## PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, W., on Tuesday, February 1, 1916, at 8.30 P.M., the Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Pickford, *President*, in the Chair.

The PRESIDENT said: I regret to have to call attention to the death of Lieut.-Colonel Charles Stonham, C.M.G., F.R.C.S. He has not climbed for a good many years, nor has he been seen at the Meetings of the Club in recent times. He went out on service to the Dardanelles, and the announcement of his death from disease which he contracted there was only mentioned in this morning's papers. I think one may say that he died in the service of his country just as much as if he had died in action.

The Club will be pleased to hear that our Member Mr. Geoffrey Young has been personally decorated by His Majesty the King of the Belgians for meritorious services in Flanders, and I think I may also mention, although he is not a Member of the Club, that his brother, Mr. Hilton Young, has also been decorated by His Majesty the King of Serbia for meritorious services there.

I dare say that you have all read the contents of the February number of the ALPINE JOURNAL, as much for the interest you take in the Club as appreciation of the great efforts of the Editors in getting it out so punctually. If you have read it, you will have read the account of some very remarkable guideless climbing by the Messrs. Parker, which happened in 1860, when guideless climbing was not an everyday occurrence as it is at the present time. There are four climbers mentioned in the JOURNAL, two of whom were Members of this Club for a number of years and were very well known to me personally. They were, as you will have seen from the accounts of what they did, written in a charming manner by one of them, considerably before their day in the climbs they accomplished without guides, but the account of some of their most important work does not appear in this number of the JOURNAL. I hope there may be before long an account of the two most remarkable attempts they made upon the Swiss side of the Matterhorn. On each occasion they were without guides, and on each occasion they seem not to have encountered very great difficulties although they attained a very considerable height. Their first attempt was more in the nature of exploration, but they got up to between 11,500 and 12,000 feet. They were prevented from renewing their attempt by bad weather and insufficient time.

I mention this partly because I think it a matter of considerable interest to the Members of the Club, but chiefly because I am glad to say that we have with us this evening the son of one of them and the nephew of the others. I am glad to welcome him here personally because I have known him for a number of years, and

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I think the Club will welcome him as a Club. I am sorry to say that he is not a climber himself, but perhaps I may be permitted to say that he has a strong claim on the regard of sportsmen for his interest in many other forms of sport. However, although he has been diverted from what we regard as the true sport, I think I am right in saying that the Club gives him a hearty welcome, and I ought to add that he has taken and is taking great pains to collect the data connected with the climbing of his relations so many years ago.

I dare say many of you remember that last year Dr. Alexander Seiler very kindly made an offer of hospitality in his hotels at Zermatt to any wounded British officers and Red Cross nurses who might care to go there to recuperate. He is very disappointed that no English people were able to take advantage of his invitation, and he wishes it to be conveyed to the Club that his offer is still open and that he will be delighted to welcome any such English officers and also Red Cross nurses who care to go to Zermatt in the coming summer.

Mr. E. A. BROOME then read a Paper entitled 'Zermatt in War-time,' which was illustrated by lantern slides.

After some discussion, the PRESIDENT said: One Member, Mr. Henry Symons, asked Mr. Broome a question as to whether there were any other English climbers in Zermatt when he was there, to which I have no doubt that Mr. Broome will reply. I have only to ask you to pass a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Broome for his interesting Paper and beautiful slides.

The vote of thanks was carried with acclamation, and Mr. Broome said in reply to Mr. Symons' question that he was the only English climber who visited Zermatt last season.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, W., on Tuesday, March 7, at 8.30 P.M., Major E. L. Strutt, *Vice-President*, in the chair.

Major E. L. STRUTT said: I am occupying the Chair this evening as the President is not well enough to attend. He has been ill, but you will all be glad to know that he is recovering rapidly.

I regret to have to announce the death of one of our Members, the Rt. Hon. John F. Cheetham. He was a very old Member of the Club, having been elected in 1866, and he would this year (on May 1) have completed his fiftieth year of Membership. He has been seldom seen at the Club in recent years, and it is possible that he was quite unknown to a large number of Members. However, he was a first-rate mountaineer in his day, having climbed passes of over 17,000 feet in the Himalayas, and he had also climbed in Switzerland.

I will now call upon the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer to present the accounts for 1915.

The Honorary Secretary and Treasurer presented the accounts and balance sheet for 1915, and moved their adoption. Major



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E. L. Strutt seconded the motion, and the accounts were adopted *nem. con.*

The Rev. WALTER WESTON then read a paper entitled 'Annals of Fuji San,' which was illustrated by lantern slides.

The Vice-President invited discussion on the Paper, and Viscount BRYCE said: Mr. Vice-President and gentlemen, I do not know that I can add anything material to what Mr. Weston has so well told us about Fuji San. His Paper was an extremely interesting one, and as the orography and geological character of the mountain are well known he did well to dwell so fully on its historic and artistic associations, which are much less easily ascertainable. It is a peak of singular beauty. I remember that our ever to be remembered and venerated Leslie Stephen once said to me that he did not believe in volcanoes. They were not mountains of the right sort, but huge humps of ashes. They are not, unless either very lofty or placed in high latitudes, well suited to the production of snow-fields and glaciers, but they can be magnificent objects.

