
A D D R E S S

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AN

A D D R E S S

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY

FOR

PROMOTING AGRICULTURE,

AT BRIGHTON,

OCT. 14, 1835.

BY HENRY A. S. DEARBORN.

B O S T O N :

N. E. FARMER OFFICE—GEO. C. BARRETT.

1835.

SR

TUTTLE AND WEEKS, PRINTERS.

At a meeting of the Massachusetts Society for promoting Agriculture,
held at Brighton, Oct. 14, 1835,

On motion of Mr HEARD, it was —

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Gen. H. A. S. Dearborn, for the able, appropriate, and eloquent address this day delivered by him, and that he be requested to furnish a copy thereof for publication.

Voted, That Mr Heard and Mr Guild be a committee, to communicate the above vote to Gen. Dearborn.

A copy of the record.

BENJ. GUILD,
Rec. Sec. of the M. S. for P. A.

BOSTON, OCT. 16, 1835.

TO GEN. H. A. S. DEARBORN —

DEAR SIR — It is with great pleasure, we have the honor to communicate to you, the above vote, and solicit your compliance with the request of the Society.

With assurances of great esteem,

and respectfully yours,

JOHN HEARD, }
BENJ. GUILD. } *Com.*

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A D D R E S S .

GENTLEMEN OF THE SOCIETY AND FELLOW CITIZENS :

The first act of the Almighty, after "the dry land appeared," was the creation of a plant, and sowing its seed, that of savage man, in his progress of civilization ; and the earliest achievement in the industrious arts was the construction of a plough. Whether we refer to the mythology of antiquity, or the authentic records of historians, agriculture has been the harbinger of the highest state of moral and intellectual improvement, which has ever been reached in any age or climate. Those pursuits which were commenced merely for the purpose of furnishing the necessaries of life, and were long held in degraded estimation, have ultimately claimed an elevated rank among all nations, at the most glorious period of their existence. No matter how various may have been the character of once barbarous tribes, or how dissimilar their countries, habits and customs, still they have all followed the same route, in the career of refinement ; and those which have become most celebrated for exalted attainments in literature, science and the arts, have also been equally distinguished for their superior skill in the cultivation of the earth. Not only the rich valleys and plains were converted into luxuriant fields and splendid gardens, but the rugged mountain, arid desert and stagnant morass successively yielded to the labors of tillage, and magnificently harmonized with the developements of mind, the sumptuousness of wealth, and the embellishments of taste.

The vicissitudes to which nations have been subjected, form memorable eras in the history of agriculture. In the primitive ages, it was limited in the objects embraced within its attention,

and confined to the simplest operations of the husbandman. At times it has nearly ceased to exist throughout the globe; and even when carried to the highest practical point of perfection in one region, it has been unknown elsewhere, while it has again fallen into desuetude, after having been for centuries the general occupation of the people, the greatest source of private affluence, and the chief cause of national prosperity. As a science and an art, it has not only been intimately connected with the condition of man in all his social relations, but is blended with the wondrous history of his creation, and the revelations of his religion.

After the expulsion, the first wants of the progenitors of the human race were food and clothing, and the duty of providing them devolved upon their sons—the one becoming “a keeper of sheep,” and the other “a tiller of the ground.” But there was this remarkable limitation in the sentence for disobedience, as to the application of the products of their industry—those of vegetation only being allowed as food: “Thou shalt eat the herb of the field, till thou return unto the ground.” This interdiction continued during the antediluvian cycle; but after the flood, all animals were formally delivered over to the surviving patriarch, with this beneficent declaration: “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you. Even as the *green herb*, have I *now* given you *all things*.”

Notwithstanding the precedence which the cultivation of the earth necessarily claimed anterior to this momentous epoch, still, for many generations the descendants of Noah lived a pastoral life, and were nomade in their habits, although on receiving the sceptre of the earth, “he began to be a husbandman,” and one of his first acts was “to plant a vineyard.”

Advancing from the mountainous regions of Ararat, into the fertile and sunny vales of the Euphrates, the acquisition of large flocks and herds, with wide ranges of pasturage, induced a less laborious mode of subsistence than must have been indispensable under the austere conditions, which the primeval inhabitants were permitted to live. These wandering habits were continued throughout Chaldea and Canaan, down to the patriarchal ages of Isaac and Jacob, and still prevail in the East, among the Arab and Tartar shepherds of the present day. Like the offspring of Jabel, they “dwell in tents,” and seek, as of old, foun-

tains of water, in the palm groves of the plains, and the refreshing streams of shaded valleys, as temporary places of encampment.

It is a singular fact, that bread is not mentioned as an article of food, until it was offered by Abraham to the angels, who appeared to him as "he sat in the tent door, in the heat of the day;" showing it was the most rare and precious gift which could be presented. So late even as that period, the wealth of individuals consisted chiefly in flocks and herds; and the most affluent had no fixed or permanent residence, but were obliged to roam over the country, as a large extent of territory was required for the maintenance of comparatively a small population, when the cultivation of the soil was so little relied upon for support. Even when Abram and Lot removed to the fertile borders of Palestine, it was found that "the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together; for their subsistence was great," as each had vast numbers of "sheep, and oxen, and men servants, and maid servants, and camels;" so that these distinguished and long associated friends were obliged to separate from each other, — Lot choosing "all the plain of Jordan, that was well watered, even as the garden of the Lord," while "Abram removed his tent to the plain of Mamre."

