresh bearing taken before proceeding. Eventually the edge of the cliffs on the south side was reached, and in a short time the cairn and three figures were seen simultaneously. The time was 2.5 p.m., just five minutes after the time of *rendezvous*. From each party the question was asked, "How long have you been waiting?" and the reply in each case was "Just arrived"—a very fortunate coincidence.

By the cairn a second lunch was soon on the go, and with the exchange of jokes and edible tit-bits a happy quarter of an hour soon passed, though the mist was as thick as ever, and the cold pretty severe. The return journeys were in both cases uneventful, and all congratulated each other on a very successful day. The heather at this time was most luxuriant and a discussion arose as to its colour. It was agreed that the colour actually was petunia, that the popular description of "purple" would not likely be displaced.

E.B.R.



## NOTES.

At the eighteenth Scottish National Photographic Salon, held in Aberdeen on February, hill lovers found many interesting and charming studies of mountain scenery, some by

MOUNTAIN members of our own club. Mr. Marshall J. Robb PHOTOGRAPHS. showed a splendid view of the Luibeg in spring, looking up the glen to the Sron Riach with the cliffs of the Coire Sputan Dearg in the distance, winter snow still remaining in the gullies. His very successful group photographs taken at the inauguration of the Lochnagar and Ben Macdhui indicators were also exhibited. The latter is reproduced in this issue. An admirable series of photographs by Mr. H. C. Dugan comprised views of the Stui buttress on Lochnagar, Loch Etchachan and the Wells of Dee on Braeriach and these as well as another print, "A Gathering Storm on Lochnagar," show that Mr. Dugan is no mere fair weather mountaineer. Among Mr. John Ritchie's exhibits was one fitly entitled "The Blizzard, Lochnagar," showing a bent figure breaking a track through deep snow on the summit of the mountain. Mr. James McKissack, a well-known Scottish photographer, had several fine mountain studies, notably one "The Call of the Hills," and there was great feeling in Mr. John Baird's views of glen scenery, reminiscent of the Forfarshire valleys, though that may not be the actual locality. Mr. Linton Gibb's study of birch trees on a hillside was very charming and another aspect of hill life was represented by a delightful photograph of a speckled fawn, by Mr. William Mackay.

OLDER Cairngorm lovers will remember with friendly thoughts Donald Fraser of Derry Lodge and his hospitable home and those

DONALD course will be interested in this vignette from Mr. FRASER. Seton Gordon's new volume, *The Cairngorm Hills*, "There are a few clearings in the forest near

Derry Lodge and I well remember how old Donald Fraser, the stalker at Derry, used to play golf here in his spare moments—and in winter they were many. Fraser was a great personality; he must have been known to thousands of mountaineers, for he always had a cheery greeting for the climber after a long day on the hill.



On his home course he was a cunning golfer, although I do not suppose he had ever played on any links away from his glen. I recall the time when I lowered his record for his course; he suggested slyly that I had played a few extra strokes which I had forgotten to add on to my score. No golfer in the usual sense of the word, I must hasten to add, had ever played here before, so my feat was not a remarkable one. And now Donald 'is lost to the mountain; is gone from the forest,' and I doubt if it would be possible to find the old course."

IN February an unusual accident to deer was witnessed by a number of woodmen engaged felling trees in Caenlochán, Glenisla.

DEER AND FATAL SLIP. Five deer were seen grazing peacefully near the top of Monega, over which passes the path to Braemar. Suddenly all five lost their footing and fell. The mountain side is exceedingly steep and rocky, and, despite every effort, the animals were unable to get on to their legs. Downwards they slid, gathering an ever-increasing impetus. Their career only terminated when the bottom was reached, hundreds of feet below. Here three lay dead, the other two just managing to crawl away, no doubt to succumb soon after from the injuries inflicted in their descent.

It is supposed that while feeding along the hillside the animals had inadvertently ventured upon a piece of snow-covered ice, and one or two had slipped and fallen, knocking the feet from under the others, and thus entailing the same fate to all.

