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THE

CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.

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ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER.

THE Tenth Annual General Meeting of the Club was held at the Hotel Cecil, London, on Friday, February 15th, 1907, and was attended by about 50 members.

The first business on the agenda was the election of officers for the ensuing year. The President, Mr. William Cecil Slingsby, and Professor J. A. Ewing, F.R.S., retired under the operation of Rule IV., and two members of the Committee, Professors L. R. Wilberforce and J. B. Farmer, retired from the Committee by rotation.

Mr. R. A. Robertson was elected President, and the Rev. J. Nelson Burrows and Professor J. B. Farmer, F.R.S., were elected Vice-Presidents. The Committee, as elected, consists of—Chr. Cookson, Esq., M.A.; C. W. Nettleton, Esq.; A. W. Andrews, Esq., M.A.; Sidney Skinner, Esq.; C. Myles Matthews, Esq., B.A., LL.B.; J. Walter Robson, Esq.; G. Winthrop Young, Esq., M.A.; J. C. Morland, Esq.; Thomas Meares, Esq. Mr. C. C. B. Moss as Honorary Treasurer, and Mr. George B. Bryant as Honorary Secretary, were re-elected.

The accounts for the year 1906, as audited, were passed by the meeting, on the motion of the President.

Mr. Eckenstein proposed the resolution standing in his name, which was seconded by Mr. Rudolf Cyriax. After a discussion, in which many members took part, Mr. Ashley

Abraham expressed regret on the part of his brother and of himself, that what they had published had caused offence to Mr. Eckenstein, and the President eventually appealed to Mr. Eckenstein, in the interests of good feeling, to withdraw his resolution, which was finally done. An amendment put by Mr. H. V. Reade, and seconded by Mr. G. Winthrop Young, "That this meeting approved of the action which has been taken by the Committee in this matter" was therefore not put to the vote.

The toast of "The Climbers' Club" was proposed by the President, Mr. R. A. ROBERTSON, who, occupying the chair for the first time, was received with hearty and prolonged applause:—

Gentlemen,—Let me first express to you my very deep sense of the honour which you have done me in electing me to be the President of the Climbers' Club. Perhaps, if it be possible, I appreciate the honour all the more because it places me in line with that short but distinguished ancestry of Charles Edward Mathews, Haskett-Smith and Cecil Slingsby. These men were worthy representatives of the Climbers' Club, and no President could have better forbears. I cannot hope now, gentlemen, to add anything to the brilliancy of the career of this club, but I do trust that nothing untoward will happen during my tenure of office, and that I may be able to pass on this chair as free from trouble as when I received it. (Hear, Hear.) As may have been expected, gentlemen, before coming here to-night, I reviewed the proceedings of the former dinners of the Club. In past years I have always thought it was a most admirable practice to report the speeches and the jokes, but when I thought it over to-night, I experienced a revulsion of feeling—(laughter)—and I stand here to condemn, to denounce this unnecessary, this cruel, this abominable practice—a practice which can gratify only an editor hungering for matter, but, thank God, overflowing with grammatical instinct. (Laughter.) Another thing which struck me in going over the proceedings of these dinners was the remarkable unanimity of a number of the speakers in condemning poor Mr. Bryant for making them get upon their feet. I think it was last year, or the year before, that somebody told us the story of the beaver. That beaver has a great fascination for me. It was a story of a climbing beaver, and I think that very probably this beaver may become the patron saint of this Club. (Laughter.) The story has more than one application, and I think the Club may adopt this particular beaver among its insignia. Some of you evidently do not know the story of the beaver. It is quite short. It is the story of a beaver that was

being hunted and chased by a dog. He got out of the way of the dog by climbing a tree. Somebody listening to the story, said, "Oh, beavers cannot climb." The man who was relating the anecdote replied, "That may be so ; but *this* beaver *had* to." (Laughter.) To-night, gentlemen, though it is a very great honour and a great pleasure to me to propose the toast of this Club, still I feel that I am in much the same position as that beaver. (Laughter.) Well, gentlemen, you will be very glad to hear that the Club continues to be prosperous. We have a membership of over 270, and, needless to say, with a membership like that we could not fail to be reminded during the past year that, after all, we are only mortal. We have lost two members — Mr. Bremner and Mr. Karslake-Thompson. Peace be to their ashes.

Then, gentlemen, our *Journal*, which I think merits very much more than a passing remark from me, has been doing very good work. A good *Journal* is really vital to a Club such as ours, and I think the Club must be congratulated on Mr. Andrews' editorship. (Applause.) The energy with which he has overcome the arrears—(loud laughter)—gives very great promise for the future. But, gentlemen, no editor can get along without matter, and I hope that I may venture to impress upon the members that everything really depends upon them. For reasons which are quite satisfactory, but which I need not detain you with, I never have contributed anything myself. (Laughter.) But, gentlemen, that places me in a position of knowledge and experience, and I am able to speak freely upon the desirability of others contributing. (Laughter.) The year just gone and past has been uneventful, and very much, I think, to the disappointment of our guests, we have no casualties and no accidents to report. I think that this circumstance must make us all very happy to-night. In this connection I think I ought to tell you that the Committee have provided two stretchers for the use of members and any of their friends. (Laughter.) Oh no, gentlemen, the stretchers are not provided *here*. There is one up at Wastdale Head, and the other is down at a place which is unmentionable. It is a Welsh name. Gentlemen, give me the sweet simplicity of my native Gaelic. (Laughter.)