Thus after a lapse of more than a thousand years, the Hebrew race appears to have made but little progress in the arts of civilization, and exhibits only the migratory herdsman, and the incipient efforts of the agriculturist. So precarious, even were their means of subsistence, that their most renowned chieftains were compelled "to go down into Egypt and dwell there, because there was a grievous famine in the land."

Egypt! now for the first time mentioned by the sacred historian. What vivid reminiscences does that name call up. Egypt! the birthplace of science, the cradle of the arts, the wonder of antiquity, the paragon of nations. A country and a people which have been subjects of the deepest interest, and the most exciting inquiry, from the time of Joseph to the travels of Herodotus, and from the visit of Diodorus, to the learned researches of Champollion. At the talismanic name of Egypt, the ponderous gates of all past time are thrown open, and how fresh, clear, and palpable does the whole history of the world unfold before us. For a long succession of ages, it was

the focus of knowledge, and at the same time the centre of that intellectual radiance, which lighted onward the nations of the earth, in their march from barbarism to refinement. There were nurtured the vast tribes of Israel, — there were they trained to fulfil the high destinies which awaited their miraculous Exodus. From thence went forth that wonderful nation, — those chosen people of God, whose present existence, whose language, faith, and identity of character, is a perpetual testimony of the prophets, and of the truth of those revelations, which constitute the religion we profess.

Egypt! who can hear that word without being excited? It seems to embrace the entirety of the past. What throngs of ideas, — what multitudes of events, rush upon the memory, — what mustering conceptions does the aroused imagination embody forth! The gorgeous courts of the Pharaohs, the conquests of Sesostris, the disastrous invasion of Cambyses, the triumphal march of Alexander, the splendid reigns of the Ptolemys, Pompey's tragic death, the victories of Cæsar, the fate of Mark Anthony, the devastations of the Saracens, the Ottoman subjugation, and the battles of Napoleon, all pass in rapid review, like the magic pageantry of an illuminated scene.

It was on the banks of the Nile, that the moral powers of man were first and most successfully developed. There were laid the deep and broad foundations of an empire, which surpassed all others in the extent of its power, in the range of commercial enterprise, in the number and grandeur of its cities, the magnitude and elegance of its palaces and triumphal monuments, — in wealth, intelligence and the arts, — in all that reflects glory on a people and gives eternal lustre to nations. There, too, was established the dominion of Agriculture; there she commenced her reign; and yet how long was that mighty kingdom wrapt in obscurity, until revealed, in the ever-interesting and instructive tale of that adventurous shepherd boy, — Israel's darling son. Then, indeed, does it burst forth with imposing magnificence, and the holy annals are filled with its importance, and the gigantic influence which it possessed over all the nations of the East. Subsequently we are very exactly instructed, by both Greek and Roman authors, as to its vast agricultural resources; and the accurate delineations on the

still existing tombs of the kings, confirm their glowing accounts of the importance in which the cultivation of the earth was held, as well as the perfection to which it had attained, from the well tilled field of the husbandman, to those superb gardens, which embellished the princely establishments in the environs of Thebes, Memphis, and Heliopolis.

By a long matured theory and practical system of culture, every foot of land was reclaimed, from the bordering deserts, which the fertilizing waters of the Nile could be made to irrigate. Thus the luxuriant valley of that majestic river, in the totality of its lengthened course, was covered with the rich and various products of rural industry, and not only furnished the whole subsistence of a numerous native population, but was rendered for centuries the garden and granary of the world.

From Egypt, civilization gradually extended along the shores of the Mediterranean, the Archipelago, and Euxine; and Phœnicia, Judea, Greece, Carthage and Rome, with their numerous colonies, became each distinguished for their progress in intellectual attainments, and whatever tends to give dignity to man, or glory to an empire. There, were cultivated in a pre-eminent manner, the useful and ornamental arts, and none claimed more attention, or were carried to greater perfection, than those connected with the tillage of the earth. In the march of their victorious armies, letters and their ever constant and inseparable companion, agriculture, were extended over northern Africa, and through Asia Minor, Spain, Gaul and Germany to the distant Isles of Britain.

In each of those nations, the cultivation of the earth was the most honorable of all pursuits. The Egyptians were so fully sensible of its importance, that its introduction was ascribed to the God of their idolatry; and the Greeks and Romans dedicated temples, and erected statues to the numerous divinities of their mythology, who presided over its various departments. As early as the time of Homer, Hesiod, and subsequently Xenophon, with many of his eminent countrymen, wrote on rural affairs. The Carthagenians, in the palmy days of their prosperity and glory, considered the occupation of a husbandman, not less meritorious than the profession of arms, exalted as was the estimation in which that was held, by the warlike country-

men of Hamilcar and Hannibal. They were so much more distinguished than any other contemporaneous nation, in the science and practical operations of tillage, that a voluminous work by Mago, one of their most celebrated generals, was so highly appreciated, by their haughty and implacable enemies, that it was translated, for the benefit of the people, by an express decree of the Roman Senate.

