

special care of anybody whom such committee might send out to us with a recommendation, and such recommendation would always have our best attention. (3) It will create a good piece of machinery for securing new members for us, and thus strengthening an organisation that is an exponent of one of the finest mountain ranges of the world. (4) The establishment of such local committee will help us very much here by giving us more importance with the railways and Governments, and thus enable us to secure better attention and more useful concessions than would otherwise be the case. (5) It will centralise our correspondence and, instead of writing individually to all our members in any matter that may arise, we can correspond with the local secretary, who can readily get in touch with our members, through knowing their whereabouts and by means either of the telegraph or telephone.

'All these reasons seem to me to be in favour of such a committee, and I should feel very much pleased if you could take the matter in hand and see if such a one could not be formed. . . . Please give this matter your consideration and let me know as soon as you conveniently can what you think about it. Personally I feel that it will be of great benefit to this country, and will also be of some service on your side through inducing more people to come out and taking care of those who may come.'

In accordance with Mr. Wheeler's wishes a meeting of the British members of the Alpine Club of Canada was held at 23 Savile Row on Tuesday, May 3, and a committee was chosen, consisting of J. N. Collie (chairman), H. B. Dixon, Mrs. C. J. Spence, H. Woolley, and A. L. Mumm (hon. secretary). The committee was empowered to invite His Excellency the British Ambassador at Washington to join it as an honorary member, and I am glad to be able to say that he has consented to do so. All communications to the committee should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary, at 23 Savile Row.

I am, yours obediently,

A. L. MUMM.

June 27, 1910.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Alpine Club was held in the Hall on Tuesday evening, May 3, at 8.30 P.M., Mr. Hermann Woolley, *President*, in the chair.

Messrs. C. H. Brook and Henry Howard were balloted for and elected members of the Club.

The PRESIDENT proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Sidney Spencer for undertaking the management of the photographic exhibition, which was unanimously passed.

Mr. F. W. HEADLEY read a paper on the 'Birds of the Alps,' which was illustrated by lantern slides.

Mr. TUBBY said: With regard to the question of an up-current of air, I have observed that from dawn till noon there is an up-

current if the sky is clear, and that after three there is a down-current. I regard the Lammergeyer as the 'golden eagle' of the Alps. I have seen it on four occasions. What I have seen of the birds of the Alps has been in the pursuit of other animals.

Mr. FRESHFIELD said: In an old number of the *ALPINE JOURNAL* there is a note on the finding of skeletons of many birds high up in the Caucasus, evidently the remains of birds killed in a blizzard while crossing at a high level. I have seen near Algiers the swallows assemble on the telegraph wires and start for their flight over the Mediterranean.

Mr. C. PILKINGTON said: The blackcock is well protected by its plumage in the woods in which it is found. The chough gets much food on snowfields where there are many large insects. As regards the Alpine swift, I have seen them on the southern slopes with a red mark on the neck like the swallow mark. The only rare bird that I have seen was on the Gabelhorn, a green sandpiper, I think it was, one August.

Mr. BOURDILLON said: There used to be a theory that in migration, birds followed the old coast line. If that were so, those crossing the Alps might have done so in ages before the Alps were raised. I have seen a capercaillie near Grindelwald. Mr. Wherry said that he preferred to believe in the Lammergeyer. Whether birds are attracted only by sight is doubtful. Choughs I have often fed; they are very handsome birds. With regard to the moulting of ptarmigan, I believe they have a triple moult, but they do not lose their quill feathers. I was delighted last winter between Wengen and Mürren to see through a telescope some chamois perfectly black in their winter coat. This was a curious protective colouring.

Mr. LEAF said: I should like to ask if any observations have been made as to the decrease of the black redstart. At Davos it appears to have been ousted by the sparrow, which is unfortunate, as there is no more pleasing bird than the redstart.

Mr. YELD said: During the years that I have visited the Cogne district I have seen only two eagles. I never saw a raven at Cogne except at the *Hôtel Grivola*.

Mr. SOLLY said: 'Members should go to the Highlands at Easter to see eagles. I saw nine this year.'

Mr. REID said: I have seen an eagle at Box Hill.

Mr. STONHAM said that no mention had been made of the seagulls which were found on the Lake of Geneva. There were several kinds, some of which being migratory were far more abundant in autumn than during the breeding season, although some species, notably the black-headed gull, bred on the French side. It was very interesting to find gulls on inland waters so far from the sea; those which were bred on inland waters in the British Islands rarely went far inland. Of the various birds which had been referred to in the paper only about half a dozen could be regarded as strictly Alpine, and all these had from time to time been recorded as having occurred in Great Britain. The snow-finch had been recorded, but

he could not off-hand give the reference, but would be pleased to let any member have it.\*

He challenged the statement which he understood Mr. Headley to make, viz.—that the swallows arriving at the mouth of the Rhone on migration to Switzerland did not intermingle with the swallows which remained there to breed; he thought that this point could not be determined, since as all swallows were alike there was no means of distinguishing them.

