

STATE AID TO COLLEGES.

ADDRESS BY THE PRINCIPAL—DR. CAVEN'S LETTERS CONSIDERED—POINTS OF MUTUAL AGREEMENT ON THE SUBJECT—THE CONSTITUTION OF QUEEN'S—UPPER CANADA COLLEGE

A MEETING of the Association of the resident graduates, recently formed, was held in the college on Saturday evening, January 5th. Mr. R. Vashon Rogers M. A., in the chair. Principal Grant delivered the following address:—

Since I spoke to the Council on the question of State Aid to Colleges, the crop of letters has been so abundant that we should again take stock. Quoting from a writer in the *Globe*, whose information was evidently official, I gave then the number of undergraduates in University College. Dr. Wilson has corrected the statement by giving the number enrolled "last year." It is an odd kind of correction, but I have no objection to take last year's figures. My only desire was to give the latest information both as to University College and Queen's. He also informs us that there are in all 497 attending classes in Arts, and thinks that this is the true number to take. I have no objection, and may mention that our corresponding list is 201. Evidently there must be from 800 to 1,000 attending Arts classes in all the Colleges. Now, with submission, I say that these could not be properly accommodated in the class rooms of University College, nor properly attended to by one staff of Professors. There are only two colleges out of the forty or fifty in Oxford and Cambridge that have over 300 students. In Glasgow and Edinburgh it is true that there are single classes containing from 200 to 300, but I have direct means of knowing that the Professors who think most of the welfare of their students find this state of things intolerable. It would be easy for me to assert that Queen's is ready to receive all the students who are now or ever shall be in Ontario, but I have too much respect for Dr. Wilson and his colleagues, not to speak of other colleges that are doing good work.

TO TALK IN SUCH A STRAIN.

It is a bad thing for a college to have too few students. It is a bad thing for the students when it has too many. Remember, we are speaking not of a University but of a college, and of a college with one faculty. When it is seriously proposed to mass all the students of Ontario in University College, it may also be proposed to gather all our High School boys into Upper Canada College, the best endowed of our Collegiate Institutes. But this side of the question may be left to the general body of experts, and I need not discuss it further. The most important contribution to the discussion has been given—I am proud to say—by one of our own graduates, my esteemed friend Dr. Caven. His two letters are regarded by the friends of University College as summing up their case, and are declared by them to be unanswerable. I am delighted to hear it, in view of the fact that he substantially admits every position for which I have contended. Especially in his second letter, and more especially in the second half of that letter, he, like a statesman, is seeking for common ground rather than for a barren controversial victory. In his own spirit I shall point out wherein we agree, and then any points of difference can be understood. These, I think, are not important.

VIEWS OF DR. CAVEN.

1. As regards the support of our sister in Toronto, Dr. Caven says distinctly that "it is not proposed that the

Government should do anything." He admits that it is eminently proper that "its graduates and friends should signify their interest in it by bearing a part in the cost of its more complete equipment," and declares that "they are not unwilling to do so." On this point I have said nothing stronger, except that perhaps I have pressed the excellent scriptural word "how," and "now after so long a time;" after the enjoyment of a million and a half for forty years! Let the State give Queen's a quarter of a million for the same work University College is doing and I engage to double it, thus saving the state quarter of a million in the prosecution of its work, and of course allowing it all the control it desires over its own money.

Further, under this head, he says that it is an important question whether changes in the constitution of Toronto University would not "tend to open the springs of liberality." And, he avows, "his desire is that its government should be made still more popular and stronger incentives furnished to private liberality." These are wise suggestions. But the Treasurer of the Province will ask, is it right to claim money from the public purse, till those changes have been made and those incentives furnished?

WORK FOR THE STATE.

2. He points out that though most of the European Universities, such as Glasgow and Edinburgh, were founded by private munificence, the state has seen fit to assist them, and to do so on the condition that they by themselves raise equal amounts. Now, it seems to me that the point here is not whether Toronto University has a more intimate relation than they to the state. The point that most of the people of Ontario will naturally wish to settle is which is the best way for the state to get its work done? That which is not beneath the dignity of Great Britain need not be beneath our dignity. Should not the state adopt the economical way of utilizing and stimulating voluntary liberality rather than the expensive way of giving all from the public purse? Purely state institutions are apt to combine the maximum of expense with the minimum of efficiency. We protest against the foolish way being imposed upon us.

SECURING HIGHER EDUCATION.

3. He admits that "if a general or public system of higher education can give adequate guarantees for its religious character, there are great and manifest advantages belonging to it." Now, what is the best way to secure these advantages? Is it by having only one college for two millions of people, its patronage in the hands of one man, and that man a party politician? Or is it by embracing in our system every efficient college that a religious community like that of Ontario has established? Here is a good answer to my questions: "Ontario really wishes to unite all good citizens in the important work of higher education. There is need of combining in its promotion the wealth, experience and zeal of all sections of the community, and anything which divides our counsels is a serious evil." Truer words could not be spoken. Let them be more than words; and let a national system be elastic enough to embrace as far as possible the whole of the nation. It will be so much the better for the system and the nation.

SERVICE OF THE CHURCHES.

4. He admits that the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches did a right and necessary thing in founding Victoria and Queen's Colleges, and "that these churches had no option in the matter." He courteously refers to the excellent work these colleges have done and the eminent Professors connected with them, and points out that they are open to students irrespective of church connection, and that locality determines to a considerable extent the