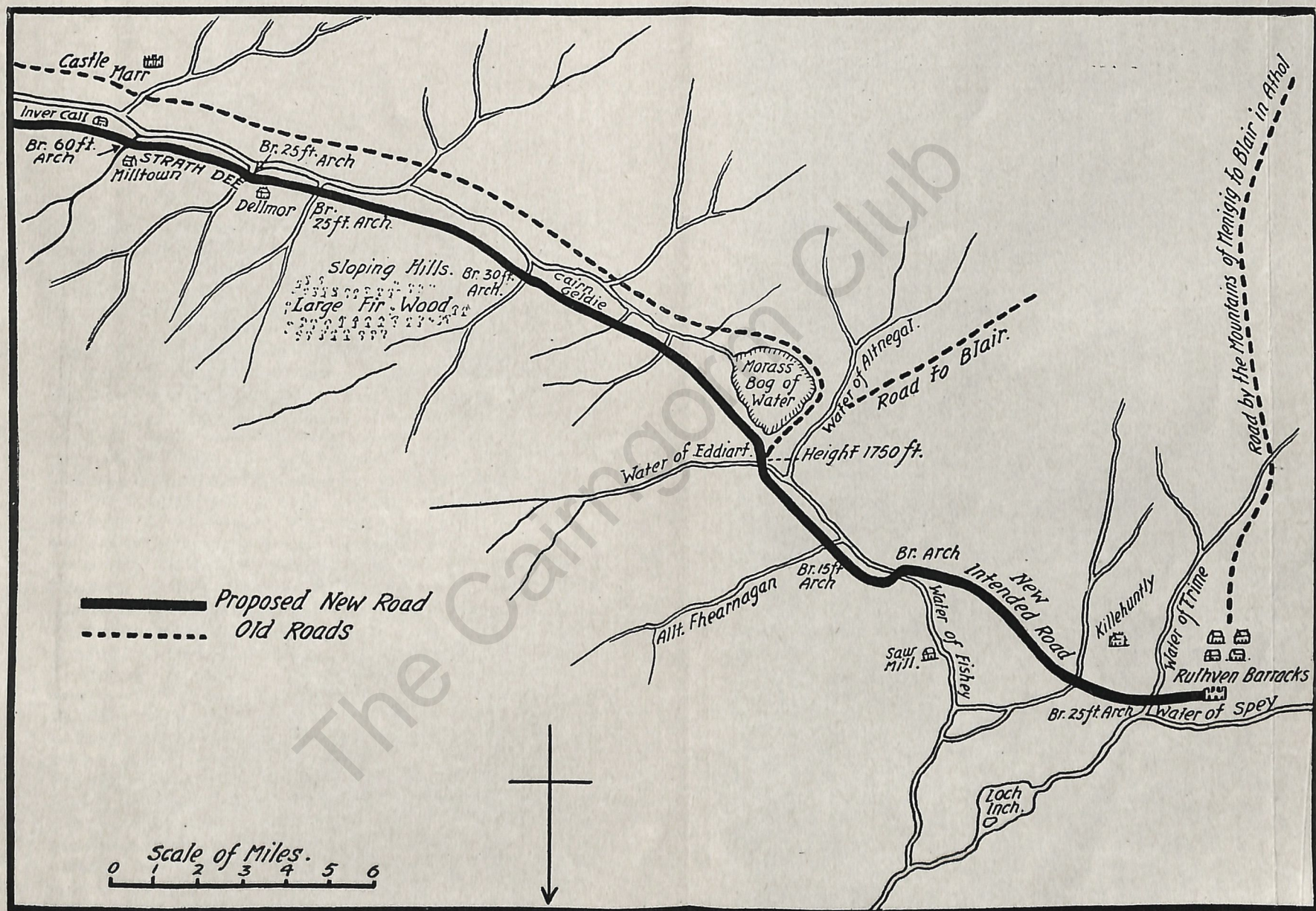


GENERAL WADE'S PLAN FOR A GLENFESHIE ROAD.



This plate, the block for which has been kindly lent by the Editor, *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, is a reproduction on a reduced scale of a map found among the General Wade Papers now in possession of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society. It shows that a road from Dee to Spey by Glenfeshie was planned by Wade. Mr. John Mathieson, who made the tracing off the original and sent it to Mr. John Clarke, inserted the height, 1750 ft., at the watershed and strengthened the distinction between the old track and the new road proposed by General Wade, but the place-names are a facsimile of the original. The map is drawn from the point of view of a person at Ruthven Barracks and therefore the top is to the south and not to the north as in modern usage.

NOTES.

