

The President of the Agric. Socy at
1817

ADDRESS

OF

THOMAS GOLD, ESQ.

President of the Berkshire Agricultural Society,

AND MEMBER OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY

FOR PROMOTING AGRICULTURE,

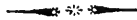
DELIVERED BEFORE THE

BERKSHIRE ASSOCIATION,

FOR THE

PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURE AND MANUFACTURES,

AT PITTSFIELD, OCT. 2^d, 1817.



“The sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold : therefore shall he beg in Harvest, and have nothing.”

“Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.” PROVERBS.

“Pater ipse colendi,
Haud facilem esse viam voluit, primusque per artem
Movit agros, curis acuens, mortalia corda,” VIRG. GEORG. LIB. I.



PITTSFIELD :

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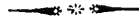
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ADDRESS.

*Gentlemen of the Berkshire Association
for the promotion of Agriculture and Manufactures,
and Fellow-Citizens—*

THE Society having required an annual exhibition of the fruits of their measures, that period has returned, and we are again assembled to discharge the important duties attached to the occasion. This meeting has recurred under far more auspicious circumstances than the last; for we behold an earnest of the promise, “that seed time and harvest shall not cease”—that the labor of the husbandman shall be blessed with the plenteousness of the fruits of the earth. The heart which was ready to faint, has been cheered by the dawn of better times. The animating hope, that the general suffering has reached its prescribed limits, is realized—let our gratitude to Heaven equal the greatness of these dispensations—let our joy be elevated to the gladdening scene. Nor have we less cause of gratitude, that the exertions of the Society have been prospered; that their labors to promote the general welfare have been so effectually succeeded. These are considerations of delightful private satisfaction, and general congratulation.

At no period since the establishment of the Society, have so many unfavorable occurrences in the peculiarity of the times and seasons, happened. At no period have efforts been made, in equal degree and extent, to sustain the hopes and expectations of our fellow-citizens in the advantages to be derived from the association. We have assurances that these expectations have been realized,

General confidence continues to sustain the character formed, and to encourage increased efforts in the great pursuits in which we are engaged. In view of the blessings we are made the instruments of diffusing, let us take courage, and persevere in the execution of our benevolent purposes. Societies for ameliorating the condition of the human race, are rapidly rising in consideration, and acquiring a decided influence over the general feeling. The best matured opinion inclines to their general support; and the policy which guides our country in its progress from rustic nature, to polished life, is imperative.

GENTLEMEN—

In a community, which has assumed as the basis of every measure, and the compass to direct every pursuit, an elevated degree of mental cultivation, and an active spirit of enquiry, the office of being the organ of their communications, confers great dignity, and is most interesting to the benevolent mind. Hence we observe a peculiar attention bestowed in the American Republic on every exertion to improve the general welfare. The field of usefulness is as extensive as the habitations of man—the task as interesting as the value of human felicity—the glory only exceeded by the imperishable benefits conferred. Such is the condition of man, that his benevolence cannot execute all the liberal purposes which a warm heart and a sound head may conceive. Hence the Sages of our Republic have adopted the policy of prescribing limits to human action, commensurate with the means of human power. Much wisdom is displayed in these social combinations, and their benefits are written in legible characters wherever the footsteps of man are found. These are now the approved mediums by which enlightened and benevolent men are operating on the great family of man. These efforts will redeem our race from the darkness of unlettered ignorance—reclaim them from the altars of cru-

city—elevate them from the debasements of superstition, to a view of the cheering radiance of revealed truth. The light reflected will disenthral man of the corruptions that mark the footsteps of tyranny, in every form, and reinstate him in his pristine dignified rank, “a little lower than the angels of Heaven.” In the consummation of this desirable state of humanity, every description of men must feel irresistible motives for co-operation. Gentlemen, it is as necessary to the welfare of society, as these high considerations are inestimable, that endeavors should be used to induce our fellow-men to abandon indifference, to put off apathy, and zealously engage in this holy cause, that of doing good, while the opportunity remains. In no sphere of useful action is the field wider, or the subjects more inexhaustible, than such engagements as have for their object the promotion of our rural pursuits. On these great interests depend all that can advance social order and general happiness—all that can elicit the natural resources of the country, and render them subservient to the prosperity and independence of the nation. It is on this prolific resource we calculate the recovery of a just proportion of foreign commerce, or the substitution of permanent arrangements for an extensive internal commerce. We solicit you to render these considerations familiar to your daily reflections. *They constitute the essential interests on which our national existence reposes. They demand universal attention, that one united conviction may be produced of their utility, and one united determination to sustain them against a world in competition.* From these efforts must proceed those lessons of wisdom, and that splendid patriotism, which shall wind their way to the national councils, give a tone and fashion to thinking, materials for debate, and a field for usefulness, that shall ensure to every honest statesman durable fame. Success in so complicated transactions, can only be expected from

