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A. W. ANDREWS

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CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

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Edited by ARTHUR WESTLAKE ANDREWS.

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[No. 27.

THE NEW SPORT.

By W. R. RICKMERS, A.C.

SKI-RUNNING in its highest form is an extension of mountaineering. Being a happy union of the scientific and deliberate methods of Alpine climbing with the skill and excitement of the "sports of speed," it claims a foremost place among all kinds of physical exercise. To the chief characteristic of that very monotonous pastime—tobogganing—it adds the possibilities and elegance of skating without any of the limitations imposed upon these two by their need of specially prepared tracks and surfaces. Greater freedom, a closer contact with nature, an education in independence, are the results of this emancipation from prescribed areas. Once above the tree line we shall find all the other advantages of mountaineering, which, however, means that we must add the requirements of the climber—knowledge, caution, experience.

It is a mistake to imagine that ski-ing is absolutely dependent on the existence of hills. Wherever the ground will support a man in boots walking, the mainstay of mountaineering, is possible, and wherever snow lies we can enjoy the ski. The Alpine man at home derives pleasure from a tramp across the plains, and he who finds no slopes discovers an unknown source of delightful sensation in gliding swiftly

over the deep layer of snow which covers the field, the heather or the swamp.

If we tilt a plain walking grows more complicated and interesting as the angle of inclination increases, and in the same way ski-running becomes more difficult and exhilarating as the snowy surface gets steeper, more broken up, covered with obstacles and changeful in condition. Then, and especially when the regions above the snow line of summer are reached, the united qualities of the Alpine expert and of the gymnast are brought into full play. In spite of this, the beginner in ski-ing requires less skill, strength or self-assurance than the skater, who has to face and counter-face a hard crystal should his gyrations come to an abrupt end. Needless to say the general and climatic conditions are also greatly in favour of the long plank, for snow covers ice, it also comes sooner, lasts longer and lies everywhere. Nor need we consider the police who guard the road, the gatekeepers who defend the rinks, nor the crowds who throng these public places. No wonder that ski-ing has found favour with thousands of men, women and children since the day when it first came into existence as a sport, and that it has even gained a firm footing in districts where, without it, the modern term "winter sport" would be considered a delusion and a snare.

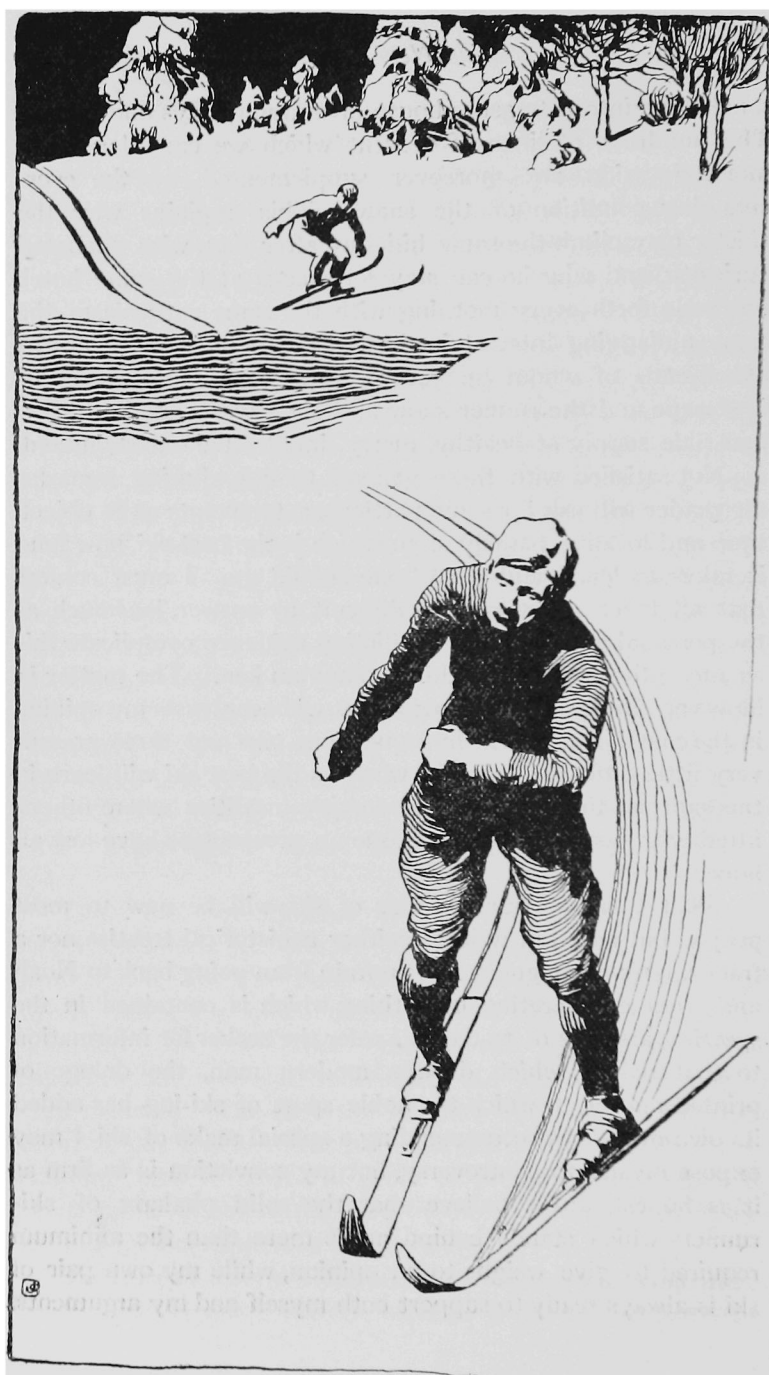
Thus the potentialities of this, the youngest of our important sports, are simply enormous, objectively and subjectively; on the one hand because the conformation of the wintry landscape offers untold variety and countless combinations; on the other because the equally numerous capacities and wishes of individuals are satisfied according to their measure. The shoe, the ship and the ski, named in their order of merit, give access to the largest surfaces of the earth, enabling men in search of profit or pleasure to penetrate to every corner of the world. During northern winter about one half of the hemisphere is clad in white.

To descend a snow-slope on foot is not a proceeding which lends itself to much variety, whereas a run on ski turns the

same slope into a treasure-house of cunning ways and means. The hundreds of lines of descent which we can plan on a mountain side are moreover supplemented by the ever-changing condition of the snow. This explains why the skister may climb the same hill day after day, with unabated curiosity, and why he can stay for weeks at the same hotel, yet issue forth every morning with the same enthusiasm, the same unflagging interest in those surroundings which are as old friends of whom he never grows weary. Between this landscape and the runner snow and ski have created an inexhaustible supply of healthy, merry, intellectual entertainment.

Not satisfied with these general, though alluring, remarks, the reader will ask for some particular statements as to object, time and locality, namely as to which is the best ski, how long it takes to learn, and where one should go. I must confess that all three questions are difficult to answer, inasmuch as the personal equation and conflicting evidence complicate this as any other problem within the human ken. The matter is, however, simplified in this way, that whoever trusts my opinion in the first instance will find questions two and three present very little difficulty. For he who has the best ski will learn in the shortest time, and will also enjoy localities where others, fitted with poorer implements, see no prospect or have lost all hope.

That there are many kinds of ski will be new to most people, but as I am writing neither a historical treatise nor a tradesman's catalogue, I must refrain from going back to Noah and from enumerating everything which is contained in the sporting arsenals of to-day. I refer the seeker for information to that deluge which drowns modern man, the deluge of printed matter, to which the noble sport of ski-ing has added its own drop. In recommending a special make of ski I may expose myself to controversy, but my conviction is as firm as it is honest, and I believe that the solid phalanx of ski-runners which stands behind me is more than the minimum required to give weight to an opinion, while my own pair of ski is always ready to support both myself and my arguments.



The Alpine ski invented by Herr Zdarsky I personally consider to be the best, because it is technically perfect, and answers the greatest number of requirements. Only one ski can be the best, and the best is undoubtedly that one which, under the greatest variety of natural conditions, fulfils the greater part of a series of demands made upon it. Its efficiency is measured by the average result derived from the trial of specific points under the largest imaginable variety of conditions. A certain group of these points, namely, those determining the floating and gliding capabilities of the ski, and which are dependent on the shape and dimensions of the wood or plank, we can dismiss at once, for they must be treated separately. The general usefulness of the ski is decided by the "binding," *i.e.*, the fastening apparatus which holds ski and foot together, and before the problem of the "binding" that of the wood pales almost into insignificance. Now the Alpine ski is a fastening and not a plank, therefore we have only to concern ourselves with the points of a binding to decide the issue. In choosing a binding one has to inquire into its weight, strength, comfort and steering power. The only drawback to the Alpine ski is the first item, for it is heavier than some of the Norwegian patterns, though by no means the heaviest on record. The weight of a ski I consider a very secondary matter, seeing that the instrument is not supposed to be carried or lifted, but must be slid or shoved along. As to strength and comfort, I must confess that I have never seen a stronger binding nor used a more comfortable one, which means a great deal to the mountaineer, for toes cramped by tight straps suffer soonest in the cold. But the crowning quality of my favourite snow-shoe is the accuracy with which it can be steered.

Add to this the new and scientific method for teaching beginners and mastering difficult ground (called the Alpine Style*), and I have summed up in a few words what all

*As described by me in "Ski-running," edited by E. C. Richardson. London, 1904. Horace Cox. 2s. 6d.

lovers of sport, and especially mountaineers, owe to Herr Zdarsky, the man who has done more than anyone else to adapt ski-running to new conditions and give it a scientific basis.

These two, the thing and the way, Alpine ski and Alpine system, enable us to learn very quickly, and to move with perfect ease on the most appalling slopes. The reason that this development in the sport of ski-ing should have taken place outside of Scandinavia is accounted for by the fact that the Norwegians begin to ski almost from their birth, thereby attaining a marvellous efficiency, while the natural conditions of their country do not oblige them to seek difficult ground. With us it is different; we begin late, we have little time to spare, and we want to make the best use of the snow or of the locality where it happens to lie. Zdarsky has given us all that is necessary to learn and enjoy ski-ing within the narrowest imaginable limits of time and space. We can acquire a reasonable amount of proficiency after a few days of patient practice; we are enabled to go to the limits of the angle of inclination; we find it possible to tease the most refractory snow, slushy or hard, into giving out an unexpected amount of pleasure; we know that the last patches at the end of the season are still full of possibilities; we never despair, and are ever looking forward to new experiences, knowing that we can meet them.*

To speak convincingly of the great joys of ski-ing is a serious undertaking, seeing that the words necessary to convey my feelings are extremely shy, and sometimes refuse to be coaxed into making a public appearance. In fact I often suspect the absolute non-existence of terms to express my enthusiasm. Deeds are said to be better than words. Let us hope so. If the members of the Climbers' Club incline to a belief in this somewhat stale and old-fashioned saying, I shall be glad to guide their first steps, as long as they do not get

* I may perhaps refer those who wish to know more on this subject to my article, "Mountaineering and the Alpine Skee," in No. 161 of the *Alpine Journal*.

tired of me. They will find me at Adelboden during January and at Igls (above Innsbruck) from February 10th to 27th. Terms—Take my advice and lend your ear; listen to my tips but do not give me any; ski and be happy, if you can. Bring your mountain outfit—strong boots, preferably hob-nailed, warm clothes, rucksack, gloves, goggles, etc., etc. Proper ski can be hired from the local clubs. My address is—Radolfzell, Baden, Germany.

To supplement this somewhat meagre general survey, I should like to give a few hints as to some of the places suitable for ski-ing.

The ground of the Polar regions is somewhat uneven, Greenland being on the whole a laudable exception, save for crevasses. Siberia is very extensive, giving also plenty of room for ski or elbows, but shares with the first-named a deplorable lack of accommodation, and even population, for human beings are sometimes welcome, thought generally undesirable. Australia is very good, but, like America, too far from the Club rooms. Norway may be left alone, so there remain only Great Britain and the Continent. I prefer to begin with the latter.

The Black Forest is the classical ground of our sport, and especially so the Feldberg, its culminating point or plateau. Here great ski-runners like Paulcke, Beauclair, Gruber, famous for their Alpine expeditions in winter, have sown the seed which already bears a rich harvest. Splendid ground, a long season, good quarters and easy access, unite to make this region specially suitable for early, late and short holidays. Undulating, bare moorland plateaux rise above the thick forests from which the region takes its name. Towards one side, these bald summit ridges break off in steep slopes or steeper rocks, heavily corniced along the top, so that even the climber in boots finds work to do. Every variety of ski-ing ground is represented, and easily reached from the Feldbergerhof, situated at a height of 4000 feet, and kept open throughout the winter. The great elevation of this hotel, which is about an hour and three quarters from the railway



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station of Titisee, and the continental climate of the district, guarantee an uninterrupted ski-ing season from the end of November till after Easter. In this respect it would be difficult to find a better place, for not a single day need be wasted for want of snow. Prices are moderate (5/- to 6/- a day for board and lodging, according to site of room), though they may be increased a little after next year, when the new hotel will be ready. This building is to be a marvel, and the first hotel of its kind specially planned for skisters, skaters and tobogganers. The visitor, having finished his breakfast in the morning, will repair to the "dressing-room," there leaving his slippers and house things to don heavy boots, gaiters and gloves, and to shoulder his weapon. Coming home at nightfall, he enters by the "dressing-room" (there is also a separate one for ladies), where he leaves his wet clothes, instead of dragging them across the passages and bedrooms. He finds special arrangements for keeping his things tidy, for setting his ski on end or protecting his skates. His gloves and puttees go into a special drying room, and he himself can step under a warm douche. Thus little time is lost, and cleanliness, order and comfort will reign. Needless to say, electric light, good heating apparatus, a spacious veranda and all the other appliances of a modern winter hotel will be conspicuous by their presence. If half of what the proprietor promises is fulfilled, I shall never want to go anywhere else. Leaving Charing Cross at 2 p.m., the traveller will reach his room at the Feldbergerhof within 24 hours. I shall keep my eye on that skisters' paradise, and if the proprietor does not realise my hopes, I shall sue him for breach of promise, claiming damages for injury to my castles in the air.

As regards the number of visitors, the centres round Vienna are the most important outside of Norway, but being so distant from England, these places will not be of immediate interest to the readers of this article. Lilienfeld, two hours by train from Vienna, the home of Herr Zdarsky, is of course the great Mecca of Austrian ski-runners. Special

trains convey hundreds of eager pilgrims to see, to hear, and to learn from him, the "Master" as they call him. Many years ago all that Zdarsky could muster was exactly one pupil. Last winter more than a thousand flocked to him to profit by his precept and example. A day with Zdarsky is a day indeed, for rarely is so much bodily power, such technical skill and knowledge, so much deep thought and eloquence, united in one man. Many a thing besides ski-ing has this "character" taught to men and women.

