

THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY
 EDWARD W. WATT.

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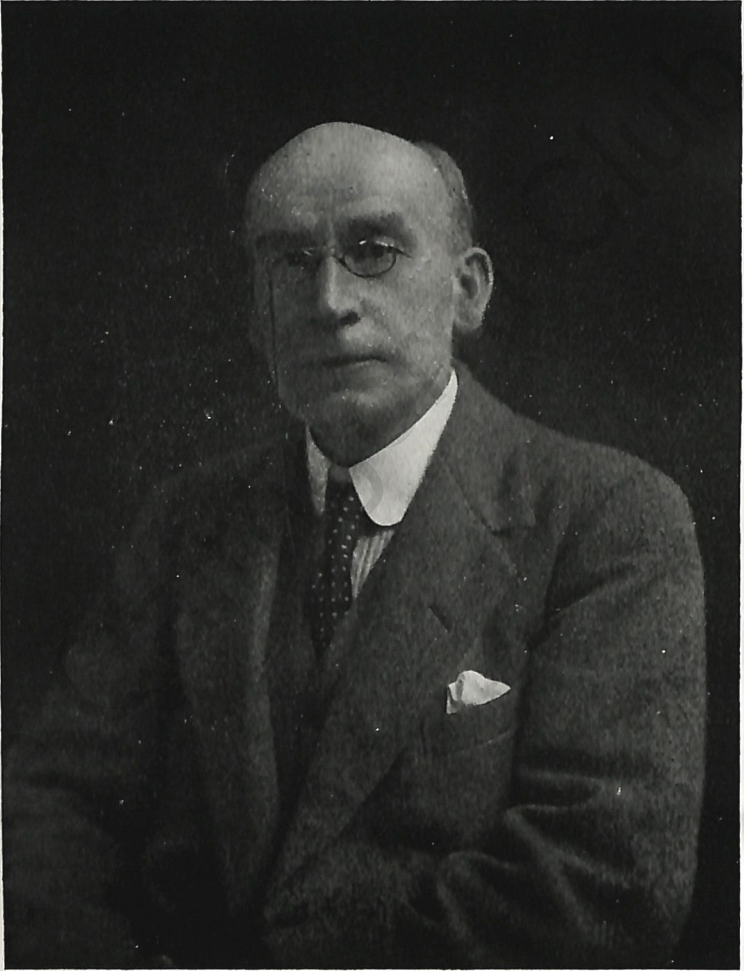
PUBLISHED BY
 THE CAIRNGORM CLUB.

AGENTS :
 ABERDEEN: D. WYLLIE & SON.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

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.

13 Forest Road,
Aberdeen.



ROBERT CLARKE.

THE
Cairngorm Club Journal.

Vol. XI.

JUNE, 1927.

No. 65.

In Memoriam :

ROBERT CLARKE.

By the death of Mr. Robert Clarke, which took place on 1st April, the Cairngorm Club and the circle of mountaineers in Aberdeen have lost an active member and a warm lover of the hills. His death came unexpectedly. He had entered a nursing home and had undergone an operation and was progressing satisfactorily when, about a week later, he collapsed suddenly. His passing was probably what he himself would have desired, for a man of his vigorous habit would ill have borne a long and tedious decline. He was 62 years of age.

A native of Stirling, Mr. Clarke came to Aberdeen in 1882 and his working life was spent in newspapers, the *Evening Gazette*, the *Free Press*, and latterly the *Fishing News*. When he first began going to Inverey for his holidays the present writer does not know but it must have been well on to forty years ago. He went up Deeside not only in summer but at brief week-ends snatched at any season and so familiar did he become with the district and its people that he had almost ceased to rank as an ordinary visitor and had rather grown to be one of the Braemar folk themselves. Nor was this surprising, for he was one of the cheeriest and most companionable of

men, ready and able to make friends wherever he went. He may have had moments of depression but, if he had, he never showed them, and the present writer cannot remember a single occasion when Robert Clarke was not bright, cheerful, interested in what was going on and happy. This buoyancy of spirit made him an admirable companion on the hills and pulled him and his companions through many a long and exhausting day.

He knew the Deeside side of the Cairngorms exceptionally well and to Ben Macdhui, the monarch of them all, he was particularly attached, for, while some men like to vary their climbs and tend to become weary of one hill, not so Robert Clarke. He ascended Ben Macdhui over a hundred times, in all weathers and at all seasons, summer and winter, and every time that I met him he spoke of his latest ascent with as much zest as a young boy making his first climb. He was no mere fine-weather walker. He knew the Cairngorms in their wilder, grander moods and loved them. A few years ago, when he was close on the sixties, he walked alone through the Lairig Ghru at the New Year from Speyside. The snow was soft and the expedition took much longer than he had expected. Darkness fell when he was still in Glen Dee and he had a hard fight to reach Derry Lodge before midnight. Only a man of great physical endurance and resolute spirit could have accomplished such a walk under these conditions. More recently and in less strenuous summer weather he made the crossing of the Lairig as one of the party that motored from Aberdeen to Coylum Bridge in the morning, walked through the Lairig and motored back to Aberdeen from Derry Lodge in the evening. Physically he was of average height but lightly built and the feature that struck one was a certain spring or elasticity in his step. It was noticeable even in Union Street. No wonder that he was a good goer on the hills.

While chiefly familiar with Deeside and the Cairngorms, Robert Clarke had made expeditions to other parts of the Highlands with Aberdeen friends, and two

years ago with a fellow member of the Cairngorm Club he visited the Alps, crossing the Col du Geant from Chamonix to Courmayeur, an arduous glacier expedition, and returning over the Theodule from the Val Tournanche to Zermatt.

No tribute to Robert Clarke would be complete without a reference to his literary gifts. It was only in his later years that he began writing anything about his mountain expeditions but what he wrote for the *Aberdeen Press and Journal* and for the *Cairngorm Club Journal* was of a quite exceptional quality, evincing deep appreciation of mountain scenery and rare descriptive power. His last contribution to these pages was the account of the inauguration of the Ben Macdhu indicator, published in last year's issue. Like everything he wrote, it breathed his profound and, if one may so put it, at the same time understanding and reverent devotion to the hills.

H. A.

HAROLD RAEBURN.

BY WILLIAM GARDEN.

THOUGH Mr. Harold Raeburn was not a member of the Cairngorm Club, many of its members will have learned with deep regret of his passing, which occurred at Edinburgh, on 21st December, 1926.

Mr. Raeburn was undoubtedly one of the finest mountaineers of his day, and his premature demise, especially to his mountaineering friends, and to the climbing world generally, will cause a blank which even time itself will have difficulty in effacing. He was undoubtedly a man of mark. The merest amateur, and the tried climber alike, saw in him at once the all-round natural gifts of a great climber. He endeared himself to all who were truly interested in the craft, for he was ever

ready to take under his wing the most junior member of his Club—the Scottish Mountaineering Club—of which he had been a member since 1896. A day on the hills with Raeburn was a real education. His great self-assurance and determination, coupled at all times with a sound judgment, made him an ideal leader in a severe climbing expedition. His courage, and extraordinary skill, gave confidence and strength to every member of his party, with the result that each man gave of his best, and the expedition was usually crowned with success. He was a mountaineer in the wider sense, for, however much the exigencies of the actual climb on hand might demand his undivided mental attention, he had always an opportunity to note himself, and draw the attention of his friends to anything of interest which might present itself whether it was bird, plant, or rock, for he was no mean ornithologist, botanist, or geologist. Indeed, it was bird-nesting that first developed in him the fascination for rock-climbing, in which art he eventually so much excelled. He revelled in his perfect balance, whether it was on the ice-rink, or the old push-bike; and things which appeared well-nigh impossible to the average individual interested in these sports, were to him simplicity itself, but with all his natural gifts he never showed any superiority, for, like all other great men, he was the essence of humility in everything he did; and surely his record was an extraordinary one.

Trained on his Homeland Hills, where he had done all the first-class climbs—either north or south of the Tweed—he first crossed the Channel in 1900, and thus well-equipped, he attacked and conquered some of the best known and dizzy towers of the Dolomites. In subsequent years, he made numerous first ascents, both in Norway and in the Caucasus. Probably his greatest feats of daring were a first British guideless traverse of the Matterhorn, by the Zmutt Ridge, descending by the Italian Ridge; and the unique effort of a solitary complete traverse of all the peaks of the Meije.

Not satiated yet, however, with his conquests, he set

out in 1920 for the far-off Himalaya, to inspect the appalling south face of Kangchenjunga (28,150 ft.) on which he pitched his base-camp at a height of only some 8,150 ft. below the summit, and actually ascended some 1,000 feet above that camp, but avalanching snow prevented his further progress. Then, in 1921, came the first series of expeditions to Everest, arranged by the Alpine Club, of which he was a member, and the Royal Geographical Society. It was only natural that he should be chosen to captain the pure mountaineering section of that great effort. A bad break-down in health, however, when he reached India, but which he fought against with almost superhuman effort, prevented him reaching a height above 22,000 ft., and, on his return to this country, a complete collapse ensued, no doubt in great part due to what the effect of defeat must have had upon a nature such as his.

Mr. Raeburn had the gift of writing. The leaves of the *Journals* of the Alpine Club, and the Scottish Mountaineering Club, testify to that. His descriptions of climbs are always reliable and instructive to those attempting them.

The writer of these notes has already dealt in some detail in the pages of this *Journal* with Mr. Raeburn's Book on "Mountaineering Art," and, therefore, no further reference need now be made to it than to say that it is an all-round replica of the author—concise, correct in every detail, well thought out, exhaustive, practical, and never leaving the reader in any doubt about whatever he may desire information—a volume which should be on the book-shelf of every mountaineer, and fill him with gratitude and respect for the memory of one of the greatest exponents of that great and adorning Art for which he lived, and practically gave his life.

"Sic itur ad astra."

SOME HIGHLAND EXPEDITIONS.

BY REV. A. E. ROBERTSON, S.M.C.

REV. ARCHIBALD E. ROBERTSON, of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, who was the guest of the Cairngorm Club at the annual dinner last November, showed a large number of slides taken during expeditions made the previous year in Breadalbane, Lochaber, Corryarrick and Glenmoriston, and gave a most interesting and racy account of these expeditions.

