

irresponsible local sections, but shall be placed under the direction and control of central expert authority.

Should an accident occur a very serious question of responsibility must of necessity arise.

Yours truly,

CHARLES E. SHEA.

January, 1899.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall on Monday evening, December 12, 1898, Mr. Charles Pilkington, *President*, in the chair.

The following candidates were balloted for and elected members of the Club:—Messrs. C. E. Ashford, F. N. Ellis, E. B. Harris, W. T. Kirkpatrick, F. G. Leatham, G. Lipscomb, E. B. Moser, L. W. Rolleston, J. P. Somers.

The *PRESIDENT*, in proposing the Right Honourable James Bryce, M.P., as President for the ensuing year, said, 'We know Mr. Bryce as a mountaineering explorer, while the world knows him as a politician, traveller, and literary man. I have great pleasure in proposing that he be our President.'

Mr. LESLIE STEPHEN in seconding this proposal said, 'One does not often get much pleasure from reading a circular, but I seldom have received a livelier pleasure by such means than when I read the circular which announced that Mr. Bryce had been nominated for our new President. I begged permission to come to-night that I might take some part in his election, as I am unfortunately unable to attend in order to greet him at to-morrow's dinner. I have a claim which, I think, can hardly be disputed. I am probably the oldest friend of Mr. Bryce in this room. My friendship began at a period when a great many members of the Club, for very sufficient reasons, had no friends at all; and, what is more, I consider that I am, in a certain sense, the creator of Mr. Bryce as a mountaineer. When I first had the honour of knowing him he had achieved the very remarkable feat—I think it was an almost unique feat—of writing a prize essay which, instead of haunting its parent like a disgraceful progeny in later years, became at once a permanent part of English historical literature. This brought him the warm approval of Professor Freeman. I remember Mr. Bryce telling me that Freeman warned him against me as a seducer of youth. I did my best to seduce Mr. Bryce. Freeman thought it quite right to travel in Switzerland, in order to investigate the history of federal institutions, but necessary to forget that there were such things in Switzerland as mountains. I used to forget that there was anything else. It was my habit to surrender my mind to what the poet by a happy periphrasis calls a "wise passiveness"—that is, I forgot that I had any mind at all, and used my brain as a mere organ for correlating the action of my legs. I tried to initiate Mr. Bryce into

this principle. Freeman and I were the good and evil angels struggling for the soul of a human being, and, as generally happens on occasions when the good and evil principles come into conflict, they made a drawn battle of it. I did what I could with a success of which I am still proud. I remember going with Mr. Bryce on our first expedition together into the Carpathian mountains, a wonderful region for political philosophers and for all sorts of people, Magyars, Wallachians, Germans, and I know not what others, all there huddled together in a manner which delights the intelligent observer. He observed intelligently till I succeeded in dragging him off into the mountains, not so high as the Alps, but haunted by bears and wolves and more or less imaginary banditti. There he showed me that he was a thoroughly competent mountaineer, quite able to keep me at my full stretch when my powers were at their best. I met him afterwards in the Alps, and investigated the recesses of Mont Blanc with him and our common friend, M. Loppé. But of course I was most impressed when he made the ascent from which he takes his mountaineering title. He was not, I believe—in fact I am quite sure he was not the first person to ascend Mount Ararat. The earliest recorded ascent, or rather descent, took place a good many years before. But, though our ancestor deserves credit for his desire to get to the top of so high a mountain, he took means which would scarcely be approved of in modern times. The first ascent even of such a mountain scarcely justified the laying so large a district under water. Mr. Bryce showed he was a genuine mountaineer, who could go up a good mountain alone, with singular dash and independence, and for the love of it. He made some futile pretence of having gone to study the Armenian question. His true object, I have no doubt, was one more worthy of a President of this Club. Since then I have watched his career under my planet and the planet of Freeman. He has been attracted to the Rocky Mountains, the Andes, and the Himalayas, and, though clogged to a certain extent by his desire for political philosophy, he has sometimes had reason to regret his taste; he would perhaps have been better, certainly more cheaply, employed in climbing the Rocky Mountains than in investigating the political morality of the backslums of New York. But he has everywhere shown a desire which is not the less commendable because it could not be fully carried out. Any one who reads his last book of travels in Africa will feel that he has the root of the matter in him. He has written one of the most charming of modern books of travel; not only because it is full of information, but because it shows how fully he shares that passion which gives a justification to our favourite pursuit, the love of the wild and the grand in nature, whether of glacier-clad mountains or lion-haunted forests. Mr. Bryce appeals to the outside world chiefly from a political point of view. Undoubtedly he is one of those who redeem the House of Commons from some of the blame we might be inclined to attach to it; he proves that a man may be a politician and yet preserve a certain degree of moral sense; that a man may take a keen part in political contests and yet be capable of

something better; that he can raise the tone of the assembly; and that it is possible to be a party man and yet not give up to party what is meant for mankind. I am sure we shall all be proud to have such a man for our President, and hope that the House of Commons may be proud that for the second time (Mr. Ball was the first instance) in the course of its existence it has had among its members a President of this Alpine Club, the mother of all Alpine Clubs, as the House of Commons is the mother of all similar representative bodies. The qualities which we seek in a President of our Club are not those which always make for success in politics, but they are admirable qualities, which I cannot attempt to define, but shall try to indicate by saying that they belong to men who, even in moments of recreation, devote themselves to ennobling pursuits.'

