

NOTES.

AN important advance in the proposal to construct a road through Glen Feshie (see the Club's memorial, pp. 255-56), has been gained in the favourable report of the Rural Transport (Scotland) Committee. This Committee was appointed by the Secretary for Scotland in February, 1918, to consider and report upon (1) the rural areas in Scotland which are most in need of transport facilities for the promotion of agriculture, forestry, and rural industries; and (2) the means of improving communication in these areas, with special reference to new or improved roads, etc. The report of the Committee (of which Sir T. Carlaw Martin was Chairman) was issued in July last; and amongst the Committee's recommendations was the construction of a new road between the Linn of Dee and Feshie Lodge. This is exceedingly satisfactory, for the report of such a Committee cannot be ignored; and though the carrying out of this particular recommendation may be delayed, the eventual construction of the road may now be regarded as assured.

The report of the Committee as regards the Glen Feshie road is in these terms:—

In connection with the proposals for the opening up of Deeside there was submitted a scheme for the making of a road between Deeside and Speyside by Glen Geldie and Glen Feshie, the construction of which would bring Kingussie within 32 miles of Braemar by road. The project differs essentially from most of those which have been investigated by us in that it proposes the making of a through route with very little local traffic—for there is practically no population on the route—but not as connecting an isolated district at one end with important centres, as is the case with the proposed cross-country railways in Ross and Sutherland. Its advocates claim that it would complete a line of roads connecting the east coast at Aberdeen with the west coast at Fort William. Its detractors say that it would serve no other purpose than to enable motorists to make a new circular tour. We do not think that this criticism does justice to the scheme. The road would not be unlike the road up Glenshee between Blairgowrie and Braemar. It may be said that there is no particular need for this road, that the railway goes up Strathmore to Aberdeen and then up the Dee Valley. Yet the Cairnwell road is one of the most interesting in Scotland; a fair amount of traffic goes on it, and a coach runs daily in summer. Any arguments in favour of the Cairnwell road as connecting different valleys apply with greater force to the proposed Kingussie-Braemar road.

One of the ways of developing the Highlands is by opening them up to tourist traffic, and it appears to us that the process should begin with the

Central Highlands, which are more accessible to the east coast and the midland part of Scotland than the country west of the Great Glen. We should be inclined, then, to classify this road with the road which we propose elsewhere connecting Glen Affric with Kintail; and for similar reasons recommend its construction.

The length of the proposed road from Linn of Dee to Glen Feshie Lodge is 17 miles. At present there is a rough road from the Linn of Dee up to Glen Geldie Lodge, which would have to be rebuilt for modern traffic. From Glen Geldie Lodge to Glen Feshie Lodge there is only a track or path. From the latter lodge to Kingussie there is a fair road which would require to be strengthened, as would also the section of road between Braemar and the Linn of Dee. The cost of constructing the 17 miles of new road was estimated at pre-war rates at, roughly, £50,000. It is suggested that the proposed road should be so laid out as not to interfere with the carrying out of works for the improvement of the River Feshie.

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Though it may appear to some to be a retrograde step to suggest the imposition of a toll, we see no reason why one should not be levied upon motorists using a road of this description for touring purposes. The maintenance of such a road running through a district with little or no population would impose a heavy burden on the local authorities, which they would be unwilling to bear without assistance from outside sources. The tax we suggest would form one such source, and in return therefor the tourist would have the advantage of a route of great scenic beauty which would represent a saving to him of 37 and 52 miles as compared with the shortest existing routes between Deeside and Speyside, viz., those *via* Tomintoul and Pitlochry respectively.

The passage dealing with the Glen Affric road referred to above is as follows:—

Among the possibilities of realising the assets of the Highlands is the development of a tourist industry, such as brings wealth to Switzerland, Tyrol, and the Black Forest. On the whole this is a surer and more stable source of wealth than preserving them for the recreation of the minute minority who are rich enough to afford to rent a deer forest. Moreover, throwing the Highlands open to the tourist is not incompatible with retaining the more modest and less exclusive kind of sport, viz., fishing. This particular district induces our reflections of this kind because it contains Glen Affric, which may be accounted the most beautiful mountain glen in Scotland—indeed, of its kind, perhaps as beautiful as anything in Europe.

LECTURES ON mountains and mountaineering are by no means uncommon nowadays, and it has been a pleasure to listen to lectures by such recognised experts in mountaineering as Mr. J. A. Parker, Mr.

