

## 1926.—A RETROSPECT.

It is permitted to a secretary that he need not be too active an exponent of the Faith to which he ministers, and it must therefore be understood that the writer has taken part in but a portion of the Walks herein referred to; sufficient information has, however, been acquired to enable a fairly accurate record of the year's activities to be put down.

The highest possible individual mileage of the year falls below that of 1925 by 76 miles, the figures being: 1925, 812 miles; 1926, 736 miles; but the total number of Club miles walked is greater by 700 miles, due to the larger number of members turning out on a greater number of walks, the largest turnout of 1926 being 23 members as against 19 members in 1925, and the smallest turnout being 6 for 1926 as compared with 2 in 1925. The General and Coal Strikes during the year, with their effect upon the transport services of the country, have adversely affected our Programme, many walks entailing longer railway journeys having to be altered or curtailed. Some mitigation of this inconvenience has been obtained by the use of motor-cars of helpful and generous members, and it may be permitted here to remark upon the growing use of motors in the service of the Club. In no ungracious spirit, and speaking from a purely pedestrian point of view, one would rather deprecate this use of motors lest it sap the strenuous effort and desire of the walking spirit; as a means to an end it is good, but the good is often the enemy of the better.

Easter, which was spent at Bettws-Y-Coed as a centre, gave us fresh country for our activities, and also fresh leaders in the persons of Kronig and Witte; these we can only consider to be new in name, their leadership and organization speaking of a ripe experience, or the possession of that innate genius which arrives without the usual intervening labours. Ten members took part in the Walk, all of whom bore testimony to its success.

The Whit-week Walk had its centre at Aberfoyle, in the Rob Roy country, T. A. Edwards being the leader and eleven members taking part. In the annals of the Club the name of Edwards stands for organization par excellence, and the Whit-week expedition in all its aspects and arrangements was but another example of his gift. In the Chronicle of Witte may be found a full account of the walk—an account which will be valued by every member—equally for its contents and for the happy manner of its writing.

The Lakes Walk found the Club again at Buttermere, where the combination of leadership of W. Hitchon and A. W. Seares gave another success to the record of these pleasant Autumn outings.

The usual Saturday Walks of the Club have been in the happy hunting grounds which surround the City, and which afford so rich a diversity of scenery and conditions in the bleak hills and wooded valleys of Derbyshire, the flat plain of Cheshire, and the pleasaunces of Delamere Forest, the richness of the Ribble Valley, and the airy, if town-encircled uplands and moors of South East Lancashire. Some new paths have been traversed, and all have given their meed of pleasure. No Sunday Walks were included in the year's programme.

Again are the Walking honours of the year claimed by W. H. Coomber, whose performance of 701 miles out of a possible 736 is evidence of his persistency and his thoroughness, and shew that his year of office as President by no means exhausted his energies. Such walkers as he maintain the credit, and enhance the prestige of the Club. It is certain that Coomber himself will value the winning of the Cup the more in view of the close pursuit maintained by E. S. Franks, who was out on every walk but on some only partially completed the course. Each of them will appreciate his share in the words of Browning: "Oh the little more and how much it is, and the little less, and what worlds away." Franks also, although he has missed the greater honour, has the consolation of knowing that he is the favoured member of the Club upon whom Fate showers her attentions, her bouquets and her buffets. To him are the smiles of the Ladies; is there an inviting bog his feet will find it, or does an angry dog object to our passing it is upon him that its teeth fasten. If some members rather envy him, all admire the modest yet ardent spirit in which he bears these honours which he cannot evade.

The Club has been happy in its Presidents, each bringing to his office some quality particular to himself, but all alike being eager and fervent in the service of the Club. In our President of the year, C. D. Doyle, we have had a President, unequal to his predecessors in stature alone, but in the first line of efficiency in every other particular. Compact in figure, terse in speech, tough in performance, he has lead the Club in field and at board with a sturdy activity and an admirable judgment, and no situation has found him wanting.

Occasion was taken at the Annual Meeting to mark our sense of obligation to our Hon. Treasurer, R. Sorensen, upon his completion of 22 years of service as Treasurer of the Club, together with our appreciation of his personal qualities; this took the form of a silver salver, suitably inscribed, and was presented with many expressions of regard from old and new members. The good feelings of which it was the token, will, we feel sure, convey to Sorensen an earnest of support to him in his ensuing year of office as President.

We have to record with regret the loss by death of our member, J. Findlay Thomson, which occurred early in the year. He had been debarred from participating in the walks for some time, but always evinced a keen interest in the proceedings of the Club, and maintained this to the last. Of resignations we have suffered that of J. McAdam, but against this have acquired three new members, J. Bowler, W. B. Causer, and H. C. Heath, the membership at the end of the year standing at 53.

We are now on the threshold of our twenty-fifth year of existence, and although during the years that have elapsed since our founding, the personnel of the Club has largely changed, some of our first members still happily remain and have passed on to the newer men the spirit and the tradition which animates us. So, though the greying years may touch us individually, our united heart retains its youth and its virility, and while we enjoy the remembered pleasures which retrospection brings to us, we look forward to further joys of the future.

ROBERT SMALLEY,  
*Hon. Secretary.*