

means of making a quick return ; and it was exceedingly pretty when coming down to see the manner, as sailors would say, in which we picked these up. One had not died out of sight before another began to loom in view, and we came down without the least stoppage of any sort whatever, though, being surprised by darkness before we could arrive at Corredor Machai, we had to pass another wretched night at the higher station.

Our work accomplished, we left Corredor Machai on the twelfth day, stopped for a day of rest at the hut (la Dormida), and on the fourteenth day that this little journey occupied arrived again at Cayambe village, heartily welcomed by the inhabitants, who did not expect to see us return from that dismal country.

*(To be continued.)*

---

THE GROWTH OF MOUNTAINEERING. By C. E. MATHEWS, late President of the Club. (Read before the Alpine Club, December 15, 1880.)

All experience is an arch where thro'  
Glams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades  
For ever and for ever when I move.

TENNYSON.

IT is not unusual in ordinary literary or scientific societies for their presidents to call public attention to the various matters of interest and importance which have occurred during their period of office ; and I venture to think that it might be of considerable practical utility to us if we established such a custom in connection with this association.

Your President occupies an important and an honourable office. He is intimately acquainted with the traditions of Alpine government. He watches keenly the state of Alpine morals. He has sources of information open to him which are not always accessible to ordinary members. He has formed opinions as to what reforms or changes are necessary in object or in organisation. He is 'en rapport' with the various foreign clubs. Surely his colleagues have a right to expect something more from him when he is on the point of handing over the reins of government to his successor, and beginning to pale his ineffectual fire, than that he should slink away

like the Ghost from the battlements at Elsinore, feebly muttering—

Adieu, adieu, adieu, remember me.

I propose to say something to you about the growth of mountaineering.\* I do not intend to confine myself to the work of my own term of office, the past three years. We are making Alpine history with extraordinary rapidity. The ascent of the Dru, the ascent, of the Meije without guides, the passage of the Col du Lion, and the ascent of the Matterhorn from the Zmutt and from the Furggen glaciers, seem to close another chapter in the annals of mountaineering. But life, especially our life, is full of new points of departure, and no point of departure is more marked, or is likely to lead to more enduring results, than the expedition of Mr. Whymper to South America, and his excursions among the Great Andes of Ecuador.

Yet the prehistoric epoch was not so long ago. It is less than forty years since Forbes first visited Zermatt. It is only twenty-five years since the highest peak of Monte Rosa was attained. I desire to give you a bird's-eye view of our mountaineering history, from the ascent of Monte Rosa in 1855 to the ascent of Chimborazo in 1880. Possibly, by the patient observation of facts, theories may be constructed, from which lasting results may be obtained.

In 1855 mountaineering, properly so called, was in its earliest infancy. Mont Blanc, of course, had been ascended many times, but that expedition is not necessarily mountaineering. The men who practised climbing for its own sake were so few that they might be counted on the fingers of one hand, and the mountains that had then been ascended were not much more numerous than the climbers.

The original founders of the Club gained their Alpine laurels between 1854 and 1859, during which years the Wetterhorn, the Finsteraarhorn, the Aletschhorn, the Bietschhorn, the Eiger, the Mönch, the Grivola, the Combin, the Fletschhorn, the Allalinhorn, and the Dom were climbed, many of them for the first time.

Attention was called to Alpine expeditions in 1856 and

---

\* The remarks in the following pages refer to the exploits of English climbers *only*, the wish of the author being to trace the art of mountaineering as developed by his own countrymen, and not to sketch the history of mountaineering in general. Hence he has not mentioned, save in a very few cases, any of the expeditions made by foreign climbers.

1857, by the appearance of two charming volumes by gentlemen subsequently my predecessors in this chair—Mr. Hinchliff and Mr. Alfred Wills.\*

The success which attended the publication of 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers' in 1859 intimated as much as it created the popularity of mountaineering. The modest conclusion of the preface to its first edition is worth recording:—'The degree of success,' says the Editor, 'that may attend the present volume, and the extent and value of the new materials that may be accumulated in the course of fresh expeditions, will probably decide whether a new collection of Alpine adventures shall at some future time be presented to the public.' The venture was put forth almost with a protest. The Editor may have had his ideas, but he was clearly of the opinion of Hosea Biglow that you should never prophesy unless you know. But how could he possibly have anticipated the immense mass of material he soon would have at his command? Edition after edition of the volume went rapidly through the press. The publishers were complacent, but bewildered. The critics were surprised and mostly unfriendly, and the 'Times,' in a memorable article, said that we excited in the spectator as much alarm as admiration.

