

The Cairngorm Club Journal.

EDITED BY
EDWARD W. WATT.

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

Glenburnie Park,
Rubislaw Den North,
Aberdeen.



FLODDEN MEMORIAL.

Unveiled, September 27, 1910, by Sir George Douglas, Bart.

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FLODDEN.

BY JOHN CLARKE.

THE "Tale of Flodden Field" has been familiar to most of us since our schooldays. It may have been that the dramatic action and human interest overlaid and obscured in great measure the topographical factor. The latter alone is the relevant aspect of the subject for this *Journal*. Yet the poem is on the whole accurate in its description of the scene and of the course of events, including the chief historical figures and the part played by each. Indeed the identification of sites in later times and the restorations based on it have largely adopted Scott's narrative as their guide.

Flodden is a name of sad memories, but not one of which Scotland need feel ashamed. Never have Scottish loyalty and Scottish valour been more sorely tried, and never have they responded more heroically. The issue it is true was trivial, when the freak of a crazy knight-errant is weighed against the independence of Scotland. But in outcome, Flodden had been Bannockbourne had Scotland had a sane leader, not to say Wallace wight or well-skilled Bruce to rule the fight.

A fortunate accident afforded an opportunity of visiting the ground—all too hurriedly, it must be admitted—on May 2, 1931. The approach by the Tweed valley from Galashiels past Melrose, Kelso, and Coldstream enabled one to observe afresh from a new angle features already familiar along the banks of the "slow and silent stream," as it here

presents itself, and by the pastoral vale through which it winds its "fruitful fishy" way. The river with its affluents may be said to contain the clue to the movements of most of the Border warfare of olden times, no less than to the peaceful pursuits of to-day. Geographically mountain takes precedence of river, which derives from it alike origin, supply and current. But for the immediate purpose it may suffice to recall the fact that the basin of the Tweed is the main theatre of Border history and romance.

Rising at a height of 1,500 feet, the Tweed in its course of 96 miles has an average fall of little over 15 feet per mile. It is thus a noiseless and peaceful stream, suggestive of "quiet waters," and incidentally also of "pastures green," little in keeping with the strife and turmoil of which it has so often been the witness. Its gentle murmur is the very echo of

Flow on, sweet river, till I end my song.

In its progress it absorbs successively the Ettrick (cum Yarrow), Gala, Leader (or Lauder), Teviot, Till, and Whiteadder (cum Blackadder), together with endless "Waters," the burns that issue from every glen and dale. Its general direction is easterly, with an inclination toward north in its lower reaches. The Gala, Leader, and Whiteadder join on the left or north bank, the others on the south. The lower course of the river is through a broad, fertile strath originally known as the Merse, having its "going out" on the east at Berwick, where the waters drawn from Hart Fell at last mingle with those of the North Sea. Peebles, with Neidpath Castle hard by, is the first town of note situated on the river; then comes Selkirk, really on the Ettrick but so close to its junction with the main stream as to be included—in fact one of the most famous of the "tweed" towns. A little way down is Abbotsford, and after that, in succession, are Galashiels, Melrose (with Bemersyde not far off), St. Boswells (with Dryburgh close by), Kelso, Coldstream, and finally Berwick. Every name is a centre of interest. Excellent viewpoints are afforded by the numerous adjacent hills, notably by the Eildons. They command the whole valley of the river from Selkirk and up the Ettrick on the

west to Berwick on the eastern horizon. The indicator which crowns the central and highest peak also supplies the key to the many famous names of the Borderland. From Flodden Field itself the triple peak can be clearly discerned, even through the haze of the afternoon sun at its back, at a distance in direct line of $21\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The topography of Flodden connects chiefly with Coldstream and the Till, which falls into the Tweed two or three miles below it. It is a little above Coldstream that the Tweed becomes the boundary between England and Scotland.

The Till is thus a Northumbrian stream. It has its source right behind, i.e., south of, the Cheviot, whence it circles round the eastern extremity of the range. Blocked of direct exit seaward by the low ridge of north-eastern Northumberland, which faces toward Holy Isle and the Farnes, it turns north to discharge itself, as already seen, into the Tweed. Close to the junction with the latter stands Twisel (locally pronounced Twy-) Bridge, one of the focal points of the battle. Flodden Hill, on which prior to the fight the Scots were encamped, lies south-east of Coldstream at a distance of five or six miles. It is the last spur of the Cheviots eastward as they drop towards the Till valley. Piper's Hill, on which the monument stands, is a little round toward the west and north, close to the village of Branxton (or Brankstone). It faces north and is approached by a short, steep ascent from the plain between it and the Tweed. This is the only side from which it is accessible by an army.

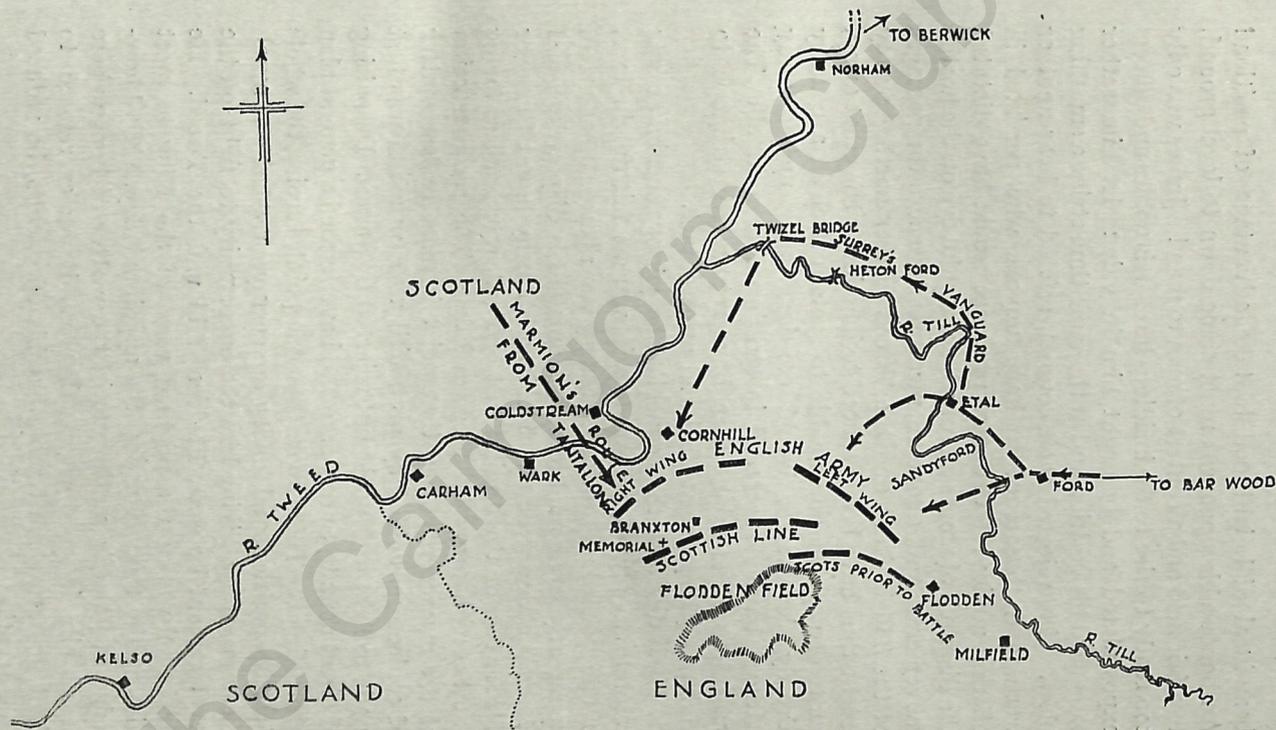
The whole position is somewhat reminiscent of the commanding Dunbar heights, from which in a later age Leslie, against his better judgment, was coerced by his clerical associates to descend, when "the Lord" delivered him into Cromwell's hands and the tender mercies of the Ironsides. In the Flodden débâcle it was the lord paramount who was the responsible agent.

It is no part of the geographer's task to describe the battle. For that, reference may be made to "Marmion," always worth re-reading, and the historians, of whom there is no lack. The main action, and such strategy as preceded

it, may perhaps be most readily understood by means of a sketch plan of the ground. (See opposite page.)

The movements of the opposing forces are not always easy to determine, and some of them prior to the battle, which vitally affected the issue, are in part conjectural. In the first place, the part played by the witching Lady Heron is not altogether beyond dispute. She is popularly supposed to have been a sinister influence, but whether she was the Delilah that led to James's ruin must remain matter of speculation. So much is certain. In absence of her husband, the castellan, she was found by him at Ford, a place which, together with Norham and Wark, he had at great sacrifice of time captured in his preliminary operations. Her society proved very attractive, and he spent much time in it. A very competent investigator, who has comparatively recently examined all the evidence, pronounces the charge of more intimate relations between them "not proven." That still leaves strong and justifiable ground for suspicion. The character of the Scottish monarch and his record on similar occasions previously, unhappily afford too much presumption of its truth. At any rate, there seems little doubt that the wily lady insinuated herself into James's confidence, ascertained, probably delayed, his plans, such as they were, and at the critical moment slipped off to her own people. The most probable inference is that she was able to reveal essential portions of the Scottish military dispositions, which enabled Surrey to act accordingly.

Not wholly unconnected with this was another determining factor, the King's quixotic ideas of knightly honour. Surrey, it may be recalled, was coming from the south-east, with large forces gathered chiefly from the northern counties of England. Finding the invaders encamped in a position almost hopeless of direct attack, he set about playing on the vanity of the foe. James's chimerical notions of chivalry gave him the opportunity. He had challenged James to meet him on a certain date, and the Scottish monarch had agreed. Now he claimed equality of conditions, a recognized rule of the tournament. It was unworthy of the



SKETCH PLAN OF FLODDEN FIELD.

beau-ideal of knighthood to take advantage of position ! An honourable opponent must come down to level ground, to a fair field and a contest of man to man ! James was only too ready to rise to the insidious lure. His nobles and officers expostulated and besought him in vain : let him rather safeguard his position and at the same time strike a smashing blow. He rejected their counsel, refused to hear another word, and threatened to hang anyone who persisted in offering advice ! Ordinary prudence would have dictated the dispatch of scouts all round, a watchful eye on the hostile movements, and, above all, measures to secure the passages of the Till in front and the Tweed further north. Surrey might thus have been reduced to inaction. His great army, short of supplies and unable to sustain itself in a country already devastated, would ere long have melted away without having succeeded in striking a blow at all. The victorious King might then have returned in triumph to Holyrood, honour satisfied and army intact.

How different the sequel ! The young Lochinvar was resolute to prove as dauntless in war as faithful in love, but he scorned precautions. Surrey was allowed unmolested, apparently even unobserved, to make his dispositions and choose his own ground. The English army lay at Barmoor Wood, two or three miles east of Ford, more or less facing the Scottish army on Flodden Edge. The reconstruction of the movements from that point is more or less matter of conjecture, guided by probability. A proposal was first made to fight at Milfield but rejected by James. Despairing of direct assault, Surrey seems to have formed a general plan of crossing the Till at more than one point, turning the whole Scottish position, and forcing the enemy, or, what was much the same thing, giving him the opportunity to fight on the level ground between Flodden Hill and the Tweed. He might rely upon the plighted word of the King to meet him at the rendezvous on the appointed day. His knowledge of James's sentiments in the matter of honour here stood him in good stead. Besides, if James refused to fight, his army must soon, like his opponent's, be reduced to starvation.

At the same time, a feint may have been made by Surrey of the invasion of Scotland by crossing the Tweed below Coldstream. The most charitable view of James's inactivity in face of the possibility of being surrounded is indeed that it was due to uncertainty as to the enemy's real intentions. Did the latter mean to face the encounter as he had professed? Or was he playing a double game, his real design being to cross the Tweed and invade Scotland? Even, however, in this event James might have kept a watchful eye on him, hurried north along parallel lines, and crossing the river above Coldstream, have headed off the invader east.

What actually happened was that he waited upon the English without taking any effective step to ascertain their intentions or frustrate their plans. Surrey got all he desired, accomplishing his object according to plan at his own time. So James rose—one can hardly say awoke—on the morning of September 9, 1513, to find his position turned, the English ranged in front and flank. He had got his heart's desire, he had no advantage, fair or unfair, over his opponent.

