

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, TORONTO.

PRESIDENT WILSON'S ADDRESS AT THE ANNUAL CONVOCATION.*

THE Annual Convocation of University College took place on Friday afternoon, October 12th, in the hall of the College; Dr. Daniel Wilson, the President, in the chair. The proceedings opened with the distribution of prizes which had been won at the College Examinations, after which the President delivered his annual address:—

On this our college anniversary it is my pleasant duty to welcome, in the name of my colleagues and myself, the students who once more return to their old halls to resume the studies which they have successfully prosecuted in past years, and to greet the new entrants who are now to begin with us their undergraduate course. It is with an ever-renewed interest that we watch not only the number, but still more the character and attainments of our new entrants. They come up here as the representatives of the collegiate institutes and high schools of this province, or of the colleges and seminaries of the other provinces of the Dominion, accredited with the hard-won honours of their preparatory training. The system thus efficiently organized is a thoroughly comprehensive and national one. From the public schools the youths of exceptional attainments are selected for admission to the institutes and higher schools of training, and from those by the test of a matriculation examination not inferior to the highest standards of the ancient seats of learning in Europe, the youthful intellectual athletes—the future hope of Canada—are here introduced to the arena where they enter on their final training and discipline for the battle of life.

The success of our new entrants in the preparatory competition for honours, and the record they bring with them from the colleges and schools of this and other provinces, have a double interest for us. I look back now over a period of thirty years, to the time when, in the reorganization of this college on its present basis, we were content to welcome a matriculation of ten new entrants in the Faculty of Arts, almost without exception from one preparatory institution. The proceedings which you have witnessed to-day furnish gratifying evidence of the healthful progress of this college. It is a pleasant tribute from those best able to judge of the merits of its system and the value of its discipline, that the sons of our early students gather in increasing numbers in these halls.

It is a no less gratifying evidence of a like well-grounded confidence, not only to be able to number among the ninety-five entrants students meeting here for the first time, who come to us from sixty-five different colleges, institutes, and high schools; but, still more, that in so far as those well-appointed educational institutions have been entrusted to men of Canadian training, by far the larger number are in charge of principals and head masters who completed their education in this college. The sons and pupils of our own former students thus crowd in to fill our ranks, and furnish the most welcome evidence of the estimation in which this college is held by those best qualified to judge of its worth. Forty-seven of the principals and head masters, and a still larger number of the teachers, of the collegiate institutes and high schools of Ontario

ARE GRADUATES OF THIS UNIVERSITY,

in addition to which we can refer with no less pride to others who are now principals, professors, and lecturers in the colleges and normal schools of this and other provinces, or who are occupying similarly responsible positions in the neighbouring States, from whence also are received from time to time candidates for admission as students here.

A generation has well-nigh passed away since this college was organized on its present footing; and as we now welcome the sons of those who were our earliest pupils in University College, we appeal with confidence to the evidence of its well-earned merits as an educational institution which has already made no unworthy return to Canada for the wise providence of those loyal pioneers by whom a portion of the wild lands of Upper Canada were appropriated as an investment for the higher education of future generations. By such sagacious foresight they laid the soundest foundations on which their successors could build, as they entered on the grand work of constitutional government and the organization of a free State. They claim our gratitude accordingly, as they will unquestionably receive that of future generations, for a nobility of thought which, amid all their early struggles and privations, thus anticipated the claims of the future. It is to them that the praise is justly due, while we appeal with pride not only to those of our alumni who, as instructors in the colleges, institutes and schools of Canada, are now our efficient fellow-workers, but also to others who have distinguished themselves in the learned professions, played their part to good purpose both in Provincial Legislatures and in the Dominion Parliament, and filled with honour the highest judicial positions. Far, nevertheless, be it from me to slight the services rendered to educational progress during

* From the *Toronto Mail* report, revised and corrected by the author for *THE MONTHLY*.