

The Varsity

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BY

THE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.

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JANUARY 26. 1892.

LITERARY SOCIETY.



THE 146th public debate of University College Literary and Scientific Society was a success, and such a decided improvement on the 145th that we have hopes of great things in the 147th. The improvement was not in the speeches, although they were excellent, but in the increased attendance and in the general conduct of the student body. To be sure that conduct was not unimpeachable, but so much better than in previous meetings that we feel tempted to let it pass without blame. But perhaps the best time to point to faults is when

Reproaches mingled with just praise
May grieve nor wake resentment's flame.

So, here, Varsity men, let me reproach you gently; you seem sometimes to forget when assembled together one rule of action which you never violate individually, but which is just as necessary on you in your collective as individual capacity.

The never-failing mark of the chivalrous gentleman is his respect for, his deference to, women. You are quite within your student rights, in deriding assuming freshness or windy eloquence; (those who would attain fame should not object to pay its certain price;) you may, within reasonable limits, express your hatred of "cheek," or your appreciation of modest worth, when the possessor of these admirable qualities crosses the literary threshold alone, but when he is the attendant of some fair divinity, some blushing girl or modest, tender woman,

No, fellow-students, not then,
He is privileged, let him pass,
Some other time, not then.

Think over it, boys, there are plenty of ways of expressing your stronger feelings without bringing embarrassment and shame to those who should never have, from you but kindly solicitude and tender respect.

The hall was filled to overflowing, the front seats by students and their friends; the ladies were in the majority here, but the back rows were unenlivened by a single fair face, and the debaters' hearts must have stirred to see the solid compact lines where each face shone with enthusiasm and anticipation of oratorical confusion.

Prof. Baker, without introductory remark, called on the Glee Club, and the "Bill of Fare" was placed before us. We called for more, but the second dish was dog's meat and we stopped there.

It is impossible to give the substance of either essay or speeches. We had vague intentions of doing some such thing, but we had reckoned without our host.

The two seats on our right were occupied by a freshman and his best girl, and if we *would* have heard we *could* not. Besides, two seats ahead, in a direct line between ourselves and the president, sat one of Toronto's very pretty girls who for some reason, which we shall leave unexplained, frequently turned her very pretty face so as to look directly between ourselves and the grave professor on our left, and the consequence was that after having treasured up Perrin's firstly, his secondly never reached me, and, when I waked from my day-dream, the third round had been fired and a new battery was opening on the enemy.

O. P. Edgar's essay on "Walt Whitman" was read in a sympathetic tone, but too low to be heard by the middle benches without effort. As to the matter we cannot speak; the reader had made considerable progress before we learned from the programme that he was speaking of Whitman, we thought it had been Sophocles.

The speeches of Hayne and Webster in the United States Senate, reproduced by Messrs. Pease and Reeve, were received with delight by the back rows. We had higher opinions of senatorial eloquence in Webster's times than we have now, but it is ever so; our youthful fancies are swept away by hard, stern realities. Webster was not feeling well when he made that reply to the South Carolina man, or else his expositor has done him injustice.

We are certain, too, that Mr. Hayne meant well in defending his friend, "The Gentleman from Missouri," but he had much better, for his friend's sake, have let it pass.

However, in justice to the orators, we must say that the original Hayne and Webster could not have been impressive or eloquent in the face of such enthusiasm as their representatives inspired on Friday night. The boys knew it would be their only chance of sport for the evening, and they made the most of it.

The first part closed with The Wanderers' Night Song by the Glee Club. This was rendered so well that they were recalled and gave "The Wild Man from Borneo."

Nothing could have been more appropriate than the reception Mr. Perrin received on stepping forward to open the debate. As if to remind him that the fame of our University was in his keeping, the boys struck up "Varsity, Varsity, V-a-r-s-i-t-y" with immense vigor, and, having rendered the inspiring chorus, subsided into silence, and the eloquent leader was heard without the slightest attempt at interruption. Perrin's fine voice filled the hall, and he was heard without effort in the farthest corner.

It was a graceful action to welcome McGill's representative with "McGill, McGill, what's the matter with old McGill," and Kullmeyer evidently appreciated it as he rose to call attention to the baneful effects of the Revolution. It required some effort to hear all that Mr. Kullmeyer said, but his matter was good.

Cooper's speech was logical, emphasizing the bettered condition of the French masses since the Revolution.

Mr. Messenger's speech contained abundance of good material excellently arranged. He claimed that good has resulted, not because of the Revolution, but in spite of it. He pointed to the overthrow of Christianity, to the excesses while it was in progress, to the unsettled state of public opinion in France to-day, and to the lack of real liberty of speech or publication.

In giving his decision in favor of McGill, Prof. Baker said he was not moved by courtesy, but while affirming the superior eloquence of our representatives, maintained that the balance of argument was in favor of the Montreal men.

Three rousing cheers were given for McGill; the President announced the Glee Club Concert for Feb. 19th, and with God Save the Queen we dispersed.