"In the middle of March," he said, "two lithe and active members of the Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club invited me to join them in a climb on the north-east face of Ben Lui. I had the time of my life, the ladies cheerfully undertaking all the hard work and, of course, climbing fearlessly and well. (When a woman does undertake anything of that sort, as a rule, she is first rate.) We foregathered at Tyndrum, and after a reasonably early start, soon found ourselves at the burnside below Coninish, feasting our eyes on the great, steep snow fields of the north-east corrie of Ben Lui. It was a clear, frosty day, with occasional blizzards of snow. Above Coninish, Ben Lui looms up, a conspicuous invitation to all lovers of the snow." Mr. Robertson described one slide as an example of the poor effect one gets trying to photograph a party on steep snow, the photographer being below and looking up. "It's no use at all," he said. "The snow looks quite flat and the poise of the figures rather silly. A blizzard," he continued, "happened to be on, just as we neared the summit,

blotting everything out. We descended by the north-east ridge, and soon got below the blizzard, obtaining wonderful vistas of the storm-clouds rolling about the Glen Lyon mountains."

A GRIM AND SINISTER PICTURE:

"At Achallader Farm next day," the lecturer proceeded, "we introduced ourselves to Mr. and Mrs. Smith, who were most friendly and kind. Little did they, little did we, think of the tragedy to be enacted on the steep, icy rocks near the summit of Ben Achallader the very next day, when young Mr. Henderson slipped and lost his life. We took the road by the riverside up past Barra-voirich towards Gorton, where I got a fine view of Ben Achallader, the trees of the Crannoch wood filling in the middle distance. Still further on another view of the Ben was obtained, the storm-clouds rolling about, on and off the top, a grim and even sinister picture, though we recked not of that when we saw it."

THE SOLDIERS' TRENCHES.

Following the Easter Meet of the S.M.C. at Fort William, Mr. Robertson walked across the Moor of Rannoch, and he discussed the problem of the so-called Soldiers' Trenches, a series of five clearly marked trenches or ditches, cut across a flat stretch of the Moor, 150 yards long by two yards wide. "What these trenches really were," he said, "I had long puzzled over. But I happened this spring to be reading some of the Forfeited Estates Papers and there I found a reference to what I think is the true solution. Ensign James Small, the Government factor for the forfeited estate of Robertson of Struan which in 1745 embraced all the south side of Loch Rannoch and the Moor of Rannoch up to the county march, reports that he caused five drains to be cut in the 'big moss,' as he calls it, in 1764, with the object of turning the moss into arable land. This was done, largely by Government troops, who were at that time readily available, a captain's command being posted

at Invercomrie, at the west-end of Loch Rannoch. (The shooting lodge there is called 'The Barracks' to this day). These efforts at land reclamation proved useless and there the soldiers' trenches remain, a monument of an abortive experiment. That, I think, is the solution of the mystery of the Soldiers' Trenches.

"The fact is that the Moor in these days of the '45 was a far busier place and a more frequented place than it is to-day. I used to think that the Moor of Rannoch must have been an impassible bog in these far off days, but recent researches in old contemporary reports and documents have shown me that this was not so. There were tracks regularly used from Lochaber across the Moor and through the pass at Gorton (the Caim) to Glen Lyon; to Argyllshire by Gorton and Achallader; to Glencoe across by a ford below Loch Ba; to Mamore by the north side of Cruach and the head of Loch Leven.

"Caterans and raiders, drovers and pack-men, Prince Charlie's men and the Hanoverian troops have all often passed this way in the good, old, bad days of the 18th century.

"Two miles further south, hidden away and out of sight of the railway, is a very lonely and seldom visted loch, Loch Doire an Dollan, on the march between Argyllshire and Perthshire. It must have been an old landmark and rendezvous, for I have found it marked and named on some of the oldest maps (over 200 years old) which we have of the Central Highlands.

"Between Gorton and Achallader there is the Crannoch Wood, one of the finest and largest surviving tracts of the old Caledonian Forest. A wonderful place, full of eerie glamourie, full of eyes within and without! You feel the elves and the fairies and the bogles are shadowing you, and wild things, rare and curious birds and beasts silently watching and looking on. It is a place to spend hours in, and to let the peace and the glamour of it sink into one. To whisk through in the train (as thousands do) is to miss its music, its mystery and its message."

PRINCE CHARLIE'S CAVE

“The middle of May found me on the banks of the Caledonian Canal at Invergloyle House. One of the expeditions we resolved on doing was to go and see the historic, but seldom visited cave in the wild recesses of the Ceannacroe Forest, Glenmoriston, where Prince Charlie spent a week, sheltered and cared for by the seven outlawed men of Glenmoriston, when he was hard beset after Culloden. He would probably have been captured had it not been for the timely shelter of this cave and the protection of these brave and faithful men. £30,000 was the price of his head and a word from them would have got it, but no! They were leal and true to their hunted Prince.

“Making an early start, we motored up past Invergarry and Fort Augustus to Invermoriston, then, turning up Glenmoriston, we sped along to Ceannacroe Lodge, a run of 40 miles. Here we were met by the keeper who was to take us to the cave which lies high up on the east face of Tigh Mor on the Affric march, a walk of some fifteen miles there and back.

“The keeper was a perfectly delicious old bird, and as we walked along I talked to him and he talked to me. I told him stories and he told me stories and I listened with all my ears for his unconscious humour was rich and rare. The miles slipped past easily and quickly. We were going up Coire Doe and the fine north-east Corrie of Carn Gluasaidh and Sgurr nan Conbheran looked tempting to my climbing eyes. Our route lay up the ridge of the Ram, a bulky, outlying peak, and then to the right, down into the corrie where the cave was. High up on the ridge of the Ram, Sgurr nan Conbheran (3634 ft.) was a great sight, carrying a surprising lot of snow, seeing it was now the middle of May. I have often noticed how much more snow the hills carry in late spring, north of the Caledonian Canal. We have now surmounted the Ram and are going along the broad and easy ridge towards the cave. This is Tigh Mor (3,276)

and the cave lies just below this sticking out shoulder, under the rocks. We are now down in the floor of the corrie and the cave is in sight. The height here is about 1,900 ft. The cave is formed by three or four enormous lumps of rock which have fallen down from the cliffs above—rather similar to the Shelter Stone in the Cairngorms, only the cave is bigger and higher inside. You can stand up in it and move about quite well and if, as I doubt not the Glenmoriston men did, all the draughty holes and crevices were stopped up with moss and fog, it would be a very comfortable place indeed. A runnel of clear spring water trickles through inside one corner of the cave—a most convenient arrangement.

A TALE OF MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL.

“The old keeper and I refreshed ourselves at this spring inside the cave, and then he proceeded to give me another tale, this time about Mr. Winston Churchill.

‘We had Mr. Winston Churchill staying at the lodge, one of the guests then, five years ago. He was a very clever gentleman, a grand speaker, but rather heavy on his legs on the high hills. He was very anxious to see the cave and I said I will take him to the cave, and we went just by the same way as Mr. Robertson and the ladies have taken, over the Ram and along the ridge and down into the corrie to the cave, and I had the rifle with me for I hoped the gentleman would be able to get a stag after he had seen the cave. Well, we got to the cave at last and he was ferry, ferry pleased to get there, but he was ferry tired; he was not a ferry good walker, not like Mr. Robertson who, I can see, is well used to the high hills. And he was so tired that he said he was going back down the corrie and not back up to the ridge, but I said that if he went down the corrie he could not get a stag. Owing to the wind he would have to go up to the ridge again, and he said he would not go back up the ridge not for all the stags in Ceannacroe. Well, we had started walking when he began

talking and arguing about going down the corrie, and I just did not say very much but all the time I was just quietly walking up towards the ridge, and he was so busy with his argument he was not noticing where he was going. He was a splendid speaker and he was arguing away and when he was finished with his argument we were almost back again on the ridge itself and I just stopped and I said to him. "Well, Mr. Churchill, just look and see where you are, you are almost on the ridge itself." And oh he was very merry and he just laughed and laughed. And we got a stag that day after all, and he was ferry pleased and I was ferry pleased. Oh, he was a clever speaker, but rather heavy on his legs on the high hills."

GENERAL WADE'S ROADS.

Mr. Robertson went on to describe an expedition over the famous old Corryarrick Road from Laggan to Fort Augustus, and to give a few words of explanation regarding General Wade's roads. "General Wade was born in 1673, and he died in 1748, and his road-making activities were confined to the eleven years from 1725 to 1736. The roads he actually was responsible for were as follows. He first connected up Fort William with Fort Augustus. He then joined up Fort George which was then in Inverness by Strath Errick. His third road ran from Inverness by Carrbridge to the Ruthven Barracks at Kingussie. Then Kingussie was linked up with Dunkeld by a road through Dalwhinnie, Drumochter, Blair Athol and Pitlochry. Then a direct road from Dalnacardoch to Crieff was made by Trinafour, Tummel Bridge, Coshieville, Aberfeldy and the Sma' Glen; and finally the Corryarrick Road from Dalwhinnie by Laggan Bridge and Garvamore over the pass to Fort Augustus. These are the only genuine Wade roads. General Wade gets credit for a great many other roads which he really had nothing to do with—the roads in Aberdeenshire, for example, the Invermoriston road to Loch Duich, the road from Tyn-drum by Glencoe to Fort William. These are old

military roads, but not Wade's roads. They were made after the '45 when there was a great outburst of road-making activity all over the Highlands.

"I feel sure," Mr. Robertson concluded, "that you all agree with me when I say that the hours we spend on the hills are our best hours, our happiest hours, evoking health and fun and laughter, giving us memories that strengthen us and hearten us in the dull routine of life.

Put me where there are hills, said Joe,
And I won't care where the next men go.
Give me mountain and peak and crag,
And I'll say I've the best of the bag."

THE POLLAGACH ROCKING STONE.

BY HENRY ALEXANDER.