Three years later (in 1862) the second series of 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers' was published, no longer as a bold experiment, but as an assured success. The interval had been well employed; there had been some failures, but the first English ascents of the Bernina and Mont Pelvoux had been accomplished; the Nord End, the Lyskamm, the Schreckhorn, the Grand Paradis, Monte Viso, and the Blumlis Alp climbed for the first time; and new passes made all over the Alps, far too numerous to record. From that time it may justly be said that the craze for Alpine adventure set in.

But what was the intelligent foreigner doing all this time? Everything was to the disadvantage of the Englishman. He sees no sun-smitten Alps as he rises from his bed in the morning. It is not given to him to telegraph to a favourite guide, to inquire what the weather is in a particular district, and on receipt of a favourable reply to start on a visit to him in the course of the afternoon. How was it that the English were generally the first to carry off the honours that lay far from their own doors, while the dwellers at the very feet of the mountains seemed hardly to know their position, or their

---

\* 'Summer Months among the Alps,' and 'Wanderings in the High Alps.'

names? It is pursuit, and not possession, as the philosophers say, that gives happiness to mankind. Perhaps, in this communistic age, there was some feeling that the pursuit of the property of other nations gave additional zest and interest to our occupation.

The Austrians, in 1862, were the first to follow our example, and to form an Alpine Club. Then, in April 1863, the Swiss discovered that 'those English' were taking their mountains out of their hands, and they hastily followed suit; then the Italians (October 1863), then the Germans (1869), and last of all (not to speak of the Pyrenean, Styrian, Trentine, Dauphiné, Carpathian, and Polish societies) the French, whose club was only definitely founded in 1874, but who now number nearly four thousand members, and have sections, with independent administrations, in twenty-four districts of France. Since that time Spain too has founded its Alpine Club, and I have reason to believe that any important article in the 'Alpine Journal' runs a good chance of being translated into Spanish for the benefit of the 'Society of Excursionists of Catalonia.'

Englishmen had made the Alps a playground, but no sooner was it known what ambitions could be gratified there, than Germans, Italians, Swiss, and Frenchmen, claimed some share in the honour and the spoil. But notwithstanding the friendly rivalry of other nations, our countrymen continued their explorations with a tenacity and a success worthy of their race. A new summit was of course the first object of ambition, the second to climb an old mountain from a new side. The Dent Blanche, the Aiguille de Bionnassay, the Pointe des Ecrins, the Rothhorn, the Piz Roseg, the Aiguille Verte, and the Matterhorn, were all first conquered by Englishmen. Mont Blanc was crossed from Courmayeur first by the Brenva glacier, and afterwards by the Brouillard and the Miage glaciers. The Matterhorn was crossed from Breil, and the Lyskamm from Gressoney.

We were contented no longer with the publication of isolated books of adventure. The time had arrived when an organ of our own was indispensable. We wanted not only an authentic record of constantly recurring adventures, but a means of communication with one another. The 'Alpine Journal' was started in March, 1863. It professed to report all new and interesting mountain expeditions, whether in the Alps or elsewhere, and generally to record all facts and incidents which it might be useful for the mountaineer to know. That publication, which during the first eighteen years of its

existence only had three editors (the Rev. H. B. George, Mr. Leslie Stephen, and Mr. Douglas Freshfield), is still as fresh and as interesting as when it was started. Greater knowledge on Alpine subjects has only inspired its editors with greater confidence, and, instead of anticipating that they might be brought to a standstill for lack of matter, they have boldly called attention to the numerous mountain ranges in all parts of the world which the foot of the Englishman was one day destined to scale, and 'have deferred the prospect of the starvation of their paper for want of matter whereon to feed to some date beyond the scope of their calculations.'

I trust that I may be allowed to pay a just tribute to the editors of that periodical. They have supplied us with authentic records of every new expedition; their pages have been open to scientific controversy; every important Alpine publication has been passed under review; valuable information has been afforded about Alpine and sub-Alpine districts all over the world. We have had a ready means of communication with the members of foreign Clubs, and upon the whole a better printed, better illustrated, better edited publication for our purposes could not have been desired. First efforts of aspiring writers are to be found there, together with the polished articles of practised critics; many pleasures of memory lie entombed there; it teems with information on every subject connected with our favourite pursuit, which can be obtained from no other source. It is a splendid record of unfulfilled prophecy. The time will come when its pages will be eagerly scanned by all those who are interested in Alpine history or Alpine archæology.

