

## UNIVERSITY REFORM

## DEMOCRACY'S CLAIMS.

Oxford and Cambridge are old seats of learning which have seen many changes, have established fine traditions, gathered wealth material and spiritual, and, while giving an education to young men which no other places afford have settled down into certain easy-going luxurious ways. Democracy to-day has just come of age, and wants its young brothers and rising sons to get some of the special benefits of the old universities. The sense of a great past, of some community with ages of learning, religion, and history, of being just where great men were when they began life—these things the old universities can give, with all that is best in knowledge and discussion to-day. Let us enrich the outlook and mind of democracy by bringing them nearer together. Oxford and Cambridge have seen many changes for good since the first Royal Commission in 1850. Yet they are still mainly for wealthy students. Some would allow them to continue to go on till they see fit to reform themselves. Really, it is kinder to compel them to start reform thoroughly at once—by another Royal Commission. Their defenders point to the changes already made; to the number of poor scholars able through scholarships to attain the best prizes, and to the hope that the small body of university reformers, of whom there have been for generations a small but noble company, will reform the universities from inside. Indeed, occasionally the reformers do attain certain results. Wonderful to relate, they have just succeeded at Cambridge, and are on the eve of victory at Oxford, in throwing theological degrees open to Non-conformists. Until a few months ago great English Protestant scholars like Dr. Fairbairn or Dr. Martineau, the great German theologian, Dr. Harnack, or the French scholar, Paul Sabatier, could not be honored with a D.D. by Oxford or Cambridge.

University extension teaching has been a blessing to thousands, has strengthened and inspired the Universities, and has been imitated in other countries. The colleges and halls of Oxford are now used for conference and summer schools in the vacations; Oxford has welcomed, not exactly within its academic circle, but as fellow-workers, Non-conformist colleges, a Roman Catholic Hall, and Ruskin College, the new buildings of which testify to the longing of the working class to come somewhere within range of our ancient seats of learning. University tutorial classes are becoming a great movement in the large centres of industry. Every year more boys who have begun life in working-class homes and had their first education in the free elementary schools of our land, rise by the ladder of scholarships to enter Oxford and Cambridge. Yet all these things, creditable as they are, show how the desire of the workers for culture is steadily increasing and ought to be encouraged. There is a demand for a quickened pace in reform, and easier access for greater numbers, at our old Universities, Oxford and Cambridge; they can do much more for those who can claim to be, in the words of the pious founders, "the poor and the indigent."

## WORLD'S MEDICAL CONGRESS.

An International Medical Congress will be opened in London this week, and attract an attendance of 6,000 physicians and surgeons from all parts of the world. The British Empire will be worthily represented, and its delegates will include several distinguished Australians. The gathering is attributable not only to the fraternal spirit traditionally cherished by members of the great profession which pursues an unceasing warfare against disease, but chiefly to the belief that personal intercourse and discussion on medical questions will produce valuable results which could possibly be obtained in no other way. The congress will be particularly interesting to the British public, owing to the controversy still proceeding regarding the duties of doctors under the National Insurance Act, and the action of the Government in appointing a body of experts, with executive functions, to be known as the Medical Research Committee. The formation of the committee was recommended in the recent report of the Departmental Committee on Tuberculosis. It will be mainly concerned for a while in the direction and co-ordination of investigations into the etiology, pathology, and other aspects of that malady. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has obtained the assistance, as members of the committee, of scientists whose records have earned the confidence of the nation. The Chairman is Lord Moulton, F.R.S., an eminent Judge, who is also—as The Times testifies—acquainted with the medical and scientific aspects of the general question such as it would be hardly possible to find elsewhere outside the medical profession. He is supported by Sir Clifford Allbut, the Regius Professor of Physics in the University of Cambridge; by Dr. Hopkins, Reader in Chemical Physiology in the same university; by Dr. Bulloch, Professor of Bacteriology in the University of London; and by Sir William Leishman, Professor of Pathology in the Royal Army Medical College. Mr. Waldorf Astor, as having been Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Tuberculosis, will participate in the development of its chief recommendation. The number is made up to nine by the addition of Dr. Addison, M.P., F.R.C.S., Mr. Bond, F.R.C.S., of Leicester, and Dr. Hay, of Aberdeen.

These first appointments are for three years in each case, but in and after 1916 three members will retire at intervals of two years, and their places will be filled by the Minister responsible for the working of the Insurance Act. As the establishment of this important new authority is designed to ensure conditions which will afford the best attainable safeguards for the public health, and therefore for the nation's vigour and security, the International Congress will probably devote considerable attention to the closer relations which are being inaugurated between Governments and the medical profession. Such a gathering is bound to confine itself mostly to subjects of common concern, and the proceedings of its various departments will therefore prove of much assistance to health authorities in every country. Bacteriology will provide a vast and expanding field for illuminating discussion. The hopes of

satisfactory results from the treatment of organic diseases by vaccines are generally supposed to have been realized. Reports of cases treated in this way are certainly reassuring. Many stomacic troubles which in the past resisted ordinary therapeutic treatment have yielded to the effects of appropriate vaccines. Humanity will eagerly look for records of further advances in cancer research, and in the profitable use of radium emanations. The pathology of epilepsy, alcoholism and insanity, sleeping sickness, tuberculous meningitis, miner's nystagmus, and a few diseases which have recently puzzled medical men in some countries are attractive subjects of enquiry.

The fight against tuberculosis is proceeding vigorously, and, necessarily, it is waged by organized communities as well as by the individual. According to a glowing prediction in The World's Work the grandchildren of persons now living will all be vaccinated against the disease as a matter of routine; and "a case of tuberculosis will be so rare that medical colleges will gladly exhibit it to new students for their clinical observation." Scientists are now thoroughly enlightened concerning the nature of the "white plague." Consumption or phthisis is tuberculosis of the lungs; scrofula is tuberculosis of the lymphatic glands; "white swelling," hip-joint disease, and spinal disease are synonyms for tuberculosis of the bone and joints; and many other old-fashioned diseases are now recognised as tuberculosis of some other organ or tissue. The cause is a tiny, rod-shaped mite, which is allotted to the vegetable kingdom. It is not inherited, but is breathed or swallowed, as a rule, after having been coughed out by some former victim. Most of the bacilli swallowed are overcome and perhaps destroyed; but, once planted in a congenial soil, the bacilli multiply with astonishing rapidity, and gradually take possession of the lungs. The chief elements in the cure of the disease are rest, nutritious food, and abundance of fresh air—which may often be had at home. While the heavy mortality from tuberculosis is being rapidly lowered by beneficent institutions and health crusades, the strong hope of medical science is that a discovery will be made of an unfailing cure for all sufferers. That hope is still deferred, like the hope of a sure remedy for cancer, but it is cheering to know that many able physicians are confident that we are coming nearer every year to the final victory over both scourges.