the union of the wisdom, the physical power and resources of the country. Gentlemen, our lot is cast at a period when events demand all the labor and sacrifices necessary to extricate our country from perplexing embarrassments. The crisis is imperative. It will admit of no delay. The return of better seasons and plentiful crops throughout Europe, supersedes all demand for the products of this country. Resuming their former policy of excluding foreign products, we may expect to see foreign commerce more than ever embarrassed. The vast accumulation of provisions in the United States, will produce a depression. The manufactures of Europe will be increased and cheapened. Our country, just rising from recent troubles, is exposed to new perils. Our manufactures, pressed by recent derangement, and inauspicious prospects, (*without sufficient protection*) afford nothing to console the heart, or invigorate our hopes. *The policy, hitherto, of leaving every pursuit to provide for its own security and prosperity, has laid our country open to the widest and most destructive projects of European speculations.* The solid wealth of the country, and the sinews of efficient operations, are rapidly passing from us. Our navigation is circumscribed—its lucrative prospects annihilated. Year after year the history of our commercial relations demonstrate that we import a greater value than we export—that our country is becoming a debtor to other countries. Such a course of events must increase the general suffering. It threatens the loss of liberty—it induces degrading habits, and prepares us to look with indifference on the high destiny assigned by Providence to this quarter of the globe. Is it not time, then, to awaken to these dangers? Knowing them as we do, the remedy is not difficult. On *ourselves* it depends, whether we occupy the station assigned by nature. Shall we become satellites to distant orbs? or shall we become the centre

of a great system, diffusing light and life to every portion of its dependencies? Gentlemen, the occasion appeals to your feelings and to your understandings. Your example is decisive of success. You have achieved great things—the limits of more extensive usefulness are enlarged. *Teach your countrymen to rely alone, under Heaven, on their own abundant and sufficient resources.* Fasten on their minds the solemn truth, that foreign cupidity and selfishness possess no compassion, no benevolence—and never casts its measures by a single regard to the welfare of its victims.

Permit me, gentlemen, to ask your attention to our more immediate local concerns. In the improved state of Berkshire, we recognize the evidence of your industry and exertions in promoting all our useful rural pursuits. Only six years ago, the agricultural concerns of the County were stationary. Few, if any valuable improvements were attempted. Indifference and unconcern seemed to have pervaded society. In 1811, the Genius of the County shook off the leaden slumbers of our husbandmen, and the spirit of improvement commenced. Under the auspices of your Association, a career of usefulness was resumed, and diligently prosecuted. The former state of things has given way to a new condition, unfolding on us improvements, in variety and usefulness, surpassing the most sanguine expectations. Every department of rural employment demonstrates an intelligent cultivation, and more effectual good management. In the selection and rearing of domestic animals, more correct information prevails, and greater emulation is awakened. A disposition for enquiry and experiments is prevalent, and gives assurance that the conviction of tillage over pastoral husbandry, possesses incalculable benefits. The vast increase, variety and excellence in our crops, satisfy our warmest desires, and leave us nothing to wish, and noth-

ing to envy in the most favored regions of the west: Such, gentlemen, is the history of the Society for the last six years. With reference to the future, the occasion does not permit me to be particular. The nature of our soils ; their various fitness for different objects of cultivation ; improved implements of husbandry ; more careful and effectual attention to the operations of your ploughs and harrows ; the better management of your meadow grounds ; discretion in the selection and management of all domestic animals : all are directly connected with a system of prosperous husbandry, and claim your constant attention. Without an adequate solicitude and devotion to these objects, no man can become a prosperous farmer. Care has been bestowed, that every variety and degree of desirable information, on these subjects, should be collected and placed within the reach of every man. The industry and solicitude of divers distinguished men of our own country, has led them to compile, from their own observations, many valuable essays, which will prove most useful aids to all who *may wisely doubt* whether they are perfectly well informed on the subjects of their pursuits. To all such, allow me to ask their attention to the Massachusetts Agricultural Repository and Journal—to the valuable memoirs of the Philadelphia Society for promoting agriculture—to Livingston's Essay on Sheep—to Lawrence's general treatise on cattle, and other animals. And permit me to call to the recollection of the literary man, the Georgics, written in the Augustan age of the Romans, expressly to reclaim the knowledge of tillage and rural employments, which a long period of wars and suffering had prostrated. The Chief of Roman Bards was selected to execute this important enterprize. With what success—with what effect, the benevolent task was executed, the history of that period assures us. Imperial honors were decreed him ; and the homage of an hundred

thousand of his fellow-citizens was spontaneously offered him, when he entered the National Theatre. This system of science in husbandry, dressed in unrivaled beauties and embellishments, is adapted to every farmer's capacity, and to every age and country. Whether we admire the Mantuan poet for the elegant simplicity of composition, or the acuteness of discrimination and deep researches in all agricultural subjects, we venture to declare, that as a system of agricultural science and practice, it is complete.

With these aids, a reading and thinking agriculturalist cannot fail of acquiring that degree of information which shall guide him successfully in his ennobled pursuit. Much, however, of the advantages of these disquisitions, depends on the disposition for experiments, the accuracy of observation, and readiness to communicate the results to the public. The Society is the proper channel through which such communications should be made; and its officers will take care to transmit to the public, in decent form, every essay which shall be entrusted to their care.

