

position du Bourg seroit extrêmement commode pour cela; cependant l'on tire peu de lumières des habitans. Il faudroit marquer précisément quelles sont les bornes & l'aspect successifs des différents Glaciers? en quel tems ils s'avancent ou rétrogradent, & quelles sont les années les plus remarquables à ces deux égards? Il faudroit examiner quand les fentes & les chutes des glaçons sont plus considérables? Quelles altérations subissent les rivières qui découlent des Glaciers? Quelles sont les différentes hauteurs du Lac de glace? ce que l'on pourroit observer dans les rochers latéraux. Il faudroit essayer de placer des fardeaux sur les grosses ondes du Glacier des Bossons, & voir quand & comment ils seroient renversés? Il faudroit examiner si la glace étant *ilidoelectrique*, ces vastes monceaux de glace ne donneroient aucuns phénomènes dans les tempêtes, &c., &c.'

THE CONGRESS OF ALPINE CLUBS AT GENEVA.

THE International Congress or Conference of Alpine Clubs took place this year at Geneva, during the first four days of the month of August, and certainly no previous Alpine Congress has so well deserved to be called International.

The English Club was represented by its President, by Captain Marshall Hall, and by M. Henri Pasteur; the Swiss Club by its President, Herr Lindt, and by Freundler, De Saussure, Binet-Hentsch, Favre, and other well-known names; America sent Mr. Cross, of Boston; France, its President, M. Le Sénateur Xavier de Blanc, its Vice-President, M. Talbert, and the Marquis de Turenne, from the Direction Centrale; but many of the Sections were separately represented, the Society of the Tourists of Dauphiné mustering in especial force. Austria sent Herr Richter, Italy, Budden and Dalgas, and Spain, Señor Arabia y Solanas, of Barcelona.

The Conference was opened on Friday, August 1, in the beautiful rooms of the Société des Amis d'Instruction, under the Presidency of M. Albert Freundler, the retiring President of the Swiss Club; and after the election of the representatives of England, France, and America as Vice-Presidents, M. Freundler delivered an excellent speech, and the practical business of the Congress began.

The subjects which had been reserved for discussion were not of special interest to the members of the English Club. Many pertinent remarks were made on the question of 'The Improvement of Mountain Inns,'—a subject which might be considered with advantage by the Presidents of the Sections of Dauphiné and Tarentaise. 'The laws regulating mountain huts' would appear to be already sufficiently codified under the head of 'First come, first served.' 'The manner of the training and the examination of guides' offers an interesting study to the speculative Alpine philosopher; but the practical climber is apt to rely on the well-known principle of the 'survival of the fittest'; and 'collective action amongst Alpine Clubs, in order to obtain reduced fares in favour of Alpinists travelling in

groups,' suggests ideas which, notwithstanding the 'nature moutonnaire' which the French ascribe to us, are at least, from an Alpine point of view, repugnant to the English mind.

The Conference lasted for two days, during which the ordinary proceedings were twice suspended to enable the audience to listen to addresses from M. Durier and M. Henri de Saussure. The former gave a graphic account of an exploration of Etna some months previous to the recent eruption, and the latter communicated some valuable and interesting information with regard to the first attempts to ascend Mont Blanc by his eminent grandfather, Horace Benedict de Saussure.

On the evening of August 1, M. Henri Pasteur—as courteous a representative of the English Club in Switzerland as he is of the Swiss Club in London—gave a *fête* to all the members of the Congress at his beautiful grounds of Grand Sacconnex, near Geneva. The exclamations of delight uttered by the tourists (on this occasion certainly travelling in groups) as they emerged from the dusty highway at the summit of the hill and entered into the paradise of Sacconnex were as frequent as they were sincere. An absolutely cloudless day had been followed by an evening of rare beauty. The air was redolent with roses and new-mown hay, exquisite shrubs vied in beauty with stately forest trees. From one end of the graceful avenue which crosses the grounds we watched at sunset the whole range of Jura in the loveliest shade, and from the other, as the full moon rose, we identified the many peaks of the chain of Mont Blanc as they lay sleeping between the Buet and the Mont Joli. The beauty of the views did not appear to prevent the numerous guests from doing ample justice to the mighty feast that was spread out under the trees. Music and dancing followed, and at a late hour the large assembly slowly and unwillingly dispersed.