IN the Ordnance Survey map of Deeside there is marked a Rocking Stone on the east side of the Pollagach Burn, the stream which joins the Dee at Ballaterach, opposite Cambus O' May. The name had often provoked my curiosity and last June, when staying at Dinnet, my wife and I set out upon what proved a rather interesting and, in some respects, amusing quest for the Stone. In the result we found three stones that rock, but which of them is the correct stone, or whether any of them is the correct stone, I will not venture to say. Truth to tell, none of the stones is a very large or very wonderful object, but the hunt for them afforded two enjoyable excursions, which opened up a new and pleasant piece of country to us. Many readers will be familiar with the south Deeside road from Dinnet to Ballater and will remember the pretty row of cottages at Ballaterach running along the bank of the Pollagach Burn. Others may know the dreary and distinctly boggy head of the burn where the path from Ballater to Mount Keen crosses it under the shadow of Cairn Leuchan. Between these two points is a stretch of some three miles into which the Rocking Stone attracted me with all the alluring sense of discovery. Anyone wishing an easy day's ramble might do worse than explore the Pollagach Burn.

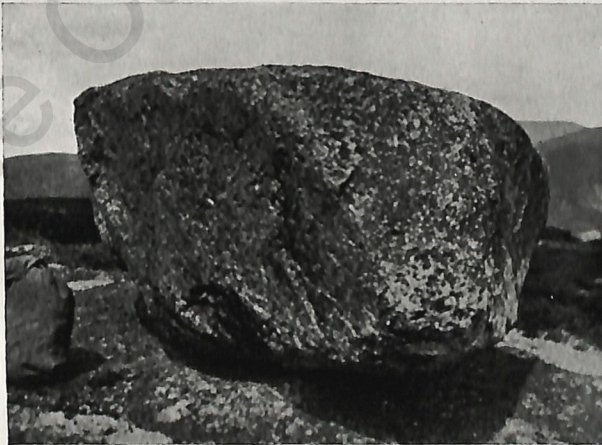
The Rocking Stone was not the main objective of our first outing, though it became so before the day was

done. We had set out to make the round of the hills on the Pollagach valley, Black Craig, Cairn Nairvie and Knockie Branar on the east side, Cairn Leuchan at the head and Craig Vallich and the Pannanich Hill on the west. Below Cairn Nairvie we came upon Mr. Duncan of Deecastle cutting peats and I asked him if he knew anything about the Rocking Stone which, according to the map, lay less than a mile away, across the Black Moss. Neither he nor his companions could throw any light upon it. If anybody, they said, was likely to know about a Rocking Stone it was the Ballaterach shepherd and he had just gone over the hill half-an-hour ago. "It was a pity I had missed him." So we went on, and by a lucky chance came upon the shepherd near the fence which keeps the Ballaterach sheep from wandering into Glentinar forest. When we mentioned Rocking Stone to him he smiled. He had heard about it and heard about people asking where it was, but in all the years he had walked the Ballaterach hills he had never seen a stone that rocked, and he evidently did not believe that there was such a thing. When I produced the map and showed the Black Moss and the Rocking Stone beside it, he agreed that there was a big stone on the hillside above the burn but it assuredly did not rock. It was as firm as a house. The shepherd's verdict seemed conclusive, and it looked as if we must give up the Rocking Stone and regard it as a pleasant myth of the Ordnance Survey.

We pursued our way over Knockie Branar, a hill with a shapely profile as seen from Deeside, and trudged across the weary bogland to Cairn Leuchan in a driving rain from the north west. I can well imagine travellers missing their way at the head of the Pollagach for the path is lost in the grass and moss and there is no obvious route down to the Tanar. Happily for us the rain ceased after we left Cairn Leuchan, and the homeward walk along the ridge of Craig Vallich and the Pannanich Hill, though made in the teeth of a nor'wester, was rendered inspiring by the splendid views on either side



THE CLIFF ABOVE HEADINCH, PANNANICH.



THE ROCKING STONE, HEADINCH, PANNANICH.

and by the grand spectacle of rainstorm and sunshine fighting for the mastery on Lochnagar and Beinn a' Bhuid, or chasing each other across the softer landscape of Cromar.

It was when we had passed Craig Vallich and reached the long ridge of the Pannanich Hill, that our interest in the Rocking Stone began to revive. Strewn along the ridge are dozens, one might almost say, hundreds of boulders, some surrounded by short heather, others resting upon the bare rock. The boulders, like the underlying rock, are of coarse red granite. None of them is very large. The largest we saw would be about three feet high and as much across. As to their origin they are probably boulders left by the ice on the summit and ridge of the hill, but this explanation may not be correct and it is possible that in some cases these blocks are the last remains of tors, such as occur on the summits and ridges of granite hills. In any case and whatever their source, the boulders are there in great numbers. Here we thought must be the Rocking Stone and, as we descended the ridge, we began examining the boulders more closely, pulling and pushing the more likely ones to see if they rocked, and every time as one block proved immovable, espying another farther on that looked sure to move, only to be again disappointed. We passed the summit of the hill, which looks steeply down the Coire of Corn Arn to the Pollagach, and hurried on for a mile or more along the ridge, which descends very gradually to the north. The further we went, the hotter the search for the Rocking Stone became. Surely here, if anywhere, we were going to run the Ordnance Survey mystery to earth. At last we were rewarded. A shout from my wife brought me over to a stone that literally did rock. So nicely was it poised upon the bare rock underneath that with the pressure of the hand it could be made to roll a few inches to either side, and if one stood upon it, the boulder moved like a see-saw. If not *the* Rocking Stone, it is certainly *a* Rocking Stone. As to its exact site, it is difficult to

define it but I should say that it lies on the ridge about a mile north of the highest point of the Pannanich Hill ridge. Satisfied with our discovery we dropped down to the mill at Bellamore and so home, passing on the way our friend the shepherd and telling him that we had found the Rocking Stone.

This was destined to prove only the first chapter in the quest. Upon our return to Dinnet we were told that the man we should have asked about the Rocking Stone was Mr. Forsyth, the keeper at Headinch, who knew every foot of the ground. Accordingly a week or two later I went back to the Pollagach and called on Mr. Forsyth whose cottage lies just below the Pannanich ridge, near the farm of Headinch and the mill of Bellamore. He knew about the stone and pointed to the skyline of the ridge just above the cottage. Three stones are visible on it, lying close together, and fifty yards behind them, said Mr. Forsyth, I would come upon the Rocking Stone. This was a point on the ridge further north than the first Rocking Stone we had discovered, so it was evident that there must be another claimant for the honour. Like the first stone, however, this second stone is in the wrong place if the map be correct. The Pannanich ridge is on the west side of the Pollagach burn and the map shows the stone on the east side. I asked Mr. Forsyth about the stone near the Black Moss, mentioned by the shepherd, as agreeing with the map. You can see it, he said, pointing up the valley, and with his stalking telescope I examined a big block lying on the top of a steep slope above the burn, about a mile-and-a-half away. This block, according to Mr. Forsyth, could not be the Rocking Stone because it did not move. Of that, he assured me, there was no doubt. The Rocking Stone was on the Pannanich ridge fifty yards behind the three stones. He was emphatic on the point, but how to reconcile this second stone with the map any more than the first one, I could not see.

The Pannanich ridge above Headinch is marked by a line of crags. They are not very high but they lend

a picturesque feature to an otherwise smooth hillside, and at one particular point the cliff is pierced by a deep cleft or crack which is visible from the north Deeside road and also from the railway. To this I shall return later. In the meantime I shall pursue the elusive Rocking Stone. A few minutes' walk and scramble took me from the keeper's cottage to the skyline with the three perched blocks, and just beyond them, as I had been told, was the Rocking Stone or at any rate a stone that rocks. It will be seen in the photograph, and beside it is a rucksack which will give some idea of the size. Roughly the block is three feet high and about as long and broad. It rests upon the bare rock, is flat on the top and, like Rocking Stone No. 1, it can be moved with the hand or, still better, made to oscillate like a see-saw by standing upon it. Regarded as a Rocking Stone it is a little better than its rival further south along the ridge, being more nicely balanced, but, so far as authenticity by the map is concerned, it is equally a pretender. The distance between the two stones is not great.

The day being a delightful one in July and having time on my hands, I decided to cross the burn to the spot marked Rocking Stone on the map, and examine the big block on the hillside which I had seen from the keeper's cottage. But before dropping down from the ridge I explored the curious cleft in the line of cliff, already referred to. This escarpment along the face of the Pannanich ridge may at one time have been continuous and extensive, but it has now largely disappeared except at two points where rocks some 20 or 30 feet high remain. It is at one of these points that a great mass of rock has, as it were, broken away from the cliff leaving a gap two or three feet wide and fifteen feet or more deep. One can step from the top of the cliff over to the top of the separated block. I pushed in at the north end of the gap and found an isolated flake of rock, sloping gradually higher to the south end of the cleft. Standing on this flake one could almost reach the top of

the crack and so climb out, but the holds were not very good and I did not make the attempt. Owing to the slope of the hillside it was not possible to take a photograph showing the cleft at the north or deeper end, and I had to be content with a photograph of the south or shallower end. The cleft, as I have said, is visible from the Deeside railway, and the traveller who, from the train window, keeps his eye fixed steadily on the sky line, after leaving Cambus o' May station, will see daylight appear for an instant on the hillside. Lying on the hillside under the cliff are some huge blocks, which have broken off in earlier times, and in the hollows and recesses are groups of ferns—altogether a delightful tangle of wild ground, unrealised from below, and least of all by the motorists who in their hundreds career along the Deeside road.

This slight diversion over, I resumed my hunt for the Rocking Stone, crossed the hollow and little stream coming out of Coire of Corn Arn and entered the pretty little ravine or canyon through which the Pollagach burn escapes from the dreary bogland above. The succession of pools and little cascades was so attractive that I wandered up the burn, leaping from stone to stone, until I was out once more on the open moorland, whence I had to come back along the hillside to the big perched block—the Ordnance map Rocking Stone—which had been quite visible on the eastern slope above me as I ascended. This rock is, I think, schist, and beneath it and not far away are a number of smaller fragments, half buried in moss and berries. At first sight the rock seems insecurely poised, and one fancies one could topple it down the hillside, but it is quite immovable, and though very much undercut, it cannot by any stretch of imagination be considered a rocking stone. The shepherd and the keeper were right. The stone was as firm as a house. Possibly at some former time the block may have been differently placed, so that it actually was movable, and one is inclined to this view from the present appearance of the mass, which certainly looks

as if it had slipped down the hillside a few feet, the result being that the height on the upper side is only four or five feet, while on the lower side it is considerably more. The Ordnance Survey "sappers" may have heard some tale of the stone having once rocked, or they may have applied the term "Rocking Stone" in a metaphorical rather than strictly scientific spirit. Be that as it may, this is the stone that accords with the spot marked on the map and, whatever may have been its history in the past, the stone certainly does not rock to-day. So ended another stage in my search.

