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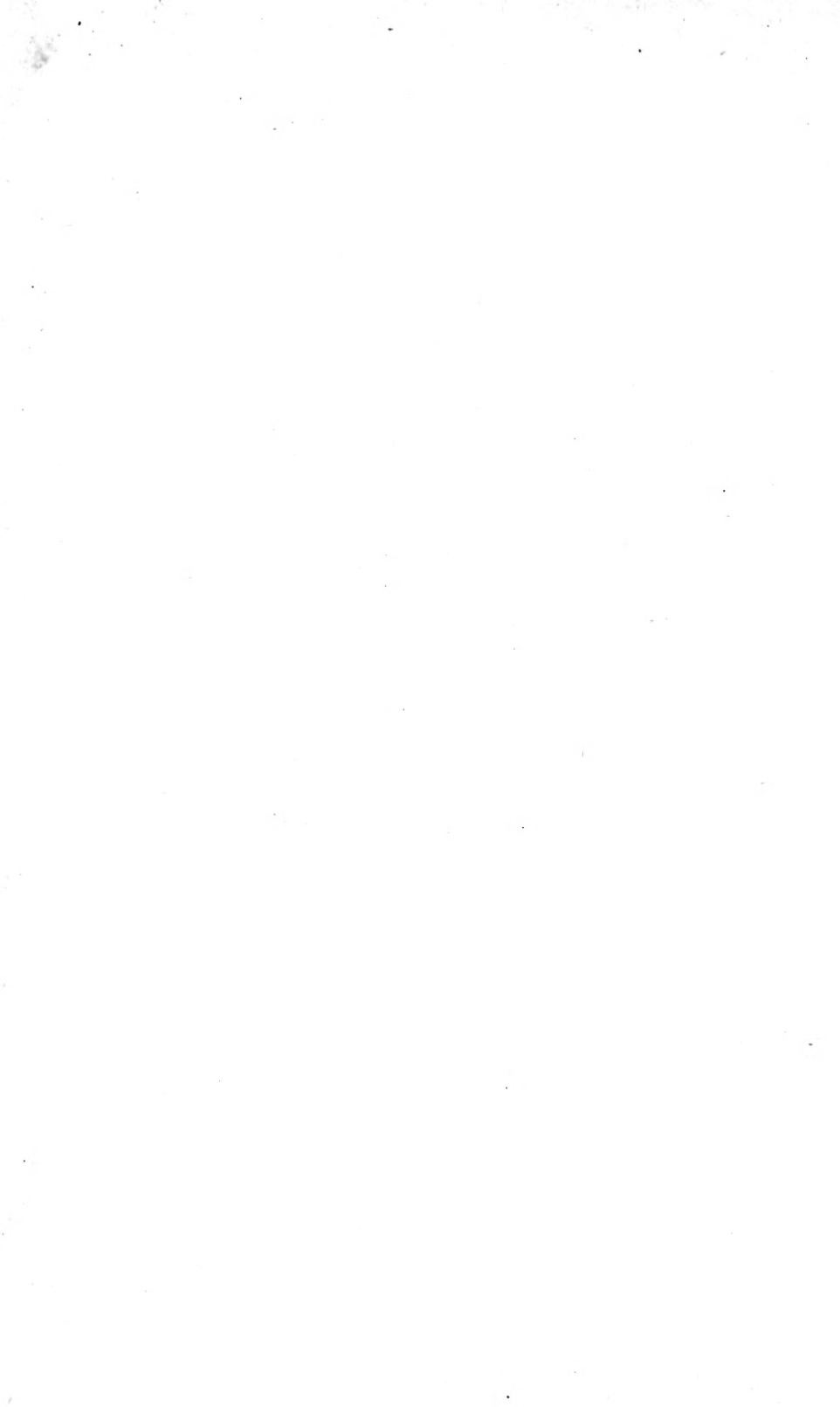


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AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
DINNER BY THE HAMILTON CLUB  
TO  
HON. JAMES S. T. STRANAHAN,  
DECEMBER 13, 1888.



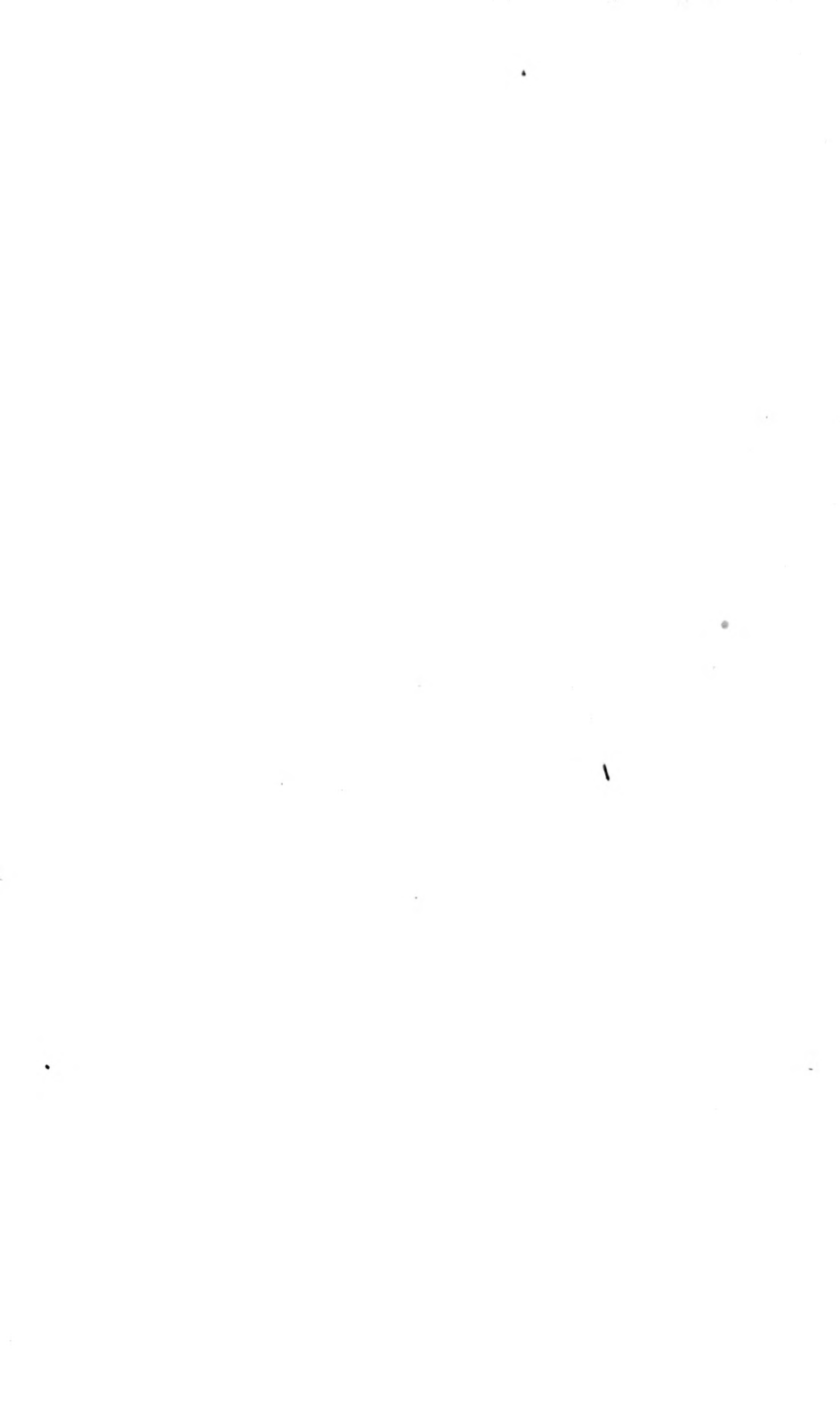




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AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

DINNER BY THE HAMILTON CLUB

TO

HON. JAMES S. T. STRANAHAN,

Thursday Evening, December 13, 1888.



BROOKLYN, - NEW YORK,

January, 1889.



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## EXPLANATORY.

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The proceedings set forth in these pages were the result of the following correspondence :

[Committee of the Hamilton Club to Mr. Stranahan.]

HAMILTON CLUB,  
BROOKLYN, November 24, 1888. }

HON. J. S. T. STRANAHAN :

*Dear Sir*—The undersigned, representing a large number of your friends and fellow members of the Hamilton Club, respectfully request the pleasure of your company at a Dinner to be given in your honor, at the Club House, Thursday evening, December 13, at 7 o'clock.

It is the desire of your friends, in a simple and unostentatious manner, to declare their appreciation of what you have been able to accomplish for the welfare of the city, in which for so many years you have lived an honored and useful life.

GEORGE M. OLCOTT,  
ALEXANDER E. ORR,  
W. B. KENDALL,  
SETH LOW,  
ALFRED C. BARNES,  
ROBERT B. WOODWARD,

CHARLES H. HALL,  
S. B. CHITTENDEN,  
ISAAC H. CARY,  
BRYAN H. SMITH,  
BENJAMIN F. TRACY,  
WILLIS L. OGDEN.

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[Mr. Stranahan to Committee of the Hamilton Club.]

BROOKLYN, November 26, 1888.

Messrs. GEORGE M. OLCOTT, A. E. ORR and others :

*Gentlemen*—I accept with pleasure your invitation to dine with you at the Hamilton Club on the evening of December 13. Let me assure you that such an expression of regard as you extend to me is highly appreciated.

Respectfully yours,

J. S. T. STRANAHAN.

To the members of the Club, with the foregoing correspondence, was mailed the appended statement :

BROOKLYN, December 1, 1888.

The attention of the members is respectfully called to the accompanying invitation and acceptance.

Mr. Stranahan is now in his 81st year, and to him is Brooklyn indebted for many of the great improvements which we now enjoy.

The Dinner will be served in the Club House, Thursday evening, December 13, at 7 o'clock.

If it be your pleasure to attend this Dinner please sign and forward the enclosed card to office of the Club. The capacity of the dining-room is limited to 110. Subscriptions will be restricted to members only until the 7th inst., but they may make application for tickets for friends immediately, and if there are any vacancies, seats will be reserved in the order of application.

Yours respectfully,

WILLIAM B. KENDALL,

WILLIS L. OGDEN,

C. S. VAN WAGONER,

GEORGE R. TURNBULL,

*Committee on the Dinner.*

The limit of numbers expressed in the statement to the members was largely exceeded, as the list of names shows. This was made possible by the use of the entire floor, on which the dining-hall is situated, as one room.

The account of the banquet, as will be seen, is taken from the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, which printed a full stenographic report of the remarks. The comments of the public journals upon the event, with letters from friends who could not attend, complete the record, which is herein given just as the press, from its varied points of view, considered the affair.

This compilation has been made at the request of those participating on the occasion, so that, in convenient form, the history of it might be presented and preserved.

BROOKLYN, January, 1889.

[From the Brooklyn Daily Eagle (report), December 14, 1888.]

## HON. J. S. T. STRANAHAN.

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### THE HAMILTON CLUB DINNER TO OUR CHIEF CITIZEN.

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AN OCCASION MEMORABLE FOR TRIBUTE AND FOR FELICITATION—THE EMINENT GUEST'S ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND LABORS IN BROOKLYN—ADDRESSES BY GEORGE M. OLCOTT, R. S. STORRS, ALEXANDER McCUE, ALFRED C. BARNES, SETH LOW, JOHN B. WOODWARD, WALDO HUTCHINS AND ST. CLAIR McKELWAY.

The Dinner of the members of the Hamilton Club to the Hon. James S. T. Stranahan occurred last night. The event informally divided itself into a social greeting of the distinguished guest in the parlors of the Club House, before the assemblage in the dining-room into the banquet proper, and into the addresses of tribute and felicitation which followed. Each event was a marked success. The venerable guest of the evening required no introduction to those who thronged around him. Each had for him a hearty salutation. For each he had an apt and courteous acknowledgment. Mr. Stranahan never looked, and said he never felt, better. A larger assemblage of members and

friends of the Hamilton hardly ever gathered in its halls. If there had been any doubt of the ability of the Committee in charge to make the occasion the climacteric one in the history of the Club, the representative attendance and the perfection of arrangements removed that doubt.

The time set for the Dinner was seven o'clock. A chart in the library indicated to each guest the arrangement of the tables and the position of his seat at each. Quite promptly, therefore, the places were found, and commendably near to the hour named the gentlemen were gathered. The tables extended from north to south on the line of greatest length of the dining-room. The first table was reserved for the President of the Club, for the eminent guest of the Club, and for those citizens, the speakers, and other gentlemen who were the guests of the Committee of the Dinner. At that table in the center were Mr. George M. Olcott, the President of the Hamilton Club, on his right being the Hon. J. S. T. Stranahan, and on his left General John B. Woodward, the present President of the Board of Park Commissioners. At the south end of the table sat Colonel William Hester, and at the north end of it sat Mr. William B. Kendall. The other gentlemen at the principal table were Judge Charles L. Benedict, ex-Judge Alexander McCue, ex-Mayor Seth Low, the Rev. Dr. R. S. Storrs, the Hon. St. Clair McKelway,

ex-Judge B. F. Tracy, and the Rev. Dr. Charles H. Hall.

