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Professor Balfour

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13th June 1872.—JAMES M'BAIN, M.D., R.N., Vice-President, in the Chair.

The following Gentlemen were elected Resident Fellows:—

HOWARD BLYTH, Churchill, Edinburgh.

JOHN DOWNIE, West Coates, Edinburgh.

JAMES WELSH, 3 Forth Street, Edinburgh.

The following Communications were read:—

I. *Notes of a Botanical Excursion to the Breadalbane Mountains, in July 1871.* By Professor BALFOUR.

I have been in the habit of giving short notices, from time to time, of excursions made with my pupils, and of recording the plants of interest which were collected, and I propose to continue the practice in this communication. These excursions have been carried on by me as a teacher of botany for nearly thirty-three years, and they have extended over a wide range, including a large part of Scotland and Ireland, and a portion of England, as well as Switzerland and other parts of the continent of Europe. There have been many pleasant and interesting adventures, and the number who have joined in the trips has been between 2000 and 3000. Those who have been associated in the more distant alpine trips will not easily forget the scenes visited, and the rare plants gathered. The very discomforts and annoyances which have occasionally been encountered are recalled as events which cemented our friendships and added new zest to our pursuits. Stopped at one time by an angry duke in some Highland glen; arrested in our progress by an insolent gillie or gamekeeper clothed with a little brief authority; sheltered for a night in an empty shielling, or under a rock, where the earth, or it may be a layer of heather, constituted our beds; sleeping on the top of Ben-na-macdhuih, and seeing a gorgeous sunset and sun-rise from its summit, adding, from time to time, some new plant to the Scottish Flora, and regarding the acquisition of it as one of the grandest epochs in our

lives, and which is ever and anon brought to remembrance by the specimens preserved in the Herbarium; encountering many a storm in the mountains, and returning weary and drenched to our Highland inn, where a substantial tea dinner made us forget all the trials and hardships of the day, and enabled us to proceed with vigour in the arranging and drying of our specimens;—all these things, and a thousand more that might be mentioned, have added charms to our practical botanical work which can never fail to be remembered. The idiosyncrasies of the party, the little peculiarities which marked individual characters, the excitement caused by the disappearance of some one of the party who had lost his way among the hills, and the appearance of another whose immersion in a bog had sadly changed his aspect, kept up the excitement, and gave rise to many a witty saying and many a bad pun. Speaking for myself, I can only say that I look back with delight to the days I have spent in my botanical rambles, and a glance at my journals, or at my specimens, conjures up many scenes of intense interest. No science is better fitted, in its practical prosecution, to cement friendships and keep up pleasing associations.

On the present occasion I mean to record the results of an excursion undertaken in July 1871, and which, considering its short duration, was the most successful perhaps ever undertaken by a botanical party in Scotland.

On Friday, 21st July, a party, consisting of myself, Mr Sadler, Rev. R. F. Colvin, Dr William Craig, Mr John Leitch, and thirty students, proceeded from Edinburgh by the 3.50 P.M. train to Killin, *via* Stirling and Callander. We took up our quarters at the Lochy Inn, the landlord of which, Mr John Cameron, has on several occasions received my botanical parties, and has always been most attentive to us.

With a small inn and such a numerous party, it was no easy matter to get the needful accommodation either as regards meals or sleeping quarters. Some of the party had to occupy a hay-loft, where the presence of rats was by no means favourable to repose. We made up our minds to a certain amount of inconvenience for the night. The luxury of a bed to one's self was awarded only to a few.

Some, who were not so easily satisfied, and desired more luxurious night quarters, went to the large inn at Killin, and deserted our corps.

