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## ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER.

THE Eleventh Annual General Meeting of the Club, which took place at the Hotel Cecil, London, on Friday, February 14th, 1908, was attended by about 45 members. The only business before the meeting was the passing of the year's accounts, and the election of the officers for the ensuing year. Under Rule IV., one of the Vice-Presidents, the Rev. J. Nelson Burrows, M.A., and three members of Committee, Mr. Christopher Cookson, M.A., Mr. A. W. Andrews, M.A., and Mr. C. W. Nettleton, resigned their posts. Mr. J. M. Archer Thomson, M.A., was elected as a Vice-President, and the three new members of Committee are Sir F. H. E. Cunliffe, Bart., Mr. Sydney B. Donkin and Mr. R. W. Lloyd.

Mr. R. A. Robertson as President, Professor J. B. Farmer, F.R.S., as a Vice-President, and Messrs. Sidney Skinner, John W. Robson, Thomas Meares, C. Myles Mathews, J. C. Morland, and G. Winthrop Young, as members of Committee, were re-elected.

Mr. C. C. B. Moss as Honorary Treasurer, and Mr. George B. Bryant as Honorary Secretary, were also re-elected, the Committee being empowered to appoint a Joint Honorary Secretary at their convenience, and the meeting terminated.

### THE DINNER

took place immediately afterwards in the Richelieu Rooms of the same hotel, the President taking the chair at 7'45, and was attended by the following members:— A. C. Adams, A. W. Andrews, Thomas Arnold, jun.; Geoffrey Bartrum, Claude E. Benson, Henry Bond, J. V. Brett, T. Fraser Campbell, Henry Candler, C. R. Canney, A. Gibson

Cheney, W. E. Corlett, W. M. Crook, Sir F. H. E. Cunliffe, A. W. Davey, J. H. Davey, S. B. Donkin, G. W. H. Ellis, Prof. J. B. Farmer, W. V. Goulstone, Brinsley Harper, W. P. Haskett-Smith, G. F. Hatfield, Donald Hunter, J. E. James, E. R. Kidson, R. W. Lloyd, T. G. Longstaff, H. C. Lowen, W. P. Marler, C. M. Mathews, Thomas Meares, J. C. Morland, C. C. B. Moss, R. E. Nelson-Younger, C. W. Nettleton, R. M. Peel, H. V. Reade, E. S. Reynolds, A. Riddett, R. A. Robertson (the President), C. D. Robertson, J. W. Robson, W. F. Shannon, Sir J. Bamford Slack, M. K. Smith, C. H. Townley, E. R. Turner, A. W. Wakefield, W. E. Webb, G. W. Young, Wm. Zimmerman.

The Club guests were Mr. Clinton T. Dent, ex-President of the Alpine Club; Mr. John Buchan, of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and Mr. C. H. Ashley, of the Rucksack Club, while the list of the private guests included Messrs. R. R. Armstrong, Algernon Bathurst, E. A. Broome, Sir Edwyn Callard, Charles Candler, Hugh Dart, F. W. Dunn, W. Lamond Howie, H. M. Leveson, Hector McFarlane, A. E. Mason, M.P.; John Maude, A. L. Mumm, G. Ogilvie, M.D.; — Robertson, jun.; P. Salter, Claude Schuster, A. C. Smith, E. Tomlinson, — Ward, A. F. R. Wollaston, M.R.C.S.

In due course, after the usual loyal toasts had been honoured, that of "The Climbers' Club" was proposed by the President, Mr. R. A. ROBERTSON, who was received with enthusiastic cheers:—

Gentlemen,—Until a few moments ago I was in full pursuit of a most enjoyable evening, forgetful of the sword which I knew would fall upon me sooner or later.

"So comes a reckoning when the Banquet's o'er—  
The dreadful reckoning —and men smile no more."

It requires rather an expert musician to bring out a varied melody from an instrument with only one string, and I am here again before you to-night somewhat in a difficulty, but hopeful that I may strike a note which will, at all events, be received with that toleration which is usually present with men who are well eaten and well drunken. (Laughter.) I mean who have eaten and drunken sufficiently to make them feel well.

Gentlemen, it is perhaps fitting, and it will interest you to be reminded, that we have arrived at an epoch in our existence. We have completed our tenth year. (Applause.) The Club was born on the 6th December, 1897, but it was in the springtime when a young man's fancy lightly turns to—(laughter)—mountaineering, that what our friend, Mr. Dent, in a recent speech, delicately termed "the necessary preliminaries," took place at Penygwryd. It was early in 1898 that the first annual gathering of the Club took place, with a membership of 200, and since then nothing but good fortune and prosperity has marked our career. We admitted our 400th member a few weeks ago, but after a period of 10 years it is, of course, the case that many of that number are no longer with us. To turn from our own immediate domestic matters, we have to chronicle the formation during the past year of the Rock and Fell Club—a Club which, I believe, is devoted mainly to climbing in the English Lake District. I am sure we all wish that Club great success. (Applause.) Perhaps to many of us a more interesting event is the formation of a Ladies' Alpine Club, under the designation of the Lyceum Alpine Club. As all of us know, there have been many lady enthusiasts who have been expert climbers in the Alps; but, I believe, the formation of this Club is the first recognition which the mountains have received of being proper and fit associates for ladies. I wrote to Miss Carthew, the Hon. Sec. of the Club, for the information of this meeting to-night, to ask if there was anything in the qualifications bearing upon climbing in the British Isles. I got a reply from her saying that although the qualification was intended to be based upon mountaineering in the High Alps, the Committee thoroughly appreciated the climbing obtainable in this country, and I gather from her letter that a good record of climbing here would have weight with the Committee in considering the candidature of any lady. She also sent me a Memorandum or Prospectus of the Club, and there is the following touch of nature in it which, I think, you will all sympathise with:—"As with the kindred club in Savile Row, so with the Lyceum Alpine Club will an annual dinner be arranged." (Laughter.) Gentlemen, this is another evidence of the humanising influence of mountaineering. (Laughter.)

The formation of a Ladies' Alpine Club, I think, merits reflection. Mountain climbing has had a comparatively short history. Except for a few isolated instances climbing, for its own sake, dates from within a century. In early times the attractiveness of a mountain depended more upon its accessibility than upon its inaccessibility. It was asserted that the chief charm of a mountain lay in its being "an ascent without toil or difficulty," or, perhaps, that it had the additional advantage "to travellers that the ascent is so easy as to permit of riding to the summit." Defoe, writing in 1726, records the fears of himself and a companion when ascending a gently undulating hill in the Cheviots. The close of his account is prophetic. When resting on the top, clinging

to the heather in an agony of mind lest the laws of gravity might be suspended and they be hurried prematurely to heaven—(laughter)—they were joined by a lady and gentleman who had made the ascent on horse-back. (Laughter.) Defoe says :—“This, indeed, made us look upon one another with a smile to think how we were frightened at our first coming up the hill. And thus it is with most things in nature. Fear magnifies the object and represents things frightful at first sight which are presently made easy when they grow familiar.” Oh! you conqueror of the Dru [here the speaker turned towards Mr. Dent] think of it! (Laughter.) Oh! Edward Broome, frequenter of peaks by untrodden ways, think of it! (Laughter.) Gentlemen, Mummery’s easy day for a lady on the Grêpon was foreseen by Daniel Defoe. (Laughter.)