As years went on, the great European playground was more and more frequented. The rapidly decreasing number of virgin peaks caused a new expedition to be the object of greater and greater ambition. Some of the older members of the Club foresaw that the word 'finis' would have to be written to purely Alpine novelties, and began to cast their eyes on other and more distant fields.

In 1862 and 1863 Mr. Evans made some important excursions in Iceland. In 1866 Mr. Leslie Stephen made some most interesting excursions in the Eastern Carpathians. In 1867 Mr. Ormsby investigated the Sierra Nevada. Important rambles in the Himalayas were made by Mr. Cheetham and by Captain Smith. Corsica was visited by Mr. Hawker. Mr. Whymper spent a long holiday in Greenland. Mr. Hall investigated Lapland, and the exploration of the snowy chain of the Caucasus begun by Mr. Freshfield, Mr. Moore, and

Mr. Tucker in 1868, and continued in 1874 by Messrs. Moore, Grove, Walker, and Gardiner formed another new departure in the history of mountaineering.

So far as the Alps are concerned, I should venture to fix the year 1870 as the time when, except in parts of the French Alps, all the ordinary mountains had been scaled, and when with few exceptions all the passes had been made which afforded a ready means of access from a valley on one side of a ridge to a valley on the other.

But the members of the Alpine Club are fellows of infinite variety. Men laid themselves out for expeditions, which would take them from one point to another, with greater labour and difficulty than by the routes already discovered. They claimed subordinate Aiguilles as main peaks; they still insisted on getting up old mountains from almost impracticable sides. Two genuine new passes were made: the Col des Hironnelles by Mr. Stephen; the Col des Grandes Jorasses by Mr. Middlemore. The Weisshorn was ascended by three new routes, the Grand Paradis from Cogne, the Aiguille Verte from the Argentière glacier, the Matterhorn from the Zmutt glacier. New ways were found up the Dent Blanche, the Rothhorn, the Täschhorn, the Bietschhorn, and the Dom. Monte Rosa was crossed from Macugnaga, the Blaitière and the Mont Maudit were ascended for the first time, and the ascent of the Dru by Mr. Dent and Mr. Hartley, a just reward of persistent effort, was perhaps one of the most gallant feats of climbing (with guides) ever recorded in the annals of the Club.

But then some of our members wanted to climb without guides, and a new sensation set in. On this point, as all mountaineers know, there is something to be said on both sides. For many years members of the Club have taken certain expeditions of the second or third order without the aid of guides. One well-known mountaineer has published an interesting work on this subject. But when Mr. Cust, Mr. Cawood, and Mr. Colgrove ascended the Matterhorn, relying only upon themselves and upon one another, there was an outburst of indignant criticism.

For my own part I prefer climbing with guides, but perhaps I have been spoiled by having had for twenty years the services of one who is *facile princeps* in his craft. But climbers increase out of proportion to the increase of competent guides. Can travellers of experience and capacity be expected to put up with men of the third or fourth order? Again, mountaineering is an expensive amusement. Some climbers prefer

to save a cost which is not essential to their enjoyment. Others honestly prefer an immunity from the trouble and inconvenience which guides sometimes involve.

I am aware that few even of the best mountaineers can vie in capacity with a good guide. They lack the instinct that comes from long experience. But climbing is improving as an art; it is becoming more scientific year by year. Men have got more knowledge; dangers and difficulties are better understood, and I take it that men without knowledge and experience are not likely to climb without guides. The excursion to which I have referred, the ascent of Ararat by Mr. Bryce, and the really splendid expeditions of Messrs. C. and L. Pilkington and Mr. Gardiner have placed beyond a doubt that climbing without guides is an interesting, and legitimate outgrowth of modern mountaineering.

I have said that guides of the first order do not increase in proportion to the climbers who need their services. I cannot account satisfactorily for this state of things. Mountaineering is only an addition to the ordinary business of their lives. The pay is high; the work is as interesting to them as it is to us, and other inducements are held out to them. We treat them as we ought to do, like valued friends; they have wandered with some of our members in all quarters of the globe; they have strange and varied experiences. I once took Anderegg down a deep coalpit, as the most vivid contrast I could find to his usual occupations. Payot has been in America, Knubel in the Caucasus, Cupelin at Teneriffe, Maurer in the Himalayas. Devouassoud has bought souvenirs for his friends at Chamoni in the bazaars of Jerusalem and Tiflis, and Jean Antoine Carrel completed his experiences of the Andes by leaving behind him a considerable part of his well-earned remuneration in one of the pot-houses of Guayaquil.