Among those present were G. M. Olcott, William B. Kendall, W. L. Ogden, C. S. Van Wagoner, G. R. Turnbull, F. E. Taylor, Judge Charles L. Benedict, W. H. Husted, P. Worth, J. S. Turner, D. Birdsall, B. H. Smith, J. N. Partridge, W. H. Williams, Clifford S. Middleton, J. F. Praeger, J. S. Frothingham, Alexander E. Orr, W. K. Paye, Henry Sheldon, F. E. Dodge, Edwin Packard, H. C. Collins, Theo. Dreier, J. B. Ladd, A. J. Perry, Abbott L. Dow, W. C. Kellogg, ex-Judge Alexander McCue, S. M. Parsons, C. A. Schieren, John Winslow, T. E. Smith, D. P. W. McMullen, Congressman-elect W. C. Wallace, E. F. Knowlton, Alexander Forman, General Henry W. Slocum, J. J. Walton, J. Hazelhurst, William Peet, S. Rowland, R. D. Benedict, W. P. Mason, L. Switzer, T. C. Long, G. P. Stockwell, L. H. Rogers, A. Fraser, H. A. Tucker, Jr., J. E. Spencer, W. V. R. Smith, H. B. Moore, W. N. Peak, J. P. Cranford, A. Segur, J. G. Johnston, C. A. Hoyt, W. A. White, A. B. Bayliss, H. E. Ide, W. S. Packer, W. C. Beecher, J. F. Conkling, St. Clair McKelway, J. S. Stanton, H. F. Koepke, Henry Coffin, R. Jenkins, C. A. Richardson, F. L. Eames, H. E. Nesmith, C. F. Wrede, J. C. Hoagland, F. Allen, D. M. Morrison, N. S. Bentley, H. S. Snow, D. S. Willard, E. G. Blackford, H. Brown, T. S.

Moore, W. H. Wallace, F. Birdseye, W. G. Budington, R. B. Woodward, C. Perry, W. V. Tupper, G. W. Mead, G. A. Jahn, C. W. Bangs, J. H. Bates, G. L. Ford, P. L. Ford, J. L. Morgan, Jr., W. K. Wilson, T. J. Backus, J. O. Low, John Gibb, William R. Porter, E. N. Pigott, Walter S. Logan, F. A. Guild, N. D. Putnam, W. A. Putnam, J. Wallace, C. W. Bowen, C. A. Moore, J. S. Coffin, W. H. Viegler, J. A. Nichols, C. Patterson, H. D. Atwater, E. B. Bartlett, T. H. Denny, T. E. Williams, S. Coffin, H. E. Nitchie, W. C. Gardiner, I. H. Cary, C. T. Howard, Charles A. Townsend, W. C. Ford, R. H. Turle, E. H. Kellogg, J. E. Leech, Benjamin F. Tracy, W. C. Sheldon, A. H. Ely, A. H. Van Cott, Joshua M. Van Cott, D. W. C. Brown, O. J. Wells, W. A. Reed, F. A. Schroeder, and others.

Before the guests were seated the divine blessing on the occasion was invoked by Dr. Storrs, after which the gentlemen addressed themselves to the excellent *menu* provided and to the exchanges of conversation, which were rendered easy and pleasurable by the skill and knowledge with which the congenial grouping of those present had been arranged.

It was 9:15 when the speaking, reported in these columns to-day, began, and quite midnight when it closed. President Olcott was both apposite and witty in his opening remarks and in his prefatory words introducing the speakers of the night. The



address of Mr. Stranahan was listened to with delighted attention, after the plaudits with which his rising was greeted. He delivered it in admirable voice and manner, and point after point was heartily cheered. The ovation which the entire affair signalized to him, under a variety of forms, was very marked during the progress of the extremely able and interesting words of his response.

The orators who followed him made Mr. Stranahan and Brooklyn their theme, and how well they did so their printed words attest. Dr. Storrs was never in better form. His eloquence was not a surprise. If his incisive humor was, it will not be hereafter to those to whom he may in that guise reveal himself, for he fairly abounded with it at notably apt and frequent intervals. He closed what he said with the words of dedication to her husband which Mrs. Stranahan has employed in her recently published volume on the "History of French Painting." Their beauty and tender truthfulness were made apparent to the hearts of all present.

The flowers which graced the occasion had been sent to Mrs. Stranahan, and mid dinner a felicitous acknowledgment was received from her and read by President Olcott. The address of Dr. Storrs covered the entire Brooklyn record of Mr. Stranahan. The remarks of Judge McCue and General Barnes referred to his

eminent relations to the bridge and the ferries. Ex-Mayor Low enlarged on Mr. Stranahan's position as a stimulating force in Brooklyn life, and wisely wove in an appeal for the municipal projects of improvements now under way.

General Woodward recalled the park record of the honored guest of the evening and magnified the need of greater park area for Brooklyn. The Hon. Waldo Hutchins, President of the Park Commission of New York, paid a tribute to Mr. Stranahan's abilities and character. Mr. St. Clair McKelway recounted the personal qualities and the perennial youthfulness of heart which have made Mr. Stranahan alike a marvel of achievement and a splendor of example to Brooklyn. The latter speaker's incidental allusion to the Hon. Henry R. Pierson, now of Albany, who represented Brooklyn in the State Senate, when park legislation was passed, was greeted with marked plaudits, as, indeed, were all the points successively made by the orators of the evening. The occasion closed, as it began and as it had progressed, with cheers for the illustrious gentleman whom it honored. Following is a report of what was said:

## THE BANQUET OF REASON.

It was 9:15 when the Dinner had been disposed of, and Mr. G. M. Olcott, who officiated as chairman very acceptably, rapped for order. The company was supplied with excellent cigars, and settled back to enjoy the intellectual part of the programme. Mr. Olcott said :

GENTLEMEN—This occasion may well call up this enthusiasm, because we cannot speak of our guest of the evening, in whose honor we are assembled, without bringing up in thought the whole growth and development of the City of Brooklyn. [Applause.] I remember a great many years ago—not so many in his estimation but in mine—in conversation with a business friend in New York, for whose opinion I had great respect, I mentioned as an advantage of living on Brooklyn Heights, where I did live, rather than uptown in New York, where he did (this was before the elevated railroads were built), that I could so readily get home from my office. He replied : “ Yes, you can get to Brooklyn easily enough, but the trouble is you are nowhere when you get there.” [Laughter.] His idea was—and a great many benighted New Yorkers still have it—that Brooklyn was a badly paved place lying between them and Greenwood Cemetery. [Laughter.] That was all they knew of it. And the carriage makers, as you all are aware, if they wanted to strongly recommend their work as good, used to say : “ It will even stand use on Brooklyn streets.” [Laughter.] In those days, as you cannot forget, there was but one place of intellectual enjoyment in Brooklyn

—the Brooklyn Institute—with a weekly course of lectures, supplemented by an occasional concert, with Luther B. Wyman to set us an example of courtly grace in handing on lady singers. [Applause.] And now look at the change. We have annexed New York by that beautiful bridge. We have enabled our friends there to cross over and enjoy the delights of Prospect Park and the luxury of riding on the boulevard ; and these advantages we owe probably more than to any other one man, to the energy, ability and foresight of J. S. T. Stranahan. [Applause.] I read some time ago of a dying man, in California, I believe it was, who was asked by the priest whether he forgave all his enemies. He replied that he had none to forgive—he had killed them all. [Laughter.] It is a good deal so with our friend. He has been called, and not always in friendship, the wizard and the magician. But the names well fit, and he has lived until a great many of those who formerly opposed him now count themselves among his friends. One gentleman here, since this dinner was spoken of, told me that while Prospect Park was being built and he read in the papers of the outrageous sums that were being expended, he felt like joining in a mob of indignant taxpayers to hang Mr. Stranahan to a lamp post [laughter], but after riding through the park and seeing what a park it was for the city he wanted to get up a mob of citizens to get lamp posts enough to melt and make a colossal statue. [Applause.] So the parallel between Mr. Stranahan and the late lamented gentleman of California is not so far-fetched. Indeed, I can share in that feeling, too, because while the bridge was being built I had a notion it was an awful piece of extravagance. But walking over it morn-

ing and night since its completion, the only way I can get myself together, I feel almost like paying for it myself. [Laughter.] Vividly appreciating the great growth and advantage of the city due to these and other works in which our eminent guest has been engaged, I ask you to join, standing, in drinking to the health of J. S. T. Stranahan.

The company arose to drink the health of Mr. Stranahan and united in singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." Then someone tenderly inquired, "What's the matter with Stranahan?" The response came at once loudly and unitedly, "He's all right!" The inquiring gentleman then wanted to know, "Who's all right?" "Stranahan," returned all in deafening concert, and loud applause followed.

Mr. Olcott presented Mr. Stranahan, who on rising to respond was greeted with three hearty cheers. When quiet was restored he spoke as follows:

#### SPEECH OF MR. STRANAHAN.

GENTLEMEN—I am here to-night as your guest by an invitation addressed to me by a committee representing the Hamilton Club of Brooklyn. The source, the medium and the special object of the invitation, as indicated by the letter, which I received, at once commanded my consideration, and awoke within me a pleasant sense of gratitude. It is true that Brooklyn has been my permanent home for many years; and I assure you that I have not been

unobservant of its growth, and, I trust, not an uninterested spectator of that growth. A special cause of a business nature brought me to this city in 1844, and here I have since continued to reside, now for nearly half a century. Here I expect to reside to the day of my death. There is no spot on earth to which I am so strongly attached as to the City of Brooklyn. In this city I have spent the larger and more important part of my life; and if I have done anything deserving the attention of my fellow citizens, it has been mainly done here.

The character of your invitation suggests to me that on this occasion you will naturally expect some words from my lips relating not to Brooklyn matters in general, but rather to those enterprises with which I have been particularly identified. This, I am persuaded, will by you be deemed a sufficient apology for what I am about to say.

The first of these enterprises is the one that led me to select Brooklyn as my place of residence. Having acquired an interest in the Atlantic Dock—an undertaking then in its infancy—I came here in 1844 in the prosecution of that interest. The construction of this dock engaged my attention, and for a series of years chiefly constituted my business. I had associates with me, and though we were all hopeful as to the future, we soon discovered that, in order to realize our expectations, we must wait for that future. Not one of those originally engaged with me in this undertaking lived to see the time when the Atlantic Dock Company made a dividend to its stockholders. Indeed, I was soon left alone, with the exception of a most excellent secretary,

who drew the first dividend check in 1870, which was twenty-six years after I embarked in the work. That, gentlemen, was a pretty severe tax on one's patience and hope. The facts of the present are that the Atlantic Dock is now a completed undertaking. Two hundred acres of land reclaimed from tide water, and added to the habitable area of this city; a resident population of fifteen thousand persons upon the land thus reclaimed; docks two miles in length, and warehouses built thereon with a frontage of one mile; the annual storage of a vast commerce brought to this great metropolitan center; an assessed valuation of property that pays one-two-hundredth part of the taxes of this city, such is the spectacle now presented to the eye of thought.

The second undertaking with which I have been connected, is the construction of Prospect Park. The people of this city in 1859, now almost thirty years ago, began earnestly to demand legislation for the twofold purpose of park improvements and parade grounds. The Legislature of the State, in response to this demand, appointed a commission charged with the duty of selecting suitable sites for each of these purposes. This commission, the next year, recommended that the necessary grounds be taken for two parks. The larger and more important of these parks was to be located in close connection with the great eastern cemeteries and Ridgewood Reservoir, and to embrace 1,300 acres of land. The other park, about one-fifth as large, was to be so located as to include the reservoir at Prospect Hill, near the site of the present Prospect Park. It was urged as an objection to this plan

that a park so far to the east could not properly be regarded as the Central Park of the city, and that a considerable part of it would, in fact, be out of the city and out of the County of Kings. The close proximity of the cemeteries with a pleasure ground was felt to be objectionable. The cost of so large a park in the Eastern District of the city, it was thought, would not be properly distributed among the people. A compromise was finally reached to the effect that the great Ridgewood Park, if ever constructed, should be made a local enterprise of the Eastern District, and that the proposed park at Prospect Hill should be considered an affair of the Western District. From this compromise followed the arrangement under which the Eastern District is now exempt from taxation for the payment of the expenses incurred in the construction of Prospect Park. This arrangement, though faulty, was a necessity at the time.

It often happens in the course of human affairs that it is not always practicable to do exactly what should be done, and when this is the fact, then the dictate of wisdom is to do the best that can be done under existing circumstances.

The arguments in favor of the construction of a park in Brooklyn, as used at the time, and presented at public meetings and through the press, as I now recall them, touched on a variety of points relating to this city. The health, strength, comfort, morality, and future wealth of the city would be promoted by building a suitable park. Brooklyn, though possessing certain obvious natural advantages over New York, but with less wealth and population, was in



danger of sinking into the character of a second-rate suburb of the greater city. It was also urged that the construction of Central Park in New York placed Brooklyn at a special disadvantage in bringing to itself taxable capital, and that a park was needed to overcome this disadvantage.

The Croton water-works in New York made similar works in this city a local necessity to its prosperity and growth. These and the like thoughts controlled the people in desiring and demanding the construction of Prospect Park. The splendid boulevard, extending from the park to Coney Island, is an appendage thereto, and will, in the end and at no distant period, be a part of the City of Brooklyn.

