

THE LAW INSTITUTE.

PRESENTATION OF BEQUESTS FROM THE LATE HUGH MAXWELL.

The regular monthly meeting of the New-York Law Institute was held yesterday afternoon, in the Library in the United States Court building, Mr. Charles O'Connor, President, in the chair; Mr. R. S. Guernsey, Secretary pro tem., and many members present.

The most interesting feature of the meeting was the presentation of some bequests which were left to the institute by the late Hon. Hugh Maxwell, an old and well-known member of the Bar in this City, who died about a month ago. The gifts consisted of life-size portraits of Chancellor Thomas A. Emmett and Chancellor James Kent, and a magnificent silver vase, which had been presented to Mr. Maxwell while he was District Attorney in this City, from 1819 to 1829, by the citizens of New-York, for faithful performance of the duties of his office. A letter from the executors, formally returning the property over to the institute, was read by the Librarian, Mr. A. J. Vanderpoel, who thereupon offered a resolution accepting the gifts. Mr. Charles Tracey seconded the motion, in a few remarks complimentary to the memory of Mr. Maxwell, and the resolutions were adopted.

Mr. O'Connor, President of the Law Institute, in accepting the gifts in its behalf, said that Hugh Maxwell was one of the most venerated and venerable of the lawyers of the past who had been among us during the last few years. He had long retired from the Bar, however, and was only seen occasionally by a few, who will remember his lofty and graceful carriage when he attended court to witness interesting forensic displays and to hear judgments pronounced that attracted him from his retirement. Mr. O'Connor remembered Mr. Maxwell well, when he, the speaker, was just beginning to study law, and he paid a compliment to Mr. Maxwell's ability as a pleader. He may have been exceeded since, but at that time he attracted great attention, and was universally admired and envied. When he went into office as District Attorney, his laborious duties kept him hard at work at an inferior kind of business, there being, at that time, no assistants in the District Attorney's Office. Perhaps the greatest cases ever tried in the District Attorney's Office took place during Mr. Maxwell's term. A large number of eminent merchants, inadvertently, became involved in a prosecution for violating the statutes of the State, and, as they were all influential men, there was great public excitement, and great efforts were made to prevent the cases being tried, but Mr. Maxwell performed his duty as District Attorney, contending successfully against the most eminent talent of the time. Mr. O'Connor described the presentation of the silver vase to Mr. Maxwell by the citizens of New-York as a mark of public appreciation of his efforts while District Attorney. He trusted that the institute would find some means to commemorate this presentation, and that Maxwell's example would serve as an incentive to virtue to the rising generation of young lawyers.

The vase is on exhibition at Tiffany's. It is of massive silver, of fine workmanship, and is valued at \$6,000.