

UNIVERSITY DAY.

THE formal opening of the session of 1881, '82 took place in Convocation Hall on Monday, the 17th inst., at 8 o'clock. Before that hour the audience were as usual entertained by a liberal measure of that classical music peculiar to students, from the gallery. As the members of Senate filed in they were received with the usual college tramp; the new member, Prof. Fletcher, was received with the chant "For he's a jolly good fellow." After prayer by the Principal, C. F. Ireland, B.A. Secretary of the Board of Trustees, read the following minute:

At the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Queen's University, held at Kingston the 27th of April, 1881, it was moved by Rev. Dr. Bell, seconded by Rev. Mr. Laidlaw, and unanimously resolved, "That Mr. John Fletcher, A.B. (Oxon.) Professor of Classics in the University of New Brunswick, be appointed Professor of Classics in this University, his engagement to commence on the 1st of October next, and to be in conformity with the statutes of the University."

The Principal:

Do you accept the appointment of Professor of Ancient Classics under the statutes of this University?

Professor Fletcher—I do.

Principal—I, then, as Vice-Chancellor, do now declare you duly inaugurated Professor of Classics and a member of the Senate of this University.

The new Professor then received the congratulations of his colleagues, and being introduced by the Principal, delivered a lecture on "The Benefits of Classical Study," of which the following is a synopsis:

It is not difficult to discover the original reason for the wide-spread employment of the Greek and Latin classics as one of the main and central subjects in university education. At the revival of letters in the 16th century, when the human mind began to be stirred with the new ideas then floating in the air, it turned in vain for any literature worthy of the name, to the writers of the Middle Ages. Scholasticism, limited and circumscribed by ecclesiastical tyranny, had produced nothing but metaphysical subtleties, and outside of the classical literature there was neither eloquence, nor poetry, nor history, nor philosophy. Latin was already the vernacular of the learned in every country in Europe. But now the attention of all whom the great revival had reached was turned toward the master-pieces of Greece and Rome as the only literatures deserving the attention of cultivated men. In the absence of a universally diffused literature such as the newspaper and magazine of the present day, classical subjects formed the one theme of educated thought and conversation. For the encouragement and prosecution of the new learning, colleges and seminaries, such as many of those in Oxford and Cambridge, were founded and endowed. And thus the classical languages soon gained sole possession of the field of literature and education. From the revival of letters to the present day there has been no more powerful influence in moulding European civilization than the diffusion of Greek and Roman ideas. "From the Middle Ages downward," in the words of Gladstone, "modern European civilization is a compound of two great factors; the Christian religion for the spirit of man and the Greek and Roman discipline for his mind and intellect." To Christianity is due the moral element in our civilization; to Greece and

Rome the intellectual. Upon the models of Greek and Roman literature the taste and literary style of the educated world have been formed, and after centuries of emulation the pupil has never surpassed his master. No modern has attained to the perfect art of Sophocles and Virgil or the descriptive power of Thucydides and Tacitus; to the simplicity and dignity of Herodotus and Livy, or the pathetic tenderness of Euripides and Tibullus. Literatures so important and inimitable can never be neglected by the universities of any country, that is, or is to be, the home of a class of literary men. They are interwoven with the whole fabric of our social life, and thought, and speech and can never be set aside without lowering the tone of our civilization. They must always be valued as containing a record of the thought and feeling of the ancient world, and the links that connect us with the intellectual efforts of the past, as the repositories of the traditions of centuries of intellectual life. But more particularly: Language and literature in themselves are by all acknowledged to be important subjects of study, and the more important languages studied are more and more perfect. Language is the expression of thought, and in studying language we, to some extent, study the laws of that process by which thought is evolved. And whatever awakens and develops the faculty of language, awakens and develops the faculty of thought. But language cannot be studied without studying also the thought which it conveys, and the student of language tends not only to grasp the form of that language which he studies, but also its matter, and spirit. He lives with the great masters of learning and makes their thoughts his own. From the classical languages, being as they are the most perfect instruments ever evolved for the expression of thought, and from the classical literatures, affording as they do the most perfect models of literary style the world has ever seen, the student derives the most thorough discipline, which can be derived from linguistic and literary study. It is not claimed for classical study that it tends to develop and discipline all the intellectual faculties. There are many other branches of study which ought to occupy an important position in any system of liberal education, both because of their value as educational instruments and because, at least, some knowledge of them is necessary to the mental furniture of every educated man. But it is claimed for classical study that it disciplines and develops more of the intellectual faculties, and disciplines and develops them more effectually than any other branch of university study. Thus: It cultivates the memory. The classical student who would become a proficient classic must constantly exercise his memory in keeping ready to hand a knowledge of Grammar and Vocabulary, History and Philology, without which he cannot appreciate or master his author's meaning. It cultivates the reason. The classical student has constantly to discriminate and decide on the proper style, on the proper turn of the sentence, on the proper choice of words he must employ to express his author's meaning. He has to apply general laws on Philology, and Grammar, to particular cases. He has to resolve compound sentences and compound words into their simple components, and to trace simple words to their roots. He has to thread some of the most intricate mazes of thought to be found in any literature. It cultivates the taste. The classical student, constantly turning over in his mind those perfect models of literary style, and constantly attempting to attain in some measure himself, to the beauty and power of the original, forms for himself a high standard of literary excellence and has his own soul filled with a love of the beautiful and true. It cultivates the imagination. The classical student has to follow some of the boldest flights ever taken by the human fancy; and the difficulty of the language only serves to impress the imagery upon the imagination. But, apart