THE subject of General Wade's roads and the opening up of the Highlands is of interest to all hill-lovers, and the members of the Cairngorm Club had the privilege, in March, of

GENERAL hearing a lecture by Mr. J. Mathieson, hon. WADE'S ROADS. librarian and map curator of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, upon "Wade's Roads and Old Maps of Scotland." Mr. Mathieson was for many years connected with the Ordnance Survey of Scotland and is familiar with every foot of the Highlands, and as map curator of the R.S.G.S. he is in charge of the valuable collection of Wade's maps and plans which has recently come into the possession of the Society. A number of these maps—not copies but the originals—were exhibited on the platform and examined with great interest by the members, and Mr. Mathieson also put on the screen a series of photographs illustrating the Corrieyairick, the most famous of Wade's roads, and the bridge over the Tay at Aberfeldy, the noblest of his monuments. It was in 1724 that Wade, an officer of wide experience in various parts of the world, was instructed to go to the Highlands, "narrowly to inspect the present situation of the Highlanders, their customs, manners, and the state of the country in regard to the depredations said to be committed in that part of His Majesty's dominions." The proposals of General Wade, set forth in his first report, were to form companies of those well affected to His Majesty, officered by men speaking their language, to build more extensive barracks and forts at Inverness, Fort-William, and Fort-Augustus, and to build on Loch Ness a vessel with sails and oars to carry 80 soldiers. There was no mention of roads. In 1725, in a second report, General Wade asked "that a sum be provided annually for making the roads of communication, and a salary for the person employed as inspector for carrying on so necessary a work." This was the commencement of the road-making campaign, with which Wade's name will ever be associated. But not every road called a Wade road was really built by him. Mr. Mathieson, who has gone into the subject very closely and examined the records in Government documents and elsewhere, gives the following as the roads actually constructed under General

Wade's superintendence :—

	Miles
Fort-Augustus to Fort-William.....1725-6	30
Fort-Augustus to Inverness.....1726-7	31.5
Inverness to Dunkeld.....1728-9	100.4
Dalnacardoch to Crieff (by Tum- mel and Aberfeldy).....1730	44.1
Catcleugh to Ruthven.....1730	8
Dalwhinnie to Fort-Augustus (by Corrieyairick.....1731	31.4
	<hr/>
	245.4

The most remarkable of these roads is the Corrieyairick which rises to a height of 2,507 feet. It is now abandoned. The roads were built for military objects and those unsuited for the purposes of civil life fell into disuse after 1814. Sixteen feet wide, the roads were made as near after the Roman pattern as the nature of the country would permit. The labour was supplied by soldiers, from 300 to 800 being engaged each season for ten years, privates receiving 6d. per day, corporals 8d., sergeants 1s., civilian masons 1s. 6d., and a workman supplying a horse and cart 5s. The cost of making the 250 miles of roads amounted to £22,730, the highest estimate, £4731 5s. 9d., being for the year 1734, which included the building of the bridge over the Tay at Aberfeldy.

MANY objections were raised to the construction of the roads and those will be found quoted in the fascinating Letters of Captain

Burt, a work to which Mr. Mathieson referred in

“SORE ON
THE FEET.” his lecture. The natives said that the roads were too hard for their feet, as they went barefoot.

The hill-climber of to-day will agree with this : the turnpike road is desperately sore on the feet at the end of a long day. Another objection was that the roads wore the horse's hoofs, as these were not shod. The chiefs also had objections. They said that the roads would destroy the stamina of the Highlanders because there would be no dangerous fords to cross. They also feared that the roads would open up the country to strangers, and they would lose their power over their men. These superficial objections, of course, soon disappeared, and the roads were of inestimable value in opening up the Highlands. The difficulties of wheeled traffic, however, were still considerable and Mr. Mathieson cited an amusing story of Lord Lovat travelling from Inverness to Edinburgh in his carriage with his two daughters. The first day he lost a horse, the second his chariot-wheel broke. At Aviemore he sent his wheelwright back, and shortly after the axletree of the hind wheel broke, which took two days to mend. Four miles further it broke again. Here the Duke of Atholl came to his

assistance, enabling him to get to Castle Drummond, where once more he was held up by damage to his carriage. It took twelve days to get to Edinburgh.

General Wade retired in 1740 and died in 1743 but his soul went marching on and after the '45 road-making by soldiers was recommenced on an extensive scale. By 1790 an additional 790 miles of roads were completed. Among these later roads is the road from Blairgowrie to Braemar, Donside, Tomintoul, and Fort George, begun in 1748 and often erroneously called a Wade road. An inscription at the side of this road on the Conglass, above Tomintoul, dated 1754, records that "Five companies of the 33rd. Regiment made the road from here to the Spey." Among Wade's maps is one showing a road through Glenfeshie projected but never executed. In this connection Mr. John Clarke called attention to the big scheme which is now under consideration for the rebuilding of the road from Glasgow to Inverness via Loch Lomond, Glencoe and Fort William, so as to accommodate modern motor traffic, and urged that, while communications north and south are being improved, we in Aberdeen must take steps to improve the lines of transport east and west by pressing the claims of the Glenfeshie route as the line of a great trunk road from Aberdeen to Fort William by Deeside, Speyside and Loch Laggan. Otherwise Aberdeen will be left in a pocket.