GENTLEMEN—The history of the past year will be found replete with most interesting occurrences in relation to agriculture and manufactures. Agriculture is receiving valuable improvements, and its profits are rapidly accumulating. The recent state of the atmosphere, and the effects on vegetation, have arrested general attention, and produced many useful speculations. The theoretic and practical farmer find it necessary to vary cultivation and crops, to meet the exigences. Long established habits and practices have been questioned, and made to yield their influence to a more rational estimate of useful pursuits. This event is by some deemed a misfortune. We, however, view it favorable to improvement and human welfare.

Among the agricultural reforms which good sense and

sound calculation have adopted, is that which relates to our Indian Corn. Experience has demonstrated to every farmer, that the uncertainty and expence of this crop require that it should become a secondary object in cultivation. This reform embraces as substitutes, summer wheat, peas and potatoes, including the usual crops of rye and oats. Recent experience has shewn it to be the true interest of the agriculturalist to bestow his undivided attention to this reform. And that it may be pursued successfully, permit me to draw your attention to the general subject of corn, which embraces every species of grain. The varieties, qualities and fitness for our soils and climate, are not to be disregarded. Success and profit usually result from a discreet selection of corn seed for crops, and the careful preparation for sowing. We are constantly making important discoveries in relation to the species of corn; and our own country and others are furnishing specimens far more valuable than those in former use. We allude, particularly, to *rye*, *barley* and *oats*. In the preparation of *summer wheat*, for sowing, much experience enables us to recommend to constant practice, that the seed be selected of the best quality—that it be made clean, and carefully washed, and spread on a clean floor, and two quarts of slacked lime to the bushel, added, and raked in until the wheat becomes thoroughly covered with the lime. This process should be executed a sufficient number of days before the time of sowing, that it may become dry: in that state it may be sowed, even if the soil is not dry, and the frost not fully removed. This preparation is intended for the double purpose of *an effectual security against smut*, and *as a manure*, that gives early activity to vegetation. Many other expedients have been adopted for these purposes; but we have never understood that the object was generally obtained. The economy of potatoes, in sustaining

and fattening domestic animals, has become extremely apparent. Much attention is bestowed on the subject, and many experiments have been made in their cultivation. It is not yet decided which of the courses pursued merit a preference. We should be gratified in seeing an exhibit of the most approved tillage of potatoes in Berkshire.

The past year having been distinguished for deficiency in forage and materials for the sustenance of animals, the ingenuity of man has been prompt in providing substitutes. The invention of machines for preparing their food, on a most saving economical plan, has arrested general attention. The discovery was not peculiarly original in this country. The *invention* had obtained confidence in Great-Britain in 1812, where similar privations originated the idea of rendering forage more useful by reducing it to chaff. The *machines* for executing this improvement, are of American origin. The introduction of machines, of various structure, for reducing hay, straw and cornstocks to chaff, has formed an era in the management of our domestic animals, when confined to forage. The improvement is of inestimable value in this climate, and will prove a security against deficiencies produced by the vicissitudes of the seasons. The economy of this measure may be fairly estimated as a saving of more than one third of the expence of forage.

Permit me, gentlemen, to recommend these machines to your attention and patronage ; and may your example be decisive of their general use. Allow me, also, to recommend steam in preparing potatoes for your animals ; and that you grind or steam all grain which you intend for like use.

The advantages of arable, over pasture grounds, have, in every age and country, attracted pointed attention, and considered as the grand resource on which rapid population and multiplied means of commerce might be expected

ted. The principle and policy of the improvement, as indispensable to the general welfare, are duly appreciated by our fellow-citizens. The abandonment of the practice of occupying large portions of land for pasturage, and adopting an active course of tillage, distinguishes the good sense of our husbandmen, and gives assurance that plenty will continue to bless this happy land.

The land devoted to meadow and mowing, justly merits the solicitude of the farmer. This department of husbandry has become a subject of much consideration. The decline in the productiveness of meadows, is a theme of common complaint. Several causes have contributed to produce this deficiency. The grounds appropriated to meadow, are too extensive, and disproportioned to the size of farms and the means of sustaining them. Hence they are too generally treated as pasture ground; are not manured or stocked with seed; of course an annual depreciation ensues. Allow me to urge you to convert a due proportion of the meadow to arable land, and the residue to improve, by care and good management, until it produces the quantity which good husbandry requires. This operation will, by its immense accession of profits, demonstrate its utility.

GENTLEMEN—That our tillage may be sustained, without prejudicing its fertility, the expedients of a rotation of crops, of vegetable manures, of composts, of plaister and marles, and of stocking with suitable grasses, will occur to you, and receive the consideration which this most important part of rural management merits. Our brother farmers, who occupy high lands, exposed to frosts and chilling atmospheres, during the vernal season, are particularly interested in this advice. If they desire to preserve their farms from decline; if they desire to increase their fruitfulness, and to realize plenty and pros-

perity ; they will adopt and vigorously pursue the useful course recommended.

