

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.

The continued popularity of the public meetings of the Society was well evinced by the large audience which last evening filled Convocation Hall. Not only as regards the audience was the meeting a success, the programme in both its musical and literary part was carried out in a way very creditable to those engaged in it, and to the Society generally.

The programme was commenced with an excellent rendition by the Glee Club of Kochat's "Rose of Woerthsee," and responded to a well-merited encore with the "Druids' Chorus" from *Norma*.

The inaugural address of the President, Rev. Father Teefy, B.A., a verbatim report of which appears in another column, followed the opening chorus. The generous applause which greeted the rev. gentleman's remarks well showed the popularity of the President-elect, and the general esteem in which he is held by the members of the Society.

Mr. M. S. Mercer read the difficult and somewhat worn selection, "Robert of Sicily," very acceptably.

The introductory portion of the programme was concluded with the quartette from the third chorus of Mendelsohn's "Antigone," by Messrs. Mercer, White, Graham and Brown, who were encored and responded with a repetition of the same.

The subject of the debate of the evening was the following resolution: "That the experience of history does not show that a permanent Senate is a beneficial check on the proceedings of a representative legislature."

Mr. J. G. Holmes led the affirmative. He referred at the outset to the widespread nature of the interest which is being taken in this question. It is ripe in England, has within the last week been decided in France, where a Senate, in existence up to a few days ago, has been done away with, and is creating considerable notice in Germany and Greece. The question is to be looked at from the stand-point of History. "One page of history," said George Washington, "is worth a thousand of prophecy." What beneficial effects does history show the Senate to have exerted on important measures? Tracing the history of the English Senate or House of Lords from the time of Henry 7th they are found as we find them to-day in England, opposed to nearly all popular measures.

Mr. H. B. Witton replied on behalf of the negative. He did not, apparently, speak with his usual fluency, and the points which he made were, to a great extent, lost upon the large majority of the audience owing to the low tone in which the speech was delivered. The principal arguments which Mr. Witton brought forward were: That, while certain cases of failure to check hasty legislation might be instanced against the Senates of different nations, still the general principle of a second Chamber was correct; because it is unwise to give the uncontrolled power into the hands of any individual, or into any one portion of the community, and because, as in the case of Canada, where there is too large and servile a majority in the Lower House, it is indispensable that some check be put upon their acts.

Mr. J. McD. Duncan followed in support of the affirmative. The Senate of the negative, according to what seemed Mr. Witton's idea, the speaker characterized as Utopian. We must take Senates as they are, not as they ought to be. The very constitution of a permanent Senate is an argument against it. How could a body of men irresponsible to the people affected by their legislation be expected to be influenced by popular sentiment? A member of Parliament owes his political existence to the attention which he pays to popular opinion. A Senator has no such check put on him. Permanent Senates have ever been a clog on the wheels of national progress.

Mr. A. Hamilton, who was the second speaker on the negative, adopted much the same line of argument as his leader. He argued that as the Commons usually adopted the amendments made by the Lords, the legislation of the Upper House was not utterly useless and without value. The fact that the constitution of the second Chamber rendered it wholly independent of sectional or party considerations, was a most powerful argument in favor of the conclusions which had been arrived at in the discussion of public questions. Mr. Hamilton concluded, stating that the restitution of the House of Lords, after its abolition by Cromwell, was a most convincing, popular verdict in favor of the retention of a second Chamber.

After concluding remarks by the leader of the affirmative, the chairman, Dr. Wilson, decided the debate in favor of the affirmative.

NATURAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.

The second regular meeting of the Association was held in the School of Practical Science on Tuesday evening, 11th inst., the President, Prof. Wright, in the chair.

Owing to the continued absence of Mr. Brent, the Secretary—

who is now residing in Trinidad—the office of secretary was declared vacant.

Mr. Roche moved, seconded by Mr. Lennox, that Mr. F. T. Shutt be appointed secretary. As no further nominations were made, Mr. Shutt was declared secretary by acclamation.

The following gentlemen were nominated to act on the General Committee as 2nd year representatives: Messrs. Nesbitt, Roseburgh, Miller, Talbot.

The literary programme was then proceeded with as follows:

Mr. T. P. Hall, B.A., Fellow in Chemistry, favored the Society with an experimental lecture on statical electricity. Although the apparatus at his command did not allow of a very brilliant exposition, Mr. Hall treated his subject in such a masterly and lucid manner, accompanying the explanations by a series of experiments, as to be at the same time instructive and highly interesting to those present.

After describing the properties of electricity Mr. Hall went on to explain induction and the various kinds of electrical machines now in use, the Leyden jar, and the effect of the electrical spark.

A brief discussion followed, eliciting some further remarks regarding the relationship between temperature-moisture and amount of electricity.

Mr. Lennox followed with a translation he had made from a German anatomist, Prof. Schmidt, of Stuttgart, on "The torsion of the Humerus," prefacing the paper by an explanation of the present theories regarding the development of the limbs. The paper was illustrated by diagrams drawn by Mr. Lennox.

Prof. Wright, in this connection, discussed the comparison between the fore and hind limbs, giving the hypotheses of certain German and American anatomists, and described the development of the limbs, including Gegenbaur's theory.

The subject will be continued at the next meeting by a further paper by Mr. Lennox, with practical illustrations.

The President then exhibited a fish which he had lately received from Illinois. It was a species of cholegaster, allied to the blind fishes of the Mammoth Cave.

MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SOCIETY.

The semi-monthly meeting of the Society was held in one of the lecture rooms at the University on Tuesday evening, the 11th inst. Mr. A. C. McKay read an extensive paper on Simple Harmonic Motion. With an harmonograph of his own construction Mr. McKay gave accurate representations of Lissajou's curves. Physical experiments were performed by Messrs. S. K. Martin and A. C. McKay. These gentlemen gave a beautiful illustration of wave motion. Problems were solved by Messrs. J. W. Reid, B.A., J. McGeary, I. E. Martin, R. A. Thompson, and Wm. Sanderson.

MODERN LANGUAGE CLUB.

The second English meeting of the year was held on Tuesday evening, the attendance being larger than at any previous meeting. Mr. W. Houston, M.A., was called to the chair. Mr. H. J. Hamilton read his essay on the character of Hamlet, maintaining that he had no lack of courage, mental and physical, to fit him for his purpose, but wasted his time in unproductive musings. Mr. McPherson read an interesting paper on "Essay Writing," showing the chief errors into which unpractised writers are liable to fall, and the remedies for these.

Mr. Houston then gave an address on "The Study of English." He contended that the teaching of English from the public schools to the colleges was notoriously defective, and that this defect resulted in a great degree from the present course in English specified on the University curriculum. The study of English should be begun by the study of standard writers, and not of works on philology. In the University of Toronto too little importance has always been attached to the department of English. It is hoped that the new curriculum will overcome this to a large extent. Anglo-Saxon authors should be introduced in the third year and continued in the fourth; and no candidate should be allowed to graduate with first-class honors who cannot read the very earliest Anglo-Saxon writers.

At the close of the meeting a unanimous vote of thanks was tendered to Mr. Houston for his able address.

THE FORUM.

On Saturday last McMillan's Hall was thronged with first and second year men eager to attend the ceremony of 'inspiring the Promethean spark in the cold ashes of the quondam Forum.'

Mr. Ferguson was chosen to superintend the proceedings, and