He did not agree with what Mr. Headley had said as to the soaring of birds being dependent on an up-current, and that they beat backwards and forwards over a given area because there they found the current. Doubtless an up-current assists, but that it was by no means essential was proved by the fact that birds soar well in an absolutely still atmosphere, as he had seen the albatross doing in the south. The object of birds beating up and down a certain district was to discover food by hunting over the whole ground. Swifts soared especially on very calm summer evenings, as anyone could see for himself. Reference had been made to the question of migration, and he disagreed with Mr. Headley's suggestion that, during their spring and summer flights in their nesting quarters, the birds prospected as it were and chose the route they would eventually take across the Alps.

The underlying impulses compelling birds to migrate were love in the spring, hunger in the autumn, but the unerring manner in which the migratory flights were accomplished was one of the most remarkable and incomprehensible things in nature. In a sense, we all had the migratory instinct, and more savage people had in some measure the power to find their way in an extraordinary manner; thus the Samoyard can quite easily find his way home across miles of tundra where any of us would be lost. That there was some instinct of direction of which we felt little or nothing seems clear when we consider that birds fly unerringly, sometimes to a particular spot, over hundreds of miles, and yet can have no guide. Young cuckoos migrate quite independently of their parents, and yet find their way to Africa—even if there were landmarks they would be unable to recognise them; they could not tell, however well they might (for the sake of argument) have been previously educated, one town from another, let alone the fact that they often crossed many miles of sea where no distinctive features are met with; furthermore, most migratory flights take place at night.

Mr. HEADLEY, in reply, recounted some experiments and observations that he had made in support of his view that where there is an up-current there is a down-current not very far off. He maintained that the swift can be seen to lift itself by powerful wing strokes, and that it does not in the strict sense soar; that the view that there are within species races of birds which keep apart is

\* The records are: *Montifringilla nivalis* (Linnæus): (1) Rye Harbour, Sussex, February 22, 1905, M. T. Nicholl, *Bulletin British Ornith. Club*, xv. p. 58. (2) Paddock Wood, Kent, December 28, 1906, N. F. Ticehurst, *British Birds*, vol. i. p. 189.

founded on good evidence; that young birds when they migrate independently of their parents may tuck on to other old birds—further evidence is wanted at present—and so reach their winter home.

A hearty vote of thanks was given to Mr. Headley for his paper, and the proceedings closed.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall on Tuesday evening, June 7, at 8.30 P.M., Mr. Hermann Woolley, *President*, in the chair.

Messrs. A. Neve and D. R. G. Oliver were balloted for and elected members of the Club.

The PRESIDENT said: My first duty this evening is to give expression to the feeling that has been uppermost in our minds during the past month—the feeling of deep sorrow at the sudden death of our beloved Sovereign King Edward. Loyalty to the Throne is an inherent attribute of our fellow-subjects, but the wave of intense feeling that has moved the heart of the nation sprang from a sentiment that is more than loyalty. If our late King's singular prudence and ability, his earnestness in the exercise of his various functions and his scrupulous adherence to constitutional practice, commanded our respect and admiration, it was his great kindness of heart and generosity of nature that inspired universal affection. The conviction that he understood his people, entered into their pleasures, sympathised with them in their troubles, and neglected no opportunity of promoting their welfare and happiness, endeared him to all his subjects and caused everyone to feel his loss as that of a true friend. It is a pleasant reflection that, during the reign of usefulness now unfortunately closed, no discordant note troubled the relations between the Throne and the people; and we also remember with gratitude that King Edward's strong desire for peace and his remarkable gift of conciliation and influence in establishing friendship and goodwill beyond our own shores were not only an inestimable blessing to the Empire, but also conduced to the welfare of the whole civilised world.

I am sure that, in this season of affliction, you will wish to express the deep sympathy that we feel, in common with the whole nation, with our late Sovereign's loved and honoured Consort, whose name will always be associated in our minds with tenderness and compassion, and with His Majesty King George, who ascends the throne attended by our fervent hopes that his reign may be long, happy, and prosperous.

If it meets with the approval of this Meeting I will move that a resolution expressing the sympathy of the Alpine Club in the death of his late Majesty be transmitted to the King and that a similar resolution be transmitted to Queen Alexandra.

The Meeting then agreed to send resolutions of sympathy to His Majesty King George V. and to Her Majesty Queen Alexandra.

Mr. FRESHFIELD said: I may remind this Meeting that the late King as Prince of Wales attended the Club Meeting when Mr. Whympster read his paper on the Andes, and that later as King he

attended the Meeting at which the Duke of the Abruzzi read a paper on his ascent of Mount St. Elias.