In dealing with a subject such as is embraced in the Climbers' Club, I feel that I am faced with very great difficulty. It is a theme which is an old theme, and a theme upon which nothing new can well be said. But it is a theme for which we all have a very great affection, which can be repeated, and which none of us are ever tired of. Perhaps there is no sport that is more deserving of recognition than climbing, and which receives so little, because, outside our own small circle the subject is rarely mentioned, unless by critics, and our critics, I think, are limited to two classes—one class hostile, and the other class, perhaps I may call them, advisory critics. The advisory critic we meet frequently, and you find a fair sample of him, I think, in the month of August in the daily press, but

the other critic we bob up against at odd times. He is unpleasant. He says things which are disrespectful. (Laughter.) It is quite true that he gives us credit for having a certain amount of determination and perseverance, but he is careful at the same time to associate these qualities with our humble friend whom we see in the costermonger's cart. (Laughter.) The only reasonable excuse for this observation, I think, is to be found in the fact that some of us enjoy, or at all events say they enjoy, getting up in the small hours of the morning, to breakfast by candlelight, in the month of August. Then there is the discomfort, sometimes alluded to as being the most highly prized by the elect, to be out all night, seated, with frozen boots, upon the serrated ridge of some rock protruding from an ice slope. But I believe that the majority of us, if we fall in with such mishaps, are in the position of the beaver, and we are also confronted by the saying of a very eminent mountaineer about critics—he said that they must have existed in the origin of the species, and that in the process of evolution some of them tarried, and gathered in intensity when passing through the ass tribe. (Laughter.) Well, gentlemen, notwithstanding it all, we go on climbing, and, after all, what is it? Our sport is but a step forward, a development of that natural craving, that natural instinct common to all humanity, which craves for fresh air, and for the exhilaration which follows upon the getting of it. The stress of city life, the concentration of humanity in our large towns produces a state of things contrary to nature, and wise men recognise that if this is not relieved, it is bound to lead to deterioration. Therefore, gentlemen, on every available opportunity we go “back to the land.” Gentlemen, the glory of a weekend upon the hills! If you think you outrage conventionality and desecrate the Sabbath, then you have the added excitement of sinning. I believe even the new theologians, though I am told they do not recognise the Potentate, will admit that climbers have a portion of the quality which is called “devil,” and I venture to say that when Satan takes you up a mountain on Sunday he, too, takes a day off. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, the joys of sunshine, on the hillside, the cries of the birds, the weird and unaccustomed sounds of the moorlands, the sense of space, the sense of freedom and of all the elements which go to make life worth living, with action, action, action — these, gentlemen, produce a fascination the uninitiated can never experience. As Emerson says —

“Hither we bring

Our insect miseries to the rocks ;
And the whole flight with pestering wing
Vanish, and cease their murmuring,
Vanish beside these dedicated blocks.”

Gentlemen, he who on the mountain top sees but what is before him, sees only half. There the continuity of life is broken. I believe every mountaineer has experienced that mystery, that supreme sensation when in the

winter silence of the hills he pictures himself with startling reality in the distant city as a thing apart. It is this marvellous sensation, gentlemen, that I think largely accounts for the remarkable fact that once a mountaineer, always a mountaineer. The love of mountains and all that mountains can give, never leaves you. We see this intense feeling reflected in literature. I do not mean mountaineering literature alone. You can see it in all books of travel and exploration. May I stray, please, for a moment to suggest to you that King David—I do not know that he was a mountaineer—but I think there is evidence that he had all the feelings of a mountaineer. I remember once a few years ago voyaging down the Caledonian Canal on one of those magnificent mornings of beautiful cloud effects, with heavy banks of cloud driving slowly along the hill side and the mountain tops appearing above. Some persons, discussing this, asked each other what description best fitted the unusual impressiveness of mountains, seen under such circumstances. Scott, Wordsworth and half-a-dozen other poets were quoted, but the captain of the steamer broke in and quoted the words of the Psalmist—I take them from the Scottish metrical version—

“I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
From whence doth come mine aid.”

The dweller on the flats, the frequenter of the valleys, can never understand the deep significance of it. Then, gentlemen, to take our own mountaineering literature. Has any sport such a literature as we have? Take our *Alpine Journal*, take our Slingsby (I beg your pardon, Slingsby, I was going to take you last). (Laughter.) I meant to say, take our Leslie Stephen. I do not think Slingsby would like to have himself put in front of Leslie Stephen. He certainly is the finest writer we have in mountaineering literature. Then may I instance Tyndall, Whymper, our own ex-Presidents, Charles Edward Mathews and Haskett-Smith, and now, Slingsby, I come to you. (Applause.) We all of us feel grateful to those writers for expressing the feelings which we find so difficult to express for ourselves. We admire their vivid descriptions, not so much of what they did or of what they saw, but of what they felt; and, gentlemen, when the book drops from our hand and we gaze into the fire, we recall the memories of our own expeditions—set in the faces of old companions—all the pleasures standing out—all the discomforts shrouded in mist. The dream is a dream, too, of the future. There is the glory of it. Gentlemen, it is in such moments that memories of the moorland come back to us, and we recall the words of our poor friend, Robert Louis Stevenson:—

“Blows the wind to-day, and the sun and the rain are flying,
Blows the wind on the moor, to-day and now.
Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying,
My heart remembers how.”

Gentlemen, I give you “The Climbers’ Club.” (Loud applause.)

In reply to the toast of "The Climbers' Club," Mr. G. WINTHROP YOUNG said:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I can imagine no other reason why my name should have been coupled with this toast, except that it is a long time since I have taken an active part at one of these dinners, and that few of the Club can be old enough to recollect the infiction. On the last occasion, it comes back to me, that I was talking about certain ripples or waves that had been started upon the face of the sea of time by the creation of this Club. The Club was young then. The ripples have now travelled to such distant shores that it is hard to trace them, and I regret that I am unable to bring an equally full report whither those waves have extended. One ripple I might allude to. I came across it in the district of the Pyrenees, when two ambitious souls attempted to show the Spaniards what the English Climbing Club could do, and spent the greater part of a day and night in descending the range by a water course—the only route—through a cañon of such difficulty that a series of neat headers down the waterfalls proved the only means of reaching the valley. (Laughter.) I remember yet another ripple, when two other climbers (on horseback) made an ascent on the serrated ridges of Mount Latmos. In their attempts to discover whether any section of the Club or any energetic climbing was maintained there, it transpired that the only previous record for the mountain was a first ascent by Endymion, and that this had not led to any repetitions. For the pleasures that rewarded him were discovered by the locality to be equally enjoyable in the valleys (laughter)—and the climbing fervour has been dissipated on a side issue. There was yet another occasion. On the ascent of Mount Ida, in the north-west of Asia Minor, we found a section of climbing Turkish soldiers, woodcutters they called themselves, but climbers they were. It is true that they had never managed to reach the top; this was not due to any technical difficulty, but because the mountain-tops were inhabited by devils. We reached the summit, to their amazement—until it was discovered that one of our party wore rubber heels to his boots! This explained it all, and they decided to communicate with the English Climbers' Club to secure a supply of rubber heels, suitable for escaping from the devils by hopping. (Laughter.) There are yet other ripples, notably those caused in Cornish cliff climbing by Mr. Andrews, when he falls off his cliffs. (Laughter.) Again, two of us lately tried to construct a climb in the Fen District, near the Wash. A small ripple on a flat surface. One of our violent "sunspot" storms arose in the night, with the result that in the morning we failed to find it again. (Laughter.) The fact is the ripples are getting farther and farther away from our centre, and I must suppose the great eddy that we climbers have created in the face of the waters has sunk those of us in the centre of the whirl-