The past few years have been fruitful in expeditions to distant regions. Mr. Tuckett and Mr. Blackstone ascended Mount Delphi in Eubœa, Parnassus and Mount Ziria in the Morea. They consulted no oracle, so far as I am aware; possibly, if they had, they would have received no assistance of permanent value. On one of their mountains they experienced an earthquake, quite a novel and unexpected element in the dangers of mountaineering. Mr. Tozer paid a visit to Cappadocia and ascended Mount Argæus. Mr. Eccles has done valuable work in the Rocky Mountains, and given us the benefit of his interesting researches in Wyoming and Idaho; and Mr. Scott has ascended Sikaram, one of the highest mountains in Afghanistan.

Of Mr. Whymper's famous exploits I shall say but little—we shall soon have the opportunity of hearing his own account of his adventures—but his expedition marks a new era in mountaineering history. It is no small feat to have made the first ascent of Chimborazo. It is no small feat to have slept on the top of Cotopaxi. But add to these the ascent of seven other first-class mountains, the lowest of them being about the same height as Mont Blanc, and we have a record of successful achievement without parallel in mountaineering annals. Yet this is not all. If Mr. Whymper had been favoured with local knowledge, or aided by local assistance, serious difficulties would have been avoided; but the natives knew nothing either of the position or even the names of the mountains amongst which they lived. His porters deserted at critical moments; his time was taken up in looking after deserters by the aid of more trustworthy servants, who also deserted in their turn; and he had to rely almost always upon himself and the Piedmontese guides who accompanied him. If the weather, too, had been fine he might have faced his difficulties with a lighter heart. But amongst the mountains of Ecuador it appears to rain perpetually when it does not snow; it is only at rare intervals that even a sight of the mountains can be obtained. It required, as Mr. Whymper has told me, no common obstinacy to grapple with the difficulties which surrounded him. But Mr. Whymper is a climber of uncommon obstinacy. Though snow was so soft that it had to be beaten down, and then crossed on all-fours; though tents had to be left, and the travellers to sleep out in the open, night after night, at an elevation of 13,000 or 14,000 feet; though snowstorms raged with such pertinacity that the route had to be marked with canes, lest tracks should be obliterated and retreat cut off; though the party was drenched for days and weeks together without the means of getting dry; though Mr. Whymper had used up all his medicines, and at one time suffered so severely that he thought it questionable if he should ever return, yet he resolutely accomplished his purpose, and did not leave one single failure behind him. A memorable expedition, honourable alike to Mr. Whymper and to the Club of which he is so distinguished a member.

My survey of the progress of mountaineering would be incomplete without a reference to that passion for novelty which has sent many of our members to the Alps in the depth of winter.

Mr. Kennedy began in January 1862. It seems to have



occurred to him that, as the Matterhorn was apparently impracticable in the summer, the heavy winter snows might help him over the difficulties, and the narrative of his wrestling with the winter blasts on the ridge of the Hörnli, forms one of the most interesting of the early contributions to the 'Alpine Journal.' In December 1866, Messrs. Moore and Walker spent ten days at Grindelwald, when, with three feet of snow in the street, a keen frost, and a full moon, they found ample opportunities for enjoyment. They crossed the Finsteraarjoch and the Strahleck by night, reversing with marked success the usual order of Alpine expeditions. The next winter Mr. Moore went out alone and crossed the Brèche de la Meije under the most favourable conditions. He found, at any rate, that mountaineering in midwinter was not impracticable, and also, as I think, that popular prejudice would continue to be in favour of the summer. The Jungfrau, the Wetterhorn, and the Gross Glockner, all fell victims to winter climbers.

Three attempts to ascend Mont Blanc were made in the month of January 1876. Mr. Coolidge and Miss Brevort spent five nights at the Grands Mulets, and succeeded in reaching the Grand Plateau with the two Almers, but were driven back by severe wind. Mr. Eccles and M. Loppé also slept at the Grands Mulets in the same month, the temperature being only seven degrees below zero at night. They, too, were driven back from the Grand Plateau, covered with ice and blinded with snow, and suffering greatly from the wind; but Miss Straton succeeded in gaining the summit in spite of all obstacles, the temperature recorded being thirteen degrees below zero (Fahrenheit).

In January 1879, Mr. Moore and Mr. Walker made a winter tour in the Dolomites, which included, however, no mountain expeditions. The Piz Bernina was ascended in February of the same year. And on January 27, 1879, Mr. Coolidge reached the summit of the Shreckhorn, and found the temperature at 4.35 P.M. 'deliciously warm.'

