

THE CITIZEN

MARCH 24, 1888.

GLOUCESTER FOOTBALL CLUB.

The annual dinner in connection with this Club took place at the Ram Hotel on Tuesday, when about fifty members and friends sat down to an excellent spread provided by Mrs. Drewitt. Mr. L. H. Priday presided, and Messrs. T. G. Smith and H. S. Simpson were the vice-chairmen. There were also present Mr. W. Washbourn, Mr. W. A. Siveter, Mr. Trevor Powell, Mr. A. W. Vears, Mr. H. J. Boughton, Mr. E. Richards, Mr. J. J. Hough, Mr. S. Halsey, Mr. C. Robbins, Mr. T. H. Chance, Mr. H. E. Cadenne, Mr. H. L. Broughton, Mr. A. J. Barnes, Mr. E. Pickford; and amongst the general company were Messrs. H. E. Taylor, Sid S. Starr, W. G. Roberts, H. A. Dancey, E. D. Tandy, O. H. Jones, C. Raven, S. H. Clutterbuck, T. Collins, G. Milnes, W. George, T. Bagwell, W. H. Fream, A. Cromwell, T. Taylor, A. F. Hughes, and others.

THE CHAIRMAN briefly proposed the health of the "Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the rest of the Royal Family," which was duly honoured by the company.

Mr. H. S. SIMPSON, the hon. secretary, read the annual report of the doings of the first team during the past season, as reviewed in last week's *Chronicle*. The report of the Second Fifteen stated that they had played 16 matches, of which they had won 10, lost four, and two were drawn. They had scored 21 goals (three dropped) and 41 tries, against 9 goals and 10 tries scored by their opponents. The following players gained tries :- Franklin 18 and dropped a goal from the field, Stoddart 10, Dere 7 and two dropped goals, Jackson 5, Jones 4, A. H. Brown 3, Roberts, R. George, E. Ellis, and Rea 2, and W. George, T. Taylor, Gorin, and Hayward one each. The matches won were against Stroud twice, Westbury Park twice, Newent, Monmouth, St. James's, Churchdown, Cheltenham Rovers, and Moseley Second; whilst they were defeated by Cardiff twice, Newport, and Cheltenham Rovers, and drawn games were played with Newent and Roath (Cardiff).

THE CHAIRMAN then proposed "Success to the Gloucester Football Club." Although the past season had not perhaps been quite so brilliant as some preceding ones, there were nevertheless many matters for congratulation in the report, as the record was above the fair average. He did not mean to say that the play of the Club had deteriorated, but the reason that they were not quite as successful as in the past was that other clubs had made more progress. Their performance was all the more creditable because many of the clubs which they had met and beaten had much larger populations to draw from. The Club had played some splendid matches during the season, and which culminated in the memorable game against Cardiff, a victory which would go a long way towards wiping out two or three defeats (applause).

The Second Fifteen had done admirably, and their record was an excellent augury for the coming seasons, because it was from this team that it was hoped to draft men for the first team.

It was a most gratifying feature of the year to know that the financial position of the Club showed that they had a balance in hand for the first time for several years (applause). There was a considerable increase in membership, and more money had been taken at the gates than ever, which showed that the popularity of the game in Gloucester was steadily increasing.

For a club to be successful it must have a good captain, and they would agree with him that the Gloucester Club had one in Mr. Smith (applause). The captaincy of a team was a difficult position, because the captain must not only be a thorough master of the game but be possessed of a great amount of patience and ability to keep his temper, and have entire control over his men. Mr. Smith commenced his football career at the bottom, he having played for a couple of seasons with the second fifteen, and for the following eight seasons he had played for the first team, with which he had played in 104 matches, and during that time he had done everything he possibly could to promote the interests of the Club (applause).

The work which the second team had done must have proved a source of gratification to their captain, Mr. Roberts, who should be induced by the success of Mr. Smith to follow in his footsteps.

The Chairman went on to say that Mr. Smith was rather anxious to possess the ball used in the Cardiff match, and he was requested, on behalf of the Club, to ask that gentleman to accept the ball as a souvenir of the past and an encouragement for the future.