pool so deep that we cannot see those beyond the edges. Edgar Allan Poe, you remember, in writing of the Maelstrom, relates that heavy objects, as they whirled down the funnel, went the fastest to the rocks at the bottom. That, I fear, is my position. The weight of years is carrying me lower and lower, and although I am not immediately afraid of being ground to pieces on the rock of ages at the bottom, still I am more confined in my interests. The groove of our usual hills is deepening, and I am ready to condemn myself as a mere circulating centrist. (Laughter.)

But there are other splashes we must mention; those of the clubs growing up all over the country in countless numbers. I should like to express the hope that we shall live to see the time when we shall all be combined as one Club in England, sub-divided into sections, like the Continental clubs. We should relieve the strain on our energetic editors by combining into one strong Journal the various and hardly-extracted papers of hitherto divided talent. We should also be financially stronger. This would enable us to have rooms, or perhaps a cottage, at our various climbing centres in Wales or England, where we could have our meets, and at last find a resting-place for our large and desolate library; one which we know to exist, but which so few of us have ever seen. (Laughter.)

That brings me more immediately to a question already dealt with by the President, but which I wish to treat in a more concrete form—the history of the past year of the Club. To take our practice first, as we are a Club that takes things from a practical standpoint; I must say at once that it is impossible for me to allude, as I should like, to all the splendid achievements that have been executed by our members during the past year, without risk of considerable repetition and infringement of copyright. The truth is that they have been so elaborately and publicly treated of by the performers themselves that I may take them as read without further mention. (Loud laughter.) Personally I should much like to describe the excellent feats that we did or saw done this Christmas in Wales or the Lakes, but as our President has set us the example of quoting, I will merely sum up the picture, for the benefit of our visitors, by some lines of serious import from Tennyson—

“Many a little hand

Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the rocks,

Many a light foot shone like a jewel set

In the dark crags.”

I then pass to the more important side of our history, that of our annual mental development. First in order, the most important, the field of Politics. The Club is taking its usual dignified and intelligent part in the national life. We have shown an equally sympathetic interest in the defeat of the Plural Voting Bill and the passing of the Trades Disputes Bill. We have supported the Access to Mountains Bill, and opposed the Beddgelert Railroad Bill, with equal success. (Laughter.) On the

important question of the Suffrage, we have given the assent of our silent sympathy both to the agitating methods of the suffragettes and to their subsequent prosecution. (Laughter.) We have maintained a dignified reserve in expressing our opinion about the House of Lords; and the presence of certain visitors this evening entails upon us a similar reserve in mentioning our opinion about the House of Commons. (Laughter.) We have displayed as a Club the same active political energy as has the rest of England in not petitioning against the defeat of the Education Bill, and while we have not shown the same partisan spirit as Another Place has in electing a Bishop as our President, it is reassuring to note in compensation that the number of sermons, texts, admonitions, reproofs and warnings inscribed in the visitors' books at our chief climbing centres by Members of the Cloth, shows no alarming sign of diminution. (Laughter.)

In the field of Art, the year has not surprised us with a mountain Raphael, but our photographic members have accomplished, as usual, unique work, and have consistently avoided the all too common error of sacrificing artistic effect to mere verisimilitude. (Laughter.) The illustrations of the *Journal* I need hardly call your attention to. They are quite—themselves. (Laughter.) But I am not quite equally sure whether you have adequately appreciated the extremely interesting new “head” and “tail pieces” attached to the various articles. The fidelity of their reproduction of the details of mountain architecture is only equalled by their felicity in suggesting the human lineaments. (Laughter.) They observe all the Canons of Art, and are strictly in accordance with (I think) the Fourth Commandment—“Thou shalt not make to thyself the likeness of any thing —” (Loud laughter.)

In the world of mountain Music there is a great deal to be done. It is a neglected domain, and, for lack of a better, I have myself a suggestion of importance to make. You must have often felt the want of a good stirring Climbing March, to be used upon mountain excursions. A march preferred, but I think anything would do — except a Plain-song. (Laughter.) Could you imagine a more exciting scene than that of a large number of us climbing the P. Y. G. track, to the strains of a skirling March, played upon the bagpipes, by our present President? (Laughter.) I am not prepared to dictate the music, but with regard to names I should suggest, as an early one, “The March of the Marshal Smiths, with Mr. H. V. Reade's Well-known Variations.” (Laughter.) Beyond that we want something greater, and I venture to suggest something after the nature of Richard Strauss's ‘Domestic’ Symphony. The key would of course be E or C minor (as the E. C. C. has not yet reached its majority). I should start with an introduction expressing the rush of feet down the stairs (cellos) and the struggle for the bathroom (bassoons). Then the sound of the calls for breakfast (to bring in the horns). Then the breakfast (the whole

orchestra), and the putting on the boots (cymbals), and the drums for the slow tramp of feet up the pass. The double bass would come in strongly when you reach the base of the climb—(laughter)—and you would hear the usual efforts of the leaders or leading violins to get away with the air from the bass fugues, and the customary difficulty they find in hitting the right “pitch.” (Laughter.) Then you should hear the hoarse breathing of the organ expressing the panting efforts of our ascent, and finally the deep, humming, musical note of the “chord” when the leader falls off! (Laughter.) You would, of course, hear through it all the usual Wagnerian storm effects. The roar of a mountain storm, and the sound of rushing streams and waving trees, and behind all a background of the shriek of the Snowdon Railway. Throw in plenty of strong, entangled chords (we must have them!) and a number of “crotchets”—for all of us—and “quavers”—for some of us! (Laughter.) Make it all end with a few happy discords. (Laughter.) Something, I think, of that kind, quite simple, would be suitable for the Treasurer or Secretary to play to us at our next Dinner—on the Pianola.

