

The Varsity

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BY

THE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

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OCTOBER 28, 1890.

THE LITERARY SOCIETY.



It was a very tired and sleepy-looking assemblage that met the eyes of the President last Friday evening. Owing to the sports in the afternoon the attendance was slightly smaller than usual, and those who had come were in a somewhat wearied and exhausted condition. The meeting was preternaturally quiet. No one had sufficient energy to make an interruption or to raise a cheer. Only gentle murmurings of applause greeted the measured accents of the speakers.

Some, indeed, of the more noble and patriotic spirits made gallant efforts to arouse the Society to its native vigor. Early in the evening serious and repeated fluctuations were observed in the gas supply, and it was not until the Recording Secretary had made a personal visit to the basement and had engaged in a desperate hand-to-hand encounter with the experimenter that tranquility was restored amongst the gas-jets. Occasional scuffling, too, and shouts of defiance drifted faintly into the hall from the outlying departments. But all was in vain. The sedateness of the Society remained unmoved. Not a yell, not a war-hoop disturbed the Sabbath-school-like stillness of the air.

Mr. Horne gave us a reading. Mr. Standing read a good essay, a remarkably good essay. Both were heard with attention and appreciation, and even with wild enthu-

siasm. The Glee Club was called for, but failed to respond. It was not dead, but sleeping. Mr. Stringer, abetted by the chairman, went as a search expedition for a soloist. The Society waited. There was no yelling, no unseemly boorishness. The members leaned back in their seats and dozed.

No soloist appearing, the debate began forthwith. The subject was of a solid and scientific character: "Resolved, That sentiment has a greater influence in moulding the destiny of the race than reason."

Mr. Cooper opened for the affirmative, dealing out history and statistics in a serene and gentle voice. Continued attention began to awaken the society. Faint murmurs of applause were heard. A joke, which was found imbedded in one of the later sections of Mr. Cooper's speech, called forth drowsy laughter from the corner of the room. Encouraged by this, the plaudits of some of the younger members grew firmer, and upon the conclusion of his speech Mr. Cooper was, one might almost say, vigorously cheered.

Mr. Knox followed for the negative. Gracefully introducing the subject with specifications of its difficulty and his own unworthiness, he proceeded to lightly touch it from the psychological, algebraical, anatomical, physiological and theological points of view, successively. Under Mr. Knox's more fervid and impassioned delivery, the society became stimulated, and on some occasions almost rose to a sense of its position and responsibilities; but when the last polysyllable had undulated its slow way down the hall and made the turn for the door, and it was seen that the speaker had resumed his seat, the meeting relapsed into sudden and complete inanity. Mr. Reeves, however, threw himself into the breach with an energy worthy of a less hopelessly ambiguous subject, and the society was saved from a yawning gap in its intellectual feast. Mr. Reeves' direct and simple earnestness effected what the rounded periods and more studied eloquence of his predecessors had been unable to perform; it aroused the meeting. Long before his speech was finished the society had regained its normally uproarious condition.

Mr. Lamont followed in a speech which did him great credit. Indeed, not only throughout this meeting, but throughout all the meetings of this year, the speaking has been of a character which compares very favorably with that of even the best which has been heard of late years. After Mr. Lamont had concluded no one was found ready to take up the discussion, and Mr. Cooper briefly closed the debate. The President summed up, and the meeting voted the victory to the negative.

After the debate several matters of business came before the meeting. The ballot for First Year Councillors took place, resulting in the election of Messrs. J. H. Brown and A. A. Vickers. A communication from McGill was read, proposing an inter-collegiate debate, to be held at McGill in November, and requesting the Society to send representatives. The proposition was accepted, and Messrs. J. S. Scott and A. T. Hunter were chosen to represent the Society. Speakers for the approaching public debate were recommended, and a ballot resulted in the election of Messrs. J. M. Godfrey, J. A. McLean, J. A. Cooper, and R. H. Knox. This concluded the business of the evening and the meeting was declared adjourned.