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THE DEBATING SOCIETY.

The Annual Meeting of the Society for the above purpose was held in Moss Hall, the lecture room of the old Medical School, on the evening of Friday, the 25th. The attendance was very poor and proceedings flat in comparison with last year, the cause being the absence of opposition to Mr. Kingsford's candidature for the presidency.

The proceedings commenced shortly after eight o'clock by the reading of the General Annual Report, which showed the Society to be in a flourishing condition, the membership having greatly increased, and the work undertaken being more difficult and of a higher class than formerly. Detailed reports of the committee followed.

ANNUAL REPORT.

To the President and Members of the University College Literary and Scientific Society.

Your committee, in presenting this the Annual Report, congratulates the Society on the successful termination of another, the 26th year of the Society's existence.

The past year has been a memorable one in the history of the Society for many reasons, and first among these stands the division into two sections for the purpose of debate, etc.

Although fraught with several drawbacks, this departure from the previous well-beaten path has on the whole been found to work in harmony with the prosperity of the Society, and might be rendered still more serviceable could each member avail himself of the privileges that are by this means conferred upon him, to render himself, under criticism, a fluent and argumentative speaker.

The average attendance has been fifty, as compared with fifty-seven in 1879-80, and seventy-one in 1878-9. The falling off may be accounted for in many ways. The close of the last session was marked by a short but spirited contest for the presidential chair, the excitement of which, your committee are happy to report, seems to have left no injurious results on the Society, except that after a storm there usually comes a lull, which may be one of the reasons of the falling off in members' attendance.

Again, the Society's room, when close to the College Residence, naturally drew a large number in a place where large numbers could drop in and out without regard for wind and weather, which during the past year has been detrimental to large meetings all over the city.

The number of meetings held were: Three public, seven ordinary, seven open, three business, three special, one conversazione; total, twenty-four.

Number of readings given was fifty-one; essays read, fifteen; besides the Inaugural Address. Number of speeches delivered on debates, 177. And while on the topic of meetings, your committee must take to itself, together with the Special Committee appointed, the credit of having, after a lapse of three years, furnished the Society and its friends with the most successful conversazione ever held in the University buildings or in the Province of Ontario. Successful in its organization, its development, its prosecution, and its pecuniary results, it proved to a somewhat doubtful membership that such a gathering could be held under the restrictions with which your committee had to labor.

Another source of congratulation is the very large increase of membership, viz.: 354, as compared with 110 in 1879-80, and 88 in 1878-79, for which many reasons could be, if necessary, assigned by your committee.

The increased interest taken in the Reading Room shows the necessity there existed for its removal to the College buildings, although the room at present in use actually cannot be called adequate to the requirements.

The changes in the Constitution regarding business meetings, &c., do not appear to your committee to have met with a success equal to the expectations of their promoters. The extra night in the month, when spent to no purpose, has been an undue strain on the energies of the members; more particularly, perhaps, as the business of the past

year (excepting that of the *Conversazione*) has not taken up much of the Society's attention. This has resulted in the passing of a bill by you altering the existing state of affairs, and it is to be hoped it may prove advantageous to the interests of the Society.

Another departure of note is the transferring of the McMurrich Medal to the tender care of the sister society, the Natural Science Association, with the proviso, however, that the competition shall be open to the members of your Society.

The time seems to have fully arrived for the production of a college paper, and the appointment by you of a Standing Committee of Management augurs well for its success, being conducted entirely (as it must needs be under these circumstances) by the Society through the committee. While the main portion of the labor will naturally devolve on the committee, your committee would urge each individual member of the Society to make the cause his own, that in the end a paper may be offered to subscribers that will reflect credit on its sponsor, the Society, on the University and the College.

Your committee would sorrowfully draw attention to the harvest that has been reaped by the 'untiring sickle' among the members of the Society during the past year. Although none of those removed from our midst were at the time active members, yet the Society by their demise has lost warm and ready friends in the Hon. Thos. Moss, Messrs. A. McPherson, F. W. Jarvis and H. A. Fairbanks.

Far away on the banks of the blue Mediterranean the golden bowl was broken which cost a University its Vice-Chancellor, a nation one of its mightiest sons, and our Society a warm-hearted friend.

After a lingering illness a second passed away, leaving a gap in the roll of modern language medalists.

Another, who would no doubt have proved an ornament to the scholarship he was enjoying, passed away in the bloom of life in that grand old capital of Scotland, where he had repaired to pursue his studies.

The fourth also met with an untimely end while pursuing his medical studies.

On the whole, as before stated, the year may be ranked among the most successful of the Society's history. Although the treasurer may not be able to hand over a very large surplus, your committee will bequeath to its successors many valuable properties procured during its enjoyment of office. The adjoining room for debate naturally entailed considerable expense, which should not be entirely charged to your retiring committee. The same may be said of the expense of removing the Reading Room, and last, but not least, of furnishing the President's room, a very necessary addition to the comfort of the Society, and which it is to be hoped, as each retiring president leaves his mark therein, will become a very interesting and historical part of the Society's possession.

Finally, your committee may be permitted to hope that the same harmony and good feeling may exist in every succeeding committee as has been the case in the one which, on now retiring, wishes the Society a hearty 'God speed.'

All of which, &c.

The Committee on Essays awarded the first prize to Mr. J. H. Brown, the author of the essay on 'Dualism,' and the second to Mr. Creelman on 'Public Opinion,' in default of Mr. Dayfoot, who forfeited his right to it on account of not having attended the requisite number of meetings of the Society. The gentlemen named were heartily cheered, and, being called upon for speeches, thanked their friends of the Society in a few appropriate words; Mr. Dayfoot saying that he acknowledged the justice of withholding the prize from him on account of non-attendance, and hoped that it would be a lesson by which he and others would profit in the future.

The Committee on Songs reported in favor of the College song by 'Alamanda.' About the one set to the tune of 'Auld Lang Syne,' which had been submitted, it was condemned as bad, especially the last verse.