

## News and Views

### Lord Nuffield and the University of Oxford

ON October 16, it was announced that Lord Nuffield had offered to the University of Oxford the magnificent sum of £1,250,000 for the development of a post-graduate medical school with a staff of full-time professors. This is the greatest benefaction ever made by an Englishman in his lifetime to a specific public object, and the biggest sum a university in Britain has received since Mr. Carnegie's gift of two million pounds to the Scottish universities thirty-five years ago. Until recently, Oxford's small but good medical school did not engage itself much either in teaching or research beyond the subjects of the second professional examination. The men who had reached this stage were encouraged to continue their work at one of the big training hospitals in London or other large city, and to return to Oxford only to take examinations. In 1927, however, the new school of pathology was built and endowed by gifts from Sir William Dunn and Mr. Theodore Williams, and, more recently, Lord Nuffield made available for medical research the Nuffield Institute by buying the Radcliffe Observatory buildings and surrounding land and endowing it with £16,000. It is now proposed greatly to extend these beginnings so that the comparatively small city of Oxford may have the kind of medical school which in Great Britain has been considered feasible only in a large university city. The main purpose of this, however, will be research, not teaching. Disease is to be studied over the widest possible front; the clinical training of medical students will be incidental and definitely subsidiary.

In his letter to the Vice-Chancellor of the University announcing the gift, Lord Nuffield briefly outlined what he had in mind. He would like clinical departments in medicine, in surgery and in obstetrics, and a department of anaesthetics, to be established immediately. Each of these would be under the direction of a new university full-time professor. They and their principal assistants would be so remunerated that their energies could be wholly given to their work in the hospitals and at the University and not, in part, distracted by private practice. The new posts would be open to any qualified practitioner whether a graduate of Oxford or not. Young research students proposing to work under the supervision of seniors on clinical problems would be encouraged. The body entrusted with the execution of the scheme will include representatives of the University, of Lord Nuffield and of the two large hospitals—the Radcliffe Infirmary and the Wingfield-Morris Orthopaedic Hospital—which will be mostly concerned. These and the Oxford Eye Hospital contain approximately seven hundred beds and serve a district extending in some directions nearly thirty miles from the city, which contains a

quarter of a million people. Much of the credit for advising on the objects to which the benefaction will be directed is due to the regius professor of medicine, Sir Farquhar Buzzard, and it is a matter of satisfaction in Oxford that the new scheme will be begun under his guidance. Not content with this great benefaction for medical studies, Lord Nuffield has also given £100,000 to the University to help its endowments generally. The University is at present deeply committed financially for the building of the great Bodleian extension, and until that building is paid for, money for the extension of the scientific departments cannot be so readily available as otherwise. This gift, accordingly, makes more hopeful, although indirectly, the provision of two new science laboratories which are badly needed—a new University department of physical chemistry, and the replacement of the Clarendon Laboratory for physics.

### Belluno Earthquake of October 18

At about 4 a.m. (3 a.m., G.M.T.) on October 18, a destructive earthquake occurred in northern Venetia and caused considerable loss of life and damage to property. The centre seems to have been close to Sacile, which lies about thirty-seven miles north of Venice and twenty miles south-east of Belluno. The area of damage is not less than forty miles in length and includes Belluno, where nearly all the old buildings were injured, Borgato Zago and Conegliano. The shock is said to have lasted twenty seconds and was felt at Milan, 166 miles to the west of Sacile, so that the disturbed area may contain about ninety thousand square miles. On June 29, 1873, there was a similarly destructive earthquake in the Belluno district, which was carefully studied by Hofer, Bittner and others. According to these investigators, the epicentre lay about two miles to the east or south-east of Belluno. Höfer assigned the origin of the earthquake to movements along two faults, one directed nearly north-east and south-east, and the other east, from the epicentre. He estimated the depth of the focus at 7.91 km., or very nearly five miles. It would thus seem that, in the recent earthquake, the centre was displaced some miles to the south-east to a point on, or not far from, the north-easterly fault marked out by Höfer.

### Science in South Africa

IN his presidential address to the South African Association for the Advancement of Science on October 5, at Johannesburg, H.E. the Right Hon. the Earl of Clarendon, Governor-General of the Union of South Africa, after referring to the part which applied science has played in the transformation of Johannesburg during the last fifty years, discussed particularly the part which the work of the man of science plays in everyday domestic, social