

In speaking of the economical policy of the present Government, Mr. Sandwell said "that the wasteful and extravagant appropriations of the late ministry for the encouragement of the statutory burglary industry has been abolished. The deficit, left as a legacy from our predecessors, will be met by various measures, for example, the levy of a stamp tax in the library, of 25 cts. per stamp; the levy of a North Pole tax upon persons leaving the door open when they come in; of a high license fee for men who sing flat in the Glee Club, and for those who dance at Class Receptions (and who do not)."

It was suggested to impose a tax to discourage the habit of attending the Glee Club concert with a person of the opposite sex, but the Government decided that this needed no further discouragement.

Mr. Sandwell said it was the intention of the Government to buy out certain great monopolies which were growing fat out of the purse of the poor, such as the University Quarterly, and the Toronto Street Railway.

He estimated the expenditure for the current year at \$50,000,000, and closed with a long quotation from some latter-day Sanskrit writer, in the original tongue.

The members, feeling the effects of the long session, decided they had had enough, and adjourned indefinitely at seventeen minutes after ten.

COMUS.

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The first meeting of the Literary Society in the Easter term was not characterized by the usual large attendance of the students, but doubtless they are reserving themselves for the Mock Parliament next week. Indeed, when the President took the chair at half-past eight last Friday night, there were present few more than the Executive of the Society and those who were to assist in the evening's programme.

Mr. W. D. Love read the minutes of the last meeting—held before the holidays. When the President called for communications, Mr. Hancock said that the two men to represent Varsity in the Varsity-S. P. S. debate had not yet been selected. Nominations were called for, and half a dozen names were placed on the blackboard—too long a list to be given here. The next business was notices of motions. Mr. Hancock announced that at the next meeting of the Society he would move that ladies be admitted to the first meeting of the Mock Parliament. This was not greeted with as much applause as was Mr. Black's notice before Christmas—which does not augur well for the passage of the motion. But such is the persistence of the young ladies' friends that perhaps they may eventually be able to bring their "Henriettas" to the Mock Parliament.

The evening's programme then commenced. Mr. D. A. Ross gave a humorous recitation about life in the west in the days of '49, entitled "The Conversazione." Women were few; and respect for them was so great that a prospective marshal lost all chance of election by asking for Charlotte Rouge (russe), one man explaining that Charlotte was a school teacher in the glen. Mr. W. D. Love sang very acceptably the song "I Loves You, My Horey, Yes I Do," and for an encore gave "A Tom-tit Sat in a Tip Top Tree."

Then came the most important number on the programme—a debate between '97 and '98, the subject of which was, "Resolved, that the benefits arising from the party system of government are greater than the evils." The affirmative side was supported by Messrs. Bale and Clark, '97, while it was assailed by Messrs. Auld and Gahan, '98. The affirmative began by defining party government as government by a body of men who are responsible to the majority of the House of Commons. Now, the question arises, what is party? Burke defines

it as a group of men united together to enforce a principle. About every question two or more views can be taken, and on every question two or more parties can be formed. Each proposes to deal with it in a different way. Elections are thus held on definite issues. The elector knows what course each party will pursue if returned to power, and can give his vote to the party which will carry out the principles which he holds. Individual electors have no force in the state, but many joined in a party have great force. Again, the services of able men, who could have no personal following in a legislature, are not lost to the state if they join a party, for they are backed by that party's strength. Under the party system there is less corruption than under any other system. Parties are usually nearly balanced in numbers in the legislature (and if they are not, the state has practically one party or really none). They can watch each other, and easily detect corrupt practices; likewise the Opposition can scrutinize the expenditures of the Government and keep them down. Thirdly, the rivalry between the parties induces a greater interest in vital political issues. Men read the newspapers, listen to both sides of the question, and come to more rational conclusions than they otherwise would. Consequently, questions are solved in a way that brings greater benefits to the nation. Fourthly, many revolutions are avoided. Before the party system was introduced, it was often necessary to carry by force of arms what can now be done simply by marking the ballots in the right way. Again, the system is being gradually extended over the whole world, and has existed in England for two centuries. This in itself shows that the benefits must be greater than the evils.

The negative challenged the affirmative's definitions. A party, they said, was a group of men united for personal interests, with the object of getting into power and remaining in power. Party government is a government of the minority by the majority, for the majority—is, in fact, a case of coercion, a thing which is so odious to an Englishman. The affirmative had claimed that the party system originated in King William the Third's choosing his ministry from the dominant party in parliament. The negative disputed this. They maintained that King William wished certain principles carried out. He entrusted the government to certain men. They saw that they needed the support of the majority, and strove to obtain it. Two parties arose—the party supporting the government and the party opposing. If the party system does induce a greater interest in questions of the day, it is wrong in its essence and should be condemned. They claimed that men join parties, not from reason but prejudice: because their father belonged to the party, and his father before him. The party system is a great evil, because it is introduced into municipal affairs, and men are defeated in municipal elections because they belong to a certain party. Secondly, independent candidates have no chance of election. Party men are suspicious of them, and unwilling to support them. Corruption increases under the party system. For party men who are guilty of corrupt practices are protected by a strong party and shielded from their just punishment. If the system was widely in use that was no plea for its existence, for crime is also widespread.

The reply of the affirmative was that while corrupt politicians did sometimes escape the punishment of ordinary criminals they are usually politically degraded. It is necessary to clearly prove a man guilty before he can be punished; and this is especially difficult in political offences. If men did join one party or another because their father belonged to it, that is a fault of human nature, not of the party system of government.

At the conclusion of the debate the President commented on the habit of referring to the speakers personally, saying that this had better be avoided. He gave his decision in favor of the affirmative. The meeting broke up at 9.45.