Switzerland has so far had the foremost place in the mind of British subjects bent on wintry pleasures, and will keep it for the majority of travellers. Davos, Grindelwald and Adelboden stand pre-eminent among winter resorts. St. Moritz is the haunt of fashion, where so democratic a sport as ski-ing has little chance. Davos, where the ground generally is first-class, has also one of the finest ski tours in existence, the "Parsenn Furka Run," which gives a descent of 5000 feet at the cost of a climb of only 2500 feet, the remaining difference of level between start and finish being done in the railway. Davos has many eager devotees of the sport, and its ski club enjoys the splendid organisation and spirited leadership of Mr. E. C. Richardson, the hon. secretary of the Ski Club of Great Britain. I have never been to Grindelwald, but know it to be good, while Adelboden is as familiar to me as my own pocket. Countless excursions are possible from this picturesque village, with its good hotels, all the better perhaps for being split into rival camps, led respectively by the Kurhaus and the Grand. Well frequented winter resorts have besides many other advantages—this great one that the ski-runner is more likely to find companions for excursions, whereas in a new place he will probably be left to his own devices, and these are always dangerous if practised very high above the snow-line. Nothing is more demoralising to a beginner than to feel that he is alone, that nobody else is in the same plight, or, later on, in the same stage of progress, and therefore ready to join him. Adelboden is reached from Charing Cross in about 26

hours ; its season lasts from the middle of December to the end of February.

The Eastern Alps are also beginning to stir, with Innsbruck at the head. It has an English Consul, an English chapel, good ice and enough snow. The owner of the largest hotel at Igls, which is 1000 feet above Innsbruck, has, however, not yet summoned sufficient courage to open during the winter, but the smaller inns offer all that is necessary to the ski-runner who is content with a bed and rustic fare. Probably the district opened up by the new Stubai railway, which works throughout the year, has the greatest future before it, and the big hotel at the terminus in Fulpmes is already making efforts to attract visitors. As in Switzerland so in the Tyrol, everywhere the local authorities are awakening to the fact that they must not sleep in winter now. Kitzbühel, Zell am See, St. Anton, to mention a few of the more prominent places, are all eager to coin the gold hidden in snow and ice. The Austrian Ministry of Railways has a travel bureau in Piccadilly, London, and it may be interesting to know that Dr. Benesch, the famous mountain photographer, is a high official in that Ministry, and responsible for its latest artistic and literary productions.

It is a tradition of mountaineering history that the Western Alps come last, and I have not heard of anything much going on there except in a military sense, for the Alpine troops have very good detachments mounted on ski.

Turning now to what is perhaps the most piquant and fascinating region for British ski-runners—their own islands—I am glad to say that the new sport is gradually annihilating that old and almost superstitious generalisation which says that Great Britain has no snow. At the time of writing this (the 22nd of November), hundreds all over the kingdom are clamouring for a pair of the slender planks, and even my cottage on the Bodensee, known for the mildness of its climate, is at this hour deep in snow, and next Sunday I hope to take the Radolfzell Ski Club on its first outing.

Snow is, of course, a more or less erratic occurrence in

Southern Britain, and therefore not very suitable for beginners, who require less intermittent periods for their practising. But to the expert these occasions are as a rare and spicy dish, for he can appreciate what he finds.

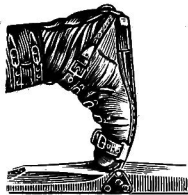
From the point of view of ski-ing, the British Isles are still an unexplored country, which has so far only been opened up in a few corners, and I can promise great fun to the pioneers of snowy Scotland. As Scotland as yet possesses no proper winter resorts, it is the expert who will get the most satisfaction out of his inroads into the hills and moors, for travelling in Scotland is not easier than in the Caucasus. Of course, beginners living in the Highlands can get plenty of practice. For tyros from the towns who cannot get away to the Continent, I should advise Ben Nevis in May, however absurd this may sound.

What is the great charm of English climbing, what the underlying psychological reason which makes it so strangely attractive? Is it not, to put it roughly, the power of finding big things in a small place (using the Alps as a standard of size), the seeing, selecting and tasting with a fine sense of appreciation those hidden beauties or tit-bits which remain veiled to the generalising eye of the ordinary tourist? Nor need anything be said as to the possibilities, in time and quality, of those tit-bits, when we hear that a party of our best men can spend ten hours on an ice-clad ridge of Ben Nevis. The expert—the ski-runner who knows how to take advantage of every condition of snow, of every slope, gully or patch, and every day from first to last—will be able to cram more adventure—curious or useful experience and activity—into one Scotch winter than anyone dreams of. The man who in years to come writes the first "Ski-runners Guide to the British Isles," will remember my words, and tell me I was right. Here is a new field which I should be only too eager to plough were it not for the fact that one man's ski-track cannot span the world, and that my lonely furrow lies in another direction.

To sum up, I now give a table of the seasons and the

most suitable localities. From the beginning of November to Christmas the surest place is undoubtedly the Feldberg. No other district can offer such chances at the same time of the year—January is reliable wherever there are hills where snow has been known to fall. The first half of February has of late years been characterised by a thaw and vanishing of the snow in those parts of the Alps where I have been, but the Feldberg keeps going merrily all the same. Later, snow falls again, and the Alpine valleys remain skiable until March, when one must go higher. Now comes the beginning of April, which would be good in Scotland but for the rain, and on Alpine ground but for the avalanches; so there remains the Feldberg again, where the accumulation has reached its maximum, plentiful enough to last well into May. The same storage system benefits Scotland. During the end of April up to past the 15th of May, the big Bens carry enough to reward one for a daily tramp of two hours to the snow-line.

I am sorry that this article has become a somewhat dry register of facts, but most direct information savours of the text-book and the railway-guide. If, however, by these uninteresting means I enable some mountaineers to have a jolly time, their hearty call "Ski-Hail" will reassure me of the fact that point-blank advice is a good shot if it hits the right man and woman too.



A NIGHT WALK ON DERBYSHIRE HILLS.

By W. SMITHARD.

“The moonlight lay on the hills like snow.”

EVER since I read that brief sentence long ago in *Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*, it had been my ambition to spend a whole night out of doors ; not half-awake in a sleeping bag praying for a climbers' daylight, or dozing fitfully and miserably on a heather couch under the crags, fearing to be forestalled by the uncertain glories of sunrise, but, with keen wits and a free spirit, to enjoy the glamour of familiar scenes under another light, to get away for once from the everyday aspect of the meagre cloddy earth, and to come into closer communion with the shining planets.

It took some years to inoculate my friends with my enthusiasm, but the supreme occasion was well worth waiting for. In the meantime we had obtained some experience which inclined the unbelieving to the view that night is not a bad time for walking. Twice after cavern exploring, we set off from Castleton at two o'clock in the morning, and tramped down to Matlock. It is a rather weird sensation to pass in the gloom and silence, like marauders, through the sleeping villages, in which the dwellers always seem to have their bedroom lights burning throughout the night, for the double purpose, one supposes, of keeping the terrors of darkness at bay and facilitating early rising. During one of these unconventional walks my companion was seized with irrepressible somnolence, and I will remember how he lay down on the roadside and slept soundly while the pearly luminosity of

coming dawn grew into the garishness of day. Those were walks undertaken on the spur of the moment, when nights were short, and on neither occasion did moon or stars reveal themselves; but that did not trouble us, for our plan was to take the line of least resistance by keeping to the high roads.

The reader possibly does not realise fully that there are two totally distinct and dissimilar Derbyshires. There is the limestone region, with grassy uplands and deep rocky dales, world-famous for their beauty, such as Dove Dale, Chee Dale, and Matlock Dale, especially beloved of the tourist; this district is also favourable to human industry; not a few fortunes have been extracted from its lead ore veins, and its farms and quarries find employment for the bulk of the people in the Peak. How different is that other Derbyshire, some two thousand feet above datum line, where league-stretched peaty moorlands, edged with black cliffs, occupy a great part of the country between Sheffield and Manchester. These untamable, irreclaimable, heather-clad plateaux, which afford no opening for the labour of man, are given up almost entirely to the grouse, the curlew, and such other hardy and wild creatures as insist on unlimited freedom and solitude. These weird and desolate uplands, which form such an effective background to the first portion of Mrs. Humphry Ward's story of "David Grieve," are on a millstone grit formation of intense hardness, but are intersected here and there by thickly-wooded shale valleys of exquisite loveliness, through which run lusty rivers fed by thousands of tumbling streamlets from the adjacent moors.

It was in this region, of which Kinder Scout ("the rock at the head of the waters") is the supreme portion, that our all-night walk was planned to take place in mid-winter at a time of full moon. After a lazy afternoon, and an early dinner comfortably digested at the Nag's Head Inn, the four of us, *i.e.*, Archer, Child, Puttrell, and myself set out from Grindsbrook, the tiny and picturesque hamlet in wide and lonely Edale, at 6.30 p.m., to carry out what the natives regarded as our lunatic project.

The dale was full of dense mist, but there was reason to believe the heights would be clear, and it was in that expectation that a start was made. The high road was frozen hard, and the cart track which succeeds to it at Barber Booth was found to be covered with big sheets of ice, as slippery as glass, on which one of the party was nearly disabled at the outset by a heavy fall. Anticipating mild weather, he had come with unnailed boots, for which remissness he had to pay dearly, as at least a dozen falls were his lot during the walk, and owing to constantly slipping on the frozen surfaces he had to do almost double work all the time. At Upper Booth, a couple of farm labourers at work with lanterns were noticed, and they were the only human beings seen during the round of 23 miles. Steady progress was made, and when Edale Head was approached, our hopes were raised by seeing the moon faintly glimmering high up through the mist, but we were not prepared for the marvellous transition which awaited us as we mounted the steep ascent near Jacob's Ladder. At the height of 1500 feet the mist ceased abruptly, and we were delighted to find ourselves all at once under the unclouded azure dome of heaven.

The moon was so brilliant that the light of the stars became quite pale and ineffectual by comparison, and Jupiter alone was able to compete with the chief lamp of night. The bold edges of Kinder Scout were silhouetted with jetty blackness, and below us was a scene of weird and unearthly beauty. The mist, which entirely filled Edale for three-fourths of its depth, was on its upper surface as flat as a billiard table, and lay there just like the silver waters of a great sea loch, such as one sees in Scotland. No tree or house was visible; nothing but the apparently solid surface of the mist lake, which turned the numerous contour lines of the enclosing hills into lovely little bays. This remarkable scene opened up undreamed of possibilities in inland landscape, and we already felt richly rewarded with this first result of our novel excursion, but from these vistas of fairy-land we were recalled by the stern realities of the task before us. The

ground got harder as we proceeded, and difficulty was experienced in mounting the ascent to Edale Cross. Regrets were expressed that ice axes had been left behind, and the man without boot nails was suffering martyrdom. On the col being reached, another great sea of mist lay below in the Kinder Valley, in which the peak of South Head rested like an island. The tufted grass on all sides was heavily embellished with hoar frost, and sparkling crystals glittered everywhere. A change of vegetation was noticed as we left the Hayfield Road, and tramped through thick bushes of heather to the steep and shapely ridge and peak of Kinder Low—2077 feet above sea level, I believe.

At this point an incident occurred which showed how easy it is for a man to get detached from his friends on such ground. During an examination of the curiously arranged crags on the slope, the members of the party became somewhat scattered, and one of them followed his fancy by clambering to the topmost part of the ridge, where he was both seen and heard. When the journey was resumed, no trace of him could be found, and our continued shouting produced no reply. Puzzled and anxious, the three of us who were together, eventually decided he must have proceeded in advance along the agreed route, and we went hastily forward in pursuit. Our efforts were fruitless, so a halt was called, and halloaing again indulged in. Great relief was experienced when a reply came from the vicinity of the distant crags on Kinder Low. When he came up, the missing man explained he had gone back from the ridge to the crags, thinking to join the others, and he had no idea how they could have passed him. This little episode made everyone careful not to stray during the rest of the night.

The distance from Kinder Low to the Downfall is about two miles, and the plateau between them is seamed with innumerable wide and deep crevasses in the peaty soil. Here, as elsewhere, the vegetation was silvered by frost, and the dark, bare, frozen surface of the loam was broken up into countless little knobs, each tipped with a tiny patch of snow,

very pretty to look at, but difficult and dangerous to walk upon, and the monotony of the general expanse was modified by snowdrifts and gleaming sheets of ice here and there. The work of crossing the crevasses is exceedingly wearisome, both to mind and body. Another difficulty in traversing Kinder Scout in the day-time is the absence of conspicuous direction points, and we found how very effectively the stars supply this want. Indeed the desired spots were reached by that means without any deviation, and this night crossing of the actual plateau, which is doubtless the roughest ground in England, was accomplished more quickly than in previous attempts made in daylight.

In going from Kinder Low, the North Star was aimed for, and the Downfall was thus reached at 10.30 p.m. The great gorge, with its sheer cliffs and chaos of tumbled crags, looked truly magnificent in the moonlight. The stream was only partially frozen, and it was found that the cave it was intended to use as a dining room could not be reached in consequence. However, a sheltered corner was found where a fire was kindled with some dry wood that had been brought for the purpose. The firewood was decidedly stubborn, and, therefore, several tallow candles had to be sacrificed, and much blowing resorted to ere the flames met with our critical approval. On the other hand pungent smoke was too plentiful and nearly suffocated our voluntary stoker—the nailless man. Eventually some hot coffee was prepared, and here among the ice-glazed boulders and icicle-draped crags, to the accompaniment of the roaring waters, with a sea of mist below, and the moon shining brilliantly above, we made an enjoyable evening meal. The romantic spot was left at 11.30 p.m., and the remarkable bed of the Kinder stream (cut 2000 ft. above datum line in the plateau), was followed for a short distance. Then a north-easterly direction was taken, towards a point about midway between the moon and the pole star. The defile on the eastern edge, beyond the wilderness of crevasses forming the watershed, was hit with agreeable precision, and the Titanic rock staircase of Fairbrook Clough was descended. This splendid lateral



The Bivouac at the Downfall, Kinder Scout.

