

# **Story of The Sind Club 1871 -1946 J. Humphrey**



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Sani H. Panhwar  
California - 2014**

# **STORY OF THE SIND CLUB**

**1871-1946**

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# STORY OF THE SIND CLUB

## FOREWORD.

On the 1st August 1946 the Sind Club attained its 75th Anniversary. It was founded in 1871 and its membership, at inauguration, was 76-63 Resident and 13 Provincial. Today the total membership is 1932, of which 178 are Resident. Its first habitat was a house rented at Rs. 90/- per month. It now almost entirely occupies a large island of land bounded on the South by Frere Hall Gardens, on the North by the Scandal Point Road, on the West by Victoria Road and on the East by Bonus Road. At the time of its foundation the total assets of the Club were Rs. 7750/-, of which the monthly income was Rs. 270/- and the monthly expenditure Rs. 250/-, the balance of the Rs 7750/- being used against capital expenditure and stores. On the 31st August 1946 the half yearly income amounted to Rs 181,422/- and the half yearly expenditure re to Rs. 1,39,700/-, while the surplus assets stood at Rs. 4,61,049/-. For years the Club lived without borrowing but the time came when money had to be borrowed and by 1922 - the peak year - the debenture outstanding amounted to Rs 4,06,500/-, though by 1946 the loan debt of the Club had been reduced to Rs. 1,24,000/-

These comparisons convey a general idea of the vast growth and expansion that has taken place, but there is much in addition about that development which cannot fail to be of interest to the members of today and of the future. The purpose of the following pages is to try and unfold the tale of how all this happened; to bring home to members the gratitude we all owe to our predecessors for the greatness of our heritage and, at the same time, to depict, in a measure, the life of the Club and its members (in many ways the life of our own community) during that period. To make it more comprehensive and telling the writer has divided the story into sections, each dealing with a particular aspect of the subject. If the reader of the story derives from it only a small portion of the interest and enjoyment that the writer has had in compiling it, then the time given to it will have been well worthwhile.

The writer is much indebted to Mr. R. B. Fairclough, M.C. the President for allowing him to have full access to the Club Minutes and records, and to the Secretary, Lieut. Col. C. Jameson, for his ever willing assistance.

October 1946.

J. HUMPHREY.

*List of gentlemen who attended a Meeting at the Frere Hall Karachi on the 25th May 1871 to discuss the subject of starting a Club in Kurrachee for the whole of Scinde.*

Chairman. :— Colonel Sir William Merewether, K.C.S.I., C.B.

General Addison, C.B.  
Colonel Marston  
Colonel Southey  
Major Nicholetts  
Major Clements  
Major Thoyts  
Major Dunsterville

Captain Anderson  
Doctor Fowler  
Doctor Hopkins  
Max Denso Esqr  
C. A. Wood Esqr  
H. L Walton Esqr  
J. A. Coghlan Esqr

**Resolution Passed:**

“That a Club be established for the whole of Scinde and that it be called the Sind Club”

**Organising Committee elected at Meeting:.**

Colonel Marton  
Major Dunsterville  
Major Clements  
Major Nicholetts  
W. Macaulay Esqr

H.I. Walton Esqr  
Max Donso Esqr  
Captain Giles  
Captain Anderson  
Dr. Fowler.

Honorary Secretary: Major Thoyts.

Major Dunsterville was appointed Chairman at the first Meeting of the Committee on the 30th May 1871.



## Original Members

Sir William Merewether K.C.B.I., C.B.

General Addison C.B.

F. R. S. Wyllie Esqr C.S.

Major Dunsterville

AH. Izaak Walton Esqr

T. P. McLellan Esqr

W. M. Macaulay Esqr

E. Pearson Esqr

Major T. Bell

L. Lumsden Hall Esqr

W. T. Cole Esqr

Dr. Fowler

Major Nicholetts

Major Fagan

Captain C. J. Andersen

Captain H. C. Brown R. A.

C. A. Wood Esqr

Captain Dowden

Colonel Marston

Major Clements

Doctor Hopkins

Major Thoyts

E. James Esqr

Captain Styffe

Doctor Thorpe

Doctor Roche

Captain Giles

Captain Bishop

Captain J. C. Grant

C. Melver Esqr

W. A. Boulton Esqr (Shahbunder)

S. Philpotts Esqr C.S.

F. P. Seley Esqr

- Walker Esqr

G. M. Grant Esqr C.S.

Major Haig

Max Denso Esqr

E. Steele Esqr

R. Giles Esqr

H. Watson Esqr

W. Forman Esqr

Major Harrison (Khelat)

P. A. Browne Esqr

Doctor Schlich

A. Pengelly Esqr

Captain Galloway

Captain R. I. Crawford

Doctor Keith

T. W. Walker Esqr

J. A. Coghlan Esqr

Colonel Philips

Captain Worsley

Lieut Harman

Lieut Foote

C. H. Allson Esqr

D. K. Maclean Esqr

F. Masotti Esqr

E. G. Anderson Esqr

L. M. Mareseaux Esqr

### JACOBABAD

Lieut E. Reynolds

Major T. Mills

Lieut Peat

Lieut Macnair

Captain Forbes

Captain Carpendale

Major C. Loch

Asst Surgeon Banks

Lieut C. Lucas

Lieut H. Lucas

Lieut W. Loch

Lieut Caulson

Captain W. Reynolds.



## STORY OF THE SIND CLUB

At the time this story begins Kurrachee (as it was spelt then) was definitely in its embryo stage The Conquest of Scinde had only been completed twenty-eight years before and there were probably a few among the original members of the Sind Club who had participated in it. There was certainly one— Colonel Marston— who saved Sir Charles Napier's life at risk of his own, at Meanee. The Indian Mutiny had taken place fourteen years before, Sind's only Railway- Karachi to Kotri -- had started running in 1861, and the Suez Canal had only been opened two years previously, so in every way conditions were very, very different from what they are now. Kurrachee, which at that time had a Population of about 56,000 inhabitants, was made up of large open spaces, with buildings scattered here and there about it. Government House and tie Frere Hall were two of the only realty pucca buildings while the Kutcherry, being the Collector's' Secretariat of those days, was built on substantial though not elegant lines. Trinity Church, consecrated it 1858, was also another solid building. That had its uses, apart from being the English Church, for its Tower, which was two tiers higher than it is now, was a definite Landmark for shipping approaching Kurrachee, and acted as a guide to the entrance to the Harbour, which in itself was only in the early stages of development. The area this story tells about is situated round about the Church. Except for the bungalows in Staff Lines on the East Side, and Government House grounds on the West Side, the whole area up to the Frere Hall on the South Side was waste land, with the Masonic Hall, another, moderately solid building, occupying a small portion of the ground on which the Married Quarters of the Sind Club are now built. The bungalows in Staff Lines, which is the area to which this story partly applies, were rambling buildings, made up of large airy, rooms with wide verandahs and were situated in huge compounds, generally unkept and often uncultivated. There were very few trees, for those were only planted after the occupation by the British. As an instance of this, the age of the three parts of the present Sind Club can almost be told by the varying heights of the trees bordering its front road. The Frere Hall stood in the middle of its own small desert, but possibly a slightly better kept desert than the waste land surrounding it. Except for the Kutcherry and its out building, the ground between Victoria Road and Kutchery Road was completely void of any buildings.

The English population of the Station was made up almost entirely of officials: either Civil or Military. There were only ten business houses in Karachi then. Social life was based on the life of Society in England. Calling, which was between the hours of 12 noon and 1 P M, was *de rigueur* and strictly observed; unfortunate men having to wear frock coats and top hats. Ladies costumes consisted of voluminous skirts covering the feet with fold upon fold of garments underneath and steel ribbed corsets enclosed and compressed their waists. All parties were strictly formal and for dinners, even in the hot weather, fall evening tail suits, with stiff shirts, were worn. On other

occasions, lounge suits were the fashion. Ladies did not play strenuous games in those days, but a few years later, when they did, the only relief they had was a long white dress (which they had, to hold up when they ran) over their numerous other garments, while men wore flannel trousers, tennis shirts and ties, and invariably, a blazer when they ceased playing. And all this was at a time when the only *punkah* in any house was, in the dining room and when ice was difficult to get and very expensive. The shopping centre was situated where it is now, and was then called the "Bazaar". The number, of shops was very limited as were also their supplies. That will account for so many members obtaining all their supplies from the Sind Club, as their only other source was England, and, for a few things, Bombay and Calcutta. It was not at all unusual at that period for people to send their best clothing and linen to England for being laundered.

Such was the period when on May 25th 1871 a few gentlemen met at the Frere Hall for the purpose of taking step to establish a "Club for Europeans in Kurrachee". Sir William Merewether, the Commissioner in Sind, was elected to the Chair, and there were present Colonels Marston and Southey, Majors Nicholetts, Clements, Thoyts, Dunsrville Captain Anderson, Doctors Fowlers and Hopkins and Messrs Max Denso and C. A. Wood. Though this meeting was, held in the hottest month of the year, one can be certain that it was extremely formal, (particularly as the Commissioner in Sind was in the Chair) and that they were all suitably dressed in English lounge, suite. We are indebted to Major Thoyts who was appointed Honorary Secretary, for very full minutes of proceedings, written in the beautiful calligraphy of that time. The main resolution was "That a Club be established for the whole of Scinde and that it be called the Sind Club" One wonders why, when the Province was spelt S-c-i-n-d-e, that the Club should have been given the nomenclature of "Sind Club" In the discussion that followed it was decided that it would not be safe to start the Club unless there were at least sixty subscribers. Within a few minutes the names of sixty-eight gentlemen were put forward and the resolution was carried with acclamation, though very possibly with great decorum. It was decided that all whose names had been put forward should be balloted for amongst themselves, that the entrance fee should be Rs. 100-0-0 for those originally elected; Rs. 150-0 0 for those joining within six months and Rs. 200-0-0 thereafter. The subscription, which remained at the same figure for some forty years, was to be Re 7-0-0 for those who lived within Municipal limits, while Provincial Members were to pay on the basis of Re 2-0-0 per month, the sum being collected annually. This however was changed in 1882 to Provincial Members paying the full subscription, as will be seen latter. A Managing Committee were elected and consisted of Colonel Marston, Majors Dunsteiville, Clemente, Nicholette, Messrs Macaulay, Walton, Denso, Captains Giles and Anderson and Dr. Fowler. The date fixed for the opening of the Club was between the 1st and 15th August. The actual opening date was the 1st August 1871.



The Committee wasted no time in getting down to work and hold, weekly Meetings during the next two months. They drew up rules, which, were passed at special General Meeting of, subscribers (they, did not become members until the Club opened) on the 20th July 1871; they rented a bungalow at Rs. 90-0-0 per month, engaged staff and ordered supplies. These were mostly ordered from England, special instructions being given that they were to be shipped via Suez Canal. As an indication of the tastes of the people of these days, the list of supplies is interesting. They consisted of Claret, Brandies, Old Tom, Light Wines, Sherry, Port and Champagne, while 15,000 Trichinopoly Cheroots were ordered from Madras. At the same time a Billiard Table was ordered from Cox & Yemans, London.

A few words about the first Club House, both as regards its location and accommodation, will be of interest to readers. The minutes record that it was in Staff Lines and had previously been occupied by Captain Bourdillion. Many years ago two old Members who had been Members when the Club was still housed in that building, pointed the site out to the writer of these notes. It was the site which is at present occupied by Armadale, immediately opposite the Howard Institute. Some doubt has been expressed as to whether that actually was the position. Fortunately Mr. W. U. Nicholas, when he was acting as Honorary Secretary of the Sind Club in 1903, wrote a note at that time in which he states "The first Club House was the 'Bird Cage' Bungalow in Staff Lines rented at Re 90-0-0 per mensem. The Bungalow subsequently fell down and the present General's bungalow is built, on the site". General Craigie was the first occupant of Armadale and he was certainly there in 1900, and it was the General's bungalow for many years afterwards. Mr. Nicholas joined the Club in 1886, so must, have been fully acquainted with the old Club House, for that was only vacated in 1883. The Bungalow was commodious and sufficiently large to provide for dining room, reading room, card room, while there were three large bedrooms which were let to Members as Chambers at Re 25-0-0 per month. The 'Bird Cage', referred to by Mr. Nicholas, must have been a largo roofed in porch verandah jutting out from the main one, and was probably used as a lounge. A detached bungalow, in the same compound, of one large room and bathroom was utilized as the Billiard Room.

The first General Meeting of Members was held on the 23rd of October 1871 and ever since that date that, has been the month in which one of the half-yearly General Meetings has been held. The purpose of the Meeting was to confirm the Rules and to pass the accounts. These showed a considerable improvement over the first estimates. Assets amounted to Rs. 9435-0-0 with liabilities of only Rs. 2818-0-0 but those did not include the cost of the goods ordered from Home, as they had not yet arrived. When they did arrive the minutes report "that with the exception of Sherry and Port nothing had arrived intact". One of the features of the first accounts was the very large out standings of members amounting as they did to one third of the assets. This was the case for many years to come and "postings" were not infrequent.

The rules provided only for the election of the Committee but made no provision for authority over the Club except by the Committee as a body. The practice was for one of the senior officials of the Station to preside at general Meetings, whilst the Committee, at their first meeting, elected a Chairman to preside over them for the ensuing year. The official who presided at General Meetings seems to have been regarded as President, but with no authority whatever. On this basis Sir William Merewether was the first President of the Club and Mr. H. L Walton for the first Chairman of the Committee. For the sake of record a list has been made both of Presidents and Chairmen of Committee, until the system was changed in 1896 when, as will be seen later, it was decided to regularize the position by electing a President.

Even during the early months of the Club the Committee had to compete with several problems. It is minuted that in December 1871 the Complaint Book was discontinued "as the many trifling complaints appear to furnish a fund of amusement to frequenters in the Reading Room". Another source of anxiety to them was 'smoking,' for Members strongly objected to the restriction of only being allowed to smoke after Gun Fire, which was at 9 P. M. So strong was the feeling that after many clashes with the Committee, they called a Special General Meeting in May 1872, when the following resolution was passed "Cigar smoking be allowed in all parts of the Club except in the Dining Room, half an hour before and after meals, Pipe smoking to be restricted to the Billiard Room". This alleviated the trouble but did not put an end to it, for the question of 'smoking' frequently recurs in the Minutes for some years more. A more serious matter was when the Committee had to issue a strict order that servants lending money to members would be instantly dismissed. Members were also inclined to bring guests into meals whom the Committee did not think desirable or suitable, and they overcame this difficulty by issuing an order that "the eligibility or otherwise of a resident being allowed admittance, as a guest, to the Sind Club, shall be guided by the fact whether he is on the visiting list of Government House or not". The same question arose again in 1879 when an Officer bought an ex-Sergeant, who had since become a pleader, into the Club. The Committee dealt with this Officer by telling him that he would not have been allowed to entertain such a guest in his own Mess, and he was asked not to err again. The assistance of the Brigadier General Commanding Sind was invoked in this case. The Committee was also not without their economic troubles for in 1874 the Club was losing steadily on an average of Rs. 40/- per month and a Sub-Committee was appointed to find way and means of putting the Club on a more sound financial basis.