Now here is a problem for the scientific members of the Club to solve. How is it that in the depth of winter, in the very heart of the Alps, with snow covering the whole country like a pall, the temperature is higher on the mountains than it is in the valleys?

Mr. Stephen tells us that in the Valley of Engelberg he enjoyed a moderate warmth at a height of 3,000 feet above the sea—above the upper level of the mists—while the dwellers below were exposed to the bitter cold of a genuine winter.

Mr. Loppè tells us that on the night of January 20, 1876, the cold was far greater in the village of Chamonix than at the Grands Mulets or the Grand Plateau. Mr. Coolidge does not tell us the temperature he found at Grindelwald, but he does tell us that almost at sunset on the summit of the Schreckhorn the air was *deliciously warm*.

These are facts which oblige us to alter our preconceived impressions of the terrible cold of the winter Alps. I believe it will be found that the air is lighter and drier at great elevations, and less subject to variation. At any rate, we have sufficient evidence that, for those who can brave long nights, winter climbing (when the weather is calm) is not specially difficult or dangerous, whilst it offers rare opportunities for the study of Alpine nature in its sternest majesty of form.

The Swiss glaciers continue their unfortunate retreat. No one who has visited the Alps with any regularity during the last twenty years can have failed to be struck with the extraordinary diminution in their size; with some of them it is not only retreat, it is catastrophe. The amazing reduction of the high ice mark calls for special observation. What is the cause of it? Whether, as Mr. Stephen suggests, the glaciers are indignant at the increased rush of tourists, and retire sulkily into their hidden fastnesses, or whether the enormous reduction in the acreage of Alpine forests cause a drier atmosphere, and consequently a diminished snowfall, I shall leave for you to determine.

There are still grounds for hope. You will recollect that a few years ago the lower glacier of Grindelwald, in its disastrous retreat, left exposed an old stone quarry, from which, it is said, many of the houses in Grindelwald were constructed not more than 100 years ago. So let us take heart, and trust that the time may come when we may again see the white pinnacles over the moraine of the Glacier des Bossons in the valley of Chamonix, and the extending ice again stretching out into the cornfields as in the days that were.

The observations of the last few years have thrown a good deal of light upon the vexed question of the rarefaction of the air. On this point, I venture to think that more unmitigated nonsense has been talked and written than on any other subject in connection with mountaineering.

In the early days it was thought that no man could live on the top of Mont Blanc, in consequence of the rarefaction of the air. In later days, when any man has failed for lack of training, no matter at what elevation, he has usually attributed

his failure to the rarefaction of the air. Even competent men have hastily assumed that mountaineering at certain elevations would be impossible—those elevations being always a little in excess of peaks that had been already attained. The old explorers had a good deal to say upon this subject. M. de Saussure describes in his celebrated work the effect of the rarity of the air upon the human body at a height of eight or nine thousand feet. He tells us that palpitations come on, obliging the traveller to rest from time to time; but that with a little rest the palpitations cease, and the traveller can go on his way rejoicing. He tells us that once on the Buet, the air plunged one of his guides into profound sleep, but he does not tell us how the guide had been previously occupied.

On another occasion, he says that his party suffered severely from rarefaction, adding, however, 'Il est cependant possible, que la vue de l'horrible précipice que nous avons immédiatement sous nos pieds, ait contribué à augmenter l'effet de cette disposition.'

Now, of course, no one could say that the air is not rarer at higher altitudes than at lower. But the question that concerns us as climbers is this: Is there anything in the rarefaction of the air which will prevent men, in good training and accustomed to high elevations, from climbing to the very highest point of the surface of the earth? Mr. Stephen says that there is a *primâ facie* presumption that climbing is more laborious at the greater height. Most certainly my experience does not justify this view. Mr. Hinchliff has told us that the highest mountains in the world will never be climbed. Dr. Liveing has expressed an opinion that the action of the heart will interfere with success in climbing at great altitudes. Mr. Grove pondered over the subject on the top of Elbruz, and, after arriving at the conclusion that the fatigue his party experienced at a height exceeding 15,000 feet was due to want of training, and only in a small degree, if at all, to the thinness of the air, he says, 'It must be taken for granted that no human being could walk to the top of Mount Everest.' Why taken for granted? In an inquiry of this kind we have no right to assume anything, but only to observe.

