

DEBATE.

Our Literary and Debating Society is this year, as it has been in the past, calculated to do much good to its members. Indeed from the keen interest evinced in the discussions of the last few weeks it would seem as though its members were intent upon surpassing the debaters of former years. This is as it should be. Although skilful debaters have gone forth from our ranks, it must not be supposed that all the talent has gone with them. A *novus homo* is not usually reckoned a first-class debater until he has gained some experience and proved his right to be recognized as one of the foremost. This year, however, some new members have by one great leap taken a front rank.

The students seem to recognize fully the importance of being able to debate a question skilfully and forcibly. It matters not in which one of the many walks of life we may find ourselves, to be able to express our views in public with clearness and precision will be to us not only a source of satisfaction, but also very often a passport to wealth and fame. To be able to hold our own in face of all opposition is very desirable in the conflict of opinion that prevails in every department of life. A man may possess brilliant ideas, he may originate wise plans and be eloquent with his pen; but if he is not a fluent speaker he will always find it difficult to secure the co-operation of others.

The question for debate is not of so much importance as the manner in which the discussion itself is carried on. The art of properly conducting a discussion is one which requires considerable attention. A successful debater will always state clearly his position and support it with strong arguments, listen carefully to the reply of his opponent, note his arguments and rebut them. Since the time allotted to each speaker is limited, it is necessary that he should make the best possible use of that time. He must keep the debate within the proper limits,—that is, the point under discussion must always be kept in view; side issues must be carefully avoided; and personalities should never, under any circumstances, be permitted. The speaker must present his views in as concise a manner as is consistent with clearness, and always bear in mind that a multiplicity of words can never take the place of strong arguments.

To the superficial, college debates may not appear to be of much importance. But that does not affect their value in the