by Herr E. A. Tholme, the treasurer of the club. As this journey was through 7° of latitude, it was of a very comprehensive nature, and is very well described. Herr Thomle was apparently unusually favoured in the north, as he was able to photograph the Okstinder, a range of mountains which almost invariably veil their faces on the approach of any stranger. Other papers there are, and these are good too. WM. CECIL SLINGSBY.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall on Tuesday evening, May 7, the Bishop of Bristol, *President*, in the Chair. Mr. W. B. Worthington was balloted for and elected a member of the Club.

Mr. ALFRED EAST, A.R.A., read a paper entitled 'Mountains from the Painter's Point of View,' which was illustrated by lantern slides.

Sir MARTIN CONWAY: I have listened with interest to the remarks made by Mr. East. I am not a painter, and do not think I have the right to express an opinion about mountains from a painter's point of view. I have always been interested to see how mountains are painted. The general desire of mountaineers is to see the way up the peak, and the attempt to satisfy that desire has a very bad effect upon the artist. If you could produce upon paper or canvas a reproduction in colour and in form absolutely truthful, on a tiny scale, of a mountain, you would probably get something entirely ugly, however beautiful the view of the mountain itself might be. It certainly would not produce an effect similar to that produced on the eye by sight of the mountain itself. I may illustrate the difference by a comparison between the elaborate model of a ship and the ship itself. If you look at one such a model, and then at the ship, it will be obvious at a first glance that the effect produced by looking at the two is entirely different. If you look at the ship, the effect produced is of its enormous weight, solidity, force, and volume. Now, the most perfect model on a small scale produces no effect upon the spectator of either force, weight, strength, or any of those qualities which are the impressive qualities of the thing itself when seen. If you wish to tell an absolute lie about anything, you will do so in the most conclusive manner by an accurate reproduction of every detail on a tiny scale. If, therefore, you wish to paint a picture of a mountain in a manner which shall be entirely wrong in every respect, the way to do so is to depict the mountain with absolute exactness in every detail. A small picture, 10 inches high, of the Matterhorn, entirely truthful, in which you can see the way up and point out all details and so on—such a picture will not tell the truth about the mountain, nor truthfully represent the Matterhorn as we know it.

Now, Mr. East has said that no picture of a mountain reproduces

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upon the spectator the effect of its majesty, which is the primary effect of mountains. No picture has ever yet been painted which gives that effect. There are numbers of effects which have not been reproduced by translation into paint.

You come nearer to producing on the eye the effect of the mountains which the mountains themselves produce when you have a large and fine lantern slide than in any other way. We have seen on this screen over and over again effects which do to some extent produce upon us something like the effect of the mountains themselves. They are not always the best photographs by any means that do so. It is not easy to say which do and which do not. I think it is partly due to the effect of the illumination. No painting can compare in brilliancy with a slide thrown on the screen. You have some of the fire of sunlight on it. Lantern slides have suggested to me over and over again that there is a future for glass painting. It is conceivable that some effects might be produced by some future development of glass painting which we cannot well foresee. It does not follow that even the effect of mountains cannot some time or somehow be produced by actual paint.

How long is it since the sea was first expressed on canvas? Certainly not any great number of years; and in time many things will be accomplished which have not been done up to the present. I am not without hopes that the day will come when the majesty of the mountains, from which we who have experienced it get such a high degree of pleasure, may yet be transferred even to canvas.

Mr. Charles Pilkington: I do not know that I have anything particular to say. Every photographer is a nuisance on a climbing expedition, and anybody who paints even worse. I am, unfortunately, not a painter, but I quite appreciate what Mr. East says about painting being hard work. One of the difficulties is to find a place from which to make your attempt. Then it is hard to find a position to sketch from. We mountaineers are under a special difficulty, as we feel obliged to show the exact places we climb, and so it is very difficult to sketch these in accurately. It is a very good thing not to draw the whole thing before you for a time and save unnecessary work. You can then bring out your foreground after. I only wish that we could all attempt some little thing. Mr. East has given us some very good hints.

