Swan Electric Engraving Co.

C. M. Mathews.

My day's march ended at Rytgong, on the edge of the rhododendron jungle. This jungle is very dense and almost impassable, but by making a *détour* we avoided the densest part and reached the junction of the Rinpiram and Ronghep, where the torrent has cut for itself an almost vertical channel through the rock, very narrow and about 20 ft. deep. A natural bridge of fallen boulders enabled us to reach the opposite bank.

The sides of this valley are exceedingly precipitous, more especially the northern cliffs, which are very high and at times almost perpendicular. A short distance below the natural bridge, and on the right bank of the Rinpiram, are two hot-water springs smelling strongly of sulphuretted hydrogen. Near here we saw a large troop of monkeys—Himalayan langurs—on the opposite bank of the stream. They manifested considerable interest at the unwonted sight of man.

The going was always rough and the jungle generally very dense, so that the marches had of necessity to be very short. In fact, it was on the fifth day after leaving Chemthang that we reached Sakyong, a small village opposite that extraordinary village Pontong, which is situated on a ledge half way up the almost vertical cliffs on the opposite side of the Talung Chu, and which is reached by a series of ladders from the same bridge over the river. Well indeed is the valley called the Talung, which I take to mean the valley of rocks, though in all fairness the name ought to be given to the valley of the Rindiang, in which the Talung Gompa is situated. From the bridge we cut a path to the track that leads to Lingdem. From this point there is a track, consisting mostly of bamboo scaffolding on the sides of rocks and cliffs, till Lingthem Gompa is reached. This Gompa is peculiar in that it is run purely by Lepcha Lamas. From Lingthem the track is mostly on solid ground, but very rough, and descends to the Sanklan Sampo, over the Teesta, leading to Samathek.

IN MEMORIAM.

CHARLES EDWARD MATHEWS.

THE ALPINE CLUB has lost in Charles Edward Mathews the last of its actual founders, though happily not the last original member, the only one among them who through nearly half-a-century has continued to take a prominent part in its affairs. There are few of our members by whom his death will not have been felt as a personal sorrow, apart from the loss to the Alpine interest generally,

of which all must be deeply conscious. Few men have lived a more strenuous life, making themselves acceptable to all sorts and conditions of men, and fewer still have retained so much of the vigour of youth well beyond threescore and ten.

Charles Edward Mathews, who was born in January 1834, was the second son of Mr. Jeremiah Mathews, in his day the most highly esteemed land-agent in the Midlands. Leaving school early, he did not follow his elder brother to Cambridge, but began at once to study law, was admitted a solicitor in 1856, and set up for himself in Birmingham, where he presently rose to the top of his profession. Introduced to the Alps by his elder brother in 1856, he from that time onward scarcely ever missed spending his summer holiday among them, while the few days of Christmas and Easter holidays were with almost equal regularity devoted to the Welsh hills. Mountaineering and mountain walking were the one outdoor pursuit which he always continued to follow, and the refreshment thence derived assisted an exceptionally vigorous constitution to get through in fifty years enough work for two or three ordinary lives. There were few things in Birmingham in which he had no share, and his activity made him a prominent member of every society or council to which he belonged. His natural gifts he cultivated with assiduity, and, besides being a vigorous writer, made himself, as the Alpine Club well knows, an admirable and effective speaker.

Birmingham, or its immediate neighbourhood, was his home all through his adult life. On his marriage in 1860 he took a little house on the Worcestershire side, whence he presently removed to Edgbaston, where was his home for thirty years. During much of that time he had a cottage near Machynlleth, where he delighted to entertain his Alpine friends at the holiday seasons, conducting them up Cader Idris and Plinlimmon, as well as on smaller climbs of his own discovery. Naturally he knew these mountains well—I think he had been up Cader Idris a hundred times; but he used to tell, as an interesting proof how completely among the mountains Nature is master of man, how during a winter storm an exceptionally strong Alpine party went the whole way round Llyn-y-Cae, on the south side of Cader Idris, without hitting on the way up, and thereupon acknowledged themselves defeated. In 1893 he built himself a house in the country, on high ground overlooking Sutton Coldfield Park, with the idea that he would thenceforth spend rather less time at his office. But the claims of business, professional and civic, were exacting, and it is doubtful whether he gained more by the purer air and change of scene than he lost by the daily journeys to and fro. When the last of his family left home he parted with this house, and was in the act of settling into a new one in Edgbaston when he broke down.