As to the value placed on Agriculture by the Romans, we have the fullest evidence. It was encouraged by liberal donations of land, elevated by the sanctions of religion, and rendered not merely a meritorious pursuit, but an object of the first consideration, by the most wealthy and illustrious citizens. In their conquests, if not always more magnanimous than most other nations, they never lost sight of the grand object for which their invasions were projected, — the augmentation of the resources, and prospective aggrandizement of the empire. Instead, therefore, of desolating, they endeavored to improve the countries which they subdued, and were solicitous to civilize the inhabitants by the introduction of letters, with the useful and ornamental arts. Cato derived as much honor from his writings on husbandry, as by his eloquence in the Senate house, his victories in the field, or his lofty patriotism at Utica. Cincinnatus was twice called from his plough, to the dignified offices of Consul and Dictator. Virgil acquired as much fame for his poems on rural economy, as by his epic on the adventures of the Ilian prince. Pliny, the Linnæus of antiquity, was as ambitious to obtain the honors which were lavishly bestowed on the cultivators of the soil, as the distinction of pro-consul in Spain. Varro, the intimate friend of Cicero, and who had the reputation of being one of the greatest philosophers, and the most learned man of Rome, has his name perpetuated by a treatise on rustic affairs, being one only of his five hundred writings which have come down to us. Columella was the agricultural Cyclopediast of the Claudian age, and his great work, in which he treats on all the branches of agriculture and gardening, is still extant.

Simultaneous with the advancement of the arts of civilization in the West, — if not at an earlier period, — there was a like movement in the East, by which they were extended over Palestine, Persia, Media, and the populous valleys of the Indus and

Ganges, and probably to the ocean bounds of China; and considerable portions of that immense region had become eminent for improvements in tillage, anterior to the expedition of the Macedonian conqueror.

But all those once powerful kingdoms of antiquity were destined to experience a tremendous reverse of fortune. By slow advances, each had reached the loftiest point of national grandeur, from whence their decadence was rapid and irremediable. Neither wisdom, numbers, wealth or valor could arrest their disastrous fate; and they were successively, either subjugated or impoverished by some ambitious chieftain of a rival power, or overwhelmed by those tribes of barbarians, which in all ages have come down like a furious tempest from the northern wilds of Asia and Europe, spreading fire, slaughter and devastation in their terrific course. The whole human race was thus thrown back into such a degraded condition, that the moral firmament was obscured like a perpetual night, by the dark and lurid clouds of ignorance, superstition and wretchedness. Entire nations were so thoroughly exterminated, or so blended in the population of their savage conquerors, as to have lost their distinctiveness of character. Egyptians and Carthaginians have disappeared from the earth, leaving no traces of their existence, but in the stupendous ruins of their cities, pyramids, temples, aqueducts and tombs; and even the inscriptions on those of the former are now unintelligible, while not a single book, or page of the language — no, not so much as the alphabet of the other has survived — so complete has been the work of destruction. Had it not been for the sacred volume of the Jews, and a few of the Greek and Roman authors, which have reached us, the history of the world, from the creation, to the revival of letters, would have been as unknown as that of the American continent, before the voyage of Columbus. By his transcendent genius, a way was opened over the ocean to this western hemisphere, and by the aid of those precious repositories of learning, an arch has been thrown across that immense gulf of oblivion, which separated the far distant past from the present.

Amidst the universal gloom, which so long enveloped the earth, a few but widely separated beacon-lights faintly glimmered in the distant horizon. They arose in the midst of the wide extend-

ed encampments of the Arab, the Saracen and the Moor, where yet glowed the unextinguished embers of that general conflagration, in which was consumed the accumulated wisdom of thirty centuries. There it was, that the lamps of literature, science and the arts were reilluminated. At Bagdad and Ispahan, Basora and Cairo, Fez and Cordova, were again reared the temples, and thither thronged the devotees of intellect. It was there the revival of learning commenced and gradually spreading over Southern Europe, the progress was onward, until it reached

" That bleak coast, which
 Hears the German ocean roar,
 Whence full-bloom'd, strong,
 And yellow hair'd, the blue ey'd Saxon came,

then with him, and freedom, and Christianity, ultimately crossed the broad Atlantic, and in conformity to prophetic annunciation westward still, they keep their glorious course.

During the ages of bloodshed, desolation, anarchy and barbarism, which succeeded the overthrow of the Roman Empire, agriculture was almost wholly abandoned, and pasturage was substituted for tillage. The earliest efforts for its restoration was made by the Moors in Spain, and was there carried to great perfection, during the period of their supremacy in that kingdom. Remains of numerous hydraulic structures, which were erected for the purposes of artificial irrigation, so indispensable in that sultry climate, are to be seen in several parts of the country, which evince the intelligence and enterprise of the Moorish inhabitants. Some of the most learned men of that extraordinary race also wrote able works on husbandry, which are still preserved in the royal libraries of Madrid: but after the impolitic expulsion of that most enlightened and industrious portion of the population, the cultivation of the earth rapidly declined, and has never since regained its former consequence.