During the very early years the Committee gave a great deal of consideration to making arrangements for more permanent and suitable accommodation for the Club. In 1872 they went into the question of building their own premises but it was not until 1874 that they came to the conclusion that new Club premises could not be built at a lower cost than Rs. 50000/- which they felt, at that stage, was beyond the means of the Club and the matter was dropped for the time being. Previously in 1873 the Collector

of Karachi offered to the Club the Kutcherry Building with land attached, for, Rs. 40000/- This was carefully considered by the Committee and Government was asked if, they would be prepared to rent the building at Rs. 300/ per month until such time as the Club would be ready to build. Government responded in the negative and the matter was dropped. As an alternative Government offered the Club a free grant of the land lying between the Masonic Hall and the Frere Hall. This proposition the Committee did not allow to lapse entirely and it was referred to from time to time in the Minutes, the final result being that it was eventually, taken over in 1880. In 1874 a General Meeting agreed to the expenditure of Re. 8000/- for the purchase of a house suitable for a Club building, but such a house was never found. Various other alternatives were considered from time to time but nothing happened and the Club remained where it was.

The first attempt to come to reciprocal arrangement with another Club was in 1875 when the Club of Western India, Poonah, was approached. The invitation was not accepted at that time but a final agreement was reached in 1881. It is perhaps suitable to mention here that similar arrangements were concluded with the Punjaub Club in 1887, the New Club Simla in 1888, the Byculla Club in 1889 and with the Quetta Club in 1890. There is no record as to the exact date when reciprocity with the Bombay Club was arranged but the correspondence with that Club, as mentioned in the Minutes, indicates that it was early in the 1880's. In 1891 a guest visiting the Sind Club as a reciprocating member of the Byculla Club claimed certain privileges to which the Committee agreed in the following minute "That Members of the Byculla Club making use of the Sind Club under reciprocity, shall come under the rules of their own Club; that being the older of the two." Later on arrangements were made to reciprocate with other Clubs.

A reference to the enormous cost of ice as made in the note regarding the early days of Karachi. In 1878 a thirsty soul longing for a cooling drink was charged 1¼ annas for ice in each drink he consumed, and this charge was later on increased still further to 1½ annas per drink. And at the time this enormous charge was being made for ice, Champagne was being sold by the Club at Rs. 36/- per dozen quarts! 1878 also marks the first occasion on which whiskey was mentioned for it was in that year that 50 gallons of Irish Whiskey was ordered from England. This was closely followed by an order in February 1879 for 100 gallons of Scotch whiskey, which as the minutes particularly mention, was already in use in the Club. Its popularity was apparently instant, for in March of the same year they ordered another 200 gallons. The temptation, to the staff, of so large a stock seems to have proved irresistible for in 1880 it was recorded that "Whiskey and Brandy to the value of Rs. 1290/- was missing". The Committee held the Steward responsible for this, but, gave him the opportunity of reimbursing the Club for the loss, at the rate of Rs. 50/- per month. This penalty was willingly accepted by him and the amount was fully recovered. The price at which Whiskey was sold to members at this time was Rs 24/- per dozen quarts but, in

1886, a heavy fall in Exchange necessitated the price being increased to Rs. 25/-. By 1889 it had reached Rs. 36/- per case. A further mention of Exchange, made; for in the accounts of 1873 the sterling liabilities of the Club are calculated at Rs. 106/- (presumably per £ 10/-); to our modern ideas an unusual basis! By 1880 modernization began to set in; for the Committee ordered Electric bells from England but only after considerable discussion and after the advice of an expert had been taken. The Committee were however less advanced in their views about telephones, for it was recorded in 1882 that they did not desire linked up with the new telephone system in Karachi and it was not until 1886 that this convenience was provided and then only at a charge to members using the telephone. The cost was Rs. 50/- per year! But, in 1876 they had been sufficiently up-to-date to agree to subscribe to press telegrams from Europe and India.

Mention has already been made of the efforts of the Committee to provide more permanent housing for the Club. In 1878 they contemplated leasing from Government the building which they already occupied, but that fell through because Government insisted that the tenants should insure the building against Fire. The Committee refused "as no such demand had previously been made in Karachi nor was it the custom in England". All other efforts having failed, the Committee then decided, and a General Meeting agreed with them, to accept from Government a lease of the land lying between the Masonic, Hall and the Frere Hall. This was in 1880. The land leased did not reach the present southern boundary of the Club but only extended to the road now running between the Main building and the South block. The rest of the land in that direction was part of the Frere Hall compound and belonged to the Municipality. This acquisition initiated an expansion of the Club which did not cease until the whole of the land between Scandal Point Road and the present South block of Chambers was in the hands of the Club. The story of the expansion must, be told as it took place. The land having been secured, the first steps that were taken were to build much needed Chambers, and at, a General meeting held in August 1880, the Committee were authorised to raise debentures for Rs. 8000 for this purpose. These were the first debenture raised by the Club and were taken up on the spot at 6%. Plans were drawn up and the Chambers built, but it was not until early in 1882 that the Committee discovered to their consternation that though the General Meeting had authorised the raising of debentures for the purpose of building Chamber, they had not authorised the actual building of the Chambers nor had they given their consent to any money being spent an the building. This shocked the Committee considerably for they had already paid away most of the money for, which of course they were, in the circumstances, personally liable. Fortunately the half yearly General Meeting was near at hand and the matter was rectified by the necessary authority being given by the Members. The Committee breathed again These Chambers have always been known as the "Dog Kennels" possibly on account of then proximity to the stables. In 1923, when so many other Chambers in the Club were empty and there seemed no prospect of filling them, there was a suggestion that the

“Dog Kennels” should be pulled down, but a sudden revival in demand for Chambers prolonged then life and they remain to this day.

The next step was the more ambitious one of building a Club House. This time the Committee Made no mistake for they obtained their authority from the General Meeting to build at a cost of Rs. 50,000/- and to pay for it and it was not till some time afterwards that the raising of the necessary debentures for a similar amount was asked for and granted. This was in 1882 and again the debentures were fully subscribed for at the meeting. The submission of plans was invited in open competition, one of the conditions being that each plan should be subscribed with a motto in place of the name of the competitor. The two plans finally chosen as first and second bore the Mottoes “Palmarum qui meruit ferat” and “Spes”. It transpired that the first plan was by Mr. J. Strachan, a Member of the Club and Engineer and Secretary of the Karachi Municipality, and the second by Mr. Sweton. The amount of the prize is not recorded. The only plan still extant is that of Mr. Sweton, and that has been suitably framed and hangs in the Secretary’s Office today. In the end it was found that neither the plans nor the amount allocated for the new building were adequate and it was decided to start all over again. The sum finally decided upon was Rs. 75,000/-, and the drawing up of further plans were entrusted to Colonel Le Mesurier, R. E., who was on the Committee. This time the plans were passed; the resulting building being the present main block, without, the three storied portion at the South end; and where the present Ladies part of the Club is today, there was a ground floor set of Chambers. A matter that has always puzzled members is why the Ball Room is divided up so irregularly by an arch? When the planning of the Club was originally discussed it was intended that there should be a public dining room and also a private dining room. This was allowed for in both the competition plans, and it seems extremely likely that Colonel Le Mesurier also included both rooms and that later on, it was found necessary to increase the floor space for dancing and so the dividing wall was pulled down and the arch substituted for it. This is pure guess work, but it seems to be a reasonable explanation. There is nothing in the minutes to explain it. The remaining Rs. 25,000/- were over subscribed and the Club was launched on its new and biggest venture.

The building was completed and occupied in 1883. There was one amusing incident whilst the building was in progress. A Building Sub-Committee was formed to supervise the structure with one of their number immediately in charge of, the actual building. The other two met one day at the works, decided on some slight modification and instructed the Overseer accordingly. When the working member of the Sub-Committee heard this, he immediately stopped all work, dismissed the Overseer, took the plans away and locked them up. But it was some time before the offended party was appeased and the work was allowed to proceed. At the time the new building was completed the total membership of the Club was only 266, of whom many must have been absent members. It seems all the more amazing therefore that



such foresight was shown in planning on a scale that even today the public rooms of the Club are still sufficiently roomy and adequate, except on very rare occasion.

Expansion demands additional income; so the entrance fee was raised from Rs. 150/- to Rs. 200/- and Provincial Members were inflicted with the full subscription of Rs. 7/- per month instead of Rs. 24/- annually. It seems from this that the entrance fee of Rs. 200/-, which it had been decided should be paid by those joining six months after the formation of the Club, was never put in force, and that everyone paid only Rs. 150/-. The reason given for raising Provincial Members' subscription was that, they were getting the full benefit of the Club, as they purchased all supplies from it. This reason was, in the view of Provincial Members, by no means adequate, and an angry protest was soon received from 43 of them, and at the same time they demanded a Special General Meeting, which they attended in full force. "Equality of subscription" was however the War cry of Resident members, and as they were at the Meeting in greater numbers, the increased subscription was confirmed and, what was worse, from the Provincial Members' point of view, imposed.

The Committee during these years when their work and responsibility was already heavy was confronted with domestic troubles which took up a lot of their time and caused them much anxiety. "Wild behavior" and "skylarking in and about the bar" caused them to introduce a bye-law prohibiting "Songs, speeches and noises of any description". Members were inclined also to be touchy; for one complained bitterly of a member of the Committee describing, in public, his conduct as "fishy". Another member complained of a Committee member using abusive language to him, and the Committee recorded that "No provocation justifies the use of abusive language in the Club". The complaint book was apparently restored by this time, for at dinner one night in the Club a Captain entered in it a very strong complaint against a Colonel for "plundering the table, etc". In his subsequent letter to the Committee the Colonel vehemently resented the insinuation and described "as most pointed and aggravating" the fact that the Captain had passed the Complaint Book to him, for his information, before sending the complaint in. In all of these instances apologies were forthcoming and accepted, but it is possible the Captain had a very thin time onwards, unless he was wealthy and influential, which usually, had a very great influence in those days. Members keeping the Club open until all hours in the morning was another problem with which the Committee had to deal, and they finally recommended to a General Meeting that fines should be imposed on all members keeping the Club open after 2 a.m. on the following basis:- "After 2 a.m. Rs. 50/-, after 3. a.m. Rs. 70/-, after 4 a.m. Rs. 100/- and after 5 a.m. Rs. 150/- All fines to be accumulative". The General Meeting accepted the Committee's proposals. A golden opportunity was afforded to Members of "wild behavior" by the fact that the roof of the dining room verandah was found to be unstable and that it was necessary to introduce two pillars to strengthen it, (these exist to the present day). After a cheery dinner three Members discovered the fascination of climbing up one pillar, crossing



over by the girder and descending by the other pillar. This naturally was to the detriment of the paint of the pillars, but that damage was nothing compared to hurt feelings of the Committee, more particularly when they found that an original member of the Club was one of the party. A Special General Meeting was called and they were successful in getting a resolution passed "That the Committee be empowered to deal with cases of unbecoming conduct of members if not of so grave a nature as to require their being brought before a General Meeting". With this authority behind them the Committee informed the offending Members that "their conduct was objectionable and unbecoming a Member and calculated to cause annoyance to other Members to the detriment of the character and respectability of the Club". They were then each fined Rs. 100/-. This instead of acting as a deterrent drew attention to such an enjoyable pastime after a festive night, and similar instances occurred with the utmost regularity until the Committee decided eventually to compromise by authorizing the Secretary to inflict a fine of Rs. 10/- for each offence. That the Members were somewhat out of hand, at this time, seems to be very definite for the Committee had recourse to another General Meeting to give them authority to suspend Members for causing 'disturbances' and this was duly granted. The immediate reason for this request was another, Saturday night 'binge', and one Member was suspended – but reinstated after an ample apology had been made.

Meanwhile, the other interests of the Club were not neglected by the Committee. When taking over the new land from Government it was found that the land owned by the Masons encroached on the Sind Club property. An arrangement was therefore come to with them by which the Masons handed over the small area which was required to square off the Club land, and the Club bought from the Municipality for Rs. 1780-5-0 two strips of land bordering Scandal Point Road which were given to the Masons. This land ultimately became the property of the Club, when the whole of that area was taken over many years afterwards. Another piece of land between the Masonic Lodge and Elphinstone Street was bought for Rs. 2,711-0-0 in 1885 from the Municipality to complete the land that was required for servant's quarters. In 1889 an addition of 710 square yards to this plot was acquired from the Municipality for Rs. 221-14-0. It will be remembered that the land leased from Government only extended on the South to the present road running between the Main Building and the South Block of Chambers; the land beyond that being part of the Frere Hall Compound and owned by the Municipality. In 1886 negotiations were opened with a view to purchasing a portion of this land and were satisfactorily concluded the same year, the land passing hands for Rs. 4,713/-. It was arranged to build four sets of Chambers (part of the present day South Block Chambers) on it. Rs. 25,000/- was raised to pay for these and this completed the Club's building activities for some time. In 1881 Mr. J. Grant who had performed the duties of Honorary Secretary for three years, resigned and Captain Wetherell was asked to take his place. Before undertaking the work Captain Wetherell asked what were the privileges of the post; which rather nonplussed the Committee, for up-to-date there had been no

privileges. The question having been raised they decided that in future Honorary Secretaries should be supplied with free quarters and free Messing and that has been the case ever since. Captain Wetherell accepted the appointment. The accounts of the Club were at this time audited by Honorary, Auditors one of whom at the conclusion of his certificate of audit introduced the words "*Veritas prevalebit*" (Truth is mighty, and it shall prevail). This is possibly a unique certificate of audit. Having acquired land of their own the Committee did not neglect the question of garden and in 1886 Rs. 200/- was granted for making a grass plot in front of the Billiard Room. It was not however until 1891 that a Sub-Committee was appointed to look after the garden, the first Sub-Committee consisting of General Boyce Combe and Mr. R. N. Coghlan. This is mentioned as it was those members who laid the foundation of the beautiful garden of which the Sind Club is so proud today. In later days Mr. T. L. F. Beaumont, Mr. W. U. Nicholas and afterwards Mr. T. G. Elphinstone were responsible for the wonderful progress that was made in developing the lawns and the garden.

