

public evil;—one of the most remarkable social reforms on record. He also devoted himself to various ameliorations, such as improving the construction and arrangement of the dwellings of the working classes, providing for them a better education, organizing houses of industry, introducing superior breeds of horses and cattle, and promoting landscape-gardening, which he did by converting an old abandoned hunting-ground near Munich into a park, where, after his departure, the inhabitants erected a monument to his honor. For these services Sir Benjamin Thompson received many distinctions, and among others was made Count of the Holy Roman Empire. On receiving this dignity he chose a title in remembrance of the country of his nativity, and was thenceforth known as Count of Rumford.

“His health failing from excessive labor and what he considered the unfavorable climate, he came back to England in 1798, and had serious thoughts of returning to the United States. Having received from the American government the compliment of a formal invitation to revisit his native land, he wrote to an old friend requesting him to look out for a ‘little quiet retreat’ for himself and daughter in the vicinity of Boston. This intention, however, failed, as he shortly after became involved in the enterprise of founding the Royal Institution of England.

“There was in Rumford’s character a happy combination of philanthropic impulses, executive power in carrying out great projects, and versatility of talent in physical research. His scientific investigations were largely guided and determined by his philanthropic plans and public duties. His interest in the more needy classes led him to the assiduous study of the physical wants of mankind, and the best methods of relieving them; the laws and domestic management of heat accordingly engaged a large share of his attention. He determined the amount of heat arising from the combustion of different kinds of fuel, by means of a calorimeter of his own invention. He reconstructed the fire-place, and so improved the methods of heating apartments and cooking food as to produce a saving in the precious element, varying from one-half to seven-eighths of the fuel previously consumed. He improved the construction of stoves, cooking-ranges, coal-grates, and chimneys; showed that the non-conducting power of cloth is due to the air enclosed among its fibres, and first pointed out that mode of action of heat called *convection*; indeed he was the first clearly to discriminate between the three modes of propagation of