The Italian States early adopted the agricultural improvements which had been introduced into Sicily by its Saracenic conquerors. The Normans and Flemings next became conspicuous for their advancement in husbandry; and after the invasion of Great Britain by the ambitious sovereign of the former, numerous emigrants from both of those nations, soon followed, who

gave such a powerful impulse to rural industry, that it extended with various success, over the whole island, where it has finally reached a higher state of perfection, in all its applications, than in any other country.

Stimulated by the favorable results, which had been produced in England, most of the continental nations were induced to attempt like ameliorations, in their antiquated and very imperfect modes of cultivation. Scientific experiments and practical illustrations in the renovated art of tillage were made, and beneficial changes gradually effected, so far as the character of the soil, the products best adapted to their various climates, and the peculiar demands of other branches of industry, might dictate or require. This spirit of improvement has continually extended, with varying energy and advantage, but most successfully in portions of France, Holland, Belgium, Germany and the valley of the Po.

Agricultural institutions were very generally established, for the concentration and diffusion of information in all the departments of rural economy, either by the voluntary association of the affluent, industrious and emulous portions of the community, or in conformity to express laws and royal edicts. In aid of these powerful auxiliaries, botanical and horticultural societies, and experimental farms and gardens were rapidly founded from London to Naples, and from Paris to Moscow.

The proceedings of these numerous treasuries of knowledge, and seminaries of mutual instruction, being published in the form of reports, or periodical journals, whatever useful discovery is made or interesting fact announced in any part of the large region included within the circle of their influence, soon becomes known in all the others. In addition to all these very effective means for the dissemination of intelligence, funds have been provided by the contributions of the members of the several corporations, the generous bequests of individuals, and the munificence of government, for the encouragement of tillage by the distribution of rewards and premiums.

From England, our ancestors brought the theory and practice of husbandry, which there prevailed at the period of their adventurous expatriation; but the progress of improvement here, has not kept pace with that of the parent country. Latterly how-

ever, honorable and very successful exertions have been made to awaken a more zealous spirit, diffuse greater information and create a better taste in relation to a subject which is of such vital consequence to the United States, where at least eight tenths of the inhabitants are actually engaged in agricultural pursuits, and who, besides supplying the entire alimentary subsistence of the whole population, a large portion of the clothing and other articles of comfort and luxury, furnish more than three quarters of the native products of exportation, amounting to over fifty millions of dollars.

There are two chief modes, in which improvements are effected in agriculture : one, the introduction of new or valuable species, or varieties of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and the other a more perfect theory in the science and a better application of labor to the art in all their diversified compartments. The latter includes the requisite implements, as well as the manner in which every kind of cultivation is to be conducted, and the great object of both is to obtain the largest amount of products, which the earth is capable of being made to yield, by the most approved management, and at the lowest possible expense.

So simple and common are these positions, so self-evident and familiar are they, that it may seem irrelevant as the utterance of truisms to repeat them. They were early proclaimed by Bacon, Tull and Evelyn, and have been emphatically illustrated by Coke, Young, Bakewell and Sinclair—names which will ever be illustrious in the annals of agriculture. Yet how little have they been regarded here, and how few among all those, who have spent their lives in cultivating the earth, can say, that they have attempted the fulfilment of the requisitions implied, although so indispensable to their own advancement. Routine has been more influential than precept, and custom has domineered over truth and reason. We have been quiescent pupils in the observance of what has been, rather than anxious inquirers of what should and can be done. The mind has been slavishly restrained by prejudice, erroneous example, and that dread of change, which has been so universal and so fatal to the improvement, rights, dignity and happiness of man. Something more than, is required, than a mere knowledge of principles, to insure their salutary influence, and of duty, that it be well performed. There

must be independence of thought, and freedom of action, with an energy of disposition which constantly aims at improvement and is never satisfied until it is reached. And where are we to look for the greatest display of these qualifications? where are they most certainly induced? Is it not in those climates which are embraced between the southern and northern extremes of the temperate zones, and in those localities too, where the soil is not naturally the most remarkable for its fertility, or the physical conformation of its area, the most favorable to the efforts of tillage; for there the greatest intelligence, genius, skill and industry are required to produce the desired effects; and it is most common, that in countries where these difficulties are to be encountered, the best farmers are to be found, and the most instructive, as well as valuable results are obtained. This arises from the constant demand of expedients, to surmount the numerous obstacles to complete success, which the asperities of the soil, the rigor of the climate and the labor of fertilization present; as impediments in this, as in all other pursuits, have a direct tendency to challenge enterprise and create the means for overcoming them. Activity is thereby given to talents, ingenuity is roused and that determination of character formed, which neither admits of impossibilities, yields to adverse circumstances, or halts in its course, until the object sought is attained.

