

40.
Importance
of British
contribu-
tions to
science.

side had been very largely developed by the great French naturalists and mathematicians in the beginning of our period. The change in the higher branches of science which took place during the first half of the century is greatly owing to them, and to the later German school, which was much influenced by them. If we compare the contributions of British science in these branches, they are indeed inferior in bulk, and still more so in methodical arrangement; but among them is a small number of works of the first order which are embodiments of scientific ideas of the very highest importance. Introduced into the great edifice of scientific research which was being planned and erected on the Continent, they mark the very corner-stones of the building, standing out in bold and conspicuous prominence. But it is a fact that no Academy existed in this country which was zealous in collecting and arranging all the best labours of scattered philosophers, no university which was anxious to attract and train promising intellects, no comprehensive text-books and hand-books, ensuring right guidance, correctness of knowledge, and completeness of study, no historical and philosophical traditions guaranteeing that novel contributions should make their appearance under favourable conditions, or supplying the most appropriate *mise en scène* for new ideas.

41.
Diffusion of
scientific
knowledge
on the
Continent.

It is the French Institute, in the earlier years of the century, and the German university system, with its many local ramifications and literary organs, during the whole of the century, which have done the great work of systematising and diffusing scientific knowledge, and of introducing the exact spirit of research. There is