

THE OLD BOYS' DINNER.

There has always existed amongst old "Conway" boys a strong feeling of attachment to their old ship, and although scattered far and wide over seas and continents the sons of the "Conway" remain ever united by bonds of affection for their *Alma Mater*, and the many happy memories which cluster round the place

where they received their early training. Old "Conways" hail each other as comrades still, wherever they meet, be it under the burning Eastern sun or in the cold Antarctic seas. Yet it has long been felt that some visible expression should be given to these feelings of fellowship and of affection for the old ship.

At the pleasant and most successful gathering at the Exchange Station Hotel, in which 77 Old Boys and their guests took part, these wishes

found their gratification, and it is to be hoped that the happy reunion of old comrades which took place at the Old Boys' Dinner will be precursory of many such gatherings in future years. The chair was ably and fittingly filled by Captain Lapage, one of the first boys to join the "Conway" when she was started fifty years ago, and the proceedings were further graced by the auspicious presence of the Lord Mayor of Liverpool and of many other well-

known gentlemen, whose names will be found elsewhere. While the dinner proceeded sweet music was discoursed by Miss Ross' Ladies' Orchestra, and afterwards between the toasts, Messrs. John Melvey and Campbell contributed songs which were enthusiastically received. Mr. Frank Coops also won great applause by his rendering of "The Ballad of the Bolivar."

In proposing the toast of the "Conway," the chairman, Captain Lapage, in the course of a

Liverpool to engagement in some form or other of maritime business.

Perhaps the most pleasing feature of the function was the presence at the festive board of several old boys of the great training ship of the Thames—the "Worcester." Equal in every way, both as regards the high class of the boys themselves and of the splendid instruction which they receive on board, the "Conway" and the "Worcester" have ever occupied the position of friendly rivals, this feeling being augmented by the very laudable spirit of mutual emulation which for nearly all time has existed between the Mersey and the Thames. Nowhere in the wide world does there exist two nobler streams which, by affording easy commercial intercourse with all parts of the globe, have done more for the glory of the country in which they are located and for the civilisation and development of mankind. That these rivers should be the anchoring grounds of two ships devoted to the training of the men who are to conduct the maritime commerce of our nation is only natural, and though it may be true that many old "Conway" and "Worcester" boys drift away from the service of the sea into more remunerative employment, it must be none the less a fact that before they leave the ocean they must do infinite good to the profession by raising the educational tone and standard to a high level. The shipping interest has ever been to the fore in recognising the good work done by those who conduct these excellent training vessels, and the gathering will, we sincerely hope, be the first of a permanent series of yearly fixtures, to which perhaps in the future there will be invited one or two eminent shipowners, a feature which will testify to the strong ties which still bind the shipmaster and officer to his employer.

The strong feeling which was expressed by every speaker that the annual boat race between the "Conway" and the "Worcester" should never have fallen through, and should again be reinstated, is one which, we hope, will produce

the desired effect on the authorities of the vessel located in the Thames. Few contests of the kind could be supported by more convincing arguments in their favour, for quite apart from the feelings of good-fellowship which naturally spring from friendly battles of this kind between equals, the encouragement given by the race to the useful practice of rowing as well as of boat management, would repay many times over the necessary time taken for training and preparation. We are not disposed to put athletics on so high a pedestal as many of the votaries of sport, but undoubtedly where the work of practical education can be united with the great incentive to skill given by competition with one's fellows, it would seem very bad economy to neglect to take advantage of such co-operation. Provided this end is kept in view and the trouble taken with the race is kept to its proper proportions nothing but good can come of a friendly yearly test in which both the boys and the masters of the "Conway" and the "Worcester" are brought together. As time goes on educationists are getting less and less narrow in their views with regard to the means for obtaining that sound mind in a sound body which all experience tells us is the highest point attainable in human development, and now that the "Conway" people have spoken out so strongly for a renewal of a friendly contest which must certainly make for good in one of the educational essentials referred to, we sincerely hope the authorities of the "Worcester" will not be backward in uttering an affirmative response.—*Liverpool Journal of Commerce.*

long and interesting speech, recalled the history of the founding of the "Conway" fifty years ago as an institution for the training of officers for the Mercantile Marine, and contrasted sea life of the present day with that of fifty years ago. In alluding to the growth of sport and athletics on the "Conway," Captain Lapage, speaking as one who had been fond of sport all his life, said that sport kept within proper limits made for the growth and well-being of young Englishmen, and was in itself an education for the more serious battles of life.