Photo. by W. SMITHARD, DUFFIELD, DERBY.

valley is two miles long, and every part of its surface is interesting and beautiful. Many of the pools of the stream were frozen, but the ice was not of uniform thickness, and sometimes collapsed when trodden upon, with the result that most of the party had cold and wet feet while clambering down its bed. Ashop Dale and the Snake Inn were reached at one o'clock, but although we were somewhat exhausted after our arduous and exciting labours, we refrained from rousing the occupants. The nailless man, however, pulled out his flask, and can boast that he at any rate had a drink at the Snake at that unearthly hour.

Ashop Dale was frost-bound, and its lofty slopes and thick woods were all clad in glistening white, making a delightful picture under the full moon. We walked down the highway for a couple of miles, and then took the steep and rough Roman road over the moors to Hope. Some place where a bivouac could be formed was eagerly looked for, but no building or shelter of any kind was met with during the long eight miles, and owing to the bitterness of the weather it was almost impossible to take food or rest in the open.

Our programme included the ascent of Win Hill from the Roman Road, but by the time we reached its vicinity the mists had gathered again. We plodded on, a ghostly procession, through miles of icy knee-deep heather, fighting a searching wind, but the summit eluded us after all. So we perforce descended abruptly to the village of Hope, and there found shelter in a farm hovel, where we made another fire and then regaled ourselves once more with some much needed hot coffee and food.

Then followed a tramp along the bed of Edale to the Nag's Head at Grindsbrook, which we reached at half-past six, just twelve hours after we set out.

Of course we were ravenous, and ate a record breakfast which the good folk of the Inn had provided for us; and so ended our "lunatic" adventure, which we all look back to with far more pride and pleasure than we are ever likely to feel for having done more useful things.

A DAY ON THE POINTE D'ORNY NEAR CHAMPEX.

By J. W. WYATT, A.C.

DRIVEN away from Zermatt early last September by very unsettled weather, which put a stop to high climbing in that district for the season, my friend Mr. W. H. Gover and myself decided to spend the last remaining week of our summer holidays at Champex, a small village and lake above Orsières, in the Val d'Entremont. Gover had once visited this secluded and ideal spot some years before, and was loud in its praises; he knew there was good climbing to be done in the neighbourhood, and as it was also closely associated with the memory and exploits of my old schoolmaster in Lausaune, M. Emile Javelle, to whom I was much attached, I was quite ready to fall in with his suggestion.

Champex is one of those primitive and unspoilt places of which, alas, the number is so rapidly diminishing in Switzerland, little known or frequented by our compatriots, and consists merely of a few pensions and chalets on the shores of one of the most beautifully situated little lakes I have seen. It lies 4820 feet above the sea, at the foot of the Mont Catogne, embedded on three sides in fine pine woods, and backed to the south-west by the noble group of the Grand Combin range, over 14,000 feet high. It has with truth been described as one of the most exquisite spots in the Alps.

The nearest railway station is Martigny, from which Champex can be reached, either by road *via* Orsières, a distance of about 14 miles, or by a bridle-path which turns off



The lac de Champex.

Photo. by J. W. WYATT.

to the right of the main road near the village of Les Valettes, four miles from Martigny, up the wild and beautiful valley of the Durnant, about $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours walking in all from the station.

The Pensions on the lakeside are simple and primitive, but clean, comfortable, and cheap. We put up at the Hotel Pension du Lac, which I can strongly recommend, and where the "en pension" rates are from 5 to 7 francs per day.

Having arrived from Zermatt the evening before, Gover and I started off from Champex at 6:20 a.m. on September 6th for the Pointe d'Orny. It was a glorious morning; the little lake, calm and still, lay at our feet, nestling amid the pine forests which clothed the steep slopes on either side; beyond, above the Orsières Valley, rose majestically the imposing range of the Grand Combin, showing up boldly against the sky in the early morning sunlight—a wonderful combination of the peace and majesty of nature. Our way led us first for about a mile and a half through a dense forest of larch and spruce towards the Combe or Glen d'Arpetta; underneath the trees in these woods the ground was literally carpeted with bilberry and cranberry bushes laden with fruit, and intermixed with oak fern and a peculiar grey-green lichen; the effect of the brilliant autumn colouring of the bilberry leaves, contrasted with this grey lichen and the scarlet cranberries, was very striking and beautiful. Now and again an opening in the forest disclosed a fine view, over a wilderness of pine tops, of the Durnant Valley and the distant peaks between the Diablerets and the Dent de Morcles on the other side of the Rhone Valley.

Shortly after 7 a.m. we reached the châteaux at the foot of the Combe d'Arpetta, where we turned off sharply to the left towards the Col de la Brea. This desolate, but wild and striking glen, is well worth a visit; it is about four miles long, and is enclosed on both sides by rugged and precipitous ridges of rock pinnacles, on the north the Clochers d'Arpetta, and on the south the Aiguilles d'Arpetta, culminating in the Pointe d'Orny. At the head of the glen two cols or passes, the Col des Ecandies and the Fenêtre d'Arpetta, lead to the

Glacier and Valley of Trient, and the ridges of rocks on both sides of the glen should afford ample scope for many rock scrambles of a high order.

An exceedingly steep zig-zagging path, rising over 1300 feet in half a mile, soon took us out of the valley above the tree line, and at the same time warmed us up to our day's work, and after a rise of another 1000 feet over a wilderness of huge boulders, and up a steep bit of rock and detritus, we reached at 8'25 a.m. the Col de la Brea, 7904 feet high. A magnificent view here burst suddenly upon us, and, by mutual consent, a halt of ten minutes was cried to sit down, and cool down, to admire it. Behind us the Dents du Midi and the Vaudois Alps; before us, to the south and south-east, the fine mountain masses of the Combin and the Velan, with the higher Zermatt peaks and the Grand Paradis and Grivola in the distance; while, frowning down upon us to our right rose the forbidding-looking pinnacles of the Aiguilles d'Arpetta. From here we skirted under the rocks of the Aiguilles by an almost level path, where I saw, growing for the first time in Switzerland, a quantity of the Parsley Fern, *allosorus crispus*, so well known to climbers and botanists on our Welsh and Cumberland hills. This path eventually debouched on a very pretty little mountain glen at the head of the Combe d'Orny, surrounded by high and precipitous rocks, carpeted with bright green grass, and watered by a number of rills of clear pure water; the clearness and purity of the streams about Champex is noticeable, as well as refreshing, after the milky look of the glacier streams in the higher Alps. A steep scramble up the terminal moraine of the Glacier d'Orny brought us at 9'25 a.m. to the Cabane d'Orny, 8819 feet, and breakfast, for which the air and exercise had made us quite ready.

This little hut, built in 1893, struck me as one of the cleanest and best arranged huts I had been in in Switzerland, and the charges very moderate. It is provided with a caretaker during the tourist season, and a few simple provisions. It lies at the foot of the Glacier d'Orny, in a fine situation under the

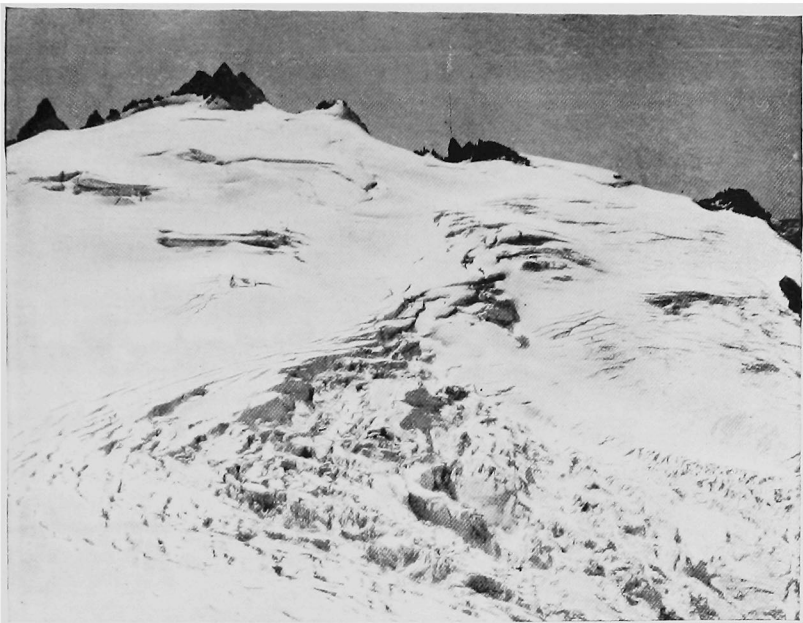
crag of the Aiguilles d'Arpetta, with the steep snow and rock slopes of the Portalet, 10,975 feet, rising right in front, and a fine distant view of the Combin range across the Val Ferret; it is apt, however, to be overcrowded in the height of the season, being one of the excursions from Champex. On a face of rock behind the hut is fixed an inscription, in large iron letters, to the memory of M. Javelle; close to the hut are the remains of a small ruined chapel, of which I was unable to learn the history.

After considerably lightening our provisions, and some fresh warm tea, we left the hut at 10.15 a.m., and ascended the lateral moraine of the glacier, passing two wild mountain tarns on the way, and soon took to the glacier, which was in good condition, the ice dry and free from snow, and the rope unnecessary. Our goal was now before us, and we decided to go straight up the steep snow slopes and rocks of the east face. From here the fine rocky arête of the Aiguilles d'Arpetta showed up well, broken up into innumerable and fantastic needles and pinnacles; the rocks, however, looked unsafe and rotten, and signs of falling stones were much in evidence in the gullies and on the glacier below. Our ascent presented no difficulties; after jumping a number of crevasses and crossing a bergschrund, a stiff climb up steep but easy rocks brought us to the double top by noon, 10,742 feet high.

If our ascent, from a modern climber's point of view, had been easy and somewhat uninteresting, we were rewarded on reaching the summit by a truly grand and imposing view. An Alpine view is, I think, always finer and more impressive when seen from a high pass or peak of moderate height than a more or less panoramic view, however extensive, from one of the higher peaks themselves, and this fully applies to the Pointe d'Orny. Except perhaps the view from Lo Besso, near Zinal, and the Wellen Kuppe, or the Moming Pass near Zermatt, I don't remember any Alpine view that impressed me more than this one; but the Pointe d'Orny, lying as it does at the extreme northern end of the Mont Blanc group, combines sub-Alpine with high Alpine scenery in a way that is

unusual, and gives the view from it quite a charm of its own. The large cup-like basin of *névé*, called the Plateau du Trient, lay at our feet encircled by the Aiguilles du Tour, Grande Fourche, Aiguilles Dorées, and the Portalet, with the grand peaks of the Aiguilles du Chardonnet and d'Argentière and le Tour Noir beyond; below us, to the north-west, was the fine ice-fall of the Trient Glacier, a wild confusion of crevasses and seracs, and further down, the valley of the Trient, with Finhauts in the distance, and the Savoy and Vaudois Alps behind; to the east we looked sheer down into the wild Val d'Arpetta and on the striking pinnacles of the Aiguilles d'Arpetta; the distant view comprising the Grand Combin, M. Vêlan, the Valais Alps and the Grand Paradis range.

It was a glorious day, and very warm, but over the Italian ranges ominous clouds were hanging. We spent $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours on the top to enjoy the view, to refresh the inner man, to take photographs, and last, but not least, to smoke the pipe of peace. We left the top at 1.45 p.m., intending to return by the Col des Ecandies and the Arpetta Glen, and so effect a traverse; we crossed the ridge and snow slopes to the Petite Pointe d'Orny, where we looked down a steep couloir or gully right into the head of the Arpetta Glen. We did not like the look of this gully, as the rocks seemed rotten, and there was much fresh snow on this side, but we found out afterwards that we ought to have descended this way, known as the "Pas de Chamois," and by which the ascent of the Pointe d'Orny is sometimes made; so we descended a steep rock face and snow slope to our left towards the Trient Glacier. About half-way down we saw that two courses were open to us, either to continue descending the rocks, which here fell very sheer on to the glacier, and trusting that the inevitable bergschrund or rimage would permit us to get round the ice-fall, or to traverse to our right across a long and steep snow slope which would take us on to rocks below the ice-fall, and so reach the Col des Ecandies. This snow slope, described so well in Javelle's "*Souvenirs d'un Alpiniste*," would either mean a lot of step-cutting or the risk

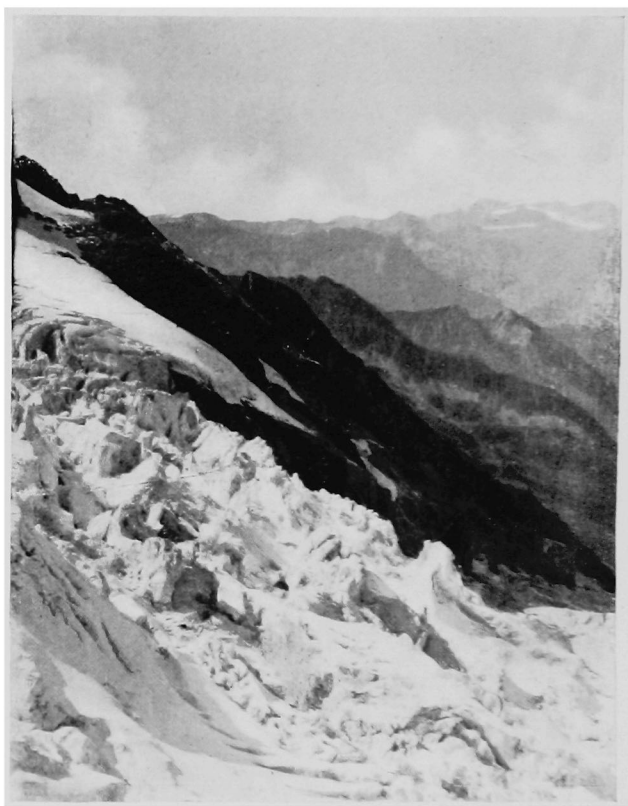


The Upper Trient Glacier and Aiguilles du Tour from Pointe d'Orny.



The Portalet from the Pointe d'Orny.

Photos. by J. W. WYATT.



The Ice-fall of the Trient Glacier.

Photo. by J. W. WYATT

of the fresh snow avalanching with us when we got on it, neither of which events inspired us with much ardour for the attempt. We held a council of war, and decided that, as neither of us knew the way, or where it would lead us, discretion was the better part of valour, and that we had better turn back, consoling ourselves for our want of enterprise with the thought that we had no guide, and would be only two on a rope, and that moreover the afternoon was advancing. From the point we had reached, just above the glacier, the magnificent seracs and ice-fall, tossed and twisted in every direction, formed a most striking picture; the distant view of the Trient Valley beyond gave a beauty to it generally missing amid grand ice scenery, and we both thought this one of the finest glacier scenes we remembered. (See photo.)

