

PUBLIC DEBATE.

To the general public and friends of the University, as well as to the Undergraduates, who certainly always enjoy a meeting where they reign supreme, the public debates held by the Literary Society have ever been interesting events. The former, on these occasions have an opportunity to test and applaud the debating and oratorical powers of the students, trained in these useful mental calisthenics, not by a learned professor at the demands of the College curriculum, but in an arena founded and directed solely by themselves; while the students dearly love to congregate in the gallery and cheer on their fellow-students to victory (or defeat), punctuating the speeches with a never-ceasing flow of satirical applause and witticisms. It was from this gallery point of view that I had always looked upon the debates, and I found it very entertaining to hear the humorous sallies of the more witty and less backward boys, and join in the laugh at the "roastings" to which the heroic students, who sat downstairs, were subjected. Seeing, therefore, that every question has two sides, and wishing to view the meeting from the standpoint of the general public (and here I wish to affirm that it was from no other reason) I determined last Friday evening to take a seat in the body of the hall, and I can assure the boys upstairs that my impression of these meetings was different from former occasions. The jokes from the gallery I thought were not at all funny or apropos, and I found it well-nigh impossible to follow the trend of the speeches.

Professor Baker, in the capacity of chairman, opened the proceedings with a few appropriate words. After some most interesting remarks he concluded by congratulating the present Literary Society on having such an energetic and distinguished President as the one whom he would now introduce to make his inaugural address.

Dr. Wickett, on rising, was greeted with great applause. He stated that former Presidents, in their inaugural addresses, had chosen for their subject College sentiment, but in his case he had decided to depart from this custom, and would speak rather on national sentiment, taking as a type Prince Bismarck, whose recent death has made him the object of interest to the whole world. The audience manifested their appreciation of Dr. Wickett's choice of subject and their admiration for his oratorical ability by their careful attention and rounds of applause.

Mr. W. Beardmore, S.P.S., then rendered "Cavatina," by Raff, on the violin in a very masterly style.

The essay by Mr. A. H. R. Fairchild, '00, on Genius and Reality, was a product of deep thought and literary skill. I may echo the chairman's hope that Mr. Fairchild's essay will soon be reproduced in printed form.

A very entertaining selection from Mark Twain's experiences with European guides, by Mr. Burch, '99, soon brought us down from the loftier sphere of thought to which the preceding speaker had raised us—down, down, from the sublime to the ridiculous—and I joined in the quaint Twain humor, which Mr. Burch can so well bring out in his inimitable style and mimicry.

Before announcing the debate, the chairman greatly relieved my feelings by requesting the students not to interrupt the debaters, unless they had something

exceptionally funny to say, and to be sure to think twice, or even four or five times, before they spoke. In this neat way the undivided attention of the students was gained for the speakers.

The subject under consideration was, Resolved, that Lord Salisbury's foreign policy, during the present administration, has been, on the whole, censurable. All four speakers, Messrs. R. J. McAlpine, '99, and A. N. Mitchell, '00, for the affirmative, and W. F. McKay, '99, and G. F. Kay '00, for the negative, showed themselves to be strong debaters, as well as brilliant orators. The two leaders combined clearness and force, while their colleagues were not a whit behind in their forcible and argumentative handling of their respective sides.

I think the audience agreed with the chairman that the negative had beaten the affirmative, and so all, but the two unhappy men who censured Lord Salisbury, went home happy.

OUR ANNUAL HUSTLE.

The "hustle" has seemed for so many years an accepted college institution that many students have, perhaps, given it no serious thought, and have made no enquiry as to the advisability of continuing it. During these years, there has, doubtless, always been a considerable number of students who have felt that the thing ought to die; but they have said so little, and the "hustlers" have said so much, that some of the students may not know of any serious spirit of opposition to this method of receiving the Freshmen.

As far as I know, there are only three arguments that are advanced in support of the observance of this initiatory ceremony.

The strongest reason for its observance is, probably, a conviction in the minds of many students in the higher years that something must be done to curb the self-assertive spirit of the Freshmen. It is feared that if they are not made to realize their immaturity and inexperience at the outset they may want to "run the University"—these are the words actually used. Now, in some degree, this conviction is undoubtedly a true one. There are Freshmen, of course, who enter the University with almost as good an education as some men have when they leave—and with a broader culture; nevertheless everyone must admit that some Freshmen are exceedingly "fresh." On the other hand, everyone must also admit that there are occasionally Sophomores and Juniors, and even Seniors, who are very "fresh." And careful observation will reveal the fact that the men in the higher years, who are found to be too self-assertive, are the very men who showed an abnormal development of "bumptiousness" in their first year. This may lead us to enquire if such a physical discipline as hustling is best suited to remedy a spiritual defect. The "freshest" man I believe I ever saw was in his third year, when he was pointed out to me nearly four years ago, and he, I was told, had been hustled three or four times. Even if we grant, however, the power of physical force to effect the desired change, is it not very evident folly to impose a discipline upon nine men, who don't need it, for the sake of one man who does need it? It does the one man no good, for he is the very man who won't believe it is meant for him in any special manner; and it may do the nine men harm in destroying their faith that an