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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

THE Sixth Annual General Meeting was held on the 6th February at the Café Royal. The change from the earlier practice of holding this meeting about the end of April or beginning of May was in accordance with a resolution of the previous General Meeting, giving power to the Committee to fix a date between January and May—both months inclusive. The date chosen by the Committee would appear to be a good one, since the attendance was certainly above the average.

The chair was taken by Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith after his unanimous re-election as President. Mr. George H. Morse and Mr. Hugo Young, K.C., were re-elected as Vice-Presidents.

The following gentlemen were re-elected to serve on the Committee :—Mr. A. O. Prickard, Mr. M. K. Smith, Dr. T. K. Rose, Mr. J. M. A. Thomson, Mr. H. R. Boyce, Prof. J. A. Ewing, Mr. E. A. Baker ; and in the places of the Rev. J. N. Burrows and Mr. W. E. Corlett, retiring by rotation, the following gentlemen were elected to serve on the Committee, namely, Prof. J. B. Farmer, Prof. L. R. Wilberforce. Mr. C. C. B. Moss was re-elected Honorary Treasurer, and Mr. George B. Bryant, Honorary Secretary for the ensuing year.

The accounts for the year 1902, as audited, were received and approved. A summary of these accounts is given below.

The existing Rules of the Club were rescinded, and in lieu thereof the new rules—a print of which had been marked for identification by the Chairman of the Meeting—were adopted as the Rules of the Club.

A cordial vote of thanks to the Chairman concluded the official proceedings.

Statements of Receipts and Payments for the year ending 31st December, 1902.

RECEIPTS.		
Balance from 1901	...	£177 17 1
Subscriptions	...	153 6 0
Entrance Fees :—		
From 26 New Members	...	13 13 0
Interest on Deposit at Bank	...	3 3 5
		£347 19 6
		£347 19 6
PAYMENTS.		
Cost of Journal	...	£76 11 1
<i>Less</i> Sales, &c.	...	15 6 11
		£61 4 2
Printing and Stationery, &c. (Secretary and Treasurer)	...	18 17 1
Postages, &c. (Secretary and Treasurer)	...	6 2 8
Expenses of Annual Meeting and Dinner	...	2 0 0
Balance :—		
Deposited at Bank	...	£210 3 7
(Including Interest to 31st Dec., 1902)		
Cash on current account and in hand	...	49 12 0
		259 15 7
		£347 19 6

CHAS. C. B. MOSS, *Hon. Treasurer.*

Examined with the Books and Vouchers and found correct.

FRANK TURNER,

Chartered Accountant.

January 23rd, 1903.

The following members were present at the Dinner, which took place after the meeting :—Samuel Aitken (Gloucester), A. W. Andrews, Thos. Arnold, Jr., E. A. Baker (Derby), Claude E. Benson, Henry Bond, H. R. Boyce, J. Vaughan Brett (Kenley), George B. Bryant, Rev. J. Nelson Burrows, C. R. Canney, Laurence Carr (Carlisle), W. G. Clay, Arthur W. Davey, J. H. Davey, W. Lloyd Davies, Godfrey W. H. Ellis (Shalford), Professor T. B. Farmer (Wimbledon), A. E. W. Garrett, F. Garrett (Stanmore), W. V. Goulstone, W. P. Haskett-Smith, George F. Hatfield, F. W. Hill, Wynnard Hooper, Dr. Peter Horrocks, Donald Hunter (Bury St.

Edmunds), H. L. Jupp (Croydon), E. R. Kidson (Nottingham), Guy Knowles, Charles Lehmann, T. G. Longstaff (Wimbledon), Rev. E. F. M. MacCarthy (Birmingham), W. P. Marler, C. E. Mathews (Birmingham), Thomas Meares, John C. Morland (Street, Somerset), Harold G. Morrish, Ralph S. Morrish, C. C. B. Moss, C. W. Nettleton, J. H. Newman, George Nicholson, Lehmann J. Oppenheimer (Manchester), H. C. L. Owen, L. W. Pagden, J. F. Pearson (Disley, Cheshire), J. H. A. Phillips, Wentworth H. Price (Cardiff), A. O. Prickard (Oxford), J. Walter Robson (Manchester), R. J. Simey, M. K. Smith, C. H. Townley, E. R. Turner (Epsom), W. Edward Webb, Roderick Williams (Liverpool), T. Williams (Liverpool), Oliver K. Williamson, G. Winthrop Young (Eton), William Zimmerman, Jr.; and among the guests were Messrs. A. F. de Fonblanque, G. H. Thiselton Dyer, George W. Beldam, C. Jervis, S. B. Peech, E. J. Renaud, P. S. Stephens, Dr. E. F. Coghlan and Dr. Claude Wilson.

After giving the customary loyal toast, the Chairman, Mr. Haskett-Smith, who was received with loud cheers, said:—

Gentlemen,—When we met upon this occasion last year I honestly thought that nothing could increase the pleasure which I derived from my meeting, but I find to my surprise this year that it has increased quite fifty per cent., the cause being that, owing to the alteration in the date of our dinner, we meet after eight months instead of the ordinary interval of twelve. (Laughter.) At the same time the limiting of the period naturally reduces the number of exciting events in the history of the Club about which I have to tell you. Our good friend, Mr. Rickmers, has again been generous to our library—(hear, hear)—and, as I ventured to predict last year, his example has inspired others, notably Mr. Maude and our excellent librarian—(hear, hear)—who, taking the broadest and most liberal view of his duties, not only looks after our books, but adds largely to them from his own collection. (Cheers.) For the present, Mr. Bryant is good enough to lend us a room to keep them in; but we are on the look-out for more permanent accommodation, and hope that before long we may have more to tell you. It may interest you to know that we have lately established our first friendly relations with a foreign power—(laughter)—namely, with the German Alpine Club; but I hasten to assure you that there is no likelihood of our undertaking any joint debt-collecting expeditions. (Loud laughter.) Among the other events of the year we welcomed with a chastened joy the advent of one more number of our *Journal*—(laughter)