The next few years were spent in "digging in" and nothing happened of any particular note. But in 1891 the Editor of the 'Daily Gazette', also a Member of the Club, who seemed to have a strong aversion to the Honorary Secretary, allowed an article (almost unquestionably written by himself) to appear in one of the issues of his paper, in which the Honorary Secretary was virtually criticized. The Committee dealt with this in no uncertain manner and told the Editor, as a Member of the Club, that they "did not consider the management of the Club a fit subject for discussion in public print and that the remarks were in bad taste" The Editor duly apologized but the vendetta was carried still further, by his bringing forward at the next General Meeting a proposition that the Honorary Secretary should be replaced by a paid Secretary. When it came to the voting the Members, who were fully cognizant of the motive prompting the resolution, overwhelmingly defeated it, there being only two votes in favour - those of the Editor, and the seconder of the resolution. Another incident, bringing out very strongly the determination of Members that a fellow Member should not be insulted in his own Club, occurred in 1914. This happened at a General Meeting in 1914 when a Member objected to a proposal having been put forward by another Member "as he was not a Britisher but a foreigner, who could not claim the protection of the British Flag" A large number of members objected to this remark and made a protest at the meeting which they followed up by demanding that the committee should call upon the offending member for an ample apology. This the Committee agreed to, and demanded "the unreserved withdrawal of the disparaging remark and an unqualified apology". Both were forthcoming. But this incident has a further interest, for the letter to the Committee discloses a matter which could not otherwise have been known or have appeared in these pages, for at the end of the letter the Member says that "There is not room in Sind for the two clubs; and the formation of a New Club, if it has not already taken definite shape, is talked of even a suitable site selected".

This statement clarifies considerably a significant incident which happened the next year, confirming, without doubt, that there was a division of feeling running through the Club. At the October 1894 General Meeting, the anomaly of there being no elected President of the Club was corrected by a rule being introduced and passed, that the Club "shall be managed by a President, Vice President and eight members" all of whom were to be elected. The first election under this rule was held at the General Meeting of October 1895, when the ballot disclosed that two young members had been elected to the important offices of President and Vice President, and that the two Officers, who it was expected would be chosen for these Offices, were not even elected to the Committee. It can be imagined with what consternation the senior Members of the Club heard this and how very annoyed many of them must have been. But their consternation does not seem to have been nearly as great as that of the two young men on whom the honour had been thrust, for the minutes of the first Committee Meeting held shortly afterwards, disclose that both of them had respectfully declined to serve in those exalted positions. The Position was overcome by holding a Special General Meeting when Brigadier General Cooke and Brigade Surgeon Lieut. Colonel Bainbridge, who had already been co-opted on the Committee, were asked by the Members present, to occupy the Position of President and Vice President respectively for the ensuing year. They both accepted and honour was satisfied. It is gratifying to find that, at the Special General Meeting, took place then. In that year it was decided to start a library and the question naturally came up with regard to the housing of it. All the room in the main block was fully employed, and in order to house the library there, it would be necessary to find other space for the Smoking Room. This could not be done without building. The only site available was the site beyond the Billiard Room. But that was far too large for one small room, so gradually the plan was evolved to build there a large Smoking Room (the present Bar), Dressing Rooms and Bathrooms, which were badly needed, four Chambers and the Lavatories at the back. This was proceeded with and in 1893 the three storied block which completes the main Block was finished. And so from the small beginning of, starting a library grew that huge addition to the Club property. The library was housed exactly where it is today except that it was only one room, the other being the Card Room. The old Bar, which is still in existence near the present Secretary's Office, continued to be used as such with the Hall as a Bar Lounge. The new Smoking Room was used purely as such, though drinks could be procured there, and it was not until about 1898 that the old Bar was closed and the Smoking Room definitely turned into and called a Bar. A reference at this time was made to the painting of the stairway leading from the Hall to the Reading Room, and it is described by the grandiloquent term of "Grand Staircase" The painting of it cost Rs. 25/-. At the same time a Conservatory was built beyond the Bar, but many years later this was pulled down to enable Offices for the Secretary and Staff to be built. The cost of the new building was just over Rs. 60,000/- and a revised valuation of the whole of the Club property at this time for Insurance purposes amounted to Rs. 2,40,000/. In 1900 the Committee decided to complete the twenty years purchase of the land acquired in 1886 (South

Block). This arrangement was concluded which enabled a further five Chambers to be added to the South Block, by building two more Chambers on to the two storied building already there and adding a third story of three more Chambers. They were ready for occupation in 1904. An offer was also made to the Municipality in 1901 to purchase the further plot of land at the South end (now the Municipal Garden) but the offer was not accepted. The limit of the Club development to the South was now reached.

As time, progressed the Committee gradually became more modern and progressive in their outlook and in 1902 they were somewhat ahead of the times, for they decided to provide the Sind Club with its own Electric installation. This was when the remainder of Karachi was lit entirely by oil lamps; for gas also had never reached Karachi. The installation provided was for 361 lights and 35 fans. The Fans were all allocated to the public rooms, for the Committee seemed to think that, as everyone in Karachi had been able to sleep for years without *punkahs* of any sort, it was quite unnecessary to spoil the occupants of Chambers providing them with fans. The Installation was completed in 1908 and ran until 1915 when the Club was linked up to the Karachi Electric Supply Company's mains, and the Club Engines and accumulators were sold for what they would fetch. The Club installation was helpful to Members in another way, for during the years that followed, some members possessed themselves of Motor Cars. These were run on battery ignition, and the Club was the only place where they could get their accumulators recharged and put in order. The minutes make frequent reference to complaints from Members about their being over-charged for this Service. The Committee's reply was to the point; "take them elsewhere if you are dissatisfied". As soon as the new Installation was complete the Committee decided to have the Club redecorated on a hitherto unprecedented scale, and Messrs. John Roberts & Co. Ltd., Bombay, were commissioned to do the work at a cost of Rs. 15,000/-. The deep red wall paper in the Ball Room which so many of us remember was one of the results. At the same time one hundred Empire Chairs and two large Sideboards were bought for the Dining Room. The granite Fireplaces in the Reading and Ball Rooms and the Pir over mantel were brought out from England in 1883.

Many enquiries have been made, from time to time, as to how it came about that the Club should be possessed of Electric Clocks. The story of this is interesting. It was not at all unusual at that time for members of the Committee (irreverently) though possibly, meaningly, called the "Family Party") when they went home on leave, to look around for anything which would be a welcome addition to the Club or add to the comfort of Members, and to purchase what they might select; the Committee, of course, confirming the purchase later. In 1908 one of the members of the Committee when he arrived at the end of his journey at Victoria Station, saw for the first time the Electric Clock there, and was immediately struck by it and the resultant synchronization of the timing of all the other clocks in the Station. His

thoughts immediately turned to the Main Building and South Block of the Sind Club and he reflected how very valuable synchronized timing would be in all the public rooms and Chambers of those two buildings. From thought to action did not take long and the story goes on to say that he there and then purchased a complete set. This is extremely doubtful, though he certainly arranged for the supply of a Master Clock and thirty six Dials should the Club decide upon its purchase. The Committee accepted the suggestion and expressed its approval by a minute passed in August 1908. The set was duly shipped and an employee of the supplier sent to Karachi to supervise the installation of it. That is why every room, except the Dining Room, is provided with a Magneta Clock. The Clock which adorns the mantelpiece over the Fireplace in the Dinning Room was purchased separately from Messrs Mappin and Webb of London. Another purchase similarly made, was of a large and very beautiful Dessert and Coffee Set which was the pride of the Sind Club for many years. There are still, it is understood, a few pieces of this Set left, and they might be well used to adorn a China Cabinet in the Ladies Room.

About this time a small group of Officers were a constant source of trial to the Committee, for after Mess they frequently came round to the Club, had a thoroughly enjoyable time, and in the process there was often considerable damage doe to Club property. They were all well off and invariably the next morning the Honorary Secretary received a cheque fully covering the replacing value of any damage done, even on the Club scale of six times the value. This completely disarmed the Committee, until on one occasion the offenders exceeded even the limits of their patience by bringing a ticca gharry pony into the Bar, mounting it there and riding, it through the Billiard Room. After Considerable correspondence their apology was accepted, but they were told that the "next offence would have more serious repercussions". Another member very shortly afterwards was asked by the Committee to give reasons why he should not be charged, on the usual basis, for damage done to Club property. His reply was ingenuous though not convincing. The reason he gave was that "the damage was caused by the fact that he had thrown a chair at a fellow member who had unfortunately missed the mark through the member dodging". From the tone of his letter it would appear that he was much more sorry that the chair missed its mark than for the damage done. He was duly fined.

We have now reached the stage when the Club was rapidly "growing up" and the story of that period can best be told in other sections which deal with the development of amenities and the social side of Club life. This particularly applies to the first fourteen years of this Century, when peace reigned supreme and life ran easily and smoothly. Those were carefree days, when one could look and think ahead, when the coming months and years could be planned with easy complacency, and when a 'chota peg' at Rs. -/2/6/ was regarded as expensive. The trade of the Port was brisk and Karachi was developing rapidly. By 1907 the membership of the Club had already risen to over 600 and was on the increase. All the Chambers were so fully



occupied that a house had to be rented during the cold weather to take the overflow. Even that did not fill the demand so the Committee decided that it was time to take more definite action to meet the situation. As has already been mentioned, there was a large area of land to the North of the Club which had been leased about 1845 by Sir Charles Napier to the Scottish Freemasons, and only a small part of it was occupied by their Masonic Hall. The area was far too large for their requirement and the building was old, ugly and unsightly. The Committee therefore approached them with a suggestion that they should, if it could be arranged, agree to hand over this plot to the Sind Club, and that the Sind Club, on their part, should compensate them by providing another site and sufficient money to build a new Hall. The negotiations started in 1905 but it was not until January 1911 that final agreement was reached and the plot transferred to the Sind Club. This meant that the Sind Club now possessed practically the whole area between the Frere hall to the South and Scandal Point Road to the North. The area still, to be acquired was 1734 square yards lying between the Masonic Hall and Elphinstone Street, which belonged to the Municipality. Negotiations for this were opened in 1908 and the site was eventually purchased from the Municipality in 1911 at a cost of Rs. 8,464, the Steward's quarters being eventually built on it. This price also included a thin strip of land bordering Victoria Road (beyond the nullah as it exists today) which the Municipality passed over to the Sind Club in perpetuity, on the condition that no building, except a boundary wall, should take place there, and that the land should be kept up as a garden. This Condition has been faithfully carried out.

This expansion was, not only in area but involved a complete change of policy on the part of the Club, for up to then ladies had only been admitted into the Club upon very special occasions. The ultimate result of this new acquisition was that Members now demanded that provision should be made for the more frequent enjoyment by ladies of the hospitality of the Club by those who wished to entertain them. Curiously enough the position was unduly developed through certain members anticipating this new trend of thought, and calling a Special General Meeting to pass a resolution that "No provision should be made for ladies in the contemplated new building". Instead of achieving their purpose they defeated it, for an amendment, was proposed and ruled in order by the Chair that "Members of the Club may have the advantage of entertaining lady friends to meals in a special portion of the proposed new building" This was passed by a large majority. Following up this resolution and another authorizing building on the newly acquired site, an Architect from Bombay was asked to draw up plans which included a considerable portion of the proposed new building being given up to the purpose agreed upon by the Special General Meeting. The plans and estimates were duly drawn up and presented to the Committee, who, on investigation, found that the ultimate result would be definitely uneconomical and that the only sound proposition was to build twelve sets of Chambers, each Chamber consisting of a sitting room and a bedroom. To meet the wishes of Members one set of Chambers was to be set apart for the entertainment of



ladies. These were completed and occupied in 1915 and were known as the "Millionaire Quarters" Unfortunately when the Committee changed their views, instead of requesting the original Architect to submit further plans, they employed a completely new one. This naturally incensed the former Architect; more particularly as there had been no reason given for the change nor was there any suggestion that he should be remunerated for the work done. The matter was eventually settled by the Club paying a considerable sum of money for the original plans. No mention has been made in these notes of the extensive building of servants' quarters that had taken place during all this development. As new buildings were erected, the necessary servants quarters followed until the whole area had been fully utilized and the waste land, which had been taken over in 1880, had gradually become a well covered and busy centre of Club life. It became necessary in 1909 to modernize some of these quarters and as Motor Cars had already begun to make their appearance, the new building, which surrounded a paved courtyard, included provision for garages as well as for stables and coach horses.

'Wild behavior' and 'skylarking' was not altogether confined to the more unruly members of the Club, for on one occasion a leading barrister, in Karachi, who invariably celebrated his birthday in the Club, was up before the Committee, after one of these occasions, for putting both black and white balls indiscriminately into all the Ballot Boxes thus destroying the ballots. In his more thoughtful moments no one regretted this more than he did, and his apology was finally accepted, though he was told that his conduct rendered him liable to be dealt with under Rule X which he himself had recently revised and made more drastic. On another occasion two members had dined together on New Year's eve and finished up at the Club to bring the New Year in, expecting to find a large and convivial crowd there. But there was no one there and they were so incensed at the enforced loneliness, that they solemnly collected all the furniture in the Bar, (Sofas, Chairs, Tables, etc) and made one big pile of them in the middle of the room. They then sat down and surveyed their work until the early hours of the morning; their meditation being accompanied by considerable quantities of drink. The Vice President, who was acting in the absence of the President, was one of the old schools, having joined the Club in the 70's, took a very serious view of this matter and decided to make an example of the members concerned. He therefore ordered that the Bar should be left as it was for one day so that, members, when they came there in the evening, would realize the extreme gravity of the offence and take a lesson from it. Unfortunately for him the members took an entirely different view, for they saw the humorous side of the incident and thoroughly enjoyed the spectacle. As and when they required seating accommodation, chairs and tables were gradually removed from the pile, so that by the end of the evening all signs of the incident had ceased to exist. The two offending members were each fined Rs. 150/- which, they paid willingly, for they, also had enjoyed themselves.

