

soon filled, and no overflow was allowed of pupils lodging in the town. The enforcement of this law was said to have been jealously watched by some colleges, which would otherwise have been all but deserted, towards the close of the last century. The numerous scholarships and other endowments of the university, the college livings, and the academical degrees required as qualifications for entering holy orders, rendered the university very independent of public opinion; and whether it taught nothing efficiently, or failed to accommodate its form of instruction to the progress and spirit of the age, it could never apprehend a serious diminution of students.

Occasionally, there were examinations and a revival of studious habits in a particular college, or some professor gave a popular course of lectures, and drew large audiences. Thus Bradley, the famous astronomer, delivered, between the years 1746 and 1760, to a class of pupils averaging 57 in number, lectures on Natural Philosophy, not in Latin, as had been the old practice, but in English. But the general indolence of the instructors, and the idleness and dissipation of the young men, became so notorious and flagrant towards the close of the eighteenth century, that a reform was loudly called for, and the governing body became deeply impressed with a sense of its expediency. Many plans were devised for carrying it into effect. As the annual or terminal examinations in several colleges had been found most useful in maintaining orderly habits among the young men, it was proposed to improve the public examinations, which had become a mere form, and to compel every one to pass them before obtaining his degree of Bachelor of Arts. Honours