Captain Broadbent, in replying for the "Conway," regretted very much the absence of the Chairman of the "Conway" Committee, Sir Robert Hampson, who was on his way to America. Captain Broadbent went on to say, in a very amusing and able speech, that while he appreciated the honour of replying to the toast so ably proposed by Captain Lapage, he felt great diffidence in doing so in the presence of so many bright stars of the nautical firmament. Around him he saw constellations of genius, notable captains, surveyors, and marine superintendents in galore, besides many other distinguished guests who, if they had had the advantage of an early training on the "Conway," would probably have been Cabinet Ministers and goodness knows what. Speaking for the "Conway," Captain Broadbent was glad to say that the ship was prospering and progressing in every direction. The staff were all young and up-to-date, the speaker himself being the only "Old Man" on board. They all were trying to make the "Conway" of the present worthy of the "Conway" of the past. The good sportsmanship, loyalty, and good feeling evident amongst the boys of the "Conway" was largely attributable to the manner in which officers and masters identified themselves with the sports and games of the boys. It was his and their endeavour in this direction, to teach the boys to take hard knocks and to give them. In alluding to the regrettable action of the "Worcester" in discontinuing the historic boat race between the two sister ships, Captain Broadbent said that he deplored that unfortunate decision more than he could say, that he looked upon the boat race and the necessary training connected with it as most beneficial, and that all the arithmetic and algebra ever invented could never take the place which boat training took in the preparation of character, and in the supplying of those qualifications necessary to a good officer of the Mercantile Marine. After paying a warm tribute to the hon. secretary of the Old Boys' Dinner, Lieut. McNeile Dibb, R.N.R., and to the Dinner Committee with respect to their efforts and arrangements, which

had culminated so successfully in the splendid gathering and entertainment which we were present at, Captain Broadbent, in the name of the "Conway," thanked all who had drunk the toast proposed by the chairman.

Dr. Burland rose next to propose the health of "Our Guests," and, in alluding to the Chairman's remarks about the inferiority of the "grub" in his days contrasted with the comparative luxury in this respect "Conway" boys now enjoy, caused much amusement, standing as he did well over six feet in height and perhaps more in girth, by remarking that although he joined the ship as the smallest boy in her, the "grub" then served out had not interfered very materially with his development. Before resuming his seat, Dr. Burland said that he looked upon the presence of the Lord Mayor as a most happy augury for the continuance of the happy gatherings and reunions, of which the present was so successful a beginning.

The Lord Mayor, who was most enthusiastically received, then responded for "Our Guests," and in doing so said that he was delighted to be present at this most interesting function for two reasons, firstly, that his great-grandfather was a ship's captain; and, secondly, that, being the Lord Mayor of a great seaport, he ought to be there, for the "Conway," he felt, was one of the most useful and important of Liverpool's institutions.

In allusion to the remarks which had been made by most of the speakers relative to sport and athletics, the Lord Mayor said that while he believed that it was historically true that Waterloo had been won on the playing fields of Eton, and that the Franco-Prussian War had been won in the Universities of Germany, the future lay with the combination of brain and courage which these two ideas typified, and for this and other reasons he joined with previous speakers in regretting the cessation of the boat race between the "Conway" and "Worcester," and trusted that very soon the race would again be resumed.

The Lord Mayor concluded by paying a tribute to the excellent training which the "Conway" provided, and said that when her sons left their old ship and sailed away for foreign ports they must not think Liverpool had forgotten them, for Liverpool watched their career with interest and was proud of them.

