

## STATE ORATORICAL CONTEST.

## Wesleyan Wins First Honors but Pushed Hard by U. of N.

It was not long after 7 when great chunks of enthusiasm began to manifest themselves at Bohannon's hall. It was crowded long before the time for the program to commence, while the yells were chasing around the hall and echoing from the splendid dome. Horas and mechanisms of various kinds added enchantment to the scene. Doane was on deck with a song, or perhaps several songs. If they did not have their share of the fun it was not because they didn't try.

At 8:15 the Adelphian opened the program with a college song, which was received with great applause. President Hyde then called the meeting to order. The university orchestra then favored the audience with a choice selection, which was heartily encored, and responded gracefully. Rev. D. R. Dungan, president Cotner university, prayed, and the president made a few timely remarks, when the orators were called to their places; and on the non-appearance of Mr. Chappell, the president announced that he was unwell but would probably come in later. The first oration consequently was, "The Voice of a Majority," by C. A. Holt, of Gates college. He was at ease on the stage, gestures few and well chosen, and his articulation clear. He was heartily applauded. Another song was given by the Adelphians, and they were forced to respond to an encore.

"The Social Problem" was then discussed by W. N. Casel, of Doane. At first he did not seem to have full control of his voice, but he improved as he went on. He spoke rapidly, yet clearly; and the audience showed their appreciation by their hearty applause. Mrs. F. Barrow then favored the audience with a piano solo, which was well received.

At this point word was sent to the president that Mr. Chappell had recovered and his oration was announced. His subject was "What Shall be Done With the Negro." He was greeted by the uni. yell as he approached the stage. His delivery was forcible, his articulation clear. His position on the stage was, perhaps, slightly stiff. He was troubled in one place to recall the passage, which somewhat-marred his delivery. He was twice interrupted by hearty applause.

G. H. Bicknell, of Cotner, followed with an oration on "The Modern Ideal." His delivery was good, his gestures well chosen. His voice showed occasionally a trace of harshness, but, on the whole, was very pleasing. He was presented with a fine boquet as a token of appreciation.

The last orator of the evening was C. E. Winter. His subject was "A Lost Citizenship." His delivery as well as his gestures were very energetic. He held the audience to the end, although they were, no doubt, wearied by this time. Following is the oration in full.

## A LOST CITIZENSHIP.

"The tree of national life, the principal of the freedom and equality of men, was implanted by the Divine hand in the field of strife. The convulsive struggles of the past stirred the soil at the roots and allowed full inspiration; it was nurtured by discontent and intolerance; it was nourished by rebellion and usurpation; the death of despot and tyrant infused new life and vigor, and the debris of ruined empires and fallen monarchies gave it sustenance. Ever perfecting through the centuries, it gradually assumed the noble proportions of maturity. Slowly it approached the culmination of symmetry and strength, and at last burst into blossom, crowned and beautified, in the declaration of independence,

and was glorified by golden fruit,—the establishment of a new nation.

Thus were produced the true principles of human government. The wisdom and knowledge of six thousand years, the experience of a world, entered into the constitution in which they were embodied.

To the American citizen was given that constitution to love and obey, to honor and uphold, to guard and cherish as his very life, for in it lay his existence,—the existence of his country. Nobly did he fulfill those duties. To him was given the noble trust to hand down to posterity, unbroken and undefiled, that document of life and freedom, and faithfully did he discharge that trust. That grand passage, the preamble, which declared the purposes of its inception, was to him sublime indeed. To him each word was a tone of wonderful sweetness, each thought a chord of exquisite beauty, and the whole the grandest melody that ever inspired man to noble thought and deed. Him it aroused and encouraged and under its influence he went forth in defense of a nation; he lived up to the provisions of that constitution and abided by its rulings; he studied its profound truths at his fireside and defended them upon the field of battle; he was a true citizen of a true republic.

But what of the present? Does the American citizen of to-day measure up to that standard? The accusing voice of oppressed and suffering millions thunders; No! The bomb of the anarchist thunders; No! A thousand evils thunder, No! And the echo of that mighty cry hurls back from the capitalists' mountains of gold and silver the answer,—No! We look for the cause. By no change of attitude of this to other nations has this been brought about. To no alteration of individual environment is it due. The true relation of citizen to government has been lost. Once the people were the sovereign power. They were the source and cause of power, the end and effect. Where is that supreme authority to day? Not in twelve million voters, but in a few thousand scheming politicians. Once there was a government of, for, and by the people. Now there is a government of, for, and by the politician. Let the American citizen bow his head in shame and let the stars and stripes droop at half mast; 't will be symbolic of a national calamity,—a lost citizenship. The American voter has allowed his limbs to be bound by the cords of party obligations; he has put into his own mouth the gag of unreasoning obstinacy; he has deadened intellect and conscience by acting in opposition to his real beliefs and convictions, and now he stands helpless, the pitiful product of his own folly,—a lettered slave. The politician wields the whip and the American citizen falls into line and marches at his bidding. In his blind and foolish, yea criminal, obstinacy in clinging to party and disregarding principle, he has lost his very identity; he has given up his greatest and grandest privilege,—the right which was gained only through a mighty revolution,—that which made him a citizen,—the power to make the laws of his country.

Our forefathers felt and recognized the absolute necessity of a strict and close observance of the constitution. To them it was a legacy, priceless indeed, and they held it in worshipped reverence. And well they might. That wonderful and mighty force by which the vast and intricate machinery of state was set in motion and controlled! That marvelous product of all time! It was the light and life of this nation in the infancy of its development, and it is now, and forever will be, the well-spring of our national life. The principles embodied in that constitution are as immutable as rocks. When oceans shall disappear and mountains crumble; when

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