According to the testimony of the last Alpine friend who visited his Welsh cottage in August last, he was then 'in first-rate form both mental and bodily, as vigorous as any man of half his age.' 'I certainly never dreamed,' adds Mr. Butler, 'that his apparently abundant stock of vitality was so nearly exhausted.' Later on he

paid a visit in Scotland, where he walked as usual, and then returned to professional work in Birmingham. Late in September he broke down suddenly and, as it proved, finally. At first there seemed a fair prospect that with time he would recover, but this proved delusive. On October 20 he passed quietly away, and was laid to rest after a funeral ceremony in the mother church of Birmingham which testified emphatically to the respect and regard which all sections and classes in the city felt for him. It was the right end for such a man. None of us could have wished for him, what he certainly would never have desired for himself, that he should exist for a few more years after all the reality was gone out of life.

No man could have been so successful and so vigorous without great natural powers; but the special moulding of his career was mainly due to two influences, the Alps and the vivid local life of Birmingham, and in both spheres he made himself widely felt. To his importance in Birmingham, to his usefulness and activity in every department of life there, eloquent tribute was paid by his life-long friend, Mr. Chamberlain, at a special meeting of the Birmingham Liberal Unionists immediately after his death. If Birmingham is —as few who are well acquainted with municipal affairs in this country will doubt—the most efficient of English cities, the place in which local patriotism is most of a reality, Charles Edward Mathews was one of the men who gave it that distinction. All his life through he busied himself, in spite of the steadily growing demands made on his time by his own profession, with Birmingham affairs, on the Town Council, as Clerk of the Peace, as a governor of King Edward's School, as a member of countless societies, professional, literary, and political. And his services to the Alpine Club were at least equally great. A most efficient President (1878–80), he set the example, which has since been followed to our great advantage, of closing his term of office with a presidential address. In many subsequent years he served as an extra member of the committee, and took a very active part in arranging for our present quarters when the Club had outgrown its original rooms in St. Martin's Place.

There are Radical reformers who will let nothing alone so long as they think that it is not perfect; and there are Conservatives who will never alter anything when once they have been satisfied that it is good. Charles Edward Mathews had a little of both tempers: he was keen in hunting out abuses and defects, though never purely destructive, and he held tenaciously to a custom once established. His first public act in Birmingham was to write a series of letters to one of the local papers criticising severely the defects of the Birmingham hospitals and similar charities, and he went on to draw attention under another *nom de plume* to the waste of opportunities at King Edward's School. But he followed up his first criticisms by founding, through his own personal exertions, the Children's Hospital, one of the earliest of its class, and he gave active help in administering King Edward's School after its reorganisation, a work which he never relinquished to the end

of his life. The Alpine Club knows how staunchly he adhered to his custom of attending the winter dinner, which he regarded as a duty as well as a pleasure; and his Oxford friends had what is now a sad illustration of the same trait. When the Oxford Alpine Club was established some thirty years ago, I naturally invited Mathews to the first annual dinner, it being an understanding among us that we should always try to secure some prominent members of the Alpine Club as guests. He had already many friends in Oxford, especially in New College, where he had been a familiar visitor for a good many years, and he was invited again and again till it became a fixture. Year after year he would inquire the date of our dinner months beforehand, lest by any chance he should form another engagement. Last May he had promised to give us, after dinner, an account of his mountaineering in Greece in 1903. When he reached my house he said, 'I ought to be in bed, but I was not going to fail the Oxford Alpine Club.' He really was unwell, so much so that almost any other man would have sent an excuse: but no one at our meeting would have guessed it. After the event, one feels that probably Nature was then warning him that his strength had limits, and that he called into play for our benefit his indomitable energy, unhappily for the last time.

Mathews's intellectual interests were almost as diverse as his practical labours, and were followed out with similar energy. He was well read in most branches of English literature, and had an extremely well-chosen library of books. Being a fervent admirer of Tennyson, he made himself acquainted with all the early editions, and with the various poems which Tennyson in his youth published anonymously. A still greater devotee of Dickens, he knew his way over the Dickens country, and had a theory as to how the mystery of Edwin Drood was to have been worked out, while there was not an allusion or a quaint phrase in 'Pickwick' which he had not at command. Though not a reader of military history in general, he had a passionate interest in Waterloo, and accumulated every book bearing on it. Eight or nine years ago, wanting a short holiday after an attack of influenza, he persuaded me to accompany him for a week to Brussels. In the course of it we drove or walked over every road used in the campaign, every detail of which he had at his fingers' ends. He even, on one day when I was unable to accompany him, traversed alone the route which plays so great a hypothetical part in Waterloo literature—that which Grouchy would have followed if he had 'marched to the cannon.' It was like Mathews to test a theory thoroughly by practice, and it was with a certain air of triumph that he recounted to me his experiences, according to which Grouchy could by no possibility have arrived in time to take part in the battle. And he was much pleased when I congratulated him on having done something for Waterloo controversies, by disposing *ambulando* of the great fiction that Napoleon lost Waterloo through Grouchy's fault.