THE centenary of the first ascent of the Pillar Rock in the Lake District was celebrated on Easter Sunday by a great gathering of rock climbing enthusiasts organised by the Fell and Rock Climbing Club. The Pillar Rock was first climbed in 1826 by John Atkinson, a sheep farmer, then 52 years of age, and thus robbed of its reputed inaccessibility and his feat is a classical one in British mountaineering. His route up the Rock is now regarded as a comparatively simple one, for enthusiasts have worked out over two dozen distinctive ways up the crag with a multitude of variations. Mr. George D. Abraham, the well-known Keswick climber, who in 1901 pioneered a new route up the west side of the Pillar, writing in the *Manchester Guardian* on the occasion of the centenary, says that, "probably the most remarkable *tour de force* on the Pillar or any other British mountain was the late Owen Glynné Jones's conquest of the ice-masked Walker's Gully in 1898. Scarcely less remarkable was the late Fred Botterill's first lead up the terrific north-west climb in 1908. Great deeds of daring have been done by rubber-soled experts on the west side of the rock, and the names of Leslie Stephen, John Tyndall, and Richard Pendlebury



are linked with pioneer routes on the east side of the rock in the sixties and seventies of last century."

The weather on Easter Sunday was most favourable for the scores of climbers who assembled from many quarters to "do" the Pillar, and who included experts and novices, men and women and boys and girls and even a fox-terrier, which somehow or other reached the top. Mr. George D. Abraham made his hundredth ascent of the Rock, and one climber, a famous authority on all the cracks and crannies of the Pillar, signalled the occasion by appearing in a silk hat.

IN a letter dated "Glasgow, August 11th, 1925, 1.56 p.m.," a correspondent J. C. N. wrote: "As one of a party of four I was on the summit of Ben Macdhui at 3 p.m. yesterday. Possibly my presence here in Glasgow within twenty-four hours may be a wayfarer's record, whatever the achievements of direct aeroplane and car passengers. This has been made practicable by the recently instituted morning motor 'bus service which, leaving Braemar at 8.30, connects with the 12.6 train from Perth to Glasgow. If, further, as a Glasgow old boy just entering on his 70th year of age, I may be permitted here to acknowledge the courtesy of the three ladies, unknown to me but assuredly Aberdonian, who personally conducted me to the summit of the Ben, I shall be very grateful. They fed me, photographed me, held their pace to mine, and, above all, refreshed me on the summit with a cup of tea from a thermos flask, which I am absolutely convinced was reinforced surreptitiously with something very old and special."

CLIMBERS who use the rucksack as a means of carrying their baggage, will be interested to know that it has taken a high place in tests carried out for the Industrial Fatigue Research Board by Mr. E. M. Bedale and Dr. H. M. Vernon, the purpose of which was to discover the best method of carrying loads. It was found that the most efficient carrying posture is the one that is nearest to the normal walking posture. The more that the body or limbs have to bend away from that posture, the less efficient is the method of carrying. A yoke over the shoulders, with two pails suspended from it, was proved to be the most efficient for loads of all weights. The energy required to carry a load of twenty pounds by this method was much below that required for the same weight by any other method, and the rate of increase in the expenditure of energy as the load increased was very much slower than that of any other method. Next to the yoke-and-pail method in efficiency comes the bundle method, namely, a bundle carried hanging from one's



hands at either side, exactly as one carries a suitcase in each hand. Obviously, however, one cannot go up a mountain carrying a yoke and pails or bundles in each hand, and it is reassuring to learn from Mr. Bedale and Dr. Vernon that the rucksack method is the best where these are not available. The initial effort required by the rucksack is high compared with the others, but in both cases the load can be increased to a considerable extent without much change in the rate of fatigue. The only objection to a rucksack is that it is so capacious that one is tempted to cram stuff into it and repent later.

LAST October an unusual funeral service took place on the summit of Great Gable in the Lake District when the ashes of a hill lover were cast to the winds. Seymour Jackson Gubba, ASHES CAST a retired schoolmaster, who lived at Buttermere, TO THE left instructions in his will that his remains should WINDS. be cremated and the ashes scattered from one of the peaks in the mountain country from which he drew his lifelong inspiration. This was carried out on the first fine day of a stormy week, when a company of some forty or fifty friends climbed Great Gable and took part in a service, amid billows of mist, on the mountain top. Gusts of wind swirled the ashes over the edge of the cliffs.

