fees, and his giving bonds for the ſettled future pay­ments. At the academy he exerted all his abilities in inſtructing the pupils who were the immediate objects of his duty, as well as others whom the ſuperior officers of the ordnance permitted to be boarded and lodged in his houſe. In his manner of teaching he had a peculiar and happy addreſs, a certain dignity and perſpicuity, tempered with ſuch a degree of mildness, as engaged the attention, eſteem, and friendſhip, of his ſcholars. He therefore acquired great applauſe from his ſuperiors in the diſcharge of his duty. His application and cloſe confinement, however, injured his health. Exerciſe and a proper regimen were preſcribed to him, but to little purpose : for his ſpirits sunk gradually, till he became incapable of performing his duty, or even of reading the letters of his friends. The effects of this decay of nature were greatly increaſed by vexation of mind, ow­ing to the haughty and inſulting behaviour of his ſupe­rior the firſt proſeſſor of mathematics. This perſon, greatly his inferior in mathematical accompliſhments, did what he could to make his ſituation uneaſy, and even to depreciate him in the public opinion : but it was a vain endeavour, and only ſerved to depreſs him­ſelf. At length his phyſicians adviſed his native air for his recovery, and he ſet out in February 1761; but was ſo fatigued by his journey, that upon his arrival at Boſworth, he betook himſelf to his chamber, and grew con­tinually worſe till the day of his death, which happened on the 14th of May, in the 51st year of his age.

STMSON (Dr Robert), profeſſor of mathematics in the univerſity of Glaſgow, was born in the year 1687 of a reſpectable family, which had held a ſmall eſtate in the county of Lanerk for ſome generations. He was, we think, the ſecond ſon of the family. A younger brother was profeſſor of medicine in the univerſity of St Andrew’s, and is known by ſome works of reputa­tion, particularly a Diſſertation on the Nervous Syſtem, occasioned by the Diſſection of a Brain completely Oſſified.

Dr Simſon was educated in the univerſity of Glaſ­gow under the eye of ſome of his relations who were profeſſors. Eager after knowledge, he made great prgreſs in all his ſtudies ; and, as his mind did not, at the very firſt openings of ſcience, ſtrike into that path which afterwards ſo ſtrongly attracted him, and in which he proceeded ſo far almoſt without a companion, he acquired in every walk of ſcience a ſtock of in­formation, which, though it had never been much augmented afterwards, would have done credit to a profeſſional man in any of his ſtudies. He became, at a very early period, an adept in the philoſophy and theology of the ſchools, was able to ſupply the place of a ſick relation in the claſs of oriental languages, was noted for hiſtorical knowledge, and one of the moſt knowing botaniſts of his time.

It was during his theological ſtudies, as preparatory for his entering into orders, that mathematics took hold of his fancy. He uſed to tell in his convivial moments how he amuſed himſelf when preparing his exerciſes for the divinity hall. When tired with vague ſpeculation, in which he did not meet with certainty to re­ward his labours, he turned up a book of oriental phi­lology, in which he found ſomething which he could diſcover to be true or to be falſe, without going out of the line of ſtudy which was to be of ultimate uſe to

him, Sometimes even this could not relieve his fatigue. He then had recourſe to mathematics, which never tail­ed to ſatisfy and refreſh him. For a long while he reſtricted himſelf to a very moderate uſe of the cordial, fearing that he would ſoon exhauſt the ſmall ſtock which ſo limited and abſtract a ſcience could yield ; till at laſt he found, that the more he learned, a wider field opened to his view, and ſcenes that were inexhauſtible. Becoming acquainted with ſubjects far be­yond the elements of the ſcience, and with numbers of names celebrated during that period of ardent reſearch all over Europe, he found it to be a manly and impor­tant ſtudy, by which he was as likely to acquire repu­tation as by any other. About this time, too, a proſpect began to open of making mathematics his profession for life. He then gave himſelf up to it without reserve.

His original incitement to this ſtudy as a treat, as ſomething to pleaſe and refreſh his mind in the midſt of ſeverer taſks, gave a particular turn to his mathematical ſtudies, from which he never could afterwards deviate. Perſpicuity and elegance are more attainable, and more diſcernible, in pure geometry, than in any other parts of the ſcience of meaſure. To this therefore he chiefly devoted himſelf. For the ſame reaſon he preferred the ancient method of ſtudying pure geometry, and even felt a dislike to the Carteſian method of ſubſtituting ſymbols for operations of the mind, and ſtill more was he diſguſted with the ſubſtitution of ſymbols for the very objects of diſcuſſion, for lines, ſurfaces, ſolids, and their affections. He was rather diſpoſed in the ſolution of an algebraic problem, where quantity alone was conſidered, to ſubſtitute figure and its affections for the algebraic ſymbols, and to convert the algebraic formula into an analogous geometrical theorem. And he came at laſt to conſider algebraic analyſis as little better than a kind of mechanical knack, in which we proceed without ideas of any kind, and obtain a reſult without meaning, and without being conſcious of any proceſs of reaſoning, and therefore without any convic­tion of its truth. And there is no denying, that if ge­nuine unſophiſticated taste alone is to be conſulted, Dr Simſon was in the right : for though it muſt alſo be acknowledged, that the reaſoning in algebra is as ſtrict as in the pureſt geometry of Euclid or Apollonius, the *expert* analyſt has little perception of it as he goes on, and his final equation is not felt by himſelf as the reſult of ratiocination, any more than if he had obtained it by Paſcal’s arithmetical mill. This does not in the leaſt diminiſh our admiration of the algebraic analyſis ; for its almoſt boundleſs graſp, its rapid and certain proce­dure, and the delicate metaphylics and great addreſs which may be diſplayed in conducting it. Such, however, was the ground of the ſtrong bias of Dr Simſon’s mind to the analyſis of the ancient geometers. It in­creaſed as he went forward ; and his veneration (we may call it his *love* or *affection)* for the ancient geometry was carried to a degree of idolatry. His chief labours were exerted in efforts to reſtore the works of the an­cient geometers ; and he has nowhere bestowed much pains in advancing the modern discoveries in mathema­tics. The noble inventions, for example, of fluxions and of logarithms, by which our progreſs in mathema­tical knowledge, and in the uſeful application of this knowledge, is ſo much promoted, attracted the notice of Dr Simſon ; but he has contented himſelf with de-