The topographical interest centres chiefly round Surrey's movements leading to the position now occupied by the two armies. Moving from Barmoor Wood he had apparently done what only the supineness of the foe, if even that, could justify, divided his forces in face, and possibly in sight of, the enemy. His right wing he had sent round north to cross the Till by Twisel Bridge, while he had thrown the rest, probably the main body, of his forces across the stream at a ford or fords higher up and, therefore, nearer the Scottish position. The name Sandyford, as well as Ford itself, indicates the site of one of the crossings. The Scots would appear to have concurrently, or a little later, slewed round their battle front toward Branxton Hill, in front of which is Piper's Hill, the eminence on which the memorial cross now stands. But "the auld carle in a carre," an ancient Foch in this regard, had got his pincer grip. One wing was right between James and Scotland, the other on his flank. The condemnation of history has concentrated

itself on the King's fatal blunder of allowing the enemy to cross the Till unmolested. But it is practically certain that Twisel Bridge was not within range of the Scottish ordnance. It was on one of the higher fords, probably Sandyford or Ford, that the master gunner, Borthwick, had trained his cannon, which on pain of death he was forbidden to fire.

Incidentally the disposition of the English right wing affords an explanation of the ease with which Marmion in the story was able to join his own army. Escaping from "the lion in his den" at Tantallon, he had hurried south over the Lammermuirs, and crossing the Tweed at the dangerous ford above Coldstream, he found himself among the rearguards of his friends. There was no *tour de force* such as the youthful imagination may on first perusal of the poem have supposed. It may also be observed that "Norham's castled steep," with which "Marmion" begins, is a little further down the river, so that the opening and the closing scenes of the poem effect a unity of place. To Marmion's view on crossing the river

Their marshal'd lines stretch'd east and west,
And fronted north and south.

The latter was the English line.

The rest is soon told. James must fight or flee. But was it to be thought of that the *preau chevalier* should shrink in face of the foe? "The better part of valour" might even yet have saved the situation. The Scots after their fashion might have eluded the toils. They might have slunk off through the hilly ground to south and west, to reunite at some safe meeting place nearer the capital, and so have lived to fight another day. But the die was cast, and the monarch rushed to his doom.

No part of James's life became him so well as the leaving of it. That is literally true and only just. He fought with heroic valour, and by his example he inspired his followers to deeds of bravery never surpassed. The foe had most cause to know it, and derived no great joy from his victory. The King's body, covered with many wounds, was next day

found among heaps of slain in the thickest of the battle. The result, if a disaster, was no disgrace to Scotland. It was more or less indeed a drawn battle, at least until the King's death was known. Even then, the English were so crippled that they were unable to follow up their success.

The echoes of the battles long ago may still stir a sympathetic regret. The wail of wives and sweethearts is even to-day repeated in the sad tones of the *Flowers of the Forest*, surely one of the most poignant laments the world has known. War is war whatever its age and folly is folly whoever its author. But, thank Heaven! the former things are passed away. The old, unhappy far-off times can no more return. Carham, close by Flodden, had been the scene of a still earlier clash of nations, nor is it to be denied that both learned lessons of mutual respect from meeting foemen worthy of their steel. But Celt and Sassenach are now at one. The federation is, and has long been, complete. Scotland in her own end of the island tries to keep that end, if not uppermost, at least on level terms with her more richly endowed sister. But it is in goodwill and service, not in the strife which entails common destruction. "Olim noster, nunc fratres" fitly symbolises the changed parts.

On the battlefield stands a Celtic cross of Aberdeen granite, with a base of rough blocks of the same material, the total height being 18 feet 6 inches. It is surrounded by an enclosure of eight granite posts joined by stout iron bars, the area being in all 66 square yards. The general effect may be judged from the accompanying reproduction of a photograph. The cross bears the inscription: "Flodden, 1513. To the Brave of both Nations. Erected 1910."

[Cordial thanks are due to the City Engineer, Mr. T. F. Henderson, for the accompanying sketch plan, and to the Rev. C. E. Hoyle, Branxton Vicarage, for much kindly assistance, including the revision of the proof.]

BEN LAWERS.

BY JAMES MCCOSS.

May the mid-day sun and the evening stars
Guide your lone path across Ben Lawers.

THE district around Fortingall, which includes Glen Lyon, is one of remarkable beauty; the proximity of Loch Tay lends a great charm to the landscape. The hills are finely grouped and are close to the roadway, so that, with the aid of a car, they can be reached with the minimum of energy.

The bulky Ben Lawers, with its height of 3,984 feet, claims sovereignty over all the hills of the Loch Tay district, and indeed over all Perthshire. It is also one of the highest hills in Scotland, there being only other nine which exceed it in height.

The Lawers group, composing nine summits, is situated in the triangle, Loch Tay, Glen Lyon, and Lochan na Lairige. Creag an Fhithich is a rock prominence on the ridge between Ben Lawers and An Stuc, while Sron Dharmurchdi is the culminating point of the south-running ridge of Meall Corranaich: with these two exceptions the summits are separate and distinct peaks.

BEN LAWERS, Beinn Latha-Ur (the mountain of the new day or dawn). The position of the summit cairn is $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles north-west of Lawers Inn, and it is famous as commanding one of the finest views in Scotland, extending from the Cairngorms to the Lothians and from the Atlantic to the North Sea.

It is a mountain of denudation, and the crumbling schists of which it is composed seem to be very favourable to the growth of many of our rarer plants. The botanist will find a good list of plants and mosses that are to be found on the Lawers range in the *C.C.J.*, Vol. 2, p. 195. The lower slopes are clothed with coarse bent grass, springing from a spongy carpet of brownish-green moss.

The easiest route to the top of Lawers from Killin starts



Easter, 1931.

COIRE AN LOCHAN A' CHAIT—BEN LAWERS.

James McCoss.

1. Creag an Fhithich.
2. Ravens' Gully.
3. Bealach Dubh.

from the Lochan na Lairige road, then up the cart track on the west side of the Burn of Edramucky, which leads into Coire Odhar, and passes Leacann Ghlas (grey, steep, shelvy ground) on the right. The high ground is best attained between Meall Corranaich and Beinn Ghlas. The time from the road to Beinn Ghlas is $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, and to Lawers another half hour.

The best route from Lawers Inn starts up the north-east side of the stream that flows down to the main road near the school. This line is followed till the ridge running east from Lawers is reached at 3,000 feet. This ridge takes one comfortably to the summit even in mist.

A fine high-level route from the north starts at Slatich in Glen Lyon, passing between (V) CREAG RORO and (U) COIRE MHAIDHEIN (the tedious corrie), then over the nameless top, 2,866 feet. This route gives a fine ridge walk and culminates in Meall Garbh.

Ben Lawers is a very fine hill at Easter-time, and if one climbs from Lawers Inn to 2,300 feet on the broad shoulder to the east of Lawers, time $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, the snow-clad summits of Meall Gruaidh, Meall Garbh and An Stuc are exposed to view. Their sharp, rugged sides, all scarred with ice and snow, form a striking picture of grandeur, as they soar above the frozen Lochan a' Chait.

From the corrie a variety of routes is opened up to the climber. The following climbs were accomplished at Easter.

Ascent of CAT GULLY of An Stuc. This gully was climbed on April 5, 1931, by Miss McCoss, McCoss, Orkney, and A. Scott. It starts at a height of about 800 feet above Lochan a' Chait, from the left of the main gully which runs up to Bealach An Stuc-Garbh. It gave a nice climb of 500 feet, the snow angle being about 55 degrees, and finished on the summit of An Stuc.

Ascent of RAVENS' GULLY of Creag an Fhithich. This climb starts in the high corrie below Bealach Dubh and runs up the north side of Creag an Fhithich. Its height is 400 feet, and there is a steep pitch 20 feet high about half-way up, which may be rock and more difficult in the

summer. The gully was climbed on April 5, 1931, by Miss Bruce, Miss Macfarlane, and Symmers.

The time from Lawers Inn over the main summits at Easter, fairly easy going, is: Ben Lawers, 2h. 45m., Creag an Fhithich, 20m., Bealach Dubh, 10m., An Stuc, 1h. 10m., Bealach An Stuc-Garbh, 45m., Meall Garbh, 1h., Meall Gruaidh, 1h. 30m. This round of Lawers covers $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the climbing height is 4,977 feet, and the total time required is nine hours.

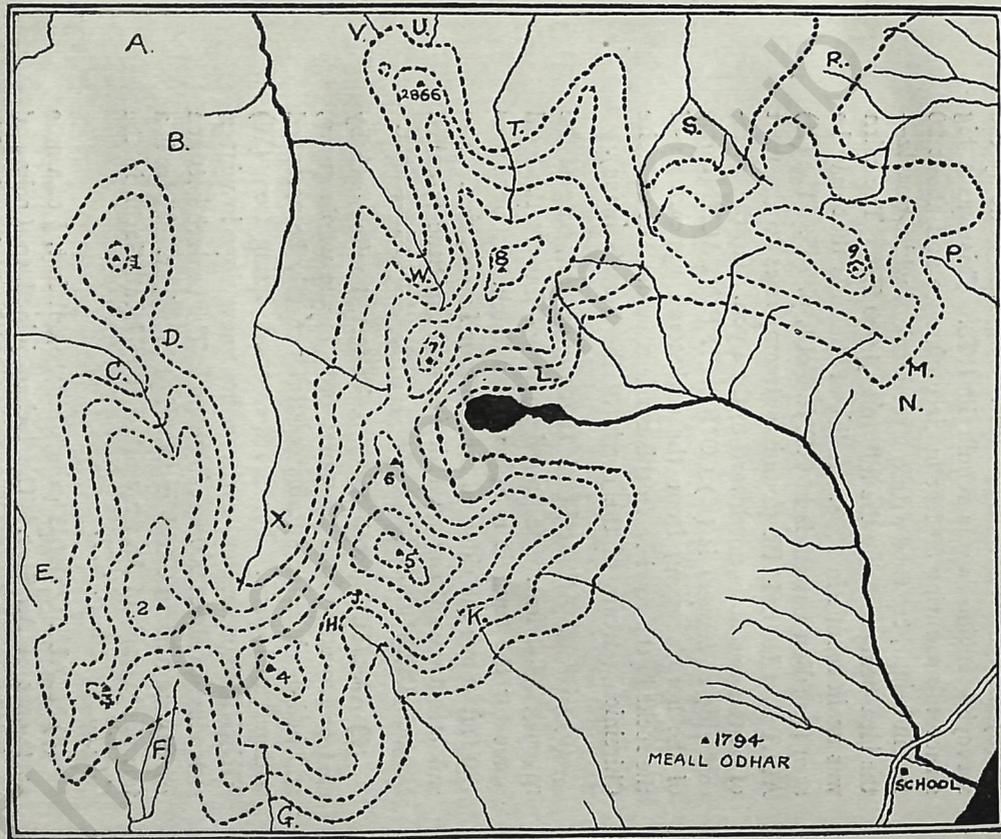
The sketch map gives the contour lines, starting at 2,500 feet and every 250 feet upward. The scale is one inch to one mile.

(1) MEALL A' CHOIRE LEITH (*mel-a-horrie-lea*, hill of the grey corrie), 3,033 feet, $1\frac{7}{8}$ miles north of Meall Corranaich. The bealach connecting these two summits is 2,550 feet in height. (D) COIRE LAITH (*currie-lea*, grey corrie) and (C) COIRE GORM (green corrie) are on the east and west sides respectively of this saddle. (A) SRON EICH (spur of the horses) is the ridge to the north, and (B) COIRE BAN (white corrie) is the rocky corrie to the north-east. (E) GLEANN DA-EIG (glen of the double point) is on the western side.

(2) MEALL CORRANAICH (hill of the corrie of the brackens), 3,530 feet, $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles west of Lawers. The time to it from Lochan na Lairige (small loch of the pass) is $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The height of the saddle connecting it with Beinn Ghlas is 3,050 feet. (F) COIRE ODHAR (*currie ower*, the dun-coloured corrie) is south of Meall Corranaich, and the Burn of Edramucky rises in it.

(3) SRON DHA-MURCHDI, 3,040 feet, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south-south-west of Meall Corranaich.

