

other authorized entertainer, as well as the divers amusements afforded, all tend to make the *Conversazione* of the Literary and Scientific Society the best appreciated re-union of the year. There was a notable cheerfulness on the faces of those present on Thursday evening, except perhaps, during a few moments of agonizing crush at the doors of the Hall. And if some found the supper tables desolate it was surely their own fault for seeking them too late. There was some very effective draping with flags, though scarcely as much attention as usual had been paid to the decorations, and the building was better lighted than we have ever seen it before. The committees deserve much credit for the perfection of all arrangements, and have the satisfaction of knowing that they were the means of affording a pleasant evening to some fifteen hundred people.

The thanks of all University men are due to the *Mail* and *Globe* for their reports of the Banquet on Friday evening. The *Mail* devotes a full page of small type to the Banquet and the meeting of Convocation. The speeches reported were just those necessary to show the strength of our position in the country at present, and their perusal throughout the whole Province cannot fail to make us even stronger.

The proposal on the part of the Senate to alter the constitution of the degree of LL. D. so that it may henceforth be granted *honoris causa* simply, and not by examination, has called forth already a good deal of comment, favorable and otherwise, from our graduates. While there is always the possibility of error or even wilful unfairness in the granting of honorary degrees, it cannot but be understood, on the other hand, that there are, or may be, degrees that can only be so obtained to be of any value. We have always considered our plan of bestowing the degree of LL. D. as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the examination system. Some measure of the value attached by our graduates to this degree may be obtained by an examination of our list of Doctors of Law. We would cast no slur upon the ability or reputation of any in this list; but we must say that our best men, when they have fulfilled the necessary conditions otherwise, are not likely to be willing to submit themselves to an examination at the hands of men, in all probability their inferiors. The degree of LL. D. is supposed to be the highest degree our University can give. It should be placed on a foundation that will allow of a reasonable confidence in its value. That foundation cannot be a written examination. The Senate deserves thanks for attention to this matter, and will be assisted, if willing, by the consideration and advice of Convocation, the body most interested in a satisfactory settlement of the question. They need not be alarmed by the threat, held out by one of our Doctors of Law, that if that degree is placed on the proposed ground of an honorary one, the present holders of it will hand in their diplomas. That threat is too improbable to cause much alarm; even if carried out, the calamity would not be considered an overwhelming catastrophe.

University News.

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.

The Society's Annual *Conversazione*, one of the social events in Toronto, and holding among undergrads equal rank with the elections, took place on Thursday last. The building, both as regards lighting and decoration, looked better than it has ever done; Convocation Hall in this respect being far ahead of last year; the library and senate chamber were also much improved by the pictures which were hung there. There were at a very moderate estimation sixteen hundred people present, and if one could judge by their faces and remarks, the great majority of them went away thoroughly satisfied with the evening's entertainment.

The musical portion of the entertainment was as successful and enjoyable as is usually the case, to judge not only from the perform-

ance itself, but from the comments also of the crowd that struggled through the narrow door. An exclamation overheard (evidently uttered by one of the banquet committee), was to the effect that if only the Ontario Ministry were jammed in that doorway, with the leader of the Opposition in the middle of them, conviction would be forced upon them that the University accommodation was not sufficiently large in consideration of the numbers who sought admission to its halls.

Mrs. Caldwell, Miss Strong, and Herr Fried were the vocalists of the evening. Mrs. Caldwell's pure tones have been frequently heard at University *Conversaciones*, and may that pleasure be not seldom enjoyed in the future by the guests of the University. Herr Fried is also well known to Toronto musical audiences. Last Thursday night, besides several solos, he joined Mrs. Caldwell in a duet. Miss Strong was the only new light in the entertainment. This lady has a soprano voice of superior cultivation; she possesses an unusual amount of execution, which was very satisfactorily displayed in an aria from Rossini's 'Barber.' Her other solos showed that she can likewise excel in a simpler style of singing. Miss Clench played most beautifully and sympathetically on that most sympathetic instrument, the violin. Beethoven's exquisite Romance for violin and Wienawski's dreamy Legend gave evidence of the wide range of this very young lady's powers. Miss Gunther and Mr. Field filled all the piano-players in the audience with admiration and envy. Unfortunately each pianist had chosen a polonaise of Chopin's, so that that variety generally denominated pleasing was absent in the pianoforte selections. Mr. Field also contributed a study by Liszt, but as Liszt may be considered a follower of Chopin in his treatment of the piano, this would scarcely count as a variety in style. The College Glee Club appeared once only on the programme. It is now useless to express anything but regret that the Glee Club, which has been able to give concerts at various places outside Toronto, so very recently, should have failed to produce anything at the annual concert in their own College more important than the two part songs which formed the only number on the programme allotted to them. At the close of the first concert Prof. Ramsay Wright expressed to the audience the regret of the Literary Society that a scheme for public lectures in Convocation Hall this winter had fallen through, and adroitly brought to his feet Mr. Matthew Arnold, one of the hoped-for lecturers, to answer for himself as a party to the non-fulfilment of the scheme. Mr. Arnold's few charming sentences of regret brought the first concert to a close.

Mr. Torrington conducted the entertainment with the skill and success which never fail him.

The only really new feature of this year was the serving of refreshments in the reading-rooms, and that this was an undoubtedly welcome addition to the programme was admitted by almost everyone; some of the minor details, such as the curious odors that pervaded the upper part of the building and having ice cream on hot plates will be doubtless obviated another year; on the whole the refreshment committee is to be congratulated on the completeness of their arrangements. It would be a good plan if connection could be made between the library and museum galleries, as those form a pleasant vantage ground from which to mark the fleeting throng. The armoury, as usual, looked at its best and reflected much of its glory upon the mighty potentate who has it under his special charge. The microscopic preparations, sciopicon views and physical experiments all had their crowd of admirers, although we think that had there been some means of directing attention to the last-named attraction other than the mere mention of it on the programmes, the audience would have been materially increased. The music of the Q. O. R. band was of an unusually good order and was well rendered, adding in no small degree to the enjoyment of the evening. Taking into consideration the narrowness of the avenues and the depth of the snow, the difficulty of finding and reaching one's cab was not greater than might be expected; at all events the amount of strong language supplied by the cabmen was far in excess of the demand for that article.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of Convocation was held on Friday at the Canadian Institute, at 12 o'clock, noon. The work of the meeting consisted mainly of preparation of business for the consideration of Convocation, and can be inferred from the report of the proceedings of the latter. The meeting was noteworthy from the number of members present from all directions, a fact owing partly, no doubt, to the occurrence of the Banquet in the evening. The following were present: Messrs. Kingsford (Chairman), Creelman (Secretary), O'Sullivan, Biggar,