

Oxford are carrying on the movement for reform. They object to reform pressed upon them "with astonishing exuberance from without." They desire reform effected noiselessly from within.

The presence of the Rhodes Scholars at Oxford it is said serves to emphasize the necessity for equipment by means of which they may be given adequate scientific training. If this is so it must be explained by the fact that representatives from the universities of United States are pursuing the modern and more practical courses of study. But from native sources too comes a demand for greater attention to those branches of knowledge that relate to the interests of the mass of the people. Whatever the necessities of the present situation there are not wanting evidences that they will be satisfied by the contemplated reforms.

Of interest to Canadian students is the contention that the English universities are the playgrounds of the sons of wealthy men and that the purses of the under-graduates are not considered. Regarding the merits of this complaint we are not in a position to speak, though it can not be doubted that the simpler and cheaper life at the universities is made the better will they be able to perform their function of widely diffusing true knowledge.

PRISON LABOR.

AT intervals the dislike that free laborers feel towards the competition of the inmates of our penal institutions takes concrete form and expresses itself in a demand for a change in prison industries. The Contract System in vogue in the Central Prison has been vigorously attacked: and with some justice. More recently too labor organizations threw cold water on the proposal to grant prison-cut stone to the authorities of the Medical College.

The whole question of the competition of convicts with free labor has been discussed for years. There has been an unreasoning fear on the part of labor unions and they have shown a tendency to exaggerate the importance of prison-made goods in the general market. On the other hand those who would maintain prison industries regardless of the interest of the free laborer have shown some lack of consideration for the sincerity of his protests against the competition of men who are kept at the expense of the State. In the process of discussion, however, certain facts have become established beyond dispute. It is now recognized that to confine men in a prison without work is a gross and unthinkable form of cruelty. The convict is too prone to brood over his trouble and the injustice that he fancies has been done him. Brooding makes him sullen and recalcitrant. In time too his health becomes impaired and he is unable to respond to any reformatory processes to which he is subject. Idleness within prison walls would vitiate the usefulness of the Parole System, the Indeterminate Sentence or any other system intended to invite the convicts co-operation in efforts toward rehabilitation. It is work and steady industry that keeps up the mental and physical condition of the convict and makes him amenable to reformatory treatment. At all costs then the inmates of our jails, prisons and penitentiaries must be kept at some useful form of work. And so