A great deal had been said as to the dangers attending football, but looking at the vast number who played the game the accidents accruing therefrom were infinitesimally small, while with all sport and pastimes there was an element of danger, and he was not sure that that was not a good thing, for it was that very fact that helped to keep up the pluck they all as Englishmen admired (hear, hear). He concluded by coupling with the toast the names of the captains of the first and second teams, and the toast was drank with musical honours.

Mr. T. G. SMITH, in responding referred to what he called the common method of gauging the success of the Club by making comparisons with previous seasons. This he considered was rather unfair, as the character of the matches had completely changed. He thought the last season would bear favourable comparison with preceding years. In times gone by the game was played in a more honest spirit than it was now, and the deterioration in this respect proved injurious to other clubs, caused chiefly by the competition in cup-ties. Especially was this the case in Wales, and it enabled opponents to take undue advantage of other teams. The past season was a distinct gain on the preceding one, because the Gloucester Club had scored more goals and tries, while fewer had been scored by their opponents, and they had played a drawn match with Swansea, the Welsh cup-holders, and had beaten Cardiff (applause).

Referring to the future, he thought the prospects of the Club were bright, as they possessed many good forward players. He thanked the members for their unvarying kindness and the confidence they reposed in him. He also tendered his warmest thanks to Mr. H. Taylor for acting as captain in his absence, and whose judgment had always been valuable to

him. He was extremely sorry to hear that Mr. Taylor intended to retire from football ("No, no"). If he did he would leave behind him the most brilliant name on the record of the Club for good, honest, sound, and fearless play, and his name would live as long as the Club existed (applause). He thanked the Club for presenting him with the ball used in the Cardiff match, which he should value most highly.

Mr. W. G. ROBERTS returned thanks on behalf of the second team, remarking that altogether the season had been a successful one.

Mr. W. WASHBOURN proposed "The Officers of the Club." He referred to the performances of the first team in the earlier part of the season, and suggested that they had not had sufficient training, and that perhaps there was a little selfishness in the play that later on utterly disappeared. It was unselfishness of play that so much pleased the spectators and won the game (applause). He congratulated the Club on its financial position, which showed that increased interest was taken in the game, and expressed the pleasure which he had derived in witnessing the various matches at the Spa.

Mr. H. S. SIMPSON, the hon. secretary, responded, and expressed his willingness to do all he could to further the interests of the Club.

Mr. VEARS, treasurer, also returned thanks, and stated that the balance in hand was from £15 to £20 (applause).

Mr. HUBERT BOUGHTON proposed the health of the Chairman, which was acknowledged by Mr. PRIDAY. He remarked that he should ever be ready and willing to do all he could for the promotion of sport in Gloucester, and he thought the public of the city were much indebted to the Football Club for affording them recreation on Saturday afternoons.

Mr. VEARS submitted "The Honorary Members and Visitors." He said that at present the Club numbered 320 members, of which about five-sixths were honorary subscribers.

Mr. T. H. CHANCE acknowledged the toast, and said he was sure the honorary members would share with regret the loss the Club would sustain if Mr. Taylor should find it necessary to retire from active membership. Should he retire ("No, no") he would do so with the greatest honour to himself, for he had not only distinguished himself as a player, but had added much lustre to the fame of the Club. The honorary members were proud of the Gloucester Club and of the opportunity of rendering it what support they could.

Mr. TREVOR POWELL also returned thanks.

In response to loud calls, Mr. TAYLOR thanked them for the kind reception of his name. He had always entered the football field with pride, and had done his utmost for the honour of the Club and of the city (applause). He also expressed his thanks to the officers for their kindness towards him, more especially in his social position, they always appearing to be "hail fellow well met." He expressed his regret that he was about to retire, but a man could not play for ever, and one did not get over the knocks and bruises so easily as one used to (laughter).

The remaining toasts were "The Referee," "The Press," and "The Hostess." Some capital songs were sung, Mr. S. Wingate and Mr. F. Jackson accompanying on the piano.