—but as that *Journal*—that lonely number—contains the report of the proceedings at last year's dinner, I, speaking as one of the guilty, suspect—without daring to ask the Editor whether it is true—that it was the length of the speeches last year which broke the printer's back. (Laughter.) We all remember the eminent statesman who was said to have been intoxicated by the exuberance of his own verbosity, but I can assure you that when I was confronted by those serried ranks of cold type, I was appalled at the evidence of my own garrulity. (Laughter.) I shall take good care to let you and the printers off much easier to-night. (Cries of "No, no.") As a matter of fact, the toast which I have the honour to propose is one which in the proposing demands very few words indeed, but a certain number are almost indispensable in order to bring upon his legs the right man to answer for it. In looking round to find that man we naturally turn to the young. No! gentlemen, I do not mean Mr. Winthrop Young, though we turned to him on this occasion last year, and got a capital speech out of him too, nor must you expect to-day the pleasure of a speech from our good friend, Mr. Hugo Young. No! I refer to the young and enterprising members of the Club. If you ask why the young members, it can be proved, as everything can be proved, from the pages of Shakespeare. It is a very remarkable thing that though the bard lived in an age when the art of climbing is stated to have been undeveloped, as a matter of fact you will find in his works a number of remarkably sound ideas. (Laughter.) He evidently knew Wales well, but it is reported—though upon this point, in the regretted absence of our Vice-President, Mr. Morse, we are without the most recent lights of Shakespearian criticism—that the best authorities hesitate to affirm that Shakespeare ever stayed at Pen-y-Gwryd, and it is said that they base their hesitation upon the fact that, if he had done so, more must have been said about him by Mr. Mathews—(laughter)—and also that more must have been said about Mr. Mathews by Shakespeare. (Renewed laughter.) Be that as it may, I have myself seen the name of Shakespeare in the Visitors' Book at Pen-y-Gwryd, and I myself once met Bacon at Pen-y-Gwryd, which might quite possibly have been a contemporary of Shakespeare. (Laughter.) This fact may be of importance to Mrs. Gallup. She maintains that the bard was Bacon; I can assure her that this Bacon was barred. (Laughter and groans.) Moreover, can you imagine a more highly significant fact than this: on one occasion only Shakespeare set himself to describe a mountaineering expedition. Where does he lay the scene? In Wales. How does he describe it? In these words: "Wales, a mountainous country with a cave." (Laughter.) What a perfect description! You will say at once, and of course it is quite possible, that that cave may be the old back-kitchen at Pen-y-Gwryd. You may be right; but let us stick to facts. It is interesting to identify localities, but still more to trace principles—the principles of the primeval mountaineer. Your attention

is particularly invited to the words which the poet puts into the mouth of the leader of that mountaineering party. It was a party of three—an ideal number—(hear, hear)—and the words may well be laid to heart by every sober-minded President of a club like ours :—

“ Now for our mountain sport ; up to yon hill !
Your legs are young ; I ’ll tread these flats.”

(Laughter.) It will doubtless not escape your observation, gentlemen, that he calls it “ *our* mountain sport,” but at the same time, like Mr. Mark Twain, he does all his hill-work by agent. What Harris did for Mr. Twain Mr. Knowles has done for you, and thus, though you are perhaps not fully aware of the fact, you have in this sense lately accomplished a very gallant and highly laborious expedition in the Himalaya. Anxious that you should understand the full value of your own exploits, I persuaded one of the greatest of Himalayan climbers, my friend Major Bruce, to consent to come here to-night, but I am sorry to say that a family bereavement at the last moment prevented him from coming, and it is only fair to express our warm gratitude to those gentlemen who, literally at the last moment, have consented to stand in the place of Major Bruce and make the eloquent speeches which you will shortly hear. Doubtless Major Bruce would have found many interesting things to tell us about this expedition in the Himalaya. But whatever remarks he might have had to make, he certainly must have admitted that it was a very big thing. You advanced to the attack “ not single spies, but in battalions,” and, though on this occasion Providence seems to have been less than usual on the side of the big battalions, in these days of fierce competition for records it is some consolation to know that in point of size this expedition has only once or twice been equalled. You will remember one exception ; it is variously ascribed to the King of France, and to the Duke of York. In the form, which is perhaps more familiar to you :—

“ The Gallant Duke of York,
He had ten thousand men.
He marched them up to the top of the hill,
And he marched them down again.”

Upon that we may observe that ten thousand men is a very imposing caravan, but with all respect to the gallant Duke, he was not making a first ascent, and, above all, he was not dealing with K 2. If, therefore, gentlemen, your agent, when he explains to you presently what you have done, is not able to assure you that you actually reached the summit of K 2, if he has to admit (of course, on your behalf) that the expedition did not meet with that complete success which his forethought and courage undoubtedly deserved, you will not repine, because you know, as the poet has told you :—

“ How far high failure overleaps the bound
Of low successes.”

--(hear, hear)—and if failure at 20,000 feet above the level of the sea, or thereabouts, is not high failure, then we may confess our inability to say what high failure is. Gentlemen, I do not know what Mr. Knowles may have to say to you, but if it should happen that he has not so satisfactory a tale to tell you as he might wish, your agent—and here we come back to a point upon which I laid stress at the beginning of my speech—is young, and, with the future before him, we may hope that some other time he will come here with another story. For they tell us that the Himalaya, like Africa, exerts a magical attraction which positively enslaves all who have ever known it; it is a bondage which they cannot escape, and, indeed, they would not if they could. For my own part, I look upon the Himalayan explorer with admiration and with awe. When we picture to ourselves that terrible phalanx of hungry mountains calling loudly for its devoted explorers, and when we see them before us revolving schemes of future conquest, and doomed beyond doubt to future hardships, but meanwhile, with that dogged perseverance to which they owe their fame, calmly and steadily absorbing all the good things that civilization has to offer—just like ordinary men—(laughter)—may we not find a new meaning in that fine poem of Mr. Watson's:—

“Nought when the harpers are harping, untimely reminds him of durance;
None, as he sits at the feast, whisper captivity's name;
But, would he parley with silence, withdraw for a while unattended,
Forth to the beckoning world 'scape for an hour and be free.
Lo, his adventurous fancy coercing at once and provoking,
Rise the unscalable walls, built with a word at the prime.
Lo, immobile as statues, with pitiless faces of iron,
Armed at each obstinate gate, stand the impassable guards.”

(Hear, hear.) In the hope that those gates will not always be obstinate to him, and that those guards will not always be impassable, we ask him now to overcome his desire to “parley with silence,” and to respond to the toast which we are now about to drink—“The prosperity of the Climbers' Club.” (Cheers.)

Mr. KNOWLES: Mr. President and Gentlemen. I feel it to be an exceedingly great honour to be asked to respond for this Club to-night—an honour all the greater because I have only so recently become a member of it. I thank you for the honour which you have done me, and propose to tell you some of my own experiences, as Mr. Haskett-Smith has already foreshadowed in his brilliant speech. The expedition, which started from England last February, consisted of another member of this Club, who is not here to-night, four others—one Englishman, two Austrians and a Swiss doctor, and myself. We went out, not necessarily with the object of climbing K 2, but of seeing how near to it we could possibly get. (Hear, hear.) To some of the very, very highly coloured

