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UNIVERSITIES OF THE EMPIRE.

THE FORTHCOMING CONGRESS.

THE CHAIRMEN.

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 Rosebery, 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 University of Oxford. Subjects.—(1) The relation of Universities to technical and professional education and to education for the public services; (2) Interchange of University teachers. Afternoon.—Chairman.—Not yet fixed. Subject.—The problem 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 entrance to 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 Bristol. Subject.—University Extension and tutorial class work.

FRIDAY, JULY 5.—Morning.—Chairman.—Lord Strathcona, Chancellor of the Universities of Aberdeen and McGill. Subjects.—(1) The establishment of a Central University Bureau: Its constitution and functions; (2) 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 Canada. Although these delegates will not be plenipotentiaries empowered to commit the Universities which they represent to any definite course of action, they will be persons who understand the feeling of their Universities and are able to interpret it to the Congress. 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 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 late 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 Universities Committee responsible for their selection comprises the Vice-Chancellors of all the home Universities, with a few other persons possessing 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 in practical results.

And here it may be remarked 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 of their own Universities and comparing notes should be of special value, owing to the circumstances in which it will occur. Each of the Universities to be visited has had its own problems which, at great expenditure of intellectual effort, it has solved with more or less success; yet in no two are the local conditions, the opportunities of usefulness, and the needs, exactly similar. It is equally true of the overseas Universities that each has its own special character. We have as much to learn from them as they from us. The promoters of the Congress do not contemplate that intercourse between their representatives will tend to obliterate the idiosyncrasies of the Universities of the Empire. On the contrary, it will undoubtedly call attention to the desirability of some degree of specialization and consequently increase their prominence. It is above all things necessary that each University should be specifically adapted for the work which it is called upon to do; that it should meet the needs, both general and special, of 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 work out its own constitution, define its aims, devise the methods proper to its sphere of work, "why," it may be asked, "summon a Parliament?" This objection may be met, if on no higher ground, by assuming that the discussions of the delegates will result in economy of time and labour. Every man who takes an active part in academic life groans under the burden of keeping University machinery up to date. Time and thought which should be devoted to class-work and research is absorbed on a lavish scale by councils and committees. Such labour, if inevitable, is unproductive. It cannot be doubted that the more recent foundations will profit greatly by listening to the clear formulation of wants and receiving precise information of the ways in which they have been met at Universities of older standing; and, reciprocally, the older will learn in some measure to look at the needs of the times through younger eyes. Delegates will return to their Universities with an expanded capacity of managing their affairs.

The discharge of routine business is facilitated by occasional conferences. For promotion of common interests and co-operation in activities it is essential. If the Universities are to be in the highest degree useful to the students of the Empire, they must fall into line in some phases of their work, whilst specializing in others. An illustration of the need for common action is to be found in the variations which at present confuse their entrance examinations. It is universally recognized at the present time that the standards of preliminary training need harmonizing—so far as this may be done without offending the traditions or stultifying the aims of the several Universities—both in range and in height.

INTERCHANGE OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS.

Although this question of matriculation examinations chiefly interests the secondary schools, it is not without importance to Universities, since it is highly desirable that a common examination should qualify *pro tanto* for admission to any University, with such additional tests, if any, as each University may see fit to impose. At present there is nothing resembling free trade in students—a policy which is of profound importance to the students, if of less moment to the Universities.

At the other end of University life the need 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 specialization in teaching and research is inevitable to a vigorous institution. In the interests of