I had left my cycle near the keeper's cottage at Headinch and the shortest way back to it was along the ridge from the Ordnance Survey Rocking Stone that does not rock, to Creag Mullach and thence down to the mill at Bellamore. Creag Mullach, seen from below, stands out as a little rock-capped hill but it is really not a separate eminence but only the termination of the ridge which forms the east side of the Pollagach burn, and which rises gradually to, and gives out finally upon, the Black Moss. It was a pleasant walk down this ridge, and as I neared the end of it, the point marked Creag Mullach on the map, I came upon a number of boulders. Once more my interest was quickened. I made for the first block and shook it and shoved it. No result. And so on with several others. They all refused to move. And then, when I had almost exhausted the group, came the Rocking Stone, or, at any rate, *a* Rocking Stone. It was a block a little larger than either of those on the Pannanich Ridge, and rising to a sharp upper edge, so that you cannot stand upon it and see-saw it as you can them. But with a strong push, applied at just one special angle, you can get quite a satisfactory roll into the block, which rests upon the bare rock. This boulder is two-thirds of a mile north of the spot marked Rocking Stone on the map and, if proximity to the Ordnance Survey point be the test, it has a better claim to the title than either of its rivals on the opposite ridge. But for prac-

tical purposes as a stone that rocks, it is inferior to them. As my camera spool was exhausted, I could not photograph it.

So has ended my search for the Rocking Stone, at any rate for the present. Whether any other members of the Cairngorm Club have hunted for it I do not know. There may be some stone that escaped my notice, better deserving of attention as a Rocking Stone than the three claimants described here, but I doubt it, for I searched diligently. The Rocking Stone may be a myth and a great illusion, and readers may say I have spun out a big story about very little. I plead guilty and can only urge that the words in antique lettering on the map intrigued me—and incidentally led me to a delightful bit of hill wandering. And what more can anyone desire?

A VETERAN GUIDE.

VISITORS to Braemar, especially those interested in mountain climbing, cannot fail to be familiar with the sturdy alert figure, with the weather-beaten face and cheery twinkling eyes, generally to be found standing opposite the Fife Arms, except when he is on a hill expedition with some more or less exacting patron. For many long years now Downie has acted as professional guide to any Braemar visitors desiring his services to conduct them up Lochnagar or some other of the high hills on Upper Deeside. His knowledge of these mountains is unsurpassed, and, by his help, many people, and especially ladies, who wished to climb one of these hills, have realised their ambition in comfort and safety, and been happy ever after. Many of the patrons are of the fussy and "fashious" type, whose desire for the mountains is greater than their strength, and to act as guide for such requires infinite patience and tact. Downie possesses those attributes in a marked degree, and many of his patrons whom I have met are loud in their praises of the old man's gentleness and patience with them when the way began to seem long and weary. The erection of the Lochnagar Indicator was, at first, at anyrate, not quite approved of by Downie. He was afraid that people would no longer require a guide to the hill. But of course that could not be so. On the contrary, the number of visitors to Cac Carn Beag is already greatly on the increase, and consequently more people than ever will require a guide to take them there. A chat with Downie is always interesting and informative,

for his knowledge of men and things is considerable, and he has an excellent sense of humour. May he long be spared to conduct visitors up his beloved hills.

J. R. L.

[The interesting snapshot which appears in this issue was taken early this year by Mr. J. A. Parker at Tomintoul, above Braemar, nearly 1,500 feet above sea level. It shows Downie standing near the "back house" in which he sometimes lives when the "front house" is let.]



A VETERAN GUIDE—DOWNIE, OF BRAEMAR.

AN ENGLISHMAN ON BENNACHIE.

THERE were seven of us. We were divisible in three ways. Into two and five, two being Scots and five Saxons. Into three and four, three being of the fair sex and four otherwise. Into one and six, one being a child and six considering themselves grown-up. And we went forth in January to climb the Mither Tap of Bennachie. Transport was provided by βιβλιάκος so called from his library of books, read and unread, and the "Lunch Lady" came with him, her "function" and intention being to stay at the foot and boil kettles while others climbed. Then there was the "Old Bird." He was English, but had breathed the air of Garioch for twelve months in early manhood, and had married a Scots wife, and had a speech so intertwined with Doric that he might pass for a Scot, in England. Then joined the party the "Englishman" and his "Winsome Wife," his "Demure Daughter," and the "Boisterous Boy."

The "Englishman" had read the guide book and had passed on to the family some information about pronunciation. It was "Ben-na-hee," he told them, not "Bennakky." They said it after him until they were word-perfect . . . "Ben-na-hee," "Ben-na-hee." But they waited to hear the Scots announce it before they gave tongue to it themselves in public, and they were not a little discouraged at the wonderful tonsil-and-palate work which these experts introduced between the "na" and the "hee."

The "Old Bird" soon began to quote

"O! gin I war whar Gadie rins,
At the back o' Bennachie."

The Saxons were much impressed. So this was not only a mountain to which they were going, but a mountain famed in song! They repeated the couplet in whispers to themselves. All but the "Boisterous Boy"

who was absorbed in the speedometer and was watching for it to touch 40. The "Old Bird" took him in hand. "Boisterous Boy," he said, "do you know the poem—'Oh! gin I war whar Gadie rins, at the back o' Bennachie'?" The "Boisterous Boy" snorted, "Burns, I suppose." The "Boisterous Boy" regards himself as St. George for England, and will have none other patron saint even on the horizon. The "Old Bird" patiently began to explain, but the speedometer here touched 45, and the "Boisterous Boy" had no ear either for poetry or patriotism.

So we crossed the Don and came to Inverurie. Here the "Englishman" disembarked to pursue a quest that had engaged him ever since he came to Scotland. Bread with a real crust—that was his desire. So at least he says. The family, however, aver that from all the confectioners' shops which he enters, ostensibly on this quest, he emerges with a disappointed look but also with a fresh discovery of Scots cake. At Inverurie a new kind of gingerbread, unseen in England, assuaged the disappointment.

Not far out from the little town we had our first sight of Bennachie—a crag in the distance shewing boldly above the slope of the nearer hills. Just below the road, an eager, hasty stream sparkled and twisted on its eager way. The "Old Bird" took his cue immediately.

"O! gin I war whar Gadie rins,
At the back o' Bennachie,"

he quoted. But the "Lunch Lady," with quiet certainty said, "That's not the Gadie, that's the Urie," and the song of the "Old Bird" abruptly ceased. The order was "eyes left" to see Bennachie and thus we ran through Chapel of Garioch. The first sight of many mountains is disappointing. One tries to be more impressed than one is. But they do not look so high as are expected, and the sense of disappointment struggles with the desire to be polite. But Bennachie is for unaccustomed eyes a very impressive sight. The low-lying land to the east of it, and to the north of it, and to

the south-east of it isolates its height and lifts it boldly for the eye to take in. The Saxons were sufficiently impressed, and vocal enough in praise even to please the Scots. The "Boisterous Boy" was inclined to complain that there was no snow on the top, and, indeed, to regard this defect as a personal slight to himself. But all the other Southrons exhausted their adjectives of praise. The ordinary man's vocabulary is spare to an almost pauper degree. The impressive things of Nature move him to such words as "lovely," "grand," "fine." He feels in his mind for other, rarer words, and then falls back again upon "lovely," "grand," "fine." The Saxons exclaimed and muttered these three in varying tones. The "Winsome Wife" said "It's lovely"; the "Demure Daughter" said "It's grand"; the "Englishman" said "It's fine." The Scots, of course, merely said "Ah, ah."

The ascent began. The plan was of the humblest kind; to go up by the path. There were no venturesome climbers looking for danger. They were excursionists out for the day. They started in a bunch. But soon youth, eagerness and breath began to distinguish themselves from discretion, experience and girth. The "Demure Daughter" and the "Boisterous Boy" soon led the ascending march. There followed *βιβλιάκος* and the "Old Bird" deep in theology. The "Englishman" discoursed with the "Lunch Lady" and the "Winsome Wife" in the rear. It was easy going on the grass, although it was not inconvenient to stop and gaze behind at the increasing panorama and see Dunnydeer and Christ's Kirk across the valley. "Now, *that* is the Gadie," said the "Lunch Lady," but the "Old Bird" was too far ahead to hear. Stones now began to appear in the track, and weak ankles began to hamper, and the Englishman's two companions proposed to descend again and prepare food against the climbers' return. The proposition was carried, and the "Englishman" went on by himself after the brisker members of the party. At this point he made a grave mistake, a mistake

inexcusable at his age. He tried a short cut. The winding path irked him, and he saw no reason why he should not make a bee line rather than describe an arc, and he plunged into the whins. But the ground beneath his feet became spongy, and black water appeared here and there, and his heart misgave him, and he beat a retreat. He reconciled himself to the beaten track and to the rearmost position.

Near the summit the nimbler people awaited him, and a pause was made. Under the rocks we sought shelter from the wind and took our fill of the view. Eastward gleamed the sea; southward the wide valley of the Don with Cairn William showing his brown shoulders above Monymusk; northward we looked to Foudland. Talk died down and our own thoughts busied our minds. A spell was put on us by the Spirit of the Heights. Not a smile even greeted the "Old Bird" when he sighed and said—"O, gin I war whar Gadie rins at the back o' Bennachie." It came to us how an exile from Garioch might feel as he thought of his beloved mountain and his beloved stream.

The last scramble up the boulders to the very top occupied but little time, though it left its mark on the unsuitable shoes of the "Demure Daughter," and there at the top the "Boisterous Boy" saw snow on the western mountains and was comforted. Was that Ben Macdhui? Was that Cairngorm? What was that? So many questions broke from us. But the wind searched us and the gale buffeted us, and we thought of kindly people at the foot preparing lunch, and we remembered that there would be other times when we could climb Bennachie. We let off our little bundle of appreciative adjectives, and began to descend. The "Englishman" thought many happy thoughts. If this little mountain could yield him so much pleasure then what further feasts of delight awaited him when he would be able to explore Scotland's more famous regions? It seemed to him that what Scotsmen had said about their country was too modest for the facts.