accounts which occurred in the papers, I do not suppose for a moment anyone, who calls himself a climber, would give any credence at all. One, I remember, suggested that we were going to scale K 2, and then walk on to Mount Everest and do that—it is only a question of two thousand miles across some of the worst mountains in the world. (Laughter.) Needless to say, that was not what we intended to do. Well, we got out there, and we fully expected a difficult job, and were ready for it. We had with us provisions for remaining three months on the high levels of the glacier, and the equipment had been fairly carefully worked out. We had done our best to guard against every contingency. We ascended the Baltoro Glacier to the point where Sir Martin Conway ascended in 1892. He then turned in one direction; we turned to the other; he to the right, and we to the left. We then went up the Godwin-Austen Glacier, and ascended the eastern branch of that. There is only one branch of it on the east side, which flows under the south-east slopes of K 2. The reason K 2 had been selected was that, from photographs taken from a distance, both by Sir Martin Conway and Mrs. Bullock Workman, the mountain seemed an accessible one. There seemed to be no great climbing difficulties upon it, and we thought it would be very suitable in consequence, as we wished to have as few climbing difficulties as possible to contend with. We all thought the effect of the air would be enough. It took us a long time to ascend these glaciers. The way I can best bring it home to you is—I have heard some people complain of an hour's walk on bad moraine. I suppose most of you have walked on bad moraine in different places, and I daresay you found an hour was quite enough—we had seven days—(laughter)—and it *was* bad moraine too. Eventually, however, by the aid of a small army—it was not ten thousand, but 230 coolies it took us to get there—(laughter)—we succeeded in planting a fairly large and moderately comfortable camp, at 20,000 feet or so, under the eastern flank of K 2. Up to there we had had most beautiful weather. There had been no difficulty with regard to weather at all. Having got there, however, the weather thought it had done all that could reasonably be expected of it, and stopped, or rather the fine weather did; the snow did not. It started to snow, and we remained in that camp and the one just below it (18,500 feet) just eight weeks in all, hoping for finer weather which we never got. During the whole of that time we saw the sun eight times—once a week, but never for more than two hours at a time. That was a sample of the weather we had up there. I may mention the fact of what I call a record snowstorm—it lasted for 114 hours without any cessation of any kind. It then stopped for 20 minutes, and then went on for another 100 hours. (Laughter.) Well, I must confess that we did begin to get a little tired of it towards the end. We had hoped that before eight weeks had passed we should have had some fine weather. The snowfall was computed at 25 feet—that was the lowest computation of it—

(laughter)—what my computation of it was I should not like to tell you—(laughter)—but possibly you would like to hear how we found the rarification of the atmosphere affected us. Of course it varied with each one of us. Three members of the party said that they distinctly felt bad effects from it; another was hardly a fair case to judge from, as he had malaria the whole time, but seemed unaffected in his breathing; another had a slight attack of asthma, but was otherwise quite fit; and lastly, in my own case, I must confess that I went on smoking between six and seven ounces of tobacco weekly without much ill effect. (Laughter.) I must say that I do not think up to 20,000 feet I felt the slightest effect as far as my going capabilities were concerned. (Hear, hear.) Furthermore, during the small glimpses of sun that we had, when we could see K 2 from where we were, the mountain seemed absolutely easy; there were no climbing difficulties of any kind before us. There was the snow ridge under which we were encamped which led to a snowfield some 2000 feet higher up; granted fine weather, that snow ridge should have afforded excellent walking; it was not at an unduly steep angle; there was no earthly reason why one should not get coolies up there and plant a camp at 23,000 feet—it was about 23,000 feet, the base of the snow slopes. Up above from there stretched a perfectly uniform slightly rising snowfield. There was absolutely no climbing difficulty; I should think that certainly 50 per cent. of the way could be ridden on the back of a donkey—(laughter)—and that, coupled with the fact that, as I said, the rarification of the air affected us so little, I think definitely proves that anyone who will try again will have an excellent chance of success. (Hear, hear.) Having returned from an expedition like that, one realises more or less that it is a big thing to undertake, and it is a big thing to organise; and one cannot say immediately whether one is going to try again, but, at the same time, one does not say one is not—(hear, hear)—and I hope at some future date, if not to ascend K 2, at all events to reach a height considerably over the present record. (Cheers.)

Mr. SIMEY: Mr. President and Gentlemen. We have all just drank, with considerable zest and enthusiasm, our own healths—that is a duty which must be done by every member of a club which is asked to drink its own health. Having done that, it is my duty to ask you to drink, as I know you will, another toast with equal zest and enthusiasm, which you are not so much personally interested in yourselves, but which I know you will drink with none the less enthusiasm, and that is the toast of the clubs which are our own kith and kin. Now, gentlemen, those clubs are, I am told, these: First and foremost there is the Alpine Club—(cheers)—which we all know something about; in addition to this there are two clubs which appear to be mountaineering clubs pure and simple: that is the two Scottish clubs—(hear, hear)—the Scottish Mountaineering Club and the

Cairngorm Club. There is another club with a queer name, the pronunciation of which—it is spelt rather queerly—I am told is the “Kyndwr” Club, which is very far from being a mountaineering club, because I understand that what the gentlemen who belong to that club do is not to soar to the heights above, but to grope down into the depths beneath, and I have no doubt that it gives the members of the Kyndwr Club as much satisfaction to grope down to their depths as it does to the members of the mountaineering clubs to soar to their heights. The other club is the Yorkshire Ramblers—(cheers)—which, I am told, is not purely a mountaineering club—it is a club that rather goes in for enjoying nature in its wilder aspects generally, but which, at the same time, we are proud to recognise as one of our kith and kin, and to join them in the toast which I have to propose of the other clubs. Now, gentlemen, I have been at some loss to understand why I, of all people, should have been chosen to perform this duty to-night, but a word which fell from the Chairman rather let the secret and the cat out of the bag. There seemed to me to be an indication that, if it had not been for some accidents which have taken place within the last few days, someone else would have appeared here to propose this toast, of more importance than myself. It appears, however, that speakers fell somewhat short, and at the last moment—I took the words down from the President’s lips—at the last moment, “other forces, the best that could be got had to be introduced.” Gentlemen, it does appear to me that the best apology for my own presence here to-night is my own insignificance. (Laughter.) I suppose that most of us here to-night, apart from the strangers (whom one is sorry for)—(laughter)—most of those who are here to-night, who are not strangers to the club, are probably members of one of the other kindred clubs whose health I am proposing, and it occurred to those who were responsible for getting up this toast list that the toast of the Kindred Clubs ought to be proposed by someone who had not the honour to be a member of the Alpine Club or any of the other clubs whose names I have mentioned. Gentlemen, I have the misfortune to be a member of none of those other clubs. (Mr. Mathews: “You’ll improve.”) It may be that I shall improve. Whether or not the club that I shall select to join next will be the Kyndwr Club which goes down, or whether it is one of the other clubs which go up, I do not know. The gentleman on my left said that I should improve, but it does appear to me that the chief reason why I am occupying this post to-night is my own insignificance in not having the good fortune, or otherwise, to be a member of the Alpine Club or any of the others. Now, I hope that I shall be true to a promise which I mean to make and to keep, which was made, and which I was glad to see was not kept by our President; that is, that the length of my speech will not break the printer’s back. Of all the clubs which I have mentioned as being our kith and kin, I am sure that we are all proud to recognise one as occupying the position of a parent—our father or our

