

compared with that of preceding years. The trip extended as far as Aylmer and was a very pleasant one, and all were more than satisfied with the amount of enjoyment it afforded.

The afternoon of December 30th was chosen by the Directors of the Philharmonic and Dramatic Societies as the most suitable occasion of affording the members of the different organizations entrusted to their care an opportunity of enjoying themselves, and, at the same time, of displaying to advantage their various talents. Two very large busses were accordingly engaged, and at 3 o'clock, p.m., the Cecilian Society, with Rev. Fr. Gervais at the head, the Glee Club and the Dramatic Society, accompanied by Rev. Fathers Emard and Jacob took their places in the sleighs for a trip to Aylmer. The ride was unusually pleasant. With so many accomplished artists there is no necessity of stating that the rural atmosphere vibrated to the varied notes of at least thirty warblers.

After an hour's ride, the busses drew up before the Convent, where the kind Sisters extended to the boys as hearty a welcome as they had often proffered before. A grand supper was prepared by the good ladies of the village, assisted by Mr. Chas. Devlin, to which the visitors did ample justice.

At the request of Rev. Father Beauchamp, pastor of the parish, the societies entertained the good people of the town with a delightful comic opera in French and a laughable farce in English. The music furnished by the band proved to be one of the most interesting and welcome features of the evening.

After the students had participated in another repast, and sung a parting song, they bade good night to their hospitable hosts, and with a V-a-r-s-i-t-y rah! rah! rah! drove merrily away towards their *Alma Mater*.

Catholicity is progressing in Ceylon. The latest number of the *Ceylon Catholic Messenger* gives an interesting account of the pastoral visitation of Nagoda. The Archbishop of Colombo, Most Rev. Dr. Bonjean, O.M.I., in the course of the visitation confirmed 930 persons. He was assisted in the missionary work by seven Oblate Fathers of the diocese, and 2,000 persons approached the Sacraments.

SOCIETIES.

DEBATING.

Practice is the secret of success in oratory as well as in any of the other arts. This statement scarcely needs proof, for but slight reflection will show the amount of truth it contains. Whether we glean from the lives of great orators the means by which they have attained to perfection, or whether we examine the progress of those who in our own generation are scaling the ladder that leads to pre-eminence, the same glaring truth reveals itself. No doubt, nature lends her kind assistance in bestowing a powerful, yet melodious voice, a large, yet graceful figure, and a pleasing, prepossessing countenance. But nature alone cannot make the orator: she furnishes the raw material, and patient, persevering practice works it into a state of perfection.

Too great an importance cannot be attached to debating societies. Through their beneficial influence many prominent orators of our day have risen from the humblest grade of life to the very pinnacle of oratorical fame. Long and constantly must the young aspirants labor; for, success depends upon the efforts—the ardent efforts of him who would succeed. Alone and unassisted, the student will soon become disheartened with his seemingly unfruitful task. What he needs most, in addition to a few endowments of nature, is encouragement, and nowhere will he find it in greater abundance than in the midst of his companions. By them, more than all others, will his efforts be appreciated. In the debating society he meets companions filled with his own aspirations and imbued with his own sentiments; classmates who will appreciate his infant efforts and second his yet feeble endeavors towards manifesting his ideas in public with a certain elegance and ease.

Our colleges, universities, and, in fact, all our institutions of learning, cannot be too deeply impressed with the necessity of these societies as part of an educational course.

During the past eleven years our debating society has prospered under the direction of a master-hand, and our experience has taught us that its success depends upon the combined efforts of an enthusiastic director, an intelligent com-