In 1914 at the out-break of the War, the Sind Club were able to play a very considerable part by providing accommodation for some of the may officers belonging to the Expeditionary Forces which were passing through Karachi. The President and Honorary Secretary had been warned that the assistance of the Club would be most valuable. The large plot of land to the North had recently been acquired and though building was taking place, there was ample space for pitching tents. These were provided by the Military and for several months were fully occupied. The Club also made all Officer members of the Expeditionary Forces, Honorary Members during their stay in Karachi. This privilege was carried on throughout the War, and at the end of hostilities H. E. the Commander-in-Chief wrote a most appreciative letter thanking the Members of the Sind Club for all they had done. This was framed and now hangs in the Reading room.

The new Chambers were completed in 1915, the total expenditure including the cost of the land etc, handed over to Lodge Hope, amounting to Rs 2,16,000/-. Ways and means had to be found to meet the extra charges resulting from this heavy additional sum, and at a General Meeting held in 1915, the Members were asked to agree to a raise of Rs. 1/- in the subscription making the total subscription Rs 8/- . To the amazement of the Committee the Members, with the exception of one, Mr. M. de P. Webb, decided that the additional sum asked for was not sufficient to pay off debenture interest, and at the same time to keep the Club in a proper state of repair. So they put in an amendment that the subscription should be raised by Rs 8/- making the total Rs 10/-. Mr. Webb then protested that it was not in the power of the Meeting to increase the amount beyond the amount of which notice had been given. He was not supported by the Chair and the amendment was passed by a large majority. Mr. Webb did not allow matters to rest there, and gave notice that he intended calling a Special General Meeting. Instead of that, however, the matter was hold in abeyance until the next General Meeting, and in the meantime Mr. Webb wrote a ten page argument, which was circulated to all members, endeavoring to show that an increase of subscription was quite unnecessary. It was a plausible, and well thought out document, but proved to be completely unconvincing to the members, who confirmed with acclamation, that the wishes of the previous General Meeting should be respected. From then on the subscription was Rs. 10/- of which Rs 2/- was set apart as a fund to meet the cost of keeping the Club in proper repair. It was at this General Meeting that the seal was set on the regular introduction of ladies into the Club as guests, for the following resolution was passed unanimously "That Ladies may be entertained daily at lunch, tea and dinner in the rooms set apart for the purpose". This resolution was then incorporated in the Rules of the Club.

As the peak year of expenditure has practically been, reached, a short summary of the financial position at this time will not be out of place. Debentures in 1915 reached the figure of Rs. 3,85,000/- and it was anticipated that before the end of the year that figure would be increased by a further Rs 40,000/-. As it turned out it was

possible to repay some debentures without having recourse to borrowing from Members, and the highest figure reached was only Rs. 4,06,500/-. The Club property, after several years of depreciation having been written off, was shown in the books as Rs. 6,48,000/- and the value for Insurance purpose was that year increased to Rs. 9,70,000/-. The profit for the year was Rs 2,035/- after allowing for debenture interest and depreciation. The Debenture interest was over Rs. 20,000/-. These figures are of particular interest when it is remembered that the total assets of the Club on opening were only Rs. 7,750/-!

The part of the Club set part for the entertainment of Ladies was the ground floor set of Chambers at the South end of the Millionaire's block. This was soon found to be insufficient to meet the demand and the next step taken was to convert the Chamber at the North end of the Main building into a Dining Room; the verandah and an outside plinth, which was built at that time, being used as a lounge and sitting out place. This raised another difficulty for ladies were allowed in there at all times but, the area being so restricted, it eventually became necessary to ask all others than those taking dinner there, to vacate the rooms at 8 P. M. Quarters for the newly employed paid Secretary were built at the same time over the new Ladies' Dining Room. This was in 1921.

The story of the Sind Club would not be complete without a mention being made of Mr. Shapurji Captain, who retired finally, on pension, in 1918, having been on the Staff of the Club from 1881 up to that date, with a small break of three years from 1912 to 1915. He had retired in 1912 but heavy defalcations having taken place in the Club, he was asked to return again in 1915 to reorganize the clerical staff. There was nothing about the Club which Mr. Shapurji did not know and he was the friend of all the Members - old and young alike - though he ruled them all with a rod of iron. There was no avoiding any payment; due to the Club when he was there. He watched the departure from and the return to Karachi of all the Members with the ability of a 'sleuth', and the absentee and monthly subscription was adjusted to the last pie. Many times did he save young men from spending too much in the Club. From anyone else it would have been an impertinence, but from Shapurji it was taken as it was meant - as kindly advice for one's own good. Everyone was sorry when failing eyesight compelled his retirement. The connection of the family with the Club is still maintained, for his son has been on the staff for some time and is now Chief Accountant. Mr. Shapurji's portrait hangs in the reception Office.

The Club has had many good and faithful servants and it would not be possible to enumerate them all. But mention must be made of one - a humble Hamal by name of Jagganath. The Club was also his life interest. He would do anything for the Members and was immensely popular with them. On particularly convivial evenings he would be called upon to dance and produced an extremely bad imitation of the Highland Fling, to the enjoyment and amusement of everyone. Duty hours meant

nothing to him, for he always seemed to be at work in the Club. One day the Honorary Secretary was going round the Servants Quarters and found Jagganath at the entrance to his *koti* surrounded by a lot of children. He asked Jagganath whose they were, and Jagganath replied with great pride that they were his. "But, Jagganath" said the Honorary Secretary "whenever I am in the Club, whether it be morning, noon or night, or even in the early hours of the morning, you are always there; how, have you managed all these children". "Oh, in between times, Sahib" replied Jagganath He died in the service of the Club and was regretted by all.

About this time two unusual happenings occurred in the domestic affairs of the Club. At the conclusion of the General Meeting held in October 1918, after the names of the new President and Committee had been declared, a Member protested that the ballot had been irregular, as a number of members had not received voting papers. On investigation this was found to be correct, for not only had the Office omitted to send the voting papers to some Members, but a number of names of those eligible for election had also been omitted from the list. In view of this the new President and Committee, who had been elected, decided to regard themselves as merely acting in an interim capacity and called a Special General Meeting to decide what should be done. The decision was that another election should be held and the result of this was made known at a further General Meeting held two months afterwards. It was bad luck on the originally elected President, for another name was declared. It was the only time he was to hold this Office, and then only in an acting capacity. The other incident had to do with the election of candidates for election to the Club. For some time there had been considerable interference with the ballot boxes and the Committee felt that it was necessary to take some action. They therefore asked the Members, at a General Meeting in 1921, to agree to the ballot being passed over to the Committee until the next General Meeting. This the Members agreed to, but on the strict understanding that they were not to lose their privilege, except for this short period. The Committee managed to regularize matters, and the voting passed back to Members at the next General Meeting.

The War period and afterwards was a very busy time for the Club, for not only had it to make provision for its own members, but there was a constant stream of Honorary Members making use of it also. It must be remembered that, at that time Motor Cars were by no means universal, which meant that movement was circumscribed by dependence upon horse, gharries or bicycles—modes of progress which considerably restricted one's movements. Consequently when people came to the Club in the evening, as most of them did, they remained there until it was time to go home or fulfill some dinner engagement. The Dressing Room was invariably crowded out, both after games and during the pre-dinner changing period. All the public rooms were used to the full; for the Club was a definite meeting place and most men regarded their evening as wasted, if they had not been there to talk over the doings of the day. In another words the Club was inclined to be over crowded and too

limited in space. This naturally caused the Committee a great deal of anxiety and they even went to the extent of drawing up plans for a complete remodeling of the public rooms, whereby the life of the Club could be catered for entirely on the ground floor. We must be thankful that these plans were never brought into operation for it was intended that the building should extend to the front lawns. As events turned out the Motor Car eventually solved the problem, for instead of increasing the use of the Club by members, they reduced its use, for the greater mobility of the car did not confine people to one rendezvous each evening, but enabled them to move freely from one place to another. The scheme therefore died a natural death, and later on the other extreme was reached, of, having to attract people to come to the Club. But that was many years later.

At the General Meeting of May 1920 a resolution was proposed and passed that "steps be taken by the Committee to select a suitable memorial to our Comrades, Members of the Sind Club, who laid down their lives during the War, the Memorial to be erected in the Bar Smoking Room". To the choice and design of the Memorial the Committee devoted a great deal of care and thought. It finally took the form of a handsome embossed mural tablet, and was more suitably, placed in the front Hall verandah instead of in the Bar as originally intended. A most delightful background and frame of very carefully selected and beautifully carved light natural teak, which brought the tablet into conspicuous contrast and relief, was provided from a design by Mr. J. R. Anderson, a member of the Club. It was unveiled by Mr. J. L. Rieu, the President of the Club, in the presence of a large number of Members, on Sunday the 18th December 1921; Archdeacon Wheeler officiating at the solemn dedication Service which attended the unveiling. The Last Post was played at the close of the Ceremony. In later years a misguided Committee decided to paint all the woodwork of that verandah a deep chocolate colour and unfortunately they included the carved teakwood of the memorial. From thence onwards the beauty of the tablet was dimmed by the gloom of its surroundings and the finish and fineness of the carving was lost in the drabness of the coloring. It was a pity.

1921 was the year when the Sind Club on the 1st August completed fifty years of its life and the event was celebrated by a Jubilee Ball to which the whole of Karachi was invited. All the arrangements were made for the Ball to be hold on the actual anniversary, but the vagaries of the Sind climate took a hand in it and at the last moment it had to be postponed on account of exceptionally heavy rain falling on that date. The Ball was finally held on the 8th August. Also as bad luck would have it, the Club happened to be without a President or a Vice President, both officials having retired and left for England a short time before. Mr. Rieu, the Commissioner in Sind, who was elected President later in the month, officiated in the place of the absent President, Mr. Nicholas. It would have been particularly appropriate if Mr. Nicholas could have been present, as he was then the oldest Member, having joined the Club in 1886.



By 1922, which was the peak year of borrowings, the debenture outstanding having risen to Rs. 4,06,500/-, the Committee were again strained for revenue. This time they decided to raise it in the form of increased entrance fee and at the General Meeting of April that year, the entrance fee was increased from Rs. 200/- to Rs 300/-, the charge to temporary members, who paid by installments, being Rs. 350/-. As it did not affect those who were already members of the Club, there was no Opposition whatever to the increased charge.

Shortly after this the Committee was again troubled by what they considered to be the non-realization by Members of their responsibilities to their fellow Members and to the Club as a whole. The first case was the destruction, by a Member, of Club notices which had been put up by the Honorary Secretary. The Committee informed the member that they regarded this as a very serious offence, that they did not consider "exuberance of spirits" (which was the reason put forward by the Member) as a sufficient excuse. The next was the increasing introduction, as guests, into the Club of residents of Karachi who were not members. A Circular was sent to all members asking for their cooperation as "Nothing can excuse the constant introduction of such guests into the Club so that such non-residents use the Club without contributing to its maintenance". A restrictive bye-law was threatened if the practice continued, but they hoped that such action would not be necessary. The third was the question of clothing, and a Circular was again sent to all Members to the effect that the Committee had noticed with the greatest regret that there was an inclination towards slackness in dress when visiting the Club, and that some members had come there "wearing shorts, tieless, shirts open at the neck, and sometimes even appearing without coats". This was in 1924.

In 1918 the Committee informed the General Meeting that they had given very careful consideration to the desirability of forming a reserve fund for the redemption of debentures, but had come to the conclusion that it was not possible to do so. Five years later, this question became one for far more than serious consideration; it became a matter of necessity and determined action, for the Committee found themselves faced with debenture outstanding to the extent of Rs. 4,05,500/- of which Rs. 1,53,000/- were, falling due for redemption within the following twelve months. The Bank balance at that time was just over Rs. 7000/-. Something had to be done to inspire the confidence of would be investors, and also to put the affairs of the Club on a sounder financial basis. A strong Finance Sub-Committee was formed and they recommended that Rs. 500/- should be contributed each month out of the Club resources to a sinking fund, that the fund should be kept in a separate Banking account and that it should be used for no other purpose than for the redemption of debentures. They pointed out that, in view of the critical state of the Club finances, every member should be asked to assist the Club in meeting the situation by agreeing to an increased subscription of Rs. 2/- per moth. They further recommended that in



future greater care should be taken to avoid large sums of money falling due for repayment in any one year and, to ensure this, they suggested that when debentures were issued more attention should be paid to due dates being better distributed. The Committee accepted these suggestions and placed them before the next General Meeting. There was considerable opposition, at the opening, to the proposed increased subscription, but when the situation was more fully and clearly explained to members not only did they pass the resolution, but it was proposed and seconded by two members who had originally been the strongest opponents to it. It was also decided at the Meeting that attention should be drawn to this resolution in every balance sheet, so that the sinking fund should not be allowed to lapse without the sanction of another General Meeting. Not only has the Sinking Fund been maintained ever since, even through the most depressed periods, but some years later the contribution to it was increased from Rs. 500/- to Rs. 750/- per month. The Debenture Holders, having been so convincingly assured of the acceptance by the Members of their responsibility, rallied round also, and the Committee not only had little difficulty in getting all the debentures renewed, but their distribution of due dates was also accepted. In ten years the debenture outstanding had fallen to Rs. 3,05,000/- and in 1946, at the time of writing they only amount to Rs. 1,24,000/- and that year's balance sheet shows. Bank balances of over Rs. 1,50,000/-. Thus was a critical situation met and overcome by the loyalty and good sense of the Members.

How wise the Members were in accepting these proposals was subsequently proved. The following few years were years of prosperity and the sinking fund gradually grew. A few years later an economic depression overtook the world with whirlwind force and shook the financial structure of all nations. The repercussions of this was naturally felt by the Sind Club and the Sinking Fund, small though it was, proved to be invaluable at that time. But the story of this will be told in its proper place.

During the latter part of 1926 the Sind Club went through an unusual experience; for the whole of the Committee resigned. The circumstances leading up to this may be told briefly by saying that the Secretary felt that a Steward should be employed and felt so strongly about the matter that, if his suggestion was not agreed to, his resignation must be the result. Having in view the declared policy of economy and the building up of resources, the Committee felt that the employment of a Steward was unnecessary and an unwarranted waste of money. They therefore accepted the Secretary's resignation. Then the Members, with whom the Secretary was extremely popular, stepped in and called a General Meeting, at which a resolution was passed in no uncertain terms, upholding the employment of a Steward and the continuance of the employment of the Secretary. The Committee had only one course to follow and that was to resign as a body. But the rules had made no provision to meet a situation of this nature, so what actually happened was that all but three (the number necessary to form a quorum) resigned and those three co-opted other

Members and then resigned themselves. In this way a full Committee was eventually formed and the work of the Club went on as before.

