

ANNUAL ADDRESS.

The lapse of another year of the placid, but, I hope, not uninteresting history of this Society, requires us to retrace together the path we have trodden during some pleasant hours, I trust not without mutual profit and much rational enjoyment. It is undoubtedly true that the waymarks by which we have endeavoured to retain that path in agreeable memory have not been increased by a number of literary efforts equal to the average of preceding years. I think we cannot fairly impute this to absence of effort; for I believe that engagements of this kind have been reasonably fulfilled; but to absence, I am sorry to say, of another kind. The number of members in attendance have, on more than one occasion, been insufficient to form a meeting agreeably to one of the rules of the Society. Whether the stringency of this rule might not be so relaxed as hereafter to obviate that difficulty without involving some greater inconvenience, is a point which has from time to time been mooted, without leading to any definite proposition. In a Society as yet so limited in number, not one of whom has the advantage of much freedom from peremptory engagements and hindrances during the greater portion of his time, it would be somewhat sanguine to expect that the attendance should never fall short of the requirement of the rule. On the whole, a review of the instances of failure under such circumstances would, I am persuaded, be such as to form no ground of discouragement. On the contrary I think it would appear that the steady zeal of a certain number of our members has always been so far superior to ordinary causes of absence, that in most cases, had the number required been less by a single unit, in order to form a meeting, the members present could have proceeded to business. Whether this may be a sufficient reason why the rule should be so far changed as to cause in future the less frequent disappointment of those who