Platonists, among whom Henry More, Cudworth, and Whichcote were especially conspicuous, were men of high character and great learning, although too much under the influence of an ill-restrained enthusiasm and purely speculative doctrines. The spread of the Baconian philo­sophy, and the example of a succession of eminent scientific thinkers, among whom were Isaac Barrow, master of Trinity (1673-77), the two Lucasian profes­sors, Isaac Newton (prof. 1669-1702) and his successor William Whiston (prof. 1702-11), and Roger Cotes (Plumian prof. 1707-16), began to render the exact sciences more and more an object of study, and the insti­tution of the tripos examinations in the course of the first half of the 18th century established the reputation of Cambridge as a school of mathematical science. At Oxford, where no similar development took place, and where the statutable requirements with respect to study and exercises were suffered to fall into neglect, the de­generacy of the whole community as a school of academic culture is attested by evidence too emphatic to be gain­said. The moral tone at both universities was at this time singularly low ; and the rise of Methodism, as associated with the names of the two Wesleys and Whitefield at Oxford and that of Berridge at Cambridge, operated with greater effect upon the nation at large than on either of the two centres where it had its origin. With the advance of the present century, however, a perceptible change took place. The labours of Simeon at Cambridge, in connexion with the Evangelical party, and the far more celebrated movement known as Tractarianism, at Oxford, exercised considerable influence in developing a more thoughtful spirit at either university. At both centres, also, the range of studies was extended: written examinations took the place of the often merely formal *viva voce* ceremonies; at Cambridge classics were raised in 1824 to the dignity of a new tripos. The number of the students at both universities was largely augmented. Further schemes of improvement were put forward and discussed. And in 1850 it was decided by the Government to appoint com­missioners to inquire what additional reforms might advantageously be introduced. Their recommendations were not all carried into effect, but the main results were as follows :—“ The professoriate was considerably increased, reorganized, and re-endowed, by means of contributions from colleges. The colleges were emancipated from their mediæval statutes, were invested with new constitutions, and acquired new legislative powers. The fellowships were almost universally thrown open to merit, and the effect of this was not merely to provide ample rewards for the highest academical attainments, but to place the governing power within colleges in the hands of able men, likely to promote further improvements. The number and value of scholarships was largely augmented, and many, though not all, of the restrictions upon them were abolished. The great mass of vexatious and obsolete oaths was swept away; and, though candidates for the M.A. degree and persons elected to fellowships were still required to make the old subscriptions and declarations, it was enacted that no religious test should be imposed at matriculation or on taking a bachelor’s degree.”@@1

In 1869 a statute was enacted at Cambridge admitting students as members of the university without making it imperative that they should be entered at any hall or college, but simply be resident either with their parents or in duly licensed lodgings.

The entire abolition of tests followed next. After several rejections in parliament it was eventually carried as a Government measure, and passed the House of Lords in 1871.

In 1877 the reports of two new commissions were followed by further changes, the chief features of which were the diversion of a certain proportion of the revenues of the colleges to the uses of the university, especially with a view to the encouragement of studies in natural science; the enforcement of general and uniform regulations with respect to the salaries, selection, and duties of professors, lecturers, and examiners ; the abolition (with a few excep­tions) of all clerical restrictions on headships or fellow­ships ; and the limitation of fellowships to a uniform amount.

That these successive and fundamental changes have, on the whole, been in unison with the national wishes and requirements may fairly be inferred from the remarkable increase in numbers during the last quarter of a century, and especially at Cambridge, where the number of under­graduates, which in 1862 was 1526, was in 1887 no less than 2979. In the academic year 1862-63 the number of matriculations was 448, and in 1886-87 1009.

Scarcely less influential, as a means of recovering for the two universities a truly national character, has been the work which both have been carrying on and aiding by the institution of local examinations and of university extension lectures. Of these two schemes, the former was initiated by both Oxford and Cambridge in the year 1858; the latter had its origin at Cambridge, having been sug­gested by the success attending a course of lectures to women delivered by Mr (now Professor) James Stuart, in 1867, in Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, and Leeds. By the former the standard of education throughout the country has been raised, both in public and in private schools. By the latter, instruction of the character and method which characterize university teaching has been brought within the reach of students of all classes and ages throughout the land.

So long ago as the year 1640 an endeavour had been made to bring about the foundation of a northern uni­versity for the benefit of the counties remote from Oxford and Cambridge. Manchester and York both petitioned to be made the seat of the new centre. Cromwell, however, rejected both petitions, and decided in favour of Durham. Here he founded the university of Durham (1657), endow­ing it with the sequestered revenues of the dean and chapter of the cathedral, and entitling the society “ The Mentor or Provost, Fellows, and Scholars of the College of Durham, of the foundation of Oliver, &c.” This scheme was cancelled at the Restoration, and not revived until the present century; but on the 4th July 1832 a bill for the foundation of a university at Durham received the royal assent, the dean and chapter being thereby empowered to appropriate an estate at South Shields for the establish­ment and maintenance of a university for the advancement of learning. The foundation was to be directly connected with the cathedral church, the bishop of the diocese being appointed visitor, and the dean and chapter governors ; while the direct control was vested in a warden, a senate, and a convocation. A college, modelled on the plan of those at the older universities, and designated University Col­lege, Durham, was founded in 1837, Bishop Hatfield’s Hall in 1846, and Bishop Cosin’s Hall (which no longer exists) in 1851. The university includes all the faculties, and in 1865 there was added to the faculty of arts a school of physical science, including pure and applied mathematics, chemistry, geology, mining, engineering, &c. In 1871 the corporation of the university, in conjunction with some of the leading landed proprietors in the adjacent counties, gave further extension to this design by the foundation of a college of physical science at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, designed to teach scientific principles in their application to engineering, mining, manufactures, and agriculture.

@@@1 Brodrick, *University of Oxford,* pp. 136, 137.