A. W. S.

MOUNT BATTOCK.

A DECEMBER DAY ON THE HILLS.

BY IAN STRUTHERS STEWART.

ONE morning in mid-December our small party left the Bucket Mill and, in brilliant sunshine, crossed the Feugh, taking the path which leads up to the ridge of Glaspits. The air had that delightful crispness which make hill walking such a pleasure. The clear atmosphere, the beauty all around, and the constant calling of the grouse gave an impression of a day in spring with dreary winter well behind.

The pace was slow and it was past midday when the ridge was reached and a line taken for the base of Cock Hill where it touches the Aven. This little river was easily crossed as the water was almost at summer level.

A toilsome grind had now to be faced up Cock Hill and so to the ridge which leads to the summit of Mount Battock, but this was amply repaid by the increasing beauty of the view to the east and north as we climbed higher. Whilst enjoying one of the frequent rests by the way, we noticed a golden eagle sailing overhead as, with hardly a wing beat, he systematically quartered the whole of the upper valley of the Aven. This was in all probability the well known Mount Battock eagle which has its eyrie—shall we say?—"somewhere in the district." On the flat ground to the west, a herd of hinds was grazing peacefully in the sunshine, quite oblivious of the human presence.

The snow level was now reached where it lay in deep drifts in sheltered places on the northern slopes. About two hundred feet below the summit we beheld a picture of wild life very typical of the district. To the left of the cairn a herd of stags was silhouetted against the

sky. In the centre of the picture a company of white hairs in their winter coats were resting just below the cairn, while on a snowdrift to the right stood a flock of ptarmigan purring out their curious alarm note.

A few minutes more and we were at the top. Behind the cairn the air was so still that it was possible to sit in comfort with but few extra wraps. A convenient snowdrift supplied the water and in a few minutes the kettle was boiling over a small primus. Lunch was enjoyed under ideal conditions. Re-invigorated, we were now able to surrender ourselves to the enjoyment of the view on all sides. To the south a thick haze prevented us seeing beyond the valley of the Tay, but the Montrose basin seemed to be almost at our feet. From south-east to north-east the sea was clearly visible and passing vessels could be made out by the aid of the glass. Aberdeen appeared to be lying under a pall of smoke and we did not envy those from whom the sun was hidden. As the temperature fell, we could make out the cold mist spreading up the valleys. To the west and north the beauty of the view was beyond description. The sky was clear and the low winter sun shining on the snowfields of Ben Avon, Lochnagar, and the White Mounth showed up as reflections varying from yellow to the bluest of blues and the deepest of purples. An intense silence brooded over all and we conversed in whispers as it seemed like sacrilege to intrude on such a silence. The sun sank lower and lower in the west and yet we could not tear ourselves away from the beauty and fascination of the scene spread around and below us. At last twilight came, the colours disappeared, and their place was taken by many shades of delicate gray.

The twilight deepens and as if by common consent three figures steal silently away. The Aven was crossed by the aid of the last rays of daylight when a course was laid for the top of the ridge. A rest at the ridge gave the young moon time to rise high enough to shed its light on the path to Feughside which was reached without any difficulty. So ended a perfect winter day on the hills.



(Ian Struthers Stewart).

MOUNT BATTOCK, FROM THE RIDGE BETWEEN PETER'S HILL AND GLASPITS.

BEN MORE IN LATE SEPTEMBER.

By ANDREW HURRY.

THERE was quietness and coolness on the hill-top. Purple and blood-red faded slowly in the sky. The clouds became grey and silver; the great spaces beyond them were clear as spring water. On the hillside the curlew's eerie cry and an occasional "Gur, wack, wack" of the grouse broke into the sound of the whispering breeze as it slightly waved the sun-scorched heather, making an eerie, soft whistling rustle and silently disappearing into the great spaces of the hillsides.

On every side of Ben More there is a tumultuous ocean of peaks, tossing with light and shade, glistening in silver and gold, torn with black scree, the purples of the rock precipices and the deep cobalt and bronze of the mountain valleys with no memories and no signs of any human occupancy at all leaving a lasting impression on me. Here and there a fertile valley, a silent river softly flowing and twining seawards. As one stands on this rocky vantage point and sees this mountainous world, man does not count; one does not think of him, it is the actual presence of these mighty forms that engrosses one's whole attention.

A look round this airy peak and I see away to the north Scotland's Roof, Ben Nevis, standing and shining above me, but from this view-point he is a massive sentinel, sparkling with his first shimmer of snow. Braeriach, Cairntoul, Angel Peak and Ben Macdhuì (all over 4,000 feet) are solitary and supreme. Schiehallion's proud top peeps past the side of Ben Lawers whose sharp rugged tops are reflected in Loch Tay. Eastward, the

view is fine and to my astonishment I could clearly see the Wallace Monument dominating the Forth, and the sun's rays glistening on its smooth surface. Ben Ledi and Ben Venue raised their proud heads through a frieze of fluffy clouds.

Southward, the chimney stacks and University Tower of Glasgow were slightly veiled in a haze, but occasionally a shaft of sunlight penetrated the smoke of the Second City and was reflected on some glass roofs.

Down the Clyde Valley, Ailsa Craig is visible and I can see the Paps of Jura topping the haze. Nearer hand Ben Lomond's summit shone and dominated the Loch Lomond range. The Loch itself is not seen from Ben More as a range of hills comes in between it and the "bonnie, bonnie banks." Westwards is a medley of mountains with no outstanding peak, but shining in the morning light, some clouded in golden white, blue white, and dead white, and these clouds floated away into the blue sky. Northwards, Ben Cruachan stands in splendour among the Loch Awe range. His head is snow-sprinkled and his sides sharply precipitous.

A little to the left of Ben Cruachan is one of 1926's tragedy mountains, Achallader. A young mountaineer slipped on the winter's ice of the mountain and was lost and found dead after many days' search. This peak in the winter is a glittering confusion of miniature glaciers and greenish ice fields, of smooth light, with dingy rock-piles, dull and cold, a tatterdemalion of desolation. Up there winter generally rules for five months of the year and the snow puts all to sleep, where in late September the face of things may in one single night turn white and the clouds consort, the winds wed, and sudden and terrible snow-storms are brought forth full grown.

Stobinian, another tragedy hill, is at my feet and is attached to Ben More by a grassy neck of land. It was the scene of a great lightning storm this summer when a young lady, daughter of an old Fifeshire family, was struck by the lightning and killed on the spot.

As I retrace my steps down the steep sides of the Ben,

towards Loch Dochart, the loch appears to be sunk within a crumpled cushion of tawny coloured silk. An old castle standing on a small rocky promontory at one of the narrow parts of the loch, reminds me of historical days, and hoary memories crowd in upon me as this ancient pile is viewed.

The waters of the loch lay before me without a ripple and the hills were reflected in the liquid mirror, the birches were a dream, thousands of silver barked stems gleaming against the thick carpet of half-withered golden grasses and russet bracken. Far away winds the river Dochart right into the tawny bosom of the glen, sparkling and splashing over its rocky bed, past the beautiful, historical thatched houses of Killin then gently snuggling into the placid waters of Loch Tay. How splendid it is to see afar, space dwarfing space and vistas of wondrous colours! No wonder artists fail adequately to paint mountains. The toiling millions in crowded cities are ignorant of the terrible beauty and sublimity of our own mountains. If they could only see the boundless open of the hills, and realise what the freedom of eagles means, and see the wintry sunlight when the great hills are a golden yellow with splashes of sparkling snow in the corries, or when they had learned to suffer the clouds on the hill-top, they would then be able to thank God for the sunshine.

Something of the lure of the hills is expressed in the following poem by Leigh Buckner Hanes :—

God give me mountains,
With hills at their knees,
Mountains too high
For the flutter of trees.

Mountains that know
The dark valleys of death,
That have kissed a pale star
And felt its last breath.

And still left the dawn
In a golden-rimmed cup—
God give me mountains
And strength to climb up.

AN INDICATOR ON THE EILDONS.

BY JOHN CLARKE.

THE Eildon Hills are a group of three small heights lying immediately to the south of Melrose, the central and highest peak attaining an elevation of 1385 feet, some 300 feet lower than the summit of Bennachie. To the traveller going south by the Waverley route, they form a prominent object in the foreground from Galashiels onward. The mass of hills to the south of Selkirk precluded the choice of a line direct south, so that the railway has to make a wide sweep to the east between Galashiels and St. Boswells, at the latter of which it gradually regains its south direction, and soon to Hawick and over the Borders. At Melrose it is running practically due east or even slightly to the north of east. The river Tweed, which emerges from the hill country between Galashiels and Selkirk, for the remainder of its course meanders through the plain—the Merse—passing in succession Abbotsford, Galashiels, Melrose, St. Boswells, Dryburgh, Kelso, Coldstream, and so east and north-east till it discharges itself into the North Sea at Berwick. On its north or left bank it receives the Gala and the Leader (from Lauderdale), and on the south the Ettrick (at Selkirk) and the Teviot (at Kelso), into which the Jed from the Jedburgh direction has previously fallen. These are the main topographical features of the ground plan of the district.