I would like, however, to make one remark about its shape. Mr. Weston has described it in his Paper as a perfect cone, and although there are other volcanoes there are extremely few that have such perfect cones as Fuji. Nearly all the great volcanoes have protuberances or bulky masses on their sides, which have been formed in the course of their long activity by eruptions, not from the central cone, but out of rifts in their sides. Many have thus lost their normal conical shape. Etna is an instance. Fuji, looked at from all sides, presents most graceful lines, the nearest parallel to whose beauty may perhaps be found in Little Ararat.

As regards mountain worship, there are, of course, a great many other mountains besides Fuji that have some connexion with religion. In fact, primitive man generally worshipped mountains in all countries, and in some he does so still. Illimani is worshipped; so is Kailas—an extremely holy peak. I have actually seen a Tibetan woman worshipping Kinchinjunga from the heights above Darjiling, and there is an extremely sacred mountain in China, a little south of the middle course of the Yangtse-kiang, with temples and shrines all the way up.

Fuji San is unique among mountains for the position it holds in art. Unless one travels in Japan it is hard to realise what Fuji means to the Japanese, who are a pre-eminently art and beauty-loving people. One never sees any picture there without some representation of Fuji in foreground or middle distance or background. Is there any other nation in which any natural object takes the same place as Fuji does in the eyes and reverence of the Japanese? It has this advantage over the more grand and terrible Matterhorn and Aconcagua, that it is accessible on all sides and can be known close by as well as seen far off. In this respect one may compare it with Parnassus, but besides having a great advantage in height it has a finer form.

Mr. DOUGLAS W. FRESHFIELD said: I have little to add to what

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Mr. Weston and Lord Bryce have told us. I was prevented by the season from climbing Fuji San, but I have been round it and admired it from all sides.

The scenery about the mountain is very romantic. It is encompassed by a number of lakes; those to the west are closely connected, and it is easy to pass from one to another, while on one of them, Lake Shōgi, there is a small but comfortable hotel, kept in European style, which may serve as centre for excursions. The view of Fuji San through the fir trees on its terrace has been made familiar to many by Mr. Ponting's admirable photographs. It is, to my taste, the finest aspect of the great volcano. The walks round Myanoshita and Lake Hakoni, on the eastern side of the mountain, are more varied and not less beautiful; while to its north, easily accessible by a quaint horse tramway, lies the broad mirror of Lake Yamanaka, often depicted in Japanese prints.

Fuji San dominates the Japanese landscape, and consequently permeates the national art of Japan to a wonderful extent. One cannot get away from it. But I would venture to point out that the native artists are apt to exaggerate the steepness of the mountain's slopes, and thereby to diminish the beauty of the curves which give Fuji its peculiar distinction. It is an exceptional case in Japanese art, and is, I fancy, due to feelings of veneration having for once overcome the artistic sense.

I desire to join on my own behalf and on that of the Club in thanking Mr. Weston for a delightful evening, and for the beautiful slides, coloured, no doubt, by native artists, that he has shown us.

Mr. H. W. Belcher said: I have been up Fuji once in summertime, but have not had the opportunity of going round it. With regard to Professor Milne's estimation of the deflection of Fuji in a wind, I fancy that may be due, not to the mountain bending, but to one side of the base sinking and the other side rising. The correct height, I suppose, may be taken to be 12,400 feet, but Fuji has been measured by many observers who have arrived at very different results. The extreme pair differ by no less than 3463 feet, the next pair by 1500 feet, and the others are within about 200 feet of each other.

Major E. L. Strutt said: I have now to ask you to pass a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Weston for his very interesting Paper and the beautiful slides he has shown us this evening, and which we have all enjoyed.

The vote of thanks was carried with acclamation.

The Rev. Walter Weston mentioned that Mr. H. W. Belcher created a record in his ascent of Fuji when he climbed at the rate of 2000 feet an hour on the ascent, and in descending came down 11,000 feet in two hours and a quarter. Mr. Weston added that he believes Mr. Belcher did this as he had left behind him a sick friend and was anxious to get back to him. The journey up and down was something like 50 miles from beginning to end, and it had always struck Mr. Weston as being a most remarkable feat.

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A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, London, W., on Tuesday, April 4, 1916, at 8.30 P.M., the Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Pickford, *President*, in the Chair.

Mr. Albert H. MacCarthy was balloted for and elected a Member of the Club.

The PRESIDENT said: There are one or two matters to which I wish to call the attention of the Club before the Paper is read.

