

All about me the same scene is going on. An old Quaker gentleman over there, with a very broad hat and long black coat has just finished a fine peroration on the nature and immortality of the soul, and I see his audience of two forget their sneers and look unwontedly serious and hopeful. I catch the old man's eye as he moves away, I give him an appreciative nod, and he smiles. A shrill voice and a large crowd now call my attention. A young student I often see at the National Library is there, bare-headed, with long esthetic hair, pale face, hands uplifted, speaking from the centre of the crowd. He will have no replies. They only make him pitch his voice the higher. He is depicting with passion, hurrying words, how happy everybody would be if only society were arranged as he would have it arranged. He speaks for some time and stops only when utterly exhausted, and then, as if the charm were broken, the crowd dissolves and circles and turns till it has found other groups into which to flow and coalesce. I stop to overhear some words of a big, burly man who seems to be telling three laboring men something very important. I find that he is talking about America. He is extolling the Americans to the skies. The soil of America seems to draw its whole virtue from the presence of the Americans. From the eager faces of the working men I judge they would like very much to be away with their families in happy America. But they cannot go; and I can imagine them turning away to listen eagerly, very eagerly, to wild political schemes which are to transform their own country into a place of Eden-like plenty and comfort. Thinking such thoughts, I am suddenly roused by swift, sharp words. In the centre of another large crowd that has just formed I see a working man in blouse holding head against two rich-looking gentlemen. One of these latter has retired from business and is living on the interest of his money. The other says he is owner of a large factory, and as the debate turns on the relation of capital and labour he claims to be heard as an authority. The debate is rather exciting. Others in the crowd, of all degrees of social standing, are drawn in by the interest of the debate, and sometimes seven or eight speaking at once make it a very Babel.

And thus the scene goes on shifting and changing, presenting a series of curious, intensely interesting kaleidoscopic views. For four hours or more the thing holds together and then dissolves; and in the clear night, in the deserted place, amongst the lighted lamps, we are left to think over what we have seen. Where else will you see the like? Where else meet such an utter disregard of persons, such a near approximation to the ideal republic so often dreamed of? I thought of all the good the rich, easy-living man would have from the recital of the needs of his poorer brother; how he would be made more generous, and how he too would be led to consider as not unreasonable the demands for social reform. I thought too how the asperity of the poor would be softened, how his mind would be turned from the rash, desperate measures to which evil or misguided men would lead him, as he came to see that it was only ignorance which made the rich man hard and cruel. And as I know that the heart of man is just, this mutual knowledge seemed to me to be the final dying away of revolutions, and I hailed this little republic, this nucleus of the larger republic yet to be I hailed it with the cry of Eureka.

And now came light and trifling, which always follows the serious. Dust and scurrying leaves always follow the railway train; the jolly camp-followers always come in the rear of the army. The stern debate of social and national problems is succeeded by a curious scene. A troupe of boys make their appearance. A circle of chairs is formed, and at a distance they seem as they sit there like a council of serious grain-buyers, such as I see sometimes in different parts of the city. But what is really going on? On approaching nearer I see that one of the number is not sitting down. He is standing, bent forward, with his head in the lap of another and covered with an apron. One of his arms reaches backward and the hand rests palm upward on his back. Then I see one of the circle rise from his seat softly, approach his stooping comrade, raise his hand high in air, then bring it down with sounding force on the bare upturned palm and quickly and softly take his seat again. Then the covered head is released, and the stooping lad stands up and faces the grimacing circle. It is his business now to guess who struck him. If he succeeds, he is released and the other takes his place. If he fails, back he goes to his place again. The readiness with which the young lads guess the right one is remarkable, and certainly indicates shrewd calculation of some sort. The game may have afforded useful mental exercise, I don't deny it; but executed as it was, at such an hour of the night, under the bare heavens, and after the curious scenes I had just witnessed, the thing came to have a mad, scarcely human effect. The stone pavement of the Bourse stretched out as a bare desert plain, and upon it I saw a hideous circle of wizards engaged in their mysterious incantations, and the whole sounded as a mocking jest at earnest hope and endeavor.