A SERMON William Garden, and Dr. Levaek, all three prominent
ON members of the Club. A sermon on the subject, however,
LOCHNAGAR. even if classified as a Sunday evening lecture, is rather rare—so rare, indeed, that there is a tendency to regard it as a trifle sensational, more particularly when advertised under the fantastic title of “The steep frowning glories of dark Lochnagar.” A sermon (of

lecture) on this theme was delivered in Trinity Congregational Church, Aberdeen, on a Sunday evening in August last, by the Rev. Frederick J. Japp, the pastor of the church, and formed the first of a series on "Holiday Landscapes," being followed by lectures on "The Rock-Hewn Grandeur of the Linn of Dee," "A Memory of the Muir of Dinnet," and so on. May one frankly own to a feeling of curiosity as to how Lochnagar would be dealt with from the pulpit? And may confession also be made that, while not to be included among those (if any) "who came to scoff and remained to pray," we were agreeably surprised by the preacher's treatment of the subject, and specially impressed by his striking powers of extempore address and his fervent eloquence? While that was so, we are constrained to add that there were disappointing features in the discourse, and that everything that Mr. Japp said could not receive endorsement. Possessed of a remarkable rhetorical faculty, he described Lochnagar and the view from its summit with a profusion of phrase that was enviable; but it struck us none the less as a waste of words to give details of the drive up Glenmuick and the long preliminary walk before "The Ladder" is reached. Then he laid far too much stress on the importance to be attached to Lochnagar from the accidental fact that Queen Victoria lived so long under its shadow; and, while admitting, of course, the special beauty and grandeur of Lochnagar, we must dissent entirely from the extravagant claim of its supremacy over all other mountains—the Alps even—which Mr. Japp seemed to set up. We felt more in accord with his treatment of mountains generally, particularly his exposition of the appeal they make to the eye and the mind, the sense and the soul, and his apposite allusions in this connection to Ruskin and Dante. How the inevitable "application" which forms the customary conclusion of sermons could be worked out from a discourse on Lochnagar may appear puzzling to the mere layman, but any difficulty in the matter was got over by the preacher very speedily and with considerable ingenuity. Mr. Japp had described mountains as symbolic of the divine and the eternal, and so it became comparatively easy to link them up with the spiritual life. The particular "message" of Lochnagar was made to consist of—the call, the conquest, the crown; its application, of course, is obvious. A minor feature of the service was the exceeding appropriateness of the passages of Scripture selected as the lessons, and of the hymns that were sung.

R. A.

AN interesting article, "Plant-Hunting in the Cairngorms," appeared in the *Aberdeen Free Press* of 3rd September: the initials appended, "A. M.,"

easily identify the writer with the author of the article,

THE FLORA OF THE CAIRNGORMS. "On the Rising Road," in our last issue. The botanical research described was conducted by the writer and some friends at Loch Kander, Craigendall, the Coyles of Muick, Glasmaol, and Ballochbuie. That it was exceedingly

successful may be gauged from the following summary of the results attained:—"Some experience convinced us that the corries facing east or north are by far the most prolific, and that a trickle of water at least is a decided advantage in the quest. We thought ourselves lucky in our search, and with reason, for we secured almost all the leaded-type species in the alpine floras,—ferns, saxifrages, orchids, willows, club-mosses, and ceras-

tiums, not forgetting the extremely rare mountain gentian. In the King's forest the white ling was quite abundant on the way to Lochnagar, and the dwarf birch—*Betula nana*—shook out its lovely dark round leaves among the heather tops. *Linnaea borealis* is there also in some secret spots. A strange phenomenon, long known to botanists, is the occurrence on the high mountains of plants that are nowhere found below except along the wild sea cliffs. There are several such, like the sea-pink, the rose-root sedum, the purple mountain saxifrage, and the maritime plantain. Their presence in those two habitats, so extreme in elevation, has been the subject of varied speculation. Probably the explanation is to be found in the fact that in such sites they have more room to vegetate, whereas in intermediate positions the dense population of grasses and herbs has crowded them out. Is it not the same with human tribes, where the seaboard fringe and the mountain ridge afford homes for the earlier races? Postulating that "Since the intensity of the sun's rays increases with the elevation in mountain districts, the effects of light must be apparent in the colouration of flowers," the writer proceeded:—"No one at all familiar with hill plants has failed to notice the marvellous hues which the alpine flora displays. The brilliance of the saxifrages, which are on the whole the feature of the spouts and gullies, is something to admire by the hour and carry along through life. Especially beautiful and appealing in their soft shades of leaf and flower are the clumps of *Saxifraga aizoides*—the yellow mountain saxifrage—which often form lovely cushions and carpets by stony rill or pebbly marsh. The Wordsworthian enthusiast has not yet come along to lift this lovely plant to the rank of nobility, but we are sure that he is on the way. The harebell, too, which has had its fair share of notice, reaches a great elevation, and wears a colour more attractive than when found at lower levels. Here it does not carry a carillon of bells, but only a single large widely-companuate bloom, altogether striking in its bearing. You may find the *Angelica* 2,500 feet above sea level, and the *Trientalis* almost as high, though it is too late in August for flower, but the large pure white petals of the knotted pearlwort more than make up for that."