We climbed up the rocks again to the edge of the Plateau du Trient, roped, and skirted close under the rocks of the Pointe d'Orny towards the Col d'Orny; we had to be both watchful and careful, as here the crevasses and shrunds were much concealed by fresh snow. On approaching the Col, Gover and I had a difference of opinion. He thought the glacier too dangerous for only two on a rope, and wanted to take to the rocks, whereas I thought him needlessly cautious, and that with watchfulness and ordinary care the risk was minute. We were both tenacious of our respective opinions till I all but fell into a crevasse, which gave such force to his view (technically the right one) that I felt bound to give way and hand the lead over to him! We then descended a steep slope of rotten rock and scree from the plateau on to the Glacier d'Orny below the Col, and soon were on the dry glacier. By this time Gover had reduced me to a state of meek humility by reciting all the horrors of falls into crevasses, impossible rescues, etc., but at last my spirit returned unto me, as the rope seemed now quite superfluous, and I humbly suggested that we might dispense with it, and this he graciously but reluctantly agreed to do! Nemesis, however, was on our, or rather my track, for immediately

afterwards we were confronted by two yawning chasms impossible to cross without a long detour on the ice. Gover looked at me with an expression of "I told you so" on his face, and religiously kept his back to our obvious way out, the moraine, which we eventually took, and so back to the Cabane without further incident by 4.45 p.m. Here we cried a halt, and rested till 5.30 p.m., finishing the rest of our provisions, washed down by some hot coffee at the low price of 25 centimes each, which still further enhanced the good opinion I had formed of the Cabane d'Orny.

We returned by the way we had come, the Col de la Brea and the Arpetta châteaux, and reached Champex at 7.30 p.m., being rewarded at the end of a most enjoyable day by a beautiful sunset effect on the Grand Combin.

We now looked forward to a few days of good climbing, as the climbs round Champex, both rock and snow, seemed good and plentiful. We engaged that evening the best guide of the place, Onésime Crettex, and planned the Aiguille d'Argentière, the Aiguilles Dorées, the Portalet, and Fenêtre de Saleinaz, intending to go back to the Cabane d'Orny the following day—but alas, the next morning mist and rain, with much fresh snow on the hills. After a council of war, and finding the high mountains would not "go" for three or four days, we decided to close our season, go home, and leave something for another time.

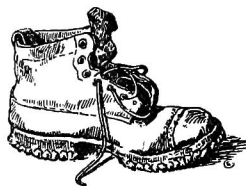
We both left Champex with much reluctance and regret. As a climbing centre it cannot, of course, compare with the better known and more frequented districts, but it has both a charm and individuality of its own with which few other districts can compete. The simpler climbs, or those close at hand, can be taken from Champex direct, but for those further afield or of a more arduous nature, the Cabane d'Orny forms an excellent starting point; Chamonix itself may be reached from the hut in a few hours by the Col du Tour and Argentière. Amongst the more important peaks and passes from this centre are the following :—

Aiguille d'Argentièrè.	Col du Tour.
Aiguille du Chardonnet.	Fenêtre du Tour.
Aiguilles du Tour.	Col du Chardonnet.
Portalet.	Fenêtre de Saleinaz.
Pointe d'Orny.	Col des Plines.
Grande et Petite Fourche.	Col des Ecandies.
The Aiguilles Dorées.	Etc., Etc.

A still better starting point for the higher climbs is perhaps the Saleinaz Club Hut on the edge of the glacier of the same name, easily reached in three or four hours from the Cabane d'Orny by the Col des Plines or the Fenêtre de Saleinaz.

Any one who desires for his summer holiday such a combination of natural charms as Champex provides, viz.:—a secluded lake, beautiful forest scenery, fine woodland walks, wild mountain glens, first-class rock-climbing, and magnificent snow and glacier scenery, combined with Alpine climbing of a high order, will, I think, not be disappointed with a visit to this neighbourhood.

Excellent descriptions of parts of this district will be found in Javelle's "*Souvenirs d'un Alpiniste*," so admirably translated by Mr. W. H. Chesson as "*Alpine Memories*." M. Javelle's account of his first ascent of the Tour Noir is reckoned to be one of the best Alpine papers ever written.



EVENING MEETING OF THE CLUB.

A NEW world was opened to many members at 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, the 16th Feb., in the Inns of Court Hotel, by Dr. W. Inglis Clark's lecture on "The Climbs of Scotland." Most of the great climbs of Skye, Glencoe and Ben Nevis, have been photographed again and again, and have thus become more or less familiar to many who have no personal knowledge of Scotland, but Dr. Clark not only gave us unusually fine views of what may be called the classical climbs, but shewed them to us under all sorts of rare winter conditions, besides illustrating many comparatively unknown districts, and detecting "bits" of technical interest to climbers, yet lurking unsuspected within a stone's throw of beaten tracks.

Skye, the Cairngorms, Glencoe, Ben Nevis and Arran, came in for special treatment, but enough was shewn of other ranges, to give to any stranger a fair idea of the kind of climbing to be found in almost any part of Scotland.

Many fine climbs were described in most interesting detail—Dr. Clark having had the good fortune and the skill to lead the way on a vast number of difficult first ascents. The Club had also the great pleasure of welcoming Mrs. Clark, who seems to have taken part in countless exploits of a truly appalling character.

The chair was taken by the President, Mr. W. Cecil Slingsby, who, in introducing the Lecturer, sketched the history of the Alpine Club and other similar institutions down to the foundation of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and pointed out that the same seniority, which the Alpine Club holds, as compared with all other mountaineering clubs, can be claimed by the Scottish Clubs as compared with all climbing

clubs, which confine their attention to the British Isles. Dr. Clark, who had so kindly come amongst them that night, was a leading spirit of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, a most energetic body possessing a field of operations far more varied and extensive than ours, and working it with a zeal which must be seen to be believed.

He had had that privilege himself, had passed many glorious days among the hills in company with divers members of it, and had been shewn "within a mile of Edinburgh town," genuine rock-climbs, which, if not very big, were yet of striking difficulty and merit.

The lecture was then given, and was followed throughout with the closest attention. We cannot pretend to give even a summary of it here. Suffice it to say that the lecturer produced the impression that, for difficulty, there was nothing to beat the Crowberry Ridge, on Buchaille Etive, a particular ascent on the N. E. face of Ben Nevis, and a certain intricate struggle on the face of Loch-na-Gair. He concluded by a most hospitable and open-handed offer to members of the Club to tell them of good things yet remaining unaccomplished, for he and his friends were not so selfish as to want all the plums for themselves. They welcomed the stranger, and could supply him with numerous nuts which would take all his time to crack.

At the conclusion of the lecture, when the well-merited applause had subsided, the President said that he had listened with extraordinary pleasure to Dr. Clark's story, and thought the photographs the best he had ever seen. He was very grateful to Dr. Clark, because some of the scenes were familiar to him and recalled glorious memories, but many which he did not know would be well-known to the ex-President, Mr. Haskett-Smith, whom he was going to ask to propose a vote of thanks for the excellent lecture. At least one of the pictures—that of Ben Eay—had a memory for both of them, as it was there that he (the speaker) once cut open the ex-President's head with a stone.

Mr. Haskett-Smith said that after such a splendid lecture, Dr. Clark deserved to have his vote of thanks proposed by the

President, and might well feel aggrieved at finding it proffered by one of lower degree; but there were two considerations which might help to console him. First, that the honour was only postponed, and what he did not get now he would get to-morrow night, as Mr. Slingsby was nursing his voice in order to deliver in the most telling way a number of pretty things which he had got ready to say about Dr. Clark at the dinner. Secondly, that, in setting another to the task, the President had practically performed it himself, and really left very little for his deputy to say. This much, however, remained for the present speaker: he might claim that, of all the glorious pictures shewn that evening, hardly one had failed to call up to his mind days of splendid exercise and enjoyment. There was hardly a hill shewn but held for him memories—not always sunny ones it was true—but memories which he was glad to say he shared with, from first to last, a good many members of the S. M. C.

He remembered one climb which, perhaps, better illustrated that "Scotch caution," which the Doctor had mentioned, than did some of that climber's own exploits.

It was on Cir Mhor in Arran, and one feature of it was a narrow oblique crack in a bulging wall above a rather exposed grass ledge. The only previous ascent had been made by "some young fellows of twenty," and for that reason, the S. M. C. man sent this poor Southron up first, and refused to help him with a shoulder, but immediately afterwards demanded the rope for himself "to save time." It certainly did so, for he came up like a lamplighter.

He further described a walk of 40 or 50 miles, from Blair Athol, by Glen Tilt, across the Dee to near Loch Avon, back to the Dee, up the Larig Ghrumach, up to the top of Ben Macdhui and back, down to Aviemore, and so by rail to Blair Athol again in 24 hours.

In two points only was the lecture (he regretted to hint) untrustworthy. It might lead them to imagine that the "Scotch caution," of which they had heard, existed only in name, and such of them as were photographers might form

from the lovely photographs, an unduly favourable impression of the weather of Scotland.

The Rev. J. N. Burrows supported the vote, warmly praising the lecture, and regretting that, personally, he knew so little of Scotland in comparison with Wales; and it was carried with acclamation.

Dr. Inglis Clark, in reply, defended the climate of his native land, and promised long spells of perfect weather to all who would visit Scotland in the spring.

The proceedings then terminated.

Among those who signed the Attendance Book were:—W. C. Slingsby; W. P. Marler; W. V. Goulstone; F. Garrett; Henry Candler; Thos. Arnold, Jr.; W. H. Gover; Geo. B. Bryant; Laurence Carr; Chas. C. B. Moss; J. Phillips; W. P. Haskett-Smith; Roger Thompson; Rev. J. Nelson Burrows; Claude C. Benson; J. Donald Hunter; C. H. Townley; Thomas Meares; John C. Morland; C. W. Nettleton; and the following were among the visitors introduced:—J. G. Parker; A. F. E. Gilbertson; C. A. Nussey; G. F. Gregor Grant.



COMMITTEE NOTES.

THE following new members were elected in January :—

William Walter Lucas, Cowper Road, Harpenden, Herts.
 Robertson Lamb, Buxton House, Wallasey, Cheshire.
 George Seatree, 39 Merton Road, Bootle, Liverpool.
 Alfred Henry Binns, 10 Holmelands Park, North Sunderland.
 W. H. Gover, 10 Old Square, W.C.
 R. W. Lloyd, 97 Thurleigh Road, S.W.

* * * *

AT the meeting on the 10th March the following new members were elected :—

F. S. Young, The College, Bishop's Stortford, Herts.
 Walter M. Roberts, Royal Military Academy, Woolwich.

Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith was re-elected by the Committee as an extra member for the present year.

* * * *

THE Committee considered a memorial received from a number of members in the Manchester and Liverpool districts suggesting the adoption of better means to give members in those districts opportunities of gathering together in a social way without the necessity of coming to London. A reply has now been sent expressing the hearty approval of the Committee of the object sought after, and suggesting the formation of a local committee to carry out the necessary

details with the assistance of the Honorary Secretary of the Club. Possibly a dinner will be arranged to take place soon after Easter. There are about 50 members of the Club in those districts.

* * * *

THE memorial regarding the proposed light railway from Beddgelert to Bettws-y-Coed was read, and carefully considered. It was worded as follows, and signed by 66 members :—

“We, the undersigned members of the Club, have observed with regret that up to the present time no action has been taken by the Club in connection with the proposed light railway from Beddgelert to Bettws-y-Coed, through Nant Gwynant and Capel Curig.

“We are of opinion that the undertaking is one which adversely affects the vital interests of the Club, and that it is not yet too late to oppose it.

“We therefore respectfully call upon you to take all such steps as may be necessary to enable the Club to pronounce a collective opinion, and, if so decided, to use every possible means of opposition to the scheme, and to register against it their most emphatic protest.”

Letters were also read from two other members in opposition to the undertaking.

The Committee had in fact given full consideration to this matter at their meeting of the 18th March, 1904, and reached the conclusion that opposition to the scheme must be left to individual action. A petition against the railway, sent in last year, bore the signatures of a good number of members of our Club. On the 15th November last, at a meeting of the Board of Trade, the various parties were heard by counsel (including the Alpine Club), but the result was that the railway from Lake Gwynant to Bettws-y-Coed was “recommended.” The Committee were informed that the scheme would be officially sanctioned as a matter of course.

Under these circumstances, no action by our Committee

against the railway would seem to offer any hope of result, and of this our members have since been advised by circular.

* * * *

THE English Lake District Association having asked whether our Club was contemplating the building of foot bridges over mountain streams near Wasdale Head, the Honorary Secretary was requested to reply in the negative.

* * * *

THE Yorkshire Ramblers brought off their Annual Dinner at Leeds on the 11th February, and the President, Mr. Alfred Barran, held a reception before the dinner, which was attended by a large number of members and guests. The chief amongst the guests was Mr. C. E. Mathews, and there were also invited representatives of our own and all other kindred Clubs.

All that goes to make such a meeting successful was there in abundance. The dinner was good, as were the speeches; the music and recitation perhaps better still. Yorkshire hospitality has been heard of before, and lives up to its reputation.

Nor could he probably find elsewhere a better field for the exercise of patience and determination under trying circumstances.

The Club is twelve or thirteen years old, with a good history, a library of long standing, regular lectures, a growing membership running near a hundred, and a *Journal* which may justly claim a high place amongst other publications of its kind, whether from the scientific or the climbing point of view.

And for genuine work, out of doors, these modestly named Ramblers have earned high praise. In Switzerland and on the British hills, and especially perhaps in Norway, they are to be heard of.

And the subterranean wonders of their great county are peculiarly their own. No member of the Climbers' Club need lack of new sensations, if, under their guidance, he has the happiness to explore the silent and watery depths of their famous pot holes.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

THE Eighth Annual General Meeting was held on Friday, 17th February, 1905, at the Hotel Cecil, London. About 45 members were present.

The election of officers, for the ensuing year, was the first business. Mr. William Cecil Slingsby was re-elected President. Professor James A. Ewing, F.R.S., was re-elected a Vice-President, and the term of office of Mr. Hugo Young, K.C., having expired, the Rev. John Nelson Burrows, M.A., was elected a Vice-President in his place.

