

NOTES.

THE following is the text of the memorial in favour of the construction of the proposed road through Glen Feshie, which was addressed to the Road

Board, in conformity with the remit made at the last annual

PROPOSED meeting of the Club (see p. 210):—

ROAD THROUGH

GLEN FESHIE.

14 GOLDEN SQUARE,

ABERDEEN, 30th December, 1918.

The Road Board,

Queen Anne's Chambers,

Broadway, Westminster, London, S.W.1.

Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Cairngorm Club, Aberdeen, we beg respectfully to bring to the notice of the Road Board the claims of a scheme in which we are doubly interested as mountaineers and as citizens. One of the most urgent needs of Scotland in respect to communication—in the north-east portion of it, perhaps the most clamant of all—is a through trunk road from east to west. The natural termini are Aberdeen and Fort William. A route between these points would be the complement, and add greatly to the utility of the great south to north road from Perth to Inverness. These two roads would open up the whole of the central Highlands. Lateral roads could be led from them in any required direction, and every locality in the area could thus be made comparatively easy of access.

To effect the main purpose, the Deeside road at the Linn of Dee (about 6 miles west of Braemar) must be linked up with the Speyside Road, preferably at Kingussie, or at such other point east of it as the existing road might be found, or made, serviceable. The easiest, and indeed the only feasible, route is by Glen Feshie, which Nature seems to have designed for the purpose, the gradient being easy and the elevation at the summit level moderate. The line is wonderfully direct, too, considering the mountainous character of the whole region.

At present Braemar is a *cul de sac*. Access to the mountains beyond is possible only to those who have leisure and to whom expense is not a prime consideration. For the scores and hundreds of young men- and women-workers in a populous centre like Aberdeen, who would be benefited both physically and morally by frequent resort to the open, we regard it as of the last importance that all possible facilities of route and conveyance should be provided for the purpose. One of the main objects for which this Club exists is to promote in particular resort to the hills, hill-climbing, and that first-hand acquaintance with native topography and scenery which is a very foundation of love of country. A through route such as described would enormously increase opportunities of the kind. It would convey—chiefly, no doubt, by motor or electric traction—visitors, whether from near or far,

to the immediate vicinity of the great mountain sanctuaries of the Cairngorms, while it would in no way interfere with the seclusion and charm of these glens and mountains. The accesses of the Larig, Glen Tilt, Glen Derry and a dozen more would be untouched; only they would become accessible to hosts of those who know them only by name.

The region, lying on the outskirts of several local road authorities, is a kind of No Man's Land. It does not specially appeal to any one road board as serving the exclusive interests of its own area. Much of the traffic would come from without and would go straight through; the road would be a national rather than a county road.

In view of schemes of development, such as forestry, small holdings, and local crafts and industries and employment generally, the road would be of even greater importance than in regard merely to tourist and mountaineering facilities, though the opening up of the Highlands as a national playground is an object that cannot be regarded with indifference.

Under these circumstances, we venture to suggest that the road should be constructed by the Road Board itself—that is, the expense should be borne by the Board direct; and that some allocation of funds ear-marked for its upkeep should be made from year to year to the County Councils of Aberdeenshire and Inverness-shire. These Councils will in due course be called upon to improve the accesses to the new road and other portions of the trunk line, and in fairness should not be saddled with expenditure that both directly and indirectly is national, not local, in character.

We trust no questions of procedure or of supposed rights may be allowed to stand in the way of a great and urgent improvement, for the furtherance of which and similar undertakings it is understood that your Board has been called into existence.

We are, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servants,

BRYCE, President.

JOHN CLARKE, Vice-President.

J. R. LEVACK, Chairman.

T. R. GILLIES, Acting Secretary.

It had been a stormy week in Fort William, but Friday brought a slight improvement in the weather, in so far that it was dry, and that the mists had crept a little higher up the hillsides. We made an early start, and, wending our way up Glen Nevis, reached the shepherd's cottage at Steall a few minutes past nine o'clock. The waterfall was a fine sight after all the rain, and the photographer crossed the stream and made an exposure.

