



Literary

ADDRESS OF MR. F. M. LAW, JR., BEFORE THE AUSTIN LITERARY SOCIETY.

Mr. President and Young Men of the
Literary Societies:

After an absence of five years it is a pleasure, I can assure you, to have the opportunity of addressing you in this old familiar hall in the capacity of a literary society.

The occasion carries me back to other days, when other faces greeted me and other voices filled the hall,—this same old hall (how friendly it seems)—the scene of many interesting and delightful incidents in which I was allowed to play a minor part. And if there was aught lacking in your welcome to make me feel perfectly at home, the benign countenance of that grand old man that I learned to love like a father (Governor Ross) looking down upon me, would supply the need.

You will allow me to state at the outset of this informal address that what I have to say will be as extremely practical and suggestive as I can make it. There will be no attempt at oratory or rhetoric, and your patience will not be taxed by a lengthy discourse.

I have been sorry to learn that interest in the society has somewhat lagged for the past few years. This ought not to be, and to-night, at the opening of a new session, I want to invoke the aid and sympathy of the new men in putting the two societies back on the high plane of excellence attained in the past. There is only one way for you to help, and that is to

join and determine in your own mind to work and help with all your strength. Do this, and I will try to prove to you that your reward will be great. It is my purpose to speak briefly of some of the accruing benefits, and I trust that my remarks will have aught in them to cheer and encourage the faithful few among the old students who have struggled bravely along in the face of many difficulties. These, then, are some of the benefits you will derive from active membership in a literary society.

First. It will give you splendid training in English, and I want to say right here (it having been granted that the school of English is not as prominent or extended in an A. and M. college as it would be in a university) that a model literary society is as good a school of English as any one could wish. The training in writing essays, making orations, and preparing debates is invaluable, and gives one that command of the queen's English that he might otherwise find it impossible to acquire.

Second. It affords the student a fine field to cultivate and bring out his oratorical powers. Many a young man has inherent the gift of oratory, and only such a training school is needed to make him proficient.

Third. It affords fine training for the mind by means of debate. It develops the argumentative and logical qualities of the mind.