

he began his experiments on road-making, which were eventually to bring him fame if not fortune. It is not a little extraordinary, however, that his main work was done after reaching the age of sixty years, when he was made surveyor-general of roads to the Bristol Turnpike Trust. He resigned this position when sixty-nine, and two years later Parliament appointed him Surveyor-General of Roads. This position he held until his death at Dumerieff House, Moffat, on November 26, 1836. At one time it is said he had no fewer than three hundred surveyors working under him. The importance of his work was fittingly commemorated at Ayr on October 30 last, when a bronze tablet erected by the Institution of Municipal and County Engineers was unveiled by Mr. Hore-Belisha, the Minister for Transport, and a paper on "John Loudon Macadam, Roadmaker" was read by Mr. G. S. Barry, the County Surveyor, Ayrshire.

Memorial to the late Sir Walter Fletcher

ON November 11, the subscribers to the Sir Walter Fletcher Memorial Fund were invited by the Medical Research Council to view Miss Dora Clarke's portrait-bust of the late Sir Walter Morley Fletcher, secretary of the Council from 1914 until 1933. The ceremony was held at the National Institute for Medical Research, Hampstead, in the library of which the bust is to be placed permanently. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, chairman of the Council, presided. The chief speakers were Prof. G. M. Trevelyan and Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins, the former dealing mainly with the personal aspect and the latter with Fletcher's scientific and administrative work. Sir Henry Dale, director of the Institute, then accepted custody of the bust. The total amount contributed to the Fund by more than five hundred separate subscribers is approximately £2,300. The remainder, after meeting the cost of the personal memorial, is being used for a Walter Fletcher Memorial Laboratory. This is being constructed at the Farm Laboratories of the National Institute at Mill Hill, and is to be used for research work in nutrition.

Grassland of Great Britain

At a meeting of the Engineers Study Group on Economics held on November 10, Prof. R. G. Stapledon discussed methods of dealing with the problem of grassland in Great Britain. He exhibited a map of Wales, the result of a recent survey, and pointed out that there are only 16,000 acres of proper pastures (rye grass), although at least a third of the 153,000 acres under bracken is of high potential value. To make the best use of the 18,000,000 acres of rough hill grazing ground in Great Britain, Prof. Stapledon considers that it is necessary for the State to acquire and develop it. This, he believes, would be economically feasible over a period of 25-50 years, beginning at once with an area of not less than 200,000 acres. Agriculturally, the potentialities of the hill land not above the 150 ft. contour (in all, more than 14,500,000 acres) are enormous, at least 20 per cent of that area being amenable to radical improvement. Lowland grass could be used for drying and for wintering, and

improved upland grass for summering, and the plough, oats and fattening crops everywhere. Roads and tracks should be constructed in connexion with land improvement and afforestation. Sir Richard Paget, who presided at the meeting, expressed his appreciation of the pioneer work of Prof. Stapledon, and Lord Northbourne, in opening the discussion, stressed the importance of preserving individual initiative.

Temples and Caste in Travancore

THE decision of the Maharajah of Travancore, announced by proclamation authorizing the opening of the temples controlled by the State to all Hindus, according to a Delhi dispatch in *The Times* of November 16, has been hailed by progressive opinion in India as "the greatest reform of Hinduism since Ramanuja's days". By this drastic action, which at once obliterates caste distinction in right of access to the sacred places of religion, and removes one of the most strongly resented marks of inferiority in the outcastes, the State of Travancore has opened a way to political unity which Hinduism at large would do well to accept as a guide and example. The exceptional position of the Rajah in relation to the State religion has endowed him with a power of initiative that was open to few others in India, and perhaps least of all to the British Raj; but whether the example of Travancore will be followed elsewhere will doubtless depend in no small degree upon the religious and political reaction to so serious an innovation. It is said that conservative opinion has already criticized the reform as rash and unsound, while maintaining that the views of Hinduism outside Travancore should have been considered—a claim, of which, in view of past events, it would be difficult to vindicate the political wisdom. On the other hand, the Nationalists and leading members of the Congress, with Mr. Gandhi, have hastened to congratulate the head of the State of Travancore on his decision.

Guide to Ancient Monuments

MR. ORMSBY-GORE'S promise on relinquishing office as First Commissioner of Works to complete the manuscript of that part of the official guide to ancient monuments then in hand, has now been redeemed by the publication of the volume covering East Anglia and the Midlands ("Illustrated Regional Guides to Ancient Monuments under the Ownership or Guardianship of H.M. Office of Works", vol. 3, East Anglia and Midlands. By the Right Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore. London: H.M. Stationery Office. Pp. 72. 1s. net). In method of treatment of both the prehistoric and the historic sections this volume follows the plan of its predecessors; but matter of general application in the various periods, which has been given in the earlier volumes, has been omitted. Although it may be agreed that nothing can make a stronger appeal to the historic imagination than Stonehenge and Avebury, which have already been described, the present volume in no other respect falls below those already issued in the importance and interest of the monuments which it includes. As