MR. H. F. LAMBERT, vice-president of the Alpine Club of Ontario, gave an account recently in London of the first ascent of Mount Logan, the highest peak in Canada and the second highest in the North American Continent. MOUNT CANADA'S HIGHEST PEAK. Mount Logan reaches an altitude of 19,850 feet. In 1922 Professor A. P. Coleman, of the University of Toronto, the veteran geologist and mountain climber, presented to the Alpine Club of Canada the suggestion that a serious attempt should be made to conquer the mountain, and in the autumn of 1923 the club decided that an expedition should be undertaken. The sister alpine clubs of Great Britain and the United States were asked to send representatives, and thus the expedition was, from the outset, stamped as distinctly international in character. The expedition started on May 12th, 1925, and reached the summit on June 23rd, after a hazardous journey, many nights being spent on the open ice. An unusual feature of their equipment was the inclusion of 1,000 willow wands to mark the trail. These wands, about three feet in length, were stuck into the snow at intervals of about 100 feet on the right side of the trail. They proved veritable beacons upon the snow-clad slope of the mountain, where without them the task would have been utterly hopeless.

The climbers suffered greatly from the sun-glare off the snow,



their faces peeling and their lips cracking and bleeding. Success eventually rewarded the expedition, the climax of which was thus described: "We set foot on the summit of Mount Logan at eight in the evening, and as we stood there in a little knot, with the distance completely obscured by fog and storm, we were reminded that a storm of no little intensity was upon us, so with a hearty handshake, the reading of the aneroid, and the depositing of a small brass tube in the snow containing the record, we commenced our downward journey after a bare 25 minutes' stop on the summit."

REV. WILL BURNETT, Restalrig, in "Vignettes from Strathspey" contributed to *Life and Work*, describes a recent visit to Glenfeshie

when he saw the famous fresco by Landseer. It is LANDSEER'S painted on the plaster above the fireplace of a little FRESKO IN cottage among the ancient pines some little distance GLENFESHIE. beyond the modern lodge. Landseer was a frequent visitor to Glenfeshie and it was there that he got the inspiration for many of his pictures. "Half the fresco and more is gone," writes Mr. Burnett, "soon the whole will have disappeared piecemeal; but just as it is, it brings even to the untutored eye that mark of reality which is the mark of genius. The work is carried out in a brown colour on a white ground. There is almost no background. The figures of the animals engage all the attention. One large stag and several smaller hinds remain. The stag stands in the foreground, a noble animal, well poised, keen, watchful, the leader of the herd, at once recalling the well-known "Monarch of the Glen." It was a strange experience and happy fortune to find in such a secluded spot a reminiscence of the great animal painter. There are those to-day who tell us that Landseer was not an artist, and that his vogue is gone for ever, Perhaps it is; but to me Landseer seems, even in this simple sketch, to have painted what he saw, and certainly I saw what he painted, as I shall shortly show." Mr. Burnett proceeds to describe a glimpse in Rothiemurchus of an antlered stag, the leader of the herd, in exactly the position depicted in the fresco.

IN a recent lecture at the Royal Institution, Professor Joseph Barcroft gave an account of the wonderful way in which the mechanism of the human body reacts to meet the relative lack of oxygen at high altitudes.

THE BIG-CHESTED MOUNTAINEER. Four different changes occur. First, the quality of the red corpuscles in the blood and of the red colouring matter contained in them is increased so that the blood is able to carry more oxygen and the body is able to store more oxygen. Secondly, the breathing becomes deeper and somewhat more rapid, so that more use is made of the oxygen present in the air. The form of the chest alters so that it



is in a chronic state of distension. In the case of the native this results in his possessing a large barrel-shaped chest mounted on an extremely short body. Thus a mountaineer five feet, two inches high would have a chest as large as that of an ordinary man six feet high. It is not certain whether this change is hereditary or brought about afresh in each individual as he grows up from childhood. Finally, an extremely subtle but wonderful change takes place in the chemical constitution of the blood, the red colour-matter of it being able to combine with a greater quantity of oxygen than is normally the case.

