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