But there never has been anything great achieved where there were not difficulties to be encountered. It is thus that the noblest faculties of the mind have been wrought up to the exercise of their highest powers, and man to the display of his immeasurable resources. Every conception of an important truth is accompanied by the cheering belief of witnessing its verification; and the triumph over obstructions in its development is as exhilarating to the philosopher and artist, as victory to the warrior. It matters not what is the exaggerated magnitude or apparent insignificance of the inquiry, it cannot be prosecuted with any prospect of success, unless there is an ardent disposition, accompanied by that indomitable spirit of perseverance, which puts at defiance all hazards and all odds. Whether the object of accomplishment or investigation be the construction of a Roman aqueduct or the stringing of a lute, the geology of the globe or the anatomy of a beetle, the discovery of a new

world or a new plant, there must be brought into vigorous action the highest powers of intellect and the most zealous determination of purpose. There is nothing valuable to man, or honorable to nations — not an addition has been made to the fund of intelligence — not a step taken in the progress of civilization, which has not been the result of intense thought and infinite research. It is one of the conditions of our existence — the fiat of Omnipotence — that to attain excellence in even the humblest vocation, there must be untiring industry, sanguine hopes, and great labor. What, indeed, were we but for that unquenchable thirst of knowledge which no acquisitions can abate — that restless demand for action, which is but increased by fruition, and that aspiring reach of imagination, which finding no terrestrial bounds, ranges from the farthest constellation in the zodiac to the realms beyond the skies — to an existence as illimitable as eternity, and an elevation transcendent as the archangels. Were we not thus created, and so endowed with an intuitive credence in the immortality of the soul, the human race must have remained in a state of the most abject ignorance and degraded barbarism. It is the inspiration of divinity itself which animates and urges us on, in the interminable career of intellectual attainments and moral grandeur.

What is the biography of those mighty men who have illumined the past and the present, and thrown forward into the obscurity of the future the effulgence of their glory? Is it not the record of genius struggling with misfortune, and battling with prejudice and ignorance, to evolve some momentous fact, establish some fundamental principle in morals, proclaim some invaluable discovery in science, or perfect some brilliant experiment in art? The very temerity of their enterprise, the cold indifference of anticipated patronage, the desponding thralldom of penury, and that unwearied perseverance which knows not despair, are the alternate subjects of our praise and commiseration. Our admiration is constantly excited by that boldness of mind and that fearlessness of heart, which are neither smitten down by the iron mace of arbitrary power, the withering influence of fanatical persecution, or the discouragements of unrequited merit; that, “unaided, unfriended and alone,” they rose

superior to the storms of fortune, and became the ornaments of their age — the benefactors of mankind. It is from these causes that we honor the names, and dwell with such profound interest upon the characters, of Galileo and Tasso, Hampden and Milton, Watt and Arkwright, Rittenhouse and Fulton.

Let not the hardy sons of New England, then, doubt of success in the application of efficient means to ameliorate the condition of their tillage, either from the rudeness of their climate, or the less favorable character of their soil, compared with the fertile savannahs of the South and the beautiful prairies of the West. They have shown what the Saxon blood can achieve, in the battle-field and on the deep, in science and in the arts, in commercial adventure and mechanical skill, and they will not incur the stigma of degeneracy, by failing to rival their own lineage of another hemisphere, in that pursuit where they have attained such marked distinction.

It should be recollected, that it is not the geographical position or sterility of our inheritance, which have thrown us in the rear of other nations; for that vast and favored region which lies under more propitious skies, in the other extremity of the Union, is not in advance of the North.

There are many causes which have retarded agricultural improvements throughout the United States, other than the natural difficulties which are to be encountered. None, however, have operated more unfavorably, than the indifference which has too generally prevailed, in relation to the subject, but more especially among those who, from their ample means, distinguished attainments, elevation of character and the time which they might devote to experimental inquiry, could render such essential service, both by their practical operations and the powerful influence of their example. There are, it is true, illustrious exceptions to this lamentable and inexcusable neglect, of the noblest pursuit in which man can be engaged, when taken in the widest scope of its intellectual, moral and physical influence.

Strenuous and commendable exertions have been made in many of the States, to induce a better disposition. This society bears upon its roll of members, the names of individuals, whose long and faithful public services cannot be too highly appre-

ciated, whose patriotic ardor has experienced no retiring ebb, and whose munificent contributions, lessons of instruction and practical labors will be enduring monuments of their fame. Other portions of the republic can boast of like benefactors. Still there is much to be done; and if there is an earnest and generous co-operation, much can be accomplished by individual enterprise, numerous and active associations, and governmental encouragement. We have already experienced, in this State, the beneficial consequences of all these influences. It is to be traced in our gardens, orchards and fields — in our flocks and herds, our farm-houses and villages, from the bleak shores of the ocean, to the luxuriant banks of the Housatonic.