PARISIEN.

## University News.

## LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.

In the absence of the President the first Vice-President, Mr. D. McKay, occupied the chair at the meeting last night. Readings were given by Messrs. Rowan, Russell and Irwin.

Resolved, "That the invention of so-called labor-saving machinery has not diminished the burdens of human toil," was the subject of debate. Messrs. Talbot and Witton argued the affirmative, and Messrs. Russell and W. H. Hunter, the negative.

In the junior division, presided over by Mr. T. A. Rowan, the question was debated by Messrs. Cronyn, Marshall, Fenton, Waldron and Gibson.

The debate was decided in the negative by both divisions.

After the divisions had re-formed, Mr. H. E. Irwin having moved that the Society request the General Committee to set aside Friday evening, the 20th inst., for the consideration of changes in the Constitution of the Society, and gave notice that he would move on that date, that the prizes given by the Society to speakers and readers, be abolished.

## Y. M. C. A.

A large number of graduates and undergraduates assembled on Thursday afternoon in Moss Hall at the usual weekly prayer meeting. The President opened the meeting and introduced Rev. H. M. Parsons, of Knox Church.

Mr. Parsons expressed his pleasure at meeting with the members of the University College Y. M. C. A. He wished to speak of the *applied power* of the spirit of God. This power was often exerted over the unconverted, though they were ignorant of the fact and attributed impulses and thoughts proceeding from Him to other sources. One must not expect that the influence of the Spirit is to compel one's will to yield despite himself. It is in simpler ways and by more ordinary means that the Holy Ghost is insinuating thoughts and suggesting motives which, if cherished and yielded to, will result in being brought into clearer light. As to the *believer*, it is his duty and privilege to be a temple of the Holy Ghost, to be in possession of His power. The possession of this power is absolutely necessary to successful work for God. Unless the Spirit dwell in him a man is utterly powerless to accomplish the work a Christian should accomplish. With His power he must succeed just as surely as effects follow adequate causes. In the early Church this power manifested itself in the working of miracles, in opening hearts to a sense of obligation to aid others in their distress. It is possible for human *power* to achieve seeming but not real success in working for God. Genuine results in that sphere flow from the exercising by the believer of the power given by the Holy Ghost. If the *study of God's word* is to be of real benefit, it must be read as the present, actual speech of a present, living Person. It is the personal influence of the Spirit exercised through His word that avails to influence heart and will. The reading of the Bible as a collection of abstract truths produces no effects of a quickening, strengthening kind. The virtue comes out of *Christ*—not the mere letter of the word—as it did when the cure of the woman with the issue of blood was effected. Students are especially exposed to the danger of overlooking spiritual culture, since their attention is so constantly occupied with the training of their intellects. They then of all men should see to it that they do not deprive themselves of the spiritual power they might possess. In order to accomplish their work the members of this Association require the *power* of God's spirit, and if they possess it they are fitted for the accomplishment of a great work in the University.

The rev. gentleman's address was listened to with marked attention.

The next meeting, on Thursday, Feb. 12th, will be addressed by Mr. J. I. Gilmour. Subject: "Missions for China." All graduates and undergraduates are urged to attend.

If it is within the range of possibility the Committee of Y. M. C. A. desire to have their new rooms opened during the Xmas term of '85. Should the necessary \$8,000 be subscribed during the months of February and March, the various sums will be collected in April and May, and the building erected during the vacation. Through the columns of the 'VARSITY we are kindly permitted to acknowledge subscriptions towards our Fund. A few days ago a lady, who is a friend to all educational movements, gave us an unsolicited subscription of \$100. The Committee feel encouraged by liberality of this sort. We would acknowledge the following:—W. Mulock, \$300; S. H. Blake, \$200; Jno. Macdonald, \$200; Edward Blake, \$100; Col. Gzowski, \$100; Dr. Wilson, \$50; W. Mortimer Clarke, \$25; Prof. Young, \$20; R. Y. Thomson, \$20.