

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

THE ANNUAL MEETING.

THE 39th annual general meeting was held in the Imperial Hotel, Aberdeen on Saturday, November 26th, 1927. The President, Mr. William Garden, advocate, was in the chair.

The Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. John A. Nicol, advocate, submitted the accounts, which showed a balance of £100 14s. 8d. at the credit of the Club as compared with £48 15s. 7d. at the end of the previous year.

The President said the Club had never been in a better financial position. No questions were asked and the accounts were adopted.

Some discussion took place as to the disposal of the special funds of the Club. The President said he did not think they would be justified in interfering with the Ben Macdhuì fund. He had heard that there was a very slight hair crack on the Lochnagar indicator and they might assume that money would have to be spent there sooner or later. It was ultimately agreed to put the funds together for banking purposes and reserve them for the special purposes for which they were intended. The money is to be put into the Investment Department of the Aberdeen Savings Bank and the due proportion of interest added to each account.

An honorarium of ten guineas was voted to the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer.

Professor J. Norman Collie was cordially re-elected as Hon. President.

Mr. Garden, who retired from the office of President and was warmly thanked for his services, proposed as his successor Mr. J. A. Parker. They could not get a better man nor one who more deserved the honour. He had put up both the Club indicators and in other ways done a lot for the Club.

Mr. Walter A. Reid seconded and the motion was unanimously and heartily agreed to.

Dr. J. R. Levack and Mr. Alexander Simpson were elected Vice-Presidents in place of Mr. T. R. Gillies and Mr. W. A. Reid who retired. The Hon. Editor and the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer

were re-appointed. Dr. J. R. Levack and Messrs. J. W. Levack, Parker, Mitchell and Simpson retired from the Committee and their places were taken by Messrs. W. A. Reid, Malcolm, Conner, Hadden and Symmers.

Braemar was chosen as the centre for the New Year Meet from Friday, December 30th to Tuesday, January 3rd. It was agreed that inquiries should be made as to whether accommodation could be obtained at boarding houses there for junior members at a lower rate than the hotel tariff. The Easter Meet is to be at Clova, failing which, Boat of Garten, and the Spring Holiday excursion will be to Lochnagar. The question of afternoon excursions was remitted to the Committee.

It was decided to issue the *Journal* in June and December, 1928.

The President reported that Colonel D. B. D. Stewart had offered to erect a 6 feet cairn on the Blue Hill and was prepared, in consultation with the Club, to cut lanes through the trees to open up the view. The question was remitted to the Committee and Col. Stewart was cordially thanked for his action in the matter.

It was agreed to grant the Scottish Mountaineering Club permission to reproduce the Ben Macdhui indicator diagram which had appeared in the *Journal*.

The President said that a Club Song, "Where the High-Road Ends," had been written by Miss Mary Skakle and set to music by her sister Miss Margaret Skakle. This, he said, put them upsides with the Scottish Mountaineering Club. "I think," he added, "the S.M.C. have a pretty poor song, and, no doubt about it, a very poor tune." The new song had been printed on the back of the menu card, and would be sung at the dinner, as the concert programmes put it, "for the first time in Aberdeen."

Mr. H. J. Butchart—I move that the chairman sing it now—(laughter and applause).

Mr. Garden declined to accept this suggestion and it was proposed that the adoption of the song as the official song of the Club should be deferred until it had been heard at the dinner. It was, accordingly, agreed to wait until it had been sung at the dinner, and, when the company heard its rollicking words and swinging tune as rendered by Miss Margaret Skakle, they joined in the chorus at the second attempt, and by the finish were roaring it out lustily and in excellent tune. That settled its adoption enthusiastically.

Two suggestions by Mr. A. I. McConnochie (1) regarding the repair of the Shelter Stone and (2) that the Club money should be invested in War Savings Certificates were remitted to the Committee.

Mr. Henry Alexander—I hope that no mason's tool will touch the Shelter Stone.

The President—It would be really vandalism to take cement up to the Shelter Stone.

Mr. Butchart proposed that it be remitted to the Committee to inquire into the possibility and the cost of renting Derry Lodge, except during the shooting season, and putting such furniture into it as they could. It would be a place where they could hold meets with great success. This was agreed to.

The President said he had been asked whether it could be arranged that members of the Club should not go through the Larig in the shooting season. He had pointed out, however, that there was a right of way there and they could not bind the members.

THE ANNUAL DINNER.

A LARGE company of members and guests attended the dinner which followed the annual meeting. Mr. Garden, who was in the chair, proposed the toast of "The King: the Laird of Lochnagar," which was loyally honoured and then gave "The Club." He said that they were in a very progressive state, going forward by leaps and bounds, and their numbers amounted to 242. Thirty-two had joined during the year, and there were not a few people waiting to add the mysterious letters "C. C." to their names. They had now the largest number of members of any club north of the Tweed—the Scottish Mountaineering Club had only 220 or thereabouts—and they were now a perfectly equipped mountaineering club. They had erected two splendid indicators on the tops of two of the finest hills in Scotland—Ben Macdhui and Lochnagar—they had club colours, a club badge, and, last but not least, a Club Song of which he was intensely proud. It was the work of Miss Skakle, a magnificent mountaineer and also a poetess and Miss Margaret Skakle had set the song to a rollicking tune.

