

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE NEWS.

All reports from Societies must reach us by noon on Thursday to secure insertion.

AMERICA BEFORE COLUMBUS.—Dr. Wilson, President of the University of Toronto, lectured on Saturday afternoon last, the 19th inst., in the Convocation Hall, on "America before Columbus." The audience was large, and the proceeds were in aid of the Newsboys' Home. Dr. Wilson commenced by giving evidence of the visits of discoverers to this continent before the time of Columbus. As early as A. D. 1000 the Scandinavian voyagers reached Greenland in their rude ships, and without the aid of the compass. Their only guide was the Phœnician star of the Greeks, and if they could reach the western world under those circumstances it was quite probable that the Tyrian voyagers, who were equally advanced in navigation, had made the discovery at a very much earlier period. The lecturer gave Christopher Columbus the credit of conceiving that the world was round, and of having the faith to sail west in order to reach the east and discover a more direct route to India, which was the object he had in view when he re-discovered America. The discovery of Brazil, some few years after, was quoted in support of the statement that had Columbus not discovered America, the existence of this continent would, within a short time afterwards, have been demonstrated by other navigators. The grand question, however, was as to the condition of this continent in the centuries before its discovery. There was evidence of the presence of man since the time the mammoth roamed this continent. The rude stone implements found in New Jersey suggested the idea of the presence of man at a time just subsequent to the glacial period, and this led to the belief that not so long after man was present in Europe he was present here. But there are no such traces of ancient civilization here as can be found in the Old World. The mound builders were doubtless a rude people, whose leaders had a knowledge of geometry and architectural science. It was evident that a germ of civilization existed at a time, but that it was quenched by the savages. From thirty years' study of the subject he did not believe that there was evidence of any knowledge of mineralogy being possessed by the people who inhabited the part of the continent north of the Mexican Gulf. In Central America there was a startling evidence of civilization, architecture, sculpture and mineralogy. In Peru there was indication of sun worship and scientific progress. Both these, however, could not be regarded as of great antiquity. He expressed deep regret that the rude hunters of gold had been permitted to eradicate the most valuable traces of the history of these people. America possessed no such evidence of ancient civilization as Europe, Asia and Africa presented, and he held that if the reverse were the case, as some advocates of evolution contend, it would make their problem ten times more difficult than it was before.

MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SOCIETY.—A regular meeting of the Mathematical and Physical Society was held in Lecture Room No. 8, on Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 15th. The President, T. Mulvey, B.A., occupied the chair. An interesting essay on the life and works of Descartes was read by Mr. J. G. Witton. Mr. C. Gordon Richardson, lecturer in chemistry in the Veterinary College, gave some instructive and beautiful experiments in connection with the theory of the polarization of light. On motion of Mr. A. F. Hunter, a vote of thanks was tendered Mr. Richardson. Problems were solved by Messrs. McGowan, Witton, DeLury and Whitelaw. At the next meeting of the Society papers will be read by Mr. J. McGowan and Mr. D. Hull.

MODERN LANGUAGE CLUB.—The second German meeting of the term was held last Monday in the Y. M. C. A. Building, the President being in the chair. The meeting was well attended and the essays above the usual standard. Mr. Steen opened the programme by his essay on L'Arrabbiata, one of the novels of the author under discussion—Paul Heyse, and presented clearly the beauty of the style and of the novel. Mr. Vandersmissen followed with a short address in German, and a selection from Heyse's poems, which was much appreciated. The next on the programme consisted of an able essay by Miss Scott, on Hans Lange, dealing chiefly with the outlines of the story. At the request of the Club Mr. Vandersmissen read another poem entitled "Nachgeschicht," and after a few complimentary remarks by the President, the meeting broke up for half an hour's conversation in German. The essayists are to be congratulated also on the clear and distinct manner in which they read their essays; thereby contributing much to the enjoyment of their audience. The meeting of this society on Monday afternoon next will be devoted to Dickens and his works. The programme is as follows: "Dickens, as an Interpreter of Human Nature," by T. C. Des Barres; "Tale of Two Cities," by O. W. McMichael; "and David Copperfield," by S. King. Readings will be given from "Nicholas Nickleby," by Miss Wetherald, a graduate of the Philadelphia School of Oratory. There should be a large attendance.

