

### The Advantages of College Residence.

The following speech was delivered at the commencement exercises on Tuesday 23, at St. Michael's College, G. J. Savage, '96:

GRAC, REVEREND FATHERS; AND GENTLEMEN—Our exercises today are of a very unusual character, and we are all anxious to hear the strains of our national anthem than anything I may say about the advantages of College residence. However, trusting that the large stock of kindly forbearance you always bring with you on occasions of this character has not yet been exhausted, and relying upon the deep interest the people of Toronto feel in all subjects pertaining to education I venture to trespass upon your good nature for a few moments longer.

In this age and country, especially in the Province of Ontario, and still more especially in the city of Toronto, all questions relating to the mental and moral development of the children and youth have received the most careful and universal attention of the people. Ministers of religion speak upon them from their pulpits; editors almost daily devote long and learned articles to them; business men discuss them in their offices and at their firesides; and even the children of our streets will be heard arguing over educational matters. Such a general and lively discussion of these questions, though the views advanced are often erroneous, and sometimes periphrastic, is bound to be advantageous to the cause of education. Now, if all were agreed as to what the word "Education" means I might pass it over and proceed to the discussion of the manifold advantages of a College that requires residence of its students over one that dispenses with it on this subject; but since the opinions on this subject are so varied and opposite it will be well for us first to agree upon a definition for this word.

Education, as I understand it, is intellectual proficiency and moral perfection; it is that which leads human souls to what is best and making what is best out of them. To educate is to develop, to strengthen, and to perfect the intellectual and moral faculties of man. As the body requires physical exercise so the mind requires intellectual exercise; and as the body demands many and various kinds of exercise, so also does the mind. We become regular attendants at the gymnasium, are taught and practice many different kinds of exercises, that exercise every muscle, great and small, in the whole body; we go through a trapeze performance, and practice on horizontal bars, we fence and box and jump; and all this for what purpose? That we may become pugilists or Japanese fencers to frighten an audience and earn a circus. Surely we do it that we may have a strong, healthy body that will serve us faithfully and enable us to discharge the various duties of life to the best advantage. As we do not take exercise in the morning, we will not be proficient in the afternoon. Mental movements that we practice, neither do we puzzle over the theorems of Euclid and the problems of Trigonometry, and burn midnight oil in mastering Latin roots and Greek particles, and merely for the sake of the particular knowledge we may gain from the study of these subjects; but that we may have a strong, vigorous and enlightened intellect, capable of grasping other subjects in turn to the best and most courteous advantage whatever knowledge we may possess.

And now if you will grant that my conception of education is correct, I contend that a College requiring residence of its students shall be far more successful in educating young men than one that dispenses with this condition. And why? Because constant association and intercourse of students in the highest and most effective means of intellectual development. And lastly because of the correctness of the statement I will briefly explain why I believe it to be true. I believe it because when hundreds of young men, keen, inquisitive and sympathetic, are gathered together, as they are sure to be, to learn and to teach, they are sure to find in each other, for themselves new ideas, find fresh matter for thought and argument, and settle upon fixed principles for judging and acting day by day. In their hours of relaxation, in the halls, in their recreations, in the conversation of each is a series of lectures to all. Moreover, the students are brought together from various parts of the country, often from foreign countries; they are widely in their habits of life, and their different local manners, thus enabling each to see the world on a small field with little trouble. In such a mixed assemblage of intelligent beings there is much to be learned, much to be taught, and much to be done. And thus, by the nature of things, we are brought into contact with the best of the world on a small field with little trouble. In such a mixed assemblage of intelligent beings there is much to be learned, much to be taught, and much to be done. And thus, by the nature of things, we are brought into contact with the best of the world on a small field with little trouble.

giving the preference to the former that required residence and nothing more over the latter which exacted of its members an acquaintance with every science under the sun." Such are the words of the most distinguished educator of the nineteenth century, and relying on their weight I submit my contention to your consideration.

The next and final reason I advance as a plea for requiring residence is that associating with other students is a sure and most effectual means of moral development. Why should any man, unless he has a very special calling in college is to a great extent removed from the temptations of the world; his mind is not dissipated by the thoughtless frivolities of the society news column, the noise and clutter of the busy world is shut from his ears and he dwells in a quiet and soothing intellectual atmosphere.

Again, a student in a college residence lives with men, not merely with books. Doubtless you have all heard that the greatest misfortune that can befall a man is to be reared an only child; such a boy grows up without potent and impatient restraint. No also the greatest misfortune that can befall a student is that he should live alone among his books. Such a student may know all that is to be known in the world without being able to do any one of them. He becomes narrow-minded, irritable, intolerant, self-sufficient. In the silence of his study errors and mistakes crowd upon him and enter his mind. The lesson he needed most he has failed to learn, namely: how to live with men. On the other hand the student in residence is open-hearted, cheerful and magnanimous; ready to respect the opinions and rights of others, and to acknowledge that others may reason as correctly and think as wisely as himself. In short, he has learned to see himself as others see him, and to appreciate what an insignificant atom he is in the world's economy and how smoothly that world would glide on even if he were to drop from its existence altogether. And lastly there is the power of good example.

In college residence each feels that he is in the presence of his neighbors, each feels that all the rest look to him, to a certain extent, for moral support. Then every man is under the constant surveillance of his tutors and the rest of the student body, and thereby is held to a higher standard, and is prevented from doing anything that might appear unbecomingly in the eyes of his companions. Thus there is a great and powerful union of all for the moral support of each. Under such conditions, I think it impossible for morality to suffer. Thus far I have spoken of resident colleges in general, permit me now to say a word for Catholic Colleges of this kind. In particular, all that I have said of the benefits of residence is doubly true of Catholic colleges of this kind. It is in Catholic colleges and universities that the best and most satisfactory results in the education of young men have been obtained. Why? First, because of the faculty employed, and secondly because of the discipline exacted. The men that compose the faculties of these universities and colleges are men that have devoted themselves to the service of God for the education of young men; men who devote not a part but their whole lives to the study and formation of character; men whose aim it is to make their disciples not merely men of science and letters but men of piety and prayer; men who have abandoned their honors and emoluments of this life to reproduce their own virtues and talents in the person of their students and to give to the world men whose hearts beat with the love of country and of God.

And then there is the discipline. And what an excellent thing is discipline! and how much we need it! and how much we got of it in Catholic colleges, and how wisely it is administered, you gentlemen who have experienced it know as well as I. I have experienced it know as well as I. I have experienced it know as well as I. I have experienced it know as well as I. I have experienced it know as well as I. I have experienced it know as well as I.

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