



AN INCIDENT AT THE LONDON COUNTY BANQUET.

"See the conquering Shorland comes!"

A "Metropole" banquet.

A BOLD venture and a brilliant success. Such was the First Annual Dinner of the London County Cycling & Athletic Club, Ltd., held at the Hotel Metropole, on Saturday last, when well over a hundred sat and enjoyed what can only be described as a magnificent banquet, which seemed faultless from beginning to end. The Earl of Albemarle was to have taken the chair, but was indisposed, Sir Blundell Maple, the club's vice-president, also failed to appear, and the responsibility of the position was admirably borne by Dr. Turner. A more representative gathering of well-known cyclers never sat down together. We should think that members of every crack club in the Metropolis were present, in addition to which, were men from many a well-known athletic club. The Press was very prominent, several of the big dailies being represented. Dinner over, a lengthy toast list and excellent program of music was commenced, Madame Florence Winn, Miss Ethel Winn, and Mr. Herbert Schartan's Part Singers, being responsible for the latter.

One of the features of the evening was the stately and exemplary toast-master, who, with his sonorous voice and portly mien was eminently successful. During the rendering of the National Anthem a somewhat unpleasant incident occurred, which at one moment threatened to mar the success of the evening. The cause was an obstinate individual, who failed to rise or drink the usual loyal toast, and who was at once the object of attention for some distance around, excited expressions, and demands to "Get up, sir!" being totally disregarded; missiles consisting of loaves, cups, and other utensils flew across tables with an unerring aim, giving ample evidence of the presence of those who had made a deep study of the subject. Upon the chairman calling upon him to rise, this disloyal person did so amidst the hisses of the whole company.

The chairman, in proposing "The London County Club," congratulated them upon so entirely successful a commencement of, to them, a new departure, and in conclusion paid a high tribute to the indomitable energy of their hon. sec., G. L. Hillier, who, upon rising to reply, was received with continued cheers. "The Visitors and Prize Donors" was in the hands of F. G. Dray, to which Messrs. G. C. Whiteley and E. W. Palin replied.

Then came the event of the evening, namely, the presentation of prizes. The chairman had scarcely mentioned the words Frank Shorland, than the hero of the Cuca Cup suddenly shot into mid-air, and was lifted on the shoulders of Holbein, A. J. Wilson, Bidlake and Grant, whilst behind followed a solemn procession of candle-bearers, consisting of W. J. Harvey, P. C. Wilson, Hartung and Dangerfield, and to the accompaniment of "The Conquering Hero," and the shrieks of the entire assemblage, he was carried right round the room to the chairman, was there presented with the Cuca Cup and a diamond ring, and there kept in durance vile until he responded to the roar of "Spe-e-ech." The procession then returned whence it came, other candle-bearers falling in *en route*.

Holbein, J. M. James and Walsh followed in a like manner, and at last no one had a squeak left in them, having cheered themselves to a standstill.

"Auld Lang Syne" closed what will be recorded as an historical event in the annals of athletic festivities. Our small sketch shows the toastmaster escorting the chairman from the room.