

with our greatest respect, with our most cordial esteem, with our most sincere thanks for what he has done for us, and I ask you to drink with me to his health, to his long life, and to his prosperity in all his work. (Applause.)

Toast : 'The Chairman.'

The PRESIDENT : My Lords and Gentlemen, I should like to thank Sir Alexander Kennedy very much indeed for the charming manner in which he has got over the almost impossible difficulties of the task he had to perform. It is very lucky indeed that he is an engineer, and a skilled engineer, for he has got over those difficulties in a remarkably skilful manner; and that with so much personal compliment and pleasantness that it is an exceedingly weak sort of way to describe that kind of engineer as just a 'civil' engineer. (Laughter.) I have only one thing to say in parting with this office, which has been such a pleasure and will continue to be such an honour to me. There is not the slightest question that my three years' tenure of office has been completely satisfying to the Club—satisfying in the very fullest sense, that nobody wants any more. (Laughter and cheers.)

On the evening of Wednesday, the 18th, a *Conversazione* of members and their friends was, by kind permission of the Benchers of the Inner Temple, held in the Inner Temple Hall. The band of the Royal Artillery played during the evening.

AN ASCENT OF KABRU.

WE reprint below the narrative, given by Mr. Rubenson, one of the two Norwegian climbers who recently reached the summit crest of Kabru. This, the only account of this very bold and successful expedition that has yet reached us, was first published in the *Calcutta 'Englishman'* of November 4 last.

All will regret that the cold, and the consequently late start, on the day of the final climb prevented the climbers from completing the ascent when they were so near their goal. We reserve further comments for a later occasion. It must, however, be pointed out that the Norwegians approached Kabru from the Rathong glen, on the S.W., while Mr. Graham attacked the mountain from the S.E., from Akluthang. The two routes meet somewhere near the saddle between Kabru and the 'Dome.' The local topography can be studied in Mr. Garwood's map and Signor Sella's photographs.

The following is Mr. Rubenson's account of the climb: his companion was Mr. Monrad-Aas.

'After having established our base camp at Jongri we proceeded to mount the Rathong Glacier at its conjunction with

the Kabru Glacier, the most direct and natural route, the highest part of which can be seen from Darjiling as a big snow flat between the two peaks. At about 16,000 ft. we reached the actual foot of the mountain. At this point we left all we considered unnecessary to carry further up, and with a week's provisions and fourteen picked coolies we started the climb. Up to 18,000 ft. we avoided the glacier by going up some loose stones. From here up to 19,500 ft. we skirted the mountain named in Freshfield's map the "Dome" peak, just in front of Kabru. The ice and snow presented no great difficulty; only a few crevasses had to be negotiated. A second camp was established at this point, and from here we got our first view of the ice stream which was our only approach to the top of the mountain. I must confess that it looked hopeless at first, and I didn't think it passable for loaded coolies at all.

'From this camp to the next it took us five days of hard work cutting steps between a chaos of ice needles and crevasses—indeed, a frozen world of the most fantastic forms and wonderful architecture. We had no professional help, but the coolies, after having been trained in the use of the ice axe and rope, more than made up for this deficiency; they proved most keen and interested mountaineers. I am of opinion that Sherpa coolies (Nepaulese, Tibetans), properly fitted out and well treated, will prove more useful out here than any European professional mountaineer, being more tractable and not requiring all sorts of delicacies to tittivate their appetite.

'Half-way up the icefall over on the Kabru side on a small flat we formed another camp, where we halted two days. The route from here was not so difficult as the first part, but the greatest care had to be taken, as the road was exposed to falling ice-blocks from the two to five hundred feet high ice wall on our left hand. Higher up we had some difficulty in crossing the enormous crevasses which can be seen from Darjiling by the aid of a telescope at the lowest part of the snow flat. This particular "flat" we found to have a slope from thirty to forty degrees—not so very flat after all! This camp we reckon to be about 21,500 ft. above sea-level, and from this point we saw Darjiling a few times, but as a rule great banks of clouds, like an ocean, barred the view.

'It was from this point that we decided to make the final attempt for the summit. Accordingly we started one fine morning, but when we topped the ridge between the "Dome" and the N.E. peak of Kabru, from which we got a splendid

view of Kangchenjunga and the range to the S.W. of it, we found that the time was but too short to accomplish the climb to the summit and safely descend, so had to defer our attempt to another day; we then returned to camp.

'Next day we had our camp brought up to this point and passed the night at about 22,000 ft. The cold was intense, the thermometer registering 29° below zero centigrade. All the coolies we sent to the lower camp, some 500 ft. below us, with the exception of our two boys, who had been with the 1905 Kangchenjunga expedition, who passed the night with us huddled up in our small tent.

'On October 20 at about 8.30 A.M. we started on the final attempt to reach the summit. The start was rather late, but the cold was so great and much intensified by an icy cold wind blowing from the W., making it very unpleasant and difficult to walk. Very slowly we went on cutting steps in the hard snow, stopping now and then to attend to our feet, which threatened to freeze. Our plan was to go up to the saddle between the two peaks, and try from there to reach the S.W. peak, which is marked on the map as the highest (24,015 ft.). The wind, which was growing stronger, made this impossible.