(4) BEINN GHLAS (grey hill), 3,657 feet, 1 mile south-west of Lawers. (G) COIRE A' CHONNAIDH (corrie of the fuel) is below it on the south. The ridge between Beinn Ghlas and Lawers falls to 3,300 feet. Below this ridge at the source of the Allt an Tuim Bhric (the stream of the speckled knoll) is a rock called (H) CREAG NAN



THE SUMMITS, CORRIES, AND BEALACHS OF BEN LAWERS.

GABHAR (crag of the goats), and a little further north-east towards Lawers is another outcrop of rock called (J) CREAG LOISGTE (*loisk*, burnt-looking crag).

(5) BEN LAWERS, 3,984 feet. The cairn built by the surveying engineers was rebuilt in 1878. This was a big structure measuring 50 feet in circumference and about 20 feet in height, crowned with a large block of white quartz—the idea being to bring the hill up to 4,000 feet. The cairn was again rebuilt in 1898. A list of the hills that may be seen from Ben Lawers is in *C.C.J.*, Vol 1, p. 165. The (X) ALLT A' CHOBHAIR (foaming stream) rises to the west of Lawers and flows northward to the Lyon. On the south-east side of Lawers is (K) COIRE CIREINEACH (corrie of the horse's mane) from the cockscomb appearance of the rocks in the corrie. In this corrie rises the Allt a Choire Chireinich (stream of the corrie of the horse's mane).

(6) CREAG AN FHITHICH (*creag-an-hich*, crag of the ravens), 3,430 feet. Half a mile north of Lawers the local name for the summit is Spicean nan Each. It only rises 130 feet above the ridge on the south or Lawers side. The saddle between Creag an Fhithich and An Stuc is called Bealach Dubh (dark pass) and it is 3,042 feet in height.

(7) AN STUC (steep rock), 3,643 feet, 1 mile north by east of Lawers. It is the finest peak in the whole group, and in icy winter conditions could not readily be ascended without an ice-axe. The north-east side rising from (W) FIN GLEN (clear glen) carries a fine snow slope in winter, extending to about 900 feet in height. The bealach between An Stuc and Meall Garbh is 3,252 feet in height. There is a fine photograph of An Stuc taken from Meall Garbh in the *C.C.J.*, Vol. 4, p. 277.

(8) MEALL GARBH (rough hill), 3,661 feet, $\frac{5}{8}$ of a mile north-east of An Stuc. The lochan joined to Lochan a' Chait is known as Lochan nan Uan (small loch of the lamb). About 400 feet above it on the slopes of Meall Garbh is a steep, slabby piece of rock called (L) CREAG A' BHUIC (crag of the buck). To the north of Meall Garbh is (T)



Easter, 1937.

S. C. H. Smith.

AN STUC—BEN LAWERS.

1. Summit.
2. Cat Gully.
3. Bealach An Stuc-Garbh.

COIRE ROIC (corrie of feasting) and the Allt Coire Roic. Lairig Innein (rocky pass), 2,802 feet, is the name of the lowest part of the ridge connecting Meall Garbh with Meall Gruaidh. To the north of this bealach is (S) COIRE NAM BUIDHEAG (corrie of the yellow point) and the source of the Inverinain Burn (stream at the junction of the point).

(9) MEALL GRUAIDH (*mel-grew*, hill of the cheek or slab), 3,280 feet, $1\frac{7}{8}$ miles east of Meall Garbh. There are two rocks about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile south-south-east of the summit. The north outcrop is called (M) SRON MHOR (*sron-vor*, big spur) and the other a little further south is named (N) SRON BHEAG (*sron-veg*, small spur). (P) COIRE PHEADAIR (corrie of fate) is east of Meall Gruaidh. One may descend from Meall Gruaidh by Gleann Da-ghob (double-forked glen) to Chesthill in Glen Lyon. There is a pass connecting Gleann Da-ghob with the Inverinain Burn called (R) BEALACH CREAG A' BHANNAICH (pass of the bannoch-looking crag), 2,650 feet.

RANNOCH MOOR AND CORRYARRICK.

A SEVEN DAYS' TRAMP.

BY MRS. J. A. WILSON.

WE had long wished to see the Moor of Rannoch, and also to cross the Pass of Corryarrick. We decided to try if two mere women could do the round trip in a week from Braemar on foot. We succeeded, with one or two minor lifts, and the following record of our doings may be of interest and, perhaps, tempt some of our members to follow our footsteps.

We did the walk in the month of May, and we need hardly emphasize the fact that May to July is the best season for the purpose, as on one of the days at least—the crossing of the moor is a pretty long one—plenty of daylight is required.

We decided that we would start on a certain Monday morning no matter what the weather was like, and, fortunately, our selected Monday was clear, so that we left Aberdeen with the first train in a hopeful frame of mind. We reached Braemar before noon and left at once on foot for Glen Tilt. The first part of our route through Inverey and past the Linn of Dee was, of course, familiar ground to us, but beyond that everything was new. We were delighted with Glen Tilt, which we found, as it has been described, to be a peaceful green glen with pleasant contours. The Bedford Memorial Bridge was a reminder of the sad tragedy of 1888, when one of two young men who, stripped, essayed to cross the flooded Tarf, was carried away and drowned—a warning that flooded highland streams may be very dangerous and crossing should never be attempted without keeping on one's footgear. To remove one's boots or shoes is simply to increase the risk and discomfort tenfold. Beyond the bridge the path is mostly downhill, a fact that was fully appreciated by us, as this was our first day, and although our first, it was not a short one, as we had covered quite twenty miles before we reached the house of a kindly keeper near Forest Lodge,

whose wife willingly placed her parlour-sofa-bed at our disposal for the night.

Next morning, Tuesday, we got away from our hospitable friends about eight o'clock and made down the glen for Blair Athol, six miles off. On the way there we stopped to speak to a shepherd, and on telling him that we were making for Rannoch for the night, he advised us to cut across the hill beyond Blair Athol by way of Loch Bhaic to the head of Loch Tummel instead of following the high road to Struan and up Glen Erochy. We did so, and were very satisfied with the result of the shepherd's advice. Besides being somewhat shorter it gave us pleasant ground instead of hard roads. We also had the magnificent view of Loch Tummel and the hills beyond it, which we otherwise should have missed had we gone by the Struan route. The Loch Bhaic footpath was struck at the farm of Milton of Invervack, about two miles west of Blair Athol, where there is a bridge across the Garry. The climb up to the loch is about five hundred feet ; but this is not any higher a climb than we should have had on the Glen Erochy road. Kinloch Rannoch was reached in good time. It is a beautiful little village, and we were sorry to think that we were only to spend one night in it. We secured comfortable quarters for the night and were glad of them, as we had logged 23 miles since leaving the keeper's house in Glen Tilt.

Wednesday was our third day and promised well for this our biggest and most venturesome trek—"The dreary Moor of Rannoch." To reach even the edge of it we had first to cover seventeen miles of hard road. We took the south side of Loch Rannoch and were charmed with the walk along the loch side, two miles of it being through the famed Black Wood ; about ten miles followed, with a fine stretch of three miles along the side of the River Gaoire. Then we emerged on to the Moor, a desert—

Yea! a desert wide and wasted,
Washed by rain floods to the bones ;
League on league of heather blasted,
Storm-gashed moss, grey boulder stones.*

*From the "Moor of Rannoch," by Principal Shairp.

Suddenly we came to Rannoch Station and the end of the road. Beyond was another eleven miles of the moor to cross before we could reach Kingshouse. To encourage us slight rain commenced. We asked a native as to the route and if there was a path, and to encourage us still more, he replied, "Path! there's none, and many o' the folk that go on to the moor are never heard o' again!" Well, he has never heard of us again but we got across all right. It was pretty wet, damp overhead and damp underfoot; but we were not down-hearted. We had a compass but did not use it, as our best guide was the magnificent cone of Buchaille Etive, which we saw now and again when the rain and mist cleared. We knew that our course was slightly to the right of it. There is, we believe, a path but we never struck it. The map shows it keeping well on the high ground on the south side of Cruach after passing Loch Laidon. Westward, the moor stretched flat and naked, all untracked and melancholy. Its nearer parts were green with boggy grass, on which the cotton-sedge was strewn like flakes of snow. In the distance its hue was sombre, grey as ashes, and blackened here and there with holes of peat. The end of it was lost in mist, from which jutted the scowling mountains of Glen Coe. God-forgotten, man-forsworn, wild Rannoch, with the birds above it screaming, was to us the eeriest thing we had ever seen. It charmed and it repelled us, and we looked across it with uneasy breast and drank in the spirit of the wilderness, so strange and so forlorn. As we traversed the waste we found that a forest had likely once been there, for its old, red fir-roots and white skeleton-like trunks stuck out from the slime of peat. We reached Kingshouse Inn sometime in the evening, and slept all right, for we had covered at least thirty miles that day.

Thursday, our fourth day, was perfect and was not to be quite so strenuous. Glen Coe is wonderful; it justifies all that has been written or said about it, and the mountains form a great attraction for the mountaineer. Having quite a short day in front of us, we lazed a good bit and enjoyed the glen to the full. One is struck by the fine cone-

shaped hills on the south side, one of which had a scarf of mist round it, which added very much to its apparent height. The great rock rampart of Aonach Eagach on the north side with its apparent hundreds of gullies was wild and majestic, and was the finest thing of the kind we had seen. Then we came to Loch Triochatan at the foot of Aonach Dubh; with Ossian's Cave high up on the rock-face.

At Ballachulish we crossed the ferry and thence we took, we must admit it, a motor bus to Fort William. Here we watched with envy the climbers coming back from a perfect day on Ben Nevis, and we wished we could have stayed an extra day to climb the Ben; but our time-table would not permit. This had been an off-day and we had walked only twelve miles.

Friday, our fifth day, was, however, not going to be anything of the kind. All the same we began it by taking the train to Fort Augustus, where we arrived shortly after eleven o'clock. Rather a late hour at which to start for the Corryarrick Pass: better had we come on the previous afternoon. We had some trouble in hitting the beginning of the Corryarrick road. We were very grateful to a kindly priest, who escorted us on the way and showed us where to cross some fields and find the road. We know now that there is a very pleasant and easily-found approach to the road by going to Cullachy House and then up Tarff side. We struck it all right finally after some trouble, and when found it was quite easy to follow. We stopped on the summit for lunch, and had quite a fair view; but we understand that in clear weather the view is very extensive. The descent from the summit of the road eastwards was far steeper than we could have imagined any road to be, especially a military one. We descended the famous twelve zigzags, now grass-grown. It was all very interesting, and the crossing seemed very short, due probably to the problem of finding the road at the outset, and the interest in following the road itself, and marvelling at the wonderful engineering displayed by General Wade nearly two hundred years ago. The pass is not used now as it once was, though up to comparatively recent times shepherds frequently crossed it,

driving their flocks from the remote north to the southern markets, so that what was once a recognized route has now lapsed into a place of solitude. It is the chief access through the hills from the Caledonian Canal valley between Fort William and Inverness, and is a convenient route between Glenmore and Badenoch. The Corryarrick was used for about a hundred years, but fell into disuse about 1830, from which date it appears to have been entirely neglected. The road drops down to the Spey at Melgrave, from which it is about ten miles of road-walking to Laggan Hotel, via Garve Bridge and Loch Crunachan. The final drop down to Loch Laggan is very fine, and was a revelation to us who had not seen that loch before. The little Inn is delightful, and we were glad to see such pleasant quarters for the night after our walk of twenty miles.

Saturday was our sixth day and was, like Thursday, to be an easy one. We sauntered along the Pattack and Strath Mashie road till a kindly, old-fashioned motor bus overtook us and picked us up. We met the Spey near Laggan Bridge and treated it as an old friend, because we had been almost at its source. We reached Aviemore in the afternoon. I am not going to say how, but we had walked at least twelve miles that day.

Sunday was our seventh day and was devoted to the Lairig, which we voted "beats a'." We had a good day for it, and reached Braemar in good time, having walked 23 miles of the distance.

Next day we returned to Aberdeen, not on foot, and picked up our daily duties again, feeling very much the better of our 140 miles tramp.

THE STONES OF OUR DISTRICT.