The interest of the Eildons is not merely three or four-fold, but manifold. They form the hub of a country

rich in historical, romantic, military, and picturesque features and associations. Trimontium, as the Romans called it, possesses also no little archæological interest, to which the Roman camp at Newstead, a mile or two east of Melrose, and the Roman road leading to it, testify. The two points of more general appeal are that it is the centre of the Scott country, and that it commands a wide view of the Borderland, the scene of foray and fight for so many ages between Scot and Southron, looking down, too, on the culminating scene of tragedy at Flodden, some twenty-five or thirty miles off to the southeast. To one nurtured on the Scott poetry and the Waverleys, the district possesses a wonderful attraction, amounting to positive fascination. A flying visit in the spring of 1873, which incidentally had been made by way of Loch Katrine, the Trossachs, Stirling Castle and Loch Leven, was but an introduction to Dryburgh, Melrose, Abbotsford and St. Mary's Loch. The intervening years had added much to the knowledge of the district and therewith enhanced the glamour of its story and legends, and the charm of its natural beauty. Two facts in particular began to force themselves on one's mind, first that in the Eildons there was a viewpoint which commanded much of the interest of the Scott and Border land, and second, that acquaintance with the traditions and associations of the region required to be preserved, renewed and placed on a more secure basis. This suggested, in September, 1924, the idea of an Indicator of the kind familiar from Arthur's Seat, and more recently illustrated by those erected on Lochnagar and Ben Macdhui. The design was to supply, as it were, a permanent map always unfolded and inviting inspection, free from the vagaries of the wind on storm swept peaks, and embodying as much topographical and other lore as it might be possible to cram into the space. The idea, once mooted, at once "caught on." Scott and Border Clubs, the Burghs of Melrose and Galashiels, backed by the neighbouring towns already mentioned, entered warmly into the project, and private donors came forward with the utmost readiness to answer

the appeal for funds. The Earl of Dalkeith, owner of the Hills, not only gave the site but entered into the project with great zeal. Other representatives of the great Buccleuch house also aided, while the committee in charge were fortunate in securing as chairman the Honourable Lord Sands, at the time president of the Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club. Aberdeen friends were not wanting in doing their part, and may claim a substantial share in the success of the movement. The Indicator was unveiled on June 2, in presence of a large and representative company. Provost Curle, Melrose, presided. The address was delivered by the Master of Polwarth, and the monument was unveiled by Lord Henry Scott, who released the Union Jack covering it. A poetical tribute was paid by Mr. George Hope Tait, Galashiels, on behalf of the Abbotsford Scott Fellowship, while votes of thanks were moved to the speakers by Provost Hayward, Galashiels, and to the technical experts and unseen workers by the writer. The Master of Polwarth, it may be mentioned, is the Hon. Walter Hepburn Scott, the lineal descendant of Sir Walter's great fighting ancestor, Wat of Harden, and it is at Harden that the Master resides. Lord Henry Scott is brother to the Duke of Buccleuch, and thence uncle to Lord Dalkeith. The design of the Indicator was drawn by Mr. John Mathieson, late of the Ordnance Survey, who designed the Arthur's Seat Indicator, and whose name is well known in Aberdeen, especially in connection with General Wade's roads. He spared no time or care in observing, recording, and verifying the details. Whereas Scott is credited with having been able to point out forty-three places "famous in war and verse," Mr. Mathieson has raised the number to over ninety, most of them places of note. He has also embodied a ground plan, showing rivers and railways, and has added a horizon corresponding to the sky line on a clear day. The Indicator is cast of the hardest bronze, while not inappropriately, the pedestal which is composed of three pieces is of Rubislaw granite, "more enduring than bronze." The Indicator

is a handsome piece of work, worthy of the site and object, in form and the knowledge it conveys alike creditable.

To describe the wealth of objects, localities, scenes, and associations which cluster round the view is beyond the compass of space or power. The spot was that to which Scott was wont to bring up his visitors, perhaps generally by way of the Rhymer's Glen, as he did in the case of Washington Irving, to show them the beauties of the land and expatiate on the delights of his Delectable Mountains. That was a main reason for the choice of the site. To Flodden, reference has already been made. The route of James IV.'s ill-fated expedition lay across the plain spread out before us at our feet. Away to the east is Norham-on-Tweed, whence Marmion's journey can be traced across the Merse till it enters the hill country to the north-west between the Lammermoors and the Moorfoots. On the west, over Bowden Moor, rode William of Deloraine on his midnight journey to the tomb of Michael Scott at Melrose. Branksome from which he started is away south, a few miles up the Borthwick Waters from Hawick. Harden is not far off, a little to the north of Branksome. Close to Hawick are Minto Crags and beyond the more prominent hill, if less known to fame, Ruberslaw. Abbotsford itself is not in sight, but the woods are, and up on the shoulder of the hill is Cauldshiels. Between us and the loch is the Rhymer's Glen. On the other side of the Tweed, a little above Melrose Bridge, is the Fairy Dean, the scene of the appearance of the White Lady of Avenel. The time would fail to speak of Yarrow and associations of the Ettrick Shepherd and Wordsworth, not to mention Mungo Park, whose cottage lies close to the spot

where Newark's stately tower

Looked out from Yarrow's birchen bower,

in the days of the Last Minstrel.

Then there are the Tweed and all its tributaries, with their thriving manufacturing centres, which supply so much of their clothing to our former enemies as well as

to friends. But perhaps the chief attraction is simply the view itself. The landscape, if lacking in the rugged grandeur of the Cairngorms, presents a wonderful panorama of varied beauty. The setting is mountainous—the long line of the Cheviots, the hills of Dumfries and Peebles, with, possibly, glimpses of the Upper Ward of Lanark, the Moorfoots, the Lammermoors, and so, round to the gap which marks the sea on the east. It is from Melrose, as already indicated, that the Tweed basin opens out into a broad strath or dale, rich in woodland, pasturage and cropping. The variety of grouping and colouring presents an ever changing scene which furnishes a source of endless enjoyment. The same view is never seen on two successive visits. The Eildons, in fact, hold a strategic position, and are an ideal position for an indicator no less on account of their natural position than for the commanding prospect of a region rich in the records of a chequered past. As a climb it is nothing—at least in the eyes of a Cairngormer. To others, however, its ease of access may be one of its many attractions. In any case, the exertion to weak or strong will be rewarded a thousandfold.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THE ANNUAL MEETING.

THE 38th annual general meeting was held in the Imperial Hotel, Aberdeen, on Saturday, November, 27th, 1926. The President, Mr. William Garden, advocate, was in the chair.

Mr. John A. Nicol, advocate, the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, submitted the financial statement, which showed that the balance at credit of the Club was £48 15s. 7d., as compared with £28 16s. 5d, at the end of the previous year. The accounts were adopted.

It was agreed that the New Year Meet should be at Braemar. Nethybridge was selected as the centre for Easter, and the Buck o' the Cabrach and the Tap o' Noth would be climbed on the Spring Holiday. The question of Saturday afternoon excursions was left to the committee.

The President stated that Mr. A. G. Nicol Smith had designed a very nice button for the Club, showing the letters "C. C." and a Scotch thistle. He thought they should have that button to be up-sides with the S. M. C. This was agreed to.

Mr. Robert Clarke referred to the question of re-erecting the Blue Hill cairn. It had been suggested that the Club in collaboration with other local organisations, might go into the matter and see what could be done. After some discussion, it was agreed, on the motion of Mr. Theodore Watt, seconded by Mr. W. A. Reid, to remit the question to the committee for consideration and report.

Mr. Parker expressed his cordial thanks to the Club for a set of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch maps of England and Wales which had been presented to him in recognition of all he had done in connection with the erection of the Ben Macdhui Indicator. The question of the disposal of the surplus on the Indicator Fund and on other special funds was remitted to the Committee.

The office-bearers were re-elected. It was agreed to increase the committee by one, and two vacancies due to retirement by rotation had to be filled. Messrs. A. J. Parker, R. Clarke, and R. Sellar were appointed. The resignation of Mr. Henry Alexander from the editorship of the *Club Journal* was received with much regret, and the President paid a warm tribute to the valuable work he had done as editor. Mr. E. W. Watt was appointed to the post, and it was decided that two numbers should be issued in the coming year.

THE ANNUAL DINNER.

THE annual dinner which took place in the Imperial Hotel, at the close of the annual meeting, was attended by a large number of members and guests. The chair was occupied by the President, Mr. William Garden.

The Chairman, in proposing "The Cairngorm Club," said that the Club was in a most prosperous and successful position both financially and from the membership point of view. A year ago the membership was 199, that night it was 243. Amongst such a large membership, there were members of other well known clubs, and that was as it should be, because all true mountaineers had no jealousy. It was his desire, as they all knew, that the Club should be on all sides as good as the Scottish Mountaineering Club. How did they compare? The S.M.C. had a club tie, a club button, and a club song, and he had heard they were proposing to have a club flag. He did not think the Cairngorm Club would have a flag, but they had a club tie and he had been authorized to arrange for a club button. Mr. Nicol Smith had designed a very suitable button for them, in the shape of a little bronze disc, with the letters "C.C." and a good Scotch thistle. As to a club song, the club poetess, Miss Skakle, said she had not yet been inspired, but he thought she would be, and they would yet have their song. They had had one set-back. Mr. Henry Alexander had given in his resignation as editor of their *Journal*. He was now a municipal father, and the municipal child, being liable to misbehaviour, required a good deal of looking after. They had accepted his resignation with much regret, and Mr. E. W. Watt had slipped into the breach. It had been decided that the *Journal* should be issued twice a year instead of once. As regards expeditions, he thought he was right in saying that the Club had done nothing heroic in that respect in the past year, but they had set up two indicators, and they were awaiting with interest their younger sister's efforts on Ben Nevis. Some foolish people had said to him, after having climbed in the Alps, and Canada, and some of the Norwegian mountains, why descend to lower summits? Could anything more absurd be said? Let us never forget that the Cairngorms are our own mountains and that on the slopes of these magnificent hills we get our first impressions of the beauty of mountain form and enjoy the peace and solitude of the Highland glens.

The Chairman then introduced Rev. A. E. Robertson, the guest of the evening, who had been a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club since 1893. Mr. Robertson had more knowledge of the Scottish mountains than any other man he knew. Mr. Robertson and another had climbed every mountain in Scotland over 3,000 feet, and there were 276 of them. They were fortunate in having him to speak to them.

Mr. Robertson's address (a summary of which appears on pp. 246-252) was greatly appreciated. It was illustrated by a series of splendid photographs shown on the screen.

Dr. J. R. Levack proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Robertson who, he said, was one of the finest exponents of mountain photography in Scotland. They had seen some examples that night which could be seldom equalled, and certainly never bettered. He had not only knowledge of the rocks and high peaks, but he had also the knowledge of the artist in picking out the beauty spots of the glens. They were grateful to him for coming north to give them such a delightful and enjoyable lecture.

Mr. Robertson made suitable acknowledgment, and thanked Mr. Stott for his skilful manipulation of the lantern, which, he said, was one of the chief factors tending to the success of the lecture.