THE ENGINEERING SOCIETY held its usual meeting on Tuesday, 23rd inst., at the School of Science. Routine business having been disposed of, Mr. Marani read an essay entitled "A short Historical Sketch of Sanitary Science," in which he traced the knowledge of sanitary laws as far back as the 16th century before Christ; when monarchs, unquestioned in their authority, forced their people to live in healthy dwellings, and forced them to pay sufficient attention to sanitation to insure the freedom of their towns and cities from disease and pestilence. Sanitary science flourished especially in the Roman era, when that nation constructed those immense aqueducts, baths, &c., which bear testimony to the knowledge and foresight of the people, and some of which may yet be recognized among the ruins of Italy. It was at this time, also, that the Campagna of Rome was so thoroughly drained that the fever held in its marshes disappeared almost entirely, and the land thus reclaimed was utilized for farming purposes. The Roman dynasty fell, however, and with it disappeared almost all traces of sanitary science. Through the Middle Ages down to as late as 1760, we find what are now considered as rudimentary precautions disregarded entirely, and frightful epidemics of fever, cholera, &c., constantly ravaging different parts of Europe. These very plagues, however, seem to have awakened in the people a sense of the frightful state of their towns and cities, and to have led to those investigations, upon the result of which modern sanitary engineering and science are founded. The essayist closed with a brief outline of the germ theory as it is at present formulated by the eminent pathologists of Europe. In the discussion which followed Mr. Marani's paper, Dr. Ellis described some of the experiments which have been made in recent years, and which have shown that disease is due to the production of ptomaines by the bacteria which exist in all organic matter. These ptomaines are of definite chemical composition and are believed to act in a similar manner to such poisons as arsenic. Bacteria also play an important part in the purification of our soil; assimilating the animal matter which is thrown upon or filters through the ground, nitrogenizing it and rendering it perfectly harmless. The discussion on Limes, Mortars and Cements was laid over till the next meeting.

Y. M. C. A.—Tuesday next—Missionary address by Rev. John McLawrin, a Baptist missionary lately returned from India; Thursday next—Regular meeting will be addressed by Rev. E. A. Stafford, of the Metropolitan. The building is kept open every Sunday from 2 to 6 p.m.; reading-room and library open to all. Regular devotional meeting was held on Thursday, the 24th, H. B. Fraser, Captain of the "Association" team, leader. Subject—Bought with a price, based on 1 Cor. 6: 19, 20. Christians urged, on account of the greatness of the price—the sufferings and death of Christ—to live nearer Him and to devote themselves entirely to His service. A strong appeal made to those who do not believe, and objections that men urge against Christ and Christianity answered.

THE WOMAN'S MEDICAL COLLEGE has entered upon its fifth session most prosperously. There are eighteen students in regular attendance. A Students' Association, for literary, social and business purposes, has recently been organized, having a reading room in connection with it. The final students have also a Chemical Society, which meets every fortnight and promises excellent results.

The Glee Club has received a number of invitations to sing in public during the present term. The following are those which have been accepted:—They will furnish the music for the Inter-collegiate debate between the McMaster College and the Osgoode Literary and Legal Society, to be held in Osgoode Hall on Friday evening, Nov. 25th; they will take part in a promenade concert in the Horticultural Pavilion on Thursday evening, December the 7th, and also to be present at the debate between 'Varsity and Trinity on Friday evening, Dec. 2nd. The committee extend a hearty invitation to all undergraduates, who are musically inclined, to come to the practices every Friday afternoon at 4 o'clock, in the west end Lecture Room.

The Central Association cup tie match was played on the Rosedale grounds last Saturday afternoon between the Torontos and Varsity. Neither club was able to place its strongest team on the field. The Varsity, however, were more unfortunate in this respect than their opponents. At half-time the prospects were bright for Varsity the score being 2 goals to 0 in their favour; but after play was resumed, although the Varsity boys were fortunate enough to secure another goal, the Torontos were equally fortunate in securing three times in succession and would in all probability have continued to score had not time been called. The result being a draw, it was decided to play the next match on Saturday, Dec. 3rd, on Union Lawn.

The Medical Students were received in the University Y. M. C. A. building on Tuesday evening last. There were about three hundred present, including Prof. Wilson and the following mem.