Within a few years the occupation of a farmer has been elevated in general estimation; a residence in the country has become more desirable among those who have accumulated fortunes in other pursuits, and a taste for useful and ornamental culture evinced, which are full of promise for the future. But to rival other nations, there must be a more thorough change effected in public opinion. Here, unfortunately and inexplicably, the fashion has been in favor of congregating in large towns and cities, as well among such as have been reared or acquired fortunes there, as those who were born and reached affluence in the interior; while in England the reverse has been the universal taste. There the nobleman and commoner, the statesman, orator and poet, the generals of armies and the admirals of fleets, the merchant and manufacturer, and men of fortune and intelligence in every rank and station, consider the country not merely the most desirable, but the only proper residence of a gentleman. It is in fact an indispensable prerequisite to the assumption of that character, and obtaining the position in society which it commands, while the towns and cities are deemed but as temporary abodes, or as the places where means may be acquired by such as do not inherit an estate, for indulging, at some future period, in the comforts, honors and luxuries of a country life. It is to this enlightened sentiment that may be traced all that there is of freedom in that flourishing empire. It was in consequence of this condition of society, that civil liberty was there so early established, and has been so gloriously maintained, while it has either never been enjoyed, or been speedily cloven down, in all

the other portions of the eastern continent. It was the bold and independent land-holders, who compelled the tyrant John to sign the great Charter of England; and they have stood ever since, in the midst of the nation, a colossal political Janus — opposing with stern defiance the attempted encroachments of the monarch on the one side, and restraining the licentiousness of the stormy multitude on the other — obliging each to respect the Constitution and the laws. The proprietors of the soil have ever prided themselves in participating in the useful avocations, comforts, embellishments and amusements of a country life. There they expend their vast incomes in a manner which gives the greatest encouragement to rural industry. The experiments which they have made in field cultivation, for improving the breeds of domestic animals, extending the bounds of horticulture and ornamental planting — their liberal expenditures in the erection of private and public edifices, in the construction of roads and canals, and their generous endeavors to alleviate the condition, elevate the character and promote the prosperity and happiness of all classes, in their multifarious vocations, and to advance the public weal, have had a powerful tendency to excite emulation, and give an activity, determination and elevation of character to the entire population, unprecedented in the annals of the world. There we behold the indispensable and useful, studiously combined with the ornamental, from the barronial establishment, to the thatched-roof cottage. A taste universally prevails for giving either a more magnificent, picturesque, beautiful or neat appearance to every estate, while the necessary and profitable labors receive the most careful consideration and exact attention. The refinements of the arts are blended with all the possible comforts of each habitation, whether it rises, in antiquated battlements, from the heights of a princely domain, or is the dearly cherished home of him, who is but the tenant out of a rood of land.

What more interesting inquiry can there be presented to the statesman, than the intimate connexion which exists, between the political and agricultural histories of England. Are they not striking illustrations of the reciprocal influence of each, upon the character and condition of the people, in their domestic and national relations. We have only to look into the annals of the past and examine the present condition of Great Britain, Spain

and France, for a full solution of the problem, how and why it is, that the two latter are so far in the rear of the former, in their institutions of government, and the general aspect of the country.

In Spain, the rich proprietors of the soil were compelled to live at Madrid, from an apprehension of the sovereign, that their residence in the midst of their numerous tenants would be dangerous to his power; and the disastrous consequences have been despotism, an ignorant and impoverished population, and an uncultivated kingdom. In France, especially after the accession of Henry IV. to the throne, if the nobles were not required to abandon their estates to the management of the peasantry, they were induced to concentrate round the court, from the splendor with which it was maintained, the prestiges which deluded the ambitious, the stations which were conferred on many of the most powerful, and the hope of royal favor in all. If the country was not as badly cultivated, as that beyond the Pyrennees, the people were nearly as impoverished and degraded in character.

How often in our day, have we seen those nations convulsed by revolution, when the only measure required for producing a change of government, or of dynasty, was the unfurling a new banner, on the Palaco Real, or the Thuilleries. Paris and Madrid, like Rome, when in the plenitude of its glory, have each become the state, of their respective kingdoms, insolently uniting the prerogatives of the senate and the forum, and whoever can wield the physical and moral power of either, may dictate law to all the other provinces, as to so many distant colonies.

How different is the situation of Great Britain. The tower may be stormed, the palace of St James razed to the ground and London controlled by a mob, the myrmidons of a tyrant, the army of an usurper, or the legions of invasion,—still England would no more be conquered, or its government subverted, than by the destruction of Dover castle or one of her ships of the line. Her mighty power is in the owners and cultivators of the soil, scattered broad cast, over the whole surface of the island, where every yeoman is a champion of liberty, and every house a fortress. There the whole people must be consulted [for

change or reformation, and every gallant Briton must be cut down in battle, or subdued by overwhelming numbers, from Cornwall to Caithness, before the government can be abrogated, or the nation yielded up to foreign conquest.

Who will ask the cause of this intense attachment to their homes and firesides, — of this lofty and ardent patriotism, when there is not an acre of land in England, that has not been rendered famous in history, or dear to the inhabitants by some remarkable event, some deed of valor, some monument of art, or some development of mind. Every hill-top and vale, every forest, grove and glade, — the ocean which bathes its rock bound shores, — each island, river and stream, each sequestered dell and shaded fountain, — the daily life and evening pastimes, from prattling childhood to hoary age, — all, all are embalmed in the traditions of England. Her literature is redolent of that captivating scenery, which nature and art have rendered so admirable; and the glorious feats of war, the splendid achievements of genius, and taste in peace, — with the names of her illustrious men, have been immortalized by her gifted bards, the undying echoes of whose thousand harps are yet heard in every passing breeze, and make vocal, even the desert stillness of the star-lit night. These have rendered the whole island precious in the sight and memory of Englishmen. To them it is indeed, a holy land, and ere it can become the prize of conquest, like Jerusalem, it must first be made desolate.