The Aonachs were to be our first point of attack, so we struck up the slope of the "Beg" above us and followed the course of the burn right into the great south corrie. Our hopes of a good day were by this time beginning to melt away, for first we encountered a few flying showers of rain and sleet, and when we reached the floor of the corrie the mist swooped down on us, and in a few minutes more the air was thick with snow flakes.

We pressed on, however, over great beds of old snow, and up the short rise to the summit level, where we found a good three inches of fresh snow; then along the plateau to the few stones marking the highest point of Aonach Beg (4060 feet). There were tremendous cornices of snow crowning the precipitous east face, but under the conditions we dared not approach them too closely, though at one point we were able to have a peep into the vapoury depths. As there was no abatement of the storm, or likely to be any, we descended the 400 feet to the col, and then trudged along the great flat, northward to the large cairn on Aonach Mor (3999 feet).

We had intended crossing over Carn Mor Dearg and so on to Ben Nevis, but the storm was so persistent and the cold so intense that we thought it prudent to give up the idea of any more tops. This was the month of June, and we have seldom experienced a worse day, even in April. A few minutes were spent in the shelter of the cairn, and we continued our tramp along the broad flat ridge to its termination in Sgor a Pheanais (2171 feet); then descended out of the mist and out of the snow, and into the warmth of a genial summer's day. A careful survey of the landscape showed us the River Lundy, and a road running alongside it, in the direction of Inverlochy. We reached the riverside at 1.30, and sat down to some lunch, which we regarded as richly deserved; then, later on, we dawdled downstream, joined the Glen Spean road, and so on to Fort William.

WILLIAM BARCLAY.

At the time of the January full-moon, I undertook a midnight expedition to the summit of the West Lomond (1713 feet), the highest point in Fifeshire. The sky was cloudless, and there was a fair MOONLIGHT breeze from the north-west. On the way up, the snowy VISIBILITY. tops of the Ochils in the west shewed up hard and clear, so that, after ascending the snow-clad slopes to the summit, which I reached at 12.30 a.m., I was in no degree surprised at the great visibility. To the east twinkled the Fife Ness and Isle of May lighthouses, while the top of Arthur's Seat protruded from a sheet of mist, beneath which glittered the lights of Edinburgh in the south.

But it was in the north and west that the view was grandest. Here, the horizon was a brilliant white, as against its blackness in the eastern sector. To the west the peaked outline of Ben Vorlich (south of Loch Earn) was clearly visible at a distance of 38 miles. Further northward Schiehallion's outline was just distinguishable against the darker sky and the dark shapes of the nearer hills at a distance of 43 miles. To the north, the ridge of hills from Carn na Glasha to Beinn a' Ghlo shone out clear white at an average distance of 45 miles, while Lochnagar was no doubt visible though not identified. I have never yet had such an excellent opportunity of testing the naked-eye visibility of distant hills by moonlight. With the help of a glass, which would also have served as a protection against the icy north wind, the shapes could have been made out much better, but as to the main outlines of the groups mentioned I have no doubt whatever. I have seldom seen the matter mentioned in any publication.

JAMES H. BELL.

"Climbing up the last 2000 feet or so is hard," wrote Mr. Millar, "for here the ascent is over rough volcanic rocks, boulders, and loose stones, and is relatively steep. This, together with the rarefied atmosphere, which renders breathing difficult, the cutting wind blowing off the snowdrifts, and the cold driving mist, made the progress over the steep volcanic massif of the last 1000 feet more of a crawl than anything else—in fact, a veritable penance. But in the end we reached the summit at 12.15 p.m., exactly ten hours from the time we left Gotemba, which, considering the distance and the altitude, might, I was informed, be considered a fairly rapid ascent. Unfortunately the thick driving mist which had surrounded us at the higher levels still continued, and blotted out all prospect of any view from the summit."