He was sure they must all be pleased to know that the *Journal* was to appear twice a year. It was a great bond of union between them. He had been disappointed at the attendance at the Club Meets. 1927 had been a shocking season. At the first of the Saturday afternoon meets in July there had been only five present and at the second at Torphins his wife and he found themselves by themselves. He would like to see the Saturday afternoon meets more frequent. They should have as many as the Deeside Field Club.

Mr. Garden then went on to refer to the passing of their good friend, Mr. Robert Clarke of *The Fishing News*. It was only a year since he had been sitting with them in that room and only eighteen months since he (the President) and Mr. Clarke had walked through the Larig from Coylum Bridge to Derry Lodge,

the journey enlivened by his cheery laugh as they wended their way southwards. They would think of Mr. Clarke kindly. The spirit of the hills was in him and the pages of the *Journal* testified to that better than any words of his.

Proceeding to inform the company of the appointment of Mr. Parker as his successor, Mr. Garden said that this year Mr. Parker had completed the climbing of every peak in Scotland over 3,000 feet, of which there were no less than 276. (Loud applause). He had also climbed every mountain over 3,000 feet in England, Scotland and Ireland, so that now they had a unique President. Mr. Parker was at present on a tour round the world and would be back next September. He had promised to wear the Club tie that night when sailing from Quebec to New York unless he was lying too sick in his bunk. (Laughter). He had also sent them a cable of good wishes for a pleasant evening. (Applause).

Mr. George Sang, Edinburgh, editor of *The S.M.C. Journal*, gave a most interesting lantern lecture on "The Dolomites," a range of serrated peaks formerly in Austrian Tyrol, but, since the war, as Mr. Sang phrased it, "in Italy with the spaghetti and macaroni." He expressed delight at not having to explain to the company that the Dolomites were not a religious sect, and convulsed the gathering by declaring that lecturing to a mountaineering club on a mountain range was like telling a 'bus conductor about silk stockings. He went on to show a remarkable collection of photographs of sensational climbing experiences on peaks rising perpendicularly into the blue, and his references to church spires and villages thousands of feet below thrilled his audience.

Mr. Walter A. Reid proposed "The Guests," expressing regret at the unavoidable absence of Major D. W. A. D. Mackenzie, D.S.O., King's Commissioner at Balmoral, in whom the Club had a very good friend. The toast was acknowledged by Mr. Sang and Dr. J. B. Orr of the Rowett Research Institute.

Dr. Levack proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Garden, the retiring President, who had taught him all he knew about mountaineering, and, he added, "we have been in some terrible holes. I have very many pleasant recollections of very many climbs, some in snow, some on rocks, some in perfect weather, some in no weather at all. The Chairman has done a great deal of work during his Presidency, but that is only a small part of the work he has done for mountaineering, not only in Aberdeen, but in Scotland. He is an old member of the Alpine Club. He has been in Norway and there is also the never-to-be-forgotten expedition which resulted in first climbs of some of the peaks in the Rocky Mountains. Long may he tramp the hills and show to young members what they should do to get the greatest amount of pleasure and happiness out of our beloved mountains."

The vote was enthusiastically accorded and warmly acknowledged by Mr. Garden in a reminiscent speech. "If you get as much pleasure out of the hills as I have," he ended, "you will not miss much of the fine things of life."

During the evening Miss Garden played two delightful violin solos. The new Club Song had to be repeated at the close of the proceedings, the refrain being caught up with enthusiasm and after hearty votes of thanks to the Misses Skakle, Miss Garden and Mr. Sang, the gathering dispersed to the strains of "Auld Lang Syne."

NEW YEAR MEET, 1928—BRAEMAR.

THE New Year Meet was held at Braemar and had fairly good weather conditions. It was attended by W. M. Alexander, H. J. Butchart, J. McCoss, W. Malcolm, R. Sellar, G. R. Symmers and A. Taylor. The guests were Messrs. D. A. Burnett, H. Henel, J. Sellar, J. Duncan and Misses Duncan and Miss Pittendrigh. The principal excursion was an ascent of Lochnagar carried out by a party of eleven on January 1. Braemar was left at 8.30 a.m., the route both ways being by the Danzig Bridge. The ascent was made by the Lochan nan Eun burn and thence by the north ridge to the top; the descent was made by the Black Shiel burn. The top was reached at 1.15 and the Danzig Bridge at 4.15 p.m. Conditions were good, except for the last 500 feet, where a driving wind with icy snow was encountered. On the summit the thermometer registered 12 degrees of frost, the driving snow obscuring all view. January 2 was a day of thaw and did not permit of extensive excursions. On January 3 the weather was again hard, and the last members to leave Braemar who spent some hours on Morrone enjoyed an exceptionally fine show of the Cairngorms in their winter garb.

Italian Army Pioneers finished about two months ago the construction of a road leading from the Tosa Falls, in Val Formazza, to the San Giacomo Pass (7,570 feet), at the Swiss frontier, which takes the place of the former mule track and is a prolongation of the main road running from Domodossola through Baceno and Foppiano to the Tosa Falls. The picturesque and wild Val Formazza will thus be opened to motorists.

* * *

Miss Shiela MacDonald, London, whose father is a member of the Alpine Club, climbed Kilimanjaro (19,710 feet) on July 31 last. Miss Gertrude Benham accomplished this feat some sixteen years ago.