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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Watt and the kettle

There was once a little Scotch boy named James Watt. He was not a strong child, and could not always run and play with the other children, but often had to amuse himself at home. One holiday afternoon little James amused himself in this way. He held a saucer over the stream of steam which came from the spout of a boiling kettle, and as he watched he saw little drops of water forming on the saucer. He thought this was very strange, and wondered why it happened, for he did not know that steam is just water changed in form by the heat, and that as soon as it touches something cold it turns again into water. He asked his aunt to explain it, but she only told him not to waste his time. If she could have foreseen the work which her nephew would do when he became a man, she would not have thought he was wasting his time.



When James Watt grew up, he was as much interested in steam and its wonderful power, as he had been as a boy. He was sure it could be made of great service to people. It was already used for driving engines, but the engines were not good, and it cost a lot of money to use them. Watt thought they

could be improved, but it was long before he found out the way to do this. Often, he sat by the fire watching the lid of the kettle as it was made to dance by the steam, and thinking of many plans; and at last a happy thought came to him. His plan enabled great improvements to be made in the working of engines, and now steam drives our trains and ships, our mills and factories, and is one of our most useful servants.