The retiring member of the Committee was Dr. T. K. Rose, and Mr. Sidney Skinner, M.A., was elected to serve, with the following gentlemen re-elected :—

Mr. E. A. Baker, Mr. J. M. Archer Thomson, Professor J. B. Farmer, F.R.S., Professor L. R. Wilberforce, Mr. Christopher Cookson, Mr. C. W. Nettleton, Mr. A. W. Andrews, Mr. E. R. Turner. Mr. C. C. B. Moss as Honorary Treasurer, and Mr. G. B. Bryant as Honorary Secretary, were also re-elected.

Upon the motion of the President the accounts for the year 1904, as audited, were passed by the meeting.

Eleven new members were added to the Club during the year 1904, the number at the beginning of 1905 being 255.

The Honorary Secretary mentioned, informally, that he had that day received a printed memorial addressed to the Committee, and signed by 66 members of the Club, which would of course be brought before the Committee at their new meeting. It was in the following terms :—

“We, the undersigned members of the Club, have observed with regret that up to the present time no action has been

taken by the Club in connection with the proposed light railway from Beddgelert to Bettws-y-Coed, through Nant Gwynant and Capel Curig.

"We are of opinion that the undertaking is one which adversely affects the vital interests of the Club, and that it is not yet too late to oppose it.

"We therefore respectfully call upon you to take all such steps as may be necessary to enable the Club to pronounce a collective opinion, and, if so decided, to use every possible means of opposition to the scheme, and to register against it their most emphatic protest."

With the permission of the meeting, he further stated that he had information that on the 15th November last, at the meeting at the Board of Trade where the various parties who opposed the scheme were represented by counsel, the proposed railway from Lake Gwynant to Bettws-y-Coed was "recommended," so that it appeared that any fresh protest could not be effectual. The matter had been fully discussed by our Committee on March 18th, 1904, when it was decided that the matter must be left to individual action.

List of members present at the Annual Dinner, which was held immediately after the General Meeting :—

Mr. A. W. Andrews.

" Thos. Arnold, Jun.

" R. F. Backwell.

" C. E. Benson.

" Henry Bond.

" H. R. Boyce.

" G. F. Bremner.

Dr. T. Brushfield.

Mr. G. B. Bryant.

" C. R. Canney.

" W. E. Corlett.

" F. H. E. Cunliffe.

" R. C. Cyriax.

" A. W. Davey.

" J. H. Davey.

" W. L. Davies.

Mr. O. Eckenstein.

" G. W. H. Ellis.

Professor J. A. Ewing, F.R.S.

Mr. F. Garrett.

" W. V. Goulstone.

" W. P. Haskett-Smith, Past President.

" G. F. Hatfield.

" Wynnard Hooper.

Dr. P. Horrocks.

Mr. J. Donald Hunter.

" C. Lehmann.

" D. Leighton.

" R. W. Lloyd.

" H. C. Lowen.

" W. L. Lucas.

Mr. C. E. Mathews, Past President.	Mr. E. V. Slater.
" C. Myles Mathews.	" W. Cecil Slingsby, President.
" T. Meares.	" G. Seatree.
" J. C. Morland.	" P. S. Thompson.
" H. G. Morrish.	" H. S. Thompson.
" C. W. Nettleton.	" R. E. Thompson.
" J. M. Nicol.	" C. H. Townley.
" G. Nicholson.	" A. W. Wakefield.
" L. K. Pagden.	" W. Watson.
" J. H. A. Phillips.	" W. E. Webb.
" R. A. Robertson.	" G. R. West.
" H. Runge.	" W. J. Williams.
" J. Sandison.	Prof. O. K. Williamson, M.D.
" Sydney Skinner.	Mr. G. W. Young,
" J. Bamford Slack, M.P.	" W. Zimmerman.

while the list of guests included the following :—

Mr. D. Anderson.	Mr. J. C. Hicks.
" Thos. Arnold, Sen.	" A. B. Horne.
" V. W. Baddeley.	" W. G. Johnston.
" G. P. Baker.	" H. Lehmann.
" H. Barrett.	" H. D. Lowthian.
" A. Bathurst.	" R. McKay.
Dr. T. Brown.	Dr. Meek.
Mr. — Brushfield.	Mr. F. W. Moss.
" Alan Bryant.	" R. Pearce.
" Ellis Carr.	Dr. T. C. Porter, F.R.S.
Dr. W. Inglis Clark.	Mr. E. J. Renaud.
Mr. J. R. Clive.	" P. Salter.
" N. Fraser.	" W. J. Shannon.
" J. C. Gait.	" H. Stabler.
" S. H. Hamer.	Dr. A. H. Thompson.
" E. L. W. Haskett-Smith.	Mr. J. Warre.
" W. G. Holman.	" B. K. Welch.

The usual loyal toasts having been drunk, that of "The Climbers' Club" was brought forward in the following terms by the PRESIDENT, whose rising was the signal for an outburst of applause :—

Gentlemen,—It is my happy lot and great privilege to be allowed to propose, what is undoubtedly, amongst climbers, that is, members of the Climbers' Club, the toast of the evening, for, does it not concern our own noble selves? Of course, with the innate modesty which is proverbial amongst all mountaineers, it will not do for us to say too much of ourselves, but still a little will be useful, and I think that, without going into terms of exaggeration, I may say that the Climbers' Club is a very great institution, that it has a thousand times justified its existence and the creation—(much amusement)—I mean justified its creation—and I am glad to see before me many of the creators. (Hear, hear.)

Now, gentlemen, so long as the counsels of this Club are directed by such men as Mr. Bryant, Mr. Moss, Mr. Andrews and others whom I see before me, and their most able committee, whose consummate tact and unflagging zeal will enable this Club to sail smoothly over any troubled water it may meet with in the future, so long will it be a very great success, provided always that the President does, well, say about one-half of what he conceives to be his duty. I should like, on behalf of the Club, to say some pretty things about Mr. Bryant and about Mr. Moss and other great stays of this Club, but I am afraid I should make them blush. I hope they will feel that we recognise what they do, and that they will think and will agree with me, that there are times when perhaps, though "speech is silver, silence is golden." You will take, in this case, the will for the deed.

Never was the sport of mountain climbing so popular, never were its votaries so keen as is the case to-day. I have just had a very remarkable ocular demonstration to that effect. This is the fourth meeting that I have had the pleasure of attending during the last eight days connected with mountaineering. A week ago I had the good luck to attend a meeting of the "Rucksack Club." (Hear, hear.) Why, gentlemen, did that grand sporting club choose a word for their title which none of us know how to spell? (Laughter.) Never did I meet a more enthusiastic lot of fellows in my life. The County Palatine of Lancashire contains climbers of which all clubs in the world have reason to be proud. The following day I had the good luck to attend the annual dinner of the "Yorkshire Ramblers." (Hear, hear.) Our own giants, Mr. C. E. Mathews and Mr. Bryant, were present as honoured guests. I think, gentlemen, that it is quite possible that Yorkshire cheers must be still ringing in their ears. Last evening the Climbers' Club had the infinite pleasure of welcoming Dr. Inglis Clark—(cheers)—and of listening to his racy descriptions of mountain climbing in Scotland, which were illustrated by a most magnificent set of lantern slides of British mountain views, the finest this great city has ever seen. Mr. Haskett-Smith told you last night that I should be saying all manner of pretty things about Dr. Inglis Clark. It is rather a big subject. I had armed myself with a notice which Dr. Clark had sent to his club.

Unfortunately I have mislaid it. I think that the way in which the honorary secretary attracts the members of the S.M.C. to attend the Club meets may be copied with advantage. The notice to which I refer was an invitation to attend the Winter Meet at Loch Awe, and amongst the great attractions by which he knows he will draw Scottish men to the meet, he holds out the great probability of their being benighted upon Ben Cruachan. There are other equally fascinating temptations. Though I am not going to say the pretty things that Mr. Haskett-Smith said I was going to, I must say, on the part of the Climbers' Club, that we do feel deeply grateful to him, and also to the Scottish Mountaineering Club for the loan of the slides, some of which, I think, are the property of that club. Last night we were reminded of the undoubted fact that slimness of figure is occasionally a great advantage in mountaineering, especially if climbing the Church Door on Bidean nan Bien. Gentlemen, I cannot exactly understand why a Scotchman should talk about a church door. I have applied to Dr. Clark, and he said, "We do not talk about a kirk door." I know nothing of Scottish theology, but I think you will all agree with me, though the joke's a poor one, that that kirk door must have represented the kirk door of the United Presbyterians—the UP body. Ah, well do I remember last year, on the occasion of the second ascent of Rulten, when my friend Dr. Collie, with a perverseness that was characteristic, led our party through a hole on a vertical chimney, in Arctic Norway, where it was wholly unnecessary for us to go, and there my knee stuck fast. Hermann Woolley, Norman Collie and Dr. Collier said it was something above the knee which stuck. I, poor wretch, could only pray, and was fain to mutter, "Oh, that this too too solid flesh would melt, thaw and resolve itself into a dew."

Now, gentlemen, these dinners may lead to the formation of a certain amount of adipose tissue, but they are all right, they lead us also to the planning of grand mountain expeditions. Don't tell me that no such arrangements have been made here to-night during dinner, for I won't believe it. In these expeditions, the adipose tissue will be converted into muscular tissue. There are also other excellent reasons why we should dine together. Truly, gentlemen, as we realized last evening, it is the golden age for climbing in Scotland. Then, brother members of the Climbers' Club, up and be doing, and do not let our friends across the Border get it all their own way. There, as I know full well, victory awaits you on many a grisly ridge, and on many a rugged mountain face, but do not be tempted into trying to learn how to spell the names of the mountains of the Scottish hills, otherwise you will be confronted with a difficulty which you have no power to surmount. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, though we saw last night abundant evidence that there is excellent snow and ice practice to be had in Great Britain, it must not be thought by youngsters amongst us who have not had the fortune of going to the Alps,

that it is of the same nature as what is met with on the high mountains. It is not so. This arises from the fact that on all the climbs in Great Britain the snow on the mountains is almost always in good order. You can attempt to ascend the most difficult snow gullies on Ben Nevis and other mountains at four o'clock in the afternoon with as great safety as you can at ten in the morning. The non-recognition of this fact has, I am sorry to say, on more than one occasion led to inevitable disaster, and possibly may in the future.

With regard to this Club, I note that death has been in evidence this last year, and we mourn the loss of several friends. Some of our most honoured members died on their beds. Others on the mountains. Amongst those who have been called to their long rest, the name of Mr. Thomas S. Halliday—(sympathetic murmurs)—a well-known figure in the Club comes to mind. We also mourn the sad loss of Mr. Clay, a skilful mountaineer and a delightful comrade, who found his death on one of the finest snow mountains of the Italian Alps. We deplore their loss, but whilst we mourn for them, we recognise of course that we are all mortal, and that, sooner or later, our own turn will come.

In the Club we possess a great institution, an institution which is still in its youth, which is, I think, a greater institution, and really a bigger thing than we are apt to acknowledge. Just to think, gentlemen, merely of the friendships formed amongst the high mountains, which continue as long as life itself. I will not dwell on this subject. Yes, it is good for men who possess common interests to club together as we do, and it is a far better thing, too, for clubs to club together. Let us who are privileged to belong to the Climbers' Club foster and cherish our Club. Let us aspire not only to lofty heights but also to lofty ideals, and, believe me, there is no sport in the world so well calculated to ennoble man, to give him breadth of mind and solidity of character, to turn a man into a good citizen, to make him a wise and happy creature, as the sport of mountain climbing. Let us, then, the members of the Climbers' Club, preserve untarnished the high reputation amongst kindred clubs to which we have already attained.

Gentlemen, I give you "The Climbers' Club." (Loud applause.)

In reply to the toast, which was received with the usual enthusiasm, Mr. F. H. E. CUNLIFFE said :—

After the most interesting and inspiring speech of our President, I cannot say that I approach my task with any degree of confidence. Like Mr. Montague Tigg, I am flushed with wine, but I am not gay. (Laughter.) I feel like another of Dickens's heroes, Sydney Carton, when he was led to execution. I think he said—or Dickens said it for him—that the thoughts he was thinking at that moment were very well worth

writing down. I, too, have thought the same of my dinner ideas ; and also that they were much more worthy of record than those which I am now about to express. At any rate I may say at once how very deeply I feel the honour of being allowed to undertake the responsible task of replying to this toast. I do not know by what right I do so, unless that it is as one of those members of the Club who, without possessing any technical skill in the art of climbing, yet take a very keen interest in it, and cherish a genuine affection for the British hills. (Hear, hear.) To such as myself the Climbers' Club, in the true spirit of mountaineering, has been good enough to give admittance, and no one is more proud of its membership than myself. Yet I wish that I could more adequately represent the varied interests that draw us together, that I could represent not merely those who take a general interest in the subject, but also those who possess more practical skill. Unfortunately my career as a climber, if such it may be called, has been brief and broken, partly from want of opportunity, partly, as the climbing text-books say, from want of suitable companions. I think that its climax, if an Irishism be permitted, was my descent from the Col above Glaslyn, some four Easters ago, in the wake of your esteemed ex-President, Mr. Mathews. (Hear, hear.) As I watched my leader traversing the Upper Pig Track with a rapidity and decision worthy of Meg Merrilees herself—(laughter)—I felt that I was very near to the Golden Age of Mountaineering—I have always been a worshipper of ages and heroes—to that enchanted land where we have all wandered in company with Whymper and Tyndall, and Leslie Stephen. I felt we were close to the great men of the past, and I seemed to recognise, in the energy and alertness of the movements of my guide one of the characteristics of a race of men amongst which even he was not the foremost. I should like to linger in that romantic region, but I must pass on. I am very sure that in thus meeting many of the first generation of Alpine Climbers we all of us feel that we are as near as we can be to that golden age, and that, as members of a flourishing club of mountaineers, we can bridge over, as no one else can, the lengthening interval that separates us from the great past. To us, too, are left its traditions. I hope that we shall leave to the generations that succeed us that same spirit of cautious adventure which lies at the basis of mountain exploration, and hand on, in its freshness, to our descendants, that peculiar combination—romance and reverence which are the mainsprings of our sport, and which are together accountable for its singular and overwhelming fascination. (Applause.)