The PRESIDENT said : I have to report that since the last Meeting we have lost two members—Mr. E. Kelly and Mr. Michael Cartheige. Mr. Cartheige, who joined the Club in 1880, was not only a man of extraordinary energy and ability, but also one of the most generous and unselfish of men ; he was held in the highest regard by everyone who was intimate with him. Another death—that of Mr. E. B. Rodway—occurred last December, but by an oversight has not been previously announced to the Club. I have also to mention the passing away of one of the most famous and favourite figures amongst the older Swiss guides, Alois Pollinger of St. Niklaus.

The PRESIDENT then put the Regulations with regard to Guests' Tickets and Members' Seats at the Winter Dinner to the Meeting, and these were approved.

The PRESIDENT announced that (it was hoped that) Dr. De Filippi would read a paper on the Duke of the Abruzzi's Karakoram Expedition at a Special Meeting of the Club on November 1.

Mr. AMERY read a paper on 'An Attempt on Mount Robson,' which was illustrated by lantern slides.

Mr. MUMM said : Few people realise Mr. Wheeler's disinterested devotion to the cause of mountaineering in connection with the Canadian Club's camps. He gets none of the climbing : he has to organise, and he has always worked hard. He gets up at four, sees everyone off, and is hard at it all day. By the last mail from Canada I have received three letters from members of the Canadian Alpine Club with regard to Mr. Wheeler. He has hitherto been a topographer on the Government Survey, and had leave to organise the camp. The Government recognises that an interest in mountaineering is a matter of national importance, but yet this year leave has been refused to Mr. Wheeler. In face of that he has resigned his position on the Survey. He knew that there was no one to take his place, and that the future of the Canadian Alpine Club would be precarious if he did not remain. It is the most remarkable example of mountaineering devotion that I know of.

Captain AMERY said : I feel much honoured in being asked to say a few words, but I only joined the expedition rather late. I started from Khartoum and found that it took about the same time whether I went east or west from Port Said. I reached the camp only after the attempt had been made. I do not regret having visited the country, which is full of interest to others besides mountaineers, as there is plenty of fishing and shooting.

Dr. ANDERSON said : I did not get further than O'Hara Camp, which I found a most magnificent place. I should like to mention the extreme hospitality we received from the Canadian Alpine Club and from Mr. Wheeler, who was the soul of the whole thing. All of us, whether active climbers or not, received the same kindness and assistance from Mr. Wheeler.

Mr. G. P. BAKER said : I wish to congratulate the party on the good work that they did. It is such pioneering work that we want.

The photographs that we have seen to-night exhibit a serious aspect of climbing—that of steep escarpments. The party were caught by those steep slabs as all parties are apt to be in the Rockies. Not only are the mountains steep and slabby, but they are rotten. I feel very envious, for I now have to live in the remembrance of the past. I am only sorry that I shall not go back.

Mr. STUTFIELD said : I need hardly say that I have listened with the keenest interest to the paper. The narrative has brought back to me some of the best days of my life. I envied the party the broad trail compared with the bogs we had to deal with. I am glad to hear that the Rockies are rising socially. I should like to ask what Mr. Amery thought was the real height of Mt. Robson. It is the fate of those mountains to come down. I do not think from the photographs that we have seen to-night that Mt. Robson will come down much. In Stieler's Atlas the height is given as 12,600 ft. Mt. Robson is probably the finest mountain in the Rockies in shape and colour.

The PRESIDENT said : Mr. Amery has given us a most delightful, excellently illustrated and very important paper. It is the Club's first introduction to a magnificent region, probably destined in the future to be a very popular climbing district. Messrs. Amery, Hastings and Mumm have shown great enterprise in undertaking the formidable journey to the Mount Robson group, and the experience they have gained will make it much easier for the next party to succeed there.

A hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Amery.

In reply Mr. AMERY said : As regards the height, we took with us every sort of elaborate apparatus. Thanks to the disinterested efforts of our 'cayooses,' it arrived in fragments. The height was taken as 13,700 ft. by a Government Surveyor, Mr. McEvoy, in 1897. Dr. Coleman, I was told, made it 13,800 ft. Judging from mere impression, if we had not had any official figures to restrain us, we should have thought it 15,000 ! I do not think that the error in the official estimate of height is likely to be more than 300 or 400 ft. Our camp was fixed, I believe, by Dr. Coleman at about 6,400 ft., and we climbed a good 6,000 ft. after that. One of the great features of mountaineering in the Rockies is that so much of the interest centres on the problem of getting to your climb and back again, on dealing with forests and rivers. It is often tiresome work, but there is also something very attractive in not having a ready-made path right up to your climb.

The PRESIDENT then, on behalf of the Committee, submitted to the meeting their decision as to a distinctive emblem which can be worn by members. This was agreed to.