Knowing what has been the salutary influence, in one nation, of comingling wealth, intelligence and industry over the entire surface of a country, should we not hasten to follow the example. It is an axiom in morals as well as physics, that well authenticated facts constitute the elements of those theories, by which general truths are evolved and principles established. In the history of the past then, we should behold mirrored the future; and if it is not reflected with that distinctness of outline and accuracy of detail, by which every object can be readily recognized, — still, the shadowings forth are so palpable to the philosophic eye, that they are confidently proclaimed as approaching realities; and thus, the revelations of exalted intelligence assume the imposing character of prophecy, when in truth

they are but the inductions of reason, from the accumulated facts of ages.

The agricultural resources of Massachusetts are not inferior to those of Great Britain. The soil is naturally as fertile and capable of being rendered as productive. All the cereal grains, vegetables and fruits there raised can be here cultivated, and the latter more perfectly. We have in addition maize, one of the most important, if not the greatest staple of New England, and silk is being successfully introduced,—a product, which is destined to be of as much consequence to the proprietors of land, as that of their flocks, and may rival the vast cotton crop of the south in value. Our domestic animals if not now generally equal, are rapidly becoming so. The facilities of inter-communication, by good roads, canals and rail-ways are increasing in a manner, which promise especial benefit to the farmers of the interior. Their industry will be encouraged, their prosperity advanced, and a more cheering aspect be given to large portions of territory, which have been unable to compete with more favored localities, from the distance of a market and the enormous expense of transportation. But those terrestrial comets, which are traversing every star in our political system, and attract the gaze of the astonished world, as much as that, which now blazes in the heavens, will have an influence on national prosperity more beneficial, than that of the other, was ever deemed baneful. By their potent agency distance has become a mere technical term of geographical illustration, and time has been substituted as the only true measure of the space, by which places are separated, as well as that which divides events. It is of no moment what are the ranges of mountains, extensive plains, vast rivers and capacious lakes, which lie between the emporium of demand and the region of supply,—the steamboat and rail-roads have given them a juxtaposition of existence.

The tide of emigration will be diminished, in proportion as the demand for labor is increased; and that it must be inevitable, when every water-fall becomes the site of a Lowell and a Dover, which it requires no gift of prescience to announce, will be realized at no very distant period. Commerce, navigation, manufactures and the mechanical arts have received an impulse,

throughout the north, which cannot fail to be experienced in every department of rural economy. Instead, therefore of seeking employment in distant regions, the sons and daughters of New England will rejoice to dwell among the green hills of their own native land, where repose the hallowed ashes of their adventurous ancestors. If it should be urged that our population is even now too dense for the successful enterprise of the rising generation, it may be proper to inquire what number of inhabitants are maintained, on the soil, in other and not more favored portions of the globe.

In England, where there is still so much land unsubdued by cultivation there are over two hundred and seventy persons to the square mile, which would give to Massachusetts more than two millions of inhabitants, instead of the six hundred thousand which it now contains.

By a census of the Chinese empire taken in 1813, the population, all of whom are subsisted upon the products of their own soil, amounted to 370,000,000; but enormous as it seems, the number to the square mile is not so great as in England. There are, however, large provinces whose inhabitants are so numerous that they average four, five and six hundred to the mile; and there is one, whose area is nearly five times that of this state, which has seven hundred to the square mile, which would give us 5,460,000. But as still more conclusive evidence of how many persons can be supported from the culture of the soil alone, there is an island on the eastern coast of China, which contains only one thousand square miles, being less than a seventh part of this State, which has a population of 400,000, or 400 to a square mile. There is not a town upon it, the inhabitants living in hamlets and single houses scattered all over the surface, and the only articles cultivated are rice, cotton, millet, and culinary vegetables.

The difference between the number of inhabitants to the square mile, in the United States and that of China is still more striking, as in the former there are only six while in the latter there are 268. If, therefore, our whole country should be as thickly populated the census would be 589,600,000, and if the increase should continue in the ratio which it has done, during the last forty years, it would require only 125 for this vast accu-

mulation, a period, but little exceeding twice that of our brief existence, as an independent nation.

If our climate is as congenial, our soil as teeming, and our skies more bright, why is it that a country life is not so fervently desired,—so much the theme of universal disquisition, and so much the object of unqualified admiration, as in other and far less propitious lands? Where under the broad heavens, have been more lavishly bestowed, whatever man can ask, of a beneficent Providence, to supply his wants, administer to his comforts and insure his felicity?