An enjoyable musical programme was contributed to by Miss Lena Dunn, the Misses Skakle, and Mr. Frank Scorgie, while Mr. Robert Clarke gave a recitation.

Mr. E. W. Watt proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, and referred to his extensive experience and knowledge of mountaineering in several countries.

The chairman replied, giving several reminiscences, and the evening ended with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

NEW YEAR MEET, 1927—BRAEMAR.

BRAEMAR was again the centre for the New Year Meet—from December 31 to January 3. Headquarters were at the Invercauld Arms Hotel and there was a good attendance of members. The following notes record the expeditions of the various parties :

Friday, Dec. 31, 1926.—Messrs. J. A. Parker, R. T. Sellar, and Sturm, made the last ascent of Ben Macdhui for the year 1926. Leaving Braemar by car shortly after 8 o'clock, the party found the road to Derry Lodge clear of snow and got away from the latter about 9. The Lui Beg route was followed and the summit was reached about noon, a compass course having had to be followed from the Stob Coire an Sput Dearg. Plenty of large patches of old snow were encountered all frozen hard. The Indicator was found to be clear of snow and in as good condition as the day it was built. After lunch in the Sappers' Hut a descent was made by Coire Etchachan and Glen Derry, and Braemar was reached about 4 o'clock. The weather throughout was favourable, but very cold on the summit.

Saturday, Jan. 1, 1927.—The same party motored to the top of the Cairnwell road and from it climbed Glas Maol and Creag nan Leacan in very windy weather.

Sunday, Jan. 2.—The same party with the addition of Roy Symmers walked to the top of the Slugan, where the party divided. Sturm and Symmers pushed on to the Clach a'Chleirich and thence to the north top of Beinn a'Bhuird and then back along the edge of the eastern corries to Carn Fiaclach and home by the Slugan Glen, Braemar being reached some time after 5 o'clock. Meantime Parker and Sellar walked down Glen Quoich, through its magnificent forest of Scots pine to the Dubh Glen bothy, and up the latter glen to a point about half-a-mile beyond the tree line, by Glen Quoich to Alanaquoich and the ferry, Braemar being reached shortly before 5 o'clock.

Monday, Jan. 3.—D. S. P. Douglas, Mackie, J. A. Parker, and Sturm left Braemar shortly after 8 o'clock in two light cars and motored to the ford over the Geldie Burn, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles beyond the White Bridge, where it was found possible to turn the cars without difficulty. Leaving the cars about 9.20 the party walked up the very rough cart road to Geldie Lodge and thence skirted across the lower slopes of An Sgarsoch at a level of about 2,000 feet. From the Allt a'Chaorruinn a compass course was struck up the eastern slope of Carn Ealar, crossing some very hard snow near the top, and the small cairn on the top of the hill was found without any difficulty. The weather conditions were now very bad, thick mist and driving snow, but very careful compass work with dead reckoning, enabled the party to reach the bealach, which was clear of mist, at the head of the Allt a'Chaorruinn and thence to the top of An Sgarsoch. From the big cairn on the latter a compass course was set down the slopes of the Coire an Tobar, the party getting out of the mist about the 2,500 feet level. Passing Geldie Lodge, the back portion of which is now in ruins on account of a fire, the cars were reached about half-past 4 o'clock, just as it was getting pitch dark. The drive to the Linn of Dee required the greatest caution; but by going very slowly there were no adventures and Braemar was reached about 6 o'clock.

Tuesday, Jan. 4.—Douglas, Mackie, and Parker motored back to Aberdeen.
J. A. P.

Saturday, Jan. 1., 1927.—A party consisting of:—Dr. Levack, Walter Reid, E. B. Reid, Dr. D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, Wm. Malcolm, D. S. P. Douglas, G. R. Symmers, Taylor, T. Ogilvie, J. Ogilvie, Miss Margaret Cameron, Miss Ruth Warren, and two guests, left Invercauld Hotel by bus, and proceeded to the Garrawalt Bridge, over the Dee. The weather was dull, somewhat wet, and a frosty strong wind was blowing, but it was not very cold.

Leaving the main road, the party struck through the woods to the Garrawalt Shiel—which was apparently deserted. Then leaving the private driving road beyond the Shiel, the rather steep ascent through the Ballochbuie Forest was accomplished fairly easily.

At the upper limits of the forest the party divided, and four members—Wm. Malcolm, D. P. Levack, D. S. P. Douglas, and G. R. Symmers—struck off to the right, up the glen of the Garrawalt, to the Sandy Loch and the Stuié Buttress.

The remainder of the party proceeded upwards towards Lochnagar itself. The weather was now much worse, with some rain, and a very strong gusty wind. The whole party, with the exception of Dr. Levack, made the top of Lochnagar without much difficulty, although the wind was very severe at times, and threatened to blow some of the members over.

After a short stay at the top, where there was a tremendous gale and a view rather broken up by storm clouds and rain showers, the whole party, with the exception of Dr. Levack and Mr. Walter Reid, descended by the ridge of Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe into the forest, and then by the path back to the Garrawalt and the main road.

The four who made for the Sandy Loch had a very good climb on the Stuié Buttress. In a fierce gale of wind, very gusty, and liable to attack them from any direction, they slowly made the ascent, finding some difficult patches with half frozen snow, and rather thinly covered rock. Had the temperature been a few degrees lower the climb would have been extremely uncomfortable, if not actually impossible, owing to the very exposed nature of the ridge. On the summit the whole plateau of the White Mount was covered with frozen snow, half melted in places, and difficult to walk over in the terrific gale of wind which was blowing. After making the cairn of the White Mount, the party retraced their steps to the Buttress, and then down the edge of the cliffs immediately to the north of it, to a part where a steep snow slope afforded some excellent practice in cutting steps. In places the angle approached 60° —and was quite exciting. One man dropped his hat and had to descend the whole slope to rescue it.

After an hour or so passed in this pleasant way the party struck off down the Garrawalt, and by the path descended once more to the main road, arriving, within five minutes of their scheduled time, singing loudly.

Here the whole party packed into the bus, except the Ogilvies and their friend, who walked home to Braemar. One member of the party—a guest from Dundee—was found suffering from true exhaustion—with typical symptoms and a partial collapse. He recovered quickly, however, in the hotel, after a hot bath, food, and an evening in bed.

Sunday, Jan. 2.—A party consisting of D. P. Levack, J. W. Levack, D. S. P. Douglas, Miss Elizabeth Warren, Miss Ruth Warren, and Miss Margaret Cameron, left the hotel about 10.30 a.m. and drove to Callater. They then proceeded up the west side of the loch, and ascended into Corrie Kander. The gale of the previous

day had not settled very much, and the loch looked very wild and black.

An ascent was made, in very soft snow, of the big gully leading out of the corrie. No difficulty was experienced except at the top, where the slope steepened, and a rope was used for a short time as a safeguard.

On the plateau of Carn Tuirc the gale was very strong and a thick mist required some compass work to make the cairn. This was done without much difficulty, and then the descent to Loch Callater was accomplished, half in mist, half out below it, and the party returned to the hotel after a most enjoyable and not too strenuous day.

D. P. L.

This expedition was repeated on Monday, Jan. 3, by Malcolm, Taylor, Symmers, and E. W. Watt. The steps cut the previous day were found very useful.

SPRING HOLIDAY CLIMB.

THE Spring Holiday Excursion was to the Buck o' the Cabrach and Tap o' Noth. The main party, consisting of Messrs. W. M. Smith, Taylor, Chisholm, W. J. Milne, and Iverach, with two guests, Councillor George and Mr. Chisholm, went to Rhynie and from there ascended the Tap by a ridge covered with snow just hard enough to bear. A cold wind and sleet met them at the top and the view was not extensive, though the Cabrach was well seen. Descending the face of the hill, the party made a cross-country tramp to the Buck. Two miles from the foot a postman was met who predicted that the party would never get up the hill in time and who was entrusted with an order to send a motor to meet them on the Lumsden side. A Lumsden man then appeared on the scene, and, deferring to his local knowledge, the party put him in charge. The going became pretty stiff owing to the snow and long heather, but the climbers followed a wire fence right to the top where a blizzard raged. Fleeting glimpses of the country, especially the Cabrach, were obtained. The conditions were extraordinarily severe for so late a date as the May Holiday. The descent was down a long ridge pitted with holes, some of them 15 feet deep. "We had to jump about," as one of the climbers put it, "like a lot of hyperborean kangaroos," (We do not know this breed.—Ed.). Ultimately the car, duly sent by the postman, was reached about 6 o'clock, and the party dined at Rhynie with the President and Dr. Levack, who had gone out by an early train, and with Mr. Parker who also turned up. Mr. Munn and a lady guest climbed the Tap independently and also joined the party at dinner. The homeward journey was by train from Gartly.

THE BLACK SPOUT--(LEFT-HAND BRANCH)--
LOCHNAGAR.

ON August 1, 1926, Mr. King and I did some climbing in the left-hand branch of the Black Spout. Apart from the initial 12 ft. choke-stone pitch at the foot of the gully it is very similar to the Black Spout and proves somewhat uninteresting. To overcome the above mentioned obstacle it was necessary to enter a very cramped cave under the blocking stone and push one end of the rope, which was fastened to a stone, through a hole in the roof and let it slide down the outside of the choke-stone. Holding the end of the rope coming from the cave I gave my companion a back up and with the assistance of the other end he managed to scramble up. After I had passed up the kit, King anchored the rope and I went up hand over hand. Having thus succeeded we looked for more difficulties to overcome but were bitterly disappointed. About half-way to the top, tired of scree scrambling, we decided to tackle a rather steep chimney of the open variety which branches off to the right. The rock which composes this narrow gully is very unreliable, the most inviting looking holds coming away in one's hand. The top of the chimney is rather picturesque. Climbers emerge through a hole formed by a bridge-stone and to an onlooker at some distance would appear to come from the bowels of the earth. Although not exceedingly difficult, leaders should exercise the utmost caution in negotiating this chimney, because of the disintegrated nature of the rock. For those coming behind, my advice is, "Wear a crash-helmet."

G. R. S.

THE ANGELS' PEAK: NORTH-EAST RIDGE.