mother—that is the Alpine Club—(cheers)—to which I suppose every member here would confessedly yield some kind of allegiance. The other clubs, I should say, we rather love as sisters than revere as parents. (Hear, hear.) We cannot emulate the Alpine Club any more than Scaw Fell can emulate the Matterhorn ; but amongst us all—amongst all mountaineering clubs, whether they exist on this island, or wherever they exist—there are obvious bonds of union ; whether it is the clubs that take people up to the top of the mountains, or whether it is the clubs that take the people down to the depths below, there is a common bond of union in that we all admire nature in her sterner and wilder moods ; and a bond of nature by which we, most of us living in London, I suppose, or in the towns, solicit the grandeur of the mountains to rescue us from Cockneydom and from vulgarity. (Hear, hear.) To talk of Cockneydom or vulgarity in connection with a mountain seems to involve a contradiction in terms. (Hear, hear.) There is that bond of sympathy, at any rate, not only amongst all mountaineering clubs, but amongst all lovers of the mountain, whether we climb rocks or glaciers. Now, gentlemen, there are other bonds of union between these and all other clubs, and I am repeating something which I heard said some years ago—I think it was at a meeting of this club ; I forget whose lips it fell from, but it does appear to me that it is a point in which the sport of mountaineering, amongst all others, is distinguished from any other sport that exists. There are many points in which all sports must necessarily be assimilated to each other, and resemble each other. Common features to most, if not all, sports are the display and exercise of the nervous powers and forces, the strenuous exercise of the muscles, and also the spice of danger which, no doubt, we all rather enjoy than otherwise ; but, as regards mountaineering, there is one feature which appears to me to distinguish it from all other sports, and that is, that in mountaineering there is little, or, I believe, none of the record cutting, of the pot-hunting and the competition, and perhaps also the betting, which are associated with nearly all other sports all the world over. (Hear, hear.) You cannot race up a mountain ; you cannot compare times with other people who have gone up the same mountain, especially in the Alps, because circumstances vary. There is no such thing as pot-hunting in mountaineering ; there can be no prizes, because the conditions cannot be the same ; and it does appear to me that that particular feature is one that lifts our sport to a height which no other sport ever can and ever will attain to. Gentlemen, I am not going to say anything more. I hope I have not broken the printer's back, but I will ask you to drink the toast which I have to propose : that is the health of the clubs which are our own kith and kin, especially those which I have enumerated to you, and I have to couple with the toast the name of Dr. Claude Wilson. (Cheers.)

Dr. CLAUDE WILSON: Gentlemen. I thank you very heartily on behalf of the clubs which I am asked to represent for the enthusiastic manner in which you have received the toast. My friend, Mr. Haskett-Smith, at whose invitation I am among you this evening, asked me to respond on behalf of the Kindred Clubs. Several clubs have been named, but I imagine—and I suppose I am not wrong in doing so—that the list might have been extended; because the spirit of mountaineering, which started fifty years ago with the Alpine Club, and has extended to the other British Clubs, of which you are so conspicuously brilliant an example, has also spread not only to the Continent of Europe, but over the whole of the rest of the world. I think, therefore, that the French, German, Austrian, Swiss and Italian Clubs should be included. I do not know if there is a Himalayan Club, but a Caucasian Club is in the process of formation, and there is a New Zealand Club: and, for all I know, there may be others, which would be rather sorry if they were not included in the term "Kindred." On behalf of the Alpine Club, which has been referred to as the parent of the others, and of which I have the honour to be a member, and on behalf of the Scottish Club, of which also I have the honour to be a member, I wish to thank you for the enthusiastic way in which you have received this toast. On behalf of the Kyndwr Club—why Kyndwr I cannot imagine—and of the Yorkshire Ramblers, an institution in which we all have many friends in common, I may say that I am sure they would wish to be not less represented in the response than those clubs of which I am a member. Well, gentlemen, I have been wondering in what way I could respond for these clubs beyond simply saying that we were grateful for the way in which you have received the toast, because it appears to me that it would not be very becoming to enlarge upon the virtues of these clubs, and perhaps it would be even less becoming to enlarge upon any evils which may be connected with any of them of which one may know, and you may not; and possibly it is best that we should try to continue to deserve the compliment which was paid to the Alpine Club by Mr. Hutchinson at the last winter dinner, when he said that the Alpine Club and Alpine climbers were conspicuous in saying very little about themselves. At any rate that is a very easy thing to do; and seeing that possibly I cannot say anything about these clubs that either you do not know, or that you would wish to know, or that it would be desirable you should know, I have thought that if I could say anything about yourselves which you do not know, and which you would wish to know, and which it would be desirable for you to know—(laughter)—it would be more acceptable, and more appropriate, and more becoming on my part to do so. In speaking about yourselves it appeared to me that those individuals upon whom you have chosen to confer your highest honours, offer me a topic on which I can speak with possibly more appropriateness than about anything else. Well, gentlemen, I congratulate you very much on your choice of

Presidents. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Mathews—(cheers)—whom I am thankful to see with us this evening, looking younger than ever—(hear, hear)—was one of the founders of the Climbers' Club. He was also, as you are all very well aware, one of the founders of the Alpine Club, and I am under a debt of gratitude to him of 25 years' standing—ever since he, as President of the Alpine Club, proposed me as a member of that body. Later I have been in Mr. Mathews' company in many and in varied situations. I have been with him on the fells of Cumberland, and on the glaciers and the snow slopes of the Alps. But only once have I been actually lost with Mr. Mathews—(laughter)—when his great guiding capacities came to the fore in a very conspicuous manner, and I think that, as you may not have heard of this incident, I may be permitted to recount it shortly. You may be aware, gentlemen, that the great guide, Melchior Anderegg, when he came to London, astonished Mr. Mathews and his other friends by the way that he was able to find his way about London. The only time that I was lost with Mr. Mathews was in London. (Laughter.) I had been dining in the company of Mr. Mathews—(laughter)—and with sundry other members of a kindred club, in a situation which geographically corresponds very much with the one which we occupy to-night. We had left the dinner table and were proceeding, two and two, in search of an institution which is situated at the end of Savile Row—the North end. Mr. Mathews and I proceeded along the streets of London until we thought we ought to be about where we expected to be—(laughter)—when we were suddenly confronted, instead of by the comparatively gloomy *cul de sac* which we expected, by an avenue brightly lit up, down which poured an avalanche of omnibuses and cabs. We found ourselves at the Southern end of Bond Street, with the Egyptian Hall in front of us. Well, gentlemen, the hour was late, and clearly we had lost our way. We had no lantern—(laughter)—we had no rope; our shoes were devoid of nails. (Laughter.) The slabs were very smooth and very slippery, and were studded with gendarmes. (Laughter.) It appeared to me that we should have to make a night of it—(renewed laughter)—but not so to Mr. Mathews. I felt a kindly hand grip my shoulder and we turned round; and, like the poet who has been referred to, we trod those flats—(laughter)—we rounded the gendarmes, and within an hour or two, it may be less, we arrived in what the newspaper correspondents generally describe as an utterly exhausted condition, at the head of Savile Row. (Laughter.) Well, gentlemen, my confidence in Mr. Mathews, which was considerable before that day, has since then been such that I feel if ever I am again lost in London, I shall never again fear if only Mr. Mathews is by my side. I congratulate you very much on having chosen Mr. Mathews, as your first President, from the ranks of that great profession which trains its votaries, from their earliest days, to say the right thing at the right time and in the right way, and never to say the wrong thing. I always wish that I had had this

training—it would have saved me trouble more than once. It was a member of that profession of whom it is written in beautiful words:—

“ In my youth, said his father, I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife ;
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life.”

