

The Varsity

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BY

THE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

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NOVEMBER 25, 1890.

THE LITERARY SOCIETY.



LAST Friday's debate was one of those periodical visitations to which the Literary Society is subject, a special discussion of the Constitution. The evening opened with the President in the chair, but as the terrified hours flew by the members of the Executive Committee took the control of the meeting by relays, the exhausted being deposited in the adjoining room. The obstruction of the evening was, on the whole, characterized rather by heavy-headed intellectuality than by the brilliant inconsequence usual on such occasions, but as the society warmed to its work this became less noticeable. The Honourable the Leader of the Government on Mock Parliament nights and of the Opposition on all other occasions was unable to remain with us throughout the meeting, but his mantle fell upon Mr. Walker and Mr. Standing, who showed themselves not unworthy substitutes. We were talking quite a bit ourselves at times and are unable to give a very clear account of the proceedings at certain stages, but we trust that if our narrative seems in passages deficient in its customary lyric daring, our readers will, in view of the circumstances, excuse us.

After the opening exercises had been concluded Mr. A. M. Stewart opened fire with a small preparatory motion demolishing some five sections of Article II. The society, though hardly as yet in fighting shape, rose to the occasion and plunged at once *in medias res*, which is to say, in the vernacular, became immediately and irremedi-

ably desperately tangled up. After considerable discussion the motion was carried, having been amended by the addition of a clause to the effect that an Ordinary Member is a member who is not a Life Member nor an Honorary Member nor any other special kind of member, but just simply an ordinary member. It is to be hoped that this proviso will obviate further painful misunderstandings on this point.

One motion disposed of Mr. Stewart immediately came to the point with his second and more voluminous and iconoclastic proposition. After first excusing himself for not having been able to prepare any speech on the question, Mr. Stewart proceeded to briefly explain the purport of his motion, until after the lapse of some time Mr. C. A. Stuart felt impelled to call attention to the rule of order limiting speakers to ten minutes. As, however, the authorities had not foreseen this contingency and had neglected to take Mr. Stewart's time at the start, the remonstrance, beyond inducing the speaker to slightly condense the remaining half of his speech, produced no result. Contrary to the general expectation, there was very little discussion on this motion, the objections being mainly on account of a loop-hole discovered in the regulations proposed. It was feared that, encouraged by the urbanity of the Registrar, a number of Philistines might before elections register themselves as students without intending to attend lectures or to pay fees, when, under the new system, they would be entitled to vote. After considerable consultation an expedient was devised which though not absolutely satisfactory, will probably hinder malpractices until the price of votes rises considerably. As thus altered, the motion carried on a very close division.

Next came the motion by Mr. McKellar, and that by Mr. Davis, who introduced his in a slightly modified form. Both of these were recognized as useful and necessary, and were carried without opposition. Mr. McNicol then brought on his motion, creating the office of Historical Secretary, and defining his duties. This aroused opposition. Some said that there were too many offices already, some that some of the other officers should have been doing the work, some that the enactment would be a sort of insinuation that some of the other officers should have been doing the work and had not done so. From one source and another a large aggregate of disconnected, and some times irrelevant, sagacity was brought to bear upon the motion, but the motion survived and was finally carried by a majority larger than usual, but none too large for safety.

Mr. Evans' motion, removing the restriction on Political discussion, came up next, and, after a short debate, was defeated. Mr. Standing's monstrous proposal striking at the very root of our noble system of elections was next considered, and was instantly and sternly negated. Mr. C. A. Stewart's motion, abolishing prizes for essays, was passed with very little opposition. Three motions disposed of in a few minutes! The society began to think that it had earned a little time for diversion.

At this unlucky juncture Mr. Evans brought up the annual motion to have the fee reduced to one dollar. The influence of old associations proved too strong for the sedateness of the society, and the meeting broke loose. After a very short discussion the question was put and the result declared a tie. Everyone yelled and stamped. The chairman asked for instructions. Six members sprang up and asked for a recount. Mr. Stewart called attention to the clause declaring it the chairman's duty in case of a tie to give the casting vote. Applause. Mr. Kirkpatrick moved to have a recount. More applause. Mr. Stewart asked for the chair's ruling on his point of order. The chairman ruled that he was compelled to give the casting vote. Loud yells. Mr. McKellar and Mr. Graham protested that since the vote required was a two-thirds vote there could be no tie; either the majority amounted to two-thirds or it did not. Frenzied cheering. The chairman admitted the justice of the protest, and gave the figures 32 to 18. He then declared the motion lost, which