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SECOND

ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

United States Agricultural Society.

FEBRUARY 22, 1854.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

WASHINGTON:

PRINTED FOR THE USE OF MEMBERS.

1854.

Franklin Print. House, 210 Washington St. Boston.

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SOCIETY:

THE occasion which has convened us is the Second Anniversary of the UNITED STATES AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

Our meeting occurs this year on a day ever memorable in America, as commemorative of the birth of the immortal Washington, the friend of all that ennobles and dignifies humanity. His military valor, his political wisdom, his patriotism and benevolence were equalled only by his skill as a farmer, and by his warm and enduring attachment to that worthy cause which our Association seeks to promote.

In his first message to Congress, and in his last, he recommended Agriculture to the consideration and patronage of government, an object which he considered most important to the welfare of his country and of mankind, and to which he returned from the camp and the forum, after a life rendered illustrious by distinguished public service in the cause of freedom and of humanity.

I congratulate you, on the appreciation, by the men of this generation, of the words of wisdom which fell from his lips on this subject. The seed which he sowed has been long buried; but at length it has sprung up, and gives promise of a bountiful harvest. The progress of Agriculture is remarkably evinced in our period by improved arts of cultivation,— by discoveries in the natural sciences on which those arts depend — by the multiplication of agricultural societies and periodicals — by the patronage extended to these — by the general diffusion of knowledge — by labour-saving implements of husbandry — by the increase of our agricultural products,

in variety, quality and amount, — by the extended demand for our crops, — and by the facilities for conveying the same from the field of production to the great agricultural marts of the world. These have long since relieved our fears of scarcity. True, our population is increasing beyond a parallel in history ; hundreds of thousands from the old world are hastening to the new. Let them come ! We bid them welcome ; there is land enough for them and for us ! Here, they become not mere consumers, but producers ; and increase the amount of our products faster than they do the aggregate of our consumption ; and therefore rather brighten than darken the prospect of Agriculture in this great granary of the world. They are constantly settling our new territories, developing the vast natural resources of the country, enriching the public domain, and adding to our national wealth and power. This cheering process will go on, in proportion as the tyranny of trans-atlantic countries becomes more oppressive, and the freedom of our beloved land more attractive. They cannot come so fast as to keep up with American enterprise, or with the rapid extension of our boundaries, nor so fast as materially to diminish the foreign demand for our agricultural products.. Tides of immigration are rising on our Atlantic, and also on our Pacific coasts. Let them rise, — till flowing through the fastnesses of our mountains they shall meet and fill up our great valleys with an active, intelligent and prosperous yeomanry. But on these themes, it is not my purpose to dwell, nor to address you at this time upon the science or art of Agriculture, nor on the immense influence which is yet to be exerted on our own country and the world by the application of science to this art. My official relation rather demands such suggestions pertaining to our organization and progress, as the experience of the past year, and the present condition of our Society seem to require.

PROGRESS.

When we consider how long kindred and richly endowed institutions, in other countries, existed before their influence was powerfully felt in their respective territories, for the pro-

motion of Agriculture, we need not be surprised if our Association, in the first year of its existence, and with small pecuniary means, has not made its full impression on the public mind.

Like every other enterprise, it must pass through its infancy before it can attain to manhood ; yet it has vital energy and an important mission to accomplish ; it has grown and began to act for itself in a manner which gives promise of future and extensive usefulness. Its general objects have been defined ; but its specific, await a fuller development.

Four numbers of its Journal have been issued,—the first National Exhibition has been held—its number of members and funds have been increased—its agents have commenced their action under favorable auspices—its diploma has been designed ; and all these will be spoken of in their proper place.

THE JOURNAL.

In behalf of the Executive Committee, I have the pleasure to announce that four numbers of the Society's Journal have now been published, and constitute the first volume of its Transactions, thus cancelling our obligations to the annual members for their first year's subscription.