HILL lovers are all more or less interested in maps and we in Aberdeen can boast of two of the most famous of early Scottish cartographers, Gordon of Straloch and his son, GORDON Parson Gordon of Rothiemay. In the latest issue OF the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* Dr. A. S. STRALOCH. Cumming describes an astrolabe which he picked up in an antique shop in Edinburgh and which proves to have belonged to Gordon of Straloch. It bears the name *Robertus Gordon* and was apparently made in Paris about the beginning of the sixteenth century. Gordon, who was born in 1580 and died in 1661, went to Paris in 1598 to complete his studies. The astrolabe was an instrument for taking observations of the stars, and Gordon had adapted this one to the latitude of Straloch. Gordon of Straloch produced an atlas of Scotland, which was published at Amsterdam in 1648, and, with the assistance of his son, Rev. James Gordon of Rothiemay, and others, he revised Pont's maps of Scotland for Blaeu's Atlas (1663-64).

CAPTAIN D. J. MUNRO, C.M.G., R.N., writing in the *Glasgow Herald* on the possibility of reviving sheep farming in the highlands, points out that when the black faced and Cheviot SHEEP IN THE sheep were introduced about the end of the eighth HIGHLANDS. century, they found the country suited for grazing because the grass in the glens had been well kept down by cattle and the heather checked by burning. When sheep farming decayed and the country was put under deer, the grazing deteriorated for the grass became rank and deep heather spread over the hillsides. Captain Munro fears that if sheep were put on to deer forests to-day, they would not thrive. Sheep always feed on the barest place and the first thing necessary to convert a deer forest into a sheep farm would be to turn cattle out to eat down the rank grass and to burn the heather. A system of Government loans is suggested in order to encourage farmers to take deer forest ground and re-stock it with sheep, with security of tenure over a period of years and the stock tied to the farmer and not the proprietor.



THE SCOTTISH RIGHTS OF WAY AND RECREATION SOCIETY in its last annual report states that guide posts which were urgently required have been erected in Rothiemurchus forest and also on Deeside and in Athol. It is further stated that the adjustment of the rights of way through Glen Tanner on Deeside is still the subject of negotiation with Lord Glentanar, the proprietor, and with several influential people in Aberdeen and Deeside, who are interested in the matter, but the Directors of the Society have confidence that a satisfactory arrangement will be come to at an early date.

The report invites members of the Society and the public generally to report any questions regarding rights of way, because the erection of posts, especially at the *termini* of rights of way, is one of the best methods of keeping them open and encouraging the public to use them.

ON 22nd Aug. 1925, Messrs. A. Harrison and L. St. C. Bartholomew of the Scottish Mountaineering Club made an ascent of the west buttress of Coire Brochain on Braeriach, and an account of their climb appears in the *S.M.C. Journal*. Their climb, which is probably new, commenced at a point a short way up the screes leading up to the west gully, from which the rocks of the buttress were traversed to a point almost underneath the highest point of the buttress. From here a fairly direct course was taken to the top of the buttress. The climb took one hour and twenty minutes, the height of the climb by aneroid being about 650 feet. They state that the climb presented no special difficulties and was most enjoyable. Four previous rock climbs in Coire Brochain have been recorded in the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*. The gullies on the east and west of the central buttress have been climbed, and two climbs have been made on the buttress itself, one of which included the ascent of the Black Pinnacle in the centre of the buttress.



## REVIEWS.

*The Cairngorm Hills of Scotland* by Seton Gordon, F.Z.S. Mr. Seton Gordon is the best known writer of the present day about the Cairngorms, and in this volume of over 200 pages, illustrated with many fine photographs, he has given sketches of his many wanderings over the district, and gathered together a great mass of interesting matter relating to the legend and history of the region ; its physical configuration and its plant and animal life. The volume is not a guide book and it says nothing of climbing in the technical sense, for Mr. Gordon does not go in for rock work or snow work ; but to the ordinary hill-walker and hill-wanderer it will make a strong appeal and it is comprehensive in that the various chapters cover the whole of the Cairngorms, and a very complete index makes reference to any point easy. Mr. Gordon knows every corrie, burn and knoll, and in his walk down Glen A'an, for example, from the loch to Inchrory, he mentions a score of local Gaelic place names which do not appear on the one-inch map, but the names of which, like "The Otter's Knoll" and "The Little Knoll of the Robber," point to some long forgotten incident. Everywhere and always he is sensitive to the wind and the sky and he makes you feel the soft summer breeze wafting the scent of the hill plants or the fierce gale lashing your face with rain or sleet. It is superfluous to refer to his knowledge of the birds of the mountains : that appears on every page. One sometimes wonders, however, whether the present vogue for nature study is not actually endangering wild life, for the worst robbers of the Cairngorms to-day are the egg collectors of whose depredations Mr. Gordon writes with proper indignation. He mentions that in March (1925) a keeper told him that he had already received two letters from different collectors each offering him £5 for a clutch of golden eagle's eggs. Speaking of the mountain or blue hare, Mr. Gordon says that in June, 1924, he found a family of newly born leverets in a tuft of grass on the 4,000 ft. plateau of Braeriach—a great elevation, surely, for this creature to reach. Of that plague of the summer climber, the house fly, which accompanies one in swarms, Mr. Gordon remarks that it is not until you reach some 3,500 feet that it begins to drop behind. We are not so sure. And he forgets to remember that other