Of course we, as the President has said, do not rely entirely on the past. Like other Climbing Clubs, like the Alpine Club itself, we have a field of our own. We have the Hills of Wales and Cumberland ; and these, I think I may say, the Climbers' Club has made peculiarly its own. Look at the literature which has been published on the

subject. To an ex-President we owe the first attempt at a true Climbers' Guide to those districts ; a late and much regretted member has written a standard and most exhaustive account of the rocks of Cumberland ; and now we may look forward to an equally interesting book by Mr. Abraham on Wales. We may fairly claim a preponderant share in the literature of Welsh and English climbing, as well as in the practical exploration of those districts. But everybody will agree with me that our work is not yet done, and that, at any rate in Snowdonia, there are considerable fields where fresh and original work might be accomplished, and the work of others might be completed. Everyone will have his own ideas on the subject, but it has always seemed to me that the mass of Carnedd Llewelyn, especially the fine gullies on the Penhelig Ridge, might receive more attention than they have hitherto had. Now we have an admirable instrument for the collection of fresh material in our *Journal*. It is the only periodical of the kind that I ever read from end to end, and I do it with intense pleasure. I even look forward to the time when we shall all be dead. (Laughter.) You take exception to the phrase, but it is to our posthumous fame that I look, to the great deeds, as Napoleon said to his Old Guard, that we have done together. Our fame will live in the *Journal*, which will itself become one of the curiosities of English literature, will perhaps take rank with the works of the early navigators. That surely is something to look forward to. Speaking personally, and not from the editorial point of view, the more numbers of the *Journal* that appear the better. (Hear, hear.)

Now, gentlemen, I come to the practical side of our business. I shall not venture to trench upon the technical niceties of a subject which our President has already treated with such learning and authority. But, as a tyro, I have often felt that the great mass of expert knowledge contained in the Club is largely wasted so far as educational purposes are concerned. Let me give you an experience of my own which illustrates the point. I was lately staying at Caux, on the Lake of Geneva. Those of you who know the district will remember that in its vicinity rise the Rochers de Naye, a peak of so formidable a nature that the obstacles which it presents to ordinary pedestrians are surmountable only by means of a railway. I determined, however, as the railway was closed, to attempt the ascent on foot. But I made a fatal error at the commencement. I violated a great canon of mountaineering. Of course I should have taken a guide. There was a guide ; the difficulty was to recognise him. His hat was garlanded with edelweiss, his clothes and rucksack were fringed and ornamented like those of a Red Indian ; he carried an alpenstock with a chamois-horn handle. (Laughter.) The only time I had been to Switzerland before I had stayed at Zermatt, and the guides there in no way resembled the guide at Caux. I started without him, and—I blush to admit it—made the ascent along the railway line. I lingered on the top—for I don't believe in

coming down a mountain till I am obliged to—and got down at sunset to find the whole hotel, which is always in need of some fresh excitement, in an uproar. It was believed that I was lost, and it was with something like disappointment that they viewed my safe arrival. I had passed, then, through peril unawares. I inquired where I could have been lost. Then I realised the extent of my rashness. There is a tunnel which traverses the mountain, the doors of which are shut every night. Had I come down half an hour later, I should have been immured till next morning. (Laughter.) Such are the risks run through lack of expert advice. No wonder I feel that the Club might utilise its knowledge and skill to better purpose. I venture to put forward a scheme for the consideration of the committee, and I hope that those whose names I mention will believe that I speak with the deepest respect. I would suggest that the expert ability of the Club should be employed educationally. The course of training would be marked out over a well-known climbing field. We should divide our members into the three time-honoured classes of professors, dons and undergraduates. The professors would of course enjoy the immemorial privilege of their class, choose their own sphere of operations, and abide in the ancient ways, without breaking fresh ground, as long as they pleased. The dons would, of course, follow in the track of the professors, with discreet, but not disruptive, criticism, as is the privilege of dons. The undergraduates, amongst which I myself would be proud to be enrolled, would benefit from both. I would suggest that certain chairs and readerships should be created. Mr. Haskett-Smith, for example, would be the natural and proper occupant of the Needle Chair; Mr. Robinson would specialize on the north face of the Pillar Rock; Mr. Thompson would lecture on Lliwedd; and Mr. Abraham and his brother would enjoy Research Fellowships. Smaller details, such as remuneration, would no doubt be easily settled by the committee. At any rate I leave the results of such a scheme to the kindly imagination of my listeners.

There is one more characteristic of the Club to which I should like to refer, namely, our relations with the outside world. We act, like other mountaineering clubs, as a powerful civilizing agent. We have carried the towel and the toothbrush into regions almost unvisited by men. We have shed material benefits on many a lonesome shanty, many a benighted inn. We have been, like the Athanasian Creed, a source of comfort to thousands. (Laughter.) I do not deny that the results of civilization are not always satisfactory; but we are no more responsible for railways in our most beautiful valleys than the early western pioneers are for modern Chicago, and like those pioneers, we fly further into the waste. From Llanberis we went to Pen-y-Gwryd, from Pen-y-Gwryd we have come to Pen-y-Pass, where we have found another Mrs Owen, not unworthy of the fame of the first. May that sanctuary remain inviolate! Whatever be in store for

us, of one thing I am certain, the future is with the high places of the earth, and therefore with the mountains. To take one instance only. The Admiralty have invaded Scawfell. A naval friend of mine last winter, was plastering its gullies with the yellow envelopes of telegrams which carried the destinies of navies. I yield to no one in the vagueness of my ideas as to wireless telegraphy, but I cherish a vision of an admiral scaling the rocks of Snowdon, and dispatching from its summit wireless messages that shall decide the battles of the future. What a cheering thought this for the patient unrecognised climber! At any rate, whether this vision be realised or not, of the immediate future of this Club, under so enthusiastic and inspiring a President, there can be no possible doubt. (Applause.)

The toast of "Kindred Clubs" was next proposed by Mr. J. BAMFORD SLACK, M.P., who said :—

'I have been wondering, Mr. Chairman, why I was selected to propose this toast. I very speedily came to the conclusion, as, while I was standing in the adjoining room at the close of the business meeting, a gentleman who was unknown to me, but to whom I think I must have been very well known, came and spoke to me and said, "We are going to have a very good dinner to-night. I always enjoy these dinners because the speeches are of a very high order. I am afraid they will not be so good as usual to-night!" He evidently knew me, and my limited and unpractised speaking powers! But he evidently did not know my eloquent friend Mr. Cunliffe. There was a Mayoral banquet in Yorkshire once, where the Mayor was a rough, self-made man, none the worse for that, by the way. He did not approve of one of the vocalists, who had a very bad cold, and did not manifest any idea of time, tune or harmony. The Mayor was heard to say to him after the song, "I dinna blame thee, my lad; thou hast done the best thou couldst, but if I could get hold of the man that engaged thee, I'd wring his neck." (Laughter.) I fancy our Secretary will have a bad time of it after dinner to-night. I belong to at least two or three of these Kindred Clubs. Since I first saw the long chain of snowy Alps, more than 21 years ago, I have always had the greatest respect for the father of all these clubs, the English Alpine Club, to which I am now proud to belong. Occasionally my respect has fallen into contempt or annoyance, as, for instance, once at Cortina, in Tyrol, when my good friend Dr. Morriston Davies and I were contemplating a peak, and had almost decided to scale Monte Cristallo. We mentioned this proposal to a young member of the Alpine Club, who patronisingly said, with a supercilious sneer, "Oh yes, you can go up Cristallo with a pair of bedroom slippers and an umbrella." We started the next morning, and I took a walking-stick, and nearly broke

my neck, as I did break my stick on the glissade coming down. I gave that gentleman some good plain Anglo-Saxon when I came down, but he got better still from Dr. Davies, reminding me of the old railway story, told by the railway guard of the Scotch Express, who was asked by a passenger whom he locked up in a first-class compartment at King's Cross Station to wake him up at York, adding, "I shall be very sleepy, and shall doubtless complain and abuse you, but make me get out." The next morning the same old gentleman emerged at Edinburgh, and was very irascible indeed, and in no measured terms rated the guard for his negligence in omitting to waken him at York, where he had wished to alight. "Well, sir," said the guard, "your language is pretty strong, but it's a fool to what that gentleman used whom I turned out some hours ago at York!" I have the profoundest respect, and always have had, for those that love the mountains, and we are glad to do honour to all Kindred Clubs to-night. Their members, like ourselves, are lovers of the hills. All good and all wise men in all ages of the world have necessarily loved the mountains. Especially should denizens of cities appreciate the beauty and charm of the everlasting hills. We are in London to-night. We are in the valley. We here dwell in the valley of the Thames. We are daily in the valley of the ordinary routine of life, and of our often humdrum ordinary business avocations. But the heights are ours, if we will but climb them. Leslie Stephen well says somewhere that "those love the mountains best who have wandered longest in their recesses, and have most endangered their own lives and those of their guides in the attempts to open out routes amongst them," and yet with what different eyes different men regard these objects of admiration. The great author I have just quoted tells a story of a guide he had brought to London, and as they were together in the train for Dover, leaving one of the great London railway stations, Leslie Stephen pointed to the forest of chimney pots, and, with an appropriate sigh, said to the famous Swiss guide, "Ah, you and I have seen a finer view than this from the top of Mont Blanc." The guide, after a solemn pause, replied with pathos, "Ah, sir, this is far finer." Our attitude to the mountains is the opposite of this, and yet we too often miss the poetry, the beauty and the pathos of our own home surroundings.

You and I go to the Alps in search of health, and we find it there. This region of Central Europe is the best playground in the world for us, after spending the previous ten months of our lives toiling in the smoke and smell of great centres like London. We have the opposite point of view to Leslie Stephen's guide.

I was very much amused at Mr. Cunliffe's description of his solitary adventures upon, and descent of, the Rochers de Naye. I watched that operation from Caux eight days ago. I had no axe. I had struggled up on-foot to the station above Caux with two *luges*, on which my wife and I presently descended with bumpy rapidity. But we first watched the

motley group of men and women, who had been taken up the formidable railway-conquered peak by a guide. I saw them coming down the snow slopes above us, sliding or glissading, all in different attitudes. During this, my first winter visit, I realized that the mountains of Switzerland and Savoy are delightful at all times of the year. In winter they are even more glorious than in the golden autumn time. In the very near future Switzerland will be more resorted to in winter than in summer. A Frenchman said to me last autumn, "You Englishmen take your holidays very madly. We, when we take our holiday, we rest. You, you go and get tired out." It is just the same at home. Instead of taking our recreation, sipping coffee in the street, we seek physical effort and exhaustion. We take our pleasures and holidays strenuously—cricket, football, hockey, lacrosse, golf. This characteristic of our nation has done a great deal to crystallize and build us up into the people that we are. We strive after rest and recreation by tiring ourselves out physically. I am glad, then, to be here to-night to see some old and friendly faces, and I am glad also to see those that are unfamiliar to me. I see one or two here with whom I have climbed. Howard Barrett, for instance, with whom I once passed a few hours at night on the old door of the ruins of the Stockje Hut *en route* for the Dent Blanche.

It is very pleasant to come here after the week I have been spending listening to unending, and not always interesting, speechifying, and to change to the charming oratory of Mr. Cunliffe, and I rejoice to give you this toast of the Kindred Societies and Clubs. Many of them have been mentioned. They represent our brothers in the craft. Let us see to it that we exercise our noble and scientific sport, always having regard to the demands of safety, wisdom, caution and prudence, so that we do not bring our sport, which is the joy of both old and young, into disrepute by running risks which no man ought to run. There are two very elementary conditions which I, as an absolute amateur, always observe. I never climb when the weather is doubtful, and I always take the best guides I can find, and, wherever possible, men I already know. I would commend these two very simple rules to all my young friends here, who have proved their skill in Cumbria and Cambria, but have not yet tried their skill in the Alps. A chapter might be written upon the discipline of mountaineering, the practice it gives in mastering difficulties, but I content myself now by agreeing with the poet Byron—

Though sluggards deem it but a foolish chase,
And marvel men should quit their easy chair
The toilsome way and long long league to trace,
Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air
And life, that bloated Ease can never hope to share.

—(Applause.)

In reply to this toast, the principal guest of the evening, Dr. W. INGLIS CLARK, member of the Alpine Club and of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, spoke as follows :—

I look upon it as one of the most special honours that could have been conferred on me, to be asked to reply to this toast. There are times when one feels that in replying to a toast there is some difficulty. The difficulty may be that the subject is unfamiliar, or it may be so exalted and noble, as to be impossible to be properly represented. This is the difficulty I feel. This subject is the most eloquent one I could possibly have, more especially as, representing the Alpine Club and the S.M.S., I am representing two of the noblest clubs in the world. I have no hesitation in placing the Alpine Club first. It is true that before the time of the Alpine Club men went up mountains, but there was no attempt to place mountaineering on a sound basis, and to formulate definite rules for the sport. Anyone may attempt to climb a mountain, and the more agile or strong or daring he may be the greater is the possibility of his overcoming some special difficulty, but he may fail where an older or more experienced climber, through knowledge of the rules of mountaineering, succeeds finding a way. (Hear, hear.)

Those who founded the Alpine Club had before them a distinct intention. We may recognize that the first thing that was in the minds of these founders was an intense love of nature. They felt that no obstacle must interfere with their getting to the goal of their ambition. They did more. They said, we must at all costs get to this point, but we must do it in such a way that we take no risks that can be avoided. The public think that mountaineers are people who disregard risks, and in fact rejoice in encountering them. A few years ago I used to get letters recommending that I should enter my own house by the water pipe. (Laughter.) That showed that the public had the idea that I liked to encounter some difficulty in getting what other people could get with no trouble. I am confident that the members of the Alpine Club had no such idea. They felt that they could not get to the mountain summits without undergoing privation, and preparing themselves for it, thus laying the foundations of success, so that they might perform these feats without unnecessary danger. They desired to see this glorious world in its finest and best aspects. We have only three aspects of the world that are not touched, changed and altered by human hands. One is the sea, another is the sky, and the last is the mountain summit. The sky is ever changeful, and the clouds floating along evade the scrutiny of artist or photographer. The sea is even more mobile, but the mountains, ever changing though we know them to be, yet retain their visible shape from year to year, and remain permanent monuments of their Maker. These mountains, how is the ordinary person to get up and see them? He must undertake risks

and take chances. The mountaineer, on the other hand, prepares himself for his task and sport with such thoroughness and determination that he may climb mountains with comparative safety. Mountaineering, it must be confessed, is a dangerous sport, but, just because it is dangerous, it is the safest of sports. The man who sees no danger incurs constant risk, but the climber who recognizes danger on every hand, guards against it, and proceeds without fear. The more we realize our danger, the safer we are. These are the maxims of the Alpine Club. In course of time those who were first mainly searchers after the beautiful, and lovers of nature, began to love climbing for its own sake, and so evolved the modern type of mountaineer. In him the intense love of nature has in no whit abated, but along with it are coupled the joys of muscular exercise, and the grappling with climbing difficulties. In earlier days the difficulties were on a grander scale, but as these became known and provided for, climbers began to seek out new problems, and more and more difficult routes to the summit. Mountaineering had in this way become a science as well as a sport. Older heads have been shaken over this development, and in both clubs men have lamented over the rise of the gymnastic climber. It seems to me that this is the natural outcome of vigorous life, and that the modern climber is no whit behind his predecessor in his love for nature.