A WEEK-END spent at Luibeg in the last days of January this year provided some very striking contrasts in weather. The first day was to be devoted to visiting Loch Etchachan and

WEATHER Loch Avon, by way of Glen Derry and Corrie
 CONTRASTS IN Etchachan. It was quite a nice morning when I
 JANUARY. set forth, and though a fresh wind was blowing
 down the glen, this in no way prepared one for the
 terrific gale and snowstorm that held possession of the snow-filled
 corrie, more especially in its upper half. The wind-force was tremendous in its intensity and very erratic in its behaviour, and was the strongest I have ever experienced on the hills, while the blinding clouds of powdery snow and ice which it swept and whirled about made upward progress very slow and difficult. At the top of the corrie two hurricanes from the north-west and the south-west were converging with great force ; and as daylight had all but disappeared in the dense ice-curtain that was drawn across the whole face of the mountain, it was impossible to make further headway. The storm seemed to be quite local, with its centre resting on the tops of Ben Macdhui and Cairngorm. The Larig track up the Luibeg was taken next day. There had been rain overnight on the low ground, and it was late forenoon ere a start was made. Though a fine snow-slope on the eastern face of Carn Mhaim looked very tempting, the

Sron Riach ridge of Ben Macdhui, white from base to summit, was decided upon. The snow, about eighteen inches deep, was in splendidly firm condition, and provided the most delightful snow-climb I ever engaged in. The conditions overhead were in marked contrast to those of the previous day. The sky was certainly overcast, but for the first 1000 feet of the ascent not a breath of wind was stirring, and it was only as the Sput Dearg cliffs were neared that a smart breeze from the north-west, accompanied by occasional snow-flurries, began to put in an appearance. It, however, gave not the slightest trouble, and, compared with its "brother" of the previous day, was as the cooing of the gentle dove to the roaring of a whole cageful of hungry lions! On this exposed spot no human being could have withstood the onslaught of that hurricane, while to-day one could survey the scene in comfort and pleasure. The basin in which Lochan Uaine lies contained great quantities of snow, and the ice-bound lochan was buried beneath many feet of it. The cliffs themselves looked very grand, the magnificent sweep of their snow-filled gullies making a fine spectacle, the whole finished off by an unbroken cornice about six feet wide. The surrounding view was dull and uninspiring. Though the visibility was good the lack of sunshine completely spoiled the effect. The near and far-away hills, snow-covered for the most part, stood out cold, grim, and spectral-like, and one had almost the feeling of taking part in a funeral. The short January day made the traverse of the mountain by way of Loch Etchachan impossible, and I contented myself with a delightful glissade down a steep snow-slope to the bed of the Luibeg, and reached "home" by Cairn Crom just as dusk was falling.

R. C.

A CORRESPONDENCE, initiated by an article by Mr. W. Keith Leask, has been proceeding in the *Glasgow Herald* upon the authorship of the music to Byron's verses on THE AIR TO Lochnagar. The air is attributed to John Galt and "LOCHNAGAR." is, in fact, claimed by him in his Autobiography, but another claimant is advanced in the person of Mrs. Gibson (1786-1838), the wife of Patrick Gibson, R.A., teacher of drawing at Dollar Academy. In Vol. I., Chap. 3, of his Autobiography, John Galt writes:—"My compositions at Greenock I dare say were bad enough, but afterwards, when I came to London and heard better things, those made there were not utterly despicable. The reader, however, may judge for himself, as I have subjoined to this work some of my songs that have been published—one of them 'Lochnagar,' to the words of Lord Byron, was deemed of such excellence that I heard it grinding on a street organ. The air was given away and published to some advantage." This claim,

however, is disputed by some writers who assert that the author of the air was Mrs. Gibson, of whose career a sketch is given in Love's "Scottish Church Music" published by Blackwood in 1891. Mrs. Gibson is still remembered by her Psalm tune, "Comfort" (originally a repeating tune), so named because written for the Par. "Take comfort, Christians, when your friends." It is one of four tunes contributed by the composer to "Sacred Harmony," Part I, for the use of St. George's Church, Edinburgh, 1820. Mrs. Gibson also contributed two original Psalm tunes to Vol. VI. of James Steven's "Church Music," edited by John Turnbull, Glasgow, 1833. She was a skilful performer on the harp and likewise a gifted vocalist.

THE question of the valuation of Glenmuick deer forest has been before the Lands Valuation Appeal Court, the point at issue being whether the forest should be assessed for 1923 at "A VOLATILE the rent paid for it in that year, or whether the SUBJECT." assessment should be based upon an average of years. During the war the demand for shootings was greatly reduced and there has been much disputing between proprietors and assessors ever since as to the proper valuation to be put upon grouse moors and deer forests. In 1923 Sir Victor Mackenzie let Glenmuick deer forest and low ground shootings, together with Brackley House, to Mr. Dudley Docker for £3500, for three months. This, however, was only gross rent, for the proprietor undertook to provide and pay the wages of two game-keepers, two stalkers, an under-gamekeeper, a gardener, and a man to look after the electric light plant. He also undertook to keep up the gardens, provide three hill ponies with panniers, three pointers and two retrievers, and also to pay all rates and taxes. The assessor made an allowance for all these charges and fixed the valuation at £1805. For the proprietor it was argued that the fairer method was to take not any single year, but an average over a period, and the five years before the war were suggested, giving a figure £386 below the assessor's. This brought from Lord Sands the remark that a deer forest is "a volatile subject" with great variations of rent and that the assessor cannot do better than take the rent of the year as his basis. The Court shared this view and the valuation of Glenmuick stands therefore at the higher figure stated.