plague, the midges. The midges of a moist evening in Rothiemurchus are a thing not to be forgotten. But one might go on dipping into these pages indefinitely and one must close with a reference to the photographs, taken by the author and his wife, and a special tribute to the novel and admirable bird's eye map of the Cairngorms on the inside of the cover.

*The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, Nos. 100 and 101, 2/6 each net. We congratulate the S.M.C. on the publication of the one hundredth number of its Journal. Appropriately it opens with a series of short articles by all

S.M.C. the former Editors. The most interesting article is a long one by Mr. G. Sang on the Achallader accident, in which he describes fully that unfortunate accident and the doings of the various search parties. It is significant that this rooth number of the S.M.C.J. should chronicle the formation of the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland with headquarters in Edinburgh and Glasgow. And in No. 101 we find that five pages have been placed at the disposal of the Junior Club, a facility of which they have taken full advantage, and a perusal of which shows that the "Juniors" are a pretty energetic lot. Both numbers are well illustrated, the frontispiece to No. 101 is Dr. J. R. Levack's "Storm Clouds over Coire an-t-Sneachda.

*Tales of a Highland Parish (Glenshee)*, by Rev. T. D. Miller. In this unpretentious but very interesting little volume the former minister of Glenshee has gathered together the lore and legends of a district which is familiar to many members of the Cairngorm Club. Tír nam beann, nan gleann's nan gais-geach (the land of bens, glens and heroes) is the motto on the title page and it is very apt, for this region on the south side of the Grampians is rich in mountain and valley scenery and it is also rich in historical association. Glenshee is the scene of one of the legends of Fingal—the death of Diarmid. Grainne, the wife of Fingal, became enamoured of Diarmid, the nephew of Fingal, and he, when he discovered it, plotted this revenge, "He invited his nephew to play the part of Sir Lancelot in slaying a bear of great size and ferocity, whose lair was in a rocky ravine at the foot of Bengulbein. After slaying the monster he was commanded by King Fingal to measure, with bare foot, his quarry from snout to tail and then to take its measurement the reverse way. When doing so some of the sharp, foul bristles pierced and poisoned his foot, and, after a futile appeal for a draught of life-giving wine from the King's golden cup, he died in great agony." Bengulbein is the hill just above the Spittal of Glenshee and on its northern side is a gully called the Boar's Bed, while opposite the Spittal and across the stream is a tarn where the King



threw his cup and the mound where Queen Grainne, Diarmid and his white hounds lie buried. A later and historical and not mythical figure of the region was M'Comie Mor, of whose great physical strength and prowess tales still linger in the glen. He was a breeder of stock, his skill in which trade was inherited by his descendants. Glenshee suffered from the raids of the caterans from Lochaber and many and thrilling were the encounters with these marauders. In the early years of her stay at Balmoral, Queen Victoria travelled thither by Glenshee and the Cairnwell, and now, with motors, the old route has regained its importance. Glenshee is believed to be derived from the Gaelic word *shith* (fairies), and in olden days the glen folk were called "the fairies" by their neighbours.

