

Inaugural Address

DELIVERED BEFORE THE SOCIETY,

BY THE PRESIDENT, JOHN A. PATERSON, M.A.,

OCTOBER 30th, 1898,

REV. JOHN MCCAUL, LL.D., IN THE CHAIR.

To the Members of the University College Literary and Scientific Society.

GENTLEMEN :

It now becomes me to return my very sincere and respectful thanks for the kindness which has placed me in a chair, rendered dignified and an object of honorable ambition by the many men who have filled it in former times, the very mention of whose names might well make any comparison alarming to a far more worthy successor. It was not for my predecessor last year, nor is it for me this year, to question the correctness of a decision respecting an issue, on which the constitution empowers you to be judges from whom there is no appeal; I feel assured, however, that my fellow-candidate for your suffrages, whom I am happy to be able to call my friend, would have most gracefully worn the mantle of office with which you have seen fit to endow me. In the former years of our Society's existence, the elections for office were conducted with a spirit of peacefulness and unanimity, which, however gratifying to the honored recipient, was by no means indicative of a plurality of official talent, nor of that healthful play of vitality which, if properly restrained within the limits of honorable emulation, conduces so powerfully to our development. Two successive elections we have seen conducted in a spirit not purely pacific, but still not violently warlike; we have seen the strife of parties, and the resistless force of the *vox populi* tending to prevent a listless apathy which might engender the poisonous mists of stagnation. Our little student world is periodically agitated by throes of internal convulsions, occurring with unwavering regularity, which soon evince themselves in so-called caucus meetings, fiery harangues from beardless demagogues, mysterious private conversations, all premonitory symptoms of a grand electoral contest soon to be waged in that ever memorable West-end Reading-room. On one side stand the brazen-tuniced Myrmidons, and on the other glitter the long-shadowed spears of the heroes of Troy; terrible are the heart-cutting words of the Greek warriors, and no less fearful are the verbal javelins of the undaunted Trojan soldiers; round about flash the satire-pointed brands, from side to side fly the winged words,—alas! however, for Homeric simile, the man-slaying Hector has forgotten his character, for, leaving his spearmen to