BY W. M. ALEXANDER.

To those who use the open country primarily as a place of recreation, three branches of science make a special appeal, those, namely, that deal with the plants, animals, and rocks. But while the desirability of knowing something about these is plain, practical considerations must in every case determine how far it is possible to push such knowledge. The ideal would seem to be the possession of such a quantity of information as can be conveniently carried about ; more is a burden, if not to the carrier, then perhaps to his companions ; and we must assume that the mountaineer and walker have set out with the intention of travelling light. In what follows we are discussing geology, from the standpoint of the ordinary person. That person as a rule does not concern himself much with rocks and stones. He knows that modern scientific books are filled with a very formidable terminology and vocabulary, of which he can make little ; and if he does take up a book on geology he lays it down disheartened, and leaves the entire department to the specialist.

Now, it should be possible for the ordinary person to get some knowledge of field geology without excessive effort, rather more in fact than he seems generally to consider within his reach. The mere fact that many books on the subject are unreadable should not blind him to the fact that there is much that can be got not from books but from personal observation ; that personal observation, carried on as opportunity offers over a period of years, is cumulative in its results. Above all, it is not necessary for the thing to be made a task, or even a definite hobby ; let it remain an amusement and nothing more. Here we will attempt to set down something of the casual observational information which is within the reach of the average member of the Cairngorm Club ; that is to say, of a person who makes

frequent tramps about the neighbourhood of Aberdeen on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, and excursions here or there to the hills in summer.

There is one consideration, a very general one, which may be thought to justify such people in taking a casual interest in the rocks below their feet. That is, that the north-east of Scotland, and the region with which the Cairngorm Club is most identified in particular, is located definitely upon one of the world's great mountain chains of the past. That is the chain of the Caledonian Mountains, or as the geological text-books call them, the "Caledonides." Their remains run diagonally across Scotland from north-east to Argyleshire; they reappear in Ireland on one side, and in Scandinavia on the other; and they were once probably of Alpine, and possibly of Himalayan, stature. This fact stands at the back of all field geology in our district, whether it be amateur or professional; and the amateur may find comfort in the additional fact that the structure of the Caledonian Mountains—what they call the "tectonics"—contains many problems which the professionals are still far from solving.

Suppose now that we want to know what rocks these mountains are built up of, and to learn in a rough way to distinguish the different rock types. We have not far to go; for nature has been good enough to lay out collections of representative samples for us in unlimited quantity; these samples are unlabelled, but they are very accessible. We have simply to visit one of the pebbly stretches by the River Dee to be able to handle, one after another, specimens of all the chief rock types on Deeside. Here we can make a start. The pebbles, it will be seen, vary in tint from nearly white to nearly black; and they also vary in schistosity, or capacity for splitting instead of breaking when struck. They can be grouped into some half dozen classes. In the first place there are easily recognizable granites, generally of the reddish granite of the Hill of Fare, Lochnagar sort. There are others of a brighter brick red, close in grain; these are probably quartz-porphyrines. Then there are gneisses, with light and dark bands, extremely variable in

appearance. Flat stones, suitable for skipping on the water, are generally mica-schists. An important group are the quartzites, of two main types; one is an almost white stone formed of quartz grains, the other is greyish and is formed of grains of quartz and of black mica. The remainder are for the most part dark or black stones, and the majority of them are classed as hornblende schists. These pebbles all represent native rock which is to be found in place on Deeside. The great variability within such a class, say, as the hornblende schists, helps us to realize that with a stone we can never get a specific name, as we can for a plant or an animal; the utmost we can get is a class name, while stones of any one class may differ much in general appearance from each other, and may shade imperceptibly into another class.

Suppose that, leaving the pebbles, we climb to such an eminence as the Blue Hill. We see at a glance that the rocks that underlie the north-east of Scotland are for the most part concealed under a covering of gravel, soil, and vegetation; exposures are few, except on the ridges, and are never extensive. In only one direction can we look for a good continuous section of bare rock, and that is along the coast. The coast from Aberdeen to Cove is very easily reached, and provides some features of interest. For instance, the rocks near the harbour mouth and round Girdleness, and again south of Cove harbour, give an excellent show of granite in contact with gneiss, the granite winding about in veins and strings through the darker rock in a striking manner. Along the same stretch of coast are to be seen some examples of intrusive rocks; about half way to Cove, beside a big inlet, there is a sill, or horizontal intrusion, of quartz-porphry, conspicuous with its bright, pink colour; while less conspicuous, there are at other points at least two dykes, or vertical intrusions, of greenstone. This section of coast would appear to give us a true idea of the character of the rock bottom which underlies the whole of lower Deeside; that bottom may be taken to consist of gneiss shot through with granite, and with occasional intrusions of quartz-porphry; the existing quarry holes in the area prove this.

As indicated, what the amateur field geologist may aim

at is a broad general classification of rocks. He uses, shall we say, no other instrument than a pocket magnifying glass. So he must perforce ignore all refinements of classification. These are carried out very thoroughly by modern petrologists by means of microscopes specially fitted for mineralogical work and requiring a special technique. The amateur will accordingly realise his own limitations; his classification can be systematic and quite scientific, but it must be a broad one. We are concerning ourselves only with the north-east of Scotland, and in what follows we will attempt to set out the main rock groups represented there and mention some of the places where they can be seen.

In short synopsis they are as follows:—

Plutonic Rocks—granite, diorite, gabbro.

Volcanic Rocks—andesite, basalt.

Metamorphic Rocks—gneiss, micaschist, quartzite, crystalline limestone, hornblende schist and serpentine.

Sedimentary Rocks—old red sandstone.

Intrusive Rocks—quartz-porphry, greenstone.

PLUTONIC GROUP.

Granite.—The standard composition of granite is quartz, felspar, and mica. There is much variation in the quantity of mica, black or white, which is present: and the sub-classification of the granite family depends on the chemical nature of the felspar. The granites of our area have been shown to fall into two series, an older and a younger; the former being those which are closely bound up with the country rock, such as we saw at Girdleness, the latter being the large independent masses like such as form Lochnagar, the Cairngorms, and so on. There is no need to mention localities where granite may be seen. Its manner of weathering and decay will be what will sometimes catch our eye as we go along. Sometimes we see it disintegrating in place into "rotten rock." On the knobs on the higher hills the jointing, whether vertical or horizontal, is always conspicuous. The most interesting form, however, assumed

by our granites when weathering in the mass is to be seen on the summit plateaus of the Cairngorms, where there are frequently considerable areas of loose blocks of stone lying promiscuously upon each other; there is a good instance on Ben Macdhui, near the top of the Tailors' Burn. The German geological books call this phenomenon rather graphically, a "sea of rocks" (felsenmeer).

Diorite.—The standard type of diorite consists of crystals of black hornblende and pale felspar. The result is a spotty rock weathering dull and greenish. Diorite is supposed to have arisen in association with adjoining masses of granite, but it is nothing like so abundant as granite. A notable occurrence of it is to be seen in Glen Derry, and can be found by going up the Glas Allt on the east side of the glen. The patch of diorite there may be a mile in diameter, and is entirely surrounded by the Cairngorm granite. It is a conspicuous stone. A similarly big-grained diorite can be got in Strathdon; but most occurrences of this rock are much less noticeable than the Glen Derry sort.

Gabbro.—This family comprises a series of rocks of somewhat varied appearance. All are dark, or black-green or black-blue; weathering with a rough surface or with a brown skin that peels off. There is little gabbro on Deeside; probably more in Strathdon; more important occurrences are at Belhelvie, Portsoy, etc. Under certain geologic conditions gabbro may be altered into other sorts of rock, notably epidiorite, hornblende schist and serpentine; this will be discussed under metamorphic rocks.

VOLCANIC GROUP.

The volcanic rocks of our region are confined to the old red sandstone area of Kincardineshire and consist of two kinds, andesite and basalt. These represent the lavas of the old red sandstone age.

Andesite.—A brown or chocolate-coloured stone, not very hard, dotted frequently with little oblong felspars. Many of the field walls from Dunnottar southwards are built of it.

Basalt.—A hard, black rock, weathering dirty brown-green; the typical volcanic lava. The best exhibit of it within our reach is at the Crawton, four miles south of Stonehaven. Several big flows of it are to be seen there in the pudding-stone, and at one place facing the sea there is a rude columnar structure with a suggestion of a giant's causeway.

METAMORPHIC GROUP.

The metamorphic rocks are so called because they are metamorphosed or altered forms of other rocks, the alteration having come about by pressure or heat or chemical action, processes which presumably operated on a great scale during the folding of the "Caledonian Mountains." Our area provides a good range of these rocks. Though the main types are distinct, the different classes grade into one another, and many specimens turn up which are on the boundary line between one class and the next. There are some half dozen chief classes in our district.

Gneiss.—Main constituents: quartz, felspar, and mica. Well known, especially in boulders, where its characteristic banding appearance is often noticeable. The banding is more or less parallel but winds about in every direction. Gneiss may have arisen from the alteration of plutonic or sedimentary rock, but its origin in any given case may be quite obscure. It can be taken to be an ancient rock.

Mica schist.—The definite character of mica schist consists of its marked tendency to split and its abundance of mica. Specimens vary according to locality. It may approximate to gneiss on one hand or to slate on the other; but it is always splittable.

Quartzite.—This stone consists of quartz grains which represent an altered quartz sandstone. The Deeside quartzites are mostly fine grained and sugary in texture. The most striking type is a conspicuous white quartzite which stretches in belts across the hills south-west of Braemar, forming Ben Lutharn and other hills; pebbles of this can be picked up anywhere on the river. Another type of quartzite is found along the Dee valley west of



A MOUNTAIN OF QUARTZITE—WEST SIDE OF BEN IUTHARN MOR.



CONTORTED LIMESTONE IN GLENEY.

Braemar ; it has a more definite tendency to split, and so can be called a quartz schist. Similar stones containing mica may be called quartz-mica schist.

Limestone.—The limestones of north-eastern Scotland are all crystalline limestones, that is, they are ancient sedimentary limestones which have been completely recrystallised and have lost their sedimentary character. On Deeside this sort of limestone occurs intermittently from Banchory westward ; its presence is frequently indicated by the old lime-kilns in which it was formerly burnt for use.

Hornblende schist.—This stone consists mostly of black hornblende. The outside is more or less dirty black ; fresh surfaces rather blue-black. It is fairly common as rock, but is probably still more common as boulders and in field-dykes. It can be very hard. The popular name for it is "blue heathen." Hornblende schist represents, in origin, an altered gabbro or greenstone. In any stretch of country where supposedly there may have been in ancient times a tract of fresh gabbro, forces of metamorphism are generally found to have turned the whole into a "complex" of varied rocks, all referable to the same origin. There is an example of such a complex in upper Deeside, in a stretch of country extending from Glenmuick across Morven into Strathdon. The south side of lower Glenmuick is hornblende schist. Morven is epidiorite, which is an intermediate form of the same rock. The Coyles are serpentine, which is regarded as a chemical alteration of gabbro. Serpentine is easy to recognize : it is black or dark with splashes of colour, and it can be cut with a knife.

SEDIMENTARY GROUP.

Of the great series of sedimentary rocks, so abundantly represented elsewhere in Britain, we have only to consider one member : the *old red sandstone*. This formation is best known to us as a rough conglomerate or pudding-stone ; it can be well seen in the mass in the sea cliffs south of Stonehaven. In this pudding-stone will be seen boulders of granite, quartzite, and other rocks of the Grampian range.

The old red sandstone also appears on the north side of our area, in scattered patches over the country which drains into the Moray Firth. On Deeside it does not occur; and on Donside only about Kildrummy. Curiously enough, it underlies part of the town of Aberdeen, but is not visible. There is a rather odd outcrop of it on the shore at Balmedie, where, about half a mile beyond the Black Dog Rock, a considerable stretch of the conglomerate is laid bare at low tide.

INTRUSIVE GROUP.

This consists of a rather distinctive group of rocks which can be called dyke-rocks. They form "dykes"; that is to say they fill rents in the old rock surface. The width of these dykes may be anything, but it generally runs about from ten to fifty feet; in length they may run for miles across country, always in a fairly straight line. The rock of these dykes is uniform, hard and compact, and is very frequently worked for road metal. It is of two main sorts, quartz-porphry and greenstone.