Gentlemen, two hundred years ago, when the mountains in this country were the abode only of robbers, reivers and murderers, they were regarded with feelings of dread and terror. Gradually this gave way to a feeling of repugnance born of the unknown, and we find mountains were approached with reluctance, much being made of the labour and exertion necessary to overcome hills which are now traversed by roads. We find in early literature Richmond Hill, Hampstead Hill, and even Primrose Hill requisitioned for comparative purposes in order to stimulate the imagination of the reader. Who knows but that amongst their friends those pioneers were regarded by their friends with as much interest as we now regard the conqueror of Trisul. Gentlemen, Dr. Longstaff’s victory may, at the Climbers’ Club Dinner two hundred years hence, be a fitting subject for pleasantry. (Laughter.) In Hume Brown’s collection of “Early Travellers in Scotland” a Captain Burt, in 1730, speaks of a narrow glen as “a most horrible and terrifying sight.” He said “the huge naked rocks produce the disagreeable impression of a scabbed head”—(laughter)—and he conjures up a happy dream of “poetical mountains, smooth and easy of ascent, clothed with verdant, flowery turf where shepherds tend their flocks.” So, too, in the recorded isolated ascents in the Alps over a hundred—even two hundred—years ago, all of which were apparently undertaken for scientific or other special reasons. Mystery, fear of the unknown, terror and all evil are the dominating notes in these records, and it was only forty years ago that the devil himself was driven off the Matterhorn. (Laughter.)

The first real admiration of the hills seems to have gathered in poetry. Thus we have Byron, Wordsworth and Scott, each of whom must have done much to awaken the slumbering idea. The angry aspect of the mountains, and all pertaining to them, vanished. Wordsworth struck the note, and men’s feelings answered in harmony.

“The sounding cataract  
 Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,  
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy woods—  
 Their colour and their forms were then to me  
 An appetite.”

So, too, we find Byron changing the terror of the storm into a feeling of awesome admiration—

“ Far along,  
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among  
Leaps the live thunder ! not from one lone cloud  
But every mountain now hath found a tongue.  
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,  
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud.”—(Applause.)

Scott gives us the more domestic picture of an evening rainstorm on our hills at home—

“ The evening mists, with ceaseless change,  
Now clothed the mountain's lofty range,  
Now left their foreheads bare.  
And round their skirts their mantle furl'd,  
Or on the sable waters curl'd,  
Or on the eddying breezes whirl'd  
Dispersed in middle air.  
And oft condensed at once they tower  
When brief and fierce the mountain shower  
Pours like a torrent down.  
And when return the sun's glad beams  
Whitened with foam, a thousands streams  
Leap from the mountain's crown.”—(Applause.)

Gentlemen, it was writings such as these that encouraged the great change of thought which came over men early last century and which, from our point of view, culminated in that grand achievement—the formation of the Alpine Club. (Applause.) Gentlemen, it was indeed fitting that the British should originate mountaineering as a sport, for we are told on good geological authority that some of our British hills existed long before the Alps were thought of. Like the grain of corn in the mummy we find the spirit of these primeval mountains lying dormant through long ages in our noble selves, suddenly developing into active growth when brought to the forcing house of the Alps. A member of this Club, at one of the dinners—or perhaps it was a guest—had the brazen effrontery—(laughter)—to designate a climber as the noblest work of God. Gentlemen, he is nothing but the product of the common or garden agency of original sin. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Now, gentlemen, without encroaching upon the preserves of the gentleman who proposes the next toast, I would like to refer to modern mountaineering, and I feel I must name the Alpine Club, because the Alpine Club to us is the living embodiment of mountaineering. (Hear, hear.) The Alpine Club is the complete mountaineer. (Hear, hear.) But it may be that the Alpine Club, as it now exists, is only the nursery of what is to follow. One of the foreign representatives at the recent Jubilee gathering expressed the hope that the

Club might continue to go upwards, but never reach the summit. We may soar to heights yet unknown. The progress and development of the last fifty years will not stop, and it is not for us to say when or how it should stop. The mountaineering era, as we think of it, dates from fifty years ago. There was the brilliant period of the sixties—(applause)—the Golden Age it is called. Then followed the period of development, when the wrong ways became the right ways; and, lastly, we come to the guideless age, which is, I believe, only now in its infancy, and in which the members of this Club take a special interest. I say this because the climbing in the British Isles, as practised by a large section of this Club, calls for the same individualism, the same readiness and resource, and the same responsibility which is so absolutely necessary for guideless climbing in the larger sphere of the Alps. We have not at home the great expanses of snow and ice or the great distances which there are in the Alps, but we can find sufficiently technical climbing in our own country to call out the independence of thought and self-reliance which is so necessary to guideless climbing. We must remember, however, that rock climbing is not mountaineering, and that any novice who attempts to climb in the Alps without previous experience, without guides or without experienced companions, is not a novice—he is a fool. (Hear, hear, and applause.) And, perhaps, the man who has been used to adopting the ideas of guides, without thinking out things for himself, is not on a much higher plane, if he regards his experience as sufficient for guideless climbing. But I feel I am on delicate ground. Some of you may not know the story of the Oxford man who had just succeeded in taking a double-first. On the following evening, exhilarated by happiness—and, possibly, by refreshment—(laughter)—he was endeavouring to climb upstairs to his rooms, and he stumbled just as he reached the top, and rolled down to the bottom of the stairs and stayed there. Shortly afterwards a dull-witted Proctor came along, and seeing the recumbent form expressed the pious hope that the gentleman was not much hurt. Our friend snorted a drunken snort. “Dear me, Mr. Smith,” said the Proctor, “I thought you knew better than to get into a condition of this sort.” Mr. Smith replied, “How the devil can you ‘think’ what a double-first knows.” (Laughter.) Gentlemen, it was *not* Mr. Haskett-Smith. (Laughter.)

