we owe the first beginnings of a general and international system of units and measurements, which, like the common Latin tongue in former centuries, or like the universal languages of algebra or of music, enables us to express the results of scientific research in formulæ intelligible everywhere and at all times, without laborious translations and time-absorbing reductions.

3. Disappearance of national differences.

The effect of these international labours has been to destroy the clearly marked differences of national thought. At least in the domain of science the peculiarities of the French, the German, and the English schools are rapidly disappearing. The characteristics of national thought still exist; but in order to find them in the present age we should have to study the deeper philosophical reasonings, the general literature and the artistic efforts of the three nations. These aspects of the thought of our century belong to later portions of this work. I hope there to take up many of the threads which I here break off, as for the present purpose they cannot be profitably continued. To separate the scientific work of the second half of the century according to countries and nations would lead to unnecessary repetition. The second half of the century sees everywhere in the domain of science the dying out of national restrictions—in every country the introduction of foreign methods and foreign models, foreign institutions and foreign apparatus. The establishment of an observatory or a laboratory in our age lays under contribution almost every civilised country in the world, and the most international of sciences—that of electricity—fixes its units by the names of discoverers of many countries.