On the morning of August 2 the official representatives of the various Clubs were entertained at breakfast at the Hôtel de Russie, under the presidency of M. Freundler. The business of the Conference was concluded in the afternoon; and in the evening a friendly *réunion* took place in the Stand de la Coulouvrenière.

Sunday, August 3, was given up to unmitigated festivity, and the interest of the Congress culminated at the Banquet which took place at the Hôtel National, when 480 persons sat down. The enormous *salle à manger* was not large enough to hold all the guests, some eighty of whom were seated at tables on the terraces outside the hotel. The walls were hung with flags and Alpine pictures, and from the high table the view down the great hall and through the open windows to the lake and the mountains was very impressive.

M. de Saussure presided, and as the dinner proceeded proposed the toast of 'La Patrie—à la Suisse des Alpes.' Herr Lindt proposed 'The Swiss Alpine Club,' which was very warmly received; and then came the toast of 'The Foreign Alpine Clubs,' associated with the names of England, France, Austria, and Italy. The English President responded, in French, and pointed out the priceless benefits which the playground of Europe conferred year by year upon the overworked men of business who sought rest and relaxation amongst the Alps. On

arriving in Switzerland, he said, they were like the muddy Rhône on its entrance into the Lake of Geneva, but on quitting it they resembled the noble river that rushed and sparkled under the bridges of the city. M. Xavier de Blanc, who followed, paid many compliments to England and the English; and the company was also addressed by the representatives of Austria, Italy, and Spain. The proceedings were characterised by great enthusiasm; and as the afternoon wore on the Winkelried steamer, chartered expressly for the occasion by the chairman, arrived below the hotel, and, decked with banners from stem to stern, bore off the guests to the charming grounds of M. de Saussure, at Genthod, where another *fête* had been prepared. The guests entered the grounds at Genthod in procession, preceded by a band of music playing a march composed by Madame de Saussure specially for the occasion. The grand avenue and grounds were lit up by innumerable lanterns, and a delightful evening was spent, many of the guests being invited to inspect the numerous relics of the great De Saussure, still carefully preserved at the beautiful villa which he formerly inhabited. These relics included many scientific instruments made with his own hands, and the very shoes which he wore on his memorable ascent of Mont Blanc. Night came, and the Winkelried, now glittering with Chinese lanterns, bore back the whole Alpine fraternity happy and contented to Geneva.

The efforts made by the Reception Committee for the comfort and entertainment of the numerous visitors to the Congress were beyond all praise, and special thanks are due to M. Freundler for his indefatigable personal exertions.

The writer of these lines gratefully acknowledges the extreme courtesy and kindness which he received from his Alpine brethren of all nationalities during his stay at Geneva, which were more than sufficient to convince him that the English Club still holds the first place amongst European climbers; and it was with a warm heart that on Monday, August 4 (on his way to Mr. Wills's charming chalet at Sixt), he stopped at St. Jeoire, and flashed a last message of courtesy and goodwill to his many friends at Monnetier, where the visitors to the Congress held their final banquet, after spending a happy day amongst the 'dizzy heights' of the Salève.

C. E. M.

NEW EXPEDITIONS IN 1879.

THE Expeditions recorded in the following pages are believed to fall under the definition given in an early Number, that is to say, not to have been previously accomplished by English mountaineers, or noticed in the Journal. For the sake of unity and convenience of reference several of Mr. Coolidge's expeditions (e.g. Mont Mounier, Col de Valasco) are placed here instead of under 'Alpine Notes.'

In the cases where foreign climbers had preceded the writers, reference has, as far as possible, been made to the original accounts.