

MOUNTAIN ROADS.

THE DAPTO PASS.

We learn from Mr. Carl Weber (an unquestionable authority on the subject) that he has discovered a line up the Bong Bong Mountain from Dapto, by which a road equal to the Bulli Pass could be constructed. Mr. Weber was employed by the Central Illawarra Council recently to ascertain whether it was possible to obtain a better route between Dapto and the tableland than that known as the Bong Bong or Barrina Track. By spending about a fortnight in making surveys of the locality, that gentleman discovered that a road, with a grade not exceeding 1 in 8, could be made from the bottom to the top of the mountain. That is exactly the grade of the Bulli Pass, but Mr. Weber states that the Dapto Pass, constructed according to his survey, would be a much better road, as it would include more steps or flats than the Bulli one. The Central Illawarra Council has done a good work by gaining this important information, as hitherto the general impression was that it would be impossible to make much more than a goat-track up the mountain face where referred to. Now, however, the question is settled that even a better road than the celebrated Bulli Pass can be made there. The route selected by Mr. Weber, after a careful exploration of the country, includes zig-zagging, but the whole of that necessary kind of work would not lengthen the distance from top to bottom of the mountain more than five chains per mile—a mere nothing compared to the convenience so obtained in the grade. The road leads directly to the Dapto railway station, a fact which renders it exceptionally important. Altogether, it is an avenue for traffic between this district and the tableland that should be opened up, and now that it is a settled matter that so good a grade can be obtained there, it is to be hoped the Central Illawarra Council will do its duty further by following the matter up until Government constructs the required road.

THE MACQUARIE PASS.

Mr. Weber informs us also that an opening discovered by inhabitants of the Macquarie River locality on the top of the mountain, near the Macquarie Pass, is of a most extraordinary formation. He states that it is an opening of about fourteen feet wide, with perpendicular sides of solid rock, fully sixty feet high, extending a length of about ten chains. The opening, he admits, is the most remarkable he has ever seen anywhere, and although it is rather narrow for road purposes, he says a very good track can be made along it between the towering walls on either side. At the instance of the Shellharbour Council, he inspected the Pass a short time ago, and was astonished to see the opening in the rock as here mentioned. He says a very fair grade could be obtained along the whole course of the opening, a fact which he proved by a pocket instrument he had with him when inspecting the extraordinary natural gateway. The said Council is employing him further to define the grades from the bottom of the opening to a favorable point on the Pass-road below it. This he intends to do before long, and it is to be hoped that the road from the top to the bottom will then be improved in accordance with the present traffic, which is very considerable, and would increase enormously under favorable conditions. It may be stated that the wonderful cleft in the rock alluded to is

that the wonderful cleft in the rock alluded to is some distance south of the top of the present road, a fact which is rather an advantage in some respects. We have always advocated very strongly that this road should be rendered as fit for traffic as possible, being (as it is) a direct connecting-link between the populous and important Wingecarribee settlements on the tableland and the still more populous and important locality of Albion Park in this district.

MACQUARIE AND KANGAROO VALLEY.

An agitation is being made to some extent in the Kangaroo Valley direction for the construction of the best available road between that place and the Macquarie River. The route intended, we understand, is, in the main, via what is (or was formerly) known as Mr. Henry Osborne's Butter Track, passing the Messrs. Frasers' Lake View Farm, on the Tullimbar side of the mountain. By a good road in that direction the large population inhabiting Kangaroo Valley and the adjoining localities would be within a much shorter distance of Sydney than under present circumstances. By having to go to Moas Vale to reach the railway, as now is the case, the people are travelling half-way to Goulburn, as it were, before getting a direct start to Sydney. In fact, they are worse off in that respect than were the people of this district when they had to travel round by Campbelltown to get to Sydney. By means of a good road via Albion Park, however, they would be proceeding straight to Sydney, as might be said, or *vice versa*. That the matter is a most important one there cannot be a doubt, as, by having railway communication with the metropolis via Albion Park, instead of by the round-about Moas Vale route, hundreds of thousands of miles of travelling and corresponding expense would be saved to the large population interested in the proposed road.