'I only wish to say one thing more, which I could not omit without suppressing my strongest feelings. Perhaps you may not take some things that I have said quite literally, but this I mean in all possible earnestness. I have known Mr. Bryce nearer forty than thirty years, and I have always been proud to call him a friend, as I could not but be proud of the friendship of such a man. Besides being proud, I have been grateful for many kindnesses, and the more grateful because, as our lives have often run very far apart, I have never found, when I met him again after long separations, that his friendship had grown one whit less hearty and cordial. Having known him so well and so long, I am confident that in proposing him as President of this Club I am proposing not only a distinguished man, but one of the staunchest and most loyal of friends, and one of the most generous and high-principled and warm-hearted men I ever knew in my life.'

Mr. Bryce was then unanimously elected President for the ensuing year.

Mr. BRYCE then replied, 'I thank the Club most sincerely for the honour which has been done me, an honour which is enhanced to me by the thought that I am succeeding a long line of most distinguished men, many of whom were and are my intimate friends. It gives me additional pleasure to be proposed as President by my old and dear friend Mr. Leslie Stephen, who instilled into me by word and example the principles of mountaineering. I will try to do the best I can in the service of the Club during my term of office as its President.'

On the motion of Mr. Justice WILLS, seconded by Dr. WAUGH, Mr. F. O. Schuster and Mr. H. G. Willink were unanimously elected Vice-Presidents, in place of Dr. G. H. Savage and Mr. Frederick Gardiner, whose term of office expires.

On the motion of Mr. SLINGSBY, seconded by Mr. MUIR, Mr. A. L. Mumm and Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith were unanimously elected new members of Committee, in place of Mr. Ellis Carr and Mr. T. L. Kesteven, whose term of office expires.

On the motion of Mr. C. E. MATHEWS, seconded by the Rev.

H. B. GEORGE, the other members of Committee and the Honorary Secretary, being eligible, were unanimously re-elected.

The HONORARY SECRETARY then read a statement with reference to the republication of Ball's 'Alpine Guide,' of which the following is a *résumé*: After congratulating the Club on the completion of the first volume and thanking the Editor and his coadjutors for their labours, the Committee have to point out that the financial position of the undertaking is not very satisfactory. The total receipts have been 1,046*l.* 19*s.* 1*d.*, of which practically the whole has been expended on Vol. I. This was largely owing to the very heavy cost of the maps, the bill for which amounted to half the total cost of the book. The Committee hope that the receipts from the sale of the first and second volumes may amount to about 700*l.*, and, as steps will be taken to reduce very largely the cost of production of the maps of Vol. II., at the same time that far fewer new district maps will be required, it is expected that ultimately the whole cost of Vol. II. will be covered by this 700*l.*

The practical point is that the second volume can only be proceeded with if the Club will endorse the action of the Committee in employing the Club funds for this purpose and risking a possible loss of some 200*l.* and a temporary locking-up of about 300*l.* or 400*l.* at the date of publication of Vol. II.

With respect to the third volume, the Committee feel that unless the Club are prepared to find the money, or the sale of the first two volumes is unexpectedly productive, practical financial reasons will probably prevent its publication. It must also be remembered that the present Editor has stated that he is unable, owing to lack of personal detailed knowledge, to edit more than the first two volumes.

It may seem to some that there was no necessity for providing maps, but the experience of all editors of guide-books for some time past has been that they largely depended for success on the maps. In the case of the Alps S. of the Little St. Bernard Pass there were and are no satisfactory maps existing which give both sides of the frontier, and those provided in Vol. I. will, the Committee consider, be found to be very useful practical maps. The General Introduction, to be published next spring as a separate volume under an attractive title, 'Hints and Notes, Practical and Scientific, for Travellers in the Alps,' it may reasonably be hoped, will cover the expenses of production, which are estimated at about 80*l.* to 100*l.*

Mr. SPENDER asked why Messrs. Stanford had been employed, and not the makers of maps direct.

The HONORARY SECRETARY explained that this was owing to Messrs. Stanford being part owners of the copyright and plates of the Alpine Club map.

Mr. HORACE WALKER moved, and Mr. Justice WILLS seconded, 'that the Committee be authorised to assist out of the Club funds in the publication of the second volume of Ball's "Alpine Guide."'

This was unanimously agreed to.

The PRESIDENT then read an address. (See pp. 285-98.)

The PRESIDENT ELECT proposed and Mr. C. T. DENT seconded a vote of thanks to the President for his address and for his services to the Club during his term of office. This was carried unanimously and acknowledged by the President. The proceedings then terminated.

The WINTER DINNER was held at the Whitehall Rooms, Hôtel Métropole, on Tuesday evening, December 18, when 298 members and guests were present, the latter including Lord Russell of Killowen, Prof. Klein, Dr. Mitchell Bruce, the Hon. Lionel Holland, M.P., Mr. Onslow Ford, R.A., Dr. Gunther, and Sir H. H. Howorth, M.P.

An Exhibition of Alpine Paintings, by artist members and others, was held in the Hall from December 3rd to 31st, tea being provided on the 3rd and 18th. During the time the Exhibition was open it was visited by about 900 persons, exclusive of the two private view days, on the first of which about 400 and on the second about 500 members and their friends were present. For a detailed notice of the Exhibition see pp. 352-5.

Erratum.

Page 291, line 4, *for second ascent read third ascent.*