The topographical features of Massachusetts, are more diversified, more interesting, and can be more speedily and perfectly embellished by cultivation, than even the northern Hesperides. The state is traversed in all directions, either by majestic rivers or copious streams. Lofty mountains, from whose rugged flanks gush forth perennial springs, and beautiful hills, clothed with forests to their very summits, give grandeur to the scenery; picturesque vallies everywhere invite attention, and promise as smiling and happy aspects, as those whose loveliness is preserved in Grecian song; innumerable lakes, spangled with verdant islets, and floral stars, are scattered over the whole area of our territory. The sea coast abounds in capacious bays, broad estuaries, commanding promontories, and beetling cliffs; and in addition to our catalogue of superb forest trees, there is a profusion of shrubs, and wild flowers, which are so unrivalled in variety and splendor, that they constitute some of the most choice collections in the conservatories, sumptuous gardens and rural plantations of Europe.

The common idea associated with a residence in the country, is that of profit,—that an income should be realized from all expenditures there made. But why, it may be asked, make this distinction so unfavorable in its effects, to the prosperity and improvement of the country? Are the magnificent edifices, costly furniture, and luxurious indulgences in cities and large towns, sources of income? Are they not, rather, intended to administer to the comfort and gratify the taste of the proprietors, without any regard to the cost, or any expectation of revenue? Why then should it be urged, that such investments should yield an income, because the location is on the borders of a river or

stream, in the midst of a forest, or embowered in some secluded vale? The answer is difficult. Yet, on the other hand, it can be shown that a less extravagant expenditure in the country, will produce infinitely more interesting and imposing results. It is not in buildings that money should be expended. The more simple and neat their structure, the better will they comport with our laws for the distribution of property, the genius of our government, and the habits of the people. Here architectural taste should be guided by economy. It is in the improvement of the grounds which surround the establishment, that is so much required, to render the country desirable as a place of residence. Here it is that wealth and intelligence and taste can do so much, — can produce such striking effects, and contribute more to the enjoyment of life, than it is possible to accomplish in the midst of a city, even by the lavish expenditures of a Semiramis.

Is not a garden, extensive grounds, umbrageous walks, verdant lawns, and sparkling cascades, quite as interesting objects, as the massive piles of brick and stone, which are wedged in continuous ranges, on the thronged and dusty avenues of a metropolis. Is not the distant landscape, whether radiant in the rich and various tints of vernal luxuriance, or clad in the gorgeous draperies of autumn, — the melodious concert of the birds, — the sunset splendors of the western sky, — the congenial serenity of summer's bland and dewy eve, —

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The cock's shrill clarion and the echoing horn,

quite as elevating to the mind, soothing to the soul, and congenial to the heart; as sublime and inspiring as "the stir of the great Babel," and the deafening surge of that living deep, which resounds through all her gates?

Refinements of all kinds have a powerful influence in elevating the character of mankind, by enlarging the sphere of observation, curbing the out breakings of the passions, fostering private virtue, and improving the public morals; and to prescribe the line of demarcation, within which taste shall be restrained, is as preposterous as to establish the limits of intellectual attainments. Every amoliation which has been made

from the rudest, wildest, and most savage condition of the human race, may, with as much propriety be denounced as superfluous and extravagant. It is the decree of omnipotence, that nations shall advance or retrograde, — that man shall rise or fall, from every point of time in his existence. But there is a consideration by which we must be actuated, in whatever we undertake, far above the attainment of the object sought. The means to be employed, the labor bestowed, the excitement produced, is of infinitely greater consequence than the advantage of actual achievement. The latter is temporary, and often of little moment, while the former are of universal benefit and abiding influence. There are results of mightier import than those of mere acquisition, which are to be sought in the excitement, which is given to the most dignified attributes of the mind and the heart, and in those manifestations of genius, talent and enterprise, which the study, pursuit and exertion unfold. Education, instead of being confined in its scope and duration, is thus made co-extensive with individual existence, and the exalted characters which are formed in this rigorous school of intellectual discipline, are for all nations and all time. There is a moral grandeur in their lives, which render them perpetual examples for emulous imitation, and the salutary effect on the human race, is as universal as the admiration in which their distinguished benefactions are held. Man can only estimate his own natural resources, by experiment. We know not their extent or efficiency, until placed in those trying exigencies, those self-relying positions, where they become indispensable for immediate extrication, or to give assurance of ultimate success. It is from repeated trials of strength, that the eagle launches forth upon the tempest, from the lofty eyry of the mountain cliff, with the fullest confidence in the sustaining power of its wing, in the longest, highest and most daring flight.

If the principles which have been assumed are founded in truth, and the facts which have been alleged for their illustration are deserving of credit, why should there not be changes produced here, in relation to a subject, in which every citizen is so deeply interested, corresponding with those which have appeared in other nations ?

May we not, then, confidently hope, that at no very distant

period, the taste which has hitherto so unfortunately prevailed, will be reversed, and the country become the admired residence of those, who are most able to improve its natural features, by the assistance of the arts. There it is, that virtue and patriotism, benevolence and hospitality, philosophy and religion, innocence and poetry have most delighted to dwell. It was on the summits of mountains, or in the awe-inspiring shadows of the deep forest, that the ancient divinities were worshipped; and how much more appropriately are they the true temples of the living God; for where can man more fitly pour out his aspirations and present the offerings of gratitude and praise, than when standing under the blue vault of the firmament, amidst the sublime and glorious works of creation.