All the members of the first Board of Park Commissioners, with the single exception of myself, are now dead and their bodies sleeping in Greenwood Cemetery, and of those who have served with me at different times as members of this Board but few remain. It gives me great pleasure to say, on this occasion, that better and more cordial support no one could expect or desire than that which was given to me by my associates during my entire administration of park affairs. Differences of opinion so rarely occurred that in but three instances during the twenty-two years of my Presidency of the Board did measures brought before the members thereof fail of a unanimous adoption. My associates were wise and able men, and shared with me the responsibility of this great work. In this connection allow me to add the fact that Prospect Park had the full benefit of the skill and experience of the ablest landscape architects in this or any other country.

Looking back, as I now do, upon the past, and recalling its facts, I may as well say that my hardest task in the administration of park matters consisted in keeping the public mind in such active and effective sympathy with the undertaking as was needed to obtain the necessary legislation and also the funds requisite at the proper time and in sufficient amount to secure a speedy and economical construction of the park. I refer in this general remark to legislators, partisan leaders, speculating theorists, and especially to a small class of irrepressible men, sometimes designated as "cranks," who usually have the misfortune of thinking that wisdom was born with them and that it will surely die with them. The last of these classes was always the source of my greatest embarrassment in conducting the construction of the park. I am grateful that the work is done, and that my special duties in connection therewith are ended. The park speaks for itself, and will continue to do so in all coming time. I had no other interest, in undertaking and prosecuting this work, at a very considerable expenditure of time and toil and care, than that which is common to me and the citizens of Brooklyn; and if, in this way, I have been able to render a good service to the city I am heartily glad that the opportunity was afforded to me and that the service has been cheerfully rendered. I assure you, gentlemen, that I would not blot out the record of that service if I could; and I do not at this time see how I could essentially change it for the better. That it commands your approval is to me a source of great gratification.

The third undertaking with which I have had

some connection, is the construction of the East River Bridge. I assume that you will expect at least a word from me on this subject. While much might be said, the proprieties of the hour dictate that my utterance should be brief.

No candid man who knows the history of this bridge can fail to award special honor to William C. Kingsley and Henry C. Murphy, both of whom are now sleeping in their graves, or to the chief engineers, the elder and the younger Roebling, the former of whom lost his life, and the latter his health in a work second to no other of its kind in any age. The skill and vigilant care of the assistant engineers having the immediate charge of the work have attracted the attention and won the admiration of every intelligent visitor of the bridge.

To say that the bridge in the hands of the trustees grew in its dimensions, and hence that its cost was increased beyond the original estimate, is simply to state a familiar fact in the history of all great works of a like character. The original plan did not contemplate such a structure as the one finally built. The height of the bridge was increased in obedience to the order of the general government, and also its width and strength by the direction of the trustees. The bridge as actually constructed will support the freight and passenger trains of the trunk railways of the country. It has two carriage roads instead of one, as first intended. The approaches were at first designed to be simply iron trestle work, and for this the trustees substituted massive arches of brick and granite. The cables and suspended superstructure are

composed of steel and not of iron. In a word, the bridge as it is now, though costing more than the original estimate, is higher, wider and stronger than the one proposed in that estimate. It furnishes an elevated highway wider than Broadway in New York between the two cities.

These changes in the way of improvement abundantly explain the increase of cost. They were needed in order to make the bridge what it is and what it should be. Not to have made them would, in my judgment, have been a grave mistake.

Those who took the deepest interest in the East River Bridge, some of whom are already gone, will soon all pass away. Not one of them will be left. The bridge, however, will remain, as generations one after another come and retire, scarcely feeling the effects of time, as strong after the lapse of centuries as it was in the days of its youth. The cables will not lose their vigor. The towers will not bend and break under their weight. The anchorages will be faithful to their trust. The massive arches will never collapse. The steel and the granite will not rot. Fire will not burn the bridge. The winds of heaven will not shake it down. Time and toil will not bring to it any fatigue. There it will remain for ages, just where human skill placed it, a permanent memorial of the enterprise of a bygone period. Travelers will study it, the sightseers wonder at it. With all my heart I congratulate Brooklyn and New York, and especially Brooklyn, upon this splendid monument of what it is in the power of man to accomplish; and as in respect to Prospect Park, so in respect to this bridge. I think with

pleasure upon the fact that I had some share in the work of construction.

Now, gentlemen, I have spoken to you thus briefly and from my own knowledge in regard to the three subjects that seem germane to the purposes of this occasion. Indeed, the letter of invitation furnished me my text, and if I have been compelled to make myself a part of the sermon the fault is yours and not mine. I am not so prudishly modest that, in telling a story, I will dodge myself for the sake of not being seen. My mother did not teach me this lesson when I was a child, and I am now too old to learn it.

There is one other subject upon which, before closing these remarks, I think it proper to say a word. Brooklyn and New York are distinct municipalities, separated from each other by the East River. Is this an advantage to either? I think not. Would the consolidation of these two cities into one municipal corporation involve any harm to either? I think not. The people in both are essentially the same sort of people, living under the same general government and the same state government. They have the same manners and customs and also common industrial, commercial and social interests, and one municipal government for local purposes would serve them quite as well as two, and at far less cost. I know of no reason why this municipal distinctness should be continued, other than the fact that it now exists, and I confess that I can see no good reason why it should exist at all. I may be mistaken, but I think that the people of both

cities should seek a consolidation of both under the title of New York.

London is London on both sides of the Thames, and Paris is Paris on both sides of the Seine. Bridges make the connection between these sides in the two cities, and neither would gain anything by a division into two municipalities. Here, however, we have our City of New York on one side of the East River and our City of Brooklyn on the other side. So it has been in the past, and so, I hope, it will not always be in the future.

The East River Bridge, now added to the ferry system, and probably to be succeeded by other similar structures, will, as I trust, so affiliate the two cities in heart and sympathy, and so facilitate their mutual intercourse that both, without any special courtship on the part of either, will alike ask the Legislature of the State to enact the ceremony of a municipal marriage. As I cannot doubt, such a marriage would be an indissoluble union between the two. Each would be so well pleased with the other, and each so proud of the other that neither would ever seek a divorce. The marriage would be for life, and that life would last as long as the world lasts. New York and Brooklyn thus united and forming the great city of this Western Continent, would at once take rank with the largest cities known to mankind. The spectacle would be a splendid one in the records of city life. Every year would add to it greatness and grandeur. The consolidated city would in itself be an empire of industry, wealth and intelligence, and eminently fit to be the great metropolitan centre of a country, stretching

from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.

I have one more thought, gentlemen, which, as I trust, will not be deemed out of place on this occasion. My age forcibly reminds me that with me, the earthly things of which I have spoken to you, must soon give place to things of a different character and a much higher order. It is no secret to you, as it is none to me, that before us lies a yawning gulf upon which we must all at last be launched. Religious faith, with its anchorages and towers resting upon the solid rock of God himself, and that only can bridge that gulf and land thought safely on the further shore. Such faith is the common necessity of our race. No elevation of intelligence can either supersede it or do its work. There is no registration for man so exalted or so rich in the privileges and immunities which it secures and guarantees, as that which places his name in "The Lamb's Book of Life." May God grant us all a peaceful and happy transit from this changing scene to the brighter and better world above.

Mr. Stranahan's speech was applauded at different points, and when he resumed his seat there was great clapping of hands and waving of handkerchiefs and napkins.

The Chairman next introduced Rev. R. S. Storrs, D.D., who was greeted with applause. Dr. Storrs spoke as follows:

SPEECH OF REV. R. S. STORRS, D. D.

I thank you, Gentlemen, for your extremely kind welcome, although I confess that I am a little perplexed with doubt as to whether it is intended for me. For, in spite of a great many extremely kind and flattering invitations, I have not before attended a public dinner for so many years that I have been quite uncertain of my own identity, while I have been sitting here this evening. I have been sounding Judge McCue, to find out whether it was really I, or whether somebody else had got into my coat, trousers and boots; and I am not quite sure now that it is not the other man, and that he should return thanks. But I am—that is, if it is I—extremely glad to be here this evening. I am glad to see the beautiful, ample, elegant interior of this building, which I have never seen before, though I pass it so often in my daily walks, and though in it I know that so many of my friends find a pleasant half-home when any necessity turns them hither, as well as, of course, a great many delightful hours with one another and with others when they are at leisure. I was very much interested, at the beginning, in the establishment of this Club, and knew something of it when it was in its modest quarters on the corner of Joralemon street; and I am extremely glad this evening to see the evidences all around me of its growth and prosperity;



and I trust that its prosperity and power will continually increase in the years to come. [Applause.]

I am certainly extremely glad to join with you this evening in offering this tribute of esteem and admiration and honor to him who is the principal guest on this occasion. [Applause.] In fact, Gentlemen, I have been moved to think, for a good while, that it would be better if we should show our sentiments of confidence and honor toward those who are pre-eminent among us, more freely and more frequently than we do. [Good! Good!] We live all the time in a kind of critical and censorious atmosphere. The papers are always good natured. [Applause.] They never say hard things about anybody. [Laughter.] But we private citizens are sometimes in the way, perhaps even here, of expressing ourselves in sharp comment on those from whom we differ, and yet for whom we have sincere esteem and respect. Well, no honorable man wants to be flattered; but every man likes a certain degree of appreciation, if he has done anything to deserve it. And his faculties work better in an atmosphere of that sort. [Applause.] The sunshine makes the flowers bloom brighter, makes the trees burgeon, and expand their branches. And I do wish that there were more of this spirit of common regard, of esteem, of affectionate honor, familiarly expressed by us toward those who have been our eminent leaders, as this man has been. [Applause.] I think it would be well for all of us now and then to bring something of the golden light of the sunset, after the orb has descended below the horizon, into the afternoon sky of those whom we love. [Applause.]

I am a contemporary of Mr. Stranahan, although he got ahead of me in the matter of being born. [Laughter.] He came upon the planet twelve or thirteen years before I did, and I have never been able to catch up. But I tried to diminish the distance, as Randolph said when pursuing the man who was trying to get away from him, for I came to Brooklyn in 1846, while he came in 1844, two years before. And so I have watched his work, and have seen these things which he has referred to, from the root upward. A great many things he has not referred to. For example, he has not spoken of his connection with the War Fund Committee, in our critical time. [Applause.] He has not spoken of his connection with a great many of our institutions; with the Atheneum, which has started many other things in this city; with the libraries and galleries which have made the city attractive and beautiful. He has not spoken of his connection with the Ferry Company, of which he is the president. But he has spoken of three things. Well, they are great things; and I cannot help thinking how much came into this City of Brooklyn when Mr. Stranahan brought his wife and children here, forty-four years ago. How much came with this head, and with this will; and as much with the will as in the head! Those Atlantic Docks, of which he has spoken, representing the noblest part of the business of Brooklyn, and representing great business sagacity and patience on his part, and on the part of those associated with him. Yonder bridge, which opens for the citizens of Brooklyn a highway to the universe; which takes us out of the old isolation, and

makes our city immediately a part, whether municipally annexed in form or not, of the great City of New York, and facilitates our intercourse with all the world; illustrating the free and far-sighted large-mindedness of the man [applause], and of all the other men who were associated with him in the enterprise, and who co-operated with him so gladly and so intelligently.

And then, Prospect Park!—illustrating his love of beauty, his appreciation of its necessity and benefit in the civilization of our city, and representing that ornamentation of the great growing town which it pre-eminently needed, and which it is to need for all time to come. Of these three great enterprises of which he spoke, I don't know but the park is his particular pet and pride. It ought to be. He gave twenty-two years of his life to that park. I will not say the best years of his life, because the years that went before were, perhaps, just as good; and I don't know but the years that have come after have been as rich, and ripe, and mellow, and noble, as any that went before them, or as any that may still come after them. But he gave twenty-two years of the best of his life to that work; and those of us who saw the work while it was going on know that he watched it with the solicitude with which a mother watches her sleeping babe. There was hardly a tree removed, or a tree planted, hardly a drive or a walk laid out, or a bit of shrubbery planted here or there, to which his personal attention was not given. It is all very well for him to say that they had the best landscape architects in the world, but they could not have done anything without him. It is very well for him to say that

there were wise and able men associated with him, and they were wise; and they showed that they were wise and able by always making their agreement with him unanimous. [Applause.] I don't know what he *would* have done if he had had that other park of 1,300 acres!

Sir Joshua Reynolds said of Rubens, if I remember aright, that his genius always expanded with his canvas, his best pictures being uniformly his largest. We can see what Mr. Stranahan did with 550 acres: creating beauty and harmony, and crowning the hills with the ornament which art has placed upon them; taking that rough, rocky, hilly waste, as we remember it, and making it the pleasure-ground of hundreds of thousands for all time to come; taking that narrow, winding country road, if there was any there, which I doubt, and converting it into the magnificent broad boulevard, fronting the sea on one side and the park on the other, which gives to Brooklyn fame in the country, and, in a degree, fame in the world! What a tremendous work it was to do! I think if he had had the other 1,300 acres under his care we should have had a succession of parks that would have astonished the continent.