On Saturday morning, 22d July, after an early breakfast, we divided into three parties. One under my guidance ascended Craig Chailleah, a mountain between 3000 and 4000 feet high, within a few miles of the inn; another party, conducted by Mr Sadler, went by conveyance to the foot of Mael Ghyrdu, about seven miles up Glen Lochy, and ascended that mountain; while a third party went with Mr Leitch, in conveyances, to the foot of Ben Lawers, about eight miles distant, and climbed that noble and rich botanical mountain. The day was showery, but not unfavourable for the mountain. We had many splendid views of the mountainous country around, as the sun shone out brightly from the rainy clouds, and the mist rose from the distant summits. The combination of sunshine and shade added no small interest to the landscape. For botanists *can* enjoy such scenes, although they have often been maligned as those who keep their eyes fixed on the ground, and see nothing beautiful but the weeds. Each of the parties worked vigorously, and all of them did good work. Their combined labours were most successful, and the number of rare alpine species collected was remarkable. All accomplished their work so as to be able to get back to the inn at Killin about 4 P.M. After dining the party went by conveyances to the railway station, about four miles distant, and returned by the train, which started at 6.25 P.M. Our progress home was not rapid, and we did not reach Edinburgh till about 11 P.M.

Among the plants collected were the following:—1. On Craig Chailleah, *Thalictrum alpinum*, *Draba incana*, *Sagina nivalis*, a new station for this rare plant, which had only previously been found on Ben Lawers and Benane, *Sagina saxatilis*, vars., *Alsine rubella*, *Cerastium alpinum*, *C. trigynum*, *Sibbaldia procumbens*, *Potentilla maculata*, *Rubus saxatilis*, *R. Chamæmoris*, *Dryas octopetala*, *Epilobium alpinum*, *Sedum Rhodiola*, *Saxifraga stellaris*, *S. aizoides*, *S. hypnoides*, *S. nivalis*, *Adoxa Moschatellina*, *Galium boreale*, *Apargia autumnalis*, *Hieracium crocatum*, *Carduus heterophyllus*, *Gnaphalium sylvaticum*, *G. supinum*, *Campanula*

latifolia, *Vaccinium Vitis Idæa*, *Gentiana campestris*, *Melampyrum pratense*, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Veronica humifusa*, *Galeopsis versicolor*, *Armeria maritima*, *Empetrum nigrum*, *Salix reticulata*, *S. herbacea*, *Gymnadenia Conopsea*, *G. albida*, *Neottia Nidus-avis*, *Narthecium ossifragum*, *Juncus triglumis*, *Luzula spicata*, *Carex atrata*, *Sesleria cærulea*, *Triodia decumbens*, *Festuca vivipara*, *Poa alpina*, *Cetraria glauca*, *C. islandica*, *Woodsia hyperborea*, and *Polypodium alpestre*.

2. On Mael Ghyrdy.—*Cystopteris montana* (in several places to the east of where it had before been collected), *Bartsia alpina*, *Drosera intermedia*, (near Cheeri) *Thalictrum alpinum*, *Trollius europæus*, *Corydalis claviculata*, *Draba incana*, *Cochlearia alpina*, *Alchemilla alpina*, *Epilobium alsinifolium*, *Saxifraga oppositifolia*, *Meum athamanticum*, *Cornus suecica*, *Saussurea alpina*, *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Juncus biglumis*, *Sparganium natans*, *Rhynchospora alba*, *Carex rigida*, *C. dioica*, *Asplenium viride*, *Polystichum Lonchitis*, *Conostomum boreale*, *Polytrichum hercynicum*, *Solorina crocea*.

3. On Ben Lawers.—*Cystopteris montana*, *Myosotis alpestris*, *Saxifraga cernua*, *Draba rupestris*, *Botrychium Lunaria*, *Erigeron alpinus*, and many of which were species collected on Craig Chailleah and Mael Ghyrdy.

The above list contains many of the rare alpine plants of Britain, and I am not aware that any previous botanical party collected so many in the space of not more than eight hours.

II. On a Cone of *Flemingites gracilis* attached to its Stem.

By C. W. PEACH, A.L.S.

The author stated that Mr Carruthers, of the British Museum, had instituted the Genus *Flemingites* from a portion of a cone found in British Carboniferous rocks, and named it *Flemingites gracilis*, and had added in 1869 a new species from stems and sporangia from similar rocks in Brazil, and which he had fully described in the "Geological Magazine" for April 1869, as *Flemingites Pedroanus*. At page 152 he says—"In all the specimens of *Flemingites* which I have examined, I have seen no indication of the