

ST. GEORGE SNOWSHOE CLUB.

On Saturday afternoon the 24th inst., the St. George Snowshoe Club gave an "At Home" at their club house at Cote St. Antoine. The "At Home" given by the St. George's once a year is now looked forward to as one of the social events of the year, therefore notwithstanding that the weather previous to the day indicated that the approach to the club house would be difficult tickets were in great demand and long before the hour named on the invitation card sleigh after sleigh commenced to storm the hill leading to the home of the Red Cross Knights. The handsome club house looked very cheery from the outside and once inside it was impossible for the guests to restrain their admiration of the unique and appropriate decorations, the stage looking particularly well decked with many fine plants and handsome rugs, the same style of decoration being carried through the ante rooms and dining hall. Mesdames T. D. Bell, C. P. Sclater, W. M. Knowles, W. S. Bryden and Miss Bell received the guests on behalf of the club.

It may safely be said that all those who were fortunate enough to receive invitations thoroughly enjoyed the club's social effort.

The following gentlemen who compose the executive management of the club deserve considerable credit for the very complete manner in which all the details in connection with the "At Home" were carried out.

Hon. President—T. D. Bell.

President—C. P. Sclater.

First Vice-President—W. M. Knowles.

Second Vice-President—W. S. Bryden.

Hon. Sec.-Treas. C. R. Hardy.

Directors—Ross MacKenzie, B. T. Kirkhouse, C. H. Godfrey, Stuart Howard, E. C. Arnoldi, R. Passmore Adams, C. E. Howard.

It is very possible that yielding to numerous requests the club will give another "At Home" before the close of the season.

In this connection a short history of the St. George Snowshoe Club may now be interesting to the readers of the DOMINION ILLUSTRATED.

In 1874 a few members of the St. George Cricket Club having decided that it was advisable that some means of keeping the members together during the winter season be adopted, it was resolved to establish a snowshoe club bearing the same name as the cricket club. An advertisement was put in the papers and a tramp of those favorable to such a club was appointed for Nov. 27 1874. On this date 28 turned out and on assembling at Roy's Hotel, the following were elected office-bearers for the ensuing season:—

President, George Sully; 1st vice-president, R. Scott; 2nd vice-president, F. L. Hankey; secretary, W. L. Matthews; treasurer, J. F. Haskell; committee, T. J. Patterson, G. O'Grady and R. H. Burn.

The first year's membership did not exceed 32, and the club started out on the second year with an increased membership of 64.

At this time, besides the weekly run over the mountain, long tramps were taken to St. Laurent, Sault au Recollet, Lachine, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Johns.

On December 7th, 1874, a meeting of the club was called and the constitution and by-laws of the club were drawn up. The substance of articles one, two and three is here quoted for obvious reasons. The club was established with a view to encourage the taste for snowshoeing; the motto *solvitur ambulando* was adopted; purple and white became the colors and St. George's cross the insignia. It was the original intention of the club that only members of the St. George cricket club or of No. 3 company Victoria Rifles should be eligible for admission and the annual subscription to the club was fixed at 50 cents. In the year 1876 the club was made an open one, and the annual subscription raised to \$1. In 1877 the members of the St. Andrew's S. S. Club were admitted en masse as members of the St. George Snowshoe Club and from this date on the membership roll of the club has increased yearly until it now numbers about 475 members.

The first club steeplechase was run on Saturday, January 27th, 1877, the result being:—Bowden, 1; K. Matthews, 2; Rose, 3. Although the St. George does not profess to be a racing club its members have never shirked a cross-

country tramp and are as used to long tramps and feats of endurance as any other club. In 1879 Mr. C. Lamothe, representing the St. George Snowshoe Club, won the Worthington cup, presented by the Windsor Hotel, and open to all snowshoe clubs of the Dominion and thus secured to the St. George's the honour of the amateur championship for one of its members. On the race track the club has won considerable renown and it is only necessary to prove this to mention the names of Messrs. C. Lamothe, H. L. Shaw, A. E. McNaughton, T. Davidson, J. Samuel, W. R. Samuel, J. G. Monk and T. Ramsay, all of whom have sustained the honor of the Red Cross Knights in many a well contested field, where they proved themselves invincible and nobly carried their colours to the front.

In March, 1880, the club held their first annual dinner at the St. Lawrence Hall, which proved, as have all subsequent ones, a decided success.

On the 31st of January, 1881, the club gave an entertainment at the Academy of Music in aid of the funds of the Montreal General Hospital, which brought together the largest audience ever assembled there. The entertainment given proved not only a success, but a triumph and resulted in the sum of \$609.33 being presented to the Hospital.

On Saturday, Feb. 19th, the club held their first annual races which took place on the Montreal Lacrosse ground. The weather was glorious, the attendance one of the largest ever seen on the ground, the events well contested, and the success of the club's representatives most gratifying.

Up to this time the club assembled after tramps at Prendergast's Hotel where they had rooms reserved for them. Subsequently Lumkin's Hotel was made the rendezvous. A feeling now began to be felt in the club that an effort should be made to establish quarters of its own, consequently very little surprise was caused when on Feb. 17th, 1883, a circular signed by F. C. Henshaw, president, and W. L. Matthews, hon.-sec., was issued to the members with reference to securing permanent headquarters. They stated that in their opinion it would be to the interest of the club to carry out this idea, and that they believed that the time had now come when active measures should be taken to secure a suitable building for the use of the club on its tramps, for social meetings of its members in summer as well as in winter, and that taking into consideration the large membership of the club and the social status of the members, the outlay required from each individual would not be felt to be a burden.