Mountaineering was to Mathews much more than a diversion; it was the pursuit which, amid all his multifarious energy, he had

ever most at heart. And it is of course as a mountaineer that his name will live, not only in the memory of the Alpine Club but in the world at large, where he has for nearly half a century stood forward as a leading representative of mountaineering. Other men have performed more sensational feats, and gone further afield; other men have from time to time been more conspicuously before the public, or rendered more immediate service to the Club. But no one has on the whole done so much, because no one has continued his Alpine activity over so long a period. It is true that he was not in the strict and literal sense one of the chief pioneers. Indeed, there were few men, conspicuous during the first decade of the Alpine Club's existence, who had not the fortune to make a larger number of new expeditions than C. E. Mathews. On his first visit to the Alps in 1856, he and his brother William were misled by local confusion of nomenclature into ascending a minor peak instead of the Grand Combin, which was not conquered till long after. In 1867 he and Mr. Morshead made the first ascent of the Lyskamm from the south—the proper side if one thinks only of the formation of the mountain, and forgets the fleshpots of Zermatt—and also crossed from Macugnaga to Zermatt close under the Nord End of Monte Rosa over the Jägerhorn, a passage which has probably never been repeated. In 1864 he and his brother George made the Col de Trélatête, an expedition involving extraordinary glacier difficulties ('I had rather not describe the passage of this ice-fall,' wrote Mathews in the 'Journal'; 'it would better suit the pages of a sensation novel'). As it starts from high up the Allée Blanche, and leads not to Chamonix but to Contamines, the Col de Trélatête has no practical convenience, though it has been once or twice crossed by climbers in search of novelty, which they certainly find. There was also in July 1860 a vigorous assault on the Weisshorn, then still unascended, which was defeated by the state of the snow, and an attempt in 1863 to achieve the desperate feat of climbing straight up the Silberhorn from the Lauterbrunnen side. Otherwise Mathews' mountaineering, though it comprised a vast number of ascents and was continued through an extraordinary number of years, was on the whole uneventful, thanks partly to good fortune, more to his ingrained aversion to running needless risks, most of all, as he used to declare, to Melchior Anderegg's admirable guiding. There was, however, one exception, an ascent of the Matterhorn from Breuil, made under most dangerous conditions of weather, &c., which would have entailed disaster on most parties; but Mathews and Morshead, J. A. Carrel and Melchior, formed probably as strong a combination as ever confronted such a task. He very reluctantly described it in the 'Alpine Journal,' but he never liked to talk of it, regarding it as a risk which prudent men ought not to have incurred, though, as he put it, even inquisitors are sometimes more human than their creed.

The chief idol of Mathews's mountaineering worship was always Mont Blanc, which exercised over him a singular fascination. He

had ascended it twelve times, and by every route, before publishing in 1898 his book on 'The Annals of Mont Blanc,' and I believe that he went up once more afterwards. The book, which involved considerable labour, such as a busy professional man might well have hesitated to expend, is at once a proof of his abiding interest in all that concerned the monarch of the Alps, and an illustration of his own special gifts. In it he discussed, with a thoroughness and lucidity such as no one else dealing with the subject had ever displayed, the complicated questions of evidence and inference arising out of the first asc nt, and the relations, not altogether amicable, between Jacques Balmat and Dr. Paccard. It does not follow that all readers must accept his conclusions as unanswerable, but no one could have written those pages who was not an expert both in evidence and in mountaineering, and an enthusiast for Mont Blanc into the bargain.