Quartz-porphry.—This is a well-known stone in our area, much used on the roads. It is pink to brick red in tint; it has the same composition as granite, but is much finer in the grain; and it is called quartz-porphry because the quartz crystals in it often stand out prominently in relation to the ground mass. A good example of a quartz-porphry dyke crosses the Dee at Potarch, slanting across the river bed; many examples may be noticed on the higher hills, where the absence of soil makes it possible to detect their boundaries and to follow them for long distances.

Greenstone.—This is the handy field term for a dyke-rock that is scarcer in our district than the foregoing and very different from it in appearance. It is blue-black when broken, and on weathered surfaces disintegrates with a brown-green crust. This stone, called "dolerite" by the geologists, and "whinstone" by roadmen, makes an excellent roadstone. But with us the occurrences of it seem to be neither so frequent nor so extensive as they are in other parts of the country.

Such, then, are the main classes of rocks which members of the Cairngorm Club are likely to meet with in the course of their tramps. The foregoing list has no expert authority ; it is set down by an amateur for amateurs, from the idea that some smattering of geology, sufficient to add materially to the interest of hill excursions, is within the reach of the ordinary person. It is not for a moment suggested that the thing should be made a task ; it should be treated rather as an amusement. The whole problem, in handling stones in the field, is one of classification. Confronting a plant, you can ask, " what is the name of that ? " ; confronting a stone, your question is, " what class does that go into ? " The answer is frequently by no means easy ; but it should be possible for any amateur by using a scheme of broad classes, as suggested, to attain without much trouble a standard of correct diagnosis of say 75 per cent. Further than this he scarcely requires to go ; unless he is to make a definite hobby of the rocks, in which case he can push classification to any lengths he likes.

A LITTLE-KNOWN PASS—THE MINIGAIG.

If anyone spending a few days in Upper Speyside should want a pleasant and out-of-the-way walk, he might traverse the Minigaig Pass from Glen Tromie to Glen Bruar and Struan.

Some time ago two members of the Club were motored up the Tromie as far as the Bhran Bridge, and proceeded by a somewhat indistinct path through long heather up the right bank of the Allt Bhran. In a very short time the whole rather featureless basin of this burn revealed itself, and away in front stood the slopes of one or two corries, including those of Coire Bhran, up one of whose grassy sides stretches the old drove road, which is still occasionally used and which possibly took carts in former days. For the first few miles the going is delightful, although the path, while it skirts the burn, is intermittent. As the travellers neared the foot of the Coire they fell in with difficulties, for country similar to that between the Geldie and the Feshie confronted them. However, a little manoeuvring and keeping to the right brought them beyond the slough, and up the grassy slope to the summit of the Pass they plodded. This track certainly does penetrate the "Back o' Beyont," which is, however, not "dry," as in "Hamewith's" case, but decidedly spongy and wet on the north side.

At the top, which by the way is near the head-waters of the Feshie, there is no defile, the path merely going over the ridge. From this point of vantage the prospect is pleasant, especially towards the south, where some of the Highlands of Central Perthshire stand out. A little farther east, and at no great distance, Beinn Dearg (3,304 feet) catches the eye; while the background is magnificently filled by the noble heights of Beinn a' Ghlo (3,671 feet). Farther eastwards, An Sgarsoch (3,300 feet) and Carn Ealar (3,276 feet) are prominent by reason of their round, featureless masses, viewed on this occasion from an unusual

stand-point. On the extreme horizon, near the latter, Lochnagar is just visible. The remainder of the view consists of the rounded and steep hills of the Gaick and Tromie areas, while the flat Monadhliath ridge blocks the view further north.

From the summit (2,750 feet) the track is clear and broad, and undulates for a mile or so, till it sharply descends by zig-zags for 750 feet to the head of the Bruar Valley, where there is an unclassified road. Once in the Glen, the walkers were shut in on three sides by high and precipitous rock faces, down which cascade one or two fine burns. No place could be much more secluded and desolate, even in the "wild and woolly west."

A three-mile walk down the glen took the members past an artificial lochan to Bruar Lodge. This building is haphazard and ramshackle, and has been added to from time to time, to judge by the various kinds of "architecture."

Below the house the road is fairly good, but very hard on the feet and somewhat dull, since the view is rather restricted. For those who would follow the old road, it must be added that it strikes directly over the hills from the Lodge to Glen Banvie and Old Blair. After the walkers "leggit along" for some four or five miles, they were led away from the stream up the steep side of a small eminence, by name Craig Bhagallteach (1,612 feet), near whose summit a delightful view up the Garry almost to Drumochter and down to Ben Vrackie (2,757 feet) met their gaze. Thereafter they wended their way down to Calvine and Struan, about eight miles from the Lodge. The pull over the last rise is most exhausting after a walk of some eighteen miles, so that it is worth while to follow the Water and visit the famous Falls of Bruar, striking the main road a little below Struan. Finally, it will interest any who may consider doing this walk to know that the glen road, as it leaves the Perth-Inverness road at Calvine, is, it would seem, intentionally kept in disrepair to deceive motorists; but after a hundred yards or so it becomes good, so that the somewhat weary trek from or to Bruar Lodge can be covered comfortably in a conveyance.

The expedition described was accomplished about two years ago, so that the accuracy of all details cannot be vouched for; but the principal facts are related with sufficient precision to show that this old drove road, in general use as the way from Athole to Badenoch long before the present Drumochter route, is still easy to traverse, and leads the wanderer into regions now but seldom trod by man.

For more particulars, Alexander's *The Cairngorms* and back numbers of *The C.C.J.* should be consulted.

G. T. R. W.

THE UNKNOWN SOUTH.

In Miss Carswell's "Life of Robert Burns" (London: Chatto & Windus) there is a very interesting account of the departure of William Burns (the father of our national poet) and his brother Robert from the Mearns.

ONE morning before sunrise, when spring was well advanced, William and Robert put on the new suits of grey homespun their sisters had made ready for them, drank down their thin porridge, thrust their horn spoons into the folds of their dark blue bonnets, shouldered the bundles that contained their patched working clothes, and said their good-byes. It was in the highest degree unlikely that they would ever see their father again, a fact of which both he and they were fully aware.

When they had walked all forenoon they reached the crest of Garvock Tap (*sic*), whence they could see backwards to the Clochan-hill lands and over the Mearns, where all their ancestors had lived. It was the last time either of them would look upon it. So far their way had been the same, so they had each other's company for the "twal hour" repast, and together they set to upon the mess of boiled beans they had brought with them from home. But after this their roads would divide. Looking forward toward the unknown South, they felt no elation. It was not as if they were in their first youth, and there was so much failure behind them that failure might only too possibly lie before as well for either or both. When at length the brothers parted William was outwardly the calmer, as he seemed the older man. But all his life he remembered the intensity of his feelings at that moment on the hilltop. Many years later, attempting to describe the scene to his children, he made use of what for him was the extreme word, anguish.

A MIDNIGHT EXPERIENCE AT THE DERRY.

BY HENRY C. DUGAN.

WE left Inverey about 11 p.m. on Sunday, July 18, 1926, my friend driving the motor cycle while I took my place on the pillion. It was a pitch dark night, with heavy clouds overhead, and as we had no head-light, the driver found some difficulty in seeing the road. Neither was it an easy task to keep an even balance with a heavily-loaded passenger swinging in the rear.

We had a good run to the Linn of Dee. The bike went bounding round the corner and up the hill which leads to the Lui bridge, when all at once we found ourselves in a rut at the roadside. The machine seemed to wriggle, and the next moment we had split partnership, my friend and I deposited in the ditch with all the baggage. As there was no damage done we set off again, but this time at a steadier pace. The road was made even darker by the trees on either side. We rounded the sandy corner near the Lui bridge with care, then up the Glen Lui road and over the Black Bridge, gaining speed all the time. After dashing through the water splash we reached Derry Lodge without any further mishap.

At 12.30 a.m. we left the Derry. The night was stifling and everything around was black. On reaching the end of the plantation I drew my friend's attention to a light in the direction of the Luibeg Cottage. It was of an orange hue, and at first appeared to come from a window. All at once the light disappeared, but after a few seconds we saw it again coming in our direction from lower down the glen. "Oh!" I exclaimed, "there is some one coming with a lantern to see who has arrived at the Derry at this unearthly hour." I had hardly passed the remark when up jumped the light into the air and vanished. Once again it appeared in another place, but this time long and tapering, and in an upright position. Again it jumped up into the air and out of sight, but scarcely had this solitary one gone

when a dozen or more appeared in various shapes and colours dancing in the air. All of a sudden they leapt up and vanished into space, and we were left in the darkness. This remarkable sight could not have lasted more than a minute. So overwhelmed were we that for a time neither of us moved but waited expectantly. As nothing further happened we concluded that the luminous meteor had gone for good, and so made track for the footbridge over the Derry Burn.

On our way we passed the Luibeg Cottage. Not a living soul was to be seen or heard; only our footsteps broke the stillness of the night. We endeavoured to keep to the path, but more than once measured our full length on the heather. Crossing the Luibeg footbridge, we climbed over the shoulder of Carn a' Mhaim and into Glen Dee, passing the Devil's Point, that formidable sentinel of the glen. Everything around was dark and eerie, and the rain came down in torrents before we reached the Dee.

The Corrou Bothy was our objective. On drawing near, we noticed smoke coming from the chimney, and peering in at the window saw a man apparently asleep, lying full length on the floor before a blazing log fire. As we entered, the man arose and with becoming dignity said: "Good morning, gentlemen, I have a good fire ready for you." For this we heartily thanked him. While our outer garments were drying, we had a substantial breakfast and a prolonged rest, caused by the rain-storm which did not abate till afternoon. It was no use making an attempt on Lochan Uaine on Cairntoul as intended, for the elements were against us, so we contented ourselves with gathering firewood for the next party who happened to reach the bothy. Leaving the Corrou at 5 o'clock on Monday afternoon, we arrived at Inverey at 8.30 p.m.

Our object in going on this midnight expedition was to obtain some early morning cloud effects around Lochan Uaine on Cairntoul. This ambition was not realized, but we considered ourselves more than fortunate in meeting with an experience which few people have ever encountered.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1931—BRAEMAR.

THE New Year 1931 Meet held at Braemar, December 31 to January 5, was a highly successful one. There were 24 members and guests present, namely: McCoss (President), Malcolm, and W. Alexander (Vice-Presidents), Bothwell, Butchart, Collins, Dugan, Duncan, Hay, Husband, Parker, Ritson, J. Scrimgeour, J. W. Scrimgeour, J. A. Sellar, R. Sellar, Symmers, Taylor; Misses Bruce, Duncan, McCoss, and Yeaman. Messrs. W. A. Reid and C. Reid arrived on January 2.

The weather on New Year's Day was hard and keen, but on subsequent days tended to be soft; on the whole it was quite satisfactory and permitted of a number of successful expeditions.

On January 1 the chief expedition was to Ben Macdhui. A clear, frosty morning provided beautiful sunrise effects on the way up to the Derry, the higher hills, all snow-covered, glowing red in the morning sun. The Derry was left at about 9 a.m. The main party made the ascent of Ben Macdhui by the Sron Riach. It comprised Parker, Malcolm, Alexander, Duncan, Taylor, Bothwell, Dugan, and Ritson. The top was reached at 1 p.m. The going was good, but there was no visibility on the summit owing to driving snow. The party descended by the same route, except Taylor, Bothwell, and Duncan, who crossed by the top of Derry Cairngorm. The Derry was reached about 4 p.m. Symmers, Hay, and Miss Yeaman went with the Ben Macdhui party to the foot of the Sron Riach, thence up to Lochan Uaine, crossing it and tackling the snow slope to the left of Stob an Sputan Dearg. There are some 800 feet of this slope to the summit plateau. The climb was easy apart from the cornice at the top, which, being very soft, occasioned some trouble. An ambitious expedition to the Garrachory was undertaken by McCoss, Scrimgeour, Misses Duncan and McCoss. They reached 3,100 feet after five hours' walking and turned for lack of time; they were then some 300 feet under the Choke Stone Gully, which they intended to attempt. Miss Bruce went to Lochnagar, joining the party from Ballater.