Mr. Douglas Freshfield: First I have to make a personal complaint. I came expecting to see a beautiful collection of Mr. East's pictures, and was very much disappointed to see nothing but pictures in black and white. When Mr. East spoke of slides, I still hoped that he would show some of his own pictures. It has been alleged that the Alpine Club, by requiring to have the mountains painted with literal accuracy, has exercised a bad influence on mountain painting. This, I think, cannot be said to be true now, if it ever was. The Club has always accepted painting as a qualification for its membership. Nobody could accuse Elijah Walton of being too topographical, or Mr. McCormick of being

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unimaginative, while Mr. Watts, R.A., who had been one of our honorary members, in his noble landscapes of the 'Mountains of Carrara' and 'Mount Ararat,' treated mountains from the point of view of a poet. I am not an art critic. Some thirty years ago I did once play that *rôle*, with somewhat successful results. For I drew three letters from Mr. Ruskin. But I am not sure that I should care to repeat now all I said then. If you would paint mountains properly you must, in the first place, love them. In the next place, go and live among them. I fancy the difficulty many painters find is that they have not lived long enough among them to free themselves from what Mr. East told us were the prejudices caused by their surroundings. I believe that probably the first great painter of the Alps will be a man who spends a large part of his life among them. Again, one of the reasons of the difficulties that painters find is that they are apt to travel during the tourist months. The Alps reserve their most picturesque aspect until late autumn, when the mists are apt to play most delightful tricks and hide the ugly parts of the mountains, and give them wonderful tones of atmospheric colour. I am sorry I cannot add anything more to this discussion, except to express our indebtedness to Mr. East for the very suggestive paper he has given us.

Mr. GOTCH: When my brother invited me to be present this evening, and told me that Mr. East was going to speak from the painter's point of view, I could not help thinking of something relating to Ireland, to the effect that there were no snakes in Ireland. The connection is this: that to these painters' minds there are no mountains for a painter's use. They have always seemed to be quite beyond the painter's art. Although we all have the same image on our retina, what we do see is what we choose to see; and I take it that people see in mountains what they look for—that is to say, the mountaineer will see the group of mountains, he will see the places where the paths are, and so on. The hunter will see the places where he can find game. The tourist will see what appeals to him; and the painter will see what appeals to him as a painter; and though we all see the same view, we all look at different things in it, and, consequently, it seems to me it must be very difficult for a painter to satisfy anyone but a painter in his representation of mountains. What the last speaker said seems to be right. His suggestion is that the real painter of the Alps, when he comes, will come from the Alps—a man who has spent his life there, and who has the intimate knowledge necessary to form a picture which will satisfy not only himself as a painter, but contain the things we all of us see; and I suppose, some day, the man will come forward to satisfy all our expectations.

Dr. CLAUDE WILSON: I would like to ask Mr. East one question in regard to showing the height, and also as to showing depth. Could we have views of mountains showing depth as well as height? Many show great height.

Mr. H. V. READE: It is much more difficult to talk about a thing than to do it. It is very much more difficult to paint

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a mountain than to climb it. It is also difficult for us as mountaineers to look at pictures of mountains fairly. The painter tries to give truth of effect, and we look for truth of detail, and if he does not show this we say he is wrong. We do not give him a fair chance.

The Rev. G. BROKE: Mr. East might tell us a little more as to whether the difficulty is not one that Sir Martin Conway pointed out to us, when he laid stress on the value of the lantern slide in giving us a true impression, and that is the impossibility in painting of giving the range in any sort of way over a subject which probably includes 5 miles, and may include 150. The lantern, with the power of light behind it, gives such an enormously increased range that there is a possibility that the painter can never hope to express it. This is borne out in some of the pictures, where we see that a great deal of it is done away with by the judicious use of clouds or mist. I remember once crossing a pass about 6 o'clock one morning, and, the sun being exactly behind us, there appeared a sort of movement in the sky to the W., and through a gap appeared a mountain not quite 10,000 ft. high, which appeared to be quite 19,000 ft., of overwhelming magnificence. I was very much struck, and turned to my companion for some explanation, who said he had never seen such a thing, and added, 'Now I understand why so many nations have invaded this land.'