(Laughter.) Well, gentlemen, this evening we have unfortunately not been able to judge of the strength of Mr. Mathews' jaw—(laughter)—but I have no reason to believe that it has diminished, nor that its other qualities—the oratorical points of his jaw—which we all know so well—(laughter)—are less conspicuous, versatile, and pleasurable to their listeners than they used to be. We all know that in his youth Mr. Mathews took to the law ; and in my youth I had occasional opportunities, to which I look back with pleasure and pride, of hearing him argue one or two cases with his wife—(laughter)—and I am certain that the experience which he has gained has not only lasted till now, but will last him the rest of his life. Gentlemen, it is at the invitation of your President, Mr. Haskett-Smith, that I am with you to-night, and I must say that I think you will all agree that, in his own particular line at all events, the strength of *his* jaw is hardly less conspicuous, and that his capacities in certain directions can yield to none. Gentlemen, if I have been lost with Mr. Mathews in London, I have been lost upon the Fells with—possibly if I am to speak accurately I should say by—Mr. Haskett-Smith. (Laughter.) Unfortunately I find myself in such close proximity to my host that I am unable to speak of him quite so freely as I can in the case of Mr. Mathews, who is farther from me on the rope ; but I have been astonished, and more than astonished, on the crags of Gable, when I have found myself in a position of exceedingly unstable equilibrium, and when the whole of my respiratory efforts have been taxed to so extreme a degree that I have been unable to articulate at all—it has astonished me how, under such circumstances, Mr. Haskett-Smith has sustained the brunt of an animated conversation, the details of which I regret to say I have completely forgotten. (Laughter.) Well, gentlemen, it was on the rocks of Gable that in his youth Mr. Haskett-Smith, having taken to the law, but not having taken to himself a wife—(laughter)—took to a habit which we members of the older fraternity of clubs regard possibly because we cannot do it ourselves, as an exceedingly reprehensible one—he took to climbing alone, and I must say that his great powers of entertaining his companions must have been sadly wasted. Still, as it was during those solitary walks and scrambles that he accumulated a fund of conversation which we have every reason to believe will last him the rest of his life, we ought, perhaps, not to grumble. And certainly, gentlemen, the feats of solitary climbing which your President has performed are such as entitle him, beyond anybody I know, to the Presidency of the Climbers' Club. (Hear, hear.) One may talk of explorers, mountaineers, and

climbers ; Mr. Haskett-Smith is all three : but to the generations which are yet unborn it is possibly as a climber pure and simple that his name will be handed down, so as to some day become allegorical, because none will ever believe that he did the things which we are perfectly sure that he has done. (Laughter.) Well, gentlemen, I believe that the Kindred Clubs whom I am asked to represent would wish me, in addition to thanking you for the kindly way in which you have drank our healths, to congratulate you on your own vigour, and on your own exploits among the hills and fells of Cumberland, Scotland and Wales, and on the difficult bits of climbing you discover wherever they may occur in the world—to congratulate you upon your success as a Club, and upon your choice of Presidents up to now. (Cheers.)

MR. ANDREWS : Mr. President and Fellow Members of the Climbers' Club. The toast which I have the honour to propose to you to-night is one which is always of peculiar interest—that of Visitors. When I received, at very short notice, the presidential command to propose the toast of the "Visitors," I turned to that model of after dinner speaking, the report of the annual dinner, which has already been mentioned this evening, and is contained in the chronicles of the Climbers' Club. My eyes were arrested by the words "Applause," "Laughter," "Loud applause," "Loud laughter," "Cheering," which occurred at every few lines—(laughter)—and I wondered in what periodical, in what book of etiquette, I could find such wit, such humour, as was contained in that annual report. I remembered, however, gentlemen, that for the last six months I had been engaged on the preparation of the index to a work which may not perhaps be known to members of the Climbers' Club, owing to the shrinking modesty of its American publishers. I refer to the tenth edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica"—(laughter)—and I remembered that that striking work contained many interesting points, such as hounds with five rows of teeth, by a little confusion with the hound shark ; Courtney Lighthouse, which turned out to refer to L. H. Courtney, the late member for Bodmin, Chairman of Committees in the House of Commons—(laughter)—St. Paul praying for Oneta, a small and obscure town in the United States—(laughter)—though why he prayed for Oneta I have not been able to discover ; probably it was the only town in the United States that he felt able to tackle, New York possessing a Tammany Hall then as now. Well, gentlemen, I referred to this index of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" with the blind faith of an old dame who looks out omens in her Bible, and I looked out the word "Visitor." I discovered the entry "Visitor," the only entry, to be a mountain on the borders of Montenegro. (Laughter.) The oracle had spoken. The institution of guests is as old as the hills, and is equally enshrined in our hearts. Homer wrote, as you probably know very well, an excellent

guide-book to Olympus, which proves, I think, conclusively that he made the first ascent of that peak. In his account he mentions, among the daily movements of the immortals, that yesterday Zeus went to a banquet with the blameless Ethiopians, and with that local colour which characterises a good guide-book, he mentions the fact that there the lambs at once become horned. Now, I am afraid that the cap does not fit altogether with reference to our visitors this evening, and I fear that the epithet "blameless" is not one that any member of this club would feel flattered by having applied to himself. It is rather an epithet which is applicable to those cautious individuals who, for fear of bad weather, confine their expeditions to days when the barometer is at set fair. Now, gentlemen, if there is one thing which is especially remarkable in the members of the Climbers' Club, it is their energy—their all conquering energy. There is an old ballad, of which you may possibly have heard, and of which I should like to quote one stanza, which I think must have been expressly written for the Climbers' Club :—

"Who lives in suit of armour pent,
Or hides himself behind a wall,
For him is not the great event,
The garland or the capital.
Nor can the heavenly towers be won
By sneaking negatives alone,
By lengthened fast or Ramazan,
But by the challenge proudly thrown,
Virtue is that beseems a man."