Gentlemen, when a man is placed in the most honourable—but, in some respects, unfortunate position for himself—of being President of a Mountaineering Club, I find he sometimes, not always, delivers himself of some antiquated ideas born of the experience of the last century. He forgets—or he seems to forget—that although the bicycle was, perhaps, like himself, a very up-to-date machine a few years ago, it has been superseded by the up-to-date hill-climbing motor, and modern up-to-date climbers must be rather apt to regard advisory remarks after the manner of Mr. Smith to the Proctor, and tell him to go and teach his

grandmother to suck eggs. (Laughter.) So I leave the modern climber alone, confident in this, that so far as the members of this Club are concerned, the object in climbing is to live—not to get killed. (Hear, hear.) We have no sympathy with the sensational Gulliverian tales which from time to time appear in certain magazines—(applause)—and which, so far as mountaineering is concerned, merit the term of “penny dreadfuls.” Before I sit down I will say one thing more. It is to those of us whose love for the mountains will, sooner or later, lead us to revert to the early type of mountaineer, and take to the hill which can be ascended without difficulty. The hill climber can be as much of a mountaineer as the dare-devil rock climber or frequenter of the ice and snow of the Alps. (Hear, hear.) He can have as much of the spirit of the mountaineer as the man with all the capacity and skill to enable him to overcome difficult ascents. He can have the mind of a mountaineer to whom the word “mountain” is an enthusiasm, for he knows what the mountains can give him. A writer in a recent number of the *Spectator* said that mountains take a man precisely as God made him; that mountaineers share a great secret which the world does not understand, and which they are content the world should not understand. These words can only have been written by a mountaineer. We have all of us read the most inconsistent definitions of the pleasures of mountaineering. We have all of us attempted to define these for ourselves; but at the end of all definitions there lurks a dissatisfaction, a feeling of emptiness, a groping in the dark for something more. That something is the great secret which we feel but cannot put into words—the secret which we share with the mountains and with our comrades, and which links them to us with a bond more lasting than all other friendships. (Applause.) Gentlemen, I give you the Climbers’ Club, coupled with the name of Dr. Longstaff.

In reply to the toast of “The Climbers’ Club,” Dr. TOM G. LONGSTAFF said :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—It gives me great pleasure to reply to this toast this evening for the Climbers’ Club. That, however, is rather marred by the great difficulty of taking such a long step as the connection between a climb in the Himalayas and a climb in our own English hills, and, as the time is limited, I hope you will excuse me from endeavouring to make it. After all, I have been expressly bidden to talk about myself this evening. Yet we can also talk about the doings of the Climbers’ Club, as, although not an original member, I am still a member of a fairly green old age. Perhaps you will allow me, as I find there is some little misunderstanding about it, to say that the ascent of Trisul does not constitute a record for altitude. But it is a fortunate mountain, and the second highest peak of a well-known group. It is named after the “Trident” of Siva. Its height is 23,406 feet, according to the great

Trigonometrical Survey of India. Turning to the interesting pages of "Who's Who," we find three people who hold "the record" for mountaineering. But the real question of a record lies between three other people, or rather parties, of a very different calibre. Firstly, there is Graham, in 1884. I have been looking very carefully into his ascent of Kabru, in Sikhim. All the objections that have been urged against Graham's authenticity really fall to the ground. With my companions last summer (Mr. Mumm is here, and can confirm what I say) we revisited the scene of Graham's exploits in Gurhwal, 600 miles from Sikhim. Graham's account of his climbing shows that it was extremely difficult. The account is bad, and difficult to follow, but his maps were unreliable. Indeed he criticised the survey so much that this made him very unpopular in certain quarters. It is impossible to expect the Indian Survey, with the means at their disposal, to carry out a perfect topographical survey. The work they have done is good, and the wonder is there are so few mistakes. He says that, with one exception, he failed to get up every mountain that he tried to get up, which is hardly what a romance writer would do. Secondly, two Norwegian gentlemen very nearly repeated the ascent of Kabru last October, but from one cause or another were not quite successful. They thought they reached 23,900 feet. Thirdly, there is W. H. Johnson, of the Cashmir Survey, who is not likely to have mistaken the mountain he was on. In 1865 he ascended E.61 (now K.5). Its height is given in the *latest* maps as 23,890 feet. I have written on this matter in the March number of the *Geographical Journal*. The "record" for altitude lies between these three ascents, all just under 24,000 feet. Then comes our ascent of Trisul, 23,406 feet, according to the G.T.S. From the point of view of the Climbers' Club, I may say that, compared with Wastdale Head, and Wales and Scotland, it affords no difficulties whatever from a technical point of view, but just as certain short lake climbs in Cumberland are harder than the average rock climb in the Alps, while mountaineering in the Alps is very much more difficult than rock climbing in Cumberland, so in the Himalayas, as a rule, the technical difficulties are less than in the Alps, but there are difficulties of another kind—the difficulty of distance, and the difficulty of having to be your own porter, and, of course, the difficulty of altitude, which affects people differently. Owing to an accident to Bruce, only Mumm and myself were able to take part in the attack on Trisul. Mumm and I slept two nights at over 20,000 feet, in a storm, with three guides and four Gurkhas. The weather was so bad that we could not get up, so we came down again. Personally I had been smoking a good deal of that time, and I think Mumm had been smoking too. I found it fairly easy to sleep. We found we could get as much of it as any member of the Climbers' Club requires. We went down. Owing to bad food, Mumm became indisposed at a lower camp, about 13,000 feet. This had nothing to do with mountain sickness.

I had another try with the two Brocherels and Kasbir. I prefer to climb without guides, because it is harder than climbing with them, but if we had not had guides, I very much doubt if I should have got to the top of Trisul. I believe I have been to 20,000 feet about ten times, and I think the so-called acclimatisation to low pressures is fallacious. I do not believe in it. I believe Mr. Dent pretty strongly expresses that view in a paper which he wrote concerning the feasibility of ascending Mount Everest. So when it came to another ascent, I thought I would try from a lower camp, and try and rush the peak in one day. Camping at 17,450 feet, we left 6000 feet to do the last day. We did that in ten hours, an average of 600 feet per hour. The ascent is something like the ascent of Mont Blanc from the Dome ridge, on the Italian side. I have been up there twice, with guides and without guides, and each time at the rate of 960 feet per hour. On Trisul I was going as fast as ever I could with a party of four, and only carrying just enough food for the day. We thus went about two-thirds of the pace we did on Mont Blanc. As for the fatigue, I was very much fatigued, but I think a good many members of the Climbers' Club would be fatigued who had climbed 6000 feet up a steep snow slope in bad weather, with few halts. When we got to the top there was a little discussion as to whether we should go on. At the top there is a rounded dome, but an overhanging cornice seemed to be a few feet higher. I did not want any question as to whether we had got to the top, so I shouted, "Go on." But it was blowing rather hard, and to save time I took the lead. After a little I had to cut some steps, perhaps twenty or thirty. It was only a diversion of half an hour to get to the top of the cornice and back. I cut those steps, at a pressure of  $\frac{2}{5}$  of an atmosphere, with just as great ease, or I should say with just as great difficulty, as I cut them on the Dome ridge of Mont Blanc, at a pressure of  $\frac{3}{5}$  of an atmosphere. I am very sure there are people who would be able to get up even a mountain as high as Everest, notwithstanding the low pressure they have to face. The question of the actual ascent of Mount Everest must depend upon whether there is a route that can be traversed quickly, leaving 4000 feet for the last day. Unless you can rush the peak in this manner, I believe that the cumulative effects of low pressure will be too much for most of the party. (Applause.)

Sir F. H. E. CUNLIFFE, Bart., in proposing "Kindred Clubs," said :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I find myself in something of a difficulty in dealing with the toast which stands opposite to my name. In the first place, you, sir, have already intimated that you have poached upon my preserves ; and, secondly, there is the difficulty of following my old friend Dr. Longstaff. I feel somewhat in the position of Tennyson's unfortunate knight, Sir Bedivere, "A cry behind him and the deep before."