Concerning the actual foundation of the Alpine Club, in which he and his brother William took a leading part, enough has probably been written. Many of us owe to these pioneers of mountaineering a great debt of gratitude, and we are not likely to under-estimate the importance, now become world-wide, of the movement then set on foot. To their perseverance we owe it that the abuse and ridicule with which the first series of 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers' was bespattered in the press produced no effect, and was replaced when the second series appeared by a respectful, if still rather ignorant, appreciation. And Charles Edward Mathews was perhaps the readiest of them all to draw the true moral from Alpine events in letters to the newspapers, and thus gradually to educate opinion. Nor was he slow to press on mountaineers themselves the principles which he deemed essential to be observed, if the pursuit which they and he loved was to be a wholesome and legitimate one. The early stage of Alpine climbing had in it a large element of exploration; there was utility in discovering new routes, together with the fascination of the unknown; and the first climbers were few. But as the Alps gradually were conquered, and mountaineering became fashionable, there grew up not unnaturally a tendency towards ignoring risks if only a novelty could be discovered, a tendency also towards guideless climbing. The latter was reasonable—even admirable—provided that men were careful to learn their business thoroughly before attempting it in earnest. The former called for warning from the veterans, who appreciated the strength of the temptation, but felt that unless it were kept within bounds mountaineering would be fatally and not unreasonably discredited. As regards guideless climbing, Mathews did not go so far as some older men, who protested against it altogether. He sympathised with the desire to dispense with professional help and do all for oneself, though very emphatic on the folly of incompetent men venturing to try it. Indeed, he enjoyed few things more thoroughly than acting as guide on the Welsh mountains which he knew so well. But he was more than emphatic against the folly of those who braved obvious danger whether through

ignorance or through recklessness, who neglected the recognised precautions, such as the use of the rope. After an interval of over twenty years, his paper, in vol. xi. of the 'Alpine Journal,' is probably little known to the younger generation. It was badly wanted at the time: his analysis of the long list of fatal accidents, from 1856 to 1881, showed that nearly every life was thrown away through disregard of those rules which make all the difference between the most deadly risk and practical immunity from danger. How much effect similar protests have had it would be obviously impossible to calculate. Men will always be found who are impatient of restrictions, or make errors of judgment in applying rules which they have not fully digested. But so far as mountaineers nowadays do adopt a sound code of precaution, they owe nearly all to the insistence of such men as Leslie Stephen and Charles Edward Mathews. An obituary notice of the latter cannot end better than by reproducing his own half-forgotten words at the end of 'The Alpine Obituary':

'What, then, are the conclusions to be drawn? Surely my readers will already have done so for themselves. Mountaineering is extremely dangerous in the case of incapable, of imprudent, of thoughtless men. But I venture to state that of all the accidents in our sad obituary, there is hardly one that need have happened; there is hardly one which could not have been easily prevented by proper caution and proper care. Men get careless and too confident. This does not matter or the other does not matter. The fact is that everything matters; precautions should not only be ample but excessive.

> The little more and how much it is,
> And the little less and what worlds away.

Mountaineering is not dangerous, provided that the climber knows his business and takes the necessary precautions—all within his own control—to make danger impossible. The prudent climber will recollect what he owes to his family and to his friends. He will also recollect that he owes something to the Alps, and will scorn to bring them into disrepute. He will not go on a glacier without a rope. He will not climb alone, or with a single companion. He will treat a great mountain with the respect it deserves, and not try to rush a dangerous peak with inadequate guiding power. He will turn his back steadfastly upon mist and storm. He will not go where avalanches are in the habit of falling after fresh snow, or wander about beneath an overhanging glacier in the heat of a summer afternoon. Above all, if he loves the mountains for their own sake, for the lessons they can teach and the happiness they can bring, he will do nothing that can discredit his manly pursuit or bring down the ridicule of the undiscerning upon the noblest pastime in the world.'*

HEREFORD B. GEORGE.

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xi. p. 85.

I have been asked, as having been C. E. Mathews's companion in the High Alps for many years, to write a few words about his characteristics as a mountaineer. Let me say first that we had, each of us, finished our more adventurous work in the Alps before we began to climb together; and that, having by that time families dependent upon us, we agreed that we should not be justified in running into unnecessary risks in our climbs, or attempting novelties which might prove dangerous. Hence but few new expeditions will be found recorded by him in the pages of the 'Journal,' though, under the guidance of Melchior Anderegg, we climbed in the course of our travels most of the interesting peaks from the Graians to the Tyrol, and I should say of my late friend that he belonged to the old school of mountaineering, when there was still a halo of mystery lingering about the 'wrinkled old hills,' and the first object of the mountaineer was to penetrate that mystery and win his way to the summit by the most convenient route; that he was therefore an explorer and a climber rather than a gymnast; better on snow and ice than on rocks—not fast, but careful and in difficulties absolutely to be relied upon—with a good knowledge of geography and of the science of mountaineering; physically strong and capable of long days and hard work, if necessary, but preferring rather, by sleeping out the night before, to have leisure to enjoy the glory of the mountain without attempting to break the latest records. For he looked on the Alps as the means of relief from the strain of a busy professional life, a time to purify mind and body. On this subject he eloquently expressed himself in the speech which he made at the dinner of the delegates to the International Alpine Congress held at Geneva in August 1879.*

