

known fertility, the elements necessary for their productiveness are discovered, and the sources whence they can be supplied are made known.

On the European continent, mining has long enjoyed the fostering care of different Governments, Colleges have been founded and cherished, for the sole purpose of qualifying the geologist, mineralogist and miner for their important duties. Libraries and museums have been collected, laws have been made to protect and encourage mining, and the ablest men have been employed in those departments of science which were found to be intimately connected with national safety and prosperity.

Great-Britain, with her vast mineral wealth, had observed the advantages gained by neighbouring countries from their attention to natural resources, and viewed with jealousy the importation of iron from Sweden and Germany; but individual enterprise was left unaided, and her miners were for a long period left to grope their way in darkness, without the light of science to guide them in their uncertain path. But no sooner was the attention of the British Government directed to this subject, and its inadequate support to the most enduring branch of natural industry rendered obvious, than public surveys were ordered, the studies of geology and mineralogy were immediately introduced into English and Scotch colleges, and an impetus was given to these enquiries which has been unparalleled in its beneficial results.

The mineral wealth of Great-Britain remained for a long period unnoticed and disregarded, and many individuals were ruined by speculations which have since proved extremely profitable, and of great national importance. Numerous are the instances where vast sums of money had been unsuccessfully expended, in enterprises which, since the diffusion of knowledge adapted to them, and the encouragement offered by legislative acts, have been resumed, and rendered the sources of public and private wealth.

It is to her great mineral deposits Great-Britain chiefly owes her elevated character. They have imparted an extraordinary impulse to mechanical genius—have aroused her inhabitants to most unceasing exertion, and have produced those extraordinary revolutions in agriculture, manufacture and navigation, which render her an object of admiration to all the world. These improvements have not arisen altogether from any peculiar advantages enjoyed by the Mother Country, or the unaided capabilities of her people. They are the