In reviewing progressive improvements in agricultural pursuits, we must not forget to bestow merited praise on those of our fellow-citizens who have, with unabated perseverance, continued to devote great attention and care in the choice and management of domestic animals. Much emulation exists on the subject of neat cattle. We anxiously wish to see an increased ambition and more active exertions in advancing neat stock to a greater degree of perfection. Much remains to be done in this department of the farmer. In every view, these animals form a distinguished portion of New-England wealth. The annals of agriculture already furnish remarkable instances of excellence in the dairy department. Allow me to urge on your attention a greater degree of discrimination in relation to the size, form and productiveness of cows. If the consideration of interest can stimulate to exertion, the price of superior animals of this kind cannot fail to satisfy the most extravagant desires.

The flocks of sheep, diversified by various origins and qualities, continue to whiten our hills, and to enjoy the first consideration. The unpropitious occurrences of the last year, severely affected this department of husbandry. The deficiency of forage, in connection with the miserable policy of encouraging foreign, at the expence of our own manufacturing resources, conspired to raise a most senseless clamor against sheep. The maddening delusion menaced the extinction of the race. It was at that critical moment we interposed our feeble voice to arrest the progress of this fatally impending calamity. The storm of fury has passed away, with the superlative folly and contemptible selfishness which gave it birth. In less than one short year, this most valuable of all our races of animals is restored to general confidence. The enhanced

price of animal food, renders them necessary to our comfortable subsistence. The incomparable advantages of the fleece, give them a claim to our highest regard. When viewed with reference to manufactures, and the future wealth and independence of our country, they merit our utmost protection. If there be any who doubt the policy of giving full encouragement to this branch of rural employment, let such turn their attention to the distinguished nations of Europe, and recal to mind the facts which their history records, *as the bases of all their wealth, prosperity and power.* The treasures of the fleece, and the resources of their flocks, occupy all the solicitude of sovereign power, and are cherished with an ardor not bestowed on any other pursuit.

Let this attractive view of prosperous and splendid acquisition, enkindle a noble ambition to adopt their example and spirit, with the many superior advantages and improvements which our condition furnishes. This subject, considered in connection with the prospective population of the United States, confidently assures us, that this department of husbandry will be sustained with increasing profit, and must be matured as our greatest national resource. The accomplishment of these events demands time, patience and perseverance. Great projects, commenced, at first, with difficulty, and pursued with sacrifices, have usually been characterized in maturity with abundant remuneration. In a country where the population doubles in a little more than twenty years, the demand for wool cannot be estimated. The present population will require fifty millions of pounds of wool to supply the exigences. This is at least twenty millions of pounds of wool more than can now be supplied. Here exists a growing demand on the farmer that no industry can fully supply. Let no farmer, then, doubt of a successful issue to this great and invaluable employment.

On this subject allow me to submit to your consideration two important objects for improvement. That in pursuing the subject of flocks and wool, it is the interest of this country to raise but two kinds of sheep, viz. those of *the coarse long wool*, and the *fine close wool races*. For the first purpose, the farmer should compose his flock of the largest sized sheep; disposed to produce large fleeces; inclined to fat; and easy to retain flesh. That for the second purpose, the flocks should be composed of the finest grades of the merino race, in which much regard is to be had to size and form, but more to the quality of the wool.

In pursuing the recapitulations of the past year, we recognize, with pleasure, that the proprietors of lands manifest an increasing solicitude for the preservation of forest trees and the economy of fuel, by the introduction of valuable improvements for warming houses, and the management of the culinary department. These are objects of vast utility, and essentially appertain to successful pursuits, whether they regard pleasure or profit.

The Society have particularly recommended the cultivation of the Sugar-Maple Tree, and excited to exertions by a liberal premium. Whether this most elegant tree of our forests be regarded for its beautiful form, its delightful and refreshing shade, or its valuable product, it merits our utmost attention and care in the cultivation and preservation. Its high value in the department of economy, will appear conspicuously, when the consumption of sugar in the United States is estimated at *seventy millions* of pounds, at least, annually; and that of this article, *twelve millions* of pounds, at least, are the product of the maple tree, exceeding, in value, \$1,200,000. Pursue this useful object vigorously for twelve years, and the demand for foreign sugars would be nearly superseded. The narrow policy of a certain great European power on the subject of monopolizing the sugar trade in their sit-

gar Islands, will eventually prove the first of blessings to this nation. But the rapid extension of plantations for rearing the sugar cane, among our enterprising southern fellow-citizens, and the success attending their exertions, promise, at no distant period, to place this article of common use beyond the reach of accident, or the machinations of nations who aim to erect their own prosperity and power on the depression of neighboring States.

GENTLEMEN—We have finished the remarks which we had prescribed, on the first duty of the Society, its agriculture. The occasion, the variety and extent of the objects, have only permitted me to occupy your time in general views. We rely on the spirit of research, which this meeting cannot fail to excite, to supply necessary omissions. This duty we entreat of you to perform with fidelity to yourselves and your country.