In the field of Dancing nothing new has been performed. I should like to suggest that we want a Jig. “The Cold Foot Jig,” perhaps, suitable for performance on unsafe ledges; or a “step” dance for ice steps, or a dance to be executed at the end of a rope, to be called a “Fandangalo.” (Laughter.) But here again there is room for something finer. We want a quadrille. Possibly a “Glacier Quadrille.” This idea was suggested to me by a book on dancing, containing—“Directions how to dance the Quadrille.” You will see how apt they are for a glacier expedition. They are written, of course, in a mixture of French and English. “Choose your Partners.” “Leave your places by the Wall.” “Avancez!” “Glissez (avec un pied)!” “Passez à droite!” “Chassez à gauche!” “Halte!” “Turn to partners.” “Suivez le guide!” “Avancez!” “Halte!” “Chassez à gauche!” “Chassez croisé!” “Sautiez!” “Cut two steps (bien coupés)!” “Cut two steps (demi coupés)!” “Levez les bras!” “Balancez!” “Glissez au fond!” (Laughter.)

The usual directions to the “Chief Musician” might be given photographically. A picture of the legs of the Committee here present, taken from the knee downwards. That would signify to the meanest intelligence “*a-lleg-ro*.” (Laughter.) A picture of the Matterhorn Hut (built for 16 persons!) on a crowded night. That would represent to members of average intelligence, “*Forte, ma non troppo!*” Finally, a picture of a climber and his guide, or of two climbers, on a mountain top, drinking deeply from a whisky flask and a gourd. This would convey to the same intelligence the idea of “*An-dà'n-tea*.”

There remains only one field on which I have not yet made any suggestions or report, that of Literature. I should much like to allude,

in order, to all the excellent works published during the past year, but I have experience of how we treat mutual criticism, and I fear to be visited with a writ of ejectment from the Club. I prefer to leave these works to the credit of their authors to support. I will only say they are all unique—of their kind, and all—worthy of their creators; and, lastly, that—I cannot think how they could write them. (Loud laughter.)

The subject of the *Journal* is public property, and can be treated with less reticence. You will all join, I am sure, in expressing our appreciation, astonishment and admiration at the variety of information we now get in our *Climbers' Journal*, and the distance which later erudition has travelled in finding a connection between climbing and other subjects not heretofore thought to be related to it. (Laughter.) You may not, however, have noticed all the points of literary skill which it now manifests. One notably, its admirable reserve and artistic restraint. In a recent number, if the word "climbing" occurred, it was only upon the cover, and if "mountains" were alluded to at all, the crude thought of a connection between them and mankind by means of climbing was concealed with an artistic and modest reticence that could not bring a blush to the cheek of the most "virgin peak." (Laughter.)

There is one other point connected with literature which has lately come under my notice. It is not immediately connected with our subject, but it is perhaps a matter of interest to the Club. I mean a MS. poem. It deals with a difference of opinion existing in some pre-historic age of the Club on the question as to whether 'spirits' existed on the tops of the mountains or no. The question is not uninteresting, even at the present time, what with our "Zancigs" and our "Licensing Questions." (Laughter.) I let the poem speak for itself. The writer evidently held strong views in favour of spirits, and maintained that they either actually existed, or that certain members of the Climbers' Club had performed feats on the then mountains which entitled them fairly to the reputation of spirituality:—

Deny there's mountain genii !
 Deny there's pixies, pucks, and—follies !
 Deny there's sprites !—as well deny
 There's Alpine *cols*, or Norman Collies :
 O members of the E. C. C.,
 This is a heresy to stamp on !
 Have you no " mountain axe-to-see " ?
 No " climbing fever " bringing cramp-on ?

Our spirits rise on hills and rocks :
 We raise them, on a smoke-room frolic ;
 We tolerate them—orthodox :
 We rather like them—alcoholic.

Some imps of mischief seem to ramp
Around the Kitchens of the Devil !
What Laker lacks—his spirit-lamp ?
What Welsher leaves—our spirit-level ?

There is a sprite, of still, small force ;
The centre of our Club's existence :
In Wales, he guides the climber's course,
And points the line of most resistance !
In Town, he seems a harsher fate,
He sets digestion at defiance,
And wires to us—at ten to eight—
' You've *got* to speak !—the force is—Bryant's !'

In Norway, or the nearer Alps—
Don't think to seek new climbs galore ! You
Will find one sprite has all their scalps,
Modestly bagged, ten years before you !
He breaks the laws of space and time,
A bearded cherub, born with wings ;—Be
Extremely cautious how you climb
Upon the tracks of Cecil Slingsby !

There is a spirit, full of speech,
A spirit mixed with much salt water :
He tells the Navy how to teach,
But never tells us how he taught her !
Spirit, though rules ridiculous
Say that your term is past renewing,
You have but seen the first of us !
We have not heard the last of—Ewing !

There's yet a sprite, in our C.C.—
(The Club I'm proud to boast that I'm in)—
His Faith is—pure rockolatory ;
His Foible—solitary climbin'.
Vices—except the hyphened half
Just given him—he hasn't got any !
He's famous for his liquid laugh,
And quite respectable—at botany !

Another sprite ! whose cliff ascents
Are interspersed with sudden swimmin' :
He dreams of Tables of Contents,
And—rues the day that we put him in !
Our faith in him is granite-sure !
And, though we find his silence bitter,
What other force in liter-ature
Could raise three *Journals* at one litter !

A Presence looms above our Boards!—
 We've borrowed him from o'er the Border—
 He's left a sort of House of Lords
 To keep our Lower House in order!
 And if the serpent of Dissent
Should creep upon our bliss—to blotch it,
 Gentlemen! there's your President,
 Generically bound to "scotch" it!

Frequent outbursts of laughter punctuated these witty stanzas, and loud applause followed the conclusion of the speech.

