

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CONVO- CATION.

THE annual Convocation of University College, Toronto, held on Friday, October the 15th, presented several features of unusual interest. The retirement, after long service, of the President, Dr. McCaul, was felicitously marked by the unveiling by Mrs. Robinson, wife of the Lieut.-Governor of Ontario, of Dr. McCaul's portrait, presented by the graduates, and thenceforward to be found among the memorial treasures of the University. The Lieut.-Governor's speech referred in terms of just appreciation to the work done by Dr. McCaul, and to the high claims and great literary position of his successor, Dr. Wilson. In reply, President Wilson reviewed the past history of the University, and gave some facts shewing how thoroughly it is identified with the present intellectual attitude of Canada. He hoped that utopian reformers would leave such vigorous growth room to develop. Without criticizing the question whether it be utopian to expect some regard to be paid in future to the graduates who represent such flourishing growth, we must express an earnest hope that President Wilson is altogether mistaken in the last sentence of his address when he says that after twenty-seven years' service as Professor, he cannot hope to hold the position of President long. But we are glad to express our belief that the present outlook of our National University is most encouraging. We have Professor Wilson at last as President. This merited honour has been tardily bestowed, yet we have great satisfaction in seeing that right has been done, at least in this instance, to Canadian literary merit of the highest kind. We have also good hopes, in the addition to the staff, of the new Classical Professor and Tutor. There is every reason to expect that personally these gentlemen are all that well-wishers of the University could desire. We trust that Party politics and the sore feelings connected with the mode of making the new appointments will in no way interfere with the welcome those gentlemen deserve at the hands of all friends of the University.

All, no doubt, will be well if Mr. Crooks is restrained from giving the Institution any more of his attention.

MR. GOLDWIN SMITH ON THE CLASSICS.

THE following remarks on the study of the classical languages are extracted from a report of the speech made by Professor Goldwin Smith, M.A., at the opening of the new College buildings in connection with Queen's University, Kingston. We take pleasure in preserving them in these pages :

"I agree with a remark which the learned Chancellor made, namely, that the ancient tongues must come down from the high position which they have held for centuries as the sole fountains of knowledge. They are no longer the key which opens the casket containing the only literature worth having. Science has grown up and is taking its place among the studies to which youth must be introduced. I myself was educated at Eton, a purely classical school, and afterwards at Oxford, almost as exclusive; but I can say with truth that none fought more ardently than I to give science, history, and jurisprudence a share in the curriculum of the University. I advocated making Greek optional. Greek has characters which can only be mastered by a considerable mental effort, and it leads to almost nothing beyond itself. But any one thoroughly acquainted with Latin can learn to read any one of the Romance languages in three weeks. Although classics are no longer the sole road to literature, they are still the best school of humanity and taste. The Chancellor says we may read them in translations, but these are far from disclosing to you their unrivalled beauties. I was of opinion before I saw ancient sculpture in Italy that I could get a very good idea of it from the plaster casts on exhibition in English museums. But, when I came before the great works themselves, I was overwhelmed with their unexpected magnificence. In such a manner, I believe, would the intelligent mind be impressed, if the linguistic veil, which shrouds from its vision the glorious imaginings of classic writers, could be in a moment lifted and all their beauty displayed at one view. There is no intellectual enjoyment in after years like reading the classics in the original. There is no retirement from the bustle of the world equal to that afforded by this cool and shady grot. I am not in favour of gerund grinding or even of compulsory Latin composition, which I think should