By 1927 the Ladies' Room had become so popular that the limited space available became too cramped to deal with the numbers using the room. The Committee therefore decided to convert the Secretary's quarters, which were above the Ladies' Dining Room, into an upstairs dining room and to turn the old dining room into a drawing room. This reconstruction and the furnishing and redecoration of the rooms seem to have become an absorbing and delightful interest to the Committee, for pages and pages of the Minute Book are devoted to their deliberations. In fact far more space was given in the Minute Books to the reconstruction of these two rooms than had ever been given before to the building and furnishing of any of the constructional projects of other parts of the Club, including the Main building and the Millionaire's quarters. Correspondence took place with Maples, Waring & Gillows, and Treloars about furniture, fabrics and carpets and the Committee themselves spent hours over the finer details of hues and shades of cushions, curtains and rugs, electric lights and suitable shades, pictures and the coloring of walls. A special Ladies' Room Sub-Committee was formed and, for the first time, there was another Sub-Committee composed of ladies to assist them. The scheme included the upstairs dining room with serving kitchen attached, the roofing and walling in, with wood and windows, of the verandah attached to the new dining room, which became a dining verandah, a drawing room and bridge Room downstairs the furnishing of the verandah and a further development of the outside Chabootra. For the first time a complete wing of the Club was given up to the entertainment of ladies. The Bridge Room was subsequently turned into a cocktail bar, which was never used and eventually the connecting wall between that room and the drawing room was pulled down, arched in and the space added to the drawing room. This extension gave the Committee another enjoyable episode of furnishing and decorating. The Secretary was given quarters in the new Chambers.

The question of dress by this time had become one of the problems of the Committee for in spite of the notice sent out in 1924, members showed no signs of taking greater pride in their appearance when visiting the Club. In fact it was rather the reverse, for many of them became more and more careless (in the opinion of the Committee) and comfortable (in the opinion of the members concerned), with the result that the more sedate members of the Club, wanted to know why this deterioration in dress was permitted and further notice had to be sent but, though it appears with very little change to new habits. Up to 1928 full evening dress was the order of the day for, all Ladies' Dinners and Dances, and other similar entertainments. In that year the question was raised whether, this rule should not be relaxed, so the matter was referred to members for their opinion. Not a large number replied but of those who did, twenty-three voted for the retention of full evening dress, the remaining forty-three being in favour of dinner jacket or white evening suite. The

Committee accepted the view of, the majority and dinner jacket or white became the dress for those functions henceforward. In another part of these notes it is mentioned that the Committee had not thought it necessary to provide Ceiling fans in any of the Chambers, in 1927 they relented and all Chambers were fitted with these.

The first few years of the 1930's was a black period for the Sind Club, though there was a bright side to it also, The gloomy side was that the general economic depression was definitely making itself felt, in common with other places, in Karachi. The bright side, the wonderful efforts made by the Committee to meet the situation and their determination never, even at the worst moments, to be discouraged. Membership was falling rapidly and against that no new candidates were putting up for election. The Chambers were half empty and there was general lack of support to the Club. But what made it worse was the fact that, in spite of the redistribution of debentures in 1923, the amounts falling due for repayment were beyond the cash resources of the Club, more particularly as the liquid assets were very low. The small sinking fund proved to be a tremendous bulwark and, in order to inspire further confidence among possible investors, the Committee took the bold course of increasing the monthly allotment, out of the Club resources, to the fund. The debenture outstanding at that time (1931) were Rs. 3,22,0000/- and by 1936 they had been reduced to Rs. 2,70,000/- . That gives some idea of the herculean efforts that they made and the success they achieved. Members, when they found that the Committee were doing all they could to meet the situation, renewed their debentures when they could, but there were a number of cases where renewal was not possible. And very little fresh money came in. The rent of Chambers was reduced, Messing charges were cut down, there was a considerable reduction in the Staff and at the same time there was a small percentage reduction in the pay of the remaining staff. They even cut down the size of the peg which drew, from one member of the Committee the plaintive appeal "that hall' other methods of retrenchment should be adopted before adulteration takes place". The appeal had no effect for Rs. 3000/- additional profit was involved, and the peg was made smaller. Then came a suggestion at a General Meeting that some of the Millionaire quarters should be turned into married quarters. A resolution was framed and adopted on the spot and several of the chambers were soon after, occupied in this way. So ladies had literally come to stay! Only five Chambers were allotted for this purpose in the first instance but later the number was increased to nine. The new adventure was an immediate success and the additional revenue which resulted helped the situation enormously. By 1936 the corner had been turned and the Club has, except for temporary setbacks, never looked back since. There was however one point which still worried the Committee and that was that, in spite of their efforts, the membership was not increasing. In 1931 the entrance fee had been reduced to Rs, 200/- but there was no response. In 1936 although the financial, position had greatly improved the Committee felt that a further effort should be made to increase the membership and thus add to the stability of the Club. So at the General Meeting in October of that year a resolution was put forward by them, and carried,

that, for two months, Temporary Members should be allowed admittance to the Club without payment of any Entrance Fee, but that they should pay a subscription of Rs. 15/- per month for, 18 months instead of the usual Rs. 12/-. This was effective and a large number of new members resulted.

An interesting document is the appeal made to the Members in 1934 to assist the Committee by contributing to debentures so far as was in their power. One sentence conveys the feeling of the Committee and should be recorded in these notes. It reads:- "We of the present generation have inherited more than we have contributed, and the advantage to the next generation stands to be even greater than ours, owing to the steady reduction of debentures by the Sinking Fund". How true this is cannot fail to have been appreciated by the members of 1946. Unfortunately the response was not satisfactory. Just at this time the Committee were advised by the Imperial Bank that they had a package belonging to the Sind Club which had been lying with them since 1885, and which they were prepared to hand over against an indemnity. But whatever hopes the Committee may have entertained as regards the contents of the package they were not to be fulfilled, for all it contained was four keys, the use of which was never discovered.

Two important decisions were made at the General Meeting of April 1936. The first was that Oriental Visitors should be admitted as guests into the Sind Club. This was a much belated move and was approved by the members by a large majority. The other was that instead of separate Ladies and Members Dining Rooms there should be one General Dining Room. This raised a general discussion but was eventually passed by a majority of 23 to 18. But it was never put into effect for ultimately the Committee, having proposed it, decided against it and at the General Meeting of April 1937 the President explained the reason for the change of mind. Unfortunately the Minutes and the Committee circulars do not divulge what the reason was, or why the Committee committed this '*volte face*'. This is by no means a suggestion that the proposal should be reintroduced.

And now we come to the last period of the 75 years of the life of the Sind Club—the period of the Second World War. As before the Club threw itself wholeheartedly into the general War effort and, gave every facility to officers of enjoying the hospitality and privileges of the Club. The hospitality had in some ways to be severely restricted for, unlike the period of the first War when there was never any shortage of Whisky, etc., during this War, the supply has been very limited, and at times there was a real shortage. This was eventually coped with by introducing a form of rationing by coupon so that everyone had a fair share of the supplies available. So far as troops were concerned the ladies of the Sind Club entertained the convalescents weekly on the lawn and they were supplied with a high tea. Also the Club lent one of the Billiard tables to the hospital for the same purpose. Large

contributions were made to War charities and the members of the Club assisted in every way possible.

With this large influx of new population the resources of the Club were strained to the utmost but the principle of share and share alike was maintained throughout. The revenue naturally benefitted, and during that period it was possible to pay off a large number of debentures, with the result that debenture outstanding are now within measurable limits and the assets of the Club are fully sufficient to cover them. The Club property had to be largely neglected during the War for material and labour was not available. Now that peace has returned large sums of money will be required for this purpose and considerable care and thought will be involved in carrying out all that has to be done. So the present Committee, and probably many future ones, have a big task before them, which the members know will be dealt with, as all Committees have done in the past, in the best interests of those for whom they are custodians—the members of the Sind Club. Our gratitude goes out to those Committees, past and present, who have made, and are continuing to maintain, the Sind Club as one of the best Clubs in India or anywhere else.

Readers may feel that the story of the last few years of the Club has been unduly shortened. This is not the fault of the writer for, unfortunately the Secretary in 1929, introduced an entirely new system of minute keeping. Instead of the somewhat chatty and communicative minutes of the past, those kept since 1929 have been confined to the briefest possible record, conveying no sense of what led up to the final decision of the Committee, or the reason for the decision. From the story teller's point of view there is very little material upon which he can build his story, for even Committee circulars only amplify in a very small way the eventual findings of the Committee. If this story is to be carried on, it is suggested that Committee should bear in mind the need for material for the story and frame their minutes in such a way that their thoughts and reasoning may be expressed, in a measure, in this important book of record.



## THE LIGHTER SIDE OF CLUB LIFE.

The first part of this Story tells about the development and the administration of the Sind Club from its very early days. Now we shall return to those early days and endeavor to follow, the development and growth of the pastimes and social life of the members. The only provision made for games in the early days of the Sind Club was for cards and for Billiards. The Card Room was situated in the Main building, whilst the Billiard Room was accommodated in a detached bungalow in the same compound as the Club. There is very little to tell about Cards except that Whist was the game played then. Round games were prohibited right from the start. The stakes at Whist were probably fairly high and the tempers of the players very short, for the minutes mention many instances where players appealed to the Committee to arbitrate in disputes. One Member took umbrage at another calling him a "liar", and it took the Committee quite a long time to make peace between the two players. The "abusive language" referred to previously, also occurred in the Card Room and then the Committee expressed their opinion quite freely. The only other reference to Cards was when a party of young men played a round game in one of the Chambers "accompanied by much noise", which disturbed the other residents. Both the Committee and the residents took strong objection to this and "parties and card playing in Chambers were henceforth prohibited entirely". Billiards was altogether another matter for that was accommodated in an entirely separate building and noisy parties, though they occurred, did not interfere with other members to the same extent. The first table was bought from Cox and Yeman, London, as soon as the Club was formed, and this was followed by an order for a second table within the next five years. The game played was mostly Pool but it is certain that Billiards was also played for in 1874 the Committee agreed that the charges for this should be "For a game of 24, Rs. -/1/- by day, Rs. -/2/- by night, for a game of 50, Rs. -/2/- by day and Rs. -/4/- by night, for a game of 63, Rs. -/3/- by day and Rs. -/5/- by night, and for a game of 100, Rs. -/4/- by day and Rs. -/8/- by night". The chief trouble in the Billiard Room was late hours and a request by the Billiard playing members that a Marker should be fined "for absenting himself from the Billiard Room after 2 a.m." was not upheld by the Committee. On another occasion an apology was made for playing Billiards until 4-15 a.m. The culprit this time was the Honorary Secretary. Later it became necessary to revise the Billiard Rules "to prevent unnecessary and unseemly wrangling". It was also decreed that "Gentlemen, while playing any game of Billiards, shall not smoke pipes".

The first mention of social activities of the Club was in August 1873 when a Special General Meeting was called to decide whether the Club should hold a Ball. The proposal put before the Meeting was "That a Ball be given by such Members of the Sind Club as wish to subscribe and that it be called the Sind Club Ball, such Ball to



be held only if thirty shares be subscribed for by Members within the next seven days". The proposal was carried and the meeting adjourned until the 12th August, when apparently the requisite number of subscribers was forthcoming, for a Committee of six was appointed to make all arrangements for the Ball which was to be held in the Frere Hall and was to be Fancy Dress. Unfortunately there is no record of the date on which the Ball took place or of the number of people who attended. The next attempt to hold a Ball was in 1878 when another General Meeting was held to decide the question. On this occasion the suggestion received no support and the idea was abandoned. Equal lack of success attended a suggestion made in 1874 that Ladies should be allowed to be entertained in the Club to light refreshments. This was not negatived but postponed 'sine die' and was not heard of again. The first Sind Club Dinner, which was to be followed by so many in later years, was given to Colonel Sir William Merewether, K.C.S.I., C.B., Commissioner in Sind and the first President of the Sind Club. This took place on the 8th September 1877, on his retirement from Sind.

Mention is made in a minute of the 26th May 1878 to the application to Government by the Committee for a free grant of land on which to build a Racquet Court, but nothing further seemed to happen about it at that time, and it was not, until 1883 that something more material developed. Then a General Meeting agreed to allow a Racquet Court to be built on a portion of the Club Ground which had been acquired from Government in 1880. The Racquet Court was to be built for the use of Members of the Sind Club and any Officer of a Regiment in or arriving in Sind. Separate Debentures amounting to Rs. 5,000/- were raised for the purpose and, though it was under the aegis of the Sind Club, a separate Committee, formed of Racquet players, administered and ran the Court. Any profits over 6% were to go to the Sind Club and at the end of five years the Club had the right to take it over at the original cost. The Court was a success from the start and it had passed into the hands of the Sind Club long before the five years were up. It is recorded in 1886 that the price of Racquet Balls was two annas each.

The Right Hon'ble Sir James Fergusson, K.C.M.G was entertained at Dinner by the Members of, the Sind Club on the 10th November 1884. This was the first time the new Dining Room was used for a Club Dinner, and it was also the first occasion on which the Sind Club had the honour of entertaining a Governor of Bombay. The next Governor of Bombay to be entertained by the Club was His Excellency, Lord Harris, who dined with the Members in 1891. Lord Harris is probably best remembered for the splendid work he did in popularizing Cricket in India. Since that date it has been the honour and custom of the Club to entertain all Governors of Bombay at Dinner when they visited this Province, which was generally once during their five year term of Office.

The second Sind Club Ball was given on 15th October and another one was given in October 1888. But it was not until 1892 that the Ball became an annual affair.

From then onwards it was taken very seriously and several pages of the minute book were filled each year with the arrangements authorised for it and the duties of the members who were appointed to superintend it and to look after the comfort of the Club guests. All Officers of Regiments stationed in Sind and Quetta were invited, as was also the Agent to the Governor-General at Quetta. Also all married couples belonging to the Gymkhana, except when the husband was a member of the Sind Club, received invitations. The cost of the Ball was divided up amongst the subscribers, and in view of the large number of guests invited, the charge was astonishingly small. This practice continued until 1922 when, for the first time, entrance was by ticket which cost Rs. 10/- per head, though even then, names of guests had to be submitted for the approval of the Committee. On all occasions full dress and decorations were worn.