Professor J. B. FARMER, in proposing "Kindred Clubs," said:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I am deeply sensible of the responsibility which must be incurred by anyone who undertakes to propose so important a toast as that of the "Kindred Clubs," but I shall endeavour to disguise my feelings under the mask of brevity. In the matter of clubs it has always struck me that their existence, so dear to the heart of Englishmen taken collectively, seems curiously opposed to our instincts as individuals. How often have we not encountered ebullitions of exclusiveness when trespassing into the compartment of a railway carriage where is already seated the inevitable Occupant, who looks on it as all his own, when he has paid for only one place in it. Are we welcomed? We are intruders, and we feel it. But in spite of our natural insularity we are but creatures of circumstances, and the gregarious spirit prevails in the long run. We form clubs as much or more than any other nation. And they fulfil, at least in a measure, the primitive purposes of savage associations. As offensive and defensive engines they are often effective, sometimes not. Thus we have not been able to prevail against the constructors of those two parallel black snakes which now deface Cwm Dyli in Snowdon, nor have we prevented the erection below of that substantial and eligible villa-residence, miscalled a Power-house. But on other occasions and in other places our clubs have more fully justified their existence, especially when (recognising the claims of the gentler sex) they have admitted Nature herself into their fighting ranks. Before such a coalition the engineers, who with sacrilegious hands thought to attack the very vitals of Mount Blanc itself, may well have quailed, and we may hope the Matterhorn in like manner will be preserved from the horrors of vivisection.

But enough of the militant spirit, which more properly belongs to the period of pre-prandial esurience. We have here to-night with us Representative Members of other clubs, who are now helping to make our dinner a success. What shall I say of that pioneer of mountain associa-

tions, the Alpine Club? Well, I will say this, remembering that some of our original members came from that great society, the Alpine Club has done something for us, and we are trying to discharge the debt in the best way we can by sending to them of our own. Just as atoms may flit from one molecular group to another, so members pass from them to us, and more still from us to them. And the balance might be thought to be in their favour if my analogy were perfect, which it is not; for the units of our societies—more fortunate than mere physical atoms—can be incorporated into two club-molecules at one and the same time.

The Scottish Mountaineers have been repeating history, and for the second time England has been annexed to Scotland, for our President is also a past President of the Scottish Mountaineers. We are glad to welcome members of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club to-night. We all of us have some experience of long tramps in the rough places of the earth, and some of us perhaps have to learn of the joys of the moorlands and the lower hills. I suppose, though I know they do not confine themselves to this pursuit, that the Ramblers, together with the Rucksack Club, may be taken as the leading exponents of the glamour of the hills and dales. No one who knows that glorious moorland can fail to catch the enthusiasm.

There are other clubs who, I think, are not officially represented here to-night, and I cannot refrain from mentioning one; I refer to the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, which has just been successfully brought into the world. I might have called it a child of the mountains, but our old friend Horace has said such very rude things about the offspring of this particular parentage that I think our own club might intervene and acknowledge its relationship. At any rate, I am sure we shall all wish it every success.

Well, gentlemen, I promised to be brief, so I will, without further delay, give you the toast of "The Kindred Clubs," coupled with the names of Sir Alexander Kennedy, Mr. Lamond Howie, and Mr. Edward Calvert.

Sir ALEXANDER B. W. KENNEDY, replying on behalf of the "Kindred Clubs," spoke as follows:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—In quite another capacity I have been for weeks past making after-dinner speeches, and I was delighted to accept the invitation to come here, knowing that there would be no engineering, and hoping that there would be no speeches as far as I was concerned. However, I cannot refuse an invitation to reply for "Kindred Clubs." Of all societies but the one of which I am President, the Alpine Club is the one I prize most, and would hold on to if I had to resign everything else. I have much natural sympathy with the Climbers' Club, and I am naturally honoured by representing the Alpine Club here, although I recognise much more distinguished members present. I began,

as many members of the Climbers' Club began, by tramping in the highlands and over the moors before there were maps to help, and I got from that to such moderate amount of climbing as an elderly member of the Alpine Club is allowed to indulge in. I have now arrived at the stage in which Leslie Stephen wrote his "Regrets of a Mountaineer," but without the possibility of getting beyond those regrets which he happily possessed. If all members of the Climbers' Club begin, like Mr. Young, with risky explorations among the chimneys of an ancient college, and go on from that to a traverse of the Blaitière, Grepon and Charmoz all in one day, they will soon make the ordinary sober member of the older society take a "back seat." Gentlemen, I thank you very much for asking me here this evening, and giving me the opportunity of meeting you.

Mr. W. LAMOND HOWIE, on behalf of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, in further reply to the same toast, made the following remarks :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I am sorry that my Club is not represented to-night by a climber. A Hill-walking Photographer is what I am. I also have had my instructions from headquarters, and have great pleasure indeed in conveying to the Climbers the hearty greetings of the Scottish Mountaineering Club. I was very much struck by what our friend, Mr. G. Winthrop Young, said when he ran over so many of his ambitions concerning what he hopes this Club may attain to. As one after the other he made his points, I felt strongly that we had already in the Scottish Mountaineering Club those very characteristics amongst our members which he so ardently longed for. We have members who are writers, painters, geologists, electricians, every art and science is represented in the S. M. C., and occasion is found for the exercise of such individual gifts during our meets. Even lawyers and doctors are amongst our members, but of what use a doctor can be in a Mountaineering Club I cannot think, although I have read in a book something about the mountains being in labour. (Laughter.) I have never myself witnessed anything so indelicate. Evidently the Climbers' Club, with its much larger membership and wider experience, knows something of these things, as we have heard to-night how a litter of literary triplets has been brought into the world. Gentlemen, Mr. Young also said something about music. There he touched a tender spot. At our last S. M. C. Meet at Aviemore we had amongst our members three Highland pipers. This was one of the most enjoyable meets we have ever had. (Question "For the pipers?" and laughter.) No. For the other members. To see grey-haired veterans, professors,—I shall not say more—men of that type, 16 of them, dancing an eightsome reel on Saturday evening to the music of the bagpipes, was a sight for the gods. Yes, Sir (turning to Mr. Robertson, the President),

