

THE MOUNTAINEER'S FATHER WILLIAM

“ YOU are old, Father William, ” the young man said,
“ And your waistcoat is awfully tight,
And yet you persistently plough up Sty Head,
Do you think, at your age, it is right ? ”
“ In the days of my youth, ” Father William replied,
“ I fostered each Sybarite taste ;
But now I strive hard my tum-tum to retard,
By wasting to limit my waist ! ”

“ Ye are old Father William, ” the young man cried,
“ Relinquish a passion so dread !
Lay ice axe and rope and dementia aside !—
Remember the years o'er your head ! ”
“ In the days of one's youth, ” Father William replied,
“ A passion more deadly appears ;
It is better for years to be over my head,
Than for me to be head over ears ! ”

“ You are old, Father William, ” the young man said,
“ And your legs are as flabby as suet,
Yet you gloat in a week on a second-rate peak,
Pray, how in the world do you do it ? ”
“ In the days of my youth (Young men *will* be young men),
I was peaked on my skill at Peak-et !
And the muscular strength (which I didn't use then)
Comes in for a subsequent day ! ”

“ You are old, Father William, ” the young man said,
“ Yet your tongue is as trusty as ever ;
You consistently lie in a manner that I
Consider infernally clever ! ”
“ I have answered three questions, and that is enough,
Come on, if you're coming at all !
I'll hold you—this Buckingham's capital stuff—
I'll hold—but I'm hanged if I'll haul ! ”