Ruwenzori, even if it is not, as was lately thought, the highest mountain in Africa, will not be given away as Kilimanjaro has been. To the native chiefs round its base the question is one of more than sentiment. One of them has recently shown his anxiety by tendering to the Uganda Government the house tax for his whole tribe, in the hope that he might thereby establish his claim to be, and remain, a British subject.

HIMALAYAN EXPLORATION.

Mr. Douglas Freshfield, in concluding his address to the British Association at Durban in September last, referred to the prospects of Himalayan exploration, and made an important announcement as to communications that had recently passed between Lord Curzon, then Viceroy of India, and himself. It was to the following effect:—

Lord Curzon, acting on his own initiative, had expressed his desire that some further endeavours should be made to explore, and, if possible, to climb, either Kangchenjunga or Mount Everest, and with this end in view had proposed to Mr. Freshfield to act as an intermediary in organising such an attempt and obtaining the sympathy and material support of the Alpine Club, the Geographical Society, and any other scientific bodies likely to be interested. On his own part he promised to recommend to the Indian Government to contribute substantially to the cost of the expedition, and to do his best to get permission from the Nepalese authorities for its sojourn in their territory.

The matter was accordingly brought before the Council of the Royal Geographical Society and our Committee. The Council instructed their President to make further inquiry of the Viceroy as to the exact scope of the proposed expedition before deciding on any action. The Alpine Club Committee promptly requested our President to express their most cordial appreciation of the Viceroy's suggestion, and their willingness to co-operate as far as was in their power. It was agreed that it was too late for anything to be done last summer; but that the Viceroy should be informed that Dr. T. C. Longstaff, who was just starting for the Himalaya for climbing purposes, might be able to make useful practical suggestions. Dr. Longstaff, after an independent excursion in Kumaon, was permitted by the Viceroy to accompany the official party that visited the Kailas. He has not as yet returned to England.

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Meantime the resignation of Lord Curzon has delayed any further steps in the matter. To his personal initiative the proposal was doubtless due. It is not every Viceroy of India who is an enthusiastic geographer, and we know as yet nothing of what his successor's views may be. We have good grounds, however, for hope. Lord Minto has long been a member of the Alpine Club. There is, moreover, a growing interest among the Survey officers in India in mountain work, and we trust that after due deliberation a joint and competent party of surveyors and mountaineers may be organised to explore the environs of the highest mountain of the world, and to climb as far as possible towards its summit. That the summit should be reached in a first attempt is, of course, highly improbable. The degree of success attained will, we believe, largely depend on the presence in the party of Major Bruce or an officer like him, with a little band of trained and properly shod Gurkhas under his command.

THE DISASTER ON KANGCHENJUNGA.

In our last number we were only able briefly to record the disaster in which one of the three Swiss members of a party that started last summer to attempt Kangchenjunga lost his life, together with three coolies.* The party consisted of three Swiss, Dr. Jacot-Guillarmod, M. Reymond, and Lieutenant Pache. They put themselves under the leadership of an Englishman, writing over the signature Alliston Crowley, and described by the 'Daily Mail' as its 'Special Commissioner.' He had been one of the companions of Dr. Jacot-Guillarmod in a cosmopolitan company that visited the Karakoram in 1892. Crowley, to whom the commissariat arrangements had been entrusted, added to the party an Italian hotel-keeper from Darjiling, named De Righi. The expedition proceeded by the Singalila ridge and the Chumbab La to the Yalung valley, and having marched up the glacier at its head attacked the great curtain of icy slopes which falls from the base of the cliffs of the S.W. face of Kangchenjunga. They succeeded in establishing a camp at 6,200 m. (20,343 ft.), and some of them, according to Dr. Jacot-Guillarmod, climbed 1,000 ft. higher. Crowley's account of the disaster which, on September 1, put a stop to the expedition has been widely circulated in this country in the 'Daily Mail' and in India in the 'Pioneer.' It is strongly objected to by the remaining European members of the party, and in justice to them we think it right to reproduce in an abbreviated form a portion of the narrative published by Dr. Jacot-Guillarmod in the 'Gazette de Lausanne' (November 11, 1905). The party, at least

* One coolie had previously perished by a fall on treacherous snow.

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