In order to carry out the proposed scheme it was found necessary for the club to obtain an Act of Incorporation; accordingly Letters Patent were applied for and granted. The capital stock of the club was made \$6,000, divided into 600 shares of \$10 each.

At first there were a good many who had but little confidence in the ultimate success of the scheme. But some of the members who had seen the club grow up from very small beginnings, and who had its interest at heart, never lost sight of the idea, and without making any great noise kept quietly at work. At length in the fall of 1886 a most picturesque and beautiful site was chosen a short distance from the city at Cote St. Antoine for the erection of the club house, which was built under the able direction of Messrs. Hutchison and Steele.

The house was erected in the early English style of architecture; externally of rough cast, with spacious verandas on all sides, recessed balconies, high pitched roof with dormers, also rough cast in the gables with half timbering.

The interior is most suitably and conveniently arranged to meet the requirements of the snowshoers and their friends.

The hall door gives access to a large square entrance hall, on passing through which one reaches the lofty, well proportioned assembly room, wainscotted with large windows opening on to the verandas. A marked feature of this room is the grand old fashioned wooded fireplace. Separated from this room by curtains is the banquetting hall. Nor have the requirements of the inner man been in any way forgotten, a large and convenient kitchen, pantries, larders, lockers and such like having been carefully provided, the whole being so skillfully arranged that whenever required the grand hall, assembly rooms and other

reception rooms on the ground floor may be thrown into one. The second floor is reached by an easy staircase and here are the dressing rooms, one or two bedrooms, also the large and cheerful, well lighted committee room with open fireplace. From this room one ascends to the recessed balcony in front of the building from which a superb view can be obtained. It is due to such men as Col. Fred. Henshaw, W. L. Matthews, T. Gilmour, Stanley Bagg, C. D. Monk, C. P. Sclater and others of the same stamp that the St. George Snowshoe Club possess to-day a home of their own and such a one.

It is needless to say that since the erection of the club house, the membership has increased and is increasing yearly and it is to-day in a most satisfactory financial position.

The club now hold two weekly tramps on Tuesday evening and Saturday afternoon. Dinner is served every Saturday evening at the club house at 6.30 and has proved a very popular innovation. So far the present season has been a most successful one and everything points towards it being one of the most successful in the history of the club. All members of the club have the privilege of introducing friends whether residents of Montreal or otherwise; therefore all who have not already paid a visit should do so on the first opportunity.

It is safe to say that during the winter season few visitors leave Montreal without having visited the club and having been initiated in the orthodox fashion by bouncing. Although the club does not favour what are known as Ladies' nights, still they are very often favoured with the presence of the fair sex, who generally go away convinced that the Saints are the best of hosts. The following are the names of the presidents and vice-presidents since the foundation of the club to date:—

	PRESIDENT.	1st. VICE.	2nd. VICE.
1874	—Geo. Sully	R. Scott	F. L. Hankey
1875-76	—	F. L. Hankey	R. H. Burn
1876-77	—T. J. Patterson	R. H. Burn	H. A. Howe
1877-78	—Geo. Sully	"	"
1878-79	—	H. A. Howe	C. Dyde
1879-80	—F. C. Henshaw	S. S. Cummins	J. G. Monk
1880-81	—	J. G. Monk	H. A. Howe
1881-82	—	"	J. A. Wilson
1882-83	—	S. Howard	C. D. Monk
1883-84	—	C. D. Monk	S. Howard
1884-85	—C. D. Monk	C. P. Sclater	R. J. Ross
1885-86	—	"	"
1886-87	—	R. J. Ross	J. G. Monk
1887-88	—R. J. Ross	J. G. Monk	Thos. Gilmour
1888-89	—	Thos. Gilmour	T. D. Bell
1889-90	—T. D. Bell	Ross MacKenzie	B. T. Kirkhouse
1890-91	—C. P. Sclater	W. M. Knowles	W. S. Bryden

Mr. W. L. Matthews occupied the position of Hon.-Secretary from 1874 to 1888.

The following brief notices of the officials of the club will be of interest to the members as well as explanatory of the portraits, which for lack of space are confined to the gentlemen at present holding office:

C. P. Sclater, President St. George Snowshoe Club, was well known in rowing and football circles in England between 1870 and 1876, rowing at Henley in the Kingston crews of 1874, 1875 and 1876, and playing on the South of England Football teams at about the same period. Soon after crossing the Atlantic he stroked the South Carolina Rowing Club four to victory at the Charleston regatta in 1877. In Montreal, where he has resided since 1880, his active interest in all outdoor sports and amusements has been felt and appreciated, he having played on the eleven and been on the committee of the old Montreal Cricket Club, being also secretary, vice-president and for several years president of the old Montreal Tobogganing Club, and an active worker on several of the Carnival committees, besides acting as referee in many football matches and rowing regattas, including the last two of the Canadian Association at Lachine. He joined the St. George Snowshoe Club in 1881, and was first vice-president in 1885 and 1886. As president he devotes himself to resuscitating the somewhat waning enthusiasm in tramping, and is to be found leading the club on all the regular tramps. He maintains that exercise is a duty, especially for those engaged in sedentary work, and that of all winter exercise snowshoeing is the best. Mr. Sclater is also president of the St. George's Society.