

The Varsity

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BY

THE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.

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NOVEMBER 17, 1891.

THE LITERARY SOCIETY.



HERE was an unusually large attendance at the meeting last Friday night, it being the occasion of the first sitting of the Mock Parliament after the vacation.

The General Committee presented the following report: "The subject of the Public Debate having been changed, it is recommended that the date of the first public meeting of the Society be changed to Nov. 27th, and that the subject for debate be: 'Resolved, That the action of the State should be confined to the protection of life and property.'

"It is recommended that the evening of the 20th Nov. be set apart for the discussion of the Constitution, instead of the evening of Nov. 27th as formerly recommended.

"Your Committee have had under consideration the questions submitted to it with regard to the holding of a conversazione or a dinner, and beg to state that a majority of the Committee are in favor of a conversazione, if the College building can be had for the purpose. With reference to the dinner, the Committee is of the opinion that the feeling of the undergraduates is in favor of having a union dinner instead of the annual class dinners.

"The Committee recommends that the second Public Debate be held on January 22nd, and that the return debate with McGill Society take place that night.

"The Committee recommends that the meetings of Dec. 11th and 18th be given to the Mock Parliament."

The report was discussed clause by clause. Mr. E. B. Horne complained that he was not sufficiently aware that Nov. 20th was the night set apart for the consideration of the Constitution, and consequently had not prepared any notices of motions which he intended to bring in in connection with that matter. He accordingly moved, seconded by Mr. S. B. Wood, that Clause II. of the report be amended to read Dec. 11th instead of Nov. 20th.

Mr. R. H. Knox was of the opinion that there was no urgent necessity for the consideration of the Constitution this term, and therefore moved, seconded by Mr. W. A. Parks, an amendment to the amendment, that the reconsideration of the Constitution be postponed till next term. Considerable discussion took place regarding the matter, Mr. J. H. Lamont arguing that it would be altogether unfair to the Government to hold a meeting of the Mock Parliament on Nov. 20th instead of Dec. 11th, as was suggested by Mr. Horne.

Mr. J. A. Cooper thought it was a very poor Government which was not prepared to go on with the business of the country when called upon to do so. Mr. Knox's amendment was put and carried.

Mr. Cooper now introduced his business, but was reminded by the President that he would have to move a return to order of business (b), which he accordingly did, seconded by Mr. Horne. The motion was carried, and Mr. Cooper gave notice of a motion appointing the President, 1st Vice-President and Recording Secretary of the Literary Society, together with the Presidents, 2nd Vice-Presidents and Secretaries of the different Class Societies, and the President of University College, as a committee to make arrangements for a union dinner of the undergraduates.

The Society now resolved itself into a Mock Parliament. The President, acting as Speaker of the House, read the Speech from the Throne, and it was taken into consideration at once.

The address, in reply to the Speech from the Throne, was moved by Mr. Fraser, who had taken his seat in the House for the first time. He reviewed the subject in an able but (naturally) slightly nervous manner. He was followed by Mr. Ross, who seconded the address in a short and able speech.

The leader of the Opposition, on rising to reply to the address, was received with loud cheers from the benches on the left of the Speaker. He congratulated the mover and seconder of the address on the able speeches they had made, and also the leader of the Government, on the large following which he had. He was sorry, however, that all the members of massive intellect and gigantic ability were on his side of the House, as he was afraid that, on that account, the majority of the discussions would be one-sided. He discussed the Speech from the Throne in a somewhat cursory and impromptu manner. He thoroughly agreed with the clauses relating to reciprocity with the United States and the reconstruction of the Senate, but found fault because no mention had been made in the speech of such important questions as Prohibition and Social Reform. He found fault with the Government for their intention to place in the hands of the judiciary the power to determine the boundaries of the electoral districts, arguing that Canada had always been noted for the complete separation of its judiciary from all political parties, but that the Government's measure would tend to remove this separation, and bring the judiciary under corrupting political influence. He also took objection to the question of Manhood Suffrage.

During the speech of the leader of the Opposition he was interrupted by a remark from one of the Ministers, to which Mr. Cooper replied rather caustically. "Never mind him, I've met him before in a lunatic asylum." Amidst the laughter of the whole House the Minister rose to a point of order, and requested the Speaker to ask the