we feel, member of my club as you are, we would like to welcome some of your southern members to such a meet of our club. We could, I am sure, amid our snow-covered Scottish hills, show you many things that would both please and astonish you. Mr. Haskett-Smith, on my right, rather jeered at my reference to the pipers. I am sure there is nothing in the music of the Highland bagpipes to call for such suggestion. I remember a somewhat interesting tale about the bagpipes that I will relate if you give me but three minutes. ("Go ahead!") A poor Scot lay dying in a hospital in New York. The hospital doctor, knowing that his end was near—he would likely not live till morning—asked whether he could do anything for the sick man before he went "up." The man replied, "If I could only hear the playing of the bagpipes once more I think I can depart in peace." The doctor, no doubt, was Scotch. One finds Scotch doctors all over the world. At anyrate, he was successful in finding a piper, whom he instructed to march up and down beneath the window of the particular ward in which the poor Scot lay, playing as long as he was able. The doctor went home that evening without doubt greatly pleased that he had been able to shed a ray of sunshine even at the last upon what had doubtless been a cold, grey life. Next morning the doctor, when he arrived at the hospital, went straight to the ward, expecting to see the body removed and the bed empty. Not at all. His Scotch patient was sitting up in bed making a dreadful clamour, shouting for "parritch, sowens, haggis, Finnan haddies, Loch Fyne herrings—onything decent to eat"—continuing—"I hav'na had a decent meal since I entered the hoose." "This is the hungriest place I ever was in." (Laughter.) Without doubt the doctor was astonished at the effect of the pipe music. No doubt so also are the members of this club. (Loud laughter.) But what I have just told you is nothing to the sequel. There was a strange stillness in the hospital that morning. All the rest of the patients were dead. (Roars of laughter.)

Do not fear for one moment, however, that my wish is to lure you into the Highlands to perform the happy despatch on you. That may be the effect of pipes on utter aliens. There are no risks for you. It has been well established, as the result of long and arduous investigation, that there are no climbers but have some trace of Scottish blood in their veins. So that undoubtedly every member of the Climbers' Club is immune. Gentlemen, it has given me great pleasure to respond for the Scottish Mountaineering Club. I am only sorry the reply did not fall into better hands, but to be here as a guest and be privileged to listen to an old friend and member of my club speaking from your President's chair, and see so many kind, familiar faces, has been to me pleasure indeed. I offer the hearty greetings of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and thank you for your kind reception of the toast. (Applause.)

Mr. E. CALVERT having added a brief response on behalf of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, the next item on the programme was

"The Visitors," in proposing which toast Mr. W. P. HASKETT-SMITH said :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I have travelled 5000 miles in order to attend this dinner, little thinking that in reward of my zeal I should find myself arriving just in time to be let in for the intolerable nuisance of making a speech. That is my grievance, and yours is still greater ; yet I want to stand between your just resentment and those who are responsible for inflicting me upon you. As the President has already told you, it has been the custom for years that everybody who gets on his feet here should complain of the tyranny of Mr. Bryant. We have all done it, and in a great variety of forms, but this time, when a telegram arrived demanding this speech, it seemed imperative to take some more effective step, and, seizing my stoutest stick, I went off to have a quiet talk with Mr. Bryant. He soon talked me round, glibly explaining that he had nothing to do with the matter. It appeared that for years we had all been on a wrong track. It was the Dinner Committee on whom all this blame ought to have fallen, and accordingly it is the Dinner Committee whom I want to protect against your indignation. The other day in America they told me a story about two Southern colonels, who had fought in the Civil War side by side. (Laughter.) You think it odd that colonels should fight side by side ; but in point of fact there were so many of them in that war that they can't have fought in any other way. Well, one day these two veterans met in some crowded city. They had not seen each other for twenty years, and, delighted to fight Gettysburg and Spotsylvania o'er again, they adjourned to celebrate the occasion in the usual manner. After celebrating it with enthusiasm for some time, there came a less enthusiastic moment when it became necessary to enquire how much there was to pay. The bill was presented, and the warrior who had made himself responsible scrutinized it carefully, and said to the waiter, "It looks to me, sir, as though you were charging me quite enough. It looks to me, sir, as though you were charging for more drinks than we have had. It looks to me, sir, like damned robbery. Blame me if I pay you a cent. of it." Deeply pained by this ebullition, his high-toned friend at this juncture broke in with a dignified protest. "Colonel," said he, "never forget that you are a Virginian gentleman. It is up to you to settle that bill. That bill has got to be paid. Pay it at once, Colonel, and shoot the damned skunk afterwards." Gentlemen, be good enough to shew the same wise and generous moderation towards the Dinner Committee. (Loud laughter.) They have my forgiveness already, because the task

they have laid on me is light. It is merely to propose to you the toast of "The Visitors," and we have before us a crowd of such agreeable and distinguished men that the only difficulty is to know where to begin and how to leave off. In a list which has just been put into my hands there appear several members of the House of Commons, and the choice has apparently fallen upon Mr. Dyke Acland, a gentleman who represents a portion of that county which cherishes the fiction that its acres are broader than any other county's acres ; but conceals the fact that its miles are longer than any other county's miles. Then, again, we have the Secretary of the Alpine Club. There is no practice against which we have more resolutely set our faces than that of guideless climbing by other people. At the same time, when the professors of guideless climbing come amongst us, no one receives a warmer welcome. Some of you may not be aware that Mr. Bradby is the junior partner in a firm by which the art of guideless climbing has been carried to a high pitch of perfection, and you may be sure that it will be kept by him at or above the highest level hitherto attained. He is also a brilliant speaker ; yet, if this list may be trusted, we have amongst us to-night a visitor before whose eloquence both these hardened orators must turn pale. It may be a misprint, but the name in this carefully prepared list appears as "Pericles." Of course if Mr. Pericles really is here, the opportunity is one which we must not miss, we shall throw over the programme, and call upon him for a speech. (Laughter.) If he has brought Aspasia with him, we shall appreciate his visit all the more. It is not often that we have here a representative of the Navy, and therefore to-night we welcome with peculiar pleasure Commander Saunders, in whom we have almost a proprietary interest. What says the grand old song—

" For of all the brave commanders, there are none that can compete
With the tow-row-row-row-row-row, of 2 King William Street."

We are not, however, to expect a speech from him ; but if you drink the health of "The Visitors" with proper enthusiasm, you shall be rewarded with one speech from Mr. Bradby, of the Alpine Club, and another from Mr. Francis Acland.