Now this is his monument. [Applause.] People say, not infrequently, "By and by we must put a statue of Mr. Stranahan in Prospect Park." Of course we must. But I don't see why we need to wait. We Americans do wait. Perhaps it is in the English blood. The French don't. Generally, here, men are dead before we raise statues to them. We have to be careful, we think, like the English woman who was called up before the judge, her husband having com-

mitted suicide. The judge said to her, "You were the first person who saw him hanging?" "Yes." "What did you do?" "Didn't do anything." "Didn't do anything? Why didn't you cut him down?" "Cut him down, Judge?" repeated the woman. "Why, he wasn't dead!" [Great laughter.] Now, why not start here to-night, with this very live man in front of us, and begin this business of the statue? There are enough here to begin this work, and carry it to success. I am the most wretched solicitor that ever was in the world, with very little tact and no experience [laughter], but I know that we could carry that to absolute and triumphant success within thirty days. [Sure.] So let us not wait to put up marble or bronze after our dear and honored friend has gone from among us, and we do not see him any more! But I rejoice to remember that whatever happens, bronze or no bronze, marble or no marble, he can take unto himself, standing at any point in Prospect Park, the words which Christopher Wren wrote on the frieze of St. Paul: "If you seek his monument, look around you!" [Great applause.]

I have taught him some lessons, perhaps; but he has certainly taught me one lesson worth remembering by all of us: it is, what a man in private station can do, if he intelligently sets to work to do it. We are accustomed to think that we must rely upon those who are in official station. Official station may not put a man on a pedestal at all, but in a pillory. It may not only not give him any power to work more effectively than before, but may diminish his power. A man in official station in any of our cities has to consult, as far as I can discover, those with him in

sympathy; the contrary opinion of others. And if there be any circle of government around him to control him, which there often is, he has then so to yield to others that he can hardly initiate and intrepidly carry forward to success great enterprises. We all remember what was said of New York in the time of the late lamented Mr. Tweed, that New York City was like the sun in an annular eclipse—nothing visible but the ring. [Laughter.] There have been other cities, since, of which that was true; although I trust it will never be true of this City of Brooklyn. But here is a man who has never occupied a public office, of any prominence, except in a post which was made necessary by his own initiatory enterprise. He was an alderman once, I know. He couldn't help it, and it is so long ago that it ought not to be laid up against him. [Laughter and applause.] He was a candidate for Mayor once, and I voted for him. But the other party were too many for us. But with those exceptions, as I have stated, he has held no public office. He has been a Commissioner of the Bridge, as one of the earliest and most efficient promoters of that great enterprise. But it has been as a private citizen that he has undertaken and carried forward these magnificent enterprises. I say that here is a lesson for every one. He has given us this park, which even those whom the Mayor has perhaps incautiously and unwisely put in charge of it, under the presidency of General Woodward, cannot seriously injure. I apply the "incautious" and "unwise" to those who are *under* General Woodward, of whom I happen to be one, but never to him!

Now, I hold it a great lesson that a man in simply

a private station can start upon a grand work for a great city, and carry it to success and to accomplishment in his own time ! But then he has taught me, at any rate, the lesson of patience ; patience, and quietness of spirit, in the midst of many things calculated to disturb the spirit. Undoubtedly he has had his disappointments ; hopes which he justly and reasonably entertained he has been unable to carry to success ; projects dear to his mind have failed to be realized. And he has been subjected to as severe criticism, at different times, as any man among us ; called, as we know, a wizard and a magician ; accused of working in the dark, mining subterraneously ; accused of doing I know not what all ; perhaps accused of putting money in his own pocket, but upon the whole I think that that charge has never been started. But he has been as quiet in it all as if every one spoke well of him. It has been a noble example which he has given. I have to learn a lesson in that direction myself. After we have been thoroughly trounced in some public fashion by some man, or possibly by a newspaper, we do not exactly like it. We feel inclined to sympathize with the schoolboy who was walking home rather stiffly, as though he had lately had some sore experience. Meeting a sportsman who said to him, "Is there any game around here ?" he replied, "There are no bears, or woodchucks, but there's the schoolmaster over there ; you might go over and take a pop at him, it would be an advantage to the community." [Laughter and applause.] Well, I don't know how much strife of the spirit our dear and honored friend has had within himself, but I know that he has never

expressed in public any uneasiness at any attacks made upon him. There is a word you rarely see in English. The French have it, the Spaniards have it, and the Italians have it: a word of Latin derivation—longanimity. It is the temper that waits patiently, that expects to be vindicated in the result, that silently endures accusation, to be at last crowned with victory. That we have in this man. I honor him for it; and I have tried to learn the lesson from him. And then, an inventive and heroic public spirit has been always manifest in him; and that, Gentlemen, is what more than anything else we need for our civic prosperity.

Here are two Brooklyns. One is the Brooklyn of convenience; the Brooklyn of streets, and shops, and markets, and churches, and schools, and pleasant homes. Here is another Brooklyn, which has come into existence and appearance; it is the Brooklyn of art and culture, which makes the city attractive to those who desire to live on the higher plane of largest life; who would fill the atmosphere of society here with a welcome to the noble, the true, and the beautiful, in learning and in art. And we must have the inventive faculty, the intrepid public spirit which works to great ends, to hasten the coming of that nobler, and brighter, and more fascinating Brooklyn; that so this city may not only remain happy and lovely, as it has been, but may become the happiest and loveliest in the country—on the continent. We want that public spirit which flinches at no obstacle; ready to devise wise plans, to be an inventor of good things, and then heroically to accomplish those plans and carry them into perfect execution. We want this



spirit in private citizens, not merely in public officials. Without it our dwellings are but hardened mud, and our marble buildings may be sepulchres of decaying life. But when we have this, we can make the city glorious and beautiful—a very Queen in the Nation, whose power and influence shall go throughout the land. Now, who will follow these men who have gone before, in this quality of heroic and inventive public spirit? I saw, just before I came here, some words written concerning our friend, by one who is dear to him—the dedication of a volume, elaborate, learned, rich, on the history of French Art. And it struck me that it expressed my own feeling precisely. I count it an honor and a pleasure of my life to have been so many years here associated, on terms of unbroken confidence and fellowship, with one of whom these words could be written: “To my Husband: in honor of the rare qualities of his service to others, through his ready perception of the rights of kinship, citizenship, and humanity.” [Great applause.]

Chairman Olcott—A paper has just been sent up to me which reads:

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this meeting that a bridge to be called the Stranahan Bridge should be built from the foot of Broadway, New York, to Governor’s Island and thence to Brooklyn, which bridge shall not be less in height and general effective sufficiency than the now existing New York and Brooklyn Bridge.

I do not know who sent it. One advantage to the Club in honoring one who is still hale

and hearty is that it has brought out some members who do not come to the Club so often as I would like to see them. Among them is Judge Alexander McCue. [Applause.] I ask him now to say something to us.

Judge McCue had a fine reception, and, waiting until the applause subsided, he made these remarks:

#### REMARKS OF JUDGE McCUE.

I wish, gentlemen, I could offer you anything that would be worthy of the occasion, but after the address that has been delivered by our distinguished guest, and the remarks of Dr. Storrs, I do not think I could interest you. I was very glad to be invited to come here, because, although I have been a member of the Hamilton Club, this is the first time I have ever visited the Club. I came, too, because I have a very great respect for the distinguished gentleman who is your guest. I have known him for a great many years. I do not think I have known him eighty years, or eighty-one years, but I have known him since he commenced the building of the Atlantic Dock—about that time. I knew him well during the building of the bridge, and while it is true that Mr. Kingsley and Mr. Murphy were strong men in the building of the bridge—indeed, Mr. Kingsley was really the originator, and Mr. Murphy was the wise man who directed the legislation through which the bridge was accomplished—still, after all, I know that Mr. Stranahan was really the main man there. He

was the Chairman of the Executive Committee. He was the man who suggested how to raise the money. He suggested everything that was possible for the purpose of making everything smooth and pleasant, and we had some very troublous times when the bridge was building. He was really the man who was entitled to a great deal of the credit for that.

Of course, there are many men in the City of Brooklyn who have been very important figures in the different works to which Mr. Stranahan has referred. Of course, he could not do it alone. He has had to have legislation; he has had to have help in the cities of Brooklyn and New York, but he has always been a very strong and reliable man, and while I can give credit to other gentlemen who have contributed in these works, I must say of Mr. Stranahan he was the prudent man all the time. He was a sagacious man. He was the man who threw oil on the troubled waters. Without such a man a great many of the things spoken of to-night would not have been accomplished.

Now, as to the suggestion that there be a statue of Mr. Stranahan erected, I think it is a good one, and I recommend that it be taken up actively so that we may experience the gratification of having a representation of Mr. Stranahan in his favorite place in the Park. May it be many years before he is taken away from us.

The Chairman—Another of our members who does not come in so often as we would like, although more often than Judge McCue, has

just entered—the Rev. Dr. Charles H. Hall. We will now hear from Dr. Hall.

There was loud hand clapping mingled with cheering at the introduction of the popular and eloquent divine. Dr. Hall surveyed the enthusiastic company and then proceeded to say these things:

#### SPEECH OF REV. DR. HALL.

Dr. Storrs is certainly as unfair a man as I know. I would have taken about the same line of thought, though without so much embellishment, and I would certainly have repeated what he has said, in a less ornate form. I am among the younger members of Brooklyn. I have been here some twenty years, and, finding it good enough for me, I have stuck to it ever since and propose to do so for some time to come. The old saying of the classics is that we can count no man happy till he dies. I think we can count Mr. Stranahan happy to-night. I have been watching his countenance with affectionate interest. All of his fellow citizens have a desire to express for him, while he is still in the bloom of youth, the affectionate reverence we all have for him. The works he has done for the city have brought him into a position among us that teaches me a lesson that has not been mentioned, and that is, that it is very often that the best part of a man's life to be roundly abused; and that that abuse is certain to come to a man whenever he gets to a point where he thinks to amount to anything.

And in looking back over life myself I have great gratitude now toward those who have helped me to understand myself a little better than I did when as a young man I came across these Brooklyn Heights, vastly different then from now; in front of Trinity Church, where the old sleepers then lay—I don't mean sleepers above the platform, but where the sleepers lay as it was being built. To think of those days and Brooklyn as it then was, a suburb of New York, with a cow-path marking the future line of Fulton street; the lines of Montague street, then not a street but a waste, and no houses till we got down to Harrison street. But it is not my desire to speak at any length to-night.

I concur most heartily in what has been said concerning Mr. Stranahan. The enterprise which he has carried out and his labors through the storms he has encountered certainly have made for him to-night a very proud record, and I shall pay Dr. Storrs the compliment of not soaring any higher than to express to Mr. Stranahan the judgment of all those whose opinion is of any value.

The Chairman—The gentlemen who got up this Dinner have done faithful work. While they have all done their share, I think to Mr. Willis L. Ogden belongs a good deal of credit. I believe it was at his suggestion the large floral decoration was sent down, before we commenced speaking, to Mrs. Stranahan. I have just received this in reply (reading):

To the members of the Hamilton Club participating in the Dinner in honor of her husband, Mrs. Stranahan sends thanks for the fact that though, owing to circumstances beyond her control, she is absent, she is not forgotten; also, that to her, indeed, are accorded the flowers of the feast: the visible symbol, if not, possibly, by some occult force, the very materialization, of its wit and reason.

The Chairman—No discussion of any subject connected with the bridge would be complete without hearing from our worthy member, General A. C. Barnes.

#### SPEECH OF GENERAL A. C. BARNES.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN—I think there can be no fitter occasion or subject for one of these Hamilton symposia than the one we have to-night. The serene gentleman who sits by your side, sir, seems to provoke eulogium. And why may he not be received by this company? For we all acknowledge him to be the Abraham of our civic faith, the Nestor of our municipal policy, and, if you please, the DeLesseps of our metropolitan achievement. To-night, I think we may add, the Samuel who prophesied the union of our two cities. All of these titles he has earned right here in Brooklyn, and while he is still younger than any of the original worthies to whom I have ventured to compare him, when Mr. Stranahan is full grown I think we shall be surprised at what he will accomplish. At all events, it is a great pleasure to

us to be here to meet him and to express to him our cordial feelings, and I for one am proud to have the opportunity to lift up my voice in that line.

I will endeavor to address myself, sir, as you have suggested, to that phase of our friend's career with which I was familiar for several years personally, namely, his labors in connection with the great bridge. Before you and I, sir, saw the magnificent span, or perhaps even conceived it, it already existed in the busy mind and the determined purpose of a very few men. And many—I may say the most of these—were still with us at the time when I entered the Bridge Board a youthful and very modest member in 1879. The heat and burden of the day at that time were past practically. The uncertainties and difficulties which at first gathered about the undertaking had been happily overcome, and it only remained to carry on the plans of the great architect with the abundant means provided by an appreciative community and to complete the structure. Of those veterans whom I met at that propitious time in the old office of the bridge—many of you may remember it was over the coal yard at Fulton Ferry—of those veterans some of the greatest, Mr. Kingsley and Mr. Murphy and Mr. Prentice, have passed away. Mr. Marshall and General Slocum and Mr. Stranahan remained to see the bridge opened for traffic and then resigned their charge. We younger men who now control the details of the management have little part or lot in the glories of that older day. The builders of the Pyramids were greater than those who occupied the

chambers they had built. The latter were Pharaohs, to be sure. They are dignified, but dead—very dead. It is no reflection, however, upon the frequent failures of the present potentates of the bridge to obtain a quorum. [Laughter.]

