

In Memoriam.

SIR JOHN FLEMING.

SIR JOHN FLEMING, who died at Pretoria, on 25th February, aged 77 years, from the results of malaria contracted while on a visit to South Africa, was one of the oldest and, despite his years, one of the most interested members of the Cairngorm Club. On the occasion of the unveiling of the Lochnagar indicator last year he motored to the foot of the hill and, though he did not ascend the mountain, he waited for the return of the Club party, and dined with them at Ballater before going back to Aberdeen. It is unnecessary here to do more than refer to his long and eminent services to the city of Aberdeen as a leading business man, as a member of the Harbour Board, as a Lord Provost, as a member of Parliament, and as Rector's Assessor for many years on the University Court. Few men had a higher conception of public duty, and none have strived more worthily to bear their part in the responsibilities of a successful commercial career.

Three years ago the present writer had the pleasure of receiving from Sir John a copy of a little autobiographical volume "Looking Backwards for Seventy Years," and it is not difficult to discover from these pages the origin of the love which he always had for the mountains and for natural scenery and which made him such a keen traveller, for not only did he frequently visit the Continent in connection with his business as a timber importer but even when over 70 years of age he made extensive tours of India and South America, and it was during a similar visit to South Africa with his wife that his death occurred. He was born in Dundee, but his holidays as a boy and as a young man were all spent on the Blackwater above Blairgowrie, whence his

family came, and of this charming valley among the foothills of the Grampians he writes with deep affection, giving at the same time many interesting glimpses of the quiet glen folk among whom these happy boyhood days were passed. He and his brother used to walk down on Monday mornings from Dalrulzion to Blairgowrie to catch the 9 a.m. train to Dundee, and they must have been good walkers for they once did the 11 miles at an average of $11\frac{1}{2}$ minutes to the mile. On one occasion, however, he met his match. "After crossing the Bridge of Cally and opening up the road to Blair I saw a Strathardle curate going well a short distance in front of me. I thought I would try to overtake him and get his company to Blair (six miles off), so I put my best foot forward and although I sweated like a horse, I only overtook this 'pale young curate' as he slacked his pace going down the Rattray brae to the station looking as cool as a cucumber."

Sir John kept his figure tall and erect to the end, and though he had ceased to climb hills, he never ceased to love them. The travel sketches which he sent to the Aberdeen newspapers, were marked by accurate observation and happy description. In a letter written from Bloemfontein on 27th January he described a motor drive through the Zwarte Bergen range and down the Meeringsport gorge in terms which showed how warm was his delight in mountain scenery and grandeur.

H. A.