One, it seems, gains "great mérit" in Japan by reaching the top of the sacred Fujiyama. But that "marvellous summit" can be appreciated—perhaps best appreciated—by being observed at a distance; and Mr. Millar says the feelings of writers who enthusiastically laud its glories can be entered into by "any one who has been fortunate enough to see Fujiyama in the sunlight, with its bridal veil of snow falling in white folds from the lofty summit, which strikes upwards towards the blue sky above it, and to behold, in the clear air of the mysterious East after sunrise, the mist clouds rolling away before the power of the sun of Japan."

A CORRESPONDENT obligingly sends us, from his commonplace book, the following cutting of a quotation from Rousseau's Works:—

ROUSSEAU "A general impression (which everybody experiences,
ON though all do not observe it) is that, on high mountains,
MOUNTAINS. where the air is pure and subtle, we feel greater lightness
and agility of body, and more serenity in the mind. The
pleasures are there less violent; the passions are more moderate; meditations receive there a certain great and sublime character proportioned to the objects that strike us; a certain tranquil pleasure which has nothing sensual. We are there grave without melancholy; quiet without indolence; contented with existing and thinking; all too lively pleasures are blunted and lose the sharp points which render them painful; they leave in the heart only a slight and agreeable emotion; and thus a happy climate makes the passions of mankind subservient to his felicity, which elsewhere are his torment. I question whether any violent agitation or vapourish disorder could hold out against such an abode if continued for some time; and I am surpris'd that baths of the salutary and beneficial air of the mountains are not one of the principal remedies of medicine and morality."

THERE are times when *Punch* exhibits the failing it frequently attributes to Scotsmen—it "jokes wi' deeficulty." It got hold of a statement in a Scottish newspaper to the effect that "The Association

"RECONSTRUC-
TION"
OF THE
HIGHLANDS. Free Church of Scotland have prepared and presented to the Secretary for Scotland a memorandum on the reconstruction of the Highlands," and thereupon it made the comment—"We have always thought that judicious

thinning of the more congested views would help the tourist." The use of the phrase "reconstruction of the Highlands" was undoubtedly unfortunate, but it hardly warranted the manufacture of such a small witticism.

A MEETING of the Committee of the Club was held on 18th June—Dr. Levack, the Chairman, presiding—at which several interesting and important matter were discussed. It was arranged to hold a

PROPOSED Summer Excursion on the July Holiday, Mount Keen

SUMMER being selected as the objective. Authority was given to

EXCURSION. Mr. J. A. Parker to accept an estimate for the painting of the Allt-na-Beinne Bridge at a cost of £17 10s., and to see

the work carried out.

The large cost—due, of course, to the recent rises in the prices of material and labour—will absorb the balance of the Bridge Fund remaining, and an appeal is to be made to visitors to Aviemore and district to contribute. Finally, the Committee agreed to recommend to the annual meeting of the Club the appointment, as Secretary and Treasurer, of Mr. John A. Nicol, D.C.M., solicitor, Aberdeen. Mr. Nicol has been a member of the Club for several years, is a splendid walker, and is keenly interested in mountaineering; and the Committee were of opinion that with a man of his vigour as Secretary the activities of the Club would speedily be renewed.

At the above-mentioned meeting of the Committee the following were admitted members of the Club:—

NEW Mr. Gerald W. T. II. Fleming, Surgeon Sub-Lieutenant,
R.N.V.R., Aldersyde, Durham.

MEMBERS. Mr. Arthur Robert Horne, Bonn-na-Coille, Murtle.

Mr. Edward Birnie Reid, 6 Golden Square, Aberdeen.

Mr. Charles Playfair Robb, Westbank, Fonthill Road, Aberdeen.

Mr. Marshall Jeffreys Robb, B.Sc., Westbank, Fonthill Road, Aberdeen.

In addition,

Miss Isabel Rose Simpson, West Bungalow, Cults,
was admitted an associate member.