Although nearly ten years have elapsed, I still recall vividly the scenes which I witnessed when those old giants of administration were with us. Each of them excelled in some department of executive ability, but none of them, I may safely say without depreciation to any—none were so masterful in debate as our friend Mr. Stranahan. He could argue like a lawyer. He was very effective in pleading, and upon occasion he could threaten like Ajax himself. On his persuasive eloquence all objections, all obstacles and all obstructions were swept away, and his measures prevailed almost invariably, as has been here recited to-night. One great beauty of his forensic victories was that, so far as I know, they never left a sting behind them, and those who had most vehemently opposed him were always the first to acknowledge the wisdom of the decision that had been in a sense thrust down their throats. The last of these great battles in which our friend participated was the battle royal of the ferries. Mr. Stranahan has always been a sort—as you know by the sketches that we have all listened to, if you do not know by your own observation—has always been a sort of high commissioner of immigration for Brooklyn. Before the Bridge days he was a ferry man, a very devoted ferry man. In fact, I may say he was the St. Christopher of



the East River, the patient bearer of all comers to our shores. Only I think if he could have so arranged it he would have had the boats run but one way [laughter], so that no one could escape from this Eldorado of homes when once landed, and to those eager, arriving throngs he would have had Palinurus, the pilot, proclaim from his point of vantage as the boat entered the dock: "Brooklyn! Unlimited time for refreshments! [Laughter.] Next and last station, Greenwood!" [Laughter.]

Well, when the bridge was finished it was Christopher Stranahan who had the courage, ignoring because he scorned to receive the charge of interested motives, to stand up in the Bridge Board and demand that the bridge should not enter into a ruinous competition with the ferries. He brought to his aid all the resources of sentiment, of equity and of policy. He depicted those faithful servants which had brought to Brooklyn its already vast population, and pleaded that they should not be deprived of their occupation, because another medium of communication had arisen for service by their side. Then in common justice he urged that the private investments in the ferries made in good faith had a right to protection from public assault, and, lastly and chiefly, he insisted upon it as the highest public policy that Brooklyn should foster every means and every form of service which would make her borders most convenient and most accessible at the greatest number of points to the greatest number of people. "If you destroy the ferries," he said, "you will depopulate South Brooklyn and the grass will grow

in the Wallabout, and thousands of people who live below the bridge termini or do business below the bridge termini will rise up and call you—anything but blessed.” And so he said to his colleagues: “Gentlemen, this won’t do. We not only need the bridge in Brooklyn, but we need the ferries, too.” [Applause.] And so, gentlemen, it comes to pass we have them both and all to the present day. And so we see that “grand old man”—for he fairly shares the title with the English statesman, whom in many points he resembles [applause]—we see him looming in the history of the bridge, even as the Brooklyn tower looms above the shifting tide. His memory, whether you erect to him a statue or not, will be as imperishable as that granite pile.

It has been often whispered, and more than once before to-night spoken of aloud, that it would be a great thing for both cities if they could be united under one corporation. Reflection along that line of thought makes it easy to fancy those two mighty bridge towers, representing on the one hand the inspired engineering of Roebling, and on the other the faithful trustee Stranahan, swinging between them the cradle of the future consolidated metropolis. [Loud applause.]

The Chairman — We have heard from the park side; we have heard from the bridge side, and, to make the story complete, we want to hear from the side of the city as well; and who can speak to us so well as the Hon. Seth Low?

The handsome ex-Mayor arose, amid much applause, to respond. This was what he said:

### SPEECH OF EX-MAYOR SETH LOW.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN—It has been to me a great pleasure to take part in this Dinner given in honor of Mr. Stranahan. I am sincerely glad to have this opportunity to lay my tribute of appreciation at Mr. Stranahan's feet for the value of his services and life in our midst. I may not speak altogether from the standpoint of a contemporary, although I made my own appearance in Brooklyn only six years after Mr. Stranahan [laughter], and only four years after Dr. Storrs. But if I speak for a younger generation, I trust that it will detract nothing from the satisfaction of our guest to know that his life here is treasured and respected and honored by those who are so much younger than he. There is one point in connection with his life that it seems to me our attention has not yet been called to, that is well worthy of mark. There may be some good cause which has asked for help in the City of Brooklyn since Mr. Stranahan has been a citizen of Brooklyn which did not receive his help, but if there be such a cause it never has been my fortune to hear of it. [Applause.]

I think there is no institution calculated to make Brooklyn a pleasanter place to live in, a place offering more to those who are dwelling here, that has ever appealed to Mr. Stranahan without meeting a cordial and glad response. Some men, you know,

only take an interest in those things which they themselves originate. Mr. Stranahan never has been such a one. While inventive in the best sense, as Dr. Storrs has said, for the good of Brooklyn, he has never withheld his co-operation, so far as my knowledge extends, from any good enterprise desired by others. That quality entitles him, as I conceive, to high honor. Mr. Stranahan has been from the beginning one of that small group of worthies of whom it used to be said that they took the happy and fortunate Brooklynite on the other bank of the river and brought him across the stream; they then received him in the cars of the Brooklyn City Railroad and carried him whither he would; they then offered him amusement in the Academy of Music, instruction in the Mercantile, now the Brooklyn Library, the resources of wisdom in the Historical Society, and finally a resting place, as General Barnes has said, in Greenwood. It has been said slightly sometimes—sometimes as a jest. But it all covers service—service for the good of his fellow citizens.

I sometimes have thought it was rather characteristic of Mr. Stranahan that from his high point upon the bridge he has been able to look down upon his colleagues in the ferry and say, as he might say if he please, "I told you so!" His prophetic faith in the complete success of the bridge led him, I think, with more steady assurance than any of his colleagues to believe that it would profoundly affect the ferry system of Brooklyn. He has lived to see his faith justified completely. But, as has been said, Mr. Stranahan's chiefest

memorial in the minds and hearts of the people of Brooklyn is the Prospect Park. The old Roman poet said, you know, when he committed his songs to the leaves of literature, "I have erected a monument more enduring than brass." Mr. Stranahan has committed his fame to the songs of the forest leaves. It may be said that the grass withers and the flowers fade, but it is also true that the grass withers only to spring up again in the Spring with a new verdure, and the flowers fade only to bloom once more. So, I believe, it will be in regard to Mr. Stranahan's fame in connection with our beautiful park. As long as the flowers, the grass and the trees continue to delight our people, so long the people will hold his name in grateful remembrance. [Applause.]

But there is another matter in connection with the park and the bridge that I think calls for a word of notice. Dr. Storrs spoke of the inventive policy, of the foresight of those days. He spoke of the heroic persistence with which those works then planned were carried out. He did not speak of the immense faith in Brooklyn which marked the devising of the park at the time when it was begun. It is easy enough for us to-day, a city of 800,000 people, to say that Prospect Park is only such a park as we ought to have; but I imagine it took immense courage, gentlemen, twenty-eight years ago, when Brooklyn was a city less than one-third of its present size, to believe she was capable financially of carrying that work and her share of the Brooklyn Bridge through to complete success. It is true that when the panic struck the city in 1873 it

brought everything to a standstill, just as it did many another enterprise the land over. For ten years and more the city was obliged to pursue a policy entirely the opposite of that which had ruled before. She was obliged, under every administration, to take in sail in every direction, to throw overboard what could be spared, and to shape her course with reference simply to carrying successfully the load that those early days had placed upon her. But the faith which those gentlemen had in Brooklyn was abundantly justified. She has come through it triumphantly. She carries her park and her bridge to-day with an ease that makes us all unconscious that she carries it.

Our debt to-day, our net debt, the first of this year, was more than \$6,000,000 less than it was when it was my fortune to be elected Mayor, and in those six years a city larger than Rochester has been added to the Brooklyn of that day. I want to ask for the present time some of that confidence in the power and capacity of Brooklyn that marked the earlier period. I want to ask for our present Mayor the support of the people of Brooklyn in the large plans for our future that he is asking us to consider. [Applause.] I believe he is absolutely right in his belief that the City of Brooklyn as she is circumstanced now—for mind you, with the settlement of the arrears problem the whole condition of Brooklyn's finances has been changed—I believe the Mayor is absolutely right in his contention that Brooklyn can better afford to borrow money at  $2\frac{2}{3}$  per cent. interest for the wholesale repaving of our

streets than by declining to do so, to tax ourselves heavily for a comparatively small improvement, and to go without the large impetus to our future growth that would come from such a system of well paved thoroughfares as he has suggested. [Applause.]

I think the experience of Berlin, gentlemen, is to the point. In 1870, or thereabouts, it was one of the worst paved cities of Europe. They began then to repave it, and they tried to do it through the annual tax levy. They discovered, after a year or two, that it would take forty years to repave Berlin at the rate at which they could tax themselves. They therefore borrowed \$4,000,000 from the Imperial Government and repaved Berlin, and made it in ten years one of the best paved cities of Europe. Now, I ask you, if the Brooklyn of 267,000 people could devise and carry through to success the Prospect Park, and a little later could bear two-thirds of the burden of the Brooklyn Bridge, whether the present Brooklyn of 800,000 people proposes to flinch before a proposition of this kind, bearing upon its surface, as it seems to me, every mark that entitles it to support. I think the city is to be congratulated that we have reached once more the point at which the enthusiastic believer in Brooklyn can, as Dr. Storrs said, devise and carry forward works for the future.

Then, Brooklyn has reached in another respect a point that Mr. Stranahan, I am sure, has long hoped for, and which some of us have sometimes thought might never come. Men of wealth and power in the city have begun to do largely out of

their own means for the honor of the city. The Adelphi Academy has been the recipient of splendid gifts from one of our fellow citizens. [Applause.] The same liberal heart and hand have erected the Pratt Institute [applause], which is calculated, in my judgment, not merely to do a beneficent work in Brooklyn, but to add honor to the name of Brooklyn all over the Union. Another of our fellow citizens has erected the Hoagland Laboratory [applause], and there he proposes, if his hopes are borne out, as I am sure they will be, that the study of the human body shall be made with so much of skill and patience and research that the name of Brooklyn will be written upon the medical and scientific annals of the country in imperishable letters.

Gentlemen, these are great things to be thankful for, and they are partly due to the guest of the evening and to the other men who, twenty-five or thirty years ago, believed largely in Brooklyn. They believed, and therefore we have the bridge and the park, and because we have those things, these, their successors, are willing to do things for Brooklyn of the kind to which I have alluded. Now, we need another thing in Brooklyn. We need a public library. I do hope that before many years go over our heads, either some munificent individual, or private citizens co-operating with the city, will take hold of the Brooklyn Library and make it free. [Applause.] It is not possible, it seems to me, to overestimate the importance of the public library in the education of the masses of the people, according to modern methods. If any of you know



how the university extension scheme has worked in England; if you know that in connection with the classes of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle there are a hundred thousand students reading all over this broad land in their homes, and reading under intelligent direction and advice, you must appreciate how important it is that those who want so to read should have the means at their disposal. A great city like Brooklyn needs a public library. I believe we never shall be the city we ought to be until we have it. I bespeak of those who are in this room that we take that up as one thing to speak for and to struggle for until we add it to the other attractions of this great city.

Now, gentlemen, have I wandered far afield? I think not, because we are standing in the presence of Mr. Stranahan, whose constant devotion of forty-four years has been to make Brooklyn a nobler, lovelier and pleasanter city in which to dwell. He has taught us that lesson of implicit faith in her capacity and in her future. I think we should miss completely the meaning of this gathering—those of us who are younger—if we did not take from this presence the inspiration of such a faith, such a trust, such an absolute belief in the Brooklyn that is to be. [Applause.]

The Chairman—We had hoped to have the Mayor with us, but he sent a note stating that it was impossible for him to be here. We are, however, fortunate in having with us

General John B. Woodward, the President of the Park Commission, whom I now present.

General Woodward was cordially received. He talked as follows:

#### SPEECH OF GENERAL WOODWARD.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN—I count it very fortunate, indeed, that I am able to be with you here to-night to join with you in a personal and in some way official recognition of the services of Mr. Stranahan. All of you see the results of his labors from the outside. I am fortunately so situated that I see much of them from the inside, and as I study the annals of the park in the office I cannot fail to receive an inspiration for the faithful performance of the duties which have been temporarily consigned to me. And I want to say to you that, from the few months' experience I have had there, I marvel that any man could have remained for twenty-two years performing the arduous and vexatious duties devolved upon the office. I know something of what I say when I assure you that the cranks and persons who come to offer advice are a troublesome lot. [Laughter.]

If you could go forward as you do in your business with a feeling that the citizens of Brooklyn had confidence in you when you were placed there, and would leave you to perform your duties in such way as your best judgment may dictate, the path of public officers would be one of roses. As it is now, to guard themselves from assault on the

one hand and on the other to do only what is right, is indeed a task which few men, unless they had the courage of Mr. Stranahan, would hold for so many years. The work he has done, if you will consider it for a moment, as shown by the record, has been a vast one. The total cost of the park has been over \$9,000,000, and every dollar has been accounted for on the books of the department. Then, for twenty-two years he had the annual appropriations to look after, varying from \$125,000 to \$175,000 — watching all points and guarding against the intrusion of the hordes who would like to have participated in all that vast sum of money.

