

find other studies more independent of locality or local empiricism, to supply the void. Fortunately the 15th Century, under the lead of such men as Wolsey, Eramus and Thomas More, presented to the adoption of the widowed ALMA MATER, their LITERÆ HUMANIORES; fortunately also Bacon, a generation later, presented his new PHYSICS to England and the World. Mathematics too, which cannot be included under either of the former, assumed a new life in the 17th Century; and Modern History, Geology, and Political Economy entered later; thus to compensate the mourning Mother, deserted by Medicine and Law. Many famous sons have been grauted to the Alma Mater in these departments and she, as a matter of course, has found her young family every way more interesting and precocious than the established brood of her first rearing. Divinity, it is to be observed, the first-born of Oxford, has always retained there the rights of primogeniture: indeed to very many, the University is best known as the leading Seminary of the Church of England. I have not been able to place my hand, up to the present, on the relative number of lay and clerical graduates, within any given period, say since 1662; it would be a curious and most instructive table, to compile or to consider; for I think it must be clear that the complexion of modern civilization fluctuates between these two hues or dispositions of mind lay and clerical. When the centre of all intelligence was among the clergy, Europe wore one aspect: when it shifted and oscillated between laity and clergy—when there were as many scholars out of orders as in; when, lastly, the preponderance of acquirement and information came to be with the educated laity of the age: in each of these stages of human intelligence, *the World, our World*, wore a special aspect. I say nothing as to the relative merits of the two great divisions of scholars—that is not my business nor is it my topic; but it is only justice to Oxford to admit that she has shown us all, how we may be just to the ecclesiastical Order, past and present, without being hostile or obstructive to the cause of lay enlightenment, and the legitimate influence of the laity, in the conduct of education. Before I dismiss this part of the subject let me say moreover—in the spirit of Oxford, (I trust)—that we are all, it is to be feared, too apt to underestimate, what we owe to the clerical centuries, of which three fourths of the Oxford Colleges are standing monuments. Judged by the anathema of ignorance,—which only denser ignorance receives as true,—they were “dark ages.” Ages of comparative darkness they were, because the sun of science had not fully arisen; but not ages of man-made darkness. Oh no! the stars were out in all their glory; the moon was up, and scholars labored as hard, and great men cheered them on as generously then as now. We blame them for not doing what we pretend we are doing—educating all the people. Before paper was invented; before types were cut or cast; before the steam press was dreamt of; when veilum was as scarce and as precious as gold-leaf; when a rare book was worth a King’s ransom; when libraries of a hundred volumes were a luxury for a royal household; we blame those ages for not being what our ages are! Let the devotee of his own day, turn his eye towards Oxford, to that tower upon the Isis, the study of Friar Bacon glowing like a star in the night; and let him bare his head in reverence at the sublime spectacle of early science struggling over every obstacle, rather than raise his presumptuous voice in mockery, of the darkness of the middle ages.

I have deeply to regret that I had not time, when on the spot, to do more than glance at the special aids to study which are found at Oxford, such as the Observatory, the Botanic gardens and the Museums; but I must add