

Correspondence

Dear Sir. — A correspondent in the issue of Jan. 15, calls attention to his lack of faith in the Literary and Debating Society, and outlines a scheme for its amalgamation with or absorption i. e. a society controlled by the Union. He evidently feels regret for what has been lamented by all who are really interested in the matter, the fact that science and medical students do not generally avail themselves of the privileges of the present society. But in his commendable zeal for better things, he somewhat blackens things as they are, and commits himself to several gross errors in matters of fact, e.g.:—

"Its (i.e. the present society's) meetings are attended only by students in Arts and Law and it never occurs to a student of the two larger faculties to attend the meetings."

Whereas there has been a growing attendance and membership of Science men, two members of the present executive belong to that faculty, and a Science student has recently represented his year in an interyear debate. Whether it is true that there has been "nothing in the meetings to invite a general attention" will depend on what sort of objects general attention inclines to bestow itself on. Our aims are modest. We do not present moving pictures or discuss French fiction or German transcendentalism. We seek rather to learn by effort and example something of the difficult art of public speaking. We exchange with our fellow students such ideas as we have on the political, social and economic questions of the times. We listen to the brilliant addresses of distinguished professors about matters literary or educational. If any gentleman is of so lofty a spirit as to find no intellectual comradeship with us, the Literary Society will strive on in its little work without the inspiration of his support.

Several of the suggestions offered by your correspondent simply advocate

what has already been adopted. Parliamentary procedure is followed if not rigidly, as far as practicable. Decision is by division of the house, except in the case of interyear debates, when the method would be absurd.

The unfounded charges of the communication are, however, somewhat atoned for in the breadth of view shown by the writer in his scheme of reconstruction, which, while it overlooks financial and other difficulties involved, is nevertheless worth due consideration. It is one of several suggestions that have been under discussion in the executives of both organizations for some time past. While as yet plans are immature there is reason to hope that changes will result that will be to the advantage of both. The defects of our constitution are obvious; so I think are those of the scheme proposed by your correspondent. Perhaps we shall not arrive at any absolutely faultless system. After all, enterprise and enthusiasm will do more than any constitutional changes to multiply the active membership of the Society.

Your readers will doubtless soon learn the nature of the changes that may be recommended. Meanwhile let us make the most of the "Lit." as it is.

I am, sir,

Yours truly,

JOHN T. McNEILL.

MONTREAL, Jan. 24th, 1909.

To the Editor of The Martlet:

Dear Sir.—It is the intention of the executive to call the annual general meeting of the Rugby Football Club early next week.

The exact date will be fixed at an executive meeting and duly advertised.

We, therefore, with your permission, take this opportunity to ask all readers of The Martlet to look out for the