Though the Club Ball was not a regular institution before 1892, ladies were being entertained in the Club in other ways for a General Meeting held in October 1887 agreed that one night every two months should be set apart for the entertainment of lady Guests on the requisition of twenty member, though a proviso was added that such requisition would be cancelled by the objection of five members. These dinners were held regularly for a considerable time. There is also a note in the minutes of 1886 that the Honorary Secretary, Ladies Club (query present day Gymkhana) applied to the Committee for permission to build their Club House on the Ground belonging to the Sind Club. Permission was not accorded.

Billiards must have become increasingly popular in the Club in those early days for, when the new building of 1882-83 was planned, the Billiard Room, in size as we know it today, was built though it was then cumbered up with innumerable pillars to support the heavy roof, which architecture of those days required. A further table was ordered to arrive in time for the opening of the new born and in 1889 still another table was bought, bringing the total up to four. At, one time in 1892 the enlargement of the Billiard room was contemplated and two more pillars were ordered out from England but never used. For in the meantime it was discovered that a truss roof could be built which would obviate the use of pillars altogether and still leave the room as it was, except that more floor space would be available for extension. That gave ample space for the four Billiard Tables then available and still left room for a fifth table when required. When that time came in 1892, two tables were ordered, one to replace one of the original tables, and the other as an additional one, making a total of five tables. But the popularity of the Billiard Room was not without its troubles, for on one occasion a member was up before the Committee for keeping the room open beyond the specified hours and accused the servant of reporting him "out of spite" The Committee's answer to this was that "Club servants should not be lightly accused of making false accusations or of acting through spite" and he was duly fined. It was decided a few years later, to have the cushions of No 1 Table restuffed by John Roberts & Co. An unusual way of treating Billiard Table cushions!

During the 1890's there arose a tremendous demand for a Swimming Bath to be built in the Club Compound, and a Special General Meeting was called to discuss the question. The general result was in favour of a Bath being built and authority was given to the Committee to raise debentures to the extent of Rs 15,000/- for this purpose. But as the applications amounted to only Rs 1500/- the scheme was postponed for the time being. The idea, however, was not completely abandoned, for in 1896 elaborate plans for a pavilion at Clifton were drawn up but as it was estimated that the cost of the building would be Rs 38,000/-, it was decided that it was beyond the means of the Club at that time. This was the last heard of Swimming, the reason probably being that it was about this time that a Swimming Club was started in Karachi which built a bath in the Government (Zoological) Gardens. The Bath is now the Crocodile Pool.

Apart from the entertainment of Ladies at dinner in the Club one every two months, a further advance in social life was the introduction in 1896, of Band guest nights for men only. These were held every Saturday night and were apparently most popular, though in 1902 they were restricted to fortnightly events. Another Club dinner, worthy of record, is the farewell dinner given by the Members to Mr. R. Giles, the retiring Commissioner in Sind and a President of the Sind Club. Mr. Giles was the last of the original members of the Club and with his departure the final link with the creation of the Club was broken. At this period it was the custom of hostesses to add to their invitations to dinner the request, that guests would bring their music. The result was that one spent the evening after dinner listening to very indifferent and frequently bad music. Unfortunately the Sind Club on the occasion of Mr. Giles' dinner decided to follow this custom with this difference that a piano was ordered and a programme of music was very carefully arranged. To one member the memory of excruciating evenings spent under a musical programme was apparently sufficient excuse for him to express himself, after dinner, very forcibly to the Chairman on the subject. The Committee resented this and reproved the Member for using "a very improper expression to the Chairman on the occasion of the dinner to Mr. Giles". But no apology seems to have been forthcoming. The entry of ladies into the Social life of the Club was still further encouraged in 1903 by the introduction of pre-dinner Band Evenings on the Lawns of the Club. The Band played on the Lawn opposite the dining room and the other lawn was given up to tea parties. This institution served a very useful purpose for it enabled the 'burra Memsahibs' to entertain the younger men who had not yet reached the status of dinner invitations, and, what is more important, it gave the young men, who could not afford expensive dinner parties, the opportunity of returning hospitality and of entertaining their lady friends. Altogether the move was a most popular one, even among those members of the Club who were not invited to the tea parties, for they sat on the Billiard Room Chabootra enjoying their drinks, surveying the galaxy of beauty and fashion and unquestionably delighting in the facetious remarks that passed amongst them. It was a fashion parade

of Karachi's highest order, even to the extent of those who had been for a ride, (and sometimes those who had not), changing from their dirty riding kit into immaculately clean breeches, top boots and intensely horse riding coats. Those who did not ride wore their best lounge suits whilst the ladies vied with each other in being the best dressed there. It may be mentioned here that the ordinary wear during the evening in the Club was thick lounge suits, even in the hot weather, and men always wore their hats in the Bar, carefully removing them if they went into the Billiard Room. This was a definite Club custom but no one has been able to recount how, this habit started. During the cold weather months the Tea parties were held on the Dining Room Verandah.

This story would not be complete without mention being made of the "Karachi Week", for never at any time of the year, was the Club fuller or happier in spirit than during that period. Though called a "Week" it generally lasted at least ten days, sometimes more, and visitors from Quetta and all over Sind swarmed into Karachi. The most important social event of the Week was the Sind Club Ball. The other events included three days Racing (all jockeys were G. R's) with the attendant Lotteries held the night before, generally in the Sind Club, Polo Tournament, Horse Show, Point to Point Meeting, a Dance at the Gymkhana, pre-Dinner Band Evenings at the Sind Club and Gymkhana and, more often than not, the K. A. D. C. produced excellent plays or musical Comedies on the two to three spare nights. Added to that the I.C.S. and the Police generally held their week (including their ever looked forward to Sports) at the same time. Night was turned into day and the days were so full that it was astonishing that any work was done at all during that time. In case any one had any spare energy a Badminton Tournament ran throughout the week in the early mornings at the Gymkhana.

In 1901 Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, paid Karachi a visit and honoured the Sind Club by accepting an invitation to dine with the Members. Lord Curzon was the first Viceroy to dine with the Sind Club, but in later years other Viceroys - Lord Minto, Lord Hardinge, Lord Chelmsford, Lord Irwin and Lord Linlithgow - Honoured the Members in the same manner. Lord Willingdon did not visit Karachi during his term as Viceroy, but had already dined twice with the Club when he was Governor of Bombay. Those dinners in the earlier days were very formal and stately affairs. The Chabootra adjoining the Dining Room Verandah was suitably furnished and specially set apart for the guest of honour and after the dinner and the usual two speeches by the President and the Viceroy, he was enthroned there; senior Members of the Club being led up to him one by one for, a few minutes conversation. The remainder of the Members had the privilege of viewing these interviews and the distinguished guest from a distance. Only on one occasion was this stately ceremony disturbed and then at the dinner table, for one of the Members, overcome with admiration for the Viceroy's speech, insisted on all present singing "for he's a jolly good fellow". The Committee of course had to join in, though very unwillingly, but

they were horrified. The next day the Member received a letter from them admonishing him for "transgressing all rules of propriety and etiquette by forcing members to join him in singing 'He's a jolly good fellow'."

During the cold weather of 1904-05 Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales visited India and their tour of this country concluded at Karachi where they embarked on H. M. S. "Renown". Though it did not have the honour and privilege of entertaining Their Royal Highnesses, the Sind Club was specially decorated for the occasion and illuminated at night. The visit was more particularly celebrated a few days after the visit by a special Ball being given by the Club. In 1911 when the Royal Couple visited India again for, the Delhi Durbar to be crowned Emperor and Empress of India, Their Majesties honoured the Sind Club by presenting the members with their autographed photos which now hang in the Ball Room and will always remain a cherished possession. When Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy of India, dined with the Members of the Club in 1942, the President of the Club drew his attention to the Portraits of Their Majesties and the Viceroy was subsequently good enough to write and ask Their Majesties, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth if they would honour the Sind Club by adding their portraits to those already there. Their Majesties graciously complied and their autographed portraits also adorn, as an equally valued possession, the walls of the Ball Room.

Other dinners of note are those given to Admiral Lord Jellicoe when he visited Karachi in H. M. S. "New Zealand" in 1919, and to the Secretary of State for Air, the Right Honourable Sir Samuel Hoare, when he inaugurated the air services by flying to India in a Handley Page in 1927. Sir Sefton Brancker, who later lost his life so tragically in the airship R-101, was one of the Party. The Sind Club also had the pleasure of entertaining the three M. C. C. Cricket Teams when they visited Karachi in 1926 (Mr. Gilligan's) 1933 (Mr. Jardine's) and in 1937 (Lord Tennysons). The signatures of Sir Samuel Hoare's Party and all the M. C. C. teams adorn the walls of the centre pillar in the Bar. The 1933 team was responsible for the repetition of an incident, already mentioned, which happened many years previously, for one of the players, a farmer by calling, could not resist un-harnessing a ticca gharry pony and bringing it, into the Bar. Assisted by his hosts a bucket was produced, filled with beer, which the pony drank avidly and apparently with great enjoyment. The pony was a white one and the team, while it was having its drink, adorned its back with their signatures. As the Committee were present on this occasion and probably, joined in the fun, there were no repercussions.

The tale of social life has taken us many years ahead of the record of other Club interests and we must now return to an earlier period. In November 1900 the celebrated John Roberts visited Karachi and gave two exhibitions of Billiards at the Sind Club during his visit. Unfortunately there is no record as to who was his opponent on the occasion, nor can the writer of this remember, but the fact remains



that, though he conceded prodigious points, the Champion won easily. The occasion was a unique one in another way, as for the first and only time, ladies were allowed in the Billiard Room to witness the play of the great exponent of the game. The popularity of Billiards at this time was very evident, for two more Billiard tables were purchased in 1908 and two others were disposed of, one being presented to the Seamen's Rest and the other sold. In 1909 Mr. A. A. Vlasto presented the Challenge Cup for Billiards, the competition for which has given so much enjoyment for, many years. Mr. Vlasto was an enthusiast, though not a very good player, of two games; Billiards and Cricket, and the purpose of the gift was to encourage similar enthusiasm in others. Many years later in 1923, a further Challenge Cup for a cold weather Billiard Tournament was presented by Messrs. Humphrey and Woodward, so that the Club now has tournaments for the two seasons of the year; the Monsoon and the cold weather. Bowls which has since become such a popular game is mentioned in the Minutes as early as 1901 when permission was given, for the lawns to be used for that purpose. But no advantage was ever taken at that time of the concession allowed. The Committee however, were very firm in refusing to countenance the introduction of Croquet when an application for, permission to play this game was asked for in 1904. Tennis, many years later in 1924 received much more sympathy, for they actually approved of the suggestion that tennis courts should be built behind the Millionaire's quarters. But the cost of upkeep was the downfall of this scheme and it was ultimately postponed 'sine die'. Mention has already been made that the Library was started in 1890. This was a great asset to the members from its earliest days and the Committee was fortunate to find in Mr. Kenyon an enthusiast who was only too pleased to act as Librarian for many years, in 1906 he compiled the first catalogue. The privilege of using the Library one morning per week was conceded to Ladies in 1923, but their approach to the room was confined to the staircase and verandah at the back of the reading room. But by 1926 they had managed to get this privilege extended to every morning, except Sundays, between 10 a.m. and 12 noon. The introduction of Bridge was enthusiastically followed by card players and the Card Room was invariably full every evening. This room, when interest in Cards waned, was eventually used for an extension of the Library. Mention should be made here of the donation, for a few years, of a Cup, which was called the "Sind Club Cup", to the Winter. Meeting of the Local Races This ceased to be supported after a time and no further cup was given.

The 1914-18 War, with its necessary restrictions, combined with the gradual growth of arrangements for the entertainment of ladies at all times in the Club changed the whole aspect of its social life. No longer was it a rare and much sought for privilege to ladies to enter the premises. They had now crossed the threshold and, as time went on, their position became stronger and stronger. The first step was the setting apart of one of the New Chambers for their entertainment at any meal. This was followed by separate rooms being allocated for their use at all times and finally a whole wing was given up to them which provided dining room, drawing room, bridge room and spacious verandahs. The fashionable teas on the lawn died a natural

death and so did the rarely given ladies' dinners. For now members, both old and young, could cross from one side of the Club to the other when they wished and entertain their lady friends at their will, 'à deux' or collectively. The more formal functions were replaced by Supper Dances. Modernization had definitely set in and rightly, though, had it been possible to divine the thoughts of very early, and possibly, members of more recent years, their verdict would undoubtedly have been "The Sind Club has gone to the dogs, Sir". But they would have been wrong for the development of the Club, as has already been shown, had already exceeded its economic capacity and, what is more, the social needs of members had to be met in a far more liberal manner than had been the case hitherto. But there was a still greater and far more revolutionary change to come for, in 1935, it was decided to allow a certain number of the New Chambers to be used as Married Quarters. That of course led to a further extension of social activity, for the Sind Club had become the home of some ladies and they naturally wished to have the same facilities of entertaining their friends as they would have had in their own houses. Private Cocktail parties became frequent occurrences and other forms of parties, such as a reception after a Wedding, have often been held on the Club lawn in front of the ladies' room. Only on one occasion have they extended to the Men's part of the Club and that was when a Cocktail Party was allowed on the Dining Room Verandah. The Reading Room though has often been turned into a party room for mixed dinners and special cocktail parties. That so far has been the limit. It is sad to relate that it was not possible to arrange for the celebration of the Club's Diamond Jubilee in 1931. Every effort was made but there was no support.

A story of the Sind Club would not be complete without a reference to what Karachi considers to be its own Regiment—The Baluch Regiment. From the earliest days of the Club the officers of the Baluchis have been associated with it and it would not be surprising to learn that Colonel Southey, one of the founders was a Baluchi; for many years later there was another Southey, an Officer of the Regiment, who was a member and a staunch supporter. In 1902 the Members had the honour of entertaining Colonel Evens and the Officers of the 1st Baluchis to dinner, prior to their leaving Karachi where they had been stationed for many years.