On January 2 the weather was softer, with less sunshine. The chief expeditions were to Corrie Kander, and consisted of two parties. Symmers, Hay, Misses Bruce and Yeaman climbed the stone chute to the left of the large opening at the back of the Corrie. They had a very fine snow climb of some 800 feet; the angle of the gully was very steep, with soft snow from half way up, ending in a cornice with a 20 foot crevasse behind it, which gave no little trouble.

They returned along Carn Tuirc to Glen Callater. McCoss, Miss McCoss, Malcolm, and Bothwell climbed the great snow gully in the Corrie and glistaded down. Dugan visited the Loch for photographs. On the return Malcolm crossed Loch Callater on the ice. Other outings were made in other directions. Parker and Alexander walked to the Dubh Ghleann bothy in Glen Quoich. J. Scrimgeour visited Carn Tuirc, where Butchart and Collins did some ski-ing. Taylor and Ritson walked to Crathie. Dr. Sellar and Husband motored to Linn of Dee and walked to the Derry and back.

On January 3 Symmers, Hay, J. Scrimgeour, Misses Bruce and Yeaman started for Corrie Etchachan, but had to cut short their expedition because of heavy going. They went up to Lochan Uaine on Derry Cairngorm. The snow was very soft and no good climb was possible, but the slope at the back of the loch was climbed to about 3,000 feet, the descent being made by a parallel gully. Malcolm, Sellar, Ludwig, and Taylor went to Lochnagar. They climbed the Staic Buttress and thence went round the top of the cliffs to the summit. There were six degrees of frost on the plateau. Descent was made by the Black Shiel Burn, Sellar and Ludwig crossing Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe.

In the evening Miss Helen Duncan was elected Queen of the Cairngorms in place of Miss Bruce, whose term of office had expired.

Wild life observed by members included one eagle on Ben Macdhui, two foxes on Lochnagar, and a flock of crossbills in the woods of Invercauld.—W. M. A.

EASTER MEET, 1931—FORTINGALL.

THIS year the Club held their Annual Easter Meet at the Fortingall Hotel, Perthshire. So large a turn-out of members and guests assembled that some of the members had to find sleeping accommodation in the village, and a few were quartered in Coshievill Inn, about three miles distant.

Wednesday, April 1. Dr. J. A. Sellar and Usher Hill (guest) arrived.

Thursday, April 2. The following members arrived:—J. McCoss (President), M. J. Robb, J. C. Orkney, Roy Symmers, H. Dason, S. C. Smith, G. F. Collie. Miss Duncan (Queen of the Cairngorms), Miss J. M. Pittendrigh, Miss Telfer, Mrs. Ross Mackenzie, Miss Nesta Bruce, and Miss Mackenzie; Miss Macfarlane of the Glasgow Ladies' Climbing Club, and Mr. F. G. S. Davidsons were present as guests. F. A. Ritson and Dr. J. L. Hendry arrived at Coshievill Hotel.

Friday, April 3. The weather, although cold, was excellent for climbing, and the following parties spent a most enjoyable day on the various mountains.

1. Miss Macfarlane, Miss Bruce, Smith, and Orkney climbed the eight peaks of the Carn Mairg range. The party motored to Invervar Lodge and started off by ascending Creag Mhor, then traversing over Carn Mairg, Meall a' Bharr, and Meall Garbh, returned to Invervar Lodge.

2. Dr. Sellar and Usher Hill motored to Lochan na Lairige and climbed up the north face of Meall nan Tarmachan to the top of the mountain. Some good snow-climbing was enjoyed, and when the top was reached, they traversed along the ridge to Carn Chreag, returning the same way as they had come.

3. Roy Symmers, Miss Telfer, Miss Mackenzie, and Dason made the ascent of Schiehallion from the Braes of Foss, returning the same way. The party enjoyed quite a lot of good glissading on the way down, and it was reported that one of the party glissaded down head first, and, I may add, he returned safe and sound to the Hotel.

4. Owing to a mechanical breakdown in one of the cars, the activities of the rest of the members were greatly curtailed, but McCoss, Miss Duncan, and Miss Pittendrigh climbed Creag Mhor from Fortingall Hotel.

The following members and guests arrived in the evening :—J. A. Parker, A. Scott (guest), Hay, and Service. Ward also arrived, coming from Ipswich to join the Meet. Although he arrived in the afternoon, he lost no time in getting into trim, as he straightaway made the ascent of Creag Mhor from the hotel.

Saturday, April 4. The morning broke fine, with practically no clouds in the sky, but a high wind was blowing all day, which made walking along the mountain ridges rather trying. In the afternoon the weather broke down and blizzards of snow swept across the high peaks.

The following parties departed to the hills :—

1. Miss Bruce, McCoss, Miss Pittendrigh, Miss Duncan, Roy Symmers, Morrison, Service, and M. J. Robb motored to Lochan na Lairige to climb the north face of Meall nan Tarmachan. Three of the party, Miss Bruce, Roy Symmers, and Leslie Hay climbed the Arrowhead Gully on the north face of Meall nan Tarmachan. This ascent was found fairly difficult, as the first cave pitch would not go owing to black ice. The party, therefore, climbed up the left wall, letting out two runs of 80 feet of rope, and then made the traverse back into the gully, after which the summit of the gully was easily reached in the snow. Thereafter they ascended to the top of Meall nan Tarmachan. The remainder of the original party who did not participate in the rock climbing ascended to the summit of Meall nan Tarmachan and crossed along the ridge to Carn Chreag. Three snow gullies were climbed by some of the party, and the rope had to be used on two occasions. Some enjoyable glissading was experienced

by the party on the return journey. One member who was wearing a kilt was unable to glissade, so he had to cut steps in some of the steeper slopes.

2. Dr. Sellar, Usher Hill, and Miss Macfarlane were motored up Glen Lyon as far as Glen Lyon Church by J. A. Parker. From here the party ascended Meall Garbh, on the Ben Lawers range, by the north shoulder, descending the southern face of the mountain to Lawers Hotel, where Parker was kindly waiting to convey them back to Fortingall.

3. J. A. Parker enjoyed a motor run round Loch Tay. After conveying the Meall Garbh party up Glen Lyon he motored by the south road of Loch Tay to Killin, and then on to Lawers Hotel, where he, along with the party who had descended from Meall Garbh to Lawers Hotel, enjoyed an excellent tea. On the south side of Loch Tay Parker discovered a valuable copper mine. He brought an excellent sample of copper ore back to the hotel with him, where it was auctioned, the excellent and valuable sample of ore falling to the highest bidder, namely, Miss Bruce, for the munificent sum of 1/6. Parker's efforts to float a company to work the mine did not meet with success.

4. Miss McCoss, Miss Archibald, Scott, Smith, and Orkney made the ascent of Schiehallion from Glengoulandie Farm. They followed the pony track up the Allt Mòr burn, and then up the eastern ridge to the top, returning again by the same way. The visibility from the top of the mountain was poor. Dr. Hendry and Ritson also climbed Schiehallion, walking from Coshieville Inn via the Allt Mòr burn. They also returned by the way they had made the ascent.

5. Collie, Davidson, Ward, Dason, Mrs. Mackenzie, Miss Mackenzie, and Miss Telfer formed themselves into two parties and ascended Ben Lawers from Lawers Hotel, returning again to Lawers Hotel.

Malcolm arrived.

Sunday, April 5. 1. Starting from Lawers Hotel, McCoss, Orkney, Scott, and Miss McCoss climbed the south side of An Stuc Gully, ascending to the top of Ben Lawers by the Raven's Crag.

2. Roy Symmers, Miss Bruce, and Miss Macfarlane climbed the gully on the east side of the Raven's Crag, and then continued to the top of Ben Lawers.

3. Ward, Miss Telfer, Malcolm, and Dason motored to Lochan na Lairige and climbed Meall nan Tarmachan, ascending some of the snow gullies at the north end of the Crag.

4. Miss Archibald, Miss Duncan, Miss Pittendrigh, Smith, and Robb made the ascent of the East Gully of Ben Lawers, walked along the ridge to the top and returned to Lawers Hotel.

5. Dr. Sellar and Usher Hill motored up Glen Lyon to the Condie Burn and climbed Stuchd an Lochain. After walking along the top of the corrie they descended to the spot from which they had started.

6. Mrs. Mackenzie, Miss Mackenzie, Collie, and Davidson motored up to Loch Lyon and ascended Ben Vannoch.

7. Dr. Hendry and Ritson climbed to the top of Ben Lawers from the Lawers Hotel, and descended by the same route.

8 J. A. Parker motored to White Bridge and climbed Meall Tarruin chon (2,559 ft.). The ascent of this hill did not necessitate the use of an ice-axe to any extent. After he had descended, he motored to Lawers Hotel to convey a party who had been climbing Ben Lawers back to Fortingall Hotel.

Monday, April 6. 1. J. A. Parker motored up Glen Lyon almost to Loch Lyon. After parking his car in a neighbouring gravel pit, he climbed to the top of Meall Buidhe via the west side of the glen of Eas Eoghannan. Visibility was perfect, especially looking towards Ben Nevis. Bartholomew's map makes this peak 3,004 feet, but Parker made the height out to be 2,981 ft. Therefore, the hill is not a Munroe. After visiting the keeper at Cashlie, Parker reached Fortingall Hotel at 7 p.m., leaving for Aberdeen on the following morning.

2. Dr. Sellar, Usher Hill, and Ward motored to the Braes of Foss, and climbed Schiehallion. The weather was very warm and on the top Usher Hill stripped to the waist and enjoyed a sunbath, the ultra-violet rays so invigorating him that he skipped down the mountain side like a two-year-old. The views from the summit were wonderful, especially towards the west, where all the mountain peaks stood out clean cut in their snowy mantles. Rarely does one see such a clear view from a mountain top as the party enjoyed that day.

3. Service and Morrison climbed Ben Lawers on their way back to Glasgow.

This meet was one of the best the Club has enjoyed for a number of years, as every day was utilized in climbing, the weather conditions on the whole being most favourable for mountaineering, and everybody returned home invigorated after the days spent on the mountain tops.—J. A. S.

OVERFLOW MEETING AT BRAEMAR.

IN steady rain, or perhaps sleet, and a cold easterly wind. E. B. Reid, J. W. Levack, R. B. Williamson, and A. Dyce Davidson left Aberdeen for Braemar on the Thursday evening. By Banchory it was definitely sleet, by Aboyne it was proper snow, which continued most of the way. Just in front of Invercauld House we surprised four stags on the road, and their lightning disappearance over a four-foot fence reminded some of us of very recent losses over the Grand National. Cairngorm Club members are always made welcome at once at the Invercauld Arms, and the kindly attentions of George and Priscilla (sometimes familiarly called "Priskie") make one feel at home immediately.

Good Friday proved dry and sunny, though the wind was cold and from an easterly or north-easterly direction. We motored as far as Shean Spital bridge on the Blairgowrie road—beyond this point drifted snow made the road impassable for vehicles; then followed the delightful Monega Pass over Sron-na-Gaoith ridge to the summit of Glas Maol. On the way we peeped into the Canlochan Glen at the head of Glen Isla. From below we had seen the snow blowing in clouds from the top of the Glas Maol corrie, but nevertheless we were able to lunch on the leeward side of the Glas Maol cairn, admiring the view of Glas Tulaichean and Beinn a' Ghlo, with Ben Lawers and Schiehallion dimly visible. We wondered if any of our fellow-members from Fortingall were looking at us from there. The lunch, as carefully ordered, included our Easter eggs, provided by Mrs. Gregor, which were duly rolled according to custom on the top of Glas Maol. As an illustration of the cold, one member found his chocolate frozen so hard, he had to use his ice axe to break it. The descent to the highest point on the Blairgowrie road, over the top of Meall Odhar, calls for no comment. As this was our first outing after some months of indoor work, our original idea was to return to Shean Spital bridge by the road. However, we decided to tackle the Cairnwell, which, over snow slopes, was reached inside three-quarters of an hour; even then, two members were not satisfied, and the ascent of Carn Aosda was soon accomplished by the party. From there the best standing glissades of the day were obtained, and after a little over six hours of leisurely going, we were back at the car at Shean Spital bridge.

