

enough explains it by supposing, "that as Frederic was always denounced as the enemy of the Church, the degrees never received from the Popes that catholic extension, which the Pope alone was considered to have the power of giving."

The oldest tradition concerning the University of Oxford is, that it was founded by King Alfred, about the year 890, a statement which is thus defended by Mr. Hallam: "Since a school for dialectics and rhetoric subsisted at Oxford, a town of but middling size, and not the seat of a bishop, we are naturally led to refer its foundation to one of our kings; and none who had reigned after Alfred appears to have manifested such zeal for learning."*(j)* The accuracy of this tradition appears to be questioned, but however this may be, there is no doubt that it received the countenance and favour of Henry II. and Richard, and that during their reigns it grew up into a most flourishing condition. It was called a University in a public instrument of John A. D. 1201, a date earlier than any at which the word is applied to Paris.*(k)* Its earliest charter was conferred by John; its privileges were confirmed and extended by Henry III., Edwards I., II., and III., and by succeeding kings.*(l)* The privileges of both Oxford and Cambridge, now depend upon an act of incorporation, which was passed in the 13th of Elizabeth, A. D. 1570. The University of Oxford was also confirmed by papal authority, and was mentioned in the constitutions published by Clement V., after the Council of Vienne A. D. 1311; the authority of the popes, however,

*j.* Middle Ages, chap. ix. part 2.

*k.* From Dyer.

*l.* Malden.