

many, had produced the greatest scientific model of modern times, a work which has probably done more than any other purely scientific work to revolutionise our scientific notions—the ‘Principia’ of Newton. In the subsequent history of the thought of this century, the next chapter will deal with the part that the Newtonian ideas have played throughout the whole period. We have now to turn our attention to the state of science in Great Britain during the period when Paris academicians and German professors combined to define and carry the spirit of modern scientific thought into the several mathematical, physical, and biological branches of research.

Considering that the great scientific institutions of the Continent—the Paris Institute, the scientific and medical schools in Paris, and the German universities—have done so much for the furtherance of science and the diffusion of the scientific spirit, it is natural that we should ask, What have similar institutions done in this country? These institutions are, indeed, mostly older than the academies and modern universities of the Continent. The Royal Society, if not older than the French Academy, is certainly older than the Paris Academy of Sciences.<sup>1</sup>

2.  
Similar in-  
stitutions  
in Great,  
Britain.

<sup>1</sup> The actual dates are as follows: The first Academy devoted to the pursuit of science seems to have been the “Academia Secretorum Naturæ,” founded at Naples in 1560. Several societies devoted to the culture of literature and art existed in Italy, such as the Academy “della Crusca” (founded at Florence in 1582). The great French Academy, devoted exclusively to the study of the French language, dates from 1629, and received its charter in 1635. The Royal Society, though

not the first scheme of its kind which was started in this country—for the establishment of a Royal Academy was discussed as far back as 1616—actually started (1645) in the private meetings described in ‘Dr Wallis’s Account of Some Passages of his own Life’ (quoted by Weld, ‘Hist. of the Royal Society,’ vol. i. p. 30). These meetings, according to him, were suggested by a German, Theodore Hank, then resident in London. The members were “persons inquisitive into natural philos-