

Philosophical and Literary Society.

THE 3rd regular meeting this session was held on Friday evening, December 10th, and was well attended. The programme included a reading by Mr. G. A. Smith, a humorous essay on "Modern Peripatetics," by Mr. W. McKenzie, and a lively debate on the question, "Are the Pleasures of Expectation greater than those of Realization?" The subject was handled with considerable skill; on the affirmative by Messrs. W. H. Geddes and G. T. Bayne, and on the negative by Messrs. D. McLean and Jas. Robertson. The Society, by vote, decided in favour of the negative. During the evening the choir, which this session fully sustains its reputation of former years, rendered several well-known anthems. The "Student's Christmas Carol," written by A. L., and set to music by Professor McLaren, was well received.

Our Societies.

THE excellence of the system of training pursued in our youthful institution has been the subject of remark and commendation with many, especially with those brought directly under its influence. At present some of our professors are overburdened with work, and the marvel is that they overtake all their duties so efficiently. It is gratifying, therefore, to know that the friends and authorities of the College are determined to have it thoroughly equipped, so as to carry out fully the admirable methods already adopted.

There are many appliances, however, needed for the proper culture of Theological students, and amongst these must be ranked as of special value their own societies.

The prelections of learned professors stand first, but these may be legitimately supplemented by our own meetings and discussions.

It is impossible for aspirants to the office of the ministry to be too thorough or extensive in their attainments. They require to have every side of their nature developed, and to know something at least of a vast variety of subjects. Their duties are not limited to the pulpit. They are expected to give tone and character to social life, and to be in sympathy with everything that tends to the elevation and refinement of the race. Besides, in our Presbyterian system we have numerous church courts, and in these the teaching elders usually take a leading part. Our Professor of Church Government discusses very fully

the Scriptural basis and constitutional principles of these courts. But we need to make practical use of these principles, and here it is that our societies become of immense service. Our debates, motions, amendments and decisions prepare us for the practical work of Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and Assemblies.

We have at present two Societies which furnish scope for such exercises, the Students' Missionary Society, and the Philosophical and Literary Society. Both are in a flourishing condition, and promise well for the future. The members are numerous, and full of energy and hope.

The Missionary Society was founded in 1869, and has steadily increased in importance and efficiency from that date. Its object is two-fold, viz., to foster a missionary spirit in its members, and to promote missionary work. How far it has succeeded in these respects is attested by the numerous missions it has opened, cultivated, and handed over to Presbyteries; as well as by the enterprise and missionary zeal which characterizes its members. Its grand work is that of opening mission stations in localities not otherwise reached. It employs missionaries during the summer vacation, whose work is thus largely of a pioneer character, and furnishes excellent practice for men whose object is to become ministers of the Gospel.

The Literary and Philosophical Society is about as old as the College itself, and all along the line of our history has done excellent work. It seeks to promote the intellectual improvement of its members. Its meetings are always of a lively and interesting character. These are held fortnightly, for the transaction of business and for the hearing of debates, essays, readings and addresses. Music also receives considerable, though, at present, not sufficient attention. Criticism is freely indulged in, and is uniformly of a friendly and helpful kind. Much good has been accomplished through the agency of this Society—more indeed than many of its members are aware of. It turns to immediate account and adds to our regular drill in homiletics and elocution. Occasionally its meetings are made public, when it becomes our happy privilege to welcome and entertain our friends from the city, who have, all along, done much to encourage us in these efforts at self-improvement. Our professors, too, take a warm interest in both societies, and have often favoured us with their counsel and aid. It is to be hoped that in the future, as our College increases, as increase it shall in numbers, and strength, and influence, that the usefulness of these students' societies may not be lost sight of.

ARENA.