Now I should not like to say that no member of the Climbers' Club has ever hidden himself behind a wall. (Laughter.) For myself, on many occasions, when the heavenly artillery had obtained rather too accurate a range to be altogether pleasant for the storming party, I have hidden myself behind a wall, but I think I can confidently state that no member of the Climbers' Club has ever lived for any considerable period of time enveloped in a suit of armour. (Laughter.) On many a crag, and in, or partly in many a crack, the members of the Climbers' Club daily prove their valour, tyros and experts alike, like the knights of old they come out for conquest, equipped, not like the knights in armour, but with all the paraphernalia and impedimenta of mountaineers, and there "they breathe the fresher, purer air, and taste the joy of living as they only find it there." Now, gentlemen, it may be that I may seem to have somewhat forgotten my theme, the toast of the Visitors, in order to descant on the Climbers' Club, but I should remind you that my duty is that of the minstrel in mediæval feasts, who had to sing the praises of the visitors, but who had far too great a regard for his own neck to entirely disregard the giver of the feast, and who, consequently, always remembered, with very great prudence, to credit the giver of the feast with the slaughter of a

few more dragons than even the visitors. The energy of the Climbers' Club will, I think, be shown to its very highest degree when we propose the toast of the Visitors. There is only one thing, gentlemen, in which we may possibly fail, or fall short of that high standard of vigour which was possessed by our forerunners. You may possibly remember those delightful lines of R. L. Stevenson, in which he speaks of the men of olden time who "ate ever with eager hand, at the oar and on foot, and at night hungry arose from their dreams to rummage the house for a bite." I am afraid, gentlemen, that even the vigour of the members of the Climbers' Club will hardly, after the magnificent feast which we have enjoyed this evening, enable us to rise to those heights. To return to my immediate theme, the toast of the Visitors who are here this evening, we have before us, I think I may say, a very high level of visitors; in fact, it would be exceedingly invidious to mention any names, but as I am expected to do so, I shall mention one or two. I may say that our guests range from Kew to the polar regions. I believe we have here a gentleman of the name of Thiselton Dyer, who, I may say, was grown at Kew; and we have here also a gentleman of the name of Longstaffe, who at once recalls the Arctic. We have also Dr. Claude Wilson, who has spoken of himself, and we should have had Major Bruce, who lives among peaks higher than Mont Blanc, many more than 30 in number, as he told us the other night, lying within a few days' journey from his own home; and last, but not least, we have a gentleman who is going to give the largess which is given to the minstrel; that is, he is going to reply and make a speech himself—Mr. A. F. de Fonblanque, an eminent solicitor, who will reply to this toast. I shall leave him, gentlemen, to describe himself for himself, and to reply for the toast of the Visitors. I think we shall all drink with peculiar pleasure and enthusiasm the toast of the visitors who are present here this evening. I therefore, gentlemen, give you the toast of the Visitors. (Cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, you will be glad to hear that instead of one speech, you are to have the pleasure of hearing two. Mr. De Fonblanque has been summoned all the way from Bristol to-day, and, if it were not notoriously impossible to catch a Bristol man napping, we could never have expected him to make any speech at all at such short notice, but he has risen to the emergency, and after him you will have the pleasure of hearing Mr. Thiselton Dyer.

Mr. A. F. DE FONBLANQUE: Mr. President and Gentlemen. Ten years ago I received a very short invitation from a gentleman named Haskett-Smith to accompany him on a climbing expedition in the Lake District. I went with him; we were out, I think, five days, and in those five days I think I was in more tight places than I have ever been before,

or since, in twenty seasons in the Alps. Three or four days ago I received a kind invitation from the same gentleman to be here to-night ; he did not say anything else, but just asked me to be here. Yesterday I was at Bristol, and telegrams began to pour in asking me to respond for the Visitors. That is another tight place that Mr. Haskett-Smith has placed me in, and I shall view Mr. Haskett-Smith's invitations with considerable suspicion in future. Now, gentlemen, there are only two classes of persons who ought to respond for the Visitors. In the first place, there is the arch expert from some foreign place who comes and tells you what you ought to do, and talks to you like an uncle ; and there is the absolute ignoramus who does not know anything about you, and tells you so, and talks about something else. Unfortunately, I am in a peculiar position ; I am a hybrid ; I cannot pretend to be a climber ; at the same time I cannot pretend to know nothing whatever about climbing. There has been a good deal of dialectical ingenuity expended on defining mountaineers and climbers and gymnasts, but I think at the back of our heads we have a pretty good idea—I have my own idea of the difference between the two : that a mountaineer is a person who goes in for large expeditions that are comparatively easy, and does them with the assistance of first-class guides—(laughter)—and that the climber does small things of a most desperate kind, and does them on his own responsibility. I confess I belong more to the former class. I have seen a good deal of mountaineering in the Alps, but I confess that I like to do my mountaineering comfortably ; I like to travel comfortably, to stop at comfortable inns ; I like to take nice things to eat in tins—(laughter)—I like to make my expeditions between two of the best guides that I can get hold of ; I like them to carry everything there is to carry, and under these conditions, and given absolutely fine weather, I am willing to put in a good deal of hard work. (Laughter.) I have not had much experience of the other sort of climbing—the guideless climbing in the British hills, and what I have seen I did not like at all. (Laughter.) It seems to me that it is not a form of enjoyment to go to a place where there is not a decent inn, to climb up gullies of rotten slate, and to spend the whole day going up and down the same mountain five or six different ways. (Laughter.) I do not pretend to climb for the sake of my health, nor for acquiring information of any kind ; I do not want to break anybody's records, and I could not do it if I tried. The only time I ever tried climbing in the Alps by myself I got hopelessly stuck on some rocks, and I had to be rescued on an 80 feet rope—Mr. Wilson may remember it—by Mr. Morse and Mr. Pasteur. Of course, gentlemen, the definitions I gave are not really true definitions, because they overlap. There are a great many climbers who are true mountaineers and *vice versa*, and especially there are a few—a very few—groups of English climbers who can go to the Alps and climb without guides. I am afraid there are not so many parties as there used to be ; I am afraid the

Germans and the Austrians are outstripping us in that. But, at any rate, gentlemen, I can only speak to you as a stranger from the point of view of climbing. I regard you with the greatest respect. (Laughter.) I would not myself do half the things that I hear are done in the Lake District and in the Scottish mountains. I went, as I said, ten years ago with Mr. Haskett-Smith. We went up a great many gullies and things—(laughter)—and we were there for five days, and it rained all the time. It never left off from the time we left Windermere to the time we got back to Penrith. Now I speak as an average outsider, but I saw climbing in the Lakes under exceptionally advantageous circumstances, because of the company I was in. We were received with gorgeous hospitality wherever we went; I really felt as if I was somebody—(laughter)—they made such a fuss of my companion. We had a coroner's inquest at one place. (Laughter.) And while we tramped along in the rain, Mr. Haskett-Smith recited to me ballads of local origin, of indefinite length—(laughter)—and written in a dialect which I did not understand (Laughter.) In spite of that, I am bound to say that I prefer my own way of doing things. (Renewed laughter.) Now, gentlemen, I do not know anything whatever about my fellow guests; I do not know who they are even, but I am sure they have all enjoyed themselves very much this evening, and they all join with me in thanking you very heartily for your hospitality. (Cheers.)

