Having now attained the firſt great object of buſineſs, wealth, Mr Strahan looked with a very allowable ambition on the ſtations of political rank and eminence. Politics had long occupied his active mind, which he had for many years purſued as his favourite amuſement, by correſponding on that ſubject with ſome of the first characters of the age. Mr Strahan’s queries to Dr Franklin in the year 1769, reſpecting the diſcontents of the Americans, publiſhed in the London Chronicle of 28th July 1778, ſhow the jult conception he enter­tained of the important conſequences of that diſpute, and his anxiety as a good ſubject to inveſtigate, at that early period, the proper means by which their grievances might be removed, and a permanent harmony reſtored between the two countries. In the year 1775 he was elected a member of parliament for the borough of Malmſhury in Wiltſhire, with a very illuſtrious col­league, the Hon. C. J Fox ; and in the ſucceeding parliament, for Wootton Baſſet, in the ſame county. In this ſtation, applying himſelf with that induſtry which was natural to him, he was a uſeful member, and attended the houſe with a ſcrupulous punctuality. His talents for busineſs acquired the consideration to which they were intitled, and were not unnoticed by the miniſter.

In his political connections he was constant to the friends to whom he had firſt been attached. He was ſteady ſupporter of that party who were turned out of adminiſtration in spring 1784, and loſt his ſeat in the houſe of commons by the dissolution of parliament with which that change was followed : a ſituation which he did not ſhow any deſire to reſume on the return of the new parliament; ariſing from a feeling of ſome decline in his health, which had rather ſuffered from the long fittings and late hours with which the political warfare in the preceding had been attended. Without any fixed diſeaſe, his ſtrength viſibly declined ; and though his ſpirits survived his ſtrength, yet the vigour and activity of his mind were alſo conſiderably impared. Both continued gradually to decline till his death, which happened on the 9th of July 1785 in the 71ſt year of his age.

Endued with much natural ſagacity, and an attentive observation of life, he owed his rise to that ſtation of opulence and respect which he attained, rather to his own talents and exertion, than to any accidental occur­rence of favourable or fortunate circumſtances. His mind was not uninformed by letters ; and from a habit of attention to ſtyle, he acquired a conſiderable portion of critical acuteneſs in the diſcernment of its beauties and defects. In one branch of writing he particularly excelled—the epiſtolary ; in which he not only ſhowed the preciſion and clearneſs of busineſs, but poſſeſſed a neatneſs as well as a fluency of expreſſion which few let­ter-writers have been known to ſurpaſs. Letter-writing was one of his favourite amuſements ; and among his correspondents were men of ſuch eminence and talents as well repaid his endeavours to entertain them. Among theſe, as before-mentioned, was the juſtly celebrated Dr Franklin, originally a printer like Mr Strahan, whoſe friendſhip and correspondence, notwithſtanding the difference of their ſentiments in political matters, he continued to enjoy till his death. One of the lateſt letters which he received from his illuſtrious and vene­rable friend, contained a humorous allegory of the ſtate of politics in Britain, drawn from the profeſſion of print­ing ; of which, though the Doctor had quitted the exerciſe, he had not forgotten the terms.

The judicious diſpoſition which Mr Strahan made of his property, affords an evident proof of his good ſenſe and propriety. After providing munificently for his widow and childern, his principal ſtudy ſeems to have been to mitigate the affliction of thoſe (and many there were) who would more immediately have felt his loss, by bequeathing them liberal annuities for their lives; and (recollecting that all of a profeſſion are not equally provident) he left 1000 l. to the Company of Stationers, the intereſt to be divided among infirm old printers.

As the virtuous connections of the life and the heart are always pleaſing to trace —of Mr Strahan it may briefly be ſaid, that his capacity, diligence, and probity, raised him to the head of his profeſſion. The good humour and obliging diſpoſition which he owed to na­ture, he cultivated with care, and confirmed by habit. His ſympathetic heart beat time to the joy and ſorrow of his friends. His advice was always ready to direct youth, and his purſe open to relieve indigence. Living in times not the pureſt in the Engliſh annals, he eſcaped unſullied through the artifices of trade and the cor­ruption of politics. In him a ſtrong natural ſagacity, improved by an extensive knowledge of the world, ſerved only to render reſpectable his unaffected simplicity of manners, and to make his Chriſtian philanthropy more diſcerning and uſeful. The uninterrupted health and happineſs which accompained him for half a cen­tury in the capital, proves honeſty to be the beſt policy, temperance the greateſt luxury, and the eſſential duties of life its moſt agreeable amuſement. In his elevated fortune, none of his former acquaintance ever accuſed him of neglect. He attained proſperity without envy, enjoyed wealth without pride, and diſpenſed bounty without orientation.

STRAIKS, in the military art, are ſtrong plates of iron, six in number, fixed with large nails called st*raik- nails,* on the circumference of a cannon-wheel, over the joints, of the fellows; both to ſtrengthen the wheel, and to save the fellows from wearing on hard ways or ſtreets.

STRAIN, a pain occaſioned by the violent extension of ſome membranous or tendinous part.

*Strain, Stress,* in mechanics, are terms indiſcriminately uſed to express the force which is *excited* in any part of a machine or ſtructure of any kind tending to break it in that part. Thus every part of a rope is *equally* ſtrained by the weight which it ſuspends. Every part of a pillar is *equally* ſtrained by the load which it ſupports. A mill axle is *equally* twiſted and ſtrained in every part which lies between the part of the wheel ac­tuated by the moving power and the part which is reſiſted by the work to be performed. Every part of a lever or joiſt is *differently* ſtrained by a force acting on a diſtant part.

It is evident that we cannot make the ſtructure fit for its purpoſe, unleſs the ſtrength in every part be at least equal to the ſtreſs laid on, or the ſtrain excited in that part. It is no leſs plain, that if we are ignorant of the principles which determine this ſtrain, both in intensity and direction, in relation to the magnitude and the ſituation of its remote cauſe, the only ſecurity we have for ſucceſs is to give to every part of the aſſem-