THE Club is greatly indebted to Mr. James A. Parker for an exceedingly pleasant evening (19th November), when he delivered the lecture on "The Scottish Alps," prepared by the late Mr. W. Lamond Howie, illustrated by about 140 of Mr. Howie's photographs. Mr. Lamond Howie was aptly described by Mr. PHOTOGRAPHS. Parker as "a photographer who climbed, not a climber who photographs." He had all the zest of a mountaineer combined with the enthusiasm of a skilled photographer; hence his photographs were not mere reproductions of mountain scenery, but were pictures taken from view-points skilfully selected so as to produce artistic effect. This artistry was otherwise displayed in the exquisitely beautiful pictures of clouds, of sunset, and of moonlight, which one would be well warranted in terming "magnificent"; and it was none the less revealed in the really wonderful pictures of snow scenes on the Ben Nevis and Cairngorm ranges. Dr. Levack, who presided, described Mr. Lamond Howie as the pioneer of mountain photography in Scotland, and said his photographs produced feelings of admiration and despair—it was not possible for anyone to take

photographs like Mr. Lamond Howie. He bequeathed all his slides, about 800 in number, to the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and Mr. Parker had obtained a selection of them for exhibition in Aberdeen, and had also transcribed Mr. Lamond Howie's accompanying descriptive lecture. The lecture, it should be added, was no jejune affair, but was an admirable exposition of mountain scenery, animated by a fine feeling for nature, and containing not a few passages of truly eloquent description. A collection was taken in aid of the fund for the maintenance of the Allt-na-Beinne Bridge, and amounted to the gratifying sum of £6 : 9/-.

A DISTRESSING and fatal accident occurred in Skye, on 8th September, Captain W. E. Elliot, M.P. for Mid Lanark, having the great misfortune to lose his newly-wedded wife, and having himself a narrow

FATAL
ACCIDENT ON
THE CUILLIN
IN SKYE.

escape from death. Captain and Mrs. Elliot, who had been married only a fortnight before, left Sligachan Hotel on the morning of Sunday, the 7th, and walked up by the Red Burn to the foot of the west ridge of Bruach na Frithe. Here they left their rucksack and went up the

hill by what is considered the easy tourist route of Bruach na Frithe. They got into mist, however, lost their direction, and wandered southward in the direction of the Castles, part of the main ridge. They eventually reached the top of a gully leading down from the ridge to Harta Corrie, and attempted to descend it. This gully is a simple scree slope on the Coire Mhadaidh side of the ridge, and is similar in character on the Harta Corrie side for a considerable distance, but near the foot of the cliffs there are several pitches in it, down which it is not easy to find a way. Captain and Mrs. Elliot descended this gully for some distance, when darkness overtook them, and they had to spend the night on the rocks. Next morning, they continued their descent, and, near the foot of the rocks, Mrs. Elliot, who was a little distance above her husband, slipped in her steps and fell, knocking Captain Elliot from his holds, and both fell to the bottom of the rocks, a distance of between 20 and 30 feet. Both were seriously injured about the head, but, apparently, were not rendered unconscious. Captain Elliot, who is a medical graduate, recognised the serious nature of his wife's injuries, and saw that it was impossible to get her down to Sligachan. He made her as comfortable as possible, and hastened down the Corrie for help, arriving at Sligachan at 1 p.m., four hours after the accident happened. He was in a state of collapse from loss of blood and exhaustion, but quickly rallied, and was able to give a very accurate and detailed account of the accident, and where Mrs. Elliot had been left.