I fear that "a cry" does not accurately represent Dr. Longstaff's very interesting speech. As regards "the deep," it is represented at this moment by my friend Mr. John Buchan, whom I intend to refer to, at whatever personal risk to myself, as an "Empire Builder." Gentlemen, here I stand, with one of those who ascend to the high places of the earth on my left, and an Empire Builder on my right, and before me the responsible and happy task of proposing the toast of "Kindred Clubs." I feel myself, from a mountaineering point of view, ill fitted to do this. May I remind you of a story told of the late William Morris. On one occasion he asked Swinburne and Rossetti to come down and stay with him. He was repapering his dining-room at the time. Around the walls he had left spaces for his motto; much in the same way as you see at Woolwich, plastered round in the Gunners' Messroom, their splendid motto, "Ubique quo fas et gloria ducunt." He proposed to write his own himself, and he told his guests what it was to be. It was to be "If I could." William Morris went to bed, but the other two men sat up all night, writing in the spaces, with dirty pencil marks, "As I can't." Gentlemen, this is what I feel as regards mountaineering. The *Alpine Journal* is my favourite literature, just as Gaboriau's novels formed the favourite reading of Prince Bismarck. I read of the great feats that mountaineers have done in the past, and feel very much in the position to which Swinburne and Rossetti relegated William Morris. I can, however, promise you this, that whatever shortcomings are apparent in the remarks I make, prolixity will not be one of them, and for several reasons. In the first place, the Committee (this will give you confidence, gentlemen, and encourage you to bear) have imposed upon me a time limit. I shall not tell you what it is. To do so would cause a sense of that unrest which precedes the announcement of the annual Budget in Parliament, and which for the same reason is kept a strict secret. A time limit, as all will admit—certainly the early free traders—with all respect to those present, is an interference with the rights of the individual. Personally, I think it is a wise restriction on the part of the Committee. After dinner speaking, in point of length at any rate, has improved since the exuberant oratory of the early Victorian period, and I think you will all agree that, in cases like this, where there is a real danger of over-production, every speech should be limited to a certain extent. I think you will all be glad to hear on this occasion that the State proposes to intervene.

There is another fact which naturally restrains my verbosity. I feel a very deep respect for the institutions whose health we are drinking, and I feel that it is extremely difficult to deal worthily with the subject. It is difficult to find a common denominator. Each of them differs from the others geographically, ethnologically, and finally, most important of all, orographically. In the case of the Ramblers, we are dealing with the eastern counties, or rather county—I suppose Yorkshire will submit to be

called a county. Then we come to the North, the ancient kingdom of Scotland; and finally we have the club upon which, like the British Empire, the sun never sets, the Alpine Club. With regard to that point of the sun never setting, I think it is a happy and striking coincidence, touching the man and the club he represents, that the first time I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Clinton Dent was in the Polar Seas, where the sun hardly ever does set. Perhaps you will permit me a trifling divergence for the moment, yet one of some importance to mountaineers. You have, I have said, perpetual sunlight in the Polar regions, and that affects seriously the question of the snow. There was an absurd rumour started when I was at Spitzbergen that a party, headed by Mr. Clinton Dent, was stopped on the lower glacier by one of the first crevasses they met. A great deal was made of the point that it was deplorable that an ex-President of the Alpine Club should be stopped so early in the day. Now I have never accepted this story. I believe I have the Club with me in refusing to credit that story without further evidence. I find it difficult to believe that such a mountaineer as Mr. Clinton Dent was stopped by an obstacle 300 feet above sea level. It was no doubt an ebullition of lowland, or rather of maritime malice which started this ridiculous rumour. But, gentlemen, the plausibility of the rumour depended solely on the known effect of perpetual sunlight on the crevasses. You, sir, have referred to heaven. We will call it the Happy Hunting Grounds for the moment. In the Happy Hunting Grounds we are told we shall climb perfect mountains, in perfect weather, and always in this perpetual sunlight. Is it not a serious point that this perpetual sunlight might subject us to conditions entirely unknown to the Alps, or even to the lover of the British Isles? It would be a post-glacial period, and that, to glacier lovers, is a rather serious matter. This everlasting sunlight might prove disastrous to the sport. Of course it would bring with it certain advantages. Too early or too late a start would be impossible. Then we should have the pleasure of perfect weather, and should be safe from those rarified air troubles that we have heard discoursed on so interestingly to-night. But I think you will agree with me that the possibility of the absence of ice and snow is a serious thing. As I hope that mountaineering will be permanent, and as I hope to go on improving my mountaineering capacity through eternity, I should regret such a state of affairs, and I think that the Alpine Club should, at the proper time and in the proper quarter, represent that an assurance should be given on this point, very much in the same way as Mr. Rudyard Kipling's sailors protested against the abolition of the sea. To return to my theme. I said that the difficulty was to treat these clubs from a common point of view. Geographically they are not the same. In mountaineering methods even they differ to some extent, even if we do not accept the absurd legend that the members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club roam through perpetual mist, and that the members of the

Yorkshire Ramblers' Club live entirely underground. Still there does remain a great common bond, the great bond of mountaineering—mountaineering in all its forms and in all parts of the world. There is surely nothing in the world of sport to equal in its human interest, its variety, its manliness, the sport of mountaineering. I do not think any other form of sport combines mental and physical powers in the same way as does mountaineering. We are told the romance of the Alps is past. I do not agree with that. I can imagine that to some of the veterans the Alps will never be quite what they have been, never quite the high playground of their youth. That is intelligible enough, especially when we contemplate the changes that have passed over Switzerland even within my lifetime. The Golden Age is no doubt to some extent gone, at any rate for the veterans who have known it. Yet the silver age remains, and to us younger men it can still be the golden. After all, we have what older men had not. In these days we hear so much about history that this matter should appeal to us. We may not have the romance of the unknown as they had, but we have the romance of the past; we can still wander over old battlefields; we can learn by actual experience the very difficulties that the early climbers had to confront, and reconstruct the stories of old victories. That is much that will make up to us, and go on making up to future generations for what we and they have lost by living too late. After all, we are still in close touch with that past. I am, I fear, a hopeless victim of hero worship; and I always feel that one of our great privileges here is to meet the great men of earlier days. Mr. Clinton Dent is a representative of the past in so far as he stands between the old and the new. He was in touch with the older generation. He knew them and he knows us; he has a foot in either world. Perhaps he will allow me to call him the last of the pioneers. It is a great satisfaction for us to meet you here, sir, and to hear from your lips something that will help us feebler men. We are already in your debt. There is a book which I imagine we have all read. I read it twice a year, along with "Ivanhoe." It is the Badminton volume on "Mountaineering," and when I find myself in difficulty, and the condition of the snow not what I have expected, I hasten to that book, and look the point up. I am approaching my time limit, if I have not already passed it. Well, sir, let me say, on behalf of the Climbers' Club, that we are proud to welcome you and the Club you represent, and the brother clubs, proud to meet you not only for the personal pleasure of seeing you here, but in the name and for the sake of the great and glorious sport to which we have all dedicated our best and highest ambitions. (Applause.)