MR. THISELTON DYER: Mr. President. The honour which has been put on my shoulders this evening is a very great one, and I am very glad it has been divided, and that part of it has fallen on Mr. de Fonblanque's shoulders. I have been to several of these enjoyable dinners, and when I came here this evening I made it my intention that it should be the last—that I should never come here again as a visitor, but that I should come here as a member of the Climbers' Club—(hear, hear)—but after I had listened to Mr. Knowles' speech, in which he said that the qualifications of membership seem to be that you have got to spend seven days going up in the rain, and smoke six or seven ounces of tobacco a week, my heart simply sank into my boots. I admit that I might be able to put up with the seven days of rain, but six or seven ounces of tobacco a week I am sure I cannot. It has been said that the visitors here should be sorry for themselves. Well, I suppose we are; but still I hope that by going into strict training I myself, and perhaps several others who are here to-night, may be able to qualify, and in time be able to go through the strict ordeal which will qualify us for becoming members of this Club. Gentlemen, I wish to thank you very much, on behalf of my fellow guests and myself, for the kind way in which you have received this toast. (Cheers.)

The Rev. J. N. BURROWS: Mr. President and Gentlemen. Several of my predecessors, in very eloquent terms, have tried to persuade you that the particular toast they had to recommend to your notice was really the important one of the evening. I wish to assure you that this is not so; they have been trying to deceive you, for the really important toast is the one that has been committed to my care. (Cheers.) The importance of it was increased a few minutes ago when I was told that I was expected to propose, not the President, but the Presidents Past and Present. (Hear, hear.) I think there must be some deep reason for this; there must be a purpose in it. (Cheers.) Now, gentlemen, I need not remind you that there are Presidents and Presidents; there are good Presidents, and inferior Presidents. (Laughter.) This fact has been brought home very forcibly to my mind only this morning. In the out of the way part of the world in which I live and work, amongst a great many other duties I have to preside over several societies and clubs. They are not quite of the nature of the Climbers' Club—(laughter)—but one of them with which I had to deal to-day has some points of similarity. The one great feature of the club I allude to is that it has to do with dinners; in fact it is entirely a dinner society; and in my official capacity as President I was present at a dinner this morning at the fashionable hour of 12:30. (Laughter.) My usual duty on these occasions is to keep order, and it is no light task to do so. To-day I was short-handed, and I had to double the part with the man who takes the money at the door. (Laughter.) The dinner is not an extravagant or an expensive one—the guests pay a halfpenny each. One of my friends, on entering this morning, looked up, and seeing me in an unusual place, said: "Ullo, Guv'nor! what, 'ave they set you to look after the dibs?" (Laughter.) He evidently thought that I was not quite the sort of person who ought to be trusted with the management of a large sum of money coming into my hands. Well, now, that reminded me that there was one point about a President that is very important. We were told at the meeting that preceded this dinner that a club ought to be able to trust its committee. Certainly a club ought to be able to trust its President. It has always been our good fortune in this Club to be able to trust our Presidents. (Cheers.) A second point in which Presidents sometimes fail was also brought home to me this morning. Another of my guests came in crying. I was very sorry for the little chap, and so I said: "What is the matter, my boy?" He said: "I ain't got no money." Now for a certain good reason, with which I will not detain you, there is a strict rule that a halfpenny shall be demanded from everyone of those children, and so I said: "Well, what is the matter?" He said: "Please, Sir, another boy pinched it." (Laughter.) Well, I must confess to a great breach of trust; I let the little man in without paying—(hear, hear)—and that reminds me that Presidents sometimes fail in their duty by not strictly carrying out the rules of the Societies over-

which they preside. Now, gentlemen, we have to-day passed a new set of rules, or, rather, we have slightly amended the old rules of this Club, and I am perfectly certain that the President who holds office, who has been re-elected to-night, will not fail in the miserable way in which I failed this morning—that he will see that all the rules are strictly carried out. I daresay that there are other imperfections which he will see that we are saved from. Well, now, I have to propose the Presidents Past and Present. It so happens that last night I was dining with one of the old city corporations, and the toast of the President was proposed by a very eloquent member of the Episcopal Bench, a man with a keen sense of humour, and also with a great knowledge of history; he made use of both these accomplishments, and he had admirable material to draw upon. He was proposing the toast of the 273rd President of the Society, or something of that sort, and he pursued the historical method. The speech was rather long, but it was exceedingly good, and he had a great many neat stories about earlier Presidents; so I said to myself when the Secretary asked me to propose the toast of our President, that I would do the same. I know that the historical method breaks down a little when dealing with Presidents of the Climbers' Club, because we have had but two. However, I have a great advantage over the Bishop that I heard speak last night, because I have the pleasure of knowing them both, and for the last five years I have been closely associated with them in matters connected with this Club. So I think I may say a word or two about the President and his predecessor. A few moments ago the Secretary came to me and said, "Would you mind amending the toast, and proposing The Presidents Past and Present"—a suggestion which would have just fallen in with my idea, only unfortunately our friend, Dr. Claude Wilson, has taken the very line that I thought was the right one, and he has said almost all we can say of Mr. Mathews, and of Mr. Haskett-Smith, exactly in the very order that I put before myself. (Laughter.) Well, now, all that I can say to you this evening is that Mr. Mathews started us and set us upon our legs. (Cheers.) A very great deal depends upon the early Presidents of any society. (Hear, hear.) They set the tone of the whole thing. We could not have done better in our early days than by securing for the first three years the advantage of having Mr. Mathews at our head. (Loud cheers.) When the time came to fill his place, we had a very solemn and serious meeting of the Committee of the Club, and the question before us was—What are we to do? Well, it so happened—I am breaking no confidence, I think—it so happened that we found every member of the Committee present on that occasion said one thing—"We must have Haskett-Smith." (Cheers.) We felt that it was the only proposition that we could very well put before the members of the Club that would be certainly accepted as the right thing. Someone said, "But supposing he wont stand?" "Oh, he must," was the reply, "and if a little pressure should be necessary, well, we must

put it on," and we did put on a little pressure, and we tightened the screw, and finally we obtained our desire. (Loud Cheers.)

The PRESIDENT : You did not raise the screw. (Laughter.)

The Rev. J. N. BURROWS : No, I missed an excellent point there. The President suggests an amendment, and says we did not raise the screw. I wish we had thought of it at the time, and not now. Mr. Haskett-Smith accepted the office, and I am sure he has carried out the traditions of the chair which Mr. Mathews so ably set, and I am quite certain that when he leaves office at the end of this year—we have now elected him for his final term—I am quite sure that he will leave the Climbers' Club in a stronger position, he will leave it a growing club, and one that is gaining respect from all those who are interested in our sport, or whatever you like to call it, and if, after 270 years have passed, and the Club is still in existence, some member gets up and proposes the toast of the Presidents, he will say : "I cannot speak of all our past Presidents, but I cannot pass over the first President—Mr. Mathews—who set the Club on its legs so admirably ; and I am certain I cannot pass over the second President—Mr. Haskett-Smith—who filled his place so ably, and who so very thoroughly carried out the duties of his office, and always kept strictly to the rules, and was invariably trusted by the members of the society. Gentlemen, I give you the Presidents of the Climbers' Club, past and present. (Cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN (who was received with loud cheers) : I will not stand long between you and Mr. Mathews. Already to-night my pleasure had an increase of fifty per cent. ; but I can assure you that Mr. Burrows' speech doubled it again. Not only has he spoken of me in such flattering terms that I feel a wild impulse to treat him to one of those expensive east end dinners of which he has told us, but he has also given me the very real pleasure of being associated with Mr. Mathews, and sharing with him the enthusiasm which you have so kindly displayed. Dr. Wilson has also connected us—by the jaw and the law—and by the asserted fact that each of us in turn lost him and rescued him, but remember that the scene of Mr. Mathews' rescue was infinitely more dangerous than that of mine. (Laughter). There is also rapture in the thought that you will now expect from me in reply only half a speech instead of a whole one. In Mr. Burrows' very genial speech there was for me a note of pathos, because, as he has said, this is my last appearance in this chair. There are many clubs in which the most important event of the year is the dinner—(laughter)—but in most of them it is the last and crowning glory ; whereas here, by the peculiar custom of our club, it is the very first. One result of this is that your Presidents are called upon to assume the