These, it is believed, will be found of permanent value, as they contain original and other articles of intrinsic merit ; and especially as it includes the history of the origin and progress of the Society, its amended Constitution, lists of officers and members, with their post office address, as far as it was possible to obtain them. In some instances, it has been impracticable to ascertain these, and, consequently, to transmit to members through the post office, the publications of the Society. It will, therefore, be necessary for each member to see that his name and post office address are properly registered on the Treasurer's book. It is hoped that the future numbers of this periodical will possess increased interest and value, be prepared by a permanent editor, and, if quarterly, issued with promptness and regularity. Of the past numbers, the first was edited by DANIEL LEE ; the second by J. C. G. KENNEDY, Corresponding Secretaries ; and the third and fourth

by WILLIAM S. KING, Recording Secretary. It may be deemed advisable, by the Executive Committee, to issue the next year's Transactions, not in quarterly numbers, but in one volume, at the close of the year, to be delivered to members, on or before the annual meeting, and to enrich it with illustrated plates, and drawings of new or improved implements, of stock, of agricultural products; and to make, so far as practicable, a digest of the doings of the several State Societies, and of others in foreign lands.

FIRST NATIONAL EXHIBITION.

The first National Exhibition, held under the auspices of the Society, was at Springfield, in Massachusetts, on the 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22d days of last October. This was confined exclusively to that noble animal, the horse. It originated with the enterprising inhabitants of that city, who generously assumed its pecuniary responsibility, and whose perseverance and devotion to the object, conducted it with the most flattering success; and who respectfully invited the co-operation and superintendence of the United States Agricultural Society. A full report thereof is contained in the Journal of the Society. The benefits of this exhibition, and the attendance of more than *twenty thousand people*, encouraged the proprietors to make the following proposition to the society:

Resolved, That we present to the United States Agricultural Society our hearty thanks for their co-operation in carrying forward to its successful termination, the First National Exhibition of Horses in the world; and that we respectfully request them to unite with us in promoting a second exhibition of a similar character, to be held under their auspices, in this city, in the year 1854, at such time and under such arrangements as may be deemed expedient.

More recently, similar applications have been received by your Executive Committee, from Ohio, and from different districts of the country. These, in the process of business, will be submitted, all of which are commended to your favorable consideration.

From the experiment alluded to above, and the lively interest manifested therein by all classes of society, it requires no unusual foresight to discover that such national exhibitions may not only give character to the Society and extend its influ-

ence, but also may easily be made to enrich its treasury. I therefore recommend that a Special Committee be appointed to consider and report at this meeting, upon the expediency of holding one or more exhibitions during the current year, either upon the account of the Society, or in conjunction with similar organizations

MEMBERS AND FUNDS.

As full returns from the agents employed to solicit memberships and funds, have not been received, it is impossible to report with accuracy the additions which have been made during the year. The Treasurer's Report, which will be hereafter submitted, will exhibit the condition of his department at this date.

A number of life-memberships have been created, and a generous donation has been received from Hon. JONATHAN PHILLIPS, of Boston, of five hundred dollars, the latter to procure a suitable diploma for the Society. It is confidently believed that funds sufficient to meet the current expenses of the year, can be obtained from memberships and donations, secured by the personal application of our agents; and from exhibitions, (should they be deemed advisable,) a permanent fund might be realized on the principle which has placed other societies in an independent condition.

GOVERNMENTAL AID.

It is still considered desirable to solicit the patronage of Government, as contemplated in the last annual address, either in the form of "a grant in furtherance of our objects, on the same general principle as many of the State Governments bestow their patronage upon the Agricultural Societies within their territorial limits; or, if Government would so direct, in the form of a consideration for the performance by this Society of the duties of the Agricultural Department of the Patent Office.

"The sum now expended by Government in that branch of the Department, if placed at the disposal of this Society, would enable us to collect, through our auxiliaries and corresponding

bodies, the most reliable statistics and the most recent and valuable information, and would also enable us to publish the same and to distribute it, through the members of Congress, through those of this Society, and of the hundreds of kindred local Associations acting in concert with us throughout the country.”

This recommendation was referred to the Executive Committee, under the following Resolution :

Resolved, That the Executive Committee be requested to make immediate application to Congress, for that portion of the money now annually appropriated to the Patent Office for the preparation of the Agricultural Report, and the collection and distribution of Seeds, with the view to the performance of the same work by the United States Agricultural Society.