GENTLEMEN—The second object of official duty requires me to ask your attention to household manufactures, and those conducted by associations. Devotion to these great interests of the country, is a corporate duty, and constitutes a portion of our most useful and pleasing engagements. A most commendable zeal, and exemplary liberality, have characterized the measures of the Association, in the encouragement of this essential system of economy. This portion of national industry is necessarily connected with the convenience and prosperity of every family. On a due estimate of the advantages, and an industrious application of the powers of families to these objects, are we to rely for their ease and independence. The subject embraces whatever relates to the health, the morals and the useful habits of the people. They tend to ensure industry, plenty and social enjoyments, which are the brightest ornaments and the distinction of the citizens of New-England. Mechanic practices, commenced with the settlement of the country,

and have been transmitted to the present generation. Progressive science and practice distinguish the age, as most fruitful in mechanic invention and their application to manufactures. In these displays the ladies of Berkshire have presented powerful claims to public admiration and respect. They early delighted to seek “the wool and the flax, and to work willingly with their hands”—their clothing is of the fabrics of their own hands: “their husbands are known in the gates, when they sit among the elders of the land.” Never did this or any country behold a more splendid and delightful exhibition of female industry, science and ingenuity, than that which succeeded the first anniversary meeting of the Society. Though pressed with embarrassments, and subjected to severe privations, never were families better clothed, or houses rendered more comfortable. Fabrics were transformed from plain to elegant—from elegant to ornamental. Never did our fair country women appear more attractive, than when clad in the manufactures of their own hands. At no period have they preferred so strong and valuable claims to the best regards, and to all the tender charities of the other sex. Happy—thrice happy would have been our country, had their example been vigorously supported and continued. Then would our country have been saved from half its burthens. Then would each family have occupied a proud and happy pre-eminence; its possessions unencumbered, and its resources plentiful and increasing. However much speculation may deride this system of economy, and however much our dealers in foreign manufactures may teach a contempt for it, or *impose the delusion of purchasing cheaper of them*, rest assured it is the only safe course for our fellow-citizens to pursue. Adhere to this course, and avoid the purchase of every article which you can create, then is a broad foundation laid for private wealth and independence: then

will the manners and morals of the people long remain uncorrupted ; their virtues and social enjoyments unimpaired ; and the liberties and governments which distinguish this free land, and attract the admiration of a world, shall be transmitted with undiminished glory.

The general subject of manufactures has become most interesting to the United States. Universal attention is excited to institute an enquiry, *whether the exigences of the country require that they should receive general systematic support ? and whether we possess the means of giving them a successful support ?* Recurrence to the history of other countries, and their manufactures in the early stages of their progress, demonstrate that the exigences of our country at this period are as urgent as any which ever existed in Europe ; and that our means are more ample than those of any other country of similar age and population. If policy and self-security lead them to make immense efforts and sacrifices to commence and prosecute manufactures, the same causes operate more conclusively on us. That the vast increase of agricultural products, above the consumption of the country, or the prospect of sale in foreign markets, will tend to depress the price, is manifest. Such an event must be sensibly felt in the market of agricultural products. In such a dilemma, *is there an expedient for relief ? Is there any way to lessen the pressure of such a reverse ?* Yes, there is. In the language of a great and distinguished statesman of our own country, “ We must now place the manufacturer by the side of the agriculturalist.” In every country and age, these two great pursuits have become mutual aids, receiving and bestowing activity and energy ; ensuring to enterprize and industry their merited rewards. The effect of such a course of policy is certain, and cannot disappoint the benevolent wishes of an honest statesman. It must result in prosperity. It will furnish all the means of

the most extensive and active internal commerce which modern days have witnessed. In exact proportion as these truths are appreciated, so will the State become powerful and respected. It is the only basis of national security : it is the only system adapted for peace or war : *it is the best protection for agriculture*, and the palladium of independence. If we are permitted to believe these remarks correct and conclusive, we ask, with confidence, whether there is not such a concurrence of circumstances at this period, to fix this as the crisis for prosecuting effectually all the manufactures so happily begun, and to invoke for them the utmost protection and encouragement ? The resources of the country are sufficient for every purpose. The science and skill in manufactures, from the simplicity of the loom to the wonderful invention and stupendous structure of steam-vessels, are multiplied, and rapidly progressing in every section of the country. Labor-saving machinery bars the argument of expence, and more than balances the difference in the compensation for labor betwixt this and older States. Nor is this all that may be thrown into the scale. The means of sustenance, the prodigious advantages of water agency, in cheapness and security, over that of steam, is decisive of success. Beyond these natural advantages, our government has the power, as we hope it possesses the disposition, to place this invaluable interest out of jeopardy, by excluding foreign competition, and by preferences for every public use. *Let the Government extend to them but a quarter of the efficient protection and encouragement which Great-Britain, our greatest and most hostile rival, extends to her artizans and manufacturing establishments, it would be the pledge of success.*

The United States are remarkably situated to give effect to the policy of sustaining manufactures. The resources and occupations of the various parts are suited to

diffuse the advantages of one section to the wants of another section of the country. The south and west furnish immense quantities of raw materials and provisions, the efficient resources of manufactures, and of extensive domestic traffic—the north and east possess sailors, ships, artisans and establishments, which enable them to become the manufacturers, carriers and distributors of these vast products. With such ample means—with such unequalled advantages, shall we doubt and linger on the brink of ruin? Shall our countrymen longer remain insensible to their own welfare? Will you, gentlemen, continue the humble tenants of your soil, to supply distant nations with the materials for advancing their own wealth and strength, by returning on you your own products enhanced an hundred fold by their industry? Will you toil on in the degraded vassalage, slaves to habit, and dupes to the dishonorable imposition, *that manufactures do not become your condition?* The supposition is offensive to your feelings, and hostile to true American policy. It tends to degrade the lofty character of the nation—to subject the country to become a great theatre for foreign speculations. The genius of America spurns such unworthy humility. Gentlemen, THE PEOPLE should understand their real and permanent interests, and place them on a basis as firm as their own independence, and cherish them with an ardor only surpassed by their attachment to their precious liberties. To the PEOPLE, then, we address these sentiments! To the PEOPLE we commit their protection.