A feature of modern times is the decline in popular favour of the deer forest as compared with the grouse moor. As Lord Sands put it, the grouse moor "with its easy motor run to the butts, the lunch cart and the bevy of ladies at lunch" has "superseded the attraction of the long, arduous and solitary climb after the wary stag." The palmy days of deer forests are over. We live in effeminate and degenerate times.

A SILVER fox fur farm has been started on Deeside at Tullochvenus near Lumphanan. The rearing of fur-bearing animals in confinement has been carried on extensively in Prince Edward Island and other parts of Canada and some ON DEESIDE. years ago the industry was introduced into this country, a fur farm being started in Ross-shire on the eastern slopes of Ben Wyvis. The head of the new enterprise on Deeside is Mr. Ireland, who was a Canadian officer in the war, and who was connected with the Ross-shire experiment. He has formed a company, called the Highland Silver Fox Ranch, and taken a lease of Tullochvenus House and grounds, seven acres of woodland being fenced as a run for the foxes. Fifteen pairs of silver foxes were imported from Canada, the cost running into several thousand pounds. Rabbits form the principal food of the animals, and it is necessary therefore to command a large supply of rabbits, an easy thing on Deeside. The run has been well fenced not only to keep the foxes inside, but to keep prowling dogs outside, as these marauders are displaying keen curiosity over the new settlers.

In Prince Edward Island fox farms are flourishing concerns. A pair of foxes will usually breed once a year for about 10 seasons, and produce from four to nine pups in each litter, six being considered a good average number. To keep up the highest standard of quality it is necessary to introduce from time to time strains of fresh blood, so breeders arrange with each other for an occasional exchange of their best young foxes and vixens. They reach their full growth at the age of 12 to 15 months, and by the October following have donned their winter coats, and are liable to pay the penalty of beauty by being put painlessly out of existence. The skins most valued are those which combine perfect blackness with the most extensive streakings of silver. Nowadays £40 is about the average price realised by breeders for pelts of ordinary quality, but four times as much is sometimes paid for exceptional specimens. It is not yet possible to say whether the Deeside experiment will produce the same results as these cited from Canada, but everyone will wish Mr. Ireland success in his enterprising venture. He is adding a new industry to Deeside and he deserves good fortune.

A PETITION has been extensively signed in the Tomintoul district, by, amongst others, the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, urging the reconstruction of the road from Deeside to THE LECHT Donside and Speyside. This is part of the so-called Wade road referred to in the preceding paragraph and it is commonly known as the Lecht, though that name relates only to the crossing between Cockbridge at the head of the Don and Tomintoul. The petition,

which has come before the various local authorities concerned, refers to the road as a General Wade road but as has been explained above, this is an error, for it was built after his time, though it is true that the road-making policy of which it was part, was initiated by him. There are four steep hills upon it between the Dee and the Spey. Leaving the Deeside road at Crathie at a height of 930 ft. the road rises to 1570 ft. and then drops sharply to the Gairn where the height is 1110 ft. The section between Gairnshiel and Tornahaish on Donside is known as the Glaschoille, the highest point here being 1800 ft. There is a steep ascent just beyond the high arched bridge over the Gairn, and an even steeper descent follows just beyond the watershed into Donside. The original road did not go down to Tournahaish but held round the south side of the Don more directly to Cockbridge. The height there is 1320 ft. and in a distance of two and a half miles there is a rise of over 700 ft. to the summit of the Lecht (2090 ft.) whence the descent to Tomintoul (1160 ft.) is more gradual. The fourth and last hill is that between Tomintoul or, to be strictly accurate, Bridge of Brown, (940 ft.) and Grantown. The highest point here is 1420 ft. and the most of the rise from Bridge of Brown is compressed into a mile and a half beyond the bridge. As the Government is at present giving large sums for work for the unemployed, it is argued that now is the time to set in hand such a work as the re-construction of the Lecht road. (It may be noted that the Government has just announced a grant of £600,000 to defray the whole cost of rebuilding the road from Blair Athol to Inverness). At the Alford District Committee, when the subject came up, favourable opinions were expressed but Mr. Charles Christie, the Chairman, very sensibly suggested that instead of tinkering at the Lecht route, the wiser course would be to change the route to Delnadamph and Inchrory. There is a road from Cockbridge to Delnadamph and it would be a very simple undertaking to extend this the three miles to Inchrory, whence there is a road down the Avon to Tomintoul. There is very little rise between Delnadamph and Inchrory, the highest point being only 1647 ft. as against 2090 ft. on the Lecht, and a level road such this would be much easier to maintain than a hilly road like the Lecht. Incidentally, too, the route by Inchrory would open up a far finer mountain region than the Lecht. The Ministry of Transport has approved of the Delnadamph and Inchrory route, in preference to the Lecht, and has offered to give 75 per cent. of the capital outlay.

MISS KATHARINE C. HOPKINSON, writing in the *Nineteenth Century* on "Spring in the Cairngorms" describes a Whitsuntide holiday at

Aviemore, in which she and two friends ascended
 SPRING Braeriach on one day, and Cairngorm and Ben
 IN THE Macdhui two days later. Two points of contrast
 CAIRNGORMS. with the English Lake District and Wales are noted.