He enjoyed keenly the excitement of climbing, but his pleasure was greatly increased by the attendant circumstances—a night bivouac on the mountain-side with a pipe, a sympathetic companion, a talk (say) about some new poem of Tennyson's, or a discussion with old Melchior about the next day's route.

He had ever a high ideal of the duties and courtesies of the Club of which he was proud to have been President, and was himself singularly free from jealousy and ever ready to help with matured advice a less experienced climber. If he had a weakness it was for good food on the mountains, and he liked, therefore, to arrange for the commissariat himself. His supreme effort in this direction was put forth in 1879 in the Aiguille Grise hut, where he provided a banquet of five courses, including fresh trout, with *café noir* and liqueurs. But that was on an historic occasion. The then President of the Italian Alpine Club, Signor Sella, was reported to be on the mountain, and he was to be invited to this banquet if he were found in the hut. He was, however, camping on the rocks 2 hrs. higher up, and it was not till the early dawn of the next morning that the

* 'On arriving in Switzerland he (Mr. Mathews) said they were like the muddy Rhône on its entrance to the Lake of Geneva, but on quitting it they resembled the noble river that rushed and sparkled under the bridges of the city' (*A. J.* vol. ix. p. 335).

two Presidents met, on a snow plateau, just as the first rays of the morning sun were flashing over the ridge of Mont Blanc. It was a sensational meeting, ever to be remembered by those who witnessed it; for the Italian President, who was going to take 3 days in his *trajet*, in token of the good feeling between the two Clubs, accepted an invitation to a dinner at Couttet's, which came off with great *éclat* on the second night afterwards. On such occasions as these Mathews was at his best, but in all his relations he was ever a most genial companion, a most staunch friend. He had his foibles, no doubt, as we all have, but his were intensely human, innocent and amusing, and added greatly to the charm of his society. Look behind them and you would ever find a sterling example of what should be the best type of an ex-President of the English Alpine Club.

F. MORSHEAD.

THE ALPINE CLUB LIBRARY.

THE following additions have been made since July :—

New Books and New Editions. Presented by the Authors or Publishers.

(Foreign works may be obtained through Mr. David Nutt, 57 Long Acre, London, W.C.)

Adelboden, Bernese Oberland. Zürich, Orell Fussli, 1905
8vo, pp. 23; map, ill.

Alaska. Volume III. Glaciers and glaciation. Harriman Alaska Expedition. New York, Doubleday, 1904. 21/-
Roy. 8vo, pp. xii, 23; map, plates.

Almanach du Montagnard. Revue annuelle de la montagne.
8vo, pp. 62; ill. Paris, L. Laveur, 1905. Fr. 1
This contains a medley of notes on mountains and climbs. The interest of the publication lies in the portraits of climbers and guides which are given.

Alpen-Kalender 1906. Herausgegeben von M. Wundt.
Berlin u. Stuttgart, Spemann, 1905. M. 2
Size 10″ × 6″. Each page is for 3 days and has an illustration with accompanying text. The 'Kalender' is well printed.

Alpine Gems. A series of beautifully coloured plates vividly portraying the grandest scenes to be found in the Alpine Range, and embracing specimens of the choicest works of art. To be published in about ten parts of 3 plates each.
Part 1. Traunsee, Dachstein, Kitzsteinhorn.
London, Owen, High Holborn, 1905. 1/6 net
The plates are of unusual excellence in colouring and printing.

Arolla. Guide to Arolla. Copied, with some changes, from the third edition of the MS. guide written and compiled by W. Larden, brought up to the date of the summer of 1904.
A typewritten copy of the original MS., which is in the hands of the Geneva Section of the S.A.C. Copies have been sent to the two hotels in Arolla.

Baker, E. A., and F. E. Ross: edited by. The voice of the mountains.
London, Routledge: New York, Dutton [1905]. 2/6 net
Sm. 8vo, pp. xxii, 294.
A carefully made collection of extracts in verse and prose from Byron, Schiller, Tennyson, Hugo, Swinburne, and many others.