

University and College News.

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.

The regular meeting was held on Tuesday, the President, Mr. Houston, in the chair. Mr. Geo. Paterson took up the historical aspect of "Capital Punishment." Its origin, so far as English law is concerned, was from the Roman custom of killing the criminal to appease the anger of the gods. After the Roman period, mutilation was a common practice in England. But very severe punishments for trivial offences had a tendency to increase crime. Moore saw this three centuries ago. Society is to a large extent responsible for crime committed. Is it then just to hang the criminal? Bentham had considered the economic loss to the state involved in the execution of criminals. In many states capital punishment had been successfully abolished. In dealing with the ethical aspect of the question, Mr. Duncan said punishment could not be retributive as there is no community of nature, but only an arbitrary connection between crime and its punishment by law. Men have certain reasons for injuring society. The fear of punishment must be such as to counterbalance these reasons. The motives to murder are from their personal connection the strongest possible motives to crime. They must, therefore, be counteracted by the greatest of deterrents, the fear of death. Capital punishment may be abolished when the motives to murder become sufficiently weak to be counterbalanced by the fear of lighter punishment. Public sentiment will be a pretty sure guide as to when this time arrives.

The usual discussion followed the papers. In More's Utopia the ground is taken that punishment is neither retributive nor deterrent, but reformatory, a view in advance of even our own age. The chairman thought it would be a good thing if an Association could be formed in connection with University College to collect materials for a history of Ontario, which has never yet been written. At the next meeting Messrs. Gibbard and Ferguson will read papers on the Rise of British Local Government.

MODERN LANGUAGE CLUB.

The last English meeting of this flourishing society was one of the most interesting and most largely attended, in its history. Mr. T. A. Rowan occupied the chair. Mr. Jones, the retiring secretary, was thanked by the society for the hearty interest he had always taken in his position, and after a close contest Mr. E. C. Jeffrey was chosen as his successor.

Dr. Wilson then took the chair and gave a most interesting account of his acquaintance with Longfellow, whose works formed the subject of the programme. Years ago when the doctor had been giving a course of lectures in Boston, he was entertained by a number of *littérateurs* among whom were Longfellow, Emerson and others. Dr. Wilson was of the opinion that Longfellow's kind heart and beautiful character were among the chief reasons which explain the distinguished place he holds in the affections of the American people.

Very carefully written and well-read essays were then given on the chief works of the poet:

"Life of Longfellow," by T. C. Des Barres; "Evangeline," by Miss Lennox, read by Miss Charles, and "Hiawatha," by A. Stevenson Bell, whose paper gave an account of the writer's experiences among the Indians, where the scene of "Hiawatha" is laid.

Mr. T. Logie read an essay on the Dramatic works. Selections from the works of Longfellow were well given by Miss Scott, Mr. H. J. Cody and Mr. J. H. Moss. Dr. Wilson was then heartily thanked by the society for his kindness in presiding. The works of Mrs. Browning will be taken up at the next meeting. All interested in English are invited.

On January 24th the meeting was devoted to French and LeSage was the author for the evening. Mr. Macpherson read his essay on "Le Noble Proteus." Mr. Logie gave a review of "Turcaret." Mr. Hogarth read a "theatre scene" from "Gil Blas," and several of the members presented a few scenes from "Turcaret." The meeting was enlivened by the singing of "A la Claire Fontaine" and "Un Canadien Errant." Mr. Stark, who has taken a kindly interest in the Club, favored us with an Italian melody.

[We learn,—for we are always learning,—that the recent report in the VARSITY of Mr. M. Rouse's lecture before the Modern Language Club did not do justice to the lecturer in any particular. Whatever we may think of Mr. Rouse's theories or of the evidence which he brings to support them, this much is certain, several of them are quite original. Thus Mr. Rouse claims to have formed a chromatic scale of the vowels, to have discovered the identity in the vowel sounds used by widely severed nations to express the same emotions, and to have established an analogy by classification between consonants and musical instruments.—EDITOR.]

NATURAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.

The first regular meeting for the present term was held on Tuesday evening, in the School of Practical Science, Prof. R. Ramsay Wright presiding. The General Committee of the Association reported having appointed a sub committee to act with the Convezazione Committee.

Mr. A. B. McCallum, B.A., opened the literary part of the programme by his report on the Development of the Nucleus in the Animal and Vegetable Cell.

The President, at the close of this paper, drew attention to the vast strides and the many discoveries the science of biology had made by the aid of the microscope during the last ten years.

Prof. W. H. Pike, Ph. D., next read an essay on "The position of science in an ideal system of education." The paper may be said to be an abstract of the views promulgated by Herbert Spencer. How to live in its truest and fullest sense should be the end of education. Self-preservation direct and indirect; the rearing of children and parental duties; good citizenship; and, finally, accomplishments and tastes, should all find a place in an ideal system. The Professor pointed out that science, *i. e.*, organized knowledge, alone could fully, on all these matters, educate. A subject might be studied for the knowledge to be gained or the discipline of mind to be derived, or from both motives, and subjects differ as to their relative values as looked at from this aspect, but all knowledge—studied from whatever object—to be of practical benefit must be organized.

Prof. Wright said the powers of observation were neglected in the present system of education. He emphasized strongly the cultivation of the habit of accurate observation, and for this end showed how drawing was of great value.

Mr. Wm. Houston, M.A., bore his testimony to the labours of Profs. Pike and Wright in improving the University curriculum.

Y. M. C. A.

The regular weekly meeting was held in Moss Hall, on Thursday afternoon at 5 o'clock. Mr. James Ross conducted the meeting. He took for a topic "Opportunities," basing his remarks on 1 Corinthians vi. : 19-20: "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you? And ye are not your own, for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body."

We are to glorify God by imitating Christ. But we must be careful how we do this. We are not to imitate Him in externals or in incidentals, but are to try to be actuated by the Spirit that was in Him. We are to imitate Him in being active workers. There are two sides to Christianity—a positive and a negative side.