A search party was quickly organised, and an advance party of it left the hotel half an hour after Captain Elliot had arrived, carrying blankets, hot coffee, and brandy. In another half-hour the main search party of fifteen left the hotel, carrying a stretcher and other appliances. The night of Sunday had been dark and misty, but the rain held off. At dawn, however, the weather fairly broke down, and it rained very heavily, and blew half a gale, so that practically every visitor was in the hotel; and all of them, climbers and non-climbers, volunteered to render assistance. Among those staying at Sligachan were five members of the Cairngorm Club, including the Chairman, an equal number of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and

several members of the Alpine Club, including the Secretary, Mr. Mumm; and all these, and other visitors, including Professor Cushny, of Edinburgh, offered help.

Each got into his hill clothes, sufficient food for 24 hours was arranged for in case of a night out, maps, ropes, compasses, and aneroids were taken, and the party set out. By this time all the burns were torrents, and the route up Harta Corrie was by no means easy, and was often dangerous. Arrived at the foot of the rocks, the party spread out, and for a time were unsuccessful in their search; but Mr. S. F. M. Cumming, of Edinburgh, who had climbed a ledge above the floor of the Corrie, saw, by means of binoculars, the object of the search lying on a steep scree slope close to the cliffs. He signalled by his arms to the rest of the party, for his shouts could not be heard owing to the noise of the countless streams and waterfalls. The medical members of the party quickly found that the poor lady had been dead for hours. She had been terribly injured about the head, and had died from exhaustion and exposure. The body was wrapped in a blanket, and bound with one of the ropes carried by the party, and was carried down the corrie for a short distance. It was ultimately decided, however, to leave the body all night near a prominent rock, and recover it next morning, as it was advisable to get the search party off the hill before darkness fell.

Next morning two gillies were sent out with ponies, and, accompanied by Major Bradley, one of the search party, they brought in the body.

This very regrettable incident must not be classed as a mountaineering accident. Neither of the parties was equipped for climbing. They went for a stroll up Bruach na Frithe, having left their rucksack at the foot of the hill. They had neither coats nor waterproofs, no food, no rope, and the lady was scantily clad, and had on shoes with fairly high heels and no nails on the soles. They had no knowledge of the ground; otherwise they would not have ventured from the Castles into Harta Corrie. It is an accident which is to be greatly regretted from every point of view. J. R. L.

IN the month of August last I had the pleasure of accompanying an aged relative of mine—Mr. Robert McGlashan, late farmer of Dunfallandy—to the summit of Ben Vrackie. He has spent all his life

AN AGED HILL-CLIMBER under the shadow of the hill, and is now in his 87th year; and, as more than half a century had elapsed since his last ascent, he expressed a desire to once again “sit on the top,” so I gladly complied. We did not ascend by the path either, but left the road at Kinnaird, just beyond Moulin, and made our way over the moorland direct for the south-running spur, which we climbed and followed round to the summit. Mr. McGlashan carried himself like “a young ‘un,” and showed no more signs of fatigue than I did, but was rather annoyed when I insisted on going home by the path instead of through the annex, as he desired. W. B.

A RECENT communication to the press by Canon Rawsley contained the pleasing information that Lord Leconfield, the lord of the manor, has placed Scafell Pike, subject to any common rights that exist, under the custody of the National Trust for the Preservation of Natural Scenery. His lordship has made this gift in honour of the men of the Lake District who

fought in the great war, and in thankful memory of the men who gave their lives in the struggle. Scafell Pike is the highest mountain summit in England (3,210 feet)—Snowdon being ruled out as being a Welsh mountain. It is situated on the Westmoreland border of Cumberland, about fifteen miles from Keswick.

A PROPOSAL to construct a carriage road over Styhead Pass, in the English Lake District, has been definitely rejected by the Cumberland County Council. The road was intended to connect Wasdale

STYHEAD PASS. near Scafell, with Borrowdale, near Keswick, and would have been driven through some of the finest mountain scenery in England. Mountaineering clubs were naturally up in arms against the project; and we may rejoice with them that their opposition has materially contributed to the defeat of the proposal.