Mr. EAST: I appreciate all that has been said by all the members of the Club, but may I point out that the object of painting is to express something that literature and music cannot—not necessarily better but different? To give the exact expression in painting is difficult. Even if a picture is vague, it may convey a greater sense of joy than when a painter puts down everything he sees. This he does at the expense of truth, simplicity, and dignity. Of course, one cannot go into technical matters with the mountaineer, because he looks at mountains from a totally different point of view from the artist. A lady once went into a studio and looked at a picture very closely to see the details of it, instead of looking at the effect that the painter wished to give, when the artist came along and, seeing her, said, 'Madam, it does not smell.'

You mountain climbers want to look too closely into its details instead of looking at the grandeur of its *ensemble*. The painter treats it with much greater respect.

There is a story of a mountain shepherd, who was rather keen about art, and went to an exhibition of pictures of mountains and said they might have his dog if he was allowed to look round. He was told he might keep his dog, so he tied it to the doorpost and went in. He looked at the pictures from the mountaineer's point of view. He knew them in reality, and he walked round, came out, and said, 'Well, I am glad I kept my dog.' It is a very curious thing that we in London see less of its beauty because we are so used to it. We go to Rome or Paris and say what beautiful places they are. It is because they are fresh to us; and so with

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mountains. Instead of calmly considering what is possible you rush into paint under impossible conditions.

In reference to one of the speakers, who talked about painting depth as well as height, I do not care what he does if he realises his object. If he can do this by taking a point of view half-way up the opposite side of the mountain, he can do so. There is no law against it. I have read much bigger lies in fiction than I have ever seen in paint. I have read books written by men who have never visited the places described. What would you say if I painted a picture of a mountain which I had never seen? You demand fact, and because one did not put in that particular detail you feel aggrieved—you never think of the object of the painter.

I would not like you to go away feeling that I have said anything to belittle my own art. The strong man is he who recognises his own limitations, and does not attempt that for which his art is not suitable.

You know as well as I that every mountain has a character of its own. You never see them twice alike, and remember that perhaps a sunset at the back of a mountain has such a rare and beautiful effect that may never be repeated. In the course of a tour in the United States I saw a sunset of such magnificence, I had ever seen such a one before, and not one man looked round. I said to one of them: 'Look here, my friend; if that was a firework display in Central Park you would pay a dollar to see it, and here you see this for nothing; therefore you take no notice.'

The PRESIDENT: We are greatly indebted to Mr. East for the many things he has said. It seems to me that he has touched upon a question that has very often entered my own mind. It has been said time after time that the one thing people care about is the climbing. I maintain that it is the love of the mountain and the sense of its majesty which appeal to the imagination. This is the magnet which draws us to the mountains, and from that point of view the painter and the mountaineer are on the same plane; but it seems to be brought out that the question of the power of enabling us to see what we do see is in the mountains rather than in the various ways of representing them. Mr. East has contrasted the power of literature with the power of painting from that point of view. I am inclined to think that the painter paints with one idea; he tries to put into his picture of the mountain some one idea of something great, something majestic, or it may be something else; and I am inclined to maintain that the painter gives an idea of that particular mountain better than any descriptive literature can possibly give and better than the best photograph can possibly do. To me literature, however well written, never influences me to use my imagination of a mountain anything like as well as a beautiful painting. We all see the same thing in a photograph, but in looking at a good painting we see so many good things there. I have taken an extreme interest in what has been said and the remarks that have been made, and we all thank Mr. East for what he has put before us.

A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. East for his paper was unanimously accorded.

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