*The Rucksack Club Journal*, No. 19 (1925) 4/- net.—The article in this issue which will interest our members most is probably that by Mr. W. E. Richards, describing the ascent of all the 4,000 feet tops in Scotland within twenty-four hours by Mr. Eustace Thomas and himself in 1924. Ben Lawers, with its 3,984 feet and 16 feet cairn, was conveniently regarded as not being a *bona fide* top! There is also an article by Mr. B. R. Goodfellow describing what was probably the third traverse of the Cuillin Main Ridge in one day. The members of the Rucksack Club seem to be going strong in the way of making "records" as there is a long article by the Editor, Mr. J. Wilding, suggesting a high level traverse of Great Britain from Lands End to John o' Groats along the watershed; but not necessarily in one day! He is apparently now engaged on this task and we wish him all success. The Journal is well illustrated by many photographs, Mr. Eustace Thomas' "Grandes Jorasses" and "Dent du Geant" being particularly fine.

*The Alpine Journal*, May 1925. The geographical distribution of the mountains dealt with in this number is world wide. Lt. Col. Norton deals with Everest. There are articles on the New Zealand Alps, on the side valleys and peaks of the Yellowhead Trail, while the Cariboo Mountains and the Ruwenjori are not left out of the immense survey and field of exploration contained within the covers of this number. In a short note it is difficult to pick out any article to which to refer to specially, but that on "Mountains and the Public," by the late D. D. Godley is by its humour and literary excellence most delightful fare and a good antidote to the views of the Dean of St. Paul's. The usual notes, reviews and illustrations complete an enthralling number.

The November Number comprises its articles more to the European Alps than was the case with the previous number. The



Matterhorn and the Aiguilles of Chamonix form the subjects of the first three papers. An interesting note is given of the Meets arranged in the Alps of two British Mountaineering Clubs—The Scottish Mountaineering Club and the Climbers' Club. A copy of the memorial plaque to the late Edward Whymper which now adorns a doorway of the Monte Rosa Hotel at Zermatt, is given. This and the other illustrations are of the usual high standard which is associated with the premier mountaineering journal of the world. In memoriam notices include one of D. D. Godley whose delightful paper was referred to in the review of the previous number.

*La Montagne.* No. 190, March, 1926. The principal article in this number is a long obituary notice of the late Joseph Vallot, the builder of the Observatory on Mont Blanc, which is named after him and to which he ascended, for the last time, in 1920 in his 66th year. The remaining article is a description of the new Refuge de la Pilatte, in the Dauphine, built by the C.A.F. last year. A second refuge in the same district is to be built in 1926.