The first is the far greater distances in the Cairngorms, "A mountain apprenticeship in Cumberland and Carnarvon," the writer says, "is apt to leave a person with very casual notions about height and distance. English and Welsh standards need stiffening up before setting one's courses in the Cairngorms." The second is the restrictions put upon the walker. "His feet are not considered in the least beautiful upon the mountains. Freedom has become a meaningless word in Scotland when many of the glories of her country are cut off during the holiday time of the year, from every man who does not carry a gun and belong to an accredited shooting party." For specific instances of restrictions Miss Hopkinson refers to Mr. Ernest Baker's recent book, "The Highlands with Rope and Rucksack." The weather was not very favourable during the visit, for mist and whirling snow driven along the tops by the wind, made the going difficult, but Miss Hopkinson writes enthusiastically of the high Cairngorms and of the valleys beneath them. "I have seen the evening afterglow of the far North mantling the Romsdalthorn. Seated on a hillock above the little cemetery at Arezzo, I have watched beyond the cypresses and the ancient cornland a summer sundown stealing over the heated flanks of the Apennines, in soft purples and crimsons and cool greys. But I do not know that these things were more lovely than the triumphs of light and atmosphere which the great artist gets in Scotland. Scottish hillsides glow and glimmer in the distance and half-distance like lit gems. The snowy hills or the very distant ones are pearls and moonstones; the others are rubies and sapphires and amethysts."

LAST autumn the Scottish Rights of Way and Recreation Society approached the Parish Council of Abernethy on the subject of access to Glenmore, and called attention to the fact that

ACCESS TO a lock had been placed by the Duke of Richmond
 GLENMORE. and Gordon on the gate at the north end of the Slugan at the entrance to the forest. The Parish Council wrote to the factor for the estate and requested him to have this obstacle removed from what had always been claimed as a right of way. The factor replied:—

"I am aware that the public claim a right-of-way by this road through Glenmore Forest, and I have to say that nothing has been done to prevent the use of it as such by foot passengers, but there is certainly no right-of-way for motor cars or other wheeled carriages.

"The Scottish Rights-of-Way and Recreation Society are going beyond their powers in claiming this as a public right-of-way for

vehicular traffic. It has been settled in the law courts that a public right-of-way means a right to the public of passing from one public place to another public place; and there is no law to support a right of sauntering or a right of picnicking, or a right of going out part of the way to look at something, and then going back again. With regard to motor or other wheeled traffic, I maintain that the right-of-way is not applicable to these, because to make it so, the road would have had to be capable of this extended use from one end to the other—i.e., from one public place to another—and without resort to engineering operations it is not.

“In recent years large numbers of tourists have been in the habit of going by motor cars and charabancs up to Glenmore Lodge, and picnicking there, and wandering over the forest during the stalking season, and even bathing in the loch in front of the lodge. Notice boards were put up some years ago directing tourists to keep to the paths, but these have had little effect in checking the abuse of the privileges given to the public. This has become such an intolerable nuisance that it is now impossible to get the place let at anything like the rent it made about 10 or 12 years ago, and this you can easily verify from the valuation roll. This is perhaps only an instance of what is going on in other parts of the Highlands, and I may say that it is one of the reasons why the proprietor had now disposed of this property to the Forestry Commission. I have therefore no further interest in the matter.”

The Forestry Commission has adopted the same position as the Duke, and has announced that the gate at the Slugan will be locked against motor traffic.

IN the Court of Session Lord Constable has given a decision upholding a right of way in Glenisla. The case was exceptional in that it raised not only the question of a public

GLENISLA right of way but the question of the suitability of a
RIGHT OF WAY substituted road, and the judge has referred it to
CASE. a surveyor to examine the place and report whether

the proprietor is willing to effect the changes that are necessary to make the substituted road suitable for public use. Prior to 1908 a right of way for all kinds of traffic existed by a road and ford leading from the Alyth-Glenisla main road across the river Isla to the estate of Cammock and Whitehills and through it to the public road at the village of Kilry. In 1908 the proprietor of Cammock built a bridge below the ford and, in respect that the access to the bridge obstructed the old public way to the ford, he gave the public free use of the new road and bridge. In 1923 the present owner, a daughter of the late proprietor, closed the bridge to public use and connected the access to the bridge with the old ford road, so that the public could use the ford as in old days.

Various people, however, insisted upon using the new road and bridge and the proprietrix raised an action of interdict against them. In this she has failed. Lord Constable finds that undoubtedly a right of way exists across the river, though it is true that the traffic is much less nowadays than it used to be when the glen was more thickly populated. The right of way, however, is only by the ford and not by the bridge. At the same time the proprietor in carrying out works for his own convenience, namely, the erection of a bridge, must not do so in such a manner as to interfere with the convenient use of the old right of way. Evidence was led showing that the junction made in 1923 between the new bridge road and the old ford road was difficult and dangerous for wheeled traffic, because of the gradient and a right angled turn at the top, and Lord Constable has upheld this complaint, finding that the partially substituted and altered road thus provided is not reasonably equivalent to the old ford road. Hence the remit by the Court to a surveyor to see the place and give the proprietrix a chance of improving the access to the ford. Only when that is done will she get permission to close the bridge. The decision is an interesting one and it would seem to have some bearing upon cases which have arisen in Deeside, and in other places where proprietors have appropriated old roads, improved them and then put gates up, excluding the public from what were undoubtedly open roads in former days. Lord Constable has held that a proprietor is not entitled to improve a passage across a river and in so doing obliterate a public right of way.