The pressure of business before Congress at the close of the last session, and other unavoidable circumstances, prevented your Executive Committee from memorializing that body on the subject ; but they conferred with members of both branches, who expressed a deep interest in these objects, and promised to give them their favorable consideration. It is recommended that the same Committee be instructed to prosecute these objects during the present session, or that a Special Committee be charged with that duty.

DIPLOMA.

In accordance with the suggestion of the Executive Committee, on the necessity of a suitable Diploma or Certificate of Membership, an application was made to the benevolent gentleman, already referred to, for funds to accomplish this object ; and in consequence of his generous response, I am now able to present the design for the same, which has been approved by the Executive Committee.

The design represents, at the top, Ceres, goddess of Agriculture, seated in a car drawn by a pair of oxen, and attended by farm laborers. On her right hand sits Science, on her left, Art ; before her lie the fruits of the earth, and various implements used in its cultivation. The front of the car is decorated with reliefs of the four quarters of the globe. She is accompanied also by the Seasons of the year.

On the right side of the design is Pomona, goddess of

Horticulture, and on the left, Flora. Groups of horses, cattle, sheep, etc., form the back grounds to these figures.

At the base, in a cartouche, is a view of Mount Vernon, surmounted by the national emblems, and supported on either side by a farmer and a gardener, with appropriate scenes in the distance.

If this design meets the approbation of the Society, it should be placed in the hands of a competent engraver, and, as early as possible, a certified copy transmitted to each of the members.

INCORPORATION.

As funds have been entrusted to this Society, which we hope will be greatly increased, it is now deemed important that an Act of Incorporation should be obtained; and I recommend that a Special Committee be charged with that duty.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTION AND EXPERIMENTAL FARM.

A Committee of the Maryland State Agricultural Society have the honor of bringing to the public notice the importance of a National Agricultural Institution and Experimental Farm. Your Executive Committee had the pleasure to receive from them a circular, inviting your coöperation in these worthy objects; and it is expected that these gentlemen and their associates, in the progress of business, will present the subject for your consideration and action.

These objects are essential to the social organization of American agriculturists. We have various County Associations auxiliary to those in the States where they are located; and the State Societies cordially coöperate with the United States Agricultural Society. These State Societies either have, or are endeavoring to secure Agricultural Institutions and Experimental Farms under Legislative patronage within their respective limits. Is it too much to expect that the Central Government will do at least as much for agricultural education and scientific farming in the nation, as any one of the individual

States accomplishes within its own borders? Is it not competent and expedient for Government to give more prominence to this great industrial pursuit, — the principal source of national wealth and prosperity? These are important and legitimate inquiries, and I trust they will receive the consideration which they deserve. May not a National Agricultural Department, with suitable instructors, library, cabinet, and apparatus, be attached to the Smithsonian Institution, for the study of the Science of Agriculture? May not the estate of Washington, at Mount Vernon, be purchased for a National Experimental Farm? And may not the United States Agricultural Society aid in the solution of these problems, and in the accomplishment of these objects?

COMMISSIONERS TO STATE EXHIBITIONS.

Important advantages have resulted to other Agricultural Societies, from the appointment of Commissioners to visit the exhibitions of kindred institutions; and it is hereby recommended that your Executive Committee be authorized to appoint Commissioners whose duty it shall be to attend the annual exhibitions of the State Agricultural Societies, to collect and transmit to said Committee the transactions of those Societies, together with their own report of their personal observation, of whatever is specially important of record in matters pertaining to the general interests of Agriculture, and to promote a kind and friendly relation between the National and State organizations. These reports, from time to time, to be published under the direction of the Executive Committee, and be distributed to the members.

OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY.

These have been substantially set forth in its Constitution, but they are general, and their accomplishment must be a work of time, and must depend on a concentration of our energies upon their essential parts.

Our general object is the improvement of American Agriculture; but on how many things does this depend? Each of these must have its time and place; and all must be prose-

cuted in their natural order. Coming up as we do from different and widely distant sections of our country to the Capital, only at our annual meeting, it is the more important that we should, on these occasions, clearly define our *specific* objects and plans of action for the succeeding year, waiting the developments of Providence to point out to us the path of future duty. As I have already intimated, there are certain subjects which claim our particular attention at this time,—*certain* duties which we can, and in my estimation, ought, to perform.