GENTLEMEN—In unison with these impressions, important events have elicited several decided expressions of the public sense. By these our hopes are animated, and our confidence increased. The recent establishment of a Society in the enterprising State of New-York, composed of numerous members from every employment, distinguished for science, intelligence, wealth and spirit, hav-

ing at their head that excellent man, the second Magistrate of the nation, for the express purpose of encouraging manufactures, is at once the evidence of reformation, and the pledge that this great cause shall be sustained. Massachusetts, not less distinguished for enterprize and public spirit, has caught excitement from the example, formed an Association with kindred views, and organized with a weight of talents, wealth and respectability, that ensures confidence, perseverance and success in the maturity of time. Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut and New-Hampshire, deeply interested in the success of these useful and splendid objects, have imbibed the spirit of improvement, and are co-operating vigorously in all the measures requisite to ensure the permanent independence of the nation. The excitement and the enterprize are not insulated ; but extending to other States and to other sources of improvement. The great and intelligent State of Virginia is shaking off its sloth and the torpor of inaction, and commencing various projects for advancement in its agricultural resources. North-Carolina, though heretofore retarded in its career of improvement, has commenced, with a noble zeal and energy, the great and useful measure of diffusing among its citizens the means of a vast and rapid amelioration of all its native resources. Societies have been instituted in these States to succeed these most useful purposes : and, gentlemen, it is not among the least of your honors and felicities, that your Society has every where been adopted as a model, and its aid sought and readily afforded.

The enlightened and benevolent men of our country have considered these subordinate arrangements as imperfect, and the advantages liable to be impaired for the want of a wise superintending head to conceive and to diffuse its spirit and intelligence through the nation. Authorised by the general concurrence of opinion, this Society made

an application to the Legislature of the United States, during the late session, to erect a "National Board of Agriculture." The measure is warranted by many precedents; and the immense advantages attending it in Great-Britain and France, induced the belief, that the United States, in their extended situation, would realize extensive and permanent blessings from the establishment. The proposition was favorably entertained by the late distinguished President and by Congress. A bill was reported and approved, and would have passed into a law, had time permitted. The measure will be resumed, and we entertain no doubt of its taking effect.

Such a system is calculated, in its relations, to produce an universal excitement. The communications which must be regularly made and dispersed, will transmit to every section of the nation the discoveries and improvements of every age and country. Such an Institution should be cherished with affection, and receive an undivided support.

GENTLEMEN—This year is distinguished by another important occurrence, peculiar to our own Commonwealth. The Legislature, though late, have listened to counsels frequently offered, but never entertained with the solicitude which their immense importance demanded. During many years, the Government have been solicited to "encourage private societies and public institutions, by rewards and immunities, for the promotion of agriculture and manufactures." This is a duty rendered imperious by our invaluable Constitution—yet, strange as is the fact, this duty, so necessary to the welfare of the State, so directly connected with its prosperity in the country, and its commerce and navigation abroad, has been procrastinated.

At last, when embarrassments brought perplexity, and unpropitious seasons depression—when our population

was daily wasting by emigration, and our invaluable eastern domains were unsought for, the Legislature awakened to the surrounding dangers, and made a direct effort to restore the Commonwealth to a better condition. The policy which begins to shed its influence on us, will have the effect to check emigration ; to attach our fellow-citizens to their native soil ; to inspire them to resume, more actively and intelligently, their agricultural and manufacturing employments. The effort is worthy the character of the State, reflects great honor on the projectors, and gives assurance of success. The eastern section of the Commonwealth particularly required, and is realizing the benefit of these enlightened counsels. It was a leading object in this policy, to awaken the citizens of the State to an instant and manly effort to improve their husbandry, and to revive and sustain their manufactures. To this end the Societies for the promotion of these interesting objects have been viewed with favor, and received pecuniary encouragement. The Legislature made two grants of money for these useful purposes, the most considerable of which was very properly given to the Massachusetts Agricultural Society, and the other to this Association.