THE death took place on May 1st at Hampstead of Miss Gertrude Martineau, the last surviving daughter of the late Dr. James Martineau, and a correspondent of the *Glasgow*

THE
MARTINEAUS
AND ROTHIE-
MURCHUS.

Herald gives some interesting notes upon this family, the memory of which will long be associated with Rothiemurchus and Aviemore. The Martineau Memorial on the roadside by the Doune, where the lane turns up past the Polchar to Loch-an-Eilan, tells of Dr. Martineau's summer residence there for many years, from 1877 onwards, until his death in 1900, and also of his daughters' beneficent activity in the district. Of the three inscriptions on the memorial one has this record:—"The Carvers of Rothiemurchus, taught for twenty-five years by Gertrude and Edith Martineau, have, in gratitude and affection adorned this memorial." Taught by the sisters to carve in wood, they were able to execute in stone the beautiful old Celtic designs of the panels which cover the three convex sides of the column. That was in 1913, when Lady Mary Grant unveiled the memorial, on the site given by the laird, and every year since then Miss Gertrude

Martineau, who was deeply attached to the place, spent her summers at the Polchar. Only last autumn, before returning to her home at Hampstead, in her 86th year, she unveiled the War Memorial in St. Andrew Church at Aviemore, which was the work of wood carvers whom she herself had trained, and in which a tablet of her own work was also set. Thus for more than forty years she had been a good friend to the people of the district, and not alone as the devoted teacher on summer evenings of that wood carving which has brought a fresh interest of incalculable benefit into many a home in Strathspye. The annual exhibition at Inverdrue of the work of her carvers became an institution eagerly looked forward to, which for the last year or two gained an added interest through the inclusion of a number of her pictures. She was one of the happiest interpreters in water-colour of the rich beauty of Highland scenery.

IT is satisfactory to know that the interests of mountaineers and hill-lovers have not been overlooked by those responsible for the programme at the Aberdeen station of the British

MOUNTAIN- Broadcasting Company. Last January Dr. J. R.
EERING BY Levack, the chairman of the Cairngorm Club, was
BROADCAST. asked to give a lecture or talk on mountaineering,
and this item in the evening's programme passed

off most successfully. Our chairman has frequently spoken in public on the pleasures and adventures of the hills but it was a novel experience to enter a curtained room and address an invisible audience scattered in a thousand places. He acquitted himself well and probably never before has any speaker on mountaineering had the satisfaction of addressing so many people. Not infrequently the lecturer at an ordinary society or club gathering has a beggarly audience of a few dozen before him—often a poor reward for all the pains he takes—but Dr. Levack's listeners were numbered not by the score or even the hundred but by the thousand. He interested them with his talk upon the mountains and did it without pictures, which are the resource and stand-by of the modern lecturer. Some day, no doubt, television will be invented and then we shall have lectures on mountaineering broadcasted, slides and all.

MEMBERS of the Cairngorm Club will be pleased by the compliment which was paid last winter to Mr. James A. Parker in being invited to read a paper on the Pyrenees to the Alpine

MR. PARKER Club, of which Mr. Parker is himself a member.

AT THE The average British mountaineer who goes
ALPINE CLUB. abroad is apt to get into a rut and confine himself to the Alps and this applies even to the Alpine

Club. Mr. Parker has had the initiative to go to the Pyrenees, a region which, apart from a few popular watering places, is

practically unknown ground to British travellers, though it is a favourite resort of French and Spanish climbers. The charm of the Pyrenees is that the country is much less hackneyed than Switzerland and in the districts, which Mr. Parker has visited on the Spanish side of the range, one can almost enjoy the pleasures of the explorer, so novel and so little known are the valleys and mountains. In the course of three successive seasons Mr. Parker has covered a large part of the chain, including the ascent of the loftiest peak, the Maladetta, and he has delivered on several occasions in Aberdeen a fascinating lecture on the subject, accompanied by his own photographs. For the Alpine Club he prepared a more technical paper, introducing a valuable chart showing the position of the various huts for climbers, erected by the French and Spanish mountaineering clubs. In the Alps there are huts and hotels everywhere, even upon the highest mountains. Not so in the Pyrenees. There the accommodation for the climber is scanty. Particulars of such huts as exist are only to be found in the French "Bulletin of the Pyrenees" and Mr. Parker is the first in this country to give a detailed and exact account of the situation. With the aid of his paper it will be possible for the intending climber in the Pyrenees to plan his tour with some reasonable expectation of reaching his peaks.