While the life of the Sind Club was being revolutionized socially, there were minor revolutions going on in the Billiard Room, for, members were no longer content to agree that the staid and sober games of Billiards and Snookers should be the only form of amusement there. On one occasion three young men were up before the Committee for ruining a cloth whilst playing what the Committee called 'Billiard Fives' but which the offenders insisted was 'Billiards Hockey'. They could not see, disregarding the fact that a Billiard cloth has a nap that any damage had been done and protested strongly against having to pay for a new cloth. But the Committee was too strong for them and they had to pay. It was about this time that the Committee decided to define what games could be played in the Billiard Room and shortly

afterwards the game of McGinty was added to the list. This has become one of the most popular of games; so much so that the Billiard Challenge Cups have been added to by a Challenge Cup for McGinty being presented to the Club by Commander J. Henfrey, R. I. N. R., and the Tournament bears the name of the 'The Pink Searcher' which was given to it by the donor of the Cup. Changes have also taken place as regards Racquets. Gradually, probably, owing to the heavy expense of bats and balls, Racquets proper ceased to be played so the Committee decided in 1923 to convert the Court into three Squash Racquet Courts. The game immediately became popular and has continued to be so. Squash Racquets also has its Challenge Cup, for Mr. G. N. R. Morgan presented one for, an Open Handicap Singles Tournament in 1937, which was played for regularly until 1941. Another game, first mentioned in the minutes of 1901, which has been recently, started, and become most popular, is Bowls. Though it is a comparatively new introduction its success was immediate and already it has its own Challenge Cup for, an Open Singles Tournament, which was presented by Commodore Hughes Hallett, D. S. C., M. B.E., R. I. N. The verandahs which were once filled to watch and discuss ladies tea parties are now used for watching Bowls being played on the much improved lawns.

As will have been noticed, although the social side and games of the Club are both included in the same section of the story, separate paragraphs have invariably been given to each subject. But in this paragraph the two cannot be separated. Quite recently the final of the Hughes Hallett Bowls Tournament was being played on one lawn whilst at the same time the other lawn was being used for a wedding reception. Included in the programme of the wedding reception was the excellent Pipe Band of one of Scotland's finest Regiments. The wedding party, as should be the case with all wedding parties, went off very happily and the Band played at its best. But no Pipe Band however good it is, can play quietly and at the same time effectively. To the Scotsman, who was one of the finalists of the Bowls Tournament, the introduction of the Band was almost heaven-sent, for with his National Music urging him to greater effort, he became inspired. But it was not so with the other finalist who happened to be an English man. Much as he admired Scotsmen and would not for a moment wish to deprive them of their special form of music, he felt the introduction of it at a Bowls Tournament was ill Chosen and out of place. The skirl of the Pips and the beating of the Drums—the Band could get the utmost out of their Drums may have filled the heart of the Scotsman with the joy of battle, but to the Sassenach it was a case of having to fight gains unexpected and unaccustomed odds. The fight went on however and a splendid game resulted; the better man eventually winning. We are now in the 76th year of the Club's life. How far the two interests will merge in the future we cannot tell!

The curtain falls on the evening of the 25th October 1946. It was, almost to the day, the anniversary of the first General Meeting held in 1871, and the Members met on this day for their General Meeting when the outgoing President was able to unfold

to them a tale of increasing prosperity and happy advancement. Then the new President was announced and together the two of them stepped on to the lawn, followed by the other members, where they were met by the ladies of the Club and at a Cocktail party, given by themselves to themselves, they celebrated the 75 years of the Club life which this story tries to tell. It was a most happy evening. Officially the Party closed at 9.30 but unofficially (and privately) the celebrations continued until the early hours of the next morning.

## PERSONALITIES AND PRESENTATIONS.

The welfare and well being of a Club is entirely dependent upon its members and no story of the Sind Club would be complete without some mention being made of certain personalities, whose affection for it and devotion to its interests have made their membership outstanding. More often than not they have expressed their feelings for the Club by making some presentation to the members, either on their final departure or on some occasion which they wished to mark in this way. That is why this section is headed 'Personalities and Presentations' for it gives an opportunity to the writer of making a reference to so many members who have done so much for the Sind Club. Outstanding amongst these in the early days were Major Thoyts, Colonel Lemesurier, Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Mules, Mr. A. Thole and Mr. W. U. Nicholas.

The first presentation mentioned was one made by the Members to the first Honorary Secretary, Major Thoyts. It is due to the very careful minutes kept by Major Thoyts of the proceedings of the early General and Committee Meetings, that so much is known of the early history of the Club. So when the members of those days decided to express their appreciation of his work they were unconsciously expressing also our thanks for the very full information he left behind him. Major Thoyts was only Honorary Secretary for three years 1871 to 1874, but they were the most important three years of the Club's life. It was the Intention of the Committee to spend Rs. 500 out of Club Funds for the purpose of the gift to be made to Major Thoyts but the General Meeting would not agree to this and decided that the amount should be collected by subscription from members. It took two years to collect the money and in 1876 the sum was remitted to him in England and he was asked to buy himself a piece of silver with it.

A short mention should also be made of Colonel Sir William Merewether, K.C.S.I., C.B., who was the first President of the Club. He came to Sind about 1841 and after serving for eleven years in his Military capacity he became one of the soldier administrators of those days. He was appointed as Commissioner in Sind in 1867 but was at that time serving as a soldier in Abyssinia with Sir Robert Napier and it was not until 1868 that he was able to take up his new appointment. As has already been mentioned he was president at the inaugural meeting of the Sind Club and at most General Meetings until he left in 1877. Until quite recently the Sind Club has never been in possession of a photo of its first President. This was mentioned to His Excellency Sir, Francis Mudie, the present Governor of Sind and he immediately had a photo taken of the picture of Sir William Merewether which hangs in Government House. This is a most valuable gift more particularly as it reached the Club at the time of the 75th anniversary and was exhibited at the celebration commemorating the occasion.



Another very distinct personality was Colonel Lemesurier for there is hardly a record in the Minute Book which does not mention his name. He was not a Founder Member of the Club but joined it soon after it was opened and was on the Committee for many years. Our chief thanks to him are for planning the Main Block of the Club Building and for superintending its structure. As an individual he seems to have been a very peppery person and more than one of the stories told in the first section can be applied to him. But he was also one of the dynamic forces in the Club and we owe a very great deal to him.

In 1880 the Committee received a letter from Lt. Colonel Warren, Officer Commanding 78th Highlanders (Ross shire Buffs) - better known to us as the Seaforth Highlanders – asking them to accept a silver mounted Mull which he and the Officers of the Regiment desired to present as a mark of their appreciation of the kindness shown to them by the Members of the Sind Club during the stay of the Regiment in Karachi in August 1880. This Regiment passed through Karachi on its return from the Afghan War of 1879 and apparently the Sind Club made their Officers Honorary Members during their visit, a privilege which they much enjoyed and appreciated. The Mull is a magnificent Ram's Head with a silver snuff box, surmounted by a Cairngorm, on the top, and the whole mounted on a handsomely carved black-wood base. This was the first presentation made to the Club and is a very cherished possession, not only for that reason, but as a memory of its association with a very gallant Regiment. For many years, lasting up to the 1914-18 War, Port and Madeira were invariably passed round after dinner at the Club and the Mull was circulated at the same time. At the present time the Ram's Head is without its usual mane and beard which it wears when in full dress. In normal times the head was sent to Rowland Ward in England to have these replaced from time to time but that has been impossible owing to the conditions prevailing during the last few years. It is hoped that this practice will be resumed when it is possible to do so.

Many years after the presentation made by the 78th Highlanders, a similar token of appreciation of the Club's hospitality was expressed by the gift of a silver Inkstand by the Commandant and Officers of the Quetta Staff College in 1907. They were down here on certain practices and during their stay they spent a great deal of time at the Sind Club. Speaking from personal knowledge the writer of this can affirm that the Club enjoyed their friendliness as much, if not more, than they enjoyed the freedom of the Club. A further presentation was made by a Regiment in 1912 when the Officers of the Munster Fusiliers gave the members a very handsome paper rack. The Regiment was only passing through Karachi and the Officers messed in the Club. They practically placed their excellent Band at the disposal of the Club and it played on the lawns on several occasions during and before dinner. This was immensely appreciated by the members.

The first presentation by a Member was two Champagne Coolers which Mr. W. U. Nicholas gave to the Club in 1907. Champagne was drunk regularly in those days so the gift had a far greater utility value then than it would have had today. Mr. Nicholas was one of the oldest members of the Club having joined in 1886. On many occasions, particularly during the war years of 1915-18, when most of the young members were with the armed forces, he acted as Honorary Secretary and he was also President in 1920-21. No one had a greater affection for the Sind Club than he did and few did more for it. As a gardener we are largely indebted to him for the beauty of the Club gardens as they are today, for he definitely laid the foundation for their development and also started the vegetable garden in front of the Married quarters. His book on gardening in Karachi is still the authority on the subject. His final gift to the Club was a handsome Silver Punch Bowl. It has never been used for that purpose but provides a very beautiful centerpiece at the head table, as a flower bowl, on the occasion of Club Dinners. Mr. Nicholas retired in 1921 and unfortunately died two years later.

The first gift from Mr. Nicholas was followed shortly afterwards, in 1908, by Mr. H. C. Mules presenting a handsome Silver Bowl to the Club. Mr. Mules joined the Club in 1875, only four years after its opening and was the oldest member of it. He was a member of the Sind Commission, a body of officials formed to administer Sind after the early days of the Conquest. Though there are only a few today who remember him, he is probably known by sight to most for his portrait appears, not, only in the Sind Club, but in many other places in Karachi. He was a dapper man, rather small in stature, very loquacious; loved making speeches and prided himself on his power of persiflage, a word he adopted to describe his own particular sense of humour. It was possibly he, as he invariably, used the left hand side of the Bar, and gathered round him all the burra sahibs, who is responsible for the notion that only burra sahibs were allowed on that side of the Bar Room, all the younger members having to use the Bar on the right hand side. But the characteristics mentioned above were merely idiosyncrasies for Mr. Mules was one of the most stalwart supporters of the Club, who guided it through difficult times and maintained and added to its stature and standing. It was always said that a young civilian official's ambition was to become Commissioner in Sind, to be President of the Sind Club and to preside at the Sind Dinner in London. Mr. Mules only acted as Commissioner in Sind but he was President of the Sind Club several times and he presided at the Sind Dinner. He joined the Committee in 1884 and continued to be on it, except when he was stationed up-country, until he retired in 1919, as Chairman of the Karachi Port Trust, which post he occupied for many years. He was the recipient of many honours, the first being the M. V. O. which he received when the Prince and Princess of Wales visited Karachi in 1905. His final honour was a well earned Knighthood. Sir Charles Mules had been a member of the Sind Club for 44 years when he retired.

One of the handsomest gifts the Sind Club has received was from Mr. A. D. Younghusband, C.S.I., I.C.S., Commissioner in Sind. It was a beautiful Cigar and Cigarette box which is too large for ordinary use and only appears on the occasions of Club Dinners. Mr. Younghusband was affectionately known by all, though the nickname was only used by familiars, as 'Yubby', and though of a very quiet and retiring disposition he was most popular with everybody. He was President of the Sind Club for six years, a longer period than any other individual member has held it. He retired in 1912 when he made the gift to the Club.

Another very great personality was Mr. A. Thole. He was practically on every Committee in Karachi and was certainly the oldest Trustee of the Karachi Port Trust. His name is perpetuated in Karachi in that connection as the Thole Produce Yard was named after him. He was also one of the oldest members of the Sind Club for he joined it in 1880, when it was still housed in the Staff Lines Bungalow. He joined the Committee in 1886 and served continuously on it until he retired in 1912. It was at the time of his retirement that he presented a very beautiful silver Bowl as a souvenir of many happy hours spent amongst the members'. In the first of this story mention is made of the purchase of section electric clocks for the Sind Club. Mr. Thole is the hero of that story. Another good story about him occurred at the time the Prince and Princess of Wales visited Karachi. Though he was a naturalized British subject Mr. Thole acted as German Consul and at all the functions which were held in honour of the Royal Visitors, Mr. Thole invariably appeared in Consular uniform, varying the uniform as the occasion might require. As no one had seen him in uniform before, his appearance in it on these occasions attracted a considerable amount of attention. But what increased the interest was that there was another member of the Club, Mr. W. L. Graham, who also possessed several uniforms as an Officer of a crack Yeomanry Regiment in England and he vied with Mr. Thole in the variety of his dress on these occasions. The climax was reached and the curiosity raised to the highest pitch when the last and biggest public function of all took place, the unveiling of the statue in the Frere Hall Gardens of Her Late Majesty Queen Victoria, by the Prince of Wales. No one was going to miss the arrival of these two gentlemen so all the seats were occupied at an exceptionally early hour. Mr. Thole was the first to arrive, magnificently dressed in a cream uniform, heavily embroidered with silver and wearing a silver helmet which was crowned, so far as can be remembered, by a golden eagle. A tremendous round of applause greeted him, but when, a few minutes later, Mr. Graham appeared in the full dress uniform of the Royal Company of Archers (The King's Bodyguard for Scotland) of which he was a Member, the applause was deafening. Public opinion had definitely acclaimed him as the winner of the contest. It was all taken in good part particularly by the two principal actors. Mr. Thole left Karachi in 1912 to take over the management of Messrs. Volkart's London Office and continued in that post until he died some years later.

Another member of the 'family party' was T. J. Stephen invariably known as 'T. J.' He was for many years Manager of the National Bank of India in Karachi and though he had all the canniness of the Scotsman and the astuteness of the Banker, there were very few people liked more than he. Many a young man was grateful to him not only for friendly advice but also for material assistance in time of trouble. He acted as Honorary Secretary of the Sind Club for a short time and was for many years on the Committee. When he retired from India he gave a Silver Cup to the members which, in appearance, was rather like the donor—large, solid but not very beautiful. For T. J. was large in girth, solid in heart and character but he was certainly not an Adonis.

To introduce the next personality it is necessary to mention that there were two Millers in Karachi and that they lived together. One was slim and the other somewhat rotund, so they were invariably known as 'Thin 'un' and 'Fat 'un.' The subject of this note was Mr. Ernest Miller who was the 'Thin 'un' of the pair. Even when, in later life, he became far more rotund than the original 'Fa' 'un' he was still 'Thin 'un' to everybody. He was certainly one of the most popular members of the Sind Club for he had that endearing quality of making anyone he was talking to feel that he was just the person he most wanted to meet and talk to at that particular moment. He prided himself that he worked late, turned night into day, but never failed to be up at 7 a. m. to decode the cables. He never took any exercise except a mild walk on Sunday mornings and sometimes, but very rarely, played a very gentle game of golf. He was at home when the 1914 War broke out and to the astonishment of everyone he enlisted in the hardest, school of military training; one of the Battalions of H. M's Brigade of Guards—the Scots Guards, serving with them right throughout the war and later, being given Commission on the same battalion in which he had served as a Guardsman. He was very badly wounded in 1916 and was unable to return to active service but was sent instead on a mission to America. He returned to Karachi after the war, but only for a short time. He acted as Honorary Secretary of the Club on several occasions and was also on the Committee. He was knighted on his retirement from India in 1935.