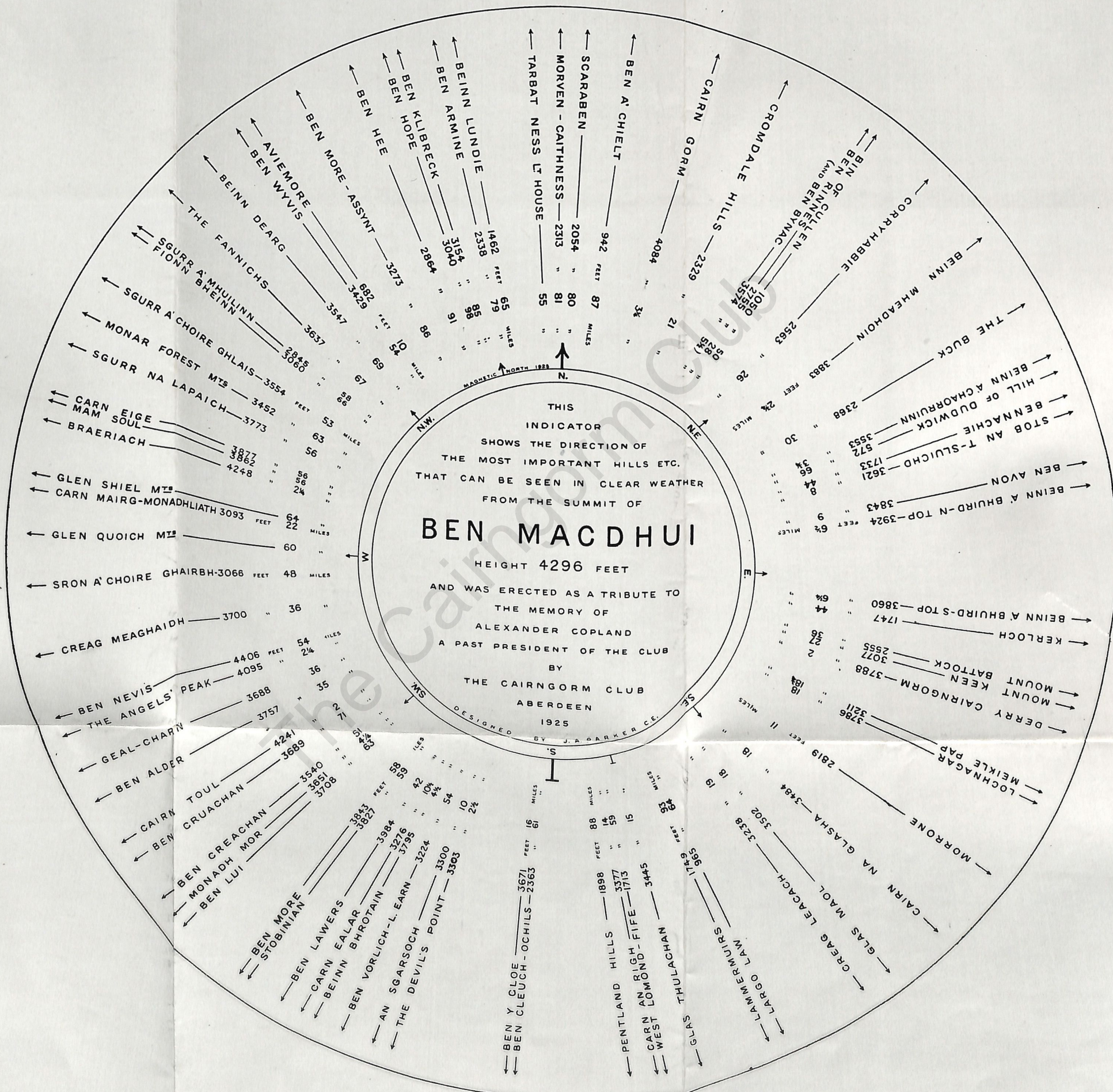
AMONG the publications of continental clubs which reach us is the journal of the Austrian section of the German and Austrian Alpine Club. This journal, which bears the title "Nachrichten der Sektion Austria," and which is published in Vienna, is a welcome indication of the summer and winter activities of Austrian alpinists. Another publication, also in German, of interest to travellers going further east is the year book of the Carpathian Club (Karpathenverein). That club has branches throughout the Carpathians, Beskids, etc., and brings out its annual under the title of "Turistik, Alpinismus und Wintersport." It is published in Kesmark, Czecho-Slovakia.

MUCH interesting matter relating to Braemar and the upper valley of the Dee appeared in the second issue of *The Deeside Field*, the publication of the Deeside Field Club, several members of the Cairngorm Club being among the contributors. Professor A. W. Gibb gives an account of cairngorms and other local gemstones. The cairngorm is a crystal of smoky quartz and one of the largest specimens known, 12 inches long and 3 inches in diameter, is the property of Mrs. A. Cook, Aberdeen, and was awarded a medal at the great Exhibition of 1851. Professor Gibb has seen another fine example, 6 to 8 inches long, which was found on Lochnagar, and he states that there is a strong vein of smoky quartz in the Black Spout on Lochnagar. Another gemstone found in granite in the Deeside Highlands, is the topaz, but, though it superficially resembles the cairngorm, it has no relation to the



quartz group and is totally different in composition. Dr. Alexander Bremner, whose researches into local geography are so well known, writes upon the Burn of the Vat. The Vat is a pot-hole cut out by water in glacial times and in size and character it is, Dr. Bremner says, unique in Europe. He makes an appeal, which everyone should support, for the better protection of this spot against the folk who disfigure it with their names, and hopes that the time will come when places like this will be taken under national keeping. In Mr. G. M. Fraser's article upon Glen Tanner and Mr. James Allan's recollections of timber cutting on Deeside are some interesting references to the floating days. The last occasion on which rafts of trees were seen on the Dee was in 1881, when cutting took place at Blackhall and the logs were floated down to the sawmill at Silverbank below Banchory.





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