A QUERY by Mr. Seton Gordon in the *Scotsman* for information as to the last nesting-places of the osprey in Scotland has elicited an interesting correspondence from which it appears

THE OSPREY. that the bird may not yet be wholly extinct in this country. One correspondent gave 1916 as the last year in which the osprey nested in Scotland but another writer mentions a report that it successfully nested as recently as 1923. Very properly the locality is not mentioned. Mr. Seton Gordon, when he published his query, stated that an osprey was observed last summer on a loch in the Cairngorms but this does not necessarily mean that it nested. It is earnestly to be hoped that if the osprey is seen again anywhere, naturalists will say nothing about it, and that men with guns will not repeat the deplorable incident of May, 1899, when an osprey was shot at Knockespoek in Aberdeenshire. The most famous breeding place of the osprey in recent times was Loch-an-Eilein in Rothiemurchus, where there was a nest in the ruined castle on the island. Ospreys also nested at Loch Morlich on a pine tree but were persecuted out of it by egg-robbers, a fate which would also have overtaken them at Loch-an-Eilein but for the fact that the proprietor of Rothiemurchus forbade boats on the loch and so prevented plunderers from reaching the island. In 1902, however, the osprey deserted the loch. An account of the Loch-

an-Eilein ospreys by the late Mr. C. G. Cash appeared in Vol. IV of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*. See also Mr. A. T. McConnachie's article in Vol. III. One of the *Scotsman* correspondents describes an interesting incident which he witnessed in 1881 at Loch-an-Eilein, a fight between an osprey and a cormorant. "Two fairly fledged eaglets were in the nest on the top of the mural tower. Perched on a little point of rock, only a few inches above the surface of the loch, stood a cormorant, evidently regarded by the osprey as a poacher on his own water. Three or four times at least the great bird swooped down upon the smaller one, but, just as he seemed on the point of striking, down dropped the cormorant, and dived under the water, while the baffled eagle had to soar upward again, and all the time the two eaglets in the nest screamed in wild excitement, fluttering their little wings. At last the osprey gave up the struggle, foolishly, as it seemed to me, for at that moment, soaring wide-winged above the eastward hills, came his mate, a bigger bird, therefore, I suppose his wife, and had the two joined forces, as in like case terriers would assuredly have done, the cormorant would not have had a chance of escape. As it was, however, he came off victor in the duel. The first eagle went off to the west to seek an easier prey, and the second settled down on the nest to feed her disappointed and hungry children, while the long-legged cormorant still perched comfortably, unharmed from the struggle, on his stone."

THIS year has witnessed an outburst of poster art between the two big railway groups interested in traffic to Scotland. The London, Midland and Scottish engaged a number of Royal Academicians to paint pictures and Mr. D. Y. Cameron did a canvas depicting Ben More and Stobinian. Perhaps to put it more correctly, these twin peaks are the ground-work of the picture but the artist's aim is less to represent any mountain in particular than to interpret Highland scenery in general. The writer not having seen the original painting but only reproductions in black and white, is not in a position to speak safely of the impression made by Mr. Cameron's work or to say whether this latest picture is equal to the wonderful "Firth of Lorne," in the Aberdeen Art Gallery. Several less ambitious but very interesting posters in colours have been issued by the London and North Eastern group. Of special interest is one by Frank Newbould showing the Dee at the old bridge of Invercauld, with the Stuir buttress of Lochnagar among the hills behind. The design is open to criticism topographically, but that, of course, is not the way to look at such a work. The artist has very skilfully caught

the outstanding features of the Crathie-Braemar stretch of Deeside—the finest in the whole valley—and his colouring, worked in big bold masses, is as effective as the design. Mr. Grainger Johnson has essayed a similar poster of Fort William, with the sea loch in front and Ben Nevis towering behind, but he just fails to make the mountain convincing, by over rather than under emphasis. A poster of the Eildons at Melrose by Mr. Walter Spradbery is more successful and arresting. All these L.N.E.R. posters are in the new big bold style. More old-fashioned, perhaps, but none the less done with distinct taste and pleasing result, is an L.M.S. poster of the Tay at Dunkeld depicting the “Gateway to the Highlands.”

IN the Nature Notes of the *Scotsman* some months ago a correspondent stated that at Bridgend, Lower Cabrach, Aberdeenshire, at 11.23 p.m., on a February night, he heard BIRDS IN THE the nightingale singing, and after one bird had CABRACH. sung for seven minutes or so, others joined in.

The height of the Cabrach is 1,100 feet. This statement elicited a number of letters from observers, all throwing doubt upon the possibility of the birds having been nightingales. One correspondent wrote:—“There is no previous well-authenticated record of the nightingale having been heard in its proper season on this side of the Cheviots. It is doubtful if it ever travels as far north as the latitude of Banffshire in any part of Europe. From my own experience, I should be inclined to say that the birds heard were members of the thrush family—probably redwings. A few days before the end of February the mild weather suddenly gave place to severe conditions, and the birds may have been moving ahead of the storm, and have been in a restless state in the night time.” Another writer recalled the fact that many years ago attempts were made to domesticate the species in Scotland by Sir John Sinclair, the Earl of Buchan, and others, who procured eggs from England, and put them into robin’s nests. The birds were hatched out, but, contrary to expectation, they did not re-appear next year to breed.

ALL the roads of England and Scotland have been classified and numbered by the Ministry of Transport and a series of maps, on the scale of half-an-inch to the mile, has been NUMBERING issued showing First Class roads in red, Second OF ROADS. Class roads in green and other roads in outline.