I for one have run backwards and forwards on the top of Mont Blanc, with no greater effort than it would have cost me in the fields of Chamonix. Mr. Bryce tells us that he suffered a little from what he supposed was rarefaction of the air, at the height of 13,000 feet on Mount Ararat, but far less at seventeen thousand feet than at thirteen. Herr Von Thielmann tells us, that on the top of Popocatepetl, 17,880 feet,

the travellers were entirely free from all the unpleasant effects wont to be ascribed to the rarity of the atmosphere.

No difficulty was experienced on Elbruz (18,500 feet) by Mr. Freshfield, who tells us that the last 2,500 feet took only three hours to climb. On Cotopaxi, 19,600 feet, Von Thielmann says that only one man complained of headache; all the others were perfectly well. None of the climbers showed any signs of exhaustion, and the appetite of all was brilliant. On Chimborazo, 20,700 feet, on his second ascent in July last, Mr. Whymper felt no inconvenience whatever, and breathed as comfortably as on Primrose Hill.

There is no doubt that persons making balloon ascents, rushing rapidly from a denser to a rarer air, have suffered severely and in one case fatally. Nor is there any doubt that some climbers have suffered from this cause at various elevations; but, so far as our observation goes, a practised and *habituated* climber can breathe with perfect freedom at 21,000 feet above the level of the sea.

I beg to submit to you the following proposition: If the highest peaks of the Himalayas are never climbed, the rarity of the air will not be the cause of failure; and if there be no other drawback, then they certainly will be climbed.

The great growth of foreign clubs has led to international gatherings on a large scale. We have made a point of attending those gatherings, and of showing by our presence and our counsel the interest which we take in the proceedings of our foreign brethren; and I have often regretted that we have not the power or the opportunity of reciprocating, in this country, their kindly feeling and their generous hospitality. We have, however, elected as honorary and ordinary members of our own Club, continental climbers of ability and reputation. We have confirmed and enlarged our own law by which not climbers only, but gentlemen distinguished in Alpine literature or Alpine art, may claim the privilege of membership. We have established offshoots from our own body, and many members now meet in the spring to cement old friendships, and to enjoy the beauties of the hills and lakes of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Wales.

We look forward with confidence to the future. Whatever is doubtful, this one thing is certain, that mountaineering will never cease to be a genuine sport for Englishmen. It is a sport which, of course, has its own elements of danger, otherwise it might not be as interesting and exciting as it is. Experience has, I think, shown us that all Alpine dangers may be reduced by reasonable precautions to a minimum, and that every accident which has chequered our history, can be

attributed to purely preventible causes. There is no doubt that our obituary is a sad one. I think few members of the Club have any idea of the number of lives lost in the Alps since Edouard de la Grotte fell into a crevasse on the Findelen Glacier twenty-five years ago. On this point, however, I will not enlarge. I will only protest against the carelessness and imprudence which have prevented climbers like Dr. Moseley, and guides like Peter Rubi, from being able any longer to answer to their names when the muster-roll is called.

Men of wealth or of leisure, or in pursuit of some scientific object, will, as the years go on, investigate great mountain ranges, as yet unknown or unexplored. The Caucasus, the Andes, the Alps of New Zealand, and the Himalayas, will find plenty of occupation for the most ardent climbers. But of one thing you may be sure, the Alps will never lose their charm. In a beautiful line in a noble poem, it is said of a woman:—

Like one that never can be wholly known,  
Her beauty grew.

‘In that idea is revealed one exhaustless charm in all our true personal relations.’

Things which we know best we weary of the soonest. Things we cannot wholly know are ever unfolding new surprises; they never weary us; they always stimulate our interest and excite our curiosity. It is the same with the Alps. They never can be wholly known. They may be climbed over and over again; but they change from day to day and from year to year; the tracks of summer and autumn are obliterated by the snows of winter; and each new man, each new generation of men will find in them, as we have found, the same novelty and the same charm.

It is possible that some of us who in the old days marched out with uncertain steps to scale some untrodden peak, had a keener pleasure in victory than is known to this generation. Now the younger men are sometimes apt to question our authority and to underrate our achievements. I do not blame them. Authority is not good for much, unless it can stand the test of criticism and of time. But remember what is known to you, was unknown to us. We went out into a strange country, you—with a map in your hands. If you see farther than we did, what wonder—for you stand on our shoulders. We too have our memories and our consolations, and somehow the older we grow, the sweeter the flowers do smell. We have created a new sport for Englishmen. Upon you the responsibility will rest that the future of mountaineering shall be worthy of its present and of its past.