ON the 15th August, 1926, G. Wilson and the writer walked from Tullochgrue through the Larig Ghru to the Garbh Choire and thence up the steep slope to the lip of the corrie which holds the Lochain Uaine. From this point the Angels' Peak was ascended by its north east ridge which gave an interesting scramble of about 750 feet. The lower part of the ridge is perfectly simple; but towards the top the ridge becomes fairly steep and at one point narrows down to a mere wall. Under winter conditions the ascent of the ridge would probably be difficult. In summer it offers an interesting line of ascent of Cairn Toul as an alternative to the usual routes up that peak.

J. A. PARKER.

NOTES.

ON June 19 Mr. J. A. Parker climbed Ben Hope, Sutherlandshire, and thus joined the very select band who have ascended every 3,000-foot mountain in Scotland, of which there are 276. The separate tops or peaks above the 3,000-foot line number 543. All these have been climbed by Mr. Ronald Burn. Rev. A. E. Robertson and Mr. Parker have done all the mountains, but not all the "tops."

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB is publishing a series of Guides, the intention being to cover all the Scottish hills, and three volumes have already appeared, one a general introductory volume and the other two dealing with Ben Nevis and Skye respectively. The Cairngorms volume is approaching completion and will be published next. It will deal with the Grampians from Aberdeen to the Drumochter Pass and with the Cairngorms.

WE regret the following *errata* which unfortunately occurred in the article under this heading in the last issue of the *Journal* :—

Page 195, line 16—This sentence should read "The masons were then called over, and the Doulton slab was placed in position and finally checked first by compass and again by a sight on to Ben Avon which was the most distant point visible."

Page 195, line 10 from foot—For "not" read "now."

Page 195, line 3 from foot—For "and did not" read "and things did not."

Page 196, line 4—For "systematical" read "symmetrical."

THE accurate mapping of a country is done by a series of triangulations based upon a line very carefully measured. One of the base lines so used in the Ordnance Survey of Scotland was measured on the Belhelvie links near Aberdeen. Members of the Geodetic Survey of Canada, found that when they began a survey of the Canadian Rockies, they had no place level enough to measure a baseline, so they sat down (says the *Canadian*

Engineer), and waited for winter to come and freeze over a small lake and then measured their line as accurately on the ice as they might have done on the sand of a long beach. The baseline measured on the ice of the Canadian lake was exactly 5,800 metres long, and posts were held in holes cut in the ice every fifty metres until the water poured around them froze them in. The tapes used for such important work are not the ordinary tape, but are made with extreme accuracy and must be used with great skill if small errors are not to be made. They have a special thermometer attached, by means of which the temperature may be known at the time of each measurement and the amount of contraction of the tape due to the cold allowed for. Unfortunately for the rapid progress of the work, but fortunately for the comfort of the surveyors, the thermometer supplied with the tape used by the Canadian experts did not read lower than two degrees below zero, while the temperature of the air was often thirty degrees colder.

CONTRAST this age of luxurious sportsmen who motor to the butts, with their predecessors of a century ago. There were indeed giants in those days, as witness this story of a Two Remark- wager quoted in the first volume of the *Cairngorm* ABLE WAGERS. *Club Journal* from a then recently published volume "Kings of Rod, Rifle, and Gun." "One night, while a large party of sportsmen were assembled at Blackhall in Kincardineshire, then the seat of Mr. Farquharson, Sir Andrew Leith Hay bet Lord Kennedy £500 that he would get to Inverness on foot before him. Off they started at nine o'clock at night in their evening costume, thin shoes and silk stockings. Sir Andrew Leith Hay went by the coast road *via* Huntly and Elgin. Lord Kennedy, with Captain Ross as umpire, struck straight across the Grampians. Amid pouring rain they walked all night, next day and the next night, reaching Inverness at 6 a.m. on the third day. Sir Andrew Leith Hay, who had chosen the longer but far more comfortable route, did not arrive till four hours later." It was an age of bets and wagers, Captain Barclay of Ury being one of the first to set the fashion by his famous walk on Newmarket Heath. That walk, however, was easy going compared with Lord Kennedy's achievement. He went through the Larig Ghru, if the tradition which still lingers at Braemar be true.

This was not Lord Kennedy's only feat of the kind. Mr. A. I. McConnochie quotes in his book "The Deer and Deer Forests of Scotland," reviewed in No. 61 of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*, a paragraph which appeared in *The Times* of 31st August, 1822, recording the decision of a match for 2000 guineas by Lord Kennedy on Monday, the 12th of August. It was a combined shooting and riding wager. He had wagered that he would in one day, from midnight to midnight, kill 40 brace of grouse at his shooting farm of

Felar (at the head of Glen Tilt a little beyond the Bynack) and afterwards ride to his seat at Dunnottar and back to Felar, a distance of 140 miles. The account goes on, "Exactly at 12 o'clock on Sunday night, three watches were set together and put into a box by the umpires. At four in the morning Lord Kennedy commenced shooting, attended by a great body of Highlanders, drawn together from curiosity. A great deal of rain had fallen in the night which made the hills very wet and the birds wild. The first bird was killed at a quarter after four, and the whole 40 brace in 4 hours and 41 minutes. After shifting his wet clothes and taking some refreshment, he mounted his horse and started for Dunnottar, where he arrived at two o'clock, having rode the 70 miles in four hours and a half. He remained about an hour there and got back to Felar four minutes before eight o'clock at night, performing the 140 miles in 10 hours and 26 minutes and winning the match by four hours.

REVIEWS.

The Alpine Journal, November, 1926. 10/6 net.—In this number the editors bid farewell to their readers. The veteran Mr. Yeld has served for thirty years, and his colleague,

THE CAPTAIN FARRAR, for eighteen. They have established a fine tradition and mountaineers everywhere owe them a debt of gratitude for the knowledge and enthusiasm they have devoted to the maintenance of the high standard of this record of mountain adventure and scientific observation. The new editor is Colonel E. L. Strutt, who is known as a skilled mountaineer and was a member of the second Mount Everest Expedition. He is to be congratulated on the May Number, the first to appear under his editorship. It is rich in illustrations, reproduced in colour, half-tone and photogravure, and including panoramic views attached to Captain A. H. MacCarthy's account of the first ascent of Mount Logan two years ago. This article is given the place of honour and along with it should be read two papers in the November issue, dealing with the problems of food and equipment which the expedition had to solve. Canadian mountains figure in another very interesting paper by Dr. Thorington, who gives an account of climbs made last year in the Forbes-Lyell and other groups of the Canadian Rockies, and some first ascents in the Northern Canadian Rockies are described by Mr. J. W. A. Hickson. In memoriam notices include one of Mr. Harold Raeburn to whose memory the President of the Cairngorm Club pays a tribute in this issue. In addition to the numerous pictures, there are nearly 400 pages of letter-press in these two numbers. It is all fascinating to the true mountaineer and in some places thrilling, as, for example, in Colonel Strutt's very frank account of "An Extraordinary Escape."

The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, Nos. 102 and 103, 2/6 each net. Mr. Sang's article, "Of Sutherland," in No. 102, has

S.M.C. an opening paragraph which will be widely endorsed, "The rapacity of the Highland hotel proprietor," he says, "has become a byword, especially south of the Tweed. It is no myth. Painful personal experience has taught me that, although absolute ignorance

may exist on culinary and domestic matters, finance is always a strong point." As he strongly resents being fleeced by his own countrymen, he has acquired "a Canadian super bus," and, he adds, "the charm of my plan is that it opens up the whole blessed Island and enables one to greet with a supercilious smile the hostile stare which so frequently takes the place of a hotel welcome on arrival. Even far Sutherland ceases to be a matter of time-table worries and advance bookings. It becomes instead a pleasant following of inclination, a drifting from beauty to beauty." The whole article bears this out, illustrated as it is by Mr. Sang's own photographs. Another series of excellent pictures by Mr. Parker relate to last year's Easter Meet of the S.M.C. at Cluanie. No. 103 gives first place to "Some Early Informal Meets" by Mr. Gilbert Thomson, who remarks that "some of the pioneer clubs, from which ours received many valuable members, had Meets in the early days, the most notable being those of the Cairngorm Club, as evidenced by Mr. Inkson McConnochie's paper on 'The Cairngorms in Winter,' which immediately followed the President's address in the first number of our *Journal*." In the account of the New Year Meet of the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland, the facts are given regarding the accident which occurred on the Couloir of Stob Ghabhar.

We have received No. 17 of *The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal* (published at 10 Park Square, Leeds—5/- net.), which presents a most attractive budget of articles and pictures.

MUTTON An amusing article on "Food and the Mountaineer"
SANDWICHES. gives some useful hints about what to take and what to avoid. The author specially appeals "for united action on the part of British climbers to secure the suppression of mutton sandwiches." Mr. C. E. Benson's paper, "Concerning Classification," deals with a subject about which, we suppose, mountaineers will always differ and ends with the truly sensible remark that "it is quite impossible for genius to appreciate a difficulty it cannot experience."

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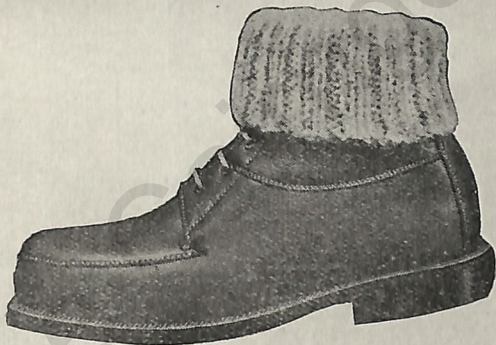
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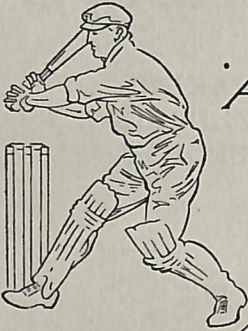
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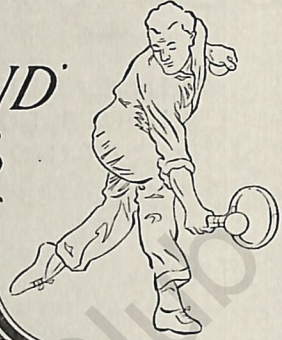
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JAMES S. CARTER

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