In reply to the toast of "Kindred Clubs," Mr. CLINTON T. DENT, of the Alpine Club, said:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I find myself for the first time in my life in the position of a man with a past. Experience of the drama had

led me to believe that was the prerogative of the other sex. Perhaps retrospection is best to anyone disposed to look forward to the future with a certain degree of misgiving—not, however, from a mountaineering point of view. Let me at once set your mind at rest on that point to which allusion has so delicately been made by Sir Foster Cunliffe. There cannot possibly be any pedestrian difficulties, because I am given to understand that cherubs have no legs. Clothed in a halo which may furnish a protection from the perpetual sunshine, supplied with a pair of wings which will facilitate ascents, with an unlimited amount of time at our disposal and without any anatomical possibility of indigestion, we can look forward to that mountaineering with absolute complacency, and, indeed, we may find in it a solace, as the only other attraction that is to be provided, apparently, is that of perpetual music. (Laughter.) You, Mr. President, have alluded to the difficulty of playing on an instrument with only one string. You did not mention the nature of that instrument. From the Alpine Club point of view, it occurs to me that a trumpet which we should ourselves blow would be appropriate; but, as an old writer on Alpine subjects, I might suggest also the common lyre. (Laughter.) This is by no means the first time that I have had occasion to respond to the toast of the Alpine Club. In the old days it was an invariable custom, at winter dinners, for the President to propose the Club and for the Secretary to respond, so that in one capacity or another, on some eight or nine occasions, I have been charged with this duty. No record, however, of the speeches was ever kept. This was a merciful arrangement for everyone except, perhaps, the speaker, who, if in search of remarks to make on some future occasion, might have, if he chanced to remember them, utilised his former points, with the absolute assurance that, if he had done so, no one would recognise either repetition or plagiarism. I view with extreme dissatisfaction a recent departure in the laudable practice of consigning these after-dinner speeches to well merited obscurity. I am assured on good authority that the whole of the after-dinner talk at the recent Jubilee Dinner of the Alpine Club is to be published in the Alpine Journal. I fear that Sir Foster Cunliffe will be driven to abandon his practice of reading that publication. I had always suspected that an after-dinner speech, viewed in cold print, might look thin, but I had no idea until I absolutely saw the proof—in every sense of the word—of the remarkable tenuity, not to say the extreme emaciation, of an after-dinner harangue. “The bearings of this observation lays in the application of it,” as Captain Bunsby said. I understand the Climbers’ Club has a Journal. I trust you do not call it a “Club organ”—as is sometimes done—for an organ is an instrument that tends to grind out the same tune over and over again. The recent Jubilee Celebration has furnished very convincing and satisfactory proof that the Alpine Club is still full of vigour and vitality and, in fact, is going stronger than ever. These celebrations resulted in a kind of stock-taking, and

some rather curious points were made evident. As an instance, the parent Club was, in all probability, as much surprised as a well-known Mormon leader when on a certain occasion he realised to his astonishment how very numerous his offspring was. (Laughter.) This Climbers' Club, at any rate, furnishes a very happy proof of the fact that some of the children are growing up to a very vigorous manhood. The early founders of the Alpine Club took a broad view, and very wisely opened the doors wide. Consequently men of every taste and profession in life joined the Club. There were men of letters, men of science, artists and others, as well as climbers. Mountaineers, however, were naturally the most numerous of all, and, indeed, formed from the first, as they do now, the very backbone of the Club. It is natural that this large section of mountaineers should, after a time, tend a little to split up into separate groups and, in short, to specialise a little. It was the same in the early days. We had mountaineers who were mapmakers as well, such as Adams, Reilly and Nichols; there were travellers, botanists, such as Hinchliff and Ball; there were others who went far afield beyond the Alps, and there were mountaineers such as Stephen, Kennedy and Charles Mathews, whose writings popularised the new recreation. There were those who wandered through the Alps from end to end, and those who worked out in detail, district after district, such as A. W. Moore. No man ever rendered better service to the Alpine Club than Moore; for at one time he nursed the Club through a dangerous illness which tended to atrophy, and if it had not been for his energetic personality, the Club might really have ceased to exist altogether. In a sense he should be regarded as one of the founders of the Club. From the first there were, as now, the pure climbers, the men who found the chief pleasure in simple climbing in the Alps. That is a form of mountain worship that can never decay. It is, as I understand, the form in which you specialise and of which you are doing your utmost to preserve the best traditions. (Hear, hear.) I must confess to a somewhat imperfect knowledge of the *raison d'être* of many of the subsidiary mountain Clubs; indeed I am but imperfectly acquainted with the precise aims and objects of not a few Clubs of which I have the honour to be a member. There is, I know, a Rucksack Club, and I understand that it is a thriving organization. I presume the members are under an obligation to carry on their shoulders that impediment to comfortable progress on every occasion—when they cannot get somebody else to do it for them. There is another Club, the name of which I only learnt this evening—"The Rock and Fell Club." I suppose the members are divided into two categories—those who climbed rocks and those who fell. But this is only conjecture, and the Club organ will probably reveal the aspirations of the Club in due course. At any rate the aims and objects of the Climbers' Club are clear and definite enough. I take it that your desire is to further the sport of climbing and its pursuit wherever you can find something to climb, let it be in the

Andes, the Alps, the Himalaya, or for that matter in the British Isles, where you can pursue the pastime as well as anywhere else. You desire to develop climbing in every form except, possibly, climbing down in the presence of an opponent or a detractor, and you wish to improve the technique of climbing to the uttermost, particularly in the British Isles. This is very proper, and appeals to every one who desires to encourage home industries. Understand, that if I am mistaken as to the main objects of the Climbers' Club, I am equally ready, especially on this particular occasion, to praise you for whatever may be your aims. All who have had a fairly long experience of mountaineering have passed through a time when climbing *per se* was the most fascinating branch of that many-sided amusement ; but there may come a time when athletic climbing loses a little of its attraction, and when there is a tendency to regard other branches of the recreation as more seductive, and to find various reasons for giving it up. I met a distinguished French mountaineer on one occasion, who was getting on in years and girth. I asked him if he still climbed and he said, "No!" I told him I regretted that he had deserted the mountains, on which he remarked, "Je n'y vais plus ! je suis un peu trop gros en avant et un peu trop pesant en derrière !" A reason which, if not convincing, was at least weighty ! (Laughter.)

It is needless to reiterate that I am in entire sympathy with this Climbers' Club. Whatever branch a Society like this may specially cultivate would, I hope, appeal equally to me. The worship of the mountains should be wholly undenominational. Such professions may seem to savour of inconsistency, and, indeed, I have often been charged with this failing. I have been told that at one time I have, in writing, advocated guideless climbing and at another denounced it as a reprehensible practice. At one time I have sung the praises of rock climbing, at another of snowcraft. I have even been confronted with passages I have written in proof of the charge. The sentences in question did not appear to me to possess the smallest interest, and to the charge of inconsistency I am absolutely impervious. Life is most enjoyable when you can make yourself believe that what you happen to be doing at the moment is the most fascinating of all possible pursuits, and the converse is also true, as any after-dinner speaker can testify. May not a man change his mind and vary his moods? Why should inconsistency be the sole privilege of women and politicians?

