

as Secretary of the Commission sent across the Atlantic by Lord North to try to arrange the matters in dispute between the mother country and her North American colonies.

When Hutton found himself in these congenial surroundings, with ample leisure at his command, he appears to have turned at once to his first love in science, by betaking himself to chemical experiment. Even without the testimony of his biographer, we have only to look at his published works to be impressed by his unwearied industry, and by the extraordinarily wide range of his studies. Though up to the time of his settling in Edinburgh he had published nothing, he had read extensively. There were hardly any of the sciences, except the mathematical, to which he did not turn his attention. He was a diligent reader of voyages, travels and books of natural history, carefully storing up the facts which seemed to him to bear on the problems of the earth's history. He not only prosecuted chemistry and mineralogy, but distinguished himself as a practical meteorologist by his important contribution to the theory of rain. He wrote a general system of physics and metaphysics in one quarto volume, and no fewer than three massive quartos were devoted by him to *An Investigation of the Principles of Knowledge, and of the Progress of Reason from Sense to Science and Philosophy*. At the time of his death he was engaged upon a treatise on the Elements of Agriculture.

Hutton was thus no narrow specialist, wrapped up in the pursuit of one circumscribed section of human inquiry. His mind ranged far and wide