UNIVERSITIES OF THE EMPIRE.

THE FORTHCOMING CONGRESS.

THE CHAIRMAN.

The names of the chairmen who will preside at the various sittings of the Congress of the Universities of the Empire to be held on July 2, 3, 4, and 5 are now announced. They will be as follows:

TUESDAY, JULY 2.—Morning.—Chairman,—Lord Hesketh, Chancellor of the Universities of London and Glasgow, and Lord Rector of the University of St. Andrews. Subjects,—(1) Question of specialization among Universities; (2) Inter-University arrangements for post-graduate and research students.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 3.—Morning.—Chairman,—Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Chancellor of the Universities of Oxford. Subjects,—(1) The relation of Universities to technical and professional education and to the existing and proposed technical colleges; (2) Interchange of University teachers. Afternoon.—Chairman,—Lord Haldane, Chancellor of the University of Oxford. Subject—The position of the Universities in the East in regard to their influence on character and moral ideals.

THURSDAY, JULY 4.—Morning.—Chairman,—Lord Rayleigh, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge. Subjects,—(1) Conditions of Congress; Universities and the mutual recognition of entrance tests; (2) Action of Universities in relation to the after-careers of their students. Afternoon.—Chairman,—Lord Haldane, Chancellor of the University of Oxford. Subject—The University's position in the teaching of English and tutorial class work.

FRIDAY, JULY 5.—Morning.—Chairman,—Lord Lovat, Chancellor of the Universities of Aberdeen and McGill. Subjects,—(1) The establishment of a Central University Barren; (2) Constitution and function; (3) The position of women in Universities.

A FORECAST.

Fifty-two Universities of the Empire will be represented at the Congress, the Senates of each of the various Universities having been asked to appoint four representatives in all cases, except some of the smaller Universities of which the number has been fixed at three. The Congress will be in the highest degree representative. The General London Committee consists of distinguished persons representing the three interests—the Universities, the Empire, and London. It includes the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellors of the Universities of the United Kingdom; the High Commissioners of the Dominions, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, and other members of the present and past Governments; the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of the London County Council. H.R.H. Prince Arthur of Connaught has consented to be President of this Committee.

THE PROGRAMME.

The agenda have been prepared with the utmost care. The Home University Commissions responsible for their selection comprises the Vice-Chancellors of the Universities of the Empire, with a few other persons possessed of exceptional knowledge of University business and politics, and has had the benefit of the advice of representatives of certain Government offices. In selecting the subjects for discussion they have rigidly excluded all those

which every University must settle for itself, as well as topics which, however interesting, are not ripe for discussion or not likely, if discussed, to prove fruitful or to the advantage of the Empire. It is stated parenthetically that although the Congress will last but four days the delegates will travel in one another's company, visiting the various Universities of Great Britain and Ireland, for nearly a month. The opportunity thus afforded of talking about the affairs and problems of the Universities and of coming to conclusions, we may fairly assert, will amount to a great deal more than the four days will beiset. It is also explained that at the general meetings each University will be allotted a certain amount of time, which, at great expenditure of intellectual effort, it has solved with more or less success; yet in no two are the local conditions the same, and each University will find that the needs and the aims of the others are not exactly the same, for it is equally true of the overseas Universities that each has learned much from them as they from us. The promoters of the Congress do not contemplate that the Congress in the future will tend to obliterate the idiosyncrasies of the Universities of the Empire. On the contrary, it will tend, by the interchange and comparison of experience, to develop the desirability of some degree of specialization and consequently increase their prominence. It is a step forward. Each University should be specifically adapted for the work which it is called upon to do; that it should meet the needs of the general and special, the province or town in which it is situated.

OBJECTS OF THE CONFERENCE.

If this capacity of adaptation be the genius of the Universities of the Empire, if each must and can in all cases do exactly what is best and be the work they can do most effectively, devise the methods proper to its sphere of work, why, it may be asked, summon a Parliament to pass laws to determine the type of each, on no higher ground, by assuming that the discussions of the delegates will result in economy of Universities and Universities which have been set up on a lavish scale by councils and committees. Such labour, if inevitable, is unproductive.

Although the most fruitful outcome of the Congress may be that the foundations will profit greatly by listening to the clear formulation of wants and receiving suggestions, it is impossible to say that it has been met at Universities of older standing; and, reciprocally, the older University will learn in some measure to look at the needs of the times with the eyes of a younger one. The Congress will be of mutual benefit to their Universities with an expanded capacity of managing their affairs.

The interchange of business is facilitated by occasional conferences. For promotion of common interests and cooperation in activities is not essential. If the Universities are to be in the highest degree useful to the students of the Empire, they must fall in line some phases of their work, whilst specializing in others. Illustrative of specialization of common action is to be found in the variations which at present confuse their entrance examination, but which in the near future may be altered by the present time that the standards of preliminary training need harmonizing—so far as they may be harmonized in the way of setting up common minimum standards or of standardizing and simplifying in the forms and tests of University examinations. This is a policy which is of profound importance to the students, if of less moment to the Universities. The solution of the problem of co-operation is equally pronounced. It is out of the question that any single University should make provision for advanced work in all subjects. Some degree of co-operation and collaboration in teaching and research is inevitable to a vigorous institution. In the interests of