Let me add one word in all sincerity. I am grateful to you for having invited me here this evening to meet so many members of the mountain brotherhood. I am grateful to you for the indulgent patience with which you have tolerated these discursive remarks ; and, if the honest truth be told, I am grateful for nothing more than that I have got to the end of my remarks, and may now enjoy peace, repose and the pleasures of digestion. (Much applause.)

Replying on behalf of "Kindred Clubs," Mr. JOHN BUCHAN, of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, said:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I am greatly honoured at being here to-night as a guest of this Club, but the honour and pleasure that I feel are coupled with some awe, awe occasioned by the brilliance of the eloquence I have listened to and by the company in which I find myself.

I have always regarded you with profound respect, not to say with reverence. I pictured you as a race of lean, hard, and incredibly courageous men, whose daily pastime was ascending cliffs equal in difficulty to the *Mer de Glace* side of the Grèpon. And for this view I had some reason. I have on occasions in different parts of the world found myself, in the pursuit of mountaineering, landed in places that seemed to me to be too difficult, and have had the misfortune, on those occasions, to have as companions friends who had climbed in Wales or the Lakes. After a long day, when I have suggested that this place or that was rather hard, I have invariably been met with the answer, "Not bad, but nothing like Bink's Traverse or Brown's Chimney." Can you wonder that I have never visited those places? I have never dared. "Some day," I have always said, "I will make my will, leave my autobiography in my publishers' hands, go into hard training, and then I will set out for Wastdale Head with quaking limbs, perhaps, but with a stout heart. To-night I am a little reassured. My respect for you remains, but my awe is weakening. I see faces around me not visibly different from the kindly race of men. I see friends of my own here, which assures me that you are not too far removed from common humanity. To-night I feel the dawns of a great hope. I, too, will attempt these things. I, too, will essay Bink's Traverse. I, too, will ascend Brown's Chimney.

Gentlemen, the Club which I have the honour to represent has many points in common with your own. We both believe that mountaineering, like charity, should begin at home. We both own several ranges of mountains, own them by that earliest form of tenure, effective occupation. But we have no protective policy about our possessions. Whatever we may be elsewhere, in mountaineering we are all Free Traders. Centuries ago our ancestors descended upon yours, and drove their cattle to the moorlands, as Irish patriots are doing to-day. Nowadays you take your revenge, and you come to our country and show us the way up our most famous peaks. It is to English climbers that we owe many of the first ascents in Skye, on Ben Nevis and elsewhere. Some of our finest peaks were first trodden by what I fear I must call an alien foot. We have some advantages over you. We have a larger area for our ambition, and more peaks to climb. You, on the other hand, have the advantage that your mountains are all free. In Scotland we are still a little troubled by the deer, an animal which is exasperating when you are stalking it, and

obstructive when you are not. Our Clubs were formed with the same object. We have the same creed, and the first article of that creed is that we believe in the unparalleled beauty of our own hill country. All of us have many mountaineering memories in other lands that we love to recall. But however far we travel, it is to our kindly grey hills that our affection returns. To those of us who were born and bred among them they are in very truth bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. They give us rock-climbing of the first degree of excellence, and they give us far more—a long-descended and intimate friendship. It is a truism that there is a special freemasonry and brotherhood among all mountaineers, and should there not be a very special brotherhood among those who practise their craft among the hills of our own land?

I have only one word to add before I sit down. We have a custom in Scotland of having “meets.” That is to say, we meet and climb in company, in stated places and at stated times. I am told by scholars that it is a practice of great antiquity. In 1715 there was a meet at Braemar, which was promptly suppressed by the reactionary Government of that day. In 1745 there was another meet at Loch Shiel, led by a Royal Prince, which also ended in trouble. Nowadays there is no trouble. We eschew politics, and are not regarded by the law as a public danger. I am bidden by our Secretary to invite any member of the Climbers’ Club, should he be in the bleak north at New Year or Easter, and want a little mild exercise, to come and join us. We promise him a warm welcome. We can promise him almost certainly atrocious weather — mist, rain, snow, tempest, habitual cold, occasional hunger and frequent fatigue. But if, like a hardy member of this Club, he relishes these things, we can also promise him good company and good sport.

Mr. CLAUDE E. BENSON, of the Yorkshire Ramblers’ Club, also replied for the “Kindred Clubs” as follows:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I confess to feelings of pride, confusion, and diffidence. I am proud to be the representative of the Yorkshire Ramblers’ Club. I am proud to be the guest of the Climbers’ Club; but I am also proud to be a member of the Climbers’ Club. Hence the confusion.

I had intended to attend this dinner (I always make a point of attending Climbers’ Club functions if I can: they take precedence of all others) as a member of the Climbers’ Club, but this intention was shattered on Monday morning by the receipt of a letter from the Yorkshire Ramblers’ Secretary. He wrote:—“Dear Benson,—We want to know whether you will represent the Yorkshire Ramblers at the Climbers’ Club Dinner on February the 14th. We have tried all round, and we can’t get anyone. So now we come on you.” I wrote to Mr. Bryant, and in his reply he told

me that I was not to come as a Climbers' Club man, but as a Yorkshire Rambler. Now, though I absolutely decline to cease to be a Yorkshire Rambler, I intend to remain a Climbers' Club man as long as you will have me. When I came here my first difficulty was signing my name. Was I a visitor or a member? I compromised by signing right across the page. Mr. Bryant then contradicted himself by asking me to second a motion at the Climbers' Club Meeting. I objected that I was a Rambler, but he said, "That's all right. You are one of us now, but will be a Rambler right enough when you get to your speech." (Laughter.) I must have a dual personality, like an Indian god with four arms and four legs—how useful they would be on the rocks—or what Mr. Kipling would call "a kind of a giddy harumphrodite." Then came the one drop of comfort. Mr. Moss came up to me and said, "I say, Benson, make your speech as short as you can." But the filling up of the cup was not complete. Mr. Myles Matthews hints that in my position of guest I am liable to be charged by our President with "brazen effrontery." Then I am informed by Sir Foster Cunliffe that the County I represent is an Eastern one, whereas I had always believed it to be Northern, and to increase the inextricable confusion, this North-Eastern County is represented by a member of what we have just heard called the Celtic fringe. The position is anomalous. To crown all, I had asked Mr. Buchan as my guest, and I find the Club has taken that pleasure off my hands by inviting him as representative of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, and how a guest of the Club is to entertain a guest of the Club I don't know. Really, I am in rather a mixed position. My diffidence arises from my uncertainty as to my ability to speak after dinner. I do not mean for the reason that led a well-known variety *artiste* to set dinner above lunch. "I do wish people would not ask me to lunch," she said pathetically. "One can go to bed after dinner." I mean that I have never tried before.

