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RUCKSACK CLUB DINNER.

THE Seventh Annual Dinner was held at the Albion Hotel, Manchester, on Saturday, the 5th of December, with the genial President, Mr. Charles Pilkington, in the chair. A very bright feature of the evening was the variety and excellence of the musical programme. One of the most successful speeches was that of Mr. H. E. Scott, the Librarian, who all the while protested with amusing vigour against the mere idea of his making a speech. A vein of quaint humour ran through the strong commonsense of his remarks, and occasional excursions into the broadest Lancashire dialect were received with rapturous applause. Professor H. B. Dixon proposed "The Guests," and in the course of his fluent and polished oration told many amusing stories of the two gentlemen who were to respond, Dr. Welldon and Mr. Haskett-Smith. He professed to have all but strangled the former on the Riffelhorn, and to remember some remarkable witticisms perpetrated by the latter during his Oxford career. He concluded with an eloquent tribute to the affection inspired by Dr. Welldon since he had been Dean of Manchester.

The Dean's reply was full of bonhomie. He gave an amusing instance of tactful dealing with Suffragettes by the Police, and some capital schoolboys' answers. One of these, dealing with the Australian town of Ballarat, he implored the reporters to omit, so we are reluctantly obliged to forego the pleasure of repeating it. He had, he continued, good reason to remember the Alpine season to which Professor Dixon had referred, not because there was a grain of truth in his narrative, but because both his (the Dean's) comrades had fallen in love, and condemned him by day to the *role* of a frightfully bored "gooseberry," and at night to that of a still more bored listener to long descriptions of the ladies' charms.

Mr. Haskett-Smith said that the painful task of making a speech was rendered ten times worse by having to follow such

a speaker as Dr. Welldon. The Dean and he had actually been at school together, the former at the very top going out just after he himself had come in at the bottom. The world thought it knew all about the Dean, his learning, his piety and so on, but it did not know what a footballer he was. One of the two kinds of football played at Eton linked the Dean to this club, for in that game there figured an uncouth padded garment called a "sack." That game was very ancient; its mediæval ferocity, not to say prehistoric barbarity, amply proved that. At that game the future bishop excelled. When his schoolfellows heard that he was going to India as a bishop, their first exclamation was, "What a waste of fine kick!" and when news came that he was leaving India, they concluded that he had grown weary of kicking the tame and irresponsible Hindoo, and was looking for a place where there would be plenty who wanted kicking, and when kicked would be perfectly certain to kick back. Personally he had rather find the Dean eloquent just before him than indignant just behind him, but there was another difficulty quite unconnected with that in responding here to the toast of "The Guests," partly because the speaker felt himself as much a Rucksacker as any one there, having borne that burden hundreds, aye thousands of miles, and partly on account of the hearty and home-like welcome they had always given him there.

The President here leapt to his feet and said he proposed that the last speaker should be for ever disqualified from replying to this toast by being there and then constituted an honorary member—a resolution which was carried *nem. con.* with cheers and musical honours. The Treasurer, Mr. P. S. Minor, then proposed the President, who briefly replied, after introducing his successor, Mr. Alfred Hopkinson, K.C. The latter, who was very warmly received, let fall in the course of a short speech a promise that he would lift the veil of mystery which has long hung over the "Professor's Chimney" on Scawfell, and the "engineered" ascent of the "Great Gully" on Doe Crag.

A few more words from the President brought an extremely successful evening to a close.