I regret to have to inform the Club that another of our Members has been killed in action. Captain A. M. Slingsby was, as you are all aware, a cousin of our well-known Member and ex Vice-President, Mr. W. Cecil Slingsby, from whom I think he learned his climbing. I did not know Captain Slingsby personally, and therefore I think I had better read to the Club a few notes about him which I have received from someone who knew him intimately. My informant says that he was a first-rate climber on rocks and equally good on snow. It was when he was climbing in Yorkshire that he met Dr. Longstaff, and they then arranged their Karakoram-Ladak Expedition. Captain Slingsby's two attempts on Kamet were a *tour de force* of great severity. He was as strong as a horse, a very bold climber, and those who have been with him say that it was impossible to have a better travelling companion. In camp, on a mountain crest, or in a rickety boat at sea, he was always ready to do more than his share of work. He was a first-rate soldier, born to command, a strict and just disciplinarian, and as such was beloved of his men. I think I am right in saying that a brother of Captain Slingsby, who was not a Member of the Club, has also fallen in the war, and I am sure the Club will wish to extend its great sympathy to his family.

I dare say the older Members of the Club may have noticed the death of another very well-known person in the Alps in the Obituary of *The Times*, where she was described as being of the Alpine Club, although this is not the fact. I refer to Miss Catherine Martha Gardner, who died last month at the age of eighty. The older Members of the Club have met her time after time in the different Alpine centres. She had climbed most of the peaks in the Pennine Alps, and her great feat was the descent of the Pigne d'Arolla by the north face, which was the second occasion on which that expedition was made. She had not climbed for a long time, as about fifteen years ago she unfortunately broke her thigh in an accident. The younger Members of the Club have probably never met her but she will be remembered by many of the older Members.

Members will have noticed that our Member Captain E. O. Wheeler, who, as you are probably aware, is the son of our Hon. Member Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler, is referred to in the ALPINE JOURNAL of last November as having been mentioned in dispatches. We have since been informed that he has been thrice mentioned in dispatches from France, and that he has received the Croix de Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur from the French Government, and the Military Cross from the British Government. He is now on active service

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in the East. We are all very pleased to hear this, and the Club congratulates him heartily.

I have also to mention that through unforeseen circumstances we have been obliged to postpone the opening of the Photographic Exhibition for a week, and instead of opening on Tuesday, May 9, as stated in the circulars which have been sent out, we shall not be able to open until a week later, that is to say, on Tuesday, May 16. This will shorten the period of the Exhibition by one week, and, consequently, it will be open for three weeks only, but it has been impossible to avoid this alteration in dates.

I will now call upon Mr. Stogdon to read the Paper, and I am sorry to say that I do not refer to the writer of the Paper, who is prevented from coming here to-night by reason of illness, but to his son. The Rev. E. Stogdon, who I may say is not a mountaineer, although he takes great interest in other sports, and we remember him as a member of the Cambridge Eleven, has been kind enough to come and read his father's Paper in the latter's unavoidable absence, and Captain J. P. Farrar has undertaken to show us the views, which otherwise would have been shown by Mr. J. Stogdon.

The Rev. E. STOGDON then read a Paper by Mr. J. Stogdon entitled 'Random Memories of some early Guideless Climbs,' which was illustrated by lantern slides shown and explained by Captain J. P. Farrar.

After the Paper, the PRESIDENT said: We have heard from Mr. Stogdon of his father's early climbs, and it seems to me that some of the early climbers were afraid to publish all they did, and we have also heard from Captain Farrar of various climbs by other Members when he was showing us the pictures. I am sorry to find that Mr. Fairbanks, who we all regret has not been well enough to attend our Meetings for some little time, has had to leave early, because I am sure we should all have been very pleased to listen to him.

Some discussion on the Paper followed, and Mr. DOUGLAS FRESHFIELD said that he had listened with interest to the account of Mr. Stogdon's party's adventure on the Bricolla face of the Dent Blanche, as he had himself had some experience of it as early as 1866. In July of that year there were no falling stones to be dreaded. The danger arose from snow lying on steep ice, and it grew so serious late in the day that his party had to descend by the ridge that falls to the Col d'Hérens.

With regard to the once hotly debated question of 'Mountaineering without Guides,' he ventured to hold what might be called a cross-bench opinion. It was founded on his own personal experience. He had learnt most of his mountaineering craft neither by climbing without guides nor between two guides, but as one of a party of amateurs led by a single first-rate guide, François Dévouassoud. The part a good guide played to beginners might be compared to that of a 'coach' in a reading party. Without such help at first he believed serious risks must be incurred by men unfamiliar with snow and ice. He had no prejudice against competent climbers

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dispensing with guides, and had himself climbed Piz Bernina without them.

Sir EDWARD DAVIDSON remarked that from the very interesting account which Mr. Freshfield had just given of his expedition on the Dent Blanche in 1866 it was clear that his party were the first to prove the practicability of the south ridge of the mountain, by which the ascent is now usually made; this ridge they followed on their descent, throughout its entire length, turning the Great Tower on its left (right ascending) side.

The PRESIDENT said: I will now ask the Club to pass a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. J. Stogdon for his Paper, an extremely good Paper if I may be allowed to say so, and a very interesting Paper; and at the same time, while we all regret his not having been able to come and read it himself, I think we should like to pass a very hearty vote of thanks to his son, who has read it so admirably.

The vote of thanks was supported by Mr. J. A. B. B. BRUCE, and was put to the Meeting and carried unanimously.

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