THE bonfires in the north on Peace Day (19th July last) were comparatively few and insignificant, as contrasted with the displays on the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897 (See *C. C. J.*, II.,

PEACE DAY 168, 186), the coronation of Edward VII, 1902 (IV., 117), BONFIRES. and the coronation of George V., 1911 (VII., 121). A

proposal was mooted in Aberdeenshire to arrange for a consecutive chain of bonfires, but it was found impracticable to carry out any such general plan, and it was ultimately left to the Parish Councils to organise bonfires, with a general recommendation "that, where possible, the bonfires should be so placed as to be seen from each other, and over as wide an area as possible." The Parish Councils did little or nothing, however, and such bonfires as there were formed part of town or district celebrations, provided in most cases by popular subscription. In very many cases flares and fireworks were substituted for bonfires, possibly because easier to arrange for, and involving much less labour. Bonfires, in fact, taken all over, constituted a very small item in the celebrations. This was due partly to a somewhat general feeling of apathy as regards both the peace itself, and rejoicing at its conclusion; and it was also attributable in many places, and especially in Upper Deeside, to the danger to which woods and forests would be exposed owing to the very dry nature of the heather on the hills consequent on the prolonged drought of the season. The number of bonfires on hill-tops was, accordingly, exceedingly limited, and in the Aberdeen newspapers mention was made only of the following:—

Beauty Hill, Udney; Hill of Dudwick, Ellon; Balquhindachy, Methlick; Hill of Culsh, New Deer; Turlundie Hill, New Pitligo; Barra Hill, Bourtie; Hill of Scars, Jericho, Insh; Hill of Ordley, Auchterless; Breagach Hill, Strathdon; Gallows Hill, Conryside; Tillypronie; Knock Hill, Logie-Coldstone; Craighdu, Coull; Glentanner; Knock Hill, Grange; Balloch Hill, Keith; Bin Hill, Cullen; Craibeg, Kingussie; Bogies Hill, Johnshaven.

Nearly as many bonfires were lit on much lower eminences or "on the level," practically; for example:—

Hutcheon Park, Turriff; Cairnhill, Rosehearty; West Braes, Portsoy; Princess Royal Park, Duftown; Upper Mains, Aberlour; Blackhillock, Knoekando; The Square, Tomintoul; The Square, Grantown; The Golf Course, Nethy Bridge.

THE thirty-first Annual Meeting of the Club was held in the Office of the Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. John A. Nicol, 189 Union Street, Aberdeen, on 18th December, 1919—Dr. John R. Levack, the Chairman of the Club, presiding. It was preceded by a Special General Meeting, duly called, at which three resolutions embodying alterations in the rules of the Club were unanimously agreed to. By these alterations three

ANNUAL
MEETING.

Members of the Committee must retire annually, remaining ineligible for re-election for a year; the entry money is raised from 5/- to 7/6 and the annual subscription similarly increased from 5/- to 7/6; and the annual subscription of minor members is correspondingly raised from 2/6 to 3/9. At the Annual Meeting, the Treasurer's Accounts for the year 1919 were submitted and approved. They showed a credit balance of £34 : 6 : 6, and the expenditure included a sum of £2 : 11 : 6 to square the debit balance on the Allt-na-Beinne Bridge Account, arising from the cost of repainting the bridge. On the motion of Dr. McIntyre, seconded by Mr. Alexander Simpson, the Secretary and Treasurer was voted a honorarium of £15 : 15/-. The President, Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were re-elected. Putting in operation the new rule with regard to the Committee, it was decided to "retire" the two members who had been longest on it—Messrs. William Porter and James A. Hadden—there being a third vacancy owing to the death of Mr. John McGregor. The remaining members of the Committee were re-elected, along with the following new members—Messrs. T. R. Gillies (the late Chairman), James McCoss, and Marshall J. Robb. It was intimated that a New Year Meet was to be held at Braemar from 29th December to 5th January; it was agreed to hold an Easter Meet at Crianlarich; and it was remitted to the Chairman and the Secretary to arrange excursions on the spring holiday and the summer holiday, and also to arrange Saturday excursions.

The following have been admitted members of the Club:—

NEW	Miss Edith Davidson, 414 Great Western Road, Aberdeen.
MEMBERS.	Mr. G. C. Grant, 76 Rubislaw Den North.
	Mr. Robert Leith, 90 Irvine Place.
	Mr. Robert Littlejohn, 19 Westburn Drive.
	Mr. A. C. W. Lowe, "Colwyn," Buckie.
	Mrs. Florence Lowe, M.A., "Colwyn," Buckie.
	Mr. R. P. Masson, M.A., LL.B., 43 Westburn Road.
	Mr. William Nicol, 6 Burns Road.

The membership of the Club stands at 153.