in all the most material, they have not only widened most magni­ficently the field of its exertions, but multiplied a thousandfold the amount of its productions. It is our improved steam-engine that has fought the battles of Europe, and exalted and sustained, through the late tremendous contest, the political greatness of our land. It is the same great power which now enables us to pay the interest of our debt, and to maintain the arduous struggle in which we are still engaged, with the skill and capital of coun­tries less oppressed with taxation. But these are poor and narrow­views of its importance. It has increased indefinitely the mass of human comforts and enjoyments, and rendered cheap and acces­sible all over the world the materials of wealth and prosperity. It has armed the feeble hand of man, in short, with a power to which no limits can be assigned, completed the dominion of mind over the most refractory qualities of matter, and laid a sure foundation for all those future miracles of mechanic power which are to aid and reward the labours of after generations. It is to the genius of one man, too, tl>at all this is mainly owing ; and certainly no man ever before bestowed such a gift on his kind. The blessing is not only universal, but unbounded ; and the fabled inventors of the plough and the loom, who were deified by the erring grati­tude of their rude contemporaries, conferred less important bene­fits on mankind than the inventor of our present steam-engine.

“ This will be the fame of Watt with future generations ; and it is sufficient for his race and his country. But to those to whom he more immediately belonged, who lived in his society, and en­joyed his conversation, it is not perhaps the character in which he will be most frequently recalled—most deeply lamented—or even most highly admired. Independently of his great attainments in mechanics, Mr Watt was an extraordinary, and in many respects a wonderful man. Perhaps no individual in his age possessed so much and such varied and exact information,—had read so much, or remembered what he had read so accurately and well. He had infinite quickness of apprehension, a prodigious memory, and a certain rectifying and methodizing power of understanding, which extracted something precious out of all that was presented to it. His stores of miscellaneous knowledge were immense,—and yet less astonishing than the command he had at all times over them. It seemed as if every subject that was casually started in conver­sation with him, had been that which he had been last occupied in studying and exhausting ; such was the copiousness, the precision, and the admirable clearness of the information which he poured out upon it without effort or hesitation. Nor was this prompti­tude and compass of knowledge confined in any degree to the studies connected with his ordinary pursuits. That he should have been minutely and extensively skilled in chemistry and the arts, and in most of the branches of physical science, might per­haps have been conjectured ; but it could not have been inferred from his usual occupations, and probably is not generally known, that he was curiously learned in many branches of antiquity, me­taphysics, medicine, and etymology, and perfectly at home in all the details of architecture, music, and law. He was well acquainted, too, with most of the modem languages, and familiar with their most recent literature. Nor was it at all extraordinary to hear the great mechanician and engineer detailing and expounding, for hours together, the metaphysical theories of the German logicians, or criticising the measures or the matter of the German poetry.

“ His astonishing memory was aided, no doubt, in a great mea­sure, by a still higher and rarer faculty—by his power of digesting and arranging in its proper place all the information he received, and of casting aside and rejecting, as it were instinctively, what­ever was worthless or immaterial. Every conception that was suggested to his mind seemed instantly to take its place among its other rich furniture, and to be condensed into the smallest and most convenient form. He never appeared, therefore, to be at all encumbered or perplexed with the *verbiage* of the dull books he perused, or the idle talk to which be listened ; but to have at once extracted, by a kind of intellectual alchemy, all that was worthy of attention, and to have reduced it, for his own use, to its true va­lue and to its simplest form. And thus it often happened that a great deal more was learned from his brief and vigorous account of the theories and arguments of tedious writers, than an ordinary student could ever have derived from the most faithful study of the originals,—and that errors and absurdities became manifest from the mere clearness and plainness of his statement of them, which might have deluded and perplexed most of his hearers with­out that invaluable assistance.