Of these, the most important and feasible are :

1. Exhibitions by the Society, either in its individual capacity, or in connection with other associations :

2. The efficient action of Commissioners to attend the exhibitions of the various State Societies, and to report thereon :

3. The publication, in the Journal of the Society, of whatever is most valuable in the progress of the Agriculture of our country :

4. An application for the aid of Government, either by an annual appropriation, or by assigning to our Society the compilation and publication of the agricultural volume now issued under the direction of the Patent Office, with the privilege of receiving and distributing seeds etc., free, so that the same may be placed, by the agency of our Agricultural Associations, acting in unison with us, directly in the hands of the most prominent Agriculturists of the country, and so that, in return, the most reliable and important results may be obtained as to their inherent value and relative adaptation to different localities. This service we may perhaps advantageously perform, even should an Agricultural Bureau, so eminently desirable, be established.

The accomplishment of these *specific* designs will materially aid in the attainment of our general object, — will extend our influence, and, in return, will increase our share in the public confidence and patronage, and will give us our relative position among the Agricultural Institutions of our own and other nations.

GENTLEMEN :

The presence, on this occasion, of so many who took an active part in the organization and previous meetings of this Society, and of others from distant sections of the country, whose acquaintance we are happy to make, affords us the highest satisfaction and encouragement. Among these I recognize gentlemen whose names are honored, not only for the important contributions which they have made to the cause of Agriculture, but also for their valuable services in the praiseworthy enterprises of our time and nation. But all are not here! An inscrutable Providence has removed some from the scenes of earth, whose charity contributed liberally to the funds of the Society. Three of our honorary members, principal benefactors, whose donations were reported at our last annual meeting, have ceased from their labors, and have been gathered to their rest, "like a shock of corn fully ripe in its season,"—SAMUEL APPLETON, THOMAS H. PERKINS and ROBERT G. SHAW—a trio of the oldest and most honored citizens in the commercial metropolis of New England, gentlemen whose memories will be cherished so long as merit shall be appreciated, princely benevolence awaken gratitude, and worthy deeds command the admiration of mankind. These have fallen; but others are rising up to occupy their places, and to aid and encourage our endeavors.

BROTHER FARMERS: I am especially happy to meet you on this Second Anniversary of the United States Agricultural Society. Whether you come from the auriferous fields of California— from the alluvial soils of our great valleys— from the plantations of the genial South— from the grain-growing and manufacturing districts of the North; I welcome you to a participation with us in this enterprise, and in the glorious prospects of our beloved country,— prospects which we think can hardly be represented in colors too bright, when we consider the agricultural and other resources of our favored land— the rapid increase of population that supplies the laborers requisite for the development of these resources— the advancement of the arts that put improved implements into their hands— the progress of education that teaches them

how to apply science to cultivation, and consequently how to labor more successfully — the facilities for intercommunication that connect city with city, state with state, and ocean with ocean, conveying our agricultural products to the great markets of the world, and rewarding industry and labor with competence and independence.

What an inviting and interesting field of labor opens before us! What a vast extent of territory, to whose limits and population no *manifest destiny* has hitherto set bounds! Who can predict the amount of our agricultural products, when genius shall have improved as highly as possible the implements of husbandry, and when science shall have applied to the arts of cultivation the rich fertilizers that now lie in their native beds! Who can calculate the millions of population that those products shall sustain, when our unoccupied territory shall be peopled and improved by an enlightened and industrious yeomanry?

FRIENDS OF AGRICULTURE: In view of these cheering prospects, let us act in a manner worthy of the position we occupy. Let us mature plans as broad and deep as the responsibilities that rest upon us, and let us execute them with an energy which will surmount every obstacle, and with a perseverance that shall never tire. Then will success reward our efforts, and enable us to transmit to those who shall succeed us, an inheritance richer than the birthright of kings or princes, — the exalted privileges, the glorious independence of an AMERICAN FARMER!

MARSHALL P. WILDER.