Saturday, April 4. The party again set out from the Invercauld Arms at 9 a.m. with the object of doing Ben Avon. Proceeding across the Dee by the temporary bridge used for timber haulage opposite Mar Castle, Gleann an t-Slugain was soon reached, and a steady walk up the glen brought the party to the shooting lodge at 10.30 a.m. The path was practically clear until within about a mile of the lodge, after which huge drifts of old snow filled the narrower parts completely. After a short halt, the usual route was followed up the head waters of the Quoich to the Clach à Chlèirich and thence up to The Sneck between Beinn a' Bhuid and Ben Avon.

The weather up to this point had been dull with a fairly strong wind on our backs. By the time The Sneck was reached at 12.45 p.m., a moderate gale was blowing, which made a halt there impossible owing to drifting snow and intense cold. The Muckle Slock looked desolate and nothing could be heard but the swish of icy particles of snow and the faint croak of an occasional ptarmigan. Turning to the right, the final ascent on to the summit plateau was made in more or less "blin' drift," fortunately on our backs, and the main top was reached at 1.30 p.m. During this time the weather had definitely turned worse, and conditions at the top were very bad,

mist having come down and obscured the view almost entirely. No shelter could be found even on the lee side of the huge rocky top. Lunch was a "standing" meal under miserable conditions of blowing snow and cold, and was a rapid affair. A course was then set for the Allt an Eàs Mhoir, leading down to Glen Gairn, so as to avoid the blizzard from the direction of Carn Eàs. The Gairn was reached about 2.30 p.m., but weather conditions were still very bad and the full blast of wind and sleet was again encountered. Turning right, the Gairn was followed up for about a mile to the broad upper end of the valley, when turning south, a course was struck over rough and wet country to Glen Slugain, which was reached at 4 p.m. By this time, and even long before, boots and plus fours were soaked through, and a short halt was made to consume the "unexpended portion" of lunch and an orange.

Once more fortified, the party soon had Glen Slugain behind and the Invercauld Arms in sight. Hot baths and tea soon made everyone at peace with all mankind. We were joined in the course of the evening by Richard Irvin, who remained with us for the rest of our visit.

Sunday, April 5. On the last day of the meeting it was decided to attempt Lochnagar—via Loch Callater. The distance of five miles to Loch Callater Lodge was covered by car, the road presenting no difficulties in spite of a fall of snow during the previous night. The start from the Lodge was made at 10.15 a.m., under almost ideal weather conditions, bright sunshine, with a slight breeze from the north.

The journey along the slopes of Creag an Loch was made at a slightly lower level than the path, but as there was very little snow lying, there was no great difficulty presented.

On rounding the southern extremity of this hill, the path was struck but, owing to old snow, could be followed for only a very short distance. A walk of approximately a mile in a north-easterly direction, away from Loch Callater, brought the party to the foot of Cairn Taggart, and, instead of rounding this hill, it was decided to make the summit, for which extra effort ample reward was given in the form of a magnificent view of the Cairngorms, with Cairn Tuirc in the foreground to the south, and Ben Macdhuì and its neighbours in the distance in the west.

The descent of Cairn Taggart was then made on the eastern side, where thick snow lay, and Lochnagar, with its snow-clad summit visible on the skyline, made for.

On reaching the flat at the foot of Cairn Taggart, weather conditions became extremely bad, a strong wind with driving snow and sleet coming from the north. However, this lasted for only a very short part of the journey and, when a start was made on the actual slopes of Lochnagar, the conditions were excellent.

The first cairn was reached at 1 p.m. and the summit at 1.15. Here the wind was fairly strong, but not strong enough to prevent the party lunching on the south side of the cairn.

Visibility was moderate, the majority of the hills referred to on the Indicator being visible, especially the nearer hills towards the south.

The return journey was started at 1.45 and the same route was taken back to Loch Callater Lodge, with the exception that Cairn Taggart was skirted on the north side. The Lodge was reached at 3.50 p.m. and, at this point, sunshine worthy of June tempted the party to relax for fifteen minutes before the return journey to Braemar by car was started.

Two members of the party went deer-stalking on the Sunday with the object of getting cinematograph pictures of the deer in its native haunts. Their efforts were successful.

Only 60 per cent. of the party were Cairngorm Club members when we started, but by the time we had completed the week-end the remaining 40 per cent. had been enrolled.—R. B. W.

SPRING HOLIDAY EXCURSION, 1931.

A PARTY of 19 members and guests assembled at Alltdourie Cottage, on the Invercauld Estate, to climb Beinn a' Bhuid. The weather was fine and clear but not hot, a contrast to Aberdeen, where rain fell until the early afternoon. After about 75 minutes' pleasant walking up the Slugain Glen the Slugain Lodge was reached, where lunch was taken. Here the party split, the main portion going direct to the south top, and four members going to the buttress between the corries on the north face of the hill. The walk down to the Quoich bridge was pleasant, but rather heavy and wet on the other side of the river owing to melting snow. The first part of the climb to about 3,000 feet was accomplished with ease, but some difficulty was experienced on the steep snow-covered slopes of the last 500 feet. Before entering the mist at about 2,750 feet, the view to the south and east was glorious. The whole expanse of the Eastern Grampians was visible, from Mount Battock to Beinn a' Ghlo. In this panorama it was possible to pick out Mount Keen, Lochnagar, Tolmount and Glen Callater, Glas Maol, and the Ben Iutharns. At the summit there was neither wind nor sun, but the temperature was not low, and mist obscured the view. After about half-an-hour the party began to descend, by the same route. The more active members tried glissading, but this was not successful on account of soft snow. The walk from the Quoich bridge to Alltdourie Cottage was most enjoyable, as all members will testify.

The four who went to rock-climb in the corries climbed the buttress between the corries and had magnificent views into these and of the Dubh Lochan. On reaching the summit plateau they

proceeded to the north top, from where they walked to the south top and descended by the same path as the main party.

Those present were :—Miss R. K. Jackson, Miss B. Forbes, Miss K. S. Forbes, Mrs. Mackenzie, Miss M. M. Telfer, Miss A. H. Dugan, Messrs. James McCoss (President of the Club), G. T. R. Watt, R. S. Gray, J. C. Orkney, W. G. Evans, G. F. Collie, E. W. M. Watt, H. C. Dugan, A. L. Hay, J. E. Bothwell, M. D. Deans, C. Marshall, and C. H. Barnes.—E. W. M. W.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON EXCURSIONS, 1931.

MAY 23—MIDMAR TO TORPHINS.

THE first Saturday afternoon excursion took place on May 23, 1931, when twelve members of the Club left Golden Square by char-a-banc for the Hill of Fare. The route taken was by Midmar, where the high road was left, and the party leisurely made their way to the plateau at the top. After the rain of the morning the country presented a beautiful aspect, and a fine view was had of all the familiar hills, with the snowy patches on the Cairngorms shining in sunshine. The return was made by the western slope of the hill, and a walk through exquisite country, including the grounds of Craigmyle House, brought the party to Torphins, where tea was provided and much enjoyed at the Learney Arms Hotel. Here the char-a-banc was picked up, and the return to town was made via Glassel and the North Deeside Road. Those present were Misses Jackson, Johnston, Mavor, Skakle, Telfer, Mrs. Hendry and Mrs. Wilson; Messrs. Conner, Hadden, McCoss, Ritson, and M. Smith.—E. J. M.

MAY 30—CRATHES TO DRUMLITHIE.

THIS was a delightful walk, and was greatly enjoyed by nine members. The forenoon was very dull and none too inviting, but by the time we had reached Culter, the sun was shining brilliantly and continued to do so all afternoon. The route followed was from Crathes by the Slug Road to Spy Hill, thence by a footpath leading between Craigbeg and Mongour. There was no strenuous climbing, the highest part being only a little over 1,000 feet. At the top we halted for a few minutes and then off down the other side, where we reached a most beautiful part of Glen Cowie at Lady's Leys, and the still more beautiful stream, which was found by some to be most refreshing and cooling. The higher Deeside hills were not visible owing to mist, but the view near at hand was quite good. We joined the road again just above Carmont station. Then along the railway line to Drumlithie, where tea awaited us. When in the Hotel we were visited by one of our new members, Mr. Collie, from Auchinblae, who, on account of the mist, had been unable to join us at an earlier stage. After a sumptuous repast, three members left by train. As it was a

glorious evening, and only just after 7 p.m., the others did a few more miles along the road until overtaken by a bus, which they boarded, arriving back in Aberdeen at 9.40 p.m. This is a splendid cross-country walk, and gives an excellent idea of the wildness of the country. Those present were: Misses Daniel, Johnston, Wallace, Messrs. W. Malcolm, J. McCoss, E. B. Reid, F. A. Ritson, M. Smith, S. C. H. Smith.—M. D.

JUNE 6—TILLYFOURIE TO LUMPHANAN.

WE arrived at Tillyfourie by 'bus at 3.20 p.m. on June 6 and ascended Green Hill by the side of the Ton Burn. This route is beautiful and interesting. We had a good view of the Vale of Alford and far beyond to Mormond Hill at Strichen and Ben Rinnes. The hill walk to Benaquhallie was very pretty by the route we took, which was south of Red Hill. The fauna and flora were particularly interesting. The visibility from Benaquhallie, in spite of some mist, was good, and we saw all the Deeside hills and the Cairngorms. We arrived at the Tarland road in 35 minutes, and after passing Gjenmillan House we reached Lumphanan at 7 o'clock, just as the rain came on, exactly 3 hours 40 minutes after leaving Tillyfourie. We took the 8 o'clock 'bus from Lumphanan, after spending an hour with a very high tea at Lumphanan Hotel. Those present were Misses Jackson, Johnston, E. A. Mavor, Wallace, and Mr. J. McCoss.—J. D. W.

JUNE 20—CORYRHABBIE.

THIS Saturday afternoon excursion took place on June 20. It was a relief to find that after the depressing weather conditions for the previous Sunday excursion the day gave promise of good walking conditions. The party of five, consisting of Misses Johnstone and Marjorie Watt, and Malcolm, McCoss, and S. C. H. Smith arrived at Dufftown by the Speyside Excursion train at 2.26. There they were joined by Ritson. Three motor cyclists, Ronald Kellas, E. W. M. Watt, and G. T. R. Watt, were to have met us, but they did not make an appearance until later. After the formality of ordering tea, which one member of the party thought wholly unnecessary, we motored along the Glen Rinnes road to near the farm of Rinatin, starting to climb at 3 o'clock. Our first objective was Muckle Lapprach and thence to Corryhabbie Hill, the summit of which was reached at 4.30. The ascent was rewarded by a magnificent panoramic view of the Cairngorms. The visibility was excellent, and the Moray Firth and the hills beyond were distinctly seen. The Buck, Tap o' Noth, Mormond Hill, Knock Hill, Binn of Cullen, and Lochnagar to Clachnaben were all also very clear. After a short rest in a sheltered spot we descended to Glen Fiddich—a most delightful spot—and leisurely made our way to the Lodge, which was reached at 7 o'clock. Our motor was waiting to take us back to Dufftown and tea, where

all, except perhaps the youngest member of the party, showed in a practical manner their appreciation of the meal which awaited us. The motor cyclists, who had been delayed in starting, joined us there. They had reached the top of Corryhabbie about half-an-hour after us, but found the visibility not quite so good. The walk to the station, an appreciation of the beautiful setting of the War Memorial, and a comfortable journey home, ended a most enjoyable outing.—S. C. H. S.

JUNE 27—KERLOCH.

