

In England and France they broke the trammels which hindered the culture of intellect, and in every country of the world the desire was felt to take part in the movement begun, of making useful to the people generally the riches of the intelligence newly acquired. In Bavaria, as elsewhere, was found a nucleus cultivating the sciences, but without power to give them any influence whatever upon life. The patriots who had the courage to propose a change in this state of things had to strive against difficulties on all sides; for a false science of nature, and errors which had become popular, had taken possession of the soil in which ought to have been implanted the new truths. Without extirpating old notions, those which should be popular evidently cannot take root.

To the names of Lori and Linprun is attached the imperishable honor of having commenced the struggle of light against darkness. These learned men conceived the idea of forming, with the aid of a few others, animated by the same noble sentiments as themselves, a society for the purpose of cultivating the sciences, devoting itself to their extension, and struggling against ignorance and superstition. For this purpose their design was, to commence by accomplishing what would be necessary for the well-being of the country, and practicable at that epoch. They had first to level the soil, and thus open a way for scientific discoveries. From the heart of this union of learned men, the majority of which was composed of ecclesiastics, came forth the project of founding an Academy of Sciences. When the Elector of Bavaria had signed the patent for its commencement, the issue of the battle no longer remained uncertain. The victory for truth was henceforth assured. On forming the Academy it was publicly declared that liberty of progress existed then in Bavaria, for the academical writers were free from all censure other than that exercised by the body itself. This act declared that ignorance and superstition was only a necessary evil, and that in seeking to battle with it they would render service to the state.

In conformity with the idea which animated the founder of the Academy, the labours of its members were confined principally, during the first period, to the geography and history of the country, the study of language, and alteration in the system of schools. A taste for the study of mathematics was particularly insisted on by the professors of the Academy, and a fundamental knowledge of the most general phenomena was encouraged by treatises on natural philosophy.

Whilst the law of 1759 indicated but one aim for the labours of the Society—"the diffusion of all useful sciences and liberal arts in Bavaria"—the constitutional ordinance of 1807 went a step farther. Not only ought the members to propagate scientific knowledge, but in addition, by reflections, researches, observations, and

other labours, new results would be introduced into the domains of science; while those already known would be rendered more useful.

At the time of its foundation, numerous practical questions which each understood had acquired a certain importance, and deserved to occupy the minds of these scientific men, so that every one was compelled to admit the utility of academical work, when, in conformity to its constitution, it employed itself with agriculture, hand labour, mineralogy, and metallurgy. Even the constitution of 1807 returned thanks specially to the members who would find means of improving agriculture, stimulating industry, and above all, destroying the prejudices which opposed the progress of manufactures.

In the organic law of 1827, with which commenced the current epoch, the members were particularly recommended to occupy themselves with the solution of problems of a practical nature. The Academy became "an association established under the protection of the King for cultivating the sciences, and extending knowledge by means of researches and collective works which are beyond the reach of isolated individuals."

It appears, in consequence, the Academy pursued another aim besides that of its foundation. Whilst it was at first merely an organ of enlightenment, an association occupying itself with certain material interests of the country, the members of the second period joined to that aim the conquests of fresh results, and those of the current epoch occupied themselves exclusively in extending the domain of science.

In reality, there was no contradiction in these different aims; they expressed only the idea, formed at different periods, of the influence of science on public prosperity. A hundred years ago it was thought that science could only operate upon the development of the material interests of the country, but now we know that science is merely useful because it develops the intellectual power of man—an advance which is a condition nearest to the development of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce.

Assigning a practical aim to the works of the Academy was not worthy of that body, nor beneficial to that which they proposed to do; and this error caused to be called in question for some time the utility of the institution. The labors of the academicians would necessarily lose their value and important signification with the mass of the population, because they estimate their value by the nature of the services they have rendered to the agriculturists and workmen of Bavaria. The special nature of the researches was not calculated to supply the particular wants of each. The perfecting of an implement, a receipt for improving the soil, the preparation of soap, a method of dyeing a stuff, or tanning of leather, would be useful to one manufacturer, agriculturist, soap-boiler, dyer, or tanner, but not to all who were engaged in the same trade. Dif-