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James Bass Mullinger (1834-1917) was a University Lecturer in History and Librarian at St. John's College, Cambridge. His monumental History of the University was the standard history of the University at the turn of the twentieth century. For most of his career Mullinger worked on the project, alongside his academic duties and his many articles, the first volume appearing in 1873 and the last in 1911. His extraordinary range of knowledge and the ambition of the work make this an important landmark in the history of universities in Britain. This volume covers the political and religious turmoil of the Civil War and the Restoration, ending symbolically with the decline of the Cambridge Platonists, the major philosophical movement of the seventeenth century. Mullinger describes the role the University played in the rise and fall of the Buckingham and of Cromwell, and explores its early connections with America.

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The University of Cambridge

*3. From the Election of Buckingham to the
Chancellorship in 1626 to the Decline of the
Platonist Movement*

VOLUME 3

JAMES BASS MULLINGER



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THE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

VOLUME III

FROM THE ELECTION OF BUCKINGHAM TO THE
CHANCELLORSHIP IN 1626

TO THE DECLINE OF THE PLATONIST MOVEMENT

BY

JAMES BASS MULLINGER, M.A.

LATE UNIVERSITY LECTURER ON HISTORY AND LECTURER
AND LIBRARIAN TO ST JOHN'S COLLEGE.



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TO
ROBERT FORSYTH SCOTT, ESQUIRE, M.A.
MASTER OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
AND
VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

DEAR MR VICE-CHANCELLOR,

It is with much pleasure that, on the completion of this Volume, I avail myself of your kind permission to dedicate it to yourself, as a grateful acknowledgement of your valuable aid in its production, and as a tribute to your own profound acquaintance with the history of the University.

Believe me, dear Mr Vice-chancellor,

Very sincerely yours,

J. BASS MULLINGER.

68 LENSFIELD ROAD, CAMBRIDGE,
February, 1911.

P R E F A C E.

As more than a quarter of a century has elapsed since the second volume of this work was published, I venture to offer a brief explanation of the protracted delay that has attended the appearance of the third, notwithstanding that continuous residence in the university throughout that time has greatly facilitated access to the original sources of information and especially those relating to the history of the colleges. The primary cause, I need hardly say, has been my engagements as lecturer and librarian at my own College, and also as lecturer on history to the University, on ecclesiastical history, as Birkbeck lecturer at Trinity College, and lecturer on the History of Education to the Teachers' Training College. A contributing cause has been one which could hardly be foreseen,—the publication of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. As soon as, in 1885, the first volume of that monumental work appeared, and I was myself privileged to become a not infrequent contributor, I could not fail to perceive, not only that I should gain largely by awaiting the completion of the series, but that such a course was almost indispensable. My lamented friend, the Reverend J. E. B. Mayor, the late professor of Latin, was always ready, indeed, to place his invaluable collections for a Cambridge *Athenae*, at my service; but with the advance of the seventeenth century, as individualities and controversies alike multiplied, and new and important fields of literature opened up, the history of university training and culture throughout Christendom assumes a

deeper significance and an enlarged importance; while it is no exaggeration to affirm that the intellectual and religious history of the English-speaking race, during the same century, was to a great extent the reflex of the traditions upheld at Oxford and at Cambridge, together with the resistance which they there evoked,—the annals of those two ancient seats of learning, again, receiving no little illustration from a comparison of the one with the other¹. The value, indeed, of the employment of the comparative method in the study of history, and especially in the history of Institutions, is now so generally recognized, that altogether to abandon it would, it seemed to me, tend to deprive my labours of much of their value; and comparatively brief as is the period dealt with in the succeeding pages, it is one perhaps more eventful and fraught with instruction than any, of equal duration, in our national experiences. Between the sudden fate of Buckingham, the chancellor of Cambridge, and the fall of Clarendon, the chancellor of Oxford, we are confronted, at both universities, with such a series of changes,—in the first instance so subversive, in the sequel so reactionary,—that it is, at first sight, difficult to account for their occurrence within less than half a century, in connexion with institutions distinguished alike by their reverence for the Past and by the tenacity of their traditions. As it was, an observer visiting either university in 1625 and again in 1669, but ignorant of what had occurred in the interval, might have been ready to conclude that, whatever had been the case elsewhere, her professed beliefs, learning and discipline remained much the same. Or, if change there were, it was by no means in the direction of improvement. At Cambridge, the new light which had before seemed breaking in from Bacon's *Novum Organum*, appeared to be dying out under the influence of a revived scholasticism; the cheerful confidence wherewith Joseph Mede had been able to greet

¹ As an instance of this, I may cite the evidence supplied by the sister university with regard to the work of the Commissioners in 1654, and the difficulties attendant upon the same,—an experience which, at Cambridge, receives but little illustration.