However, I am not here to talk about myself but about the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. Of their mountaineering ability I need say little. They have done great things, and they number amongst them great names, than which none is greater than that of Mr. Cecil Slingsby. (Applause.) It is a name to conjure, though not to play diabolos with. Of his exploits as a climber you all know, but, perhaps, you do not all know of his connection with the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. President for an unprecedented number of years, he was never shot, or even shot at. There was, indeed, not even a conspiracy to depose him. Now, what President of such inferior institutions as France or the United States can say as much? I think, too, that the Yorkshire Ramblers may claim to have discovered a new, entirely satisfactory, and hitherto unsuspected route. At least so I judge from their latest dinner card. On it is an artistic drawing of sunrise on the mountains, and down in the corner is written:—*Sic itur ad astra In*

*montibus—et in antris.* Now, though we all agree as to getting to heaven by way of the mountains, I think that a Club that can find a way to heaven by going down pot-holes has created a record.

One thing I can say of the Ramblers—they are all working members of a working Club, and they try to make and keep it a working Club. We too, like the Scottish Mountaineering Club, have our Outdoor Annual Meets; but we also have Impromptu Meets, got up unofficially by some member sending around and collecting a party—not a party of two or three, but of a dozen or a score. I have seen 15 men hard at work at Almes Cliff Crag—one man hard at work on an impossible boulder, and the other 14 hard at work laughing at him. However, each man is ready and eager to take his turn, and they may also be seen stringing in parties all over the Crag. I think we—or you—might imitate them—or us (these pronouns are confusing)—I mean that the Climbers' Club might imitate the Yorkshire Ramblers in that respect. You might say, "They are more concentrated. They all live in Leeds or in the neighbourhood." I find that the number of Climbers' Club men who live in or about London are about equal in number. I know that it costs only 1/6 to get from Leeds to Almes Cliff, but we can get a Friday to Tuesday week-end ticket to Derbyshire for 15/-, or to Yorkshire for 16/-. I can promise you plenty of sport on the gritstone and a very enjoyable holiday.

Gentlemen, this advice may be priceless, or it may be only worth an anna. Perhaps you don't know what an anna is worth. Well, I will tell you. I had it first-hand from a curry-tempered Indian Colonel. He was discoursing on the depreciation of silver and the loss on the exchange, when his little son, in filial sympathy, asked, "Papa, what is an anna worth?" "Well, my son," replied the Colonel, "a rupee isn't worth a —, and it takes 16 annas to make a rupee, so you can work it out for yourself." (Much laughter.)

The next item on the Toast List was "The Visitors," and it was brought forward by Mr. WINTHROP YOUNG in a speech so bristling with epigrammatic points, and delivered with such fluent rapidity, that the stenographer was practically "snowed under," and the exhausted orator has not yet recovered sufficient strength to dig out and reconstruct the somewhat scattered fragments of the report. Suffice it for the present to say that Mr. Mason's literary methods and progress were brilliantly analysed, and his political career traced, while attention was drawn to the Continental character of Dr. Ogilvie's professional reputation and to the broad basis upon which it was built.

Replying on behalf of "The Visitors," Dr. GEORGE OGILVIE said :—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—When I received the invitation from your President to dine with him here this evening, I accepted with alacrity, but in accepting it said I was coming here to enjoy myself, and I trusted that under no circumstances would I misconduct myself, and under any circumstances I intended to leave the table speechless. Well, gentlemen, I have enjoyed myself, and your chairman (here the speaker waved in the air a "magnum" of champagne) has endeavoured to make me speechless. In fact, I feel at this present moment like that distinguished Scottish swashbuckler, Captain Dugald Dalgetty, who, on his return from the wars, finding, after a banquet, some difficulty in removing his armour, said, "To-night, although not *ebrius*, or drunk, I am, in the classic phrase, *vino ciboque gravatus*, full of wine and food." Gentlemen, that is precisely my condition this evening. After having partaken of this excellent menu, I have come to the conclusion that the *exit* from the stage of life is hastened by too many *entrées*. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, I see by your laughter that Scotch wit is like dry champagne; it requires a cultivated taste for its appreciation. The other evening I received a letter, and the letter began "Dear Doctor,—My mother-in-law is at the gates of death. Come at once and pull her through." (Laughter.) Gentlemen, I am in a difficulty this evening, and I want to be pulled through, but no one has come forward to assist me. I must therefore work out my own salvation with fear and trembling, and must stand alone, like the pelican in the wilderness and the sparrow on the housetop.

Gentlemen, I make these few biblical quotations to show that my early upbringing was absolutely correct. In my remarks I shall try to be lucid and brief. Lucid as far as the dawn of my intelligence permits. Brief as far as is consistent with lucidity. Before such an audience, and especially before such a chairman as your President, I feel that I must adopt the advice of the Apostle St. Paul in his celebrated Epistle to the Ephesians, "Let us walk circumspectly." Gentlemen, what is meant by walking circumspectly? I will explain. All of you have no doubt seen suburban gardens surrounded by walls—walls covered with broken glass bottles, to keep out robbers and bad boys. Have you seen a cat walking among the glass bottles? (Laughter.) That is walking circumspectly. I shall try and imitate the cat. I fear I cannot do it with feline grace. I shall therefore attempt to do it with elephantine elegance, and with the lightness of movement characteristic of that noble, intelligent and pachydermatous quadruped. In replying on behalf of the guests, I must use the personal pronoun "We." There are four classes of people entitled to use the personal pronoun "We." Emperors and Kings of States by right. Editors by custom. The man who replies on behalf of "The Guests."

And, fourthly, the man who possesses a tapeworm. (Long and sustained laughter.) I am not speaking on behalf of the fourth category. I am speaking on behalf of the guests. We have enjoyed ourselves this evening, and I trust all have been as well treated as I have been. Our enjoyment has been increased by the fact that we have not been invited here to put our hands into our pockets, and subscribe to some fund for indigent and indignant females, or suffragettes, but simply to enjoy ourselves. Many of my fellow guests have done some climbing. I have not done much climbing beyond Regent Street and Primrose Hill, and in earlier days Goat Fell. We have heard that in the future, which I trust is very far off for everyone, the climbing which we will have to do will not need legs, but wings. Well, evidently Mr. Clinton Dent has not had a thorough biblical education, as he has forgotten that there is such a thing as Jacob's Ladder—(laughter)—which I am looking forward to. I have asked many of my friends about this ladder, but can get no information about it, as none of them have ever climbed it.

