

was in danger of falling a prey to hasty generalisation for the purpose of practical ends. Practical demands threatened then, as they frequently still do, to stifle or to force into premature growth the patient thought which had just begun to germinate in the new light and freedom of reason. The narrow view had indeed been widened, and the breadth of the land had been surveyed, but there was little inclination to deepen the view, or to do more than search on the surface. The spirit of Bacon's philosophy required a corrective. For a long time to come the hope of practical application had to be postponed; the thinker and student had to retire into solitude, and there to lay the more permanent foundations of the new research. This was done by Newton for all time. His reputation spread more slowly than that of the great High Chancellor; but it rests on a surer foundation, which baffles every attempt to shake it, and will outlast all coming changes of thought.

6.
Corrected
by Newton.

The beginnings of modern scientific thought are thus to be found in this country. Lord Bacon foretold prophetically the great change which the new philosophy was destined to work. Newton more patiently drew up the first simple rules and gave the first brilliant application. More than the unfinished and wearisome pages of Bacon's 'Novum Organum' does the 'Principia' deserve to be placed on a line with Aristotle and Euclid as a model work of scientific inquiry.

For a real recognition of the greatness of Newton, as well as for a partial realisation of Bacon's plans, we are, however, mainly indebted to the French philosophers of the second half of the eighteenth century. Bacon's plan of promoting

7.
Bacon's and
Newton's
ideas taken
up by
French phil-
osophers.