

Position of Athletics in College Education.



QUESTION which just now worries some of our most illustrious and distinguished pedagogues is that of the position of athletics in college education. Are manly sports essential in the education of any student? We, though young, inexperienced, and perhaps somewhat biassed on this issue must answer in the affirmative, for as a man's organic faculties are developed so also must his material faculties.

It is a difficult thing for any man to have any other opinion than that favoring a moderate amount of athletics in each student's education. To establish order I will first take this question and demonstrate the defects of athletics, and secondly, I will treat it to illustrate the benefits and outstanding features.

Defects.

The defects of athletics are very few in comparison to the benefits, but what there are, have proven to be disastrous to many students even in Canadian institutions of learning. To the fair-minded man nothing appears more ridiculous than an excessive indulgence in sports. True it is that many well-meaning young men have swerved from the path of success and honor to lead lives of misery and degradation by sporting allurements and excessive desires to obtain glory on the campus, on the stadium, track, or any other place, where athletic contests exist. Men whose energies have been so misdirected are frequently difficult to restore to good standing. They are unable to concentrate their minds on anything intellectual, their conceptions seem buried in a gulf of sport, out of which there is no opening. When a person gives evidence of mental debility there is little hope for his morals. When he buys a paper or magazine, no part contains anything of interest but the sporting section, therein he finds the solace of his desires, and beyond that the type appears to be futile.

These are a few defects which are not very common, but they comprise the extreme outcome of an excessive indulgence in sport. There are also some minor defects, entailing disadvantages which may be overcome by efforts of the will. The principal one of these is, that the student is introduced to characters