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his pupils, as he enquired *Quid dubitas?* had been exchanged, in no small measure, for despondency and dubious tones, audible even in the pulpit, as one of the most thoughtful of her teachers, himself a bishop of the restored Church, essayed the task of giving answer to the query, *What is Truth?* To infer, however, that all that had occurred in that troublous interval was really destined to remain unproductive of permanent and beneficial result, is very far from being the conclusion to which the whole narrative necessarily points; and those who may feel inclined to put aside the annals of bygone learning as devoid of much relevance to present-day questions, may do well to note that, amid the apparently ceaseless and barren controversies evoked by theological divisions during the Commonwealth, a great scholar,—perhaps the ablest whom Cambridge ever lent to Oxford,—was there to be heard pleading against all coercive discipline in secondary education, and demanding that every student in a university should be at liberty to choose such instruction as seemed best adapted to ‘his individual genius and design’.¹ Nor is it less certain, that, when individuality has thus been accorded due recognition, the extent to which it may, in turn, be moulded by the directive insight of the teacher, was a process distinctly apprehended and in actual operation, alike in Oxford and in Cambridge, two centuries before it was formulated by Herbart and by Herbert Spencer.

Another main fact to be borne in mind, is that the importance of the two universities at this period, in relation to the country at large, was not only unprecedented, but unsurpassed even in much later times. ‘Few persons,’ says Dr Venn, writing in 1897, ‘have adequately realized the commanding position to which they had then attained. Absolutely,—not relatively merely,—the number of graduates in the years about 1625–30, was greater than was ever attained again till within living memory. When allowance is made for the growth of population, it must be frankly admitted that, as far as concerns the number of

¹ See *infra*, p. 446 and note.

trained men sent out into the country, the old Universities have not yet regained the position they occupied two centuries and a half ago¹.

Among those to whom I had occasion to acknowledge my indebtedness in my second volume, although some have passed away, their places have been filled by others; and in the access to registers and other sources of information most readily everywhere accorded me, it has been no slight additional encouragement to recognize an increasing interest in all that serves to illustrate the developement of education both in the past and in the present. The *Histories* of the Colleges, both of Oxford and of Cambridge, published by Mr F. E. Robinson², I have found of considerable service, and from a majority of their authors have been able to gain additional information of a kind that would hardly have been obtainable in any other quarter. In my own university, I have been especially indebted to Dr J. E. Sandys, our Public Orator, for his careful perusal of my proof-sheets and valuable criticisms thereupon, and also to Dr Peile, the late master of Christ's, and to Dr Venn, president of Caius College, for like aid. The publication of the *Biographical History of Gonville and Caius College* by Dr Venn, together with his notes from the episcopal registries, especially those of London and Norwich, have also served to render available results of laborious researches which have been invaluable for my period; the first volume of the corresponding work (by Dr Peile), relating to Christ's College³, has just appeared; and it is satisfactory to learn that the second and completing volume may shortly be looked for, under the editorship of Mr J. A. Venn, M.A., of Trinity College, to whom also my acknowledgements are due, for frequent biographical in-

¹ *Biographical History of Gonville and Caius College*, Vol. I, Introduction, xx-xxi.

² Now published by Hutchinson & Co., Paternoster Row.

³ *Biographical Register of Christ's College (1505-1905) and of the Earlier Foundation, God's House (1448-1505)*. By John Peile, Litt.D., F.B.A., late Master of the College. Vol. I. Camb. Univ. Press. 1911.

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formation,—derived from his own and his father's transcripts of the Lists of Degrees and other documents preserved in the Registry. To Dr Peile, Dr Ward, master of Peterhouse, and to the late Provost of King's,—to Thomas Thornely, esquire, fellow and lecturer of Trinity Hall, and to Dr T. A. Walker, fellow and librarian of Peterhouse,—I have throughout been under obligation, either for permission to consult original documents, or for information transcribed from the same. At Trinity College, Mr W. W. Rouse Ball and the Rev. A. H. Boughey, tutors and fellows of the society, have vouchsafed me much kind help, while to the exceptional knowledge possessed by the former of the history of the study of mathematics, both in the university and elsewhere, I have been still further indebted. To Dr C. H. Firth, professor of Modern History at Oxford, I have been under repeated obligation, not only for the guidance afforded by his articles in the *Dictionary of Biography* and his recent volumes on the Protectorate, but also for the loan of his very valuable notes on the British Museum Catalogue of the *Thomason Tracts*. To the Rev. Andrew Clark, of Lincoln College, my thanks are also due for various information, and not least for his editorial labours on Anthony Wood's *Life and Times*.

As regards the spelling of surnames, I have preferred, whenever they occur in the *Dictionary of Biography*, the form in which they are there given, in order to facilitate reference to that work.

J. B. M.

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