There is no doubt that road would be easier and swifter, which is so well described in "Macbeth"—"the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire," or, as Virgil says, *facilis descensus Averni*. This reminds me of the story of an old Scotch doctor who had reached his last days, and was about to shuffle off this mortal coil. He said goodbye to his wife and children, and then called in his old coachman, a man who had served him for forty years, and who was treated almost like a brother. "John," said the doctor, "I am going a long road to-night—a longer road than you have ever driven me—a road that has no turning." The old coachman, wishing to comfort his master, said, "Cheer up, master, cheer up, the road you are going to-night is a broad and a straight one, and besides it is all downhill." I think, in speaking on behalf of my fellow guests, I may venture to give them some advice, viz., that when they leave here to-night they do not, like Lot's wife, turn and look back. This will be better explained by an anecdote. At a Sunday Bible Class the teacher had been describing the incident of Lot's wife, who was *turned* into a pillar of salt. She then asked if anyone could tell her of any similar miracle. A small boy said "Yes, teacher," and on being asked to explain, said, "A lady came by our back street yesterday afternoon. She looked to the right, then to the left, then behind her, and then she *turned* into a public-house." (Laughter.) I trust you will remember this to-night after you leave, and go straight home. I began, as you observe, with an exordium. I have given you one or two classical quotations. I have proved that fact and fiction are so blended nowadays that even truth itself is a matter of doubt.

I fear that I have talked at too great a length. ("No!") I fear I have wearied you. I fear I have let my imagination run away with me. ("No! No!") Gentlemen, that is not my fault; it is the fault of my nationality, because imagination, when it once lays hold of a Scotchman, possesses

him, possesses him in the old biblical sense of the word. It is like a volcano, which nothing on this earth can extinguish. I thank you, gentlemen, on behalf of the guests, not only with my lips, but with my whole heart.

On the conclusion of Dr. Ogilvie's highly entertaining speech, Mr. A. E. W. MASON followed with a spirited rejoinder to some of Mr. G. W. Young's witticisms. Unfortunately for our readers, but happily for the country as a whole, Mr. Mason's whole-hearted devotion to his Parliamentary duties leaves him no time for correcting proofs or answering letters, and we must, therefore, relegate his vigorous oratory to enliven some future number, passing on at once to the toast of "The President," which was handled by the Treasurer, Mr. C. C. B. MOSS :—

Gentlemen,—I crave your indulgence for a few moments. After the excellent speeches to which we have listened I am not quite certain whether you will the more condemn my presumption or admire my pluck in making a speech. Whatever your decision may be I trust that the milk of human kindness, which always flows freely after one has dined, will not have forsaken our dinner, and will cause you to look charitably on me. I regret I cannot tell you any drawing-room tale to enliven my speech, but if anyone would care to hear an excellent yarn let him come to me after dinner. No matter however unworthy the speech or speaker may be of your approbation, the same can never be said of the person whose health I have the pleasure of proposing, namely the President.

My friend, Mr. Fraser Campbell, has kindly written for me the following ode in honour of you, sir :—

To thee, about whose lofty heights  
Heaven's blessed breezes ever blow,  
Whose glacial apex shines afar  
Encircled by eternal snow.

Greeting from us of humble mien,  
Who grope about on lowlier levels ;  
A little lower than the gods,  
A little higher than the devils.

We know that other Cluhs one day  
To higher honours still may hid you ;  
But we believe you'll not forget  
The honour that the Climbers did you.

We wish you years of fruitful toil,  
Dinners and Climbing of the best,  
And when the evening shadows fall  
We wish you—Rest. (Applause.)

Our President is a mountaineer of no little strength and ability. What pleasures we mountaineers have, what friends we make!

We are very pleased to have heard Mr. Buchan of the S. M. C. speak this evening, and we would like to remind him that there is always a large gathering of the Climbers' Club members at Pen-y-Gwryd at Easter, and if any member of the S. M. C. were to join us he would be heartily welcomed.

I regret very much that our friend and Hon. Secretary, Mr Bryant, is not with us this evening. We offer him our sympathy and condolence for the loss he has sustained.

Sir, we are proud to have you as our President. Proud of the land from whence you come, covetous of your mountains, on which with you I have spent so many happy hours, and shall, I trust, spend many more—even if it be at the Witches' Steps in the Isle of Arran, there once more to point out to you the place where "Rose" was buried.

Sir, you are one of those who look upon this sport in the spirit in which it should be taken. You condemn and, as I consider, rightly condemn, those who take and show sensational photographs, in which the climber is posed in such a way that it would be impossible either for him to stand or for anybody else to photograph him. You also deprecate these sensational articles which appear from time to time in magazines and newspapers, which only bring discredit on the sport.

Sir, you in every way, both by your presence and your prowess, bring glory to this sport, and honour to our Club, and, therefore, it is with the greatest pleasure I raise my glass and drink to your very good health, happiness, and prosperity. (Loud applause.)

Mr. R. A. ROBERTSON replied to the toast of "The President" as follows:—

Mr. Moss and Gentlemen,—The lateness of the hour and all that we have heard to-night has prevented me from thoroughly digesting the ode of my old friend, Fraser Campbell, which you have just read, but I hope you will furnish me with a copy. As regards your personal remarks, I have swallowed them down, and depend upon it I shall reel them off to the first man I meet who does not appreciate me quite so much as you do. I read this morning's papers, and adapting, with a slight alteration, a phrase of Mr. Asquith's, I would like to characterise what you have just said as "a masterpiece of ingenious but felicitous caricature." While I am on my feet I want to read a telegram from the Rucksack Club—and our friend, Dr. Norman Collie, who is lecturing in Manchester—wishing

us all a merry evening. Our old friend Slingsby has not forgotten us either, and writes saying how sorry he is not to be with us to-night. I wish to say one thing. I think it is, perhaps, a mistake that at the close of these meetings you only propose the health of the President. There are other people connected with this Club who ought to receive your thanks on an occasion like this in a much greater degree. I mention three of them, and I will take them alphabetically. First our Hon. Editor. (Applause.) I think it hardly needs saying that if it was not for the Journal our Club would very soon go down. There would not be the same enthusiasm about it, and it is the Journal which links us together. (Hear, hear.) We congratulate our present Editor, Mr. Andrews, on having brought the Journal up to date, and we congratulate him on having produced the index for the last two volumes. (Laughter.) Our Hon. Secretary, Mr. Bryant. (Applause.) We are all sorry for his absence to-night, and extremely sorry for the cause of it. Bryant is really our Commander-in-Chief. (Hear, hear, and applause.) He was one of the founders of the Club, and has worked very hard indeed, and the whole Club owes him a very deep debt of gratitude. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Then our friend the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Moss. (Applause.) I will not say much about him, as I might be accused of giving him tit for tat. He has a great deal of trouble in collecting our subscriptions. (Laughter.) I know he has had to write me several times some years before he could extract the coin out of me. (Laughter.) It is due to that glorious triumvirate that the Club has attained its present position. They form the backbone of the Club, and I hope will long continue to hold their respective offices. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Talking of backbones leads me to grilled bones—the close of the evening. (Laughter.) There is one Committee I want to thank—the Dinner Committee—for having made such very excellent arrangements to-night. We thank them very cordially. (Applause.) Gentlemen, I sit down thanking you very much for the cordial way you have received the toast of the Chairman.

This completed the list of speeches, interesting even beyond our usual good fortune at these dinners, and a few minutes of general chat were cut off all too short by a wild rush to catch the inexorable last suburban train.