purple at a moment's notice. But they divest themselves of it with extraordinary deliberation, devoting, in fact, just twelve months to the process. In one respect, therefore—and let us hope it is almost the only respect—they resemble King Charles the Second, and are “an unconscionable time in dying.” It is a pity that one cannot frame a speech on the lines of a will, so that it may speak from the date of decease. That not being possible on this occasion, my position is very difficult. We often hear of people who do not know where they are, but I am in the more pitiable plight of not knowing precisely when I am. (Laughter.) In one sense this is my farewell to you, yet, at the same time, you are to be burdened with me for another year. Tortured by doubt as to the logical position which it behoves me to take up, I am on the whole inclined to think that my real funeral is twelve months hence, and that what you are now listening to is a sort of last dying speech and confession. In desperate cases like this, it is often safer to illustrate what you cannot explain. It occurred to me a moment ago that a fitting illustration might be found by adapting the words of Dryden, and saying :—

“A twelvemonth long we grow, and twelve we stay
Supreme in state, and in twelve more decay.”

But just in time it struck me that that unfortunate word “decay” might leave a false impression on your minds and lead you to imagine, not merely that I am rotting now—(laughter)—but that I intend to go on rotting for twelve months more. (Renewed laughter.) No, gentlemen, I am perfectly serious, and, to prove it, I will conclude by telling you a serious story. A humble neighbour of mine, down in Kent, was universally beloved by all around her. Her daughter's daughter was particularly attached to her. About a month ago, the old woman fell ill at a time when the other two were living at some distance away. The girl, although she was suffering from a bad knee, was eager to go back and nurse her grandmother, but the mother would not hear of it. She argued with her daughter, and afterwards reported the argument which she had used in these words: “Ho, yes! (I says) you want to go and see your granny (I says). Don't you? Ho, yes! I know all about it. Just like you thoughtless gals. You'd sooner 'ave a bun to bolt than a cake to keep any day. What about your knee, I should like to know? If I let you go now, as like as not you'll find that only for the sake of talking to your granny while she's alive, you'll have had to give up going to her funeral when she's dead, and then you'll know what a fool you've been.” (Laughter.) Need it be added that the argument was unanswerable. The girl wept; but she kept herself for the funeral. (Laughter.) Permit me to follow her example. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, I am deeply and sincerely grateful to you all. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. MATHEWS (who was received with loud cheers) said :—Mr. President and Gentlemen, I am greatly obliged to you for this expression—and it is not the first—of your kindly and your affectionate regard. I am here to-night against the express instructions of my medical man, but somehow it appeared to me that where two or three members of the Climbers' Club were gathered together, it was my duty at any sacrifice to be amongst them. (Cheers.) But when I wrote to Mr. Bryant and said that I should have the pleasure of attending, I said under no circumstances would I make any speech ; and I did that, gentlemen, for this reason, that I do not think it is fair to impose one man upon the same audience for six consecutive years. However, I apparently am not to be allowed to judge for myself. (Hear, hear.) In Dr. Claude Wilson's speech, which, so far as I recollect, contained a great deal of imagination and very little fact—(laughter)—he was good enough to intimate that Providence had not denied him the gift of articulate utterance, but that, gentlemen, is a gift which creates quite as many difficulties as it relieves ; and I have been reminded to-night of a memorable passage, which you may have forgotten, of the immortal Thackeray, when he said that he looked forward to the time when speaking, like carving, would be performed by an experienced waiter at a side table. (Laughter.) Now, gentlemen, I am a good deal older than I was 40 years ago, but I am happy to say that I am still an active and a *bona fide* mountaineer. (Cheers.) It is 46 years ago since I began climbing in the Alps, and I believe I am the only person of that antiquity who maintains the sport, who has maintained the sport without a break to the present time—(hear, hear)—and certainly I had as good climbing last year in the Val des Bagnes and in other places as ever I had at any period of my life—(hear, hear)—and not only was I able to climb without the slightest apparent effort, but I am delighted to say that I climbed with the same passionate joy with which I climbed more than 40 years ago. (Hear, hear.) That, gentlemen, is nothing to boast about, but it is a great deal to be thankful for. (Hear, hear.) As you know I was one of the founders of the Alpine Club, I have the honour to be an honorary member of the Alpine Club of France, I have the honour to be an hon. member of the Yorkshire Ramblers, and I tell you, and I mean it when I say that I have never enjoyed a greater pleasure than to have been associated with the Climbers' Club, and from no body of men have I ever received kinder expressions of courtesy, friendship and good-will. (Loud cheers.) In fact, gentlemen, I have always endeavoured during my mountaineering life to be a connecting link between the old mountaineers and the new—(hear, hear)—and I hope I have not been altogether unsuccessful in the efforts which I have made. (Hear, hear.) I had the pleasure only a few weeks ago of spending another week at delightful Penn y Gwryd, and those of you who have not been there recently will be glad to know that, under the careful attention of Mrs. Roberts, the old inn

has got again all its old interest and its old charm. I was there with my friend, Sir Oliver ——, a member of the University of Birmingham, and although we had horrible weather every day, we had a week of the most interesting climbing I ever had. We had a horrible blizzard on the top of Moel Siabod, a south-west gale blew up the snow in our faces, and the snow came down upon us with unusual velocity even for Wales in the winter. When we got to the top, my friend, a very distinguished man, was one mass of white from head to heel, and he said, "Do you know where we are," and I said, "Yes, I know very well," and he then said, "I shall follow you like a dog." I need not say that I got him off without any real difficulty. (Hear, hear.) Now, gentlemen, I have said that some of us are getting old, but I beg to inform you that I have no intention whatever of getting old. (Laughter and hear, hear.) Nobody shall ever call me an old fogey, and let me tell you that the man who can assimilate new ideas never can get old—(hear, hear)—the incisors may cease to hold and the molars to grind, but the man will be young, by whatever number of years his impertinent acquaintances choose to remind him. Gentlemen, I said that nothing would induce me to make a speech. To-night I have been obliged to say a few words in answer to your most courteous reception, but I will not consider this as a speech at all, and if I should be called upon next year to engage in the delightful oratory of these annual meetings, I shall be heartily, gladly and readily at your command. (Loud cheers.)