The maps, which are produced by the Ordnance Survey, are excellent pieces of cartography, showing all the principal features, streams, hills, names of houses and farms, and also giving numerous heights but no contours. The hill-walker and

mountaineer will prefer other and more detailed maps, but for the motorist and road traveller these new maps are admirable.

For the purpose of numbering Great Britain has been divided into nine sections or zones, bounded by nine trunk roads, six of which radiate clockwise from London and the remaining three similarly from Edinburgh. The numbers on the map are also shown on the signposts on the roads. A means a First Class road and A1 is the road from London to Edinburgh. The three Scottish zones are grouped round the following trunk roads—A7, Edinburgh—Carlisle; A8, Edinburgh—Glasgow—Gourock; A9, Edinburgh—Perth—Kingussie—Inverness. Every road in the north-east of Scotland begins with the numeral 9, prefixed with A for First Class roads and B for Second Class roads. Thus the figure A 92 indicates the road from Inverkeithing to Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, and Fraserburgh; A 93 indicates the road from Perth by Blairgowrie and Braemar and Deeside to Aberdeen. The south Deeside road from Banchory to Aberdeen is A 943. Similarly with the Second Class roads. The road from Bridge of Gairn to Donside and Tomintoul is B 970 and the Pass of Ballatar road as B 972. The system should make route-finding very easy. Thus the motorist starting from Aberdeen for Inverness has only to pick out the road marked A 96 and look for this on the signposts and he will be safely guided by Inverurie, Huntly, Keith, Elgin, Forres, and Nairn to his destination. The only criticism one would offer is that this makes travelling a duffer's game and destroys all sense of adventure and all the pleasure that comes from an intelligent use of maps.

A **NOTABLE** exhibit, illustrative of forestry in Scotland, has been arranged at the British Empire Exhibition this year, by a joint committee representing the Forestry Commission, Scottish landowners and Scottish timber merchants.

FORESTRY Scottish landowners and Scottish timber merchants.
AT In a pavilion, built wholly of Scotch grown timber,
WEMBLEY. are shown a number of remarkable specimens of
pine, larch, and other woods. These include the
great plank of fir cut at Glenmore 118 years ago, and now preserved at Gordon Castle. It is 5 ft. 8 in. broad at the lower end and some 6 ft. high, and it compares not unfavourably with a great block of Douglas fir to be seen in the Canadian section of the exhibition, 12 ft. high by 4ft 5. in. square. Another historic specimen is a slab of larch, 15 ft. long, cut from the giant larch, 102 ft. high, which was planted at Dunkeld Cathedral in 1738 and which was blown down in 1888. This was one of the first larches introduced into Scotland. In recent years a large quantity of timber has been felled on the Atholl estate and the Duke of Atholl has lent a slab, 20 ft. long, sawn from a Weymouth pine. There are also several noble plants of Scots fir from Balmoral, and oak planks from

Gordon Castle. The ordinary larch and the Japanese larch, both of which now grow in Scotland, have produced a hybrid, a feature of which is its very rapid growth. This is illustrated strikingly by a tree-trunk standing outside the pavilion; it is 45 ft. high and is from a tree only 11 years old. The interior of the pavilion is finely decorated with heraldic and historical paintings, done by members of the Society of Scottish Artists, and hung on the walls are photographs and drawings explaining some of the planting schemes undertaken by the Forestry Commission at the Culbin Sands and at Inchnacardoch on the Caledonian Canal, a feature of the latter being the combination of small holdings with afforestation. Reference should also be made to the remarkable collection of mosses and lichens, over 100 in number, made in Ballochbuie by Mr. John Michie, late Commissioner for His Majesty. Outside the pavilion an open space has been ingeniously laid out with a miniature lake and marsh and upland and hill, and young trees have been planted, appropriate to the different localities and levels, as, for example, willows in the damp ground, spruces on the lower slopes, larches higher up, and so on. The whole exhibit gives a vivid impression of what is already being done in Scotland in the way of silviculture and is rich in suggestiveness of the vast timber growing resources of our country which lie awaiting development.

AT a centenary celebration held at Banchory in April, in connection with the hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the firm of

A. and G. Paterson, Ltd., reference was made to
 TIMBER- old-time timber-cutting on Deeside. Mr. George
 CUTTING ON Paterson, the son of one of the two brothers who
 DEESIDE. started the business in Lanarkshire in 1824, said that it was early in the "forties" that woods were first purchased on Deeside, and floated down the Dee from Banchory, and from higher up, to Aberdeen, and then shipped on to Glasgow. The first sawmill of the company on Deeside was at Finzean, erected about 1845, and the next was at Sundayswells, on Learney, Torphins. In 1849 a sawmill was erected on the Inches beside the old oak tree at Aberdeen (this tree is now in the Duthie Park), and the firm's connection with the city has continued ever since. It was not until the railway to Banchory was nearly ready for opening, about 1854, that the mills at Silverbank were erected, but there had been purchases of growing woods from all the neighbouring estates—Crathes, Tilquhillie, Raemoir, etc.—for ten years or more previously.

Among the speakers at the celebration was Mr. R. B. Fraser, manager of the Scottish Landowners' Forestry Society, Edinburgh, who said that talking the other day about the centenary with a man 68 years of age, the latter said his first job was to carry whisky to the floaters, and the first bill for it came to £175