An unusual Form of presentation was the brass foot rails to the Bar. For a long time there had been an agitation for these to be provided but the Committee felt that they would give the Bar too much the appearance of a tap room and steadily declined to have them installed. At last one member, Mr. Stanley Barker, in desperation had the rails made and presented them as an accomplished fact to the Club. Even the Committee could not stand out against this offer, and the foot rails were put in position to the satisfaction of every one. Mention has already been made of the Point to Point Meeting which was an annual sporting event much looked forward to in Karachi and, in the old days, very keenly contested. The Gunners, and the local Regiments invariably entered for it and other teams included the I.C.S., P.W.D., Police and Merchants. Gradually, as motor cars took the place of horses, the number of

teams declined until just before the last war it was difficult even to get two teams to the starting point. Amongst the keenest, competitors were the officers of the P.W.D., but as the number of Europeans in their service decreased, the difficulties of providing a team became insurmountable and they had to cease competing. In order to help the young officer to purchase a horse, the P.W.D., had always maintained a small fund and when it became impossible to carry on any further, the three remaining officers, Messrs A. Gordon, W. Kirkpatrick and J. L. Grant decided to utilize the balance of the fund in purchasing a very handsome clock which they presented to the Ladies' Room of the Sind Club. But the Club owe far more, than this gift, to the P.W.D., members for throughout the life of the Club, the minutes are full of, instances where their expert knowledge and experience in building and engineering matters, as well as their personal help in superintending, were freely given This has always been of inestimable value to the Club

Another personality that must be mentioned is Major Kirkpatrick who was Secretary for some time. He was not only a personality in character but also in body as will be seen from his chair which is still kept in the bar in affectionate memory of him. He was as fond of the Club as the members were fond of him and when he left he presented a large Silver Cigar and Cigarette Box which is also kept on a special stand (given by another member) in the Bar. When he left in 1929 the Members entertained him to a Club dinner, and at the dinner a silver salver was handed to him as a token of their affection for him. The walls and tables are full of such instances of happy memories. The Royal Navy and the Royal Indian Navy have left us photos of their Ships as an expression of the pleasant days their officers spent in the Club, and past members put their thoughts of happy days of Club life, into action by leaving behind them very beautiful Silver Bowls, Cups, Cigarette boxes etc. Looking round the table on the occasion of a Club Dinner one feels that, through these gifts, the spirit of the last seventy-five years is still being kept alive.

Amongst the personalities of the Club there are also Mr. J. B. S. Thubron, for many years President, Mr. H. G. Houghton on the Committee and as Honorary Secretary and then there were Mr. R. E. Gibson, Mr. U. S. Bigg Wither and Mr. J. Richardson who saw the Club through those perilous years of the depression. The list would be too long to mention everybody, nor has any reference been made to any present day personalities. But there must be one exception, Colonel H. J. Mahon, known both to Karachi and the rest of India as 'Harry John,' for he was the recipient of a unique distinction. The members of the Club wanted him to realize, in some tangible form, how much they appreciated him and all that he had done for them. So they clubbed together and on his sixtieth birthday they presented him with a Silver Salver on which all their signatures were inscribed. A gift which must have greatly touched him and of which he must be rightly proud.



During the life of the Club the names of many members have, from time to time, appeared in the New Year's and Birthday Honours Lists against well merited honours. It is not intended to refer to these honours except one, and then only in the form of an amusing, though true, story. On one occasion the members of the Sind Club fully expected that in the next Honours List one of their number would receive a knighthood and there was no question about it that his thoughts followed the same trend. On New Year's Eve he and several others were in the Bar and, possibly thinking of what the morrow might bring forth, he referred to the coming Honours List and remarked that in so many cases people felt that they had not been sufficiently rewarded for the work they had done. He then went on to say "If His Majesty honoured me in any way, however humble the decoration might be, I should accept it with the greatest pride" His name duly appeared in the Honours List the next morning though not for a Knighthood, but for an honour much below the status of one he had already received. Letters of congratulation were not even acknowledged. But the Knighthood came in the next Honours List. It was well merited and deserved and everyone, including himself, was delighted. On this occasion congratulations were profusely answered.

And so the story of the Sind Club up to 1946 ends. The telling of it has brought back many happy – though some sad - memories to the writer of it, but throughout, the writing of it has been a great joy. It is hoped that some years hence the story will be added to and brought up to date so that there will never be a time when the past of the Club is not as well known and enjoyed as the present.

## PRESIDENTS OF THE SIND CLUB.

Until 1895, when Rules were passed providing for the election of a President, the Member who occupied the Chair at Club General Meetings was regarded as President. There was also the Chairman of the Committee who was appointed by the Committee. Both names are given in the following list

Presidents			Chairmen of Committee		
Oct.	1871	Sir William Merewether K.C.S.I., C.B	Aug.	1871	H. I. Walton
May.	1872	A. McIlloch Esqr	May.	1872	H. I. Walton
May.	1872	Colonel Lambert	May.	1873	H. I. Walton
Oct.	1872	H. I. Walton Esqr			
Apr.	1874	Sir William Merewether K.C.S.I., C.B	Apr.	1874	Col. Merriman
Oct.	1874	Sir William Merewether K.C.S.I., C.B			
Apr.	1875	Sir William Merewether K.C.S.I., C.B	Apr.	1875	Col. Widdicombe
Oct.	1875	Sir William Merewether K.C.S.I., C.B			
Apr.	1876	Sir William Merewether K.C.S.I., C.B	Apr.	1876	Col. Lambert.
Oct.	1876	Sir William Merewether K.C.S.I., C.B			
Apr.	1877	Sir William Merewether K.C.S.I., C.B	Apr.	1877	Dick Cunningham Esq
Oct.	1877	F. D. Melvill Esqr			
Apr.	1878	General Howard Vyse	Apr.	1878	Col. Lambert.
Oct.	1879	F. D. Melvi Esqr			
Apr.	1879	Col. Lambert.	Apr.	1879	Col. Lemesurier
Oct.	1879	Col. Lemesurier			
Apr.	1880	Col. Lemesurier	Apr.	1880	Col. Lemesurier
Oct.	1880	N. B. Erskine Esqr., C.S.			
Apr.	1881	H. M. Birdwood Esqr	Apr.	1881	Col. Lemesurier
Oct.	1881	N. B. Erskine Esqr., C.S.	Nov.	1881	Col. Boulton
Apr.	1882	N. B. Erskine Esqr., C.S.	Apr.	1882	Col. Lemesurier
Oct.	1882	Col. Lemesurier	Nov.	1882	Col. G. C. Grant
Apr.	1883	Col. G. C. Grant	Apr.	1883	Col. G. C. Grant
Oct.	1883	H. N. B. Erskino Eaqr., C.S.			
Apr.	1884	H. N. B. Erskino Eaqr., C.S.	Apr.	1884	Col. G. C. Grant
Oct.	1884	H. N. B. Erskino Eaqr., C.S.	Aug.	1831	Col. Anderson
Apr.	1885	J. Grant Esqr	Apr.	1885	Col. Anderson
Oct.	1885	H. N. B. Erskine Esqr., C.S.			
Apr.	1886	H. N. B. Erskine Esqr., C.S.	Apr.	1886	Col. Anderson
Oct.	1886	Col. J. W. Anderson	Oct.	1886	W. Foxton Esqr
Apr.	1887	C. B Pritchard Esqr., C.S.	Apr.	1887	Gen. Gulbraith
Oct.	1887	C. B Pritchard Esqr., C.S.			
Apr.	1888	C. B Pritchard Esqr., C.S.	Apr.	1888	Col. R. I. Crawford
Oct.	1888	Col. J. Galloway C.B.	Oct.	1883	Surg. Gen. Turnbull

## Presidents

Apr.	1889	Surg Gen Turnbull
Oct.	1889	Gen. Boyee Combe
Apr.	1890	Gen. Boyee Combe
Oct.	1890	Gen. Boyee Combe
Apr.	1891	Gen. Boyee Combe
Oct.	1891	Col. Crawford
Apr.	1892	Gen. Boyee Combe
Oct.	1892	Col. Crawford
Apr.	1893	Gen. Boyee Combe
Oct.	1893	Gen. Boyee Combe
Apr.	1894	H. E M. James Esqr., I.C.S.
Oct.	1894	Brig. T. A. Cooke
Apr.	1895	Brig General T. A. Cooke
Oct.	1895	Major R. G. Mayne (First Elected President but resigned at once)
Nov.	1895	Brig General T. A. Cooke (acting)
Oct. }	1896	Brig General T. A. Cooke (acting)
Apr. }	1899	
Oct. }	1899	R. Giles Esqr, C.I.E.,
Apr. }	1902	
Apr. }	1902	A. Cumine Esqr., I.C.S.,
Apr. }	1904	
Apr. }	1904	J. W. P. Muir Mackenzie Esqr, I.C.S.,
Oct. }	1905	
Oct. }	1905	H. C. Mules Esqr
Oct. }	1906	
Oct. }	1906	A. D. Youngshusband Esqr. I.C.S.,
Oct. }	1909	
Oct. }	1909	H. C. Mules Esqr
Oct. }	1910	
Oct. }	1910	A. D. Youngshusband Esqr. I.C.S.,
Oct. }	1913	
Oct. }	1913	W. H. Lucas Esqr C.S.I., I.C.S.,
Oct. }	1914	
Oct. }	1914	R. P. Barrow Esqr I.C.S.,
Oct. }	1915	
Oct. }	1915	W. H. Lucas Esqr C.S.I., I.C.S.,
Oct. }	1916	
Oct. }	1916	H. C. Mules Esqr C.S.I., M.V.O.,
Oct. }	1918	
Oct. }	1918	M. de P. Webb Esqr C.I.E., C.B.E., (Acting, as ballot irregular)

## Chairmen of Committee

Apr.	1889	Gen. Boyee Combe
Apr.	1890	Gen. Boyee Combe
Apr.	1891	Gen. Boyee Combe
Apr.	1892	Gen. Boyee Combe
Apr.	1893	James Currie Esqr
Apr.	1894	Brig. T. A. Cooke
Apr.	1895	Brig General T. A. Cooke

## Presidents

Nov. } 1918	H. C. Mules Esqr C.S.I., M.V.O.,
Oct. } 1919	
Oct. } 1919	J. L. Reiu Esqr I.C.S.,
Apr. } 1920	
Apr. } 1920	W. U. Nicholas Esqr
Aug. } 1921	
Aug. } 1921	J. L. Reiu Esqr C.S.I., I.C.S.,
Oct. } 1923	
Oct. } 1923	J. Humphrey Esqr O.B.E.,
Oct. } 1925	
Oct. } 1925	J. S. B. Thubron Esqr C.I.E.,
Apr. } 1926	
Apr. } 1926	J. Humphrey Esqr O.B.E.,
Dec. } 1926	
Oct. } 1926	J. B. S. Thubron Esqr C.I.E.,
Apr. } 1929	
Apr. } 1929	J. W. S. Fletcher Esqr
Oct. } 1930	
Oct. } 1930	J. B. S. Thubron Esqr C.I.E.,
Oct. } 1931	
Oct. } 1931	R. E. Gibson Esqr C.I.E., I.C.S.,
Oct. } 1934	
Oct. } 1934	H. S. Bigg Wither Esqr O.B.E.,
Mar. } 1936	
Mar. } 1936	J. Richardson Esqr
Mar. } 1938	
Mar. } 1938	R. H. Martin Esqr
Apr. } 1939	
Apr. } 1939	W. B. Hossack Esqr
Oct. } 1941	
Oct. } 1941	C. B. B. Clee Esqr C.I.E., I.C.S.,
Oct. } 1944	
Oct. } 1944	R. B. Fairclough Esqr M.C.,
Apr. } 1945	

## Honorary Secretaries and Secretaries.

May 1871 – September 1874	Major Thoyts
September 1874 – July 1878	Col. Laughton
July 1878 – October 1881	J. Grant
October 1881 – February 1882	Capt. Wetherall
February 1882 – May 1884	J. Grant
May 1884 – October 1884	Capt. Bell
October 1884 – May 1885	W. Foxton
May 1885 – November 1892	B. T. Finch
November 1892 – December 1895	J. T. Robertson
December 1895 – July 1897	Capt. Geddes
July 1897 – September 1897	Major Moss*
September 1897 – December 1897	C. H. Boner
December 1897 – April 1898	Capt. Newton King
April 1898 – July 1898	V. K. Kingcome
July 1898 – May 1901	Capt. Tyrell Ross
May 1901 – November 1902	Capt. C. M. Fleury
November 1902 – January 1903	Colonel Dano
January 1903 – April 1904	W. U. Nicholas
April 1904 – April 1905	T. J. Stephen
April 1905 – January 1906	J. S. Couper
January 1906 – April 1907	W. U. Nicholas
April 1907 – April 1908	R. J. Nicoll
April 1908 – April 1909	W. U. Nicholas
April 1909 – April 1910	Capt. H. S. Elliot
April 1910 – September 1910	H. Whitby Smith
September 1910 – February 1913	T. S. Downie
February 1913 – February 1915	J. Humphrey
February 1915 – May 1919	W. U. Nicholas
May 1919 – March 1922	Capt. W. M. Mando*
March 1922 – October 1922	F. A. Archdale
October 1922 – April 1923	E. G. H. Mewburn
April 1923 – March 1924	H. G. Houghton
March 1924 – May 1925	E. G. H. Mewburn
May 1925 – November 1925	S. Lakeman
November 1925 – October 1929	Major Kirkpatrick*
October 1929 – August 1933	Major J. C. Crocker
August 1933 – August 1934	T. Horrocks
August 1934 – October 1935	H. L. Walker*
October 1935 – January 1936	T. Horrocks
January 1936 – March 1936	Major D. Scott*
March 1936 – October 1941	Colonel H. J. Mahon, C.I.E., V.D., M.L.A.
October 1941 – June 1942	G. Brigstocke
June 1942 – May 1946	J. H. G. Jerrom*
May 1946	Lt. Colonel C. Jameson*

\*Secretary