

Friends of the dormitory system nearly always point to Oxford and Cambridge, where college life is the feature. But college life at Oxford or Cambridge is a totally different thing to dormitory life in any University on this continent or to any dormitory life that we could establish at McGill. Let us admit, if you like, that Oxford and Cambridge have something which universities here have not—but we cannot provide that "something" merely by the erection of the type of residence possible here. McGill is not made up of residential colleges, and never can be. American colleges thought residential life would give to them what Oxford and Cambridge had. After thirty years' experience they admit they were wrong. President Lowell of Harvard condemns the ordinary university dormitory and is trying to substitute the Oxford college.

No, gentlemen, the peculiar charm of Oxford is not due to her dormitories but to her storied past; to the memories of her famous men; to her chapels; her colleges, each with its own individuality, where professors, tutors and students live together in high company; to the thoroughly scholarly traditions of the leading colleges; and, not the least, to the work done in the famous public schools of England before ever the students went up to Oxford. You cannot create a university out of bricks and mortar and ivied walls and lawns and playing fields. No merely mechanical re-arrangement of the student body will create a single new idea or a single new sentiment in the spiritual life of the institution.

Nevertheless, it is the firm intention of the Board of Governors to begin, as soon as possible, the provision of dormitories. Just where, is a question. The majority of you will think of Macdonald Park at once. But why not on Pine Avenue, or University Street? The space in Macdonald Park is not unlimited, and if all dormitories are erected there, what becomes of playing fields, the need of which is very urgent? Some have advocated a high dormitory building, but I shudder when I think of such a building—more than ever does the idea of the cheap hotel come to my mind.

I have dwelt rather lengthily on this question of dormitories, because it is one not lightly to be disposed of, and because so many appear to judge our University not by what it has in the way of facilities or by what it has accomplished or is accomplishing now, but by what it has not and by what has been left undone.

There are other material things the lack of which disappoints our friends. We are told we should have a Convocation Hall, another building for our Department of Music, a larger Physics Building, an enlarged stadium, more playing fields, more laboratory facilities, more accommodation for the Departments of Dentistry, Law and Architecture, and greater museum space.

I admit all this, and the bare enumeration of these things will give some indication of the worries of your Principal. But there are other things which worry him

more. I am even prepared to place these different necessities in the order in which I think they should be supplied, but there are other things which I think come first.

Great as material needs may be, the need of men ranks first and chiefest. We may have clear in our minds the mission and purpose of a University, we may appreciate the conveniences it should have, we may have our own special enthusiasms and aspirations, but the thing that most gives a university character, reputation, respect, tradition, value and merit is the character of the men and women on the staff. Every university is bound to have mediocrities; like the poor, they are always with us. But how can university training hope to raise the intellectual tone of a community, how can it purify the national taste, how can it cultivate the public mind, how can it train good citizens, unless the training received in a university is imparted by men who themselves are examples of what good citizens should be, men who can not only teach but who can do; men who can inspire and stimulate and develop the minds of the students who enter their class rooms, men, strong and true, whose company is sought, whose counsel is sound, men who are wise and tolerant and just, men who know that no theory, however fascinating, is of any value if the student must immediately forget it when he enters the world of actualities and facts, men who can appreciate the needs of their fellow men and their country and who can play, and



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