On behalf of "The Visitors," Mr. E. H. F. BRADBY said in reply :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I had nearly finished an exceedingly pleasant dinner, when I happened to glance at the menu, and found there, to my horror, my name put down to reply for "The Visitors." My digestion was interrupted, and my mind became a blank. A relation of mine was once stopping at a country house, and came down to breakfast in the morning to find the family, and also the domestics, seated around in a circle. She took a seat. To her consternation she found they had

started, one by one, each saying a text, a sort of family prayers. She could not remember any text that she had ever read, and as her turn came nearer and nearer, she got more and more nervous, and at last, when it came to her, with a desperate effort she blurted out, "Remember Lot's wife." Your Secretary kindly came to me, and when I told him that I could scarcely speak on such short notice, he stated that this was a meeting of friends, and that whether I made a mess of it or whether I did not, it did not really very much matter. That being the case, I have struggled to my feet just to blurt out a few words. At the outset I am faced with the difficulty that, although I do not agree with anything Mr. Haskett-Smith has said about our party, still I am in some respects a climber, and as a climber amongst climbers I feel absolutely and perfectly at home, and not a guest at all. (Hear! Hear!) You must not misunderstand me when I say I am a climber; for I do not mean that in my most reckless moments I have attempted to copy the climbs achieved by some of this club. None of the guests here would think of trying such a well-known climb as the "Stomach Traverse" on the Pillar Rock, especially after such a dinner as you have provided us with. The thought of the pain which it would cause to that most sensitive of organs is terrible. I must, however, associate myself with the guests, and must try to think that I am not a climber at all, and am here knowing very little about the subject. Well, there are one or two things, I think, that would strike almost any visitor. If I, standing here on behalf of so many non-climbers, just glanced at my fellow-visitors, and then proceeded to talk about nothing but climbers, my action would perhaps run some risk of being misunderstood by the visitors. They might remember that story of the father who took his son to the House of Commons, and when the Chaplain came in to read prayers, the son turned to the father and said, "I suppose, father, the Chaplain will pray for the Members of the House of Commons." "No, my son," said the father, "the Chaplain just gives one look at the Members, and then he offers up prayers for the nation." (Laughter.)

But a story like that is not in the least applicable here, because, as I look round me at the members and at their guests, I am puzzled to say which of the two is the finer set of men. Lastly, gentlemen, for I will be brief, it has often struck me, and no doubt my fellow-guests, and especially in these days of professional sport, that at any rate what we may call amateur professionalism has never entered into the life of climbing clubs. The expenses of a climber are not paid. He needs no artificial encouragement, no laurel wreaths, no trophies, no monthly medals, no pots and pans. It is all done for pure enjoyment and love of sport, and we as guests can heartily congratulate this Club, and indeed all climbing clubs on that fact. (Hear! Hear!)

Mr. FRANCIS DYKE ACLAND, M.P., also replied to this toast as follows:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I cannot but admire the reticence of the proposer of this toast in not saying anything about my prowess as a climber, confining himself in his remarks about me to the county for part of which I have the honour to be a member.

I am afraid I am not worthy, as far as climbing goes, to represent a portion of that county, as, during the last three or four years, if anybody had said, "Do you know Penyghent?" I should have said, "What a funny name. Who is he? Is he a Tory? Is there any chance of getting him over?" I thought the proposer of the toast might have described me in one of those useful phrases which give complete satisfaction, without committing their user. I remember the use of such a phrase in a political connection. I was present at a meeting in which Mr. John Morley had come down to speak in a constituency of little reputation, for a man of less, and he had to say something about the candidate and the constituency. He said, "Gentlemen, your candidate is entirely worthy of the constituency which he seeks to represent. I have heard his name mentioned in London." (Laughter.) I should not, as a matter of fact, have felt that anything the proposer of this toast had said in my praise as a climber was misplaced, for I have always believed that I was a very fine climber indeed. I base that claim upon having been in the company of my friend and your friend, Mr. Young, in the performance of some of his most exceptional and noteworthy feats. I was his nearest and constant companion at the University of Jena during the time he wrote the "Guide to the Roofs of Trinity College," and, in addition to this—and it is on this that the whole of my claim rests to respond to this toast—there is a rock on the way from the glacier to Bel Alp which I can climb and he cannot. I think I had better describe it. It is a very small one, and in shape extremely convex, rather like a head with no features except beard and back hair, and the task is, with one's feet in the beard, to reach over and grasp the back hair, and pull oneself over the rock. (Laughter.) I can do it and he cannot. But if you closely consider the matter you will see that ability to climb that sort of rock is not due to prowess in climbing but to absence of stomach. (Laughter.) Therefore, gentlemen, my whole claim to respond to this toast depends upon that feature in my anatomy. But as that entirely disappeared at about the first entree of this magnificent dinner, and as, therefore, I have no claim any more to respond to this toast, my whole reputation as a climber disappears, and I have no further claim to detain you. I can only say that I, in union with your other guests, am much obliged for your hospitality, and for myself as a person who has sat most of the day listening to a theoretical attack on vaccination by Members of the House of Commons, and nearly

all the remainder to the practical objections to that practice made by a small baby without being able in the least to check the flow of oratory in either case—(laughter)—I can only say that it has been a great relief and pleasure to me to get away and to come here this evening.

At this stage of the proceedings a serious omission was discovered in the Toast List. It was manifestly impossible to pass over in silence the services rendered to the Club by Mr. Cecil Slingsby during his three years in the office of President, and the task of proposing his health without any notice was kindly undertaken by Mr. A. W. ANDREWS :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—There is one toast that even at this late hour you will drink with enthusiasm. It is that of our late President, Mr. Slingsby. I have been in the habit of prefacing any remarks which I am unfortunate enough to have to make in public with the story of a beaver, but to-night I have been forestalled.

My natural grief at having to cut an old friend gives way, however, to feelings of pride when I reflect that the President of our Club has done me the honour to remember a story which I told at a former Climbers' Club dinner. I will not say that the remembrance was unmerited, but it was certainly unexpected. We have been especially fortunate in the Climbers' Club in having had for our President not merely a rock-climber but an iceman. If Carlyle had lived to these days, I feel sure that he would have added another type to his list of Heroes and modelled it from Slingsby, "The Hero as Iceman and Wielder of the Axe."

More than that. The name of our late President, as Thucydides might have said, has in Norway from the North Cape to the Naze won its way to the mythical, and is, I doubt not, linked with Thor and Odin in Norse legend. There is but one height to which I think he has not climbed. You probably know the story of the old sailor. Some well-meaning admirer thoughtlessly suggested that he should stand for the Parish Council. The old man gently but firmly rebuked him. "I've been most things in my life, I have. I've even been a god. It don't leave much for ambition." His companions had been massacred by savages, and he had escaped through being down below in a diving dress, in which costume he appeared on shore. He was immediately worshipped as a new kind of god, and had to put up with the discomfort for several weeks, for fear of being eaten. I hope Slingsby was not intending to tell us that the presidency of the Climbers' Club was itself the goal of all ambition, if so I must apologise for having unintentionally spoilt a point in his speech. We at any rate have basked in his reflected glory. Gentlemen, I give you the health of our late President. (Cheers.)

