

City Debaters Stage Tilt

Picked Men From Debating League Meet in Vociferous Forensic Conflict

LAST night some 30 serious minded gentlemen met in wordy battle on the top floor of the McGill Students' Union building. They were picked members of six debating clubs in the city and they had been selected not only for the facility with which they could and did express their opinions upon almost any subject, but also for the wealth of meaning which they packed into the things they left unsaid.

MOCK PARLIAMENT.

The field of verbal strife was the Montreal Mock Parliament, held under the auspices of the Montreal Debating League. The subjects of contention were the same ones which the legislators of the Dominion fight about in the Houses of Parliament, and though "mock," by designated title, the parliament of Montreal surely considered national problems last night with an enthusiastic attention that should serve as a model to the more legally constituted Houses in Ottawa.

Certainly the debate was both brighter and more appreciated by the audience than that commonly heard on the floors of the senior chambers.

There were gentlemen heard last night who hurled bludgeons of statistics at the heads of those sitting on the other side of the room. There were others who had skill enough to catch these bludgeons, turn them around and twist them into boomerang flight back across to their originators.

There were those who dealt out what surely must have been long rehearsed thrusts of irony, and others who found impromptu ripostes that literally sent their opponents, as well as the audience, reeling, even though only with laughter.

PARLIAMENT OPENED.

The Parliament was opened by J. C. Bonar, president of the Montreal Debating League, who explained quite briefly that it was intended to discuss the national problems of the Dominion in a serious manner; that it was hoped these discussions would be of educational benefit to both those taking part in the debate, and their hearers.

John A. Sullivan, K.C., member of Parliament for St. Ann's, had consented to act as Speaker, and Rev. R. G. Burgoyne, as clerk of the House. There were Government whips and there were Opposition whips. A Durand was sergeant-at-arms. There was a chair for the Speaker, and there were reporters, and there were of course the nimble witted gentlemen who were at times more than metaphorically inclined to leap at each others' throats.

Thus, all the elaborate paraphernalia of British Parliaments being present, the game of government began.

Mr. Sullivan read the Speech from the Throne. Opposition members, eight of them, endeavored to embarrass the Government with questions that were strictly parliamentary, and some that were not so.

Then W. Tigh and G. H. Fox rose from the Conservative side of the House to move the adoption of the address.

F. L. P. Anderson, playing the part of the Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, assailed the address with all the fury of the leader during a 15-minute speech whose length proved so inadequate that he entirely forgot to move the censuring amendment until reminded to do so after he had sat down, by the Speaker.

After this, Opposition members alternated with ministers of the Government in attacking and defending the policies by which this gracious land is governed.

CURRENCY INFLATION.

Dr. A. E. Wilkinson, as Minister of Finance, refused with adamant hardness to bow to the as yet unvoiced demand of the Opposition for currency inflation.

W. McTeague, who, in the interests of expedition doubled in the brass of Labor while he was also Minister of Justice, spoke of penal reforms and indicated that the iron hand of law and order would be covered in these parlous times by a slightly thinner glove of velvet.

A. C. Hemmaway, as Minister of Railways and Canals, answered awkward questions addressed to the Department of Marine and Fisheries, which regrettably enough had not appeared to merit a portfolio in the cabinet of Prime Minister J. A. Whitaker. He also solved the Dominion's transportation problems with equal facility.

H. E. Rand appeared as Minister of Trade and Commerce, and gracefully appropriated the share of credit for the Ottawa agreements, which Hon. H. H. Stevens is commonly credited with and B. Schecter as Minister of Agriculture brought hope to the western grain grower.

Throughout the performance J. A. Whitaker, Prime Minister of the Dominion, flashed in and out, as occasion demanded it, suave, benign and peculiarly unpleasant in argument.

The others taking part in the debate were the following:

R. Stoeckel, K. of C.; R. B. Fraser, Ciceronians; J. Thomas, Jr. Board; A. Kaningsberg, Y. M. H. A.; C. A. Wylie, Lions; Miss Jean M. Bonar, B.A.; E. Kierns, Loyola; L. N. Poch, McGill; J. Peacock, McGill; D. Kruger, Y.M.H.A.; E. G. Patterson, Jr. Board; M. Potofsky, Y.M.H.A.; H. L. McEvy, Ciceronians; F. Riddle, Lions; J. Laflamme, Loyola; D. A. MacDonald, B.A.; Spoke Club.