This is an honorable distinction conferred on this Institution ; the best commentary on its measures, and the reputation for usefulness which the Society has acquired by its indefatigable labors and exemplary liberality. With gratitude and pleasure we hail these acts of public spirit in the Legislature, and consider them as the pledge of perseverance in more ample provisions for the promotion of these great vital interests. Surely, if the treasures of the people can be applied constitutionally to any objects, beside the mere support of government, these interests challenge the first patronage, and should be rendered permanent by solid encouragements. Without such patron-

age and encouragement, no State has been excited to make efforts, equal to its natural resources, or the extent of its wants. We, therefore, repose with confidence on the public spirit and intelligence of our rulers, that they will vigorously persevere in the course of policy commenced; that they will multiply encouragements to agricultural and manufacturing societies, according to merit, that the good effects intended may be produced. Should we be asked, *What means the State possesses to revive and sustain its rural pursuits?* its numerous manufactures? its roads, canals and interior channels of communication? We reply: The State has possession of ample resources, such as the enterprising States of New-York and Pennsylvania have constantly held in requisition for these important objects. These resources consist in banking funds, or aids drawn from them in the acts of creation—in the taxation of special objects—in a *State Lottery*, arranged as a permanent source of annual income, applicable to these destinations. We are apprised that objections are entertained against the latter provision. We, however, humbly conceive, that the course of events, furnishing so many precedents of utility, render the objections abortive and powerless. The use of this last provision has become not only expedient, but necessary to the general welfare. Policy requires its adoption, to exclude the mischiefs, attributable to the measure, which approach from abroad, and indirectly infuse the influence that has been charged on the direct legal provision. We look to the future for a more respectable estimate of the policy which should govern a great State. We confidently expect to see a liberal and cheering policy prevailing over narrow, depressing and cheerless conceptions, founded on objections long since consigned, by events, to the repository of *little objects*, whose little, transient hour of popularity has become extinct. *May we not be permitted*

to hope, that the good sense of our fellow-citizens, in full view of this Canaan of rest and glory, will select from among them men of acknowledged talents, sound heads and courageous hearts—men who calculate on no popularity that does not repose on the broad basis of the public good, and elevate them to posts of honor and of usefulness. Let us, fellow-citizens, take refuge in such counsels. Let such be the men whom the people shall delight to honor.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SOCIETY,
AND FELLOW-CITIZENS—

The history of rural pursuits is full of instruction, and the richest source of rational employment. It is the most ancient and dignified occupation of man. The hopes of the world rest on its basis. The felicity of our race ; the liberties ; the arts and sciences ; commerce and navigation, are indebted to the resources of agriculture for their existence. It is the parent of all the manly virtues, and the safe-guard of correct morals. It is this pursuit which contrasts the civilized and the savage man. It is from this source countless blessings are distributed over a world, chequered with suffering, want and wretchedness. At one period, its benefits rendered the eastern continent the abode of plenty, and the dwelling-place of every felicity. At another epoch, these grand and pleasing prospects were clouded and comfortless. The ravages of wars, and the devastations of revolutions, overwhelmed and desolated those cultivated regions. They were obscured in a long night of vandalism and wretchedness. To modern men has Providence assigned the benevolent task of redeeming from *their ruins* the knowledge and the improvements of the Augustan age, and restoring man to his legitimate enjoyments.

It was not until the year 1793, that even Great-Britain was excited to make proper efforts to improve her agricultural condition. At that eventful period, a mind, in-

bued with benevolence, and stimulated by the noble passion of rendering his country more worthy its high destiny, commenced a system of improvement which has changed the face of that country, and multiplied its population and the resources of manufactures, commerce and navigation, far exceeding all former attempts. The genius of Britain, in the majesty of her strength, inspired Sir JOHN SINCLAIR to become the organ of so many inestimable blessings. It was the mighty effort of his magnanimous mind, that boldly exposed to his countrymen the imperfections of their rural pursuits, and introduced to their practice the knowledge and experiments which distinguished the Romans above every nation of the globe. Under the auspices of this great benefactor of his country, that nation has surpassed all others in her agriculture, manufactures and commerce. His example animated numerous eminent men of various ranks, from the throne to the cottage, to achieve something for their country. It was at the instance of this distinguished man, that a "NATIONAL BOARD OF AGRICULTURE" was established, and received the protection of the Government. Adequate funds were assigned to succeed its usefulness. Its annals display its important and splendid career.

Nearly at the same period, the spirit of improvement passed the ocean and took up its abode in this happy land. It was at the era when the present government began to display its powers and its benefits, that agriculture and manufactures arrested the attention of the national councils. It was at that eventful crisis, when WASHINGTON, the first Farmer in America, and HAMILTON, the first Statesman of his country, guided by a maxim of the great FREDERICK of *Prussia*, that "the first magistrate ought to have a constant attention to agriculture, to promote plenty, to encourage industry and commerce"—ex-

posed to their country the value of its native resources, and their decided influence on the destinies of the republic. These immense interests have not ceased to occupy every succeeding administration. Clothed with such high authority, and supported by so great patronage, these most interesting subjects come addressed to your consideration, and claim your homage and support.

If we could be permitted to add a single motive to excite attention, industry and exertion in this great cause ; to furnish liberal contributions and prompt performance ; we could draw to your consideration the facts, that *agricultural improvements are the chief ground of reliance for the future safety of our liberties and the durability of the government*—and that the manufacturing capital of the United States, exceeding in amount the value of the whole American navigation, if it be suffered to languish and fail, will prejudice agriculture, and carry down with it the spirit and enterprize of the country, and must be followed by a train of events equally disgraceful to the nation and ruinous to the individual.

