

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING was held at the Club Rooms on Monday, December 14, at 8.30 P.M., Mr. HORACE WALKER, *President*, in the chair.

The following candidates were balloted for, and elected members of the Club:—Messrs. H. C. Baker, R. W. Brant, W. H. Cozens-Hardy, Rev. T. C. Fry, R. C. Gilson, E. Greenwood, J. P. Hartree, G. E. Mannering, and C. Ruxton.

The PRESIDENT referred in sympathetic terms to the death of Sir A. Ramsay, formerly director of the 'Geological Survey,' one of the contributors to the first volume of 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers,' and of Herr Seiler, of whom all members of the Club who had known him would retain a lasting and kindly recollection.

Passing to other matters, he announced that an interesting gift had just been made. A photograph, taken in 1864, of Marie Tournier, the last survivor of de Saussure's guides, then at the age of ninety-four, had been presented to the Club by Lieutenant-Colonel Barrow, to whom their best thanks were due.

He also referred to the fact that the lease of the Club Rooms was going to expire in 1892, that a higher rent than hitherto paid was asked, and that the Committee were considering the course to be taken. Suggestions from members were invited.

The election of officers for the ensuing year then took place. Mr. C. E. MATHEWS proposed, and Mr. C. PILKINGTON seconded, the re-election of Mr. Horace Walker as President. Carried unanimously.

Mr. W. M. CONWAY proposed, and Mr. L. PILKINGTON seconded, the re-election of the Vice-Presidents, Messrs. F. A. Wallroth and S. F. Still; the Hon. Secretary, Mr. F. O. Schuster; and the other members of the Committee who were eligible, viz.—Messrs. Slingsby, Willink, Carson, Thomas, Chater, and Wicks. Carried unanimously.

Mr. ABERCROMBY proposed, and Mr. NICHOLS seconded, the election of Messrs. G. H. Morse and Alfred Williams, in the places of Messrs. R. M. Beachcroft and A. Mortimer, who retired by rotation. Carried unanimously.

Mr. C. E. MATHEWS read a paper, 'New Experiences in the Old Playground,' on the subject of which an animated discussion took place.

The PRESIDENT thought it would be well if members would bear in mind the note of caution sounded by Mr. Mathews. There was no doubt that familiarity bred contempt, and that all were sometimes tempted to neglect necessary precautions. There was one point, however, on which, perhaps, he was not at one with Mr. Mathews, and that was the extra scrambling, or 'wanton climbing,' as Mr. Mathews had phrased it. Unless you did a little of it on off days, how were you to get the necessary practice?

Mr. DENT agreed that climbing in the Alps was attended by a certain amount of danger. The very fact that we were perpetually told to observe precautions proved that there was some sort of peril.

Some accidents, however, such as those due to falling stones, it was very difficult to guard against. Mr. CONWAY said the impression produced upon him by Mr. Mathews's paper was that the greatest number of accidents happened, not to competent parties without guides, but to parties with bad guides. He thought one of the greatest dangers of mountaineering was the incompetence of a great many guides. Mr. SLINGSBY said that Mr. Mathews had expressed a doubt as to whether more mountains were climbed now than was the case ten years ago. Possibly there were no more real mountaineers now, but he thought there were infinitely more men who were dragged up mountains, and these, going with inferior guides, were particularly exposed to danger. As to climbing with guides, no one ought to attempt a mountain, even of moderate difficulty, without considerable experience on easy mountains. Mr. WILLINK thought a class of accident that should be taken into account was the accident that ought to have happened but did not, owing to good luck only. These being avoided were never considered; and we must not congratulate ourselves on the figures placed before us, because there are hidden figures, which we never see. After some further remarks from Messrs. C. PILKINGTON, THOMAS, SOLLY, C. HOPKINSON, and others, Mr. MATHEWS replied, and, with regard to 'wanton climbing,' insisted on the point that if rocks were difficult—it mattered not whether they were fifty or a hundred feet high—they must be climbed with all the proper precautions. On further examination of his paper, it would be found that the largest number of accidents happened to people without guides. The main point of his paper would be lost if it was true that more people climbed now than ten years ago. He did not think that this was the case, and if his view was correct, the increased number of accidents made a word of caution necessary.

On the motion of the PRESIDENT, carried by acclamation, a cordial vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Mathews for his interesting paper, and the proceedings terminated.

The Annual Exhibition of Alpine Paintings and Photographs and of Alpine Equipment was held at the Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Métropole, during the afternoon of Tuesday, December 15. The Bijou Orchestra was in attendance, and played a selection of music. There was a large number of visitors, and, for the first time, the exhibition was kept open throughout the following day, and was again very numerously attended. For detailed notice, see p. 74.

The Winter Dinner was held at the Whitehall Rooms on the evening of Tuesday, December 15, the chair being taken by Mr. HORACE WALKER, *President* of the Club. Two hundred and fifteen members and guests were present, the latter including the Right Hon. Sir J. Gorst, M.P.; Mr. A. B. Forwood, M.P.; Sir Steuart Bayley; Mr. T. Bryant, P.R.C.S.; Mr. F. Dicksee, R.A.; Mr. Moberley Bell, manager of the 'Times'; Mr. Cook, editor of the 'Pall Mall Gazette'; the Rev. Canon Browne; the Rev. Page Roberts; Mr. Arthur Severn; Professor Kennedy, F.R.S., &c.