The same feelings that were in the minds of the founders of the Alpine Club influenced the founders of the Scottish Mountaineering Club. At first the leaders were essentially lovers of nature. Since then the same change has taken place in that club as in the Alpine Club, and difficult routes are sought out and conquered with equal avidity. The two clubs had, to commence with, the same ideals, and these ideals are still the same. But they have different methods of carrying them out. The Alpine Club is a club of the world, and therefore the members are greatly scattered. Originally the members of the Alpine Club used to hold meets at climbing centres, but that has been given up. Now it limits itself officially to its clubroom, *Journal*, evening meetings and dinners. The Scottish M.C. has, in addition, its meets. There are two meets—at New Year and Easter, and if I were asked to say which of its functions was the most vital to its life, I would say that it was the holding of these meets. Mr. Cunliffe, in his speech, desiderated professors, dons and undergraduates in climbing. You would find this ideal state at a Scottish meet. There you find original members mixing freely with the latest recruits. World-known climbers invite the less experienced to join their party. Instead of parties of first-class climbers keeping themselves to themselves, the greatest fraternity prevails, and the tyro has a chance of being included in some difficult expedition, and in this way learns how best to tackle mountain problems. I am a living example of this. Although it is many years since I first climbed and loved the mountains, yet it was not till the *S.M.C. Journal* came into my hands that I realised that Scotland

possessed climbing such as had not entered into my imagination. I joined the club, and within half an hour of attending a meet, absolutely a stranger to all, I was invited by several parties to join them, and anew begin my apprenticeship. Among others, our most respected member, Mr. Colin Phillip, introduced me to the snowy ridges of the Mamore Forest, an experience which is vivid in my memory to this day. Since then I have had a splendid education from these men, and it is entirely due to their ungrudging help and encouragement that I have been able to share in so many difficult first ascents in our beloved Scotland. I had the advantage of distinguished leaders, men who did not hesitate, but counted it a pleasure to accompany the less experienced.

That, then, I say, is a strong point in the S.M.C. I know of no one who comes to our meets for the first time who does not feel that he is among a band of brothers, and will always be welcomed, and always taken up under the best conditions. During my lecture last night I described some climbs in which you might say I had erred. You might say, "You mustn't attempt to climb a thing you cannot do." One must not take risks unless—the "unless" is this, if you find yourself in a tight place, you must take confidence and take the risk. Inexperienced and young climbers take the risk before it is really necessary. It is true that these clubs have put it as their leading rule that the strictest rules of mountaineering shall be observed. We apply rules, and endeavour to carry them out. I feel that this subject is important, and a necessary thing, if this sport is to progress. Mr. Slingsby has said that this is the golden age in Scotland. This is no exaggeration. It was only in 1892 that Mr. Hopkinson ascended the Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis, and although countless faces, ridges and gullies have been conquered since then, splendid climbs remain for those who have the skill, pluck and determination to plan and accomplish them. It will be long ere our Scottish rock faces are worked out with the detail characteristic of English climbs. As yet we have been so busy picking up the nuggets at our feet that we have not had time to dig into the gullies for the gold mines beneath. Happy then the man who takes time by the forelock, and tastes the pleasures of unexplored regions in these northern mountains, now in process of being opened up by many climbers—Scottish, English and Irish.

I thank you for the hearty and cordial way in which you have received me as representing the Alpine Club and the Scottish Mountaineering Club. (Cheers.)

Mr. J. MAIN NICOL, as the representative of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, added the following remarks in reply to the same toast :—

You remember Robert Louis Stevenson's "Strange Case of Dr.

Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," in which the leading idea was the wrapping up of two entirely distinct and antagonistic personalities in one human body.

I feel to-night a sort of mountaineering Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, for while I have the honour to be an unworthy member of the Climbers' Club, I have also the honour to be a member of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, and it is in that guise that I stand before you now to respond to this toast.

Which of these personages is predominating in me, and whether I am at present the "Climbing" Dr. Jekyll or the "Rambling" Mr. Hyde, I really cannot say. While Mr. Slack was proposing the toast, I felt that, as a Climber I ought to drink it, but that, as a Rambler, I should refrain, and rather take it out in talk afterwards.

Speaking then, first, as a member of the Climbers' Club, will you allow me to make one or two suggestions? Dr. Clark has spoken of the value of the Club meets in connection with the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and they have been found one of the most valuable assets of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club.

Now, why should we not have a meet of the Climbers' Club—(hear, hear)—say at the August Bank Holiday? Wastdale Head would make a very good centre for our first meet, and I am sure those members living in the north of England would be delighted to do everything they could in the way of arranging details. We could have an informal dinner, at which anyone attending in the conventional collar and tie, or other evidence of civilization, should be expelled from the Club. (Laughter.) Such a meet would tend to bring us together, and get us to know one another better than any number of formal meetings and dinners, good as these are in their way.

We provincial members feel that, except for the *Journal*, we do not benefit so much by our membership of the Climbers' Club as the London members do, as we are for the most part unable to get up to London to the dinner and lectures of the Club. This brings me naturally to another suggestion.

You have now as President an old Yorkshire Rambler, who was our President for ten years, before he became yours, and, believe me, we felt that we gave you our most precious possession when we parted with Mr. Slingsby as our President. Well, now that you have a Yorkshire President, why not have a formal dinner of the Club in Yorkshire? Such a dinner was held in Birmingham during the presidency of Mr. Mathews, and was, I believe, a great success, and if you will come down and try Yorkshire, I believe you will get as warm a welcome as you got at Birmingham. (Hear, hear.)

Before leaving the subject of the Climbers' Club, I would like to refer to one of those mentioned by the President as having passed from among us during the past year. I met Mr. W. G. Clay first at Wastdale, and, curiously enough, all our subsequent meetings were at that centre, where

he was always the same bright, genial spirit, ever ready to take the heaviest share of the work, and with an unvarying cheerfulness and evenness of temper which showed up most strongly in adverse conditions, when so many men turn rusty and sour.

To him may fittingly be applied the words used by James Whitcombe Riley, when referring to his dead brother in the dedication of "Afterwhiles"—

"I cannot say, and I will not say
That he is dead. He is just away."

His last words to me when we parted at Whitsuntide were, "We shall meet again," and I look forward to meeting him elsewhere some day.

Turning now to the second phase of my character here to-night as a member of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, I think that the interchange of courtesies between the different Mountaineering Clubs is a very good thing for us all, and tends to draw us closer together, and I am sure we of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club have as great pleasure in making your representatives at home with us as you have in welcoming our representatives. (Hear, hear.)

As a Club we are less restricted in our aims than most of the Kindred Clubs, we have members who are distinguished mountaineers and rock climbers, and we have members who are simply ramblers over moor and fell, and who do not attempt any serious climbing.

Our favourite sport is what we call, amongst ourselves, "Pot-holing," which is the exploration of the limestone caves with which Yorkshire abounds. It differs from mountaineering in this respect that we descend to our work instead of ascending, but we have the advantage when the work is done, as we climb upon celestial rope-ladders Heavenwards, whereas you climbers have to come down to earth at the end of the day.

When preparing for a pot-holing expedition, you get out your oldest suit of clothes, one so old that you dare not appear in it at home. This you put in a rucksack along with some candles, and join several other fanatics, and journey to the railway station and inn nearest to your piece of work. Having reached this, you put on these clothes, and descend into your pot-hole by means of rope-ladders, and pursue your speleological investigations by candle light. The exploration of these caves is so engrossing that time slips by quite unheeded, and men have been known to spend twenty-six hours in a cave, and come out thinking they had only been there about eight hours. As the work is very dirty and generally very wet, of course watches are left at the inn to avoid risk of damage, so there is nothing but one's own sensations to mark the flight of time.

At the close of your work, be the time long or short, you emerge into the upper air plastered with limestone mud from head to foot, and drenched to the skin, but thoroughly and most riotously happy, and you leave those clothes as a legacy to your landlord when you return to

civilized society. Although such a dirty sport, pot-holing is very fascinating, and most men who once get bitten with the mania for it, remain devoted followers of it for the rest of their lives.

And now I must have done lest you think I deserve the name of Rambler for my garrulous reminiscences. On behalf of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, I tender you my very hearty thanks for the way in which you have received this toast to-night, and for the welcome you have given me as the representative of the Club. (Applause.)

The next toast was that of "The Visitors," and it was brought forward by Mr. R. A. ROBERTSON in this manner:—

Mr. President, I think you have made a mistake to-night, in your speech when you said you were proposing the principal toast of the evening. I think the principal toast of this evening is that of "The Guests." Allow me first, then, in the name of the Club, most heartily to welcome all our friends. The association with our guests has been most pleasant, and I have been furnished with a list of them, but at this late hour of the evening I decline to particularise them. They all enjoy one distinction, they may take it as they like, they are not members of the Climbers' Club. I think a good many of our guests came here to-night impelled by a feeling of curiosity. They wanted to know what climbers were like. They had an idea that the evolution indicated by Darwin had not been completed. I can only assure them that we conceal nothing abnormal underneath our clothes, and as regards our tastes, I hope they find them very human, and somewhat resembling their own, and I trust they will take nothing home that disagrees with them. Seriously enough, I suppose some of our guests ask us what amount of pleasure we have in going up a mountain. Well, at this particular moment I am unable to give an answer that will be satisfactory to them or to the members of this Club. I am too much in harmony with our present surroundings to suggest a start to-morrow morning at 2 a.m. I do not think that the enthusiasm of any member of this Club would get him up to that point. I do not think that even the associations or the *esprit de corps* of a Swiss guide, so evident, so painfully evident in the fresh mountain air in the morning, would induce us to do so. Perhaps it is necessary for a member of the Climbers' Club to come down to the level of the guests to-night, because we are accustomed to go down. We are on a higher plane, and possibly it may be asked why we indulge in a pursuit which is apparently so very unreasonable. I do not know that it is more unreasonable than any other sport or game, for, after all, you cannot measure sports by any fixed criterion. There is perhaps one common measure which you can apply, which is personal, and that is, the degree of satisfaction you derive from it. Gentlemen, the amount of satisfaction which climbers derive from their pursuit is very great.

After you come back from a long expedition, I venture to say your limbs are perfectly satisfied, and as for your soul, well, if you are at all in harmony with your surroundings at feeding time you have ample means of satisfying it. It is very difficult for men who have not climbed to understand exactly the enjoyment there is in climbing. I do not know whether you know the story, I only heard it once, of the Oxford graduate who had taken a Double First. This gentleman had been very studious, and, after the result of the examination was known, he went out with a few friends to dine, and dined very well. Late that night he was found by a very dull-witted Proctor, who happened to be passing, lying at the foot of his steps. The Proctor was shocked, and, shaking our friend, said, "I should have thought, Mr. Brown, that a man in your position would have known better." Our friend, stolidly regarding him, replied, "How the devil can you think what a Double First knows?" (Laughter.) The non-climbing guests here can never know the fascination of climbing until they climb. I am very sorry to have to lead out one lamb to the slaughter.

I have had three names given to me, and unfortunately Mr. Clive, who was to have responded for the visitors, is not now available, and for this we must be very sorry, as he has recently done very exceptional work in New Zealand, and we would like to have heard his experiences. Mr. G. P. Baker, who consented to act as his substitute, has unfortunately had to leave early. Mr. Ellis Carr, of whom we have all heard as a climber of great repute, has very kindly at the last moment stepped into the breach. I conclude by wishing you all a very hearty welcome, with the hope that we will meet in higher, but still terrestrial, spheres—and Mr. Carr, I couple your name with the toast. (Hear, hear.)

The reply to the toast was gallantly undertaken at a few minutes' notice by an old friend of many of the members, Mr. ELLIS CARR, who said:—

I must ask you, Mr. President and gentlemen, to bear with me. It was not until after sitting down at table that I was requested to respond for the Visitors. Our hopes of hearing Mr. Clive had been baffled, and my old friend Mr. G. P. Baker had to leave, but did not leave his notes behind him for my benefit. Under the circumstances, I shall take very literally a hint I got from Mr. Haskett-Smith at the same time. He said, "You will not have to make a regular speech of it." Indeed I shall not make a speech of any kind, and mean to content myself with the simple expression, on behalf of myself and the other visitors of our hearty appreciation of your hospitality, of Mr. Robertson's kind way of presenting, and yours of receiving, the toast. (Hear, hear.)

The toast of "The Permanent Officials," which did not

appear on the list, was now proposed by Mr. W. P. HASKETT-SMITH, who explained the afterthought with these remarks:—

My old friend, Mr. Carr, has my profound sympathy, because both of us alike, when coming into the room to-night, looked forward to absolute repose, thinking that there was nothing to do but eating, drinking, and listening to each other's conversation. However, instead of that happy state of things, I find myself actually interpolating, by command of the Chair, a toast which is not even on the programme.

It has been pointed out by several private members who were asked to speak on this topic, that only a past President could fittingly undertake this task, and we are under contract not to call upon Mr. C. E. Mathews to-night, so there is no escape for me. This Club has now reached the age of seven years. That period is accepted as significant in the lease of a house, in the punishment of a crime, in the age of a man, and in many other important aspects of life. It is no less important in the life of a club, and it has therefore been suggested that now is the time when the permanent officials of the Club should be offered, what perhaps they have never yet had—clear and spontaneous recognition of their services. In doing this, gentlemen, you will not think that we are undervaluing the services of our former treasurer, Dr. T. K. Rose, and Mr. C. B. Moss, our present treasurer, or those of the past and present editors of the *Journal*, when we say that these gentlemen have not borne the burden and heat of the day to the same extent as our old friend, Mr. Bryant. (Cheers.)