GENTLEMEN—It is with pride and self-satisfaction that we have been allowed by your indulgence to dwell so long on the delightful subjects to which you have been so zealously and faithfully devoted. Be not weary in well doing. Innumerable blessings will be imparted to the country by your agency. The generations that shall succeed, will revere your names, and be grateful to heaven that you were inspired to make these efforts. The return of this anniversary, from age to age, shall recal the founders and the early patrons of the Institution. The recollection of their patriotism, their labors and sacrifices, shall ensure to their memory and to the Institution an imperishable existence. The annual exertions of the Association shall continue to distribute their benefits to every portion of this happy country. Time and experience

will enhance their value. They shall remain the annual theme of the Orator; the Statesman's study and sublimest displays. And when peace and plenty, wealth and happiness, shall have saturated every region of this vast community, and placed every man in tranquillity under his "own vine and his own fig-tree," then shall some new Phœnix of a modern Mantua arise to celebrate, in splendid verse, that *golden age*. No modern Augustus shall be the object of the Poet's homage. No! The annals of the land shall never be marked by such degeneracy. But he shall inscribe his lays to the immortal *Chiefs, Sages* and *Patriots*, who have guided the destinies of this free and glorious nation. He shall recount their virtues, their toils and their sacrifices. He shall consecrate his verse to erect an imperishable monument to the **BENEFACTORS OF THE COUNTRY**. And in recounting the distinguished names that shall have given splendor to history and happiness to man, the votaries of "the God of the Harvests" shall receive a full tribute of grateful homage and of elevated renown in the Temple of Fame.

THE
ADDRESS

OF

ISAIAH WESTON, ESQ.

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

GENTLEMEN—

WHEN agriculture and domestic manufactures are our theme, we interest the feelings of all, because they are the stay and staff of human life, and the Jachin and Boaz of our National Independence. We read the sublimity of our subject in the great volume of nature; we measure our views of it in the extent of our country; and the conformation of it is the type of its grandeur: When the Hero of the Revolution “beat his sword into a ploughshare, and his spear into a pruning-hook,” the “spirit of the Redeemer” entered the temple, “drove out the buyers and sellers, and upset the tables of the money-changers.”

It is now no profanation of the sacred place, rescued from the “sacrilegious spirits of horsemanship,” to make it a place for the free and noble heart to receive the civic crown, the reward most grateful to genius and industry. A little attention to the progress of civilization will shew us, *that the manufacturer is nature’s man, and the true American*, without whom we have no food, raiment, habitation, or implement of defence.

It has been said, “that manufactures should be left to themselves;” but guided by the best interest of our country, if manufactures are the best means of ensuring our independence, we think this is not the language of wisdom or patriotism.

This Society, whose object is “the promotion of agriculture and domestic manufactures,” does not ask any thing of the people but what is for their interest to grant. While we are sacrificing for their interest, we ask them to discharge part of the debt they owe to this Society for advancing the honor, interest and happiness of Berkshire, in the promotion of their agricultural and manufacturing interests.

We ask not of the Government one half of the protection which other governments have given their manufacturing establishments to enable them to hold a competition with, and to supply the world. We ask no more of that temporising policy, which “flatters with a kiss,” and then “betrays:” we ask to be protected *in our natural and just right of manufacturing for our own country.* This policy should have been adopted immediately after the revolution; *a supplement to the Declaration of Independence, or formed a conspicuous provision in our Bill of Rights.*

The Revolution was succeeded by a flood of importations of manufactures, which exhausted the circulating medium to such a degree, that the State of New-Hampshire passed a law making boards and shingles a tender for debts—Rhode-Island made paper money a tender for contracts—Massachusetts had an insurrection. The late war is now succeeded by the same course of imprudence. Far better would it now be, if we were compelled by law to fall back upon our competent resources, than at last be brought to it by dear-bought experience. If the government persevere in temporising policy, *on the principle that we can buy our fabrics cheaper than we can make them,* we reply, that with equal safety and wisdom we can hire our laws made at St. James’ for half the money we pay for the making of them at the City of Washington.

It would be little less injurious to us ; it would no more endanger our liberties and independence for the foreigner to make our laws, than our cloths ; either policy will in a few years destroy our liberty, recolonize the States, and make us “ hewers of wood and drawers of water” to foreign task-masters.

Let the Government protect the manufacturers in supplying our own citizens ; let us live on our own resources, and enjoy peace, independence and happiness ; let this Society come forward, with renewed vigor, and emancipate, not only the genius of Berkshire, but the genius of America.

Let the agriculturalist explore the hidden treasure of his farm ; perhaps the mountains of Berkshire contain the riches of Potosi, and the vales of Berkshire the mines of Golconda !

FAIR DAUGHTERS OF AMERICA !

Assert your rights ; assume your dignity. Let not the swarthy daughters of Austria, or the copper-colored Russian, exceed you in patriotism ! Let your ornaments be American, and the work of your own fingers ; then the hearts of freemen will do you homage. Disdain the fashions of St. James and St. Cloud, and you shall be ranked with the Heroines of the Revolution, who expelled the China beverage, rendered dear by habit, from the party of pleasure.

I detain you no longer ; but proceed to the pleasing duty of proclaiming the successful competitors for premiums on this joyful anniversary.

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