After the Lord Mayor had resumed his seat, Captain Young, the principal Board of Trade Surveyor for the port of Liverpool, asked permission to speak, which was readily accorded. Captain Young said that he had risen as an old "Worcester" boy and President of The Old "Worcester" Boys' Association, to give

expression to the great regret with which he and all Old "Worcesters" regarded the abandonment of the "Conway," and "Worcester" Boat Race. The speaker said that he had done what he could to persuade the authorities of the "Worcester" to reconsider their decision, and that he and others would never rest until that race was resumed. After having expressed the great pleasure which he found in being present at the "Conway" Old Boys' Dinner, Captain Young sat down amidst prolonged applause.

The toast to "Old Boys" was then proposed by the Head Master of the "Conway" in a most eloquent and polished speech, which only the lack of space prevents us printing in full.

Mr. Stuart, in speaking of fame which old "Conway" boys had won in their profession related how a late Antarctic Expedition ship when found at last by the relief ship sent out to look for her, had been hailed "Are there any old "Conways" on board?" The cry proceeded from an old "Conway" boy, Tom Pepper, who had shipped in the relief ship as an A.B., and who was sure that wherever great and heroic deeds were being done, there an old "Conway" boy would be found. Pepper was not disappointed, for from the "Discovery" his hail was answered by Lieut. Royds, R.N., an old "Conway" boy.

Captain T. Y. Powles responded for the "Old Boys" in a speech which was perhaps the most amusing of the evening, recalling certain incidents of bygone days in which he and the Chairman had taken part, and the proceedings shortly afterwards terminated with two good old sailor chanties, which Captain Powles sang with great ability.

Old Boys. Period on board.

W. P. Lapage	1859-1861
T. Y. Powles	1860-1861
H. L. Wilson	1860-1861
B. O. Daish	1867-1869
W. P. Thompson, R.N.R. ..	1869
C. K. Browne, R.N.R.	1872-1874
A. Wolfe Smyth, R.N.R. ...	1874-1876
C. Burland, M.D.....	1874-1875
H. G. Cheetham	1875-1877
G. H. Barclay	1875-1877
C. de H. Bell, R.N.R.....	1875-1877
E. R. McKinstrey, R.N.R....	1876-1878
H. W. Broadbent, R.N.R....	1880-1881
G. H. Dodd, R.N.R.	1880-1882
Q. Rhodes.....	1882-1883
S. E. Dutton	1882-1884
M. B. Wilson	1882-1884
H. McNeile Dibb, R.N.R. ...	1883-1884
W. Burrill.....	1883-1886
E. B. Cleaver	1885-1887

Old Boys. Period on board.

R. Peel, R.N.R.	1890-1892
C. S. Dodds	1890-1891
M. G. Douglas, R.N.R.	1893-1895
C. Wenner.....	1894-1895
W. A. Hawkes, R.N.R.	1896-1898
J. W. Gracey, R.N.R.....	1899-1901
J. Conroy	1901-1903
A. C. Maclachlan, R.N.R. ...	1902-1905
A. G. Foote, R.N.R.	1903-1905
T. C. A. Addis Black, R.N.R..	1903-1905
J. Derriek	1904-1906
A. P. F. Charriol.....	1904-1907
T. Nixson, R.N.R.	1904-1907

Letters of regret for their absolute inability to be present were received from the following Old Boys:—

- Capt. C. V. Daly, Marine Supt., Marconi Wireless Co.
- Chas. D. Cay, R.N.R., R.M.S. "Mauretania."
- K. Ashwin, R.N.R., R.M.S. "Lusitania."
- Capt. Colin Nicholson, Orient Line.
- Capt. P. D. Murray, Marine Supt., White Star Line.
- D. F. Jones, R.N.
- W. E. R. Hamilton, Esq.
- Capt. G. H. Harris, S.S. "Worcestershire."