ON June 27 the Saturday afternoon excursion was to Kerloch. Six members left by char-a-banc at 1 o'clock, passing over the Bridge of Strachan, then eastward to the farm of Pitreadie. The party started to cross the moor at 2.15 under most delightful conditions. Kerloch was reached at 4.15, where a most pleasant 50 minutes were spent in the sunshine. Bees and coloured butterflies were all round the cairn, and there was a pleasant, warm breeze, scented with mosses and heather. The visibility was also excellent in all directions. Cairntoul, Sgor an Lochan Uaine, and Braeriach were clearly seen. At the top, our member from Auchinblae, the Rev. E. Cruickshank, was waiting for us. He had walked over Goyle Hill and Tipperweir. At 5.5. we left for Little Kerloch, and passed over it at 5.25, then down to the Bulg Burn at 5.50. By the stream side the young brackens, bog-myrtle, and birch trees were very beautiful. It was a lovely spot. The shoulder of Heathery Hill was crossed, and the party arrived at the Bridge of Dye at 6.50, where the char-a-banc was waiting. Mr. Cruickshank, who had accompanied us to this point, now had to weigh in the balance whether he would have a ham and eggs tea at Whitestones Inn and an extra four-mile walk, or turn his face up the Cairn a' Mounth road for Auchinblae. He reluctantly took the latter course and promised himself a drink at Junior's Well on the way. We had our usual very high tea at Whitestones Inn and met Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Garden and Porter, who also had tea. We afterwards had a very enjoyable run home, and ended a very delightful excursion. Those present were Misses Jackson, Johnstone, and Mavor, and W. Alexander, Cruickshank, McCoss, and Malcolm Smith.—R. J.

JULY 4—BEN RINNES.

The Club had a very enjoyable Excursion to Ben Rinnes on the afternoon of Saturday, July 4. Members and guests, numbering seventeen, arrived at Aberlour. It seemed as if the weather conditions were to be favourable, though now and then dark, rainy clouds drifted across the sky. The party was taken by car to Esquiebuie, thus saving a walk of two or three miles along the highway. The ascent was begun at 3.20 p.m. The path ran through a wood and

finally emerged on the heather-clad hill slope. From here a fine view of three of the tops of Ben Rinnes was obtained. After covering a good distance a halt was made, when the members of the party collected together and partook of some light refreshment. At 5.10 the party arrived at Scurran of Well, which is crowned by three rocky tors. After a little rock-climbing, the next objective was the main summit, Scurran of Lochterlandoch. It had been noticed for quite a while that clouds were gathering overhead. The surrounding hills were enveloped in moving rain clouds, and soon Ben Rinnes got its share. However, this did not last long, and from the top, which was reached at 5.40, a splendid view was obtained. Away to the north lay the Moray Firth, and beyond the blue hills of Caithness. The Cairngorms, still wearing part of their winter garb, stood out clearly on the left. In all, the view was a very fine one. The party remained only 20 minutes on the summit, for it became quite chilly. The descent by the east ridge was made in good style. On reaching the Glen Rinnes road at Glack the company was conveyed by bus to Dufftown, where tea was waiting. A hearty vote of thanks was given to the President for all he had done to make the afternoon excursions so enjoyable. Those present were Misses Bothwell, Dugan, M. Johnstone, McNaughton, Russell, and Skakle; Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Ross MacKenzie, and Mrs. Wilson; Messrs. A. Booth, Ian Booth, Bothwell, Dugan, Malcolm, McCoss, McNaughton, and S. C. H. Smith.—A. H. D.

SUNDAY EXCURSION.

JUNE 14—MORVEN.

THE Club's first Sunday Excursion was held on June 14. About eight members intimated their intention to be present, but owing to the bad weather only four turned out. With such a small party a char-a-banc could not be considered, so it was decided to go by bus leaving at 10.15 a.m. It was fair but dull when we left Aberdeen, and as we had a two hours' journey before reaching Dinnet we were hopeful that the sun would break through. We left the bus at Dinnet at 12 o'clock and were successful in reaching the foot of Morven at 1.45 p.m., after a six-mile tramp along a beautifully-wooded road. Up till then we had had no rain, only a very thick mist. While we were having lunch, before starting to climb, the rain came on, and we had a few very heavy showers before the summit was reached at 3.20 p.m., that being ten minutes ahead of the scheduled time. There was a fierce gale blowing, which made us feel that we did not want to stay there for long, and there was no view to be got owing to the mist. A compass bearing had to be taken here. This being done and our way assured, we set off for Morven Burn. When we were about half-way down, the mist cleared for a few minutes and we

looked across the wide expanse to Mona Gowan and Scraulac, with black thunder clouds behind them.

Oh, the glad sounds of the joyous earth,

The murmurs that live in the mountain pines.

We saw a number of ptarmigan, grouse, and oyster-catchers, the last being a rare sight. This side of the hill is much more boggy than the Dinnet side. We reached the foot bridge over Morven Burn at 4.30 p.m. The journey from here to Ballater by Glen Gairn was much enjoyed, and was completed in 1½ hours. By this time we had left the mist behind, and we got some fine views of the hills beyond Ballater, but not as far as Lochnagar. It was still raining heavily when we arrived in Ballater. We all enjoyed a good tea at Mr. Dason's hotel. The return journey was made by bus, leaving at 8 p.m. Some of the party found it necessary to return to Aberdeen in borrowed clothing.

Those present were Misses M. Daniel and J. D. Wallace, and J. McCoss and A. A. Slessor.—M. D.

THE CRUACH ARDRAN RIDGE.

At the Spring Holiday week-end three members of the Club entrained for Crianlarich. Arrived at that station, the very fine view of Cruach Ardran (3,428 ft.), with its snow-filled Y-gully, and framed by the ridges enclosing Coire Ardran, soon decided them that this should be their objective for the following day.

At 9 o'clock on Sunday morning they were clear of the hotel, and, crossing the iron railway bridge a short half-mile down the Glasgow road, took to the gently sloping hillside and followed a sheep fence to the crest of the ridge at Hawk Craig. The ridge was then followed over Grey Height (2,159 ft.) to the foot of the final peak. At this point the party divided, one member making for the summit by the line of least resistance, up the ridge. The two other members traversed across steep snow on the north face to the fork of the Y-gully. One member tried the east branch of the Y and found it rather disappointing. The angle was probably nowhere over 40 degrees, and although the snow was in good condition, the gully could be left at any point and the face of the hill easily climbed. This member reached the Cairn about ten minutes after the climber who had taken the ridge. The west branch of the Y was tackled by the other member, and, although shorter, it appeared to be the more interesting of the two gullies, the snow at the top being at a much steeper angle. This member was about three-quarters of an hour later in reaching the summit. The view from the Cairn was very fine, especially of the hills to the west and north. Ben More and Am Binnein had very little snow on their west sides, but all the

hills were well covered on the east faces from about the 2,750 ft. level. After about an hour at the summit, as snow began falling from heavy clouds which had come up from the south-east, a start was made for the descent by the north-east face. A glance down this face into the swirling snow blown before a cold wind revealed that some care would be necessary in the descent, and a retreat was made to the shelter of the north face till the weather cleared a little. After a short time the snow stopped and the descent was made partly by steep snow and partly over the rocky face. A good glissade down the easier slopes at the foot of the face brought them to the col. Near this point and in close proximity to the snow they were attracted by clusters of small red flowers growing in the rock crevices. The ascent to Stob Garbh (3,148 ft.) from the col is very gradual but interrupted by rocky outcrops. These afford some interesting scrambling, but can easily be avoided. During a rest in the sun on the west side of the ridge, two figures were seen at the summit of Cruach Ardran. The members were interested to see these climbers glissade from top to bottom of the north-east face, descending in a few minutes what had taken them a good half hour. From Stob Garbh a leisurely descent was made over Stob Coire Bhuidhe (2,781 ft.) and Creag na Iolaire to the Glen Dochart road at Inverardran, and a half-mile walk along the road brought them back to the hotel at 6.30 p.m. The whole round is about $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles and makes a very enjoyable day's outing, without being too strenuous. With ice conditions the north-east face might give trouble and require rope, but this is the only part of the ridge presenting any difficulty.—W. M.

REVIEWS.

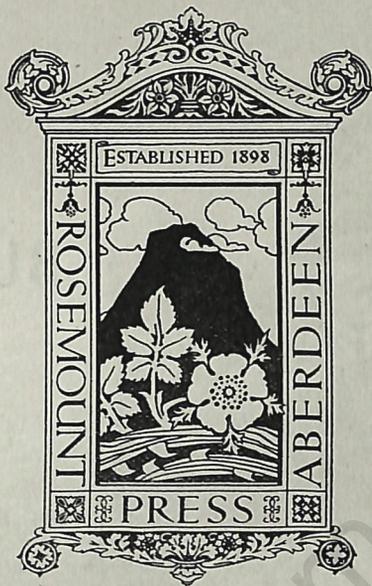
The Alpine Journal, No. 242, May, 1931. 10/6. net. The opening article in this issue is one by C. G. Bruce, entitled "Himalayan Contrasts," illustrated by two good photographs, that of Makalu being specially good. The next four articles describe THE ALPINE ascents in the Alps, and of these the most interesting JOURNAL. are Signor Benedetti's account of his ascent of the Furggen Ridge of the Matterhorn in 1930, and Miss G. I. Fitz-Gerald's description of her magnificent traverse of the Grandes Jorasses, also in 1930. The following two articles describe expeditions in Alaska (the first ascent of Mount Bona, 16,421 ft.) and in the Canadian Rockies. Mr. H. E. L. Porter contributes a long and well-illustrated article on "Glacier Peak and Mount Aspiring, N.Z.," which is followed by a most interesting paper by Mr. C. H. Archer describing the ascent of some rather grotesque peaks in Korea. There is next a 25-page article by the late Mr. R. P. Hope on "Solitary Climbs," from which one notes that he accomplished no less than 47 climbs alone. Various notes complete this very interesting and well-illustrated issue of *The Alpine Journal*.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, No. 111. April, 1931. 2/6 net. This is a most interesting number, containing 68 pages and six good illustrations. The opening contributions S.M.C. are two tributes to the late Mr. George Sang, who was JOURNAL. secretary of the S.M.C. from 1914 to 1930. Both Dr. Inglis Clark and Mr. W. N. Ling bear testimony to Mr. Sang's skill as a mountaineer and climber, and his ability as an organizer and administrator. In "Christmas at Cluanie," Mr. Lewis Graham tells of his experiences on the Glen Cluanie hills, and in "An Off-day at the Hut," Mr. Malcolm Matheson describes an interesting encounter on the Ben Nevis group. Mr. A. G. Hutchison writes a racy article, "New Year's Day, 1931," and Mr. R. R. Elton one on "Two Days on Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour." An interesting feature is the reprinting of a letter to Sir Walter Scott, dealing with the foundation and activities of a Mountaineering Club which was apparently formed in Scotland in 1815. The number contains the usual notes and proceedings of the Club, and of the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland.

The Rucksack Club Journal, Vol. VII. No. 1, 1931. 4/- net. In an excellent budget of articles, perhaps the most interesting is the first, "The Benediction of the Hills," by Mr. C. F. RUCKSACK Holland, who dwells on "considerations of climbing philosophy that are all too infrequently dwelt on in our climbing journals." "The war," says Mr. Holland, "undoubtedly had the effect on many of making them observant of natural beauty and of the subtle changes of mood in the atmospheric conditions. . . . Certainly no spring was for me ever so lovely as when I was a runner in Plug Street Wood, and sunrise acquired a new significance. The nausea for the crags was at times insistent, and in one moment of particular depression I registered a vow to the effect that if ever I found myself in the Lakes again I would sing 'God save the King' on the top of the Needle, a vow duly carried out in the fullness of time." A feature of this issue are the accounts given of new climbs, including two in Lakeland and one on Ben Nevis, and there is also a valuable index to new climbs, as recorded in various club journals during the last five years. The numerous illustrations are specially good.

Scottish Ski Club Journal, 1931. 2/6. The editorial committee are to be congratulated on their efforts as recorded in this, their second number, but we can sympathise with their demand for the appointment of an Editor, and it is to be hoped that the right person will be found. Note is made of the great increase during the past season in the number of people participating in the sport in Scotland. During the month of February there were as many as seventy skiers at Killin, and at the week-ends in March there were sometimes over thirty to be found. Experience is held to bear out the contention that snow conditions in March and April are always better than earlier in the year. The article on "Modern Ski-ing Equipment" gives the *pros* and *cons* on many points, and is a most useful supplement to the paper on the same subject in the 1930 issue. Various expeditions are described, and of special interest to our members is "A Ski-ing Holiday in Scotland," in which Mr. A. G. C. Collins describes four days' ski-ing, based on Braemar, in the company of Mr. H. J. Butchart.

We have received *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, Vol. XLVII, Nos. 2 and 3 (March and May, 1931). Two illustrated articles deal with "Water-Power Resources of Scotland" and "The Land Utilisation Survey of Britain."



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