It has been told to you that Mr. Stranahan came to Brooklyn in 1844. Let me say this: It's a great pity he did not come here sooner. I will give you a few figures to prove this. Brooklyn has in its park area 678 acres of land; New York has 5,157; Philadelphia, 3,000; Chicago, 3,000; Boston, 2,000; St. Louis, 2,232; Baltimore, 770; San Francisco, 1,181; Washington, 1,000; Buffalo, 900. Of these nine cities Brooklyn is at the bottom. Where would it have been but for Mr. Stranahan? [Applause.] Brooklyn has one acre of park area to 1,100 of its people. Imagine 1,100 citizens of Brooklyn, if they all wanted to use the park at once — 1,100 on one acre. New York has one acre to 232; Philadelphia, one acre to 282; Chicago, one to 168; Boston, one to 170; St. Louis, one to 157; Baltimore, one to 428; San Francisco, one to 198; Washington, one to 188; Buffalo, one acre to 178 people; Brooklyn only one acre to 1,100

people. Now compare Brooklyn with Europe. London has 22,000 acres of parks; Paris, 58,000; Berlin, 5,000; Vienna, 8,000; Tokio, 6,000; Brussels, 1,000; Amsterdam, 800; Dublin, 1,000. Brooklyn behind the great cities of Europe. Brooklyn has one-fifth of the average of American cities and one-ninth of the average of the cities of Europe. What would our position have been without Mr. Stranahan?

Let me say that Mr. H. B. Pierrepont in 1825 tried to preserve for public uses the ground now known as Columbia Heights. He had prepared at his own cost a plan for making a park and submitted it to the trustees of the village and the parties in interest. It was approved, but was defeated by the exertions of one individual who had a small interest in the property. If Mr. Stranahan had come to Brooklyn in 1825 this park on the Heights would have been preserved to Brooklyn, and the ground between the westerly side of Hicks street and the river would have been Iphetonga Park, and every citizen of Brooklyn would have been as proud to take visitors there as when you go to Boston they are to haul you across the Common.

In 1835 Governor Marcy appointed a commission to devise a system of parks for Brooklyn. They devoted four years to this work, and in 1839 recommended eleven sites for parks and squares, Johnson Square, Lafayette Green, Bedford Green, Marcy Square, Prospect Square, Reid Square, Fulton Square, Mount Prospect Square, Tompkins Park, Washington Park, City Park. Of these the three latter only survive; and as late even as 1868 a very deter-

mined effort was made to cut up Washington Park, Fort Greene, and sell it off in building lots. Mr. Stranahan stopped that. If he had come to Brooklyn in 1835, nine years before he did, these eleven parks would have been added to the park area of Brooklyn. I want to emphasize the fact that when Mr. Stranahan took hold of the matter Brooklyn got some park area. If he had come here and begun that same course in reference to the original laying out of Brooklyn, what a different place it would have been. Here we have the streets built up solid without any public squares, and right here, let me say, it has been a matter of great embarrassment to the Beecher Memorial Committee to find a place in the city in which to erect the statue of that great man, and it has been forced to go out to Prospect Park. Even there they suggest the removal of the bust of Washington Irving to some other place, so that Beecher and Irving may take turn about in that position. It may be wise to reserve another spot in Prospect Park where we can erect this statue of Mr. Stranahan, which has been suggested, and I know I can assure you that the present Park Commissioners will take great pleasure in trying to give it a proper and permanent place.

The Commissioners feel that they have a light duty to perform now in respect to the park, as their work is mostly that of maintenance. We are simply to preserve what Mr. Stranahan has prepared. Those of us who remember the land as it was before he took hold of it cannot but wonder that he had such faith in the future. Compare what it was then with what it is now, and it must

be to all of you a source of great happiness and glory that this gentleman came to us in 1844. I hope that the plan proposed to my fellow Park Commissioner (Dr. Storrs) to-night may result in something substantial, so that in the future the citizens of Brooklyn may have before them the faithful likeness of Mr. Stranahan in enduring bronze. [Applause.]

The Chairman next introduced Mr. Waldo Hutchins, of the New York Park Commission. Mr. Hutchins was cheered, and having arisen, spoke in this way:

#### SPEECH OF WALDO HUTCHINS.

MR. CHAIRMAN—I feel that I am here to-night under false pretenses. I came over to shake hands with my old friend Mr. Stranahan, whom I have known longer than any gentleman in this room, I presume. I came over to listen and not to speak. You don't expect me to speak of New York. She is in an eclipse to-night and our friend Stranahan has put her there. What Mr. Stranahan has done for Brooklyn has incited us to try to do something a little better. You are not only indebted to him for your Prospect Park, but I think that the inspiration coming by him to us has induced us to add to our parks something like 4,000 acres within the last two years, all of which I think Brooklyn is entitled to the credit of, and our friend Mr. Stranahan. There is no citizen whom it would give me more joy to come and meet and see

honored to-night, as Mr. Stranahan has been, than himself. It has been said that a man in private life could not do as much as a man in public life. I think Mr. Stranahan is an instance of what a man in private life can do. And undoubtedly it is true that Brooklyn to-day is more indebted to him than to any other one individual for its great public works which have been undertaken and carried through within the last few years, and which have made Brooklyn famous the world over.

Fifteen years ago a man going abroad—even my friend Judge McCue—would not register himself as coming from Brooklyn, but as coming from New York. [Laughter.] Now I am sure he registers himself as from the City of Brooklyn and its great bridge. Why, any one coming from abroad now looks at the great bridge uniting the cities of Brooklyn and New York as the first thing to be seen and to admire. It is the greatest architectural and engineering undertaking that has ever been accomplished in the history of the world, and adds to the seven wonders of the world, and has become the eighth wonder of the world. But it seems to me, gentlemen, that we must not overlook in this gathering here to-night some qualities which our friend Stranahan possesses, which, although they do not come under the term of public improvements, have a mighty bearing, and which endear him to the people of this city more than all else—his gentle acts of kindness and his love to his fellow man. [Applause.] I would ask you, gentlemen, who ever saw him in a passion? As stern a man as ever lived; decided in his views; a man whom a child

could lead, but whom a giant cannot drive. [Applause.] There is not a child in the City of Brooklyn who does not love him, nor is there an adult who does not admire and respect him. And it is this which has endeared him to you as much as these great public works with which he has been connected; genial in his heart's intercourse in life, honest in all his business engagements, having but one end in view, the interest, protection and advancement of the citizen.

There is not a tenement house in this city to-day not healthier and better for his living here. Not a street that is not in better condition than it would have been if he had not lived here. I think the spirit he has always manifested among the citizens of this city, the noble purpose of always doing that which was best for his fellow citizens, regardless of himself and his own private interests, is that which brings you here to-night to do him honor. It is too late for me to say much more, but as I have been seated here the lines of Leigh Hunt have come into my mind and they seem to me to have been for our friend Stranahan. At any rate, if he did not have him in mind it was a man just like him. They are these:

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)!  
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,  
 And saw within the moonlight in his room,  
 Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,  
 An angel writing in a book of gold;  
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
 And to the presence in the room he said,  
 "What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,  
 And with a look made of all sweet accord,



Answer'd, "The names of those who love the Lord."  
 "And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"  
 Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,  
 But cheerily still; and said, "I pray thee, then,  
 Write me as one that loves his fellow men."  
 The angel wrote and vanish'd. The next night  
 It came again, with a great wakening light,  
 And show'd the names whom love of God had bless'd,  
 And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

The Chairman—We are always anxious to know what the press think, and particularly what the *Eagle* thinks of Brooklyn men and events. Brooklyn, indeed, would not be Brooklyn without the *Eagle's* expression being nightly known. We have with us this evening the Hon. St. Clair McKelway, the Editor of the *Eagle*, who will now address you, so you can tell now what he thinks before the account of this Dinner is reviewed to-morrow. [Applause.] Mr. McKelway was heartily cheered on rising, and spoke as follows:

#### SPEECH OF MR. ST. CLAIR MCKELWAY.

MR. PRESIDENT—I shall not make my remarks so long this evening as the distance of 150 miles I have traversed to-day to participate in the pleasant proceedings of to-night. The mention of Mr. Stranahan has on all sides elicited the statement that to think of him is to think of the park, of the park from inception to completion, and from completion through the many years of maintenance in which it was under his fostering care. I take it that

the reference which Mr. Stranahan made to those legislators who stood in important relations to the grant of power to him and his associates, to work out the trust committed to their hands, was deliberately uttered by him. It has been my fortune in the last three days of absence from the city, in the discharge of official duties for the State, to be associated with one formerly a resident of Brooklyn, who was instrumental largely in helping forward the legislation necessary to the power to acquire and create Prospect Park. I refer to the Hon. Henry R. Pierson, formerly of this city [applause], now a member of the Board of Regents and Chancellor of that body. It was his privilege to be, while a resident here, the President of the Brooklyn Club, the only Club of the kind to be compared with this one, and the best members of which, with a few exceptions, are members of both organizations. [Laughter.] When Mr. Pierson left Brooklyn for larger fields of activity that organization gave to him a parting dinner of recognition and tribute, which was, I think, up to that period, the most significant social ovation in the history of our town; and I can see in the faces of certain here present the working of the mellow memories of the profound condition of animal and of ardent spirits into which they plunged on that occasion. [Much laughter.] To-day he bade me bear to his friends—and all Brooklynites are his friends, as your applauding hands attest—the assurance of his honor, gratitude and sense of deep appreciation of the labors of the guest of this evening. [Applause.] I know that I could not be original without a contradiction of Solomon, who

said, "There is nothing new under the sun;" and I would be more than human could I add anything of novelty or much of value to the accordant tributes which have been heard around this table to-night to the career and character of the eminent young man [applause] who is our guest upon this occasion.

All this concurrent expression of the worth of Mr. Stranahan in the forty-four years of his residence in Brooklyn — which numbers more years than I have been a resident anywhere—involves certain qualities which have been guardedly, gently, and, in some of the speeches, even grandly, suggested. I think that a distinguishing trait of our friend is his urbanity. His manners of courtly distinction, yet of refined simplicity, have always encased him like an atmosphere, or radiated from him like a solar light. Then, as Dr. Storrs has remarked, is that "longanimity" of the man, that long suffering and much enduring patience. He has known and shown that the best answer of any man to calumny and criticism, or misinterpretation of any sort, or from any source, is the rounded record of a blameless life. He has known and shown that vilification is the tribute which malignity and envy pay to merit and success. [Tremendous applause.]

The first time I was ever interviewed in my life was when I made an attempt to interview Mr. Stranahan. [Laughter and applause.] I remember very well he had a red handkerchief. It was an oriflamme of more evasive power than the bandana of contemporaneous human interest. [Laughter.] I told him what I came for. He told me what I

was not going to get. He made me as unanimous as the Park Board under his administration [laughter], and when I came back to my chief, he said to me, "Young man, you are no more of a failure than many of your predecessors in the same line." [Laughter.] His control of temper has been spoken of. Commissioner Hutchins, of the lesser Brooklyn [laughter], has said that no man ever saw him in a passion. Gentlemen, that is a Washingtonian characteristic which I think demands special commendation at this time. By it he made doubters disciples, opponents allies, and enemies friends, and by it he has indicated and vindicated his sublime reliance on science, and on time, and on the maturing public spirit of this city. [Applause.]

He has told you that an industry which has had its genesis in his brain, and which under the wand of his mind, like the earth, sprang from almost nothing into beauty, now pays one two-hundredth part of the taxes of this city. Is there a man who can say of any other institution of equal power I am it, and it is I, in this or any other American municipality, or in an European municipality around the globe? I think not. [Applause.] He has also spoken to us in the character of a prophet, and predicted the consolidation, the eventual union, of these two cities by the sea. I am, perhaps, from not unselfish reasons, proud of the autonomy of Brooklyn, and reverence for our guest does not involve the necessity of agreeing with all his propositions. I hope that never will be the time when Brooklyn shall lose her identity and be merged with New York or any other municipality. I believe that the genius of

American statesmanship is manifested in the smaller rather than in the larger municipalities. I believe that the interests of our people are enhanced by the division and distribution, rather than by the centralization, of political powers. I want Brooklyn to remain Brooklyn, and to develop as Brooklyn in all the future. [Applause.]

One of the speakers to-night, less embarrassed than myself, because he came earlier, said he wondered whether he was himself or somebody else. Now, sir, as there is only one Dr. Storrs, I marvel at his surprise. [Applause.] As a member of Parliament said "Ditto to Mr. Burke," so I would be glad to say now "Ditto" to what the leader of the American pulpit has advanced here to-night concerning our eminent guest. I shall not enlarge in these remarks upon any further points illustrative of Mr. Stranahan's career and character. For age, by itself considered, we all have a tender feeling; but, at best, longevity is but sheer and mere duration, and it is not necessarily either admirable or impressive. No number of yards or years of time, measured to us off as our own, can constitute distinction. To exist is only not to die. To be and to do something is to live. It is Mr. Stranahan's distinction to have identified great age with great achievements. [Applause.]

