

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB

A GENERAL MEETING was held in the Club Rooms on Tuesday, May 3, 1887, at 8.30 P.M., Mr. C. T. DENT (President) in the chair.

Mr. J. A. VARDY was duly elected a member of the Club.

A vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Seton-Karr for the present of a large photograph of a sketch made by him of Mount St. Elias, in Alaska.

An autotype enlargement on porcelain from a photograph of the late Mr. Moore, which has been ordered by the Committee for the Club Rooms, was shown, and received general approval. It was announced that Dr. John Tyndall had been elected an Honorary Member of the Club; also that the maps belonging to the Club had been rearranged and a catalogue of them made.

The CHAIRMAN then called on Mr. DONKIN to read his paper on 'Mountaineering in the Caucasus.'

Mr. FRESHFIELD opened the discussion on Mr. Donkin's paper, stating that Radde discards the Russian nomenclature and always adopts the local native names. He suggested that most of the peaks should be re-named, except the five that had been triangulated by the Russian staff. Klaproth is of opinion that the people in the northern valleys are Tartars, long ago driven up into the mountains by the Kabardas. The Urusbieh princes claim to be Magyars by birth.

Mr. GROVE remarked on the magnificence of the Koschtantau glacier basin, on the possibility of climbing Koschtantau, and on the general characters of Caucasian mountaineering.

Mr. TUCKER thought it would be a pity if the attention of climbers was too entirely absorbed in one mountain group. Probably next year travelling on the south side of the chain would be easier and safer than formerly, as there would be a considerable Russian force stationed in the Ingur valley.

The CHAIRMAN remarked that the inaccuracy of the 5-verst map in the glacier regions was of little consequence so far as the general traveller was concerned, as it is very accurate otherwise. He thought it would not be wise to trust entirely to Swiss porters, though a good Swiss guide is invaluable. The ascent of Koschtantau would be a most interesting one, but would require very exceptional conditions of weather.

After a short reply by Mr. DONKIN a vote of thanks was accorded to him by acclamation, and the proceedings terminated.

A General Meeting was held in the Club Rooms on Tuesday, June 7, 1887, at 8.30 P.M., Mr. C. T. DENT (President) in the chair.

Mr. H. W. TOPHAM was duly elected a member of the Club.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the late Mr. F. Warner, A.C., had left a legacy of 10*l.* to the Club, to be expended in any way the Committee might decide 'to further the cause.'

The CHAIRMAN then called on Dr. MARCET to read his paper on 'The Use of Alcohol in Mountaineering.'

The discussion on Dr. Marcet's paper was opened by Dr. HAND-

FIELD JONES, who considered that light wine was very different in its effect from neat spirit, which was pernicious. Alcohol chiefly affects the heart, which is the hardest worked organ in the body.

Mr. PACKE advocated the use of the light wine of the country in mountaineering, also 'nightcaps' when camping out.

Mr. FRESHFIELD said it was more difficult to treat the matter seriously than lightly. He asked Dr. Marcet whether he recommended the mountaineer to take spirits when overtaken by bad weather on a descent; also, whether it was wise to give the guides brandy when done up by hard step-cutting. His experience of mountain sickness was that it seldom occurred when there was much wind; only in calm weather.

Dr. SAVAGE thought that age had much to do with the question. A young man can eat and drink pretty much what he likes; but there is no fixed rule for all humanity.

Dr. HEYWOOD SMITH advocated the use of cold tea, carried in ebonite flasks covered with felt.

Mr. DONKIN remarked on the popular opinion that alcohol keeps out the cold, whereas observation shows that it lowers the temperature of the body; and he asked if there was any foundation for the opinion, frequently held, that to drink cold water alone when one is warm is very injurious, but harmless with a dash of spirit in it. In his own experience ice-cold water was only injurious on an empty stomach and when one is exhausted.

Dr. THEODORE WILLIAMS remarked on the deleterious effects of alcohol on an empty stomach, and said it should never be taken except with food.

The CHAIRMAN was glad to observe so general a consensus of opinion among those who had spoken. Tea was of great value as a 'respiratory stimulant'; so were some kinds of spirits—for instance, a mixture of rum and milk. Brandy, even when it could be obtained good, was deleterious in strong exercise.

After a few remarks in reply from Dr. MARCET a vote of thanks was unanimously accorded to him by acclamation.

Mr. DONKIN then showed a series of his Caucasian photographs on the screen by means of a lime-light lantern, after which the proceedings terminated.

The Summer Dinner took place on Wednesday, June 15, at the Queen's Hotel, Richmond. A party of thirty-six members and their friends sat down to dinner, the chair being occupied by the President. It was the first time the Club had dined at the Queen's Hotel, and approval was generally expressed of the dinner and the wine supplied. The weather was perfect and the only regret was that the party was not a larger one.