'We then bore off to the right and got under the shelter of the north-eastern peak. Under the saddle would have been easier climbing; this proved much steeper and provided us with some very hard work for the next two hours on rock and ice. Our only watch being lost earlier in the day, we only had a hazy idea as to the time, but by the westering sun we knew only too well that evening was fast approaching, and had to hurry as fast as possible.

'At about 5 o'clock we thought we had the summit just above us in the form of a black stone heap; so in spite of the lateness of the hour we continued, knowing that the moon would soon be up. At about 6 o'clock we reached what we thought was the top, and then saw a low snow ridge some 50 or 60 ft. higher, which I am certain was the actual summit. The sun had by this time set, and, having a rather difficult and dangerous descent, we did not dare to go on, although, had time and wind allowed us, this ridge did not present any difficulty and we could easily have climbed it. With regard to breathing we did not have any special difficulty. The cold was now almost unbearable.

'From the highest point we reached we had a fine view of the south-western peak. The ridge connecting the two summits is quite broad, with a rounded shape; the last rise on to the summit does not, in my opinion, offer any great difficulties to

its being scaled. I am now referring to the south-west peak. This peak was now almost on a level with where we were standing; the difference could not have been more than 100 ft. The two peaks do not vary much as to height, but I am inclined to think that the south-west one is a trifle higher. The altitude reached was about 23,900 ft. We did not leave anything up there, as the place we reached was not naturally marked in any way which could be recognised by future climbers.

‘On the return journey we had a very narrow escape. Going down a very steep slope, I, who was in the rear and was roped to my companion, slipped from the icy step (we had to give up nailed boots after reaching the second highest camp, on account of the great cold the nails gather and communicate to the feet), fell on my back, and flashed past my friend like a shot. He was, luckily for both of us, able to retain me by lying against the slope. The rope, a Swiss tourist rope of five strands, very nearly broke, four of these strands parting, so that I was held by a single strand. As I did not lose hold of my ice axe I was able to firmly reinstate myself and continue the journey down. It is marvellous that Mr. Monrad-Aas was able to check my fall, seeing the position he was in. Had we both fallen we could not possibly have survived it, having a slide of some 500 ft. and then a drop on to a lower glacier.

‘The moon had now risen; the wind was blowing hard as we quickly made our way to the camp. When this was reached we found our two boys shivering. We were really too tired to eat anything; the cold ox-tongue which had been our food for the two last days did not tempt either. Mr. Monrad-Aas complained of pain in his feet, and, on examination, we found that six of his toes were badly frost-bitten. I applied the only remedy available, viz. rubbing with snow.

‘This was the only accident that befell us. We lost by natural death an English-speaking boy, who died from what we think was diphtheria at one of the camps below the glacier; another coolie died on the way back, at Pemionchi, of heart disease. Neither of these two men came up to the glacier. We suffered from want of proper food at the highest camps, as when we started from the camp at the foot of the mountain we only took seven days’ provisions, and stopped a fortnight instead; what we got up afterwards was insignificant.

‘When returning towards Jongri on the 21st we had spent more than a fortnight on the ice.

‘Neither of us suffered seriously from mountain sickness; some of the coolies who had it badly we left behind at the lower camps; most of the others did not seem to mind the altitude at all.

‘I do not doubt for a moment that it is possible to climb even a good deal higher mountains than Kabru.

‘The chief thing is to have as good and willing coolies as we had; properly fitted out and with kind treatment they will surmount what would seem impossible. Take it slowly and carefully, let the coolies go over the road first without loads to get confidence, and they will then go with them. We could not make them use the rope when loaded; their reason for it, that they would not be able to help each other then, is worth considering. But by making as good steps as possible, bettering the road, fastening iron nails and stationary ropes on the most difficult places, we helped them as much as we could. Our experience is that the coolies, especially the Nepaulese Sherpa, are excellent men when treated properly, and our success is only due to the willingness and brave qualities of these people.’

THE GODLEY GLACIER AND SEALY PASS, NEW ZEALAND.

BY G. E. MANNERING.

THE story here related is an old one, for the excursion described took place in February 1892. Though since that time the Southern Alps of New Zealand have been much more fully explored by Alpine parties than was then the case (especially in the Tasman district), the Godley district has seldom been again visited, and no climbing whatever has yet been done among the many noble peaks encircling the glacier. The number of climbers in this country is few, and those who come from abroad invariably make for the region around Mt. Cook, where transport and accommodation are to be readily procured.

So many general descriptions of the New Zealand Alps have already appeared in the ‘Journal’ that it would be superfluous to repeat them here, and it will suffice to state that the Godley Glacier and River form the most northerly of the three great sources of the Waitaki—or, to be more correct, the ‘Waitangi’—River, which is one of the largest in the South Island, flowing southwards and eastwards from the mountains to the sea, and draining an area of some 4,914 square miles. The meaning of the word ‘Waitangi’ is ‘Crying