I heartily second the erection in Prospect Park of a monument to this great and good man. Samuel Findley Breese Morse did not detract by anything he did from the monument erected to him in his lifetime. William Tecumseh Sherman will not detract by anything he shall do from the one

it is proposed to erect to him in his lifetime in the City of Washington, which he preserved as the capital of an indissoluble union of indestructible States. Nor will our honored guest do aught to detract from the intention here formed and soon, I hope, to be carried into organized effect. [Applause.]

I do not believe that, except in years, he is so old as many men I see around me. He has caught from nature the secret of perpetual youth. "He is the youngest," as Dr. Holmes said on a semi-centennial Harvard occasion, "at our board to-night." We wish him many long years yet ahead, and when the summons which comes to all mortality shall come to him, may it then be said of this great civic American, as Dr. Storrs once said of the greatest President of our own time and annals, that "From the topmost achievement of man, a life well spent, he stepped to the skies as the gates of pearl swung inward at his approach." [Applause.]

At the conclusion of the applause excited by Mr. McKelway's address, the guests joined in singing the verses of "Auld Lang Syne," with impressive effect. The gentlemen then paid their parting respects to President Olcott and to Mr. Stranahan, after which the memorable occasion came to an end.

The following speech was prepared by S. M. Parsons, for delivery at the Stranahan Dinner if volunteer speeches had been called for :

MR. PRESIDENT—It is singular how difficult it is to project and carry out great public improvements. It seems to be given only to men of large brain and unselfish public spirit to forecast the coming needs of a growing people ; and, then, for one to succeed, he must be a man of energy, and pluck, and of iron determination, with an undoubting faith in himself. He will be a target for ridicule and misrepresentation, and, without a sublime confidence in himself and his measures, he will succumb.

I well remember, years ago, meeting that prince of men, who honored Brooklyn in her mayoralty chair, for one or more terms, the late George Hall. It was on the corner of Clinton and Livingston streets, and we both were looking at the water mains being laid in Clinton street.

“ Why,” he said, “ the people will not yet believe that water is to be introduced into their dwellings, although they see the pipes going down under the ground. They look upon the whole thing as a huge job to gobble up the public money. They have no faith that anything will come of it.”

The same incredulity and suspicion marked the inception of the park and bridge enterprises, and but for the grit and public spirit and wise forecast of our honored guest and his associates—the true prophets and seers of Brooklyn—we should still be discussing the propriety and feasibility of those two wonderful works. It needs a man of nerve to take the bull by the horns, and push, and *push*,

no matter who is gored, himself or others, only that he be master of the situation, and progress is made. An impalement of himself now and then only lends more vigor, and makes that progress the greater.

We recognize in Mr. Stranahan the man for the occasion—the wise projector, the skillful and successful executor ; and it is fitting that his long years of service to the people's good, without fee or reward, should be acknowledged.

When triumph has crowned devotion like his, and everybody is enjoying its fruits, we are apt to lose sight of the great architects of our good fortune. The result seems then as a matter of course—a necessary evolution, and not a special creation of special brain, and energy, and forethought. How often appear most simple the processes of a great discovery, after it is made ! The falling of an apple, the bubbling up of steam from the homely tea kettle may prefigure a mighty revolution in science and mechanics.

All honor then to our distinguished guest for the part and lot he had in these great matters.

Ancient Greece and Rome would have perpetuated his memory in enduring marble or bronze ; but he needs no work of his fellow citizens to send down his name to the future ; for they of the present generation and their children to the latest day, and the visiting strangers, as they enter the gates of our beautiful park, and enjoy its charms of field and forest and meadow and landscape, will read on every tree and green walk and sequestered vale,

Stranahan fecit,  
 "Si queris monumentum,  
 Circumspice."



LETTERS OF REGRET.



## LETTERS OF REGRET.

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The following letters of regret were received:

[FROM MR. B. D. SILLIMAN.]

56 CLINTON STREET,  
BROOKLYN, December 4, 1888. }

GEORGE M. OLCOTT, Esq., President, etc.:

*My Dear Sir:*—A disabling cold compels me to decline your kind invitation for the 13th inst. It would, I need hardly say, give me very great pleasure to meet your excellent guest and his hospitable hosts, and it is most reluctantly that I forego the opportunity of doing so. During the more than half a century in which I have enjoyed the acquaintance and the friendship of Mr. Stranahan his course—his advance in life—has been one of constant, generous and steadily progressive usefulness to others and honor to himself. His wisdom, his energy and his efficiency have each been very remarkable. In their combination they have been conspicuous and effectual in the development and conduct of the chief institution of our city. His name is identified—as his memory will be—with all our great public improvements, among them the park, the great marine basin, the ferries, the bridge, and with our institutions of learning, of art and of benevolence. These will be his monuments. His unchanging integrity and untiring and generous fidelity to his friends have given him a warmly welcome home in all their hearts. Again expressing my sincere regret that I cannot enjoy the privilege of being with you on the occasion of your reception of Mr. Stranahan, I am, dear Mr. President,

Cordially yours,

B. D. SILLIMAN.

[FROM MR. STEWART L. WOODFORD.]

HAMILTON CLUB,  
THURSDAY, December 13, 1888. }

*My Dear Mr. Stranahan:*—More than I can well tell you am I grieved and disappointed that I cannot join our fellow townsmen to-night in their tribute of respect and affection to yourself. But I must go to New York in fulfillment of a promise made long ago—before this Dinner was arranged.

May all good health and happiness be yours.

Faithfully,

Your friend,

STEWART L. WOODFORD.

To the Hon. J. S. T. STRANAHAN.

[FROM MR. A. W. TENNEY.]

EVENING POST BUILDING,  
206 BROADWAY,  
NEW YORK, December 13, 1888. }

Hon. J. S. T. STRANAHAN:

*My Dear Sir:*—I fully intended to be present at the Dinner so appropriately given you to-night by the Hamilton Club, but not being a member of this Club, I find myself unable to obtain a seat. I regret exceedingly I cannot unite with the citizens of Brooklyn in paying you this well-merited compliment, but as I cannot, I send you this note conveying to you my heartiest felicitations upon this rich occasion of your life.

I trust the last days of your long and useful life may be the best, and that the glory of the evening may be to you brighter and more lasting than was the morning.

With assurances of high regard, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

A. W. TENNEY.

[FROM MR. FREDERIC A. WARD.]

161 REMSEN STREET, }  
BROOKLYN, December 7, 1888. }

*My Dear Sir*:—I greatly regret that a professional engagement at Albany will prevent me from being present at the Dinner proposed to be given to Mr. Stranahan on the 13th inst.

I am quite in accord with the spirit of the occasion, and should delight to join in honoring our distinguished fellow-citizen, to whose disinterested and public spirited devotion to her interests our city owes so much.

Very truly yours,

FREDERIC A. WARD.

TO WM. B. KENDALL, Esq., Chairman, etc.

[FROM MR. CHARLES PRATT.]

CHARLES PRATT & Co., }  
26 BROADWAY, }  
NEW YORK, December 4, 1888. }

Mr. WM. B. KENDALL, Chairman of Committee Hamilton Club, Brooklyn, N. Y.:

*Dear Sir*:—I regret very much that the wedding of a young friend will prevent my attending the Dinner to be given in honor of our mutual friend, Mr. J. S. T. Stranahan. If it is possible, however, for me to return by half-past ten I shall come in, but am afraid I shall not have that pleasure, which I very much regret. Should be glad if you will extend to Mr. Stranahan my congratulations upon the continuation of his good health, and the high honors which his honorable and useful life entitles him to.

Regretting my inability to definitely promise to attend, I remain,

Very truly yours,

CHARLES PRATT.

[FROM MR. JAMES P. WALLACE.]

14 SCHIRMERHORN ST., )  
 BROOKLYN, December 13, 1888. }

*Dear Mr. Orr:*—Will you please allow me a suggestion. It is generally conceded that Brooklyn is indebted to Hon. J. S. T. Stranahan for the best features of Prospect Park and Ocean Parkway.

Except for him it is almost certain the Manhattan Beach Railroad would have crossed the Parkway on grade. It is quite as certain that the Elevated Railroad would have planted its posts in the center of the Parkway, had not the good sense and powerful influence of Mr. Stranahan stood in their way. And it is positively certain that if Mr. Stranahan was at the helm, that splendid drive would be preserved to the public, and not be ruined by any railroad corporation.

My suggestion is that the Dinner party being held at the Hamilton Club this evening, start a petition to change the name of Ocean Parkway to Boulevard Stranahan, in honor of the man to whom Brooklyn is so greatly indebted.

Napoleon III., in recognition of less distinguished service, gave the name of Boulevard Haussman to the finest avenue in Paris. Should not Brooklyn do as much in honor of our first citizen?

Respectfully yours,

JAMES P. WALLACE.

TO MR. A. E. ORR.

[FROM MR. WILLIAM G. LOW.]

58 REMSEN STREET, )  
 December 11, 1888. }

*My Dear Mr. Stranahan:*—Finding that I shall be unable to attend the Dinner in your honor at the Hamilton Club, I write to express my appreciation of your public spirit, your sagacity, your tenacity of purpose and your foresight, all of which have been freely given to the advancement of Brooklyn's interests.

Nor do I fail to appreciate the benignant courtesy with

which you have treated me, as well as, doubtless, the other men of my generation.

Hoping that for a long time yet you may sojourn among us here, I remain with sincere respect,

Yours truly,

WILLIAM G. LOW.

To Hon. J. S. T. STRANAHAN.

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[FROM MR. WILLIAM PEET.]

BRISTOW, PEET & OPDYKE, }  
 20 NASSAU STREET, NEW YORK, }  
 December 13, 1888.

*Dear Sirs*.:—Sadness in my bereavement, in the loss of a dear little grandchild, unfits me for the festivities of this evening to do honor to our esteemed friend Hon. Jas. S. T. Stranahan.

It is eminently proper that the oldest Club in Brooklyn, as representing its older residents, should pay their respect to one to whose prophetic vision, energetic action and unbounded liberality in time, influence and estate, our city is so greatly indebted.

Known to me personally for about forty years and appreciated as a personal friend, as well as a life-long friend of my honored father, now in the better world, I have, perhaps more than any others, a higher duty to pay him great respect; especially as the Good Book says: "Thine own friend and thy Father's friend forsake not."

Please make to Mr. Stranahan my apologies for my absence, and my wishes that for many years he may yet live a noble example to coming men of Brooklyn, as he has been for many years to their fathers.

I remain, with great respect,

WILLIAM PEET.

To MESSRS. WM. B. KENDALL, WILLIS L. OGDEN, C. S. VAN WAGONER, GEORGE R. TURNBULL, Committee.





PRESS COMMENTS.



## PRESS COMMENTS.

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[From the BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE, December 14, 1888.]

### THE DINNER TO OUR CHIEF CITIZEN.

The *Eagle* to-day reports the merited but remarkable tribute to the Hon. James S. T. Strauahan, tendered last night by a representative gathering of his fellow Brooklynites. The occasion was a recognition of signal achievement, of magnificent character, of splendid abilities, and of the fact that the chief citizen of this city has passed the eightieth milestone on the road of life, his eye undimmed and his natural force not abated.

Age is a gift of the gods rare enough to mark their capriciousness, yet, in another sense of comparison, frequent enough to make the celebration of it, merely for its own sake, not especially impressive. A dullard may outlast his century, and, so far as the world is concerned, may have survived his usefulness by as many years as he has been born. Oldness, by itself considered, is like largeness, smallness, tallness or shortness, purely incidental. In it is neither excellence nor the reverse. What we do in our period is the thing. The resultants of any stewardship are the praise or the condemnation of it. If those resultants have been wholly selfish, it may be better for the man that he never had been born. If they make for the good of kindred, city, commonwealth and country, for the nation and for humanity, the man has been a blessing to his time and clime.

Measured by these principles, the gentleman who honored the Hamilton Club with his presence last night may be sure of the verdict of the minds and of the hearts of Brooklynites and of the verdict of history as well. He has been contemporaneous with some of the grandest events in the history

of the world. He is older than the utilization of steam for the purpose of navigation. He was entitled to be a voter when the first locomotive started Echo from all her caves. The United States had not long shaken off their dependence on Great Britain on the land when he was born, and, after he was born, they challenged successfully her supremacy upon the sea. He has seen the number of our States trebled, the area of our territory quadrupled, the birth of the telegraph, the discovery of the miraculous telephone, the wonder of the phonograph, the knitting of the continents into instantaneous unity of thought by the cables, the growth of our nation from 6,000,000 to 60,000,000 of people, the establishment of the perpetuity of the Union, of the nationality of liberty, and of the universality of suffrage on this side of the earth.