“ It is needless to say, that, with those vast resources, his con­versation was at all times rich and instructive in no ordinary de­gree ; but it was, if possible, still more pleasing than wise, and had all the charms of familiarity, with all the substantial treasures of knowledge. No man could be more social in his spirit, less assuming or fastidious in his manners, or more kind and indulgent towards all who approached him. He rather liked to talk, at least in his later years ; but though he took a considerable share of the conversation, he rarely suggested the topics on which it was to turn, but readily and quietly took up whatever was presented by those around him, and astonished the idle and barren propounders of an ordinary theme, by the treasures which he drew from the mine they had unconsciously opened. He generally seemed in­deed to have no choice or predilection for one subject of discourse rather than another ; but allowed his mind, like a great cyclopae­dia, to be opened at any letter his associates might choose to turn up, and only endeavoured to select from his inexhaustible stores what might be best adapted to the taste of his present hearers. As to their capacity he gave himself no trouble; and indeed such was his singular talent for making all things plain, clear, and intelligible, that scarcely any one could be aware of such a defici­ency in his presence. His talk, too, though overflowing with in­formation, had no resemblance to lecturing or solemn discoursing, but, on the contrary, was full of colloquial spirit and pleasantry. He had a certain quiet and grave humour, which ran through most of his conversation, and a vein of temperate jocularity, which gave infinite zest and effect to the condensed and inexhaustible information which formed its main staple and characteristic. There was a little air of affected testiness, and a tone of pretended rebuke and contradiction, with which he used to address his younger friends, that was always felt by them as an endearing mark of bis kindness and familiarity—and prized, accordingly, far beyond all the solemn compliments that ever proceeded from the lips of au­thority. His voice was deep and powerful, though he commonly spoke in a low and somewhat monotonous tone, which harmonized admirably with the weight and brevity of his observations, and set off to the greatest advantage the pleasant anecdotes which he de­livered with the same grave brow and the same calm smile playing soberly on his lips. There was nothing of effort, indeed, or im­patience, any more than of pride or levity, in his demeanour; and there was a finer expression of reposing strength and mild self-pos­session in his manner, than we ever recollect to have met with in any other person. He had in his character the utmost abhorrence for all sorts of forwardness, parade, and pretension ; and indeed never failed to put all such impostors out of countenance, by the manly plainness and honest intrepidity of his language and de­portment.

“ In his temper and dispositions he was not only kind and af­fectionate, but generous, and considerate of the feelings of all around him, and gave the most liberal assistance and encourage­ment to all young persons who showed any indications of talent, or applied to him for patronage or advice. His health, which was delicate from his youth upwards, seemed to become firmer as he advanced in years ; and he preserved, up almost to the last mo­ment of his existence, nut only the full command of his extraor­dinary intellect, but all the alacrity of spirit and the social gaiety which had illuminated his happiest days. His friends in this part of the country never saw him more full of intellectual vigour and colloquial animation, never more delightful or more instructive, than in his last visit to Scotland in autumn 1817. Indeed it was after that time that he applied himself, with all the ardour of early life, to the invention of a machine for mechanically copying all sorts of sculpture and statuary, and distributed among his friends some of its earliest performances, ns the productions of a young artist just entering on his eighty-third year.

“ This happy and useful life came at last to a gentle close. He had suffered some inconvenience through the summer ; but was not seriously indisposed till within a few weeks from his death. He then became perfectly aware of the event which was approach­ing ; and, with his usual tranquillity and benevolence of nature, seemed only anxious to point out to the friends around him the many sources of consolation which were afforded by the circum­stances under which it was about to take place. He expressed his sincere gratitude to Providence for the length of days with which he bad been blessed, and his exemption from most of the infirmities of age, as well as for the calm and cheerful evening of life that be had been permitted to enjoy, after the honourable la­bours of the day had been concluded. And thus, full of years and honours, in all calmness and tranquillity, he yielded up his soul without pang or struggle, and passed from the bosom of his family to that of his God !

“ He was twice married, but has left no issue but one son, long associated with him in his business and studies, and two grand­children by a daughter who predeceased him. He was a fellow of the Royal Societies both of London and Edinburgh, and one of the few Englishmen who were elected members of the National Institute of France. All men of learning and science were his cordial friends ; and such was the influence of his mild character, and perfect fairness and liberality, even upon the pretenders to these accomplishments, that he lived to disarm even envy itself, and died, we verily believe, without a single enemy.”