

## EDITORIAL

In his speech at this year's M.A.M. Dinner, the President devoted the greater part of his time to a consideration of the nature of the Association rather than to a mere catalogue of its achievements in the realm of muscular endeavour. He surely showed wisdom in taking that particular opportunity to broach a timely subject, for it is one that always needs thinking about—the more continuously the better lest periodic reappraisals become too agonising to contemplate.

The founders of the Midland Association of Mountaineers did well when they chose that title. They could easily have done worse, and called us the Midland Climbing Club ; had they been modernists we might to-day be labouring under some such splendidly gauche title as that suggested by one of our Past Presidents—"The Old Trousers and Anorak Club." At least we now exist under a title which encourages as wide a diversity of activity and personality as can reasonably be reconciled with mountainy things. At least we can continue to do so as a society, with a good deal of that free intercourse that the word suggests, and not as a faction confined by the narrow and vertical. It is with good reason that succeeding Presidents and committees have refused to split the Association up into compartments—Ornithological Section, Botanical Section, Sailing Section, Drinking Section, and the like ; all these activities are recognised as natural to the sort of society we prefer and do not require organising. As for the expansion of that society, the dominating question has always been not "What has he done on the Grochan ?" but "Do we like him (and his wife) ?"

However, at this point we are on the brink of danger. We cannot afford to be so disinterested in a new member's prowess as to kill within the Association the spirit of the hills and the love of mountains for their own sake. Even the most lofty-minded group of mountaineers is judged ultimately by others according to their contribution to mountaineering and by their general level of activity and vitality. We must be prepared to welcome and maintain a steady flow of new blood into the M.A.M. who know what they are doing on the hills and who may ultimately do something on the Grochan, and to remember that such are not necessarily impressed by mountaineering philosophy.

*The sketches are once again the work of Kim Beck*