This toast having been received with the heartiest enthusiasm and every kind of honour—musical and unmusical—Mr. W. CECIL SLINGSBY said in reply :—

It is not unreasonable to say that I have a grievance. It is that I have to make a speech on something that I am not put down for in the list. It is not a very serious thing, but still a Yorkshireman is never very happy if he has nothing to grumble at, and I am glad Mr. Andrews has given me an opportunity of doing so. I cannot but notice the more than kind way in which you have received the toast. My friend, Mr. Andrews, has made me feel that during my term of office in the Climbers' Club I have gained many friends, and I feel also that I have lost none.

When I was elected your President, I said that it was one of the proudest days I had ever had. Gentlemen, I reiterate that statement, and I have ever been exceedingly proud of the Club which I represented. I am afraid that I did not do half of what I ought to have done for the Club. I have not been able to attend very many meetings. There were, however, one or two little matters that I thought wanted rounding up. I will not name them, but I have very great pleasure in telling you that this meeting here this evening, if other proofs were not forthcoming, is ample proof that some of the little difficulties which existed a few years ago have completely vanished. The Climbers' Club is on the very best of terms with all Mountaineering Clubs in the British Isles, and notably so with the Alpine Club. I must say that it has been a very great pleasure for me to be so long associated with you all, and I assure you that my interest in the Club will not diminish.

Some years ago I prophesied that our Club had a great future. I am absolutely certain that that prophecy was based on a substantial foundation. When we look around and see this large gathering of members, and feel and know that we have so many more in different parts of the country who could not be present, it is ample proof that the Climbers' Club is a great institution. We must never forget that, in addition to being a sporting Club, we are also a social Club. The social side of it has probably been rather neglected. In the Alpine Club exactly the same want has been felt, and the same remedial measures have recently been taken to supply this want in both cases. Well, gentlemen, I thank you most warmly and most sincerely for the way in which you have received this toast, and if you will allow me I must go on to the real work that is put before me.

It is my great pleasure and my deep privilege to propose the health of our President. No novice is he. Mr. Robertson, as you all know, was, some few years ago, the President of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, the first born British Club to which the Alpine Club gave birth. He has

been tried, and has been found true. The Scottish Mountaineering Club is giving us of its best. Has it not also given us its greatest man? Head and shoulders above most of the members of the Climbers' Club and of the Scottish Mountaineering Club Mr. Robertson stands. He is also a great climber. He knows his Mont Blanc. He also knows that grand mountain, Ben Nevis. The election of Mr. Robertson here is a sort of reversion of the old form when Scotsmen invaded England. It is an invasion of England now, but an invited one. Invasions have been invited in times past, and this invasion is a successful one. Mr. Robertson has come to his own. Probably you will recollect that when I was elected I was put in the Chair as a sort of stopgap. Mr. Robertson ought to have been elected at that time, but he had calls across the Atlantic.

I am sure that you will join me in expressing the hope that our new President will lead many members of the Climbers' Club to take their pleasure, to add to their already rich store of happy memories, and to glean health and strength amongst the mountains of his native land. The Club has neglected that most beautiful of all mountain countries, Scotland. There is a marvellous field awaiting the active climber in the Scottish Highlands, and an enormous amount of new work to be done. Of course, a considerable number of us have climbed on Ben Nevis, but this mountain is not known to members of the Climbers' Club as it deserves to be, and you must remember that on Ben Nevis one can get an experience on steep snows and in the work of cutting through cornices which can only be gained with difficulty in the Alps.

When speaking of the neglect of Scotland it reminds me that there is another mountain land which we have also neglected, Ireland. Cannot the politicians in our ranks create yet another Irish grievance, and bring it so strongly before the notice of their fellow-members that we become impelled to cross the Channel in large force, and, if necessary, to annex Carrantuohill? Better still, let us look around, and not far either, and let us elect some time in the not distant future an Irish President.

Though the hour is late, I cannot refrain from reminding you of what our President calls "the sweet simplicity of his native Gaelic." Is it, shall I say remotely, possible that this quality as represented in the nomenclature of the Coolin mountains has been in any measure responsible for the small number of our visits to Skye? Has the spelling, or has the pronunciation, of those names, so sweetly simple, been too much for us?

Gentlemen, it is my very great pleasure to propose the health of our President, Mr. R. A. Robertson.

A storm of applause followed, which was at once a tribute of affection to the outgoing, and of confidence in the future of the incoming, President, who at once rose to reply:—

Gentlemen,—The hour is very late. I would like very much to respond to Mr. Slingsby's remarks, but I feel that, as I say, the hour is too late. May I tell you a story instead about an ex-Moderator of the Church in Scotland, a Moderator of that Church being a sort of temporary Archbishop of Canterbury. Possibly you may not all know that the chief occupation of the Church of Scotland at Assembly time consists of breakfasts. But this Moderator did not confine himself to breakfasts, and sometimes he went home rather late. One night he got home about one o'clock. Directly he got inside the door of the house a voice from above called out, "John! is that you?" The Moderator replied, "Yes, dear, were you expecting anybody else?" (Laughter.) I do not want any of the members to make such a very rude reply to their wives to-night. (Laughter.) I wish to thank you very much indeed for the reception you have given to-night to Mr. Slingsby's toast. It is quite true that in Scotland we have excellent mountaineering. We have, as you may know, over 300 peaks more than 3,000 feet high, and many of these rise direct from the sea. On the north faces you will get, perhaps, the finest climbing you will get anywhere. The names of the mountains—my dear friend alluded to my Gaelic—I do not speak a word of it; I only like to look at it on the map. (Laughter.) We shall be very glad to see you. It would be a good plan for this Club to arrange a meet in Scotland. I believe the Scottish Mountaineering Club would be very glad to arrange for a combined meet, and I think they could show you some very good climbing indeed. I will not detain you, gentlemen. I thank you very much for the reception you have given me. (Applause.)

The proceedings were thus brought to a conclusion, and the party gradually broke up, after a most enjoyable evening.