Mr. Bryant has been our indefatigable secretary from the very start. He has been with us the whole seven years, and his services have been beyond price. To what eminent character in history or fiction can he fitly be compared? I can think of no one with whom we can compare Mr. Bryant without injustice to him. Probably it would do him least injustice to say that he reminds us of the Patriarch Jacob. Gentlemen, you will probably wonder why such a compliment should be paid to that Patriarch. It is by no means on account of his extraordinary business acumen, still less because this dinner recalls that he was the first person in history to realise how much business may be facilitated, and what lucrative bargains may be struck, by the well-timed offer of a meal. (Laughter.) Mr. Bryant's commerce and his hospitality are run on very different lines, but the comparison holds because the Patriarch, though he had his little failings, raised from quite humble beginnings, a very fine and flourishing flock, a flock of animals who rejoice in the open air, are lovers of the hills, agile, hardy and clean-living, and have never been charged with any aggressive intellectuality. Many have praised and few practised "lowly living and high thinking"; but these, while content with the plainest possible fare, go in for what is infinitely better, "high living and no thinking." (Laughter.) You will remember, gentlemen, that the

Patriarch to whom I have referred was not the kind of man to work for nothing. (There is a gleam in Mr. Bryant's eye which seems to say that this is a point at which the parallel breaks down ; but let him wait a bit!) One prominent feature in his reward was a septennial bonus. Once in every seven years, you remember, he claimed a bonus, and that bonus took an unusual and a very attractive form. (Laughter.) Already to-night our President has referred to Mr. Bryant and to Mr. Moss as "great stays" of the society. I am not learned in the mysteries of female dress, but have heard that these articles spend their whole time in embracing female waists, an occupation which may have been exceedingly congenial to Oriental taste, but in the case of respectable business men like Mr. Bryant and Mr. Moss, must be subject to serious interruptions. (Laughter.) The President said he was afraid of making these gentlemen blush, and if that was what he meant by "great stays," we cannot wonder. No doubt our President was exaggerating the case, and though he tells me that Mr. Bryant was last week seen in Leeds in exuberant form I am confident that his conduct there gave no ground for viewing these expressions from a literal standpoint.

No! the true explanation of the parallel is purely metaphorical. It cannot be a mere coincidence that just when Mr. Bryant had been serving this Club so faithfully for seven years, we have come to an epoch when for the first time we find that ladies have been seen at our lectures. Is it not possible, gentlemen, that the presence of ladies at our lectures may represent "Leah"? We do not know what awaits us in the future, but perhaps when another seven years have been served by Mr. Bryant (and you will be glad to know that we have renewed our lease of him for that period), there may be a critical moment for this Club, when possibly Rachel may typify the appearance of actual full-blown lady members. Returning to the Patriarch, you will remember that after a time, though he thought that bonuses were all very well in their way, he, like a sensible man, went in for regular dividends. By an ingenious arrangement, he depended for his reward upon the arrival in his flock of new members, ringstraked and spotted—(a voice, "ringstraked and speckled")—Mr. Mathews is right, though "spotted" suited me quite well. If that was Mr. Bryant's idea, it has proved a disappointing speculation, because the new members, like the old, have been, I think, without exception, absolutely free from spot or blemish. (Hear, hear.)

Yet you are not to imagine that Mr. Bryant has gone altogether without his reward, for whether he intended it or not, we know that this flock, this unblemished flock, has in the course of its existence been so won over by his unflagging zeal, by his unfailing tact and by his imperturbable good temper, that not merely a percentage of the flock, but the entire flock is absolutely and wholly his. In this way Mr. Bryant has left his wily prototype far behind, and, gentlemen, if there is one single member

of the Club who does not see Mr. Bryant in that affectionate light, though we need not go so far as to say that he is "ringstraked and speckled," we may boldly maintain that a being so eccentric would very soon be "spotted." (Laughter.) Undoubtedly all the members of the flock here present to-night are ready to express their opinion of Mr. Bryant in one joyous and united bleat! (Loud cheers.)

The toast having been drunk with great enthusiasm, amid loud cries of "Bryant," "Ba-a-a"! "For he's a jolly good fellow," the reply was made by Mr. Bryant:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I look to Mr. Mathews, and remember hearing from him not long ago, a report of "riotous and disorderly proceeding" in a kindred Club. I think to-night that this particular toast is in the character of a "riotous and disorderly proceeding." There was no notice given of it. It does not appear upon the list of toasts. It came upon me somewhat unexpectedly, and I think it is entirely indefensible. Still the fact remains that the Club is seven years old to-night. It is not possible for me to say that I am the only official present who saw it at its birth, but I am sorry to say that of the thirty members who dined together that night when the Club was formed, only five are here to-night. Others might perhaps have been present. I take it we are congratulating ourselves to-night upon the condition, the development, and the progress of the Climbers' Club formed in 1897 or 1898, upon the basis of a Pen-y-Gwryd dinner. At that dinner we formed the Climbers' Club, and with this one its first stage of seven years is completed. It started with a membership of forty or so, now it consists of more than two hundred and fifty. It has kept up its old associations, and to so many of our old friendships it has added many new. (Hear, hear.) In these few years we have achieved several things. We have created a school of orators, and to-night we have found yet another in Mr. Cunliffe—(hear, hear)—who has sketched out for us in his splendid speech a future that will guide and carry us on for years to come. I mark him down.

I would like to say that, in my opinion, the Club is very largely a matter of its President. In its Presidents the Club has been extremely fortunate. We commenced with Mr. Mathews—(hear, hear)—we went on to Mr. Haskett-Smith, who has borne out fully the traditions of the Club. (Hear, hear.) Then we found Mr. Slingsby, who for ten years had led the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. If I ever had any conceit, it was knocked out of me last Saturday night, when I was entertained by that Club as your representative. There I found a Club, which, for energy and for concentrated effort, surpassed any I had ever known. Last night, from Dr. Inglis Clark, we heard something of the Scottish Mountaineering

Club, and of its splendid country. To-night, if any note has been struck above another, it is that of fraternity. It is one brotherhood and not many, which follows the sport of mountaineering. (Hear, hear.) About our future I know nothing, and am likely to know very little, but there are many things which might be said. There is especially one point which I think is beginning to develop itself. I hardly know how to put it, but probably some Honorary Secretary of the future may find himself sharing his labours with a fully qualified member, who yet may be some "sweet girl graduate," with a chance of occupying that chair now filled by our most genial President. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, I give you my assurance that anything I have done has been done because I believe that the Club and the sport have a future in this country which is worth cultivating, and, on behalf of my colleagues, as well as on my own, I heartily thank you all for your kind reception of the toast. (Applause.)

The health of "The President of the Club" was proposed by Mr. C. MYLES MATHEWS, who as a son of our eloquent first President, was warmly welcomed by the assembly :—

Gentlemen, since for this toast I must not address myself to the President—there exists, I understand, in America a type of music hall in which the performances begin early in the morning, and go on until late at night. There is no break in the constant succession of performers. You pay your money as early as you like, and you can remain the rest of the day. This, however, would hardly pay the management, and, to meet the difficulty, they adopt the expedient of every now and again putting on a "turn" so intolerably dull that the whole audience is forced incontinently to flee. (Laughter.) Our Hon. Secretary was evidently struck with the possibility of a similar predicament. We should all of us, regardless of trains, and oblivious of Licensing Laws, like to keep up our annual dinner far into the night. To meet the threatened calamity, he adopted the trans-Atlantic expedient, and, at four o'clock this afternoon, he rang me up on the telephone, and told me that I was to supply that intolerably dull turn. In vain I protested ; in vain I appealed. There was nothing for it but to submit, and I realised to my sorrow the truth of the adage, "Needs must when the Secretary compels."

Whatever else can be said of our Club, we have been extremely fortunate in our Presidents. Of the virtues of our first President it would ill become me to speak. I can only say that his virtues are entirely his own, and that his children have inherited all his vices. ("No, no.")

Our second President, Mr. Haskett-Smith, is well-known to you as an expert climber, as the author of fascinating Climbers' Guides, and as a brilliant after-dinner speaker.

When I come to our third and present President, I feel myself in rather a delicate position. Gentlemen, it is but a simple task to praise famous men and our fathers which were before us; but when we are asked to praise famous men and our fathers which are behind us, the task is not so easy. (Laughter.) Were I to say of Mr. Slingsby to his face all that you would, I know, have me say, it would be almost as if I were in his life-time to read to him his own epitaph.

There is a story of Bishop Creighton, who one night—whether after an Episcopal dinner I know not—dreamed a dream. And in his dream he found himself in a vast entrance hall, and before him was an endless flight of stairs, the top of which vanished in the clouds. A piece of chalk was put into his hand, he was told that the stairs led up to heaven, and that on every step, as he ascended, he must write one of the sins he had committed while on earth. With what grace he might, he proceeded with his task, and had not climbed far when he heard a sound far above him as of someone descending stairs in a tremendous hurry. He looked up, and soon recognised in the descending figure the Dean of Westminster. "What are you coming down for?" asked the Bishop. "More chalk!" gasped the Dean as he flashed past. (Much laughter.) Were I in a similar predicament to his, and had to write out in like manner the virtues of our President, I tremble to think how often I should have to descend for chalk supplies. I am glad to tell you, however, that among all these virtues, he has one redeeming vice. He does not smoke.

In Switzerland he early exhausted all the ordinary ways up the mountains, and was driven to climb them by extraordinary routes. This led him on one occasion to spend 36 hours on an impossible ice-fall, after which he thought it well to seek fresh peaks and snowfields new. He went to Norway, where he did admirable work as an explorer (fortunately at the call of all of us in his fascinating book on Norwegian Climbing), and where his geniality has so endeared him to the Norwegian people, that if any Englishman is ever in a difficulty in Norway, lost in the impenetrable undergrowth of the forests, in which I am told that every Norwegian expedition ends, or suddenly unable to pay his hotel bill (a fate that of course could never happen to any member of the Climbers' Club), he has only, as we were told just a year ago, "to murmur the magic name of Slingsby," and all his troubles are at once overcome. In England the Golden Age, of which we have heard so much to-night, begins anew. He triumphantly burns the candle at both ends. When he is not climbing hills, he is burrowing into the depths of the earth, extended flat on his stomach, exploring the hidden sources of some underground stream, or perilously suspended from a winch, probing the unfathomable depths of a cave. If it be ever your good fortune to stay with him in his Yorkshire home, he will offer you the alternative of Ingleborough or Gaping Ghill. You will choose as your fancy dictates. But may I give you one word of

warning? You will be roused in the chill of morning by a weird, unearthly wailing, low at first, but gradually becoming louder and shriller, until finally it howls and shrieks about the house. You will sit up fearfully in bed, your hair will stand on end, a cold sweat will break out upon your forehead, and you will think that your last hour has come. Gentlemen, your last hour has not come. It is merely the cream-separator at its useful and domestic task. (Laughter.)

Like every true lover of the hills, our President has taught his son to worship the mistress he serves. His genial kindness, his unfailing courtesy and his splendid enthusiasm need no words of mine to praise them; and those of us whose privilege it is to call him friend—and what member of our Club cannot?—know that nothing that we can possibly say can adequately express the depth of our feelings towards him. Gentlemen, I give you “Our President.” (Loud applause.)

When the cheering with which this toast was honoured had in some degree subsided, Mr. SLINGSBY briefly replied as follows :—

Gentlemen, at this late hour I will be merciful. I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and think that I have one or two qualifications which show that I am deserving of some little of your support. The principal one is the love of mountains, a love that can easily be enjoyed, and is, probably, by every one in the room, but cannot be surpassed. The other is the friendship of all of the gentlemen whom it has been my pleasure to meet in many parts of the earth. Gentlemen, I thank you.

CURRENT EVENTS.

THE third annual dinner of the Rucksack Club was held at the Albion Hotel, Manchester, on 2nd December last, about 60 members and guests being present. Among the latter were Mr. C. E. Mathews, Professor J. Norman Collie, Professor Wilberforce (representing the Climbers' Club), Mr. F. W. Jackson (representing the Scottish Mountaineering Club), Mr. J. A. Green (representing the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club), and Mr. F. Wightman (representing the Kyndwr Club).

Mr. Joseph Collier, F.R.C.S., President of the Club, presided, and there were also present Mr. Charles Pilkington, Mr. Hermann Woolley and Professor H. B. Dixon, Vice-Presidents.

The President, on giving the toast of the Rucksack Club, said that its formation had been justified in every way; not only had it enlightened many as to what there is in Nature outside our big towns, but it had also given many a sense of physical well-being they otherwise would not have possessed. Personally, he felt he was getting "past the middle"—("Not at all")—but the energy of some of them was a sufficient guarantee that the Club would live and thrive for years to come. (A voice, "For ever.") Although they had not the incentive of some of the Kindred Clubs so far as scenery was concerned, they fully atoned for its absence by superabundant energy. After all they were not far from the Lakes and North Wales; Derbyshire was near; and there was no disputing the fact that Lancashire improved in beauty as it approached Yorkshire, just as Yorkshire improved in beauty as it approached Lancashire.

Mr. C. H. Pickstone, in responding for the Club, referred to the fact that it had a membership of about 70, which he thought was a record for one city.

Professor Dixon submitted "Kindred Clubs," and in the course of a witty speech, commented upon the various Clubs represented, remarking that if the Kyndwr Club climbed in

the bowels of the earth, the S.M.C. made up for such vagaries by climbing in the Skye.

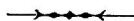
Mr. C. E. Mathews responded for the A. C., describing himself as one of a band of four who had paid their subscriptions with alarming regularity for over 40 years. (Bravo!) These four were slumbering volcanoes, the future was with such clubs as the Rucksack, and he hoped the members would hand on untarnished the noblest of the Alpine Club's traditions. There was no sport like mountaineering. (Applause.) It had certainly one abiding charm; it tended more than any other pursuit towards the making and cementing of those friendships which, after all, were the salt of life. Had it not been for mountaineering, there were scores of people he was proud to call friends that he would never have shaken by the hand. Though he had spent 40 seasons on the Alps, he had climbed for 50 years amongst the Welsh hills, which had always an imperishable fascination for him. In fact, as a mountaineer, he might fairly claim to have warmed both hands at the fire of life. In conclusion, Mr. Mathews said that he had been glad to avail himself that night of the third invitation he had received from the Rucksack Club, and hoped he would be spared to meet the members again. (Cheers.) After Mr. Mathews had sat down, Professor Dixon proposed, and the President seconded, that Mr. Mathews should be admitted the first Hon. member of the Club, a resolution that was carried unanimously with great enthusiasm.

Mr. Jackson and Professor Collie responded for the S.M.C., the latter stating that most people were under the impression the climbing in Skye was easy. That was not so, since there was climbing so difficult as to be impossible. His opinion was, the climbing in Skye has only just begun.

Messrs. Pilkington, Woolley, Green & Wightman also spoke.

The Club have also had the privilege of welcoming Mr. Slingsby, who gave a lantern lecture, entitled "Rambles and Scrambles," on February 9th, and Mr. Haskett-Smith, at the May meeting of the Club, consented to give a talk on the subject of "The Rucksack at Home and Abroad."

CLIMBERS' CLUB.



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