The recitation of the marvels of God's working in his time could be indefinitely extended, but generalizations, in each of which are held myriads of details, will suffice for suggestion. In as many of these changes as he has been able to affect, his part has not been small. His has been a constructive, a creative and a prophetic life. He took part in laying out the first grand line of railway which belted the East to the West with bands of iron. He was the pioneer in this city by the sea of those enterprises which make Brooklyn the entrepot and the depot of the commerce of three continents. For long years he poured in treasure, labor and faith, taking out nothing from the deposit, until at last his hope, his energy and his prescience were rewarded, and men saw that he had builded wiser than they knew. His relations to the park and to the bridge we need not recite, for they are household words in Brooklyn. His relation to the cause of Union and of liberty is as marked and distinctive as that of any of our citizens, and stamps him as a man whose confidence in moral principles equals his faith in the material resources of his country and in the indomitable capabilities of our citizenship. None of the men in the past who have built up the name and the

fame of Brooklyn has failed to find him an invaluable counselor and an indispensable coadjutor. None of the men of the present who have succeeded to the trusts which the founders of our city bequeathed has failed to realize that in the career and character of James S. T. Stranahan reside the indication and the vindication of a municipal patriotism, of a municipal statesmanship and of a municipal spirit which honor Brooklyn and which alike typify and account for the quality and the degree of our prosperity.

We do not look upon him as old. In heart, in hope, in resilience, he was the youngest at the board last night. He has caught from life the secret of living. The Greeks had a saying, "Call no man happy until he is dead." They had a decree prohibiting the erection of memorials to the living. Their theory was that, until the human account was closed, something might at any time occur to mar its stately proportions or to detract from its symmetrical and exemplary character. No such apprehension need be felt about Mr. Stranahan. We know that patient, gentle, wise and benignant man has a right to happiness in the fact of a life lived for others, and that from this table-land of time looking backward on the past and forward on the future, we can say in pride and he can say with confidence, "Whatsoever record leaps to light, his never will be shamed."

The *Eagle* heartily seconds the proposition started last night of a monument in the park to the man who made the park. It is fitting that the project should be effected while the man is alive to enjoy it, for not only would the fact be a deserved and felicitous tribute to him, but it would also be a proof of the gratitude and appreciation felt by Brooklyn for her most achieving and her most illustrious citizen, who has wrought for her so long and wrought for her in every high and helpful department of endeavor so transcendently well.

[FROM THE BROOKLYN STANDARD-UNION, DECEMBER 14, 1888.]

### BROOKLYN'S FIRST CITIZEN.

It is safe to say that the several hundred thousand people of Brooklyn who were not at the Hamilton Club's Dinner to Mr. Stranahan last night will partake of "the feast of reason and flow of soul" which is served in the *Standard-Union's* report of the proceedings to-day. Mr. Stranahan has had a full share of the rough criticism that often falls upon public men, but it never swerved him from his purposes, and really seems to have acted upon him as friction upon the diamond: it gave him a brighter polish.

Tenacity has been one of his distinguishing characteristics, and if the belief that ultimate success was sure to transform censure into praise in the end ever inspired him in the days of his early struggles, it has been abundantly justified in later years.

Rev. Dr. Storrs seems to have touched the point exactly when he said that "no man wants to be flattered, but every man wants to be appreciated;" and that Mr. Stranahan's grand life work is now appreciated has been shown to him by many a public and private sign before this Club Dinner was ever thought of.

As to that work, it is not easy to say which particular branch of it has been of the greatest service to the community—the Atlantic Docks, the Parks, or the Bridge. The last two were essentially public works, and, therefore, they have received the greater share of public attention; but the first, though a private enterprise, was the natural precursor, if not progenitor, of the last two, and helped largely to give this city the population that made them the necessities they are to-day. What the city is now it may largely thank him for, and no one will now dispute his right to be called "the first citizen of Brooklyn."

[From the BROOKLYN DAILY TIMES, December 14, 1888.]

### J. S. T. STRANAHAN.

The Hamilton Club honored itself last evening by paying tribute to the distinguished services James S. T. Stranahan has rendered to Brooklyn. Mr. Stranahan has encountered his fair share of criticism and misrepresentation during a more than ordinarily long and busy life, but he has survived it all, and to-day we doubt if there is one citizen of Brooklyn who would not gladly join to do him honor.

The three great works with which Mr. Stranahan has been identified from the beginning, as he stated in his speech last night, are the Atlantic Docks, Prospect Park and the Bridge. The first of these has had an incalculable influence in fixing Brooklyn's position as one of the great seaports of the world; the second has had scarcely less influence in making Brooklyn attractive as a city of homes; the third has given an unparalleled impetus to our growth and has practically made the two great metropolitan centers one city. It is no small glory to any man to have been conspicuously identified with all of these great enterprises.

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[From the NEW YORK SUN, December 15, 1888.]

### BROOKLYN AND NEW YORK.

The citizens of Brooklyn have good reason to hold Mr. James S. T. Stranahan in honor, for during more than forty years past he has been the leading spirit in every great project for the improvement and development of that now vast community.

When Mr. Stranahan first made his home in Brooklyn, in 1845, it was a town of only about 50,000 inhabitants, while the population of New York was nearly ten times as many. At that period, too, it was remarkable for a village-like character, even among places of its own size; and in all respects it was a mere satellite of the greater town, with comparatively few important industries of its own, and with little public or private enterprise. The inhabited area did not

extend far from the shores of the East River, and the only way of access to it from New York was by ferries with accommodations so indifferent that they retarded the growth of the community. The fine City Hall was in process of erection, but besides it there were no public buildings of consequence, the city being noted only for the number of its churches, all of which were without architectural importance.

In other words, Brooklyn was a very slow place in 1845, but Mr. Stranahan at once began to infuse into it his own energy, for even then he foresaw that because of its natural advantages it was destined to become a vast community. He first gave his attention to developing the water front by pushing forward the Atlantic Docks to successful completion. He was instrumental in improving the ferry facilities. He conceived and brought about the establishment of the magnificent Prospect Park, and he was the most strenuous advocate for building the East River Bridge at a time when the project was looked upon as chimerical. There has been no wise enterprise for the development of Brooklyn which this distinguished citizen has not aided and promoted.

It was therefore fitting that the leading men of the community should unite in giving Mr. Stranahan a Dinner on Thursday evening in recognition of his great services to the town. On that occasion, although he is now over 80 years of age, he spoke with the vigor of youth, and showed that the sagacity for which he has been so remarkable during his long career as the foremost man in Brooklyn is in no wise diminished.

He has witnessed the growth of Brooklyn from a sleepy town of 50,000 inhabitants to a great city of more than 800,000 population, and yet he rightly foresees that its progress has only just begun. To accelerate that progress he is convinced that the consolidation of Brooklyn with New York is necessary, and that it is inevitable. As he said on Thursday night, there is no other reason why the present separation should continue than that it actually exists. The two communities are one in interest, and their common



advantage requires that their municipal policy should be the same.

Brooklyn now is as much an integral part of New York as Harlem, and with the multiplication of bridges across the East River, sure to come in the early future, it will be not less closely linked with it. From an economical point of view also, as Mr. Stranahan remarked, the maintenance of two municipal governments where only one is necessary does not exhibit wisdom on the part of the two communities. The cost of administration is increased without any corresponding benefit, but to the actual disadvantage of both, since both would gain by a uniform scheme of development.

The argument that the greater the community the greater the dangers from municipal government under popular suffrage is not sustained by the experience of New York. With a population of more than 1,600,000, it is better governed now than when it was half the size, and when Brooklyn adds 800,000 more the improvement is likely to go on. The more important the interests and the more magnificent the possibilities, the greater will be the incentive for men of distinguished administrative ability to take part in municipal affairs.

The two communities are bound to come together, and may Mr. Stranahan live to see the day of the union.

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[FROM THE NEW YORK EVENING POST, DECEMBER 13, 1888.]

## BROOKLYN'S FIRST CITIZEN.

COMPLIMENTARY DINNER BY THE HAMILTON CLUB—OVER  
ONE HUNDRED OF HIS FELLOW CITIZENS  
TO BE PRESENT.

A compliment is to be paid this evening to a man who is often called "Brooklyn's First Citizen." He is James S. T. Stranahan, and a Dinner is to be given in his honor by the Hamilton Club in the Club-house, on the Heights. Mr. Stranahan's long and honorable career of more than four-

score years has just been crowned by his election as a Presidential Elector for the Empire State, a position he first filled when he aided in the re-election of President Lincoln. For over forty years Mr. Stranahan has been identified with the growth of Brooklyn, and the creation of Prospect Park and the building of the East River Bridge will be indissolubly connected with his name.

In his long and varied life Mr. Stranahan has followed a variety of pursuits and has always enjoyed high honor; and now in a serene old age he enjoys the fruits of a laborious career, amid the surroundings of competence, in a happy home. A school teacher and civil engineer in his youth in central New York, when only twenty-five years old he founded and built up a flourishing village in Oneida County. When thirty years old he represented it in the State Assembly. Then, after a short residence in Newark, where he promoted railroad interests, he went to Brooklyn in 1845. That city, then ten years old, was just feeling a new impetus after the panic of 1837, which stopped the building of her immense City Hall. Mr. Stranahan saw the commercial possibilities of the barren shores of South Brooklyn, and projected the great warehouse system there, now known as the Atlantic Docks, which do an immense business.

The first public honor Mr. Stranahan received was an election as Alderman, and in 1850 he was the Whig candidate for Mayor, but was defeated. Four years later, however, he was sent to Congress, where he scored an excellent record. Returning to Brooklyn, he was made one of the Commissioners when the Metropolitan Police Board for this city and Brooklyn was organized. When the plan of Prospect Park was projected he took a deep interest in it, and was made President of the Commission from its formation in 1860. He held this position until 1882, and the entire system of Prospect Park—by competent authorities declared the finest urban park in the country, with its connecting boulevards and the Coney Island Race Course—was largely due to his

fertile brain and guiding hand. Meantime he became deeply interested in the projected bridge linking the two great cities, taking stock in the enterprise, and when it was made a public work taking the position of trustee, which he held a dozen years, and succeeding William C. Kingsley as President of the Trustees. For a third of a century he has been identified with the Union Ferry Company, and hardly any public matter in Brooklyn has failed to receive hearty support at his hands. In the war, as a member of the War Fund Committee and in the work of the Sanitary Fair, which raised \$500,000, he was active and useful. His wife has just completed an important work upon the history of French painting.

The invitation which Mr. Stranahan has accepted to dine at the Hamilton Club to-night has been extended by such well-known Brooklynites as Alexander E. Orr, S. B. Chittenden, the Rev. Dr. Charles H. Hall, George M. Olcott, ex-Mayor Seth Low, Gen. Alfred C. Barnes, Isaac H. Cary, Gen. Benjamin F. Tracy, W. B. Kendall, Willis L. Odgen, and Robert B. Woodward. In it they say, "It is the desire of your friends, in a simple and unostentatious manner, to declare their appreciation of what you have been able to accomplish for the welfare of the city in which for so many years you have lived an honored and useful life."

The number who can be accommodated at the tables in the Hamilton Club's dining-room is 110, and the applications for seats have been so many that the Dinner Committee, composed of Messrs. Kendall, Odgen, Van Wagoner and Turnbull, have had difficulty in accommodating all who desired places. There will be speeches, more or less informal, after the coffee is served, for the guests of the evening, ex-Mayor Low, Dr. Hall, Gen. Tracy, and others. Notwithstanding the fact that he is in his eighty-first year, Mr. Stranahan is in the enjoyment of good health, and he presided at a public meeting in the late campaign.

[FROM THE NEW YORK INDEPENDENT, December 20, 1888.]

The Hamilton Club of Brooklyn, last week, gave a splendid reception to the Hon. J. S. T. Stranahan at a Dinner to which he was invited, as the guest of the Club, in commemoration of his "honored and useful life" in that city. Mr. Stranahan has been a resident in Brooklyn ever since 1844; and during this period has made himself a great social power of good to that city. He is now one of its oldest inhabitants, having just passed his eightieth birthday. He has been intimately identified with three great public enterprises—namely, the Atlantic Docks, Prospect Park and the East River Bridge, all of which have brought vast benefits to the city, and the first two of which are mainly the creations of his brain. It was eminently fitting that such a reception should be extended to him in the evening of his life, when lengthening shadows are pointing so significantly to its close. Mr. Stranahan in the speech which he made to the Club, gave a brief sketch of the particular enterprises with which he had been specially connected, suggesting at its close the expediency of consolidating New York City and Brooklyn into one municipal corporation. His last words, falling as they did from veteran lips and sobered age, which we here reproduce, deserve to be read and pondered throughout the world :

"I have one more thought, gentlemen, which, as I trust, will not be deemed out of place on this occasion. My age forcibly reminds me that, with me, the *earthly* things of which I have spoken to you must soon give place to things of a different character and a much higher order. It is no secret to you, as it is none to me, that before us lies a yawning gulf upon which we must all at last be launched. Religious faith, with its anchorages and towers resting upon the solid rock of God himself, and that only, can bridge that gulf, and land thought safely on the further shore. Such faith is the common necessity of our race. No elevation of intelligence can supersede it or do its work. There is no registration for man so exalted, or so rich in the privileges and immunities which it secures and guarantees, as the one that places his name in the 'Lamb's Book of Life.' May God grant us all a peaceful and happy transit from this changing scene to the brighter and better world above."

Mr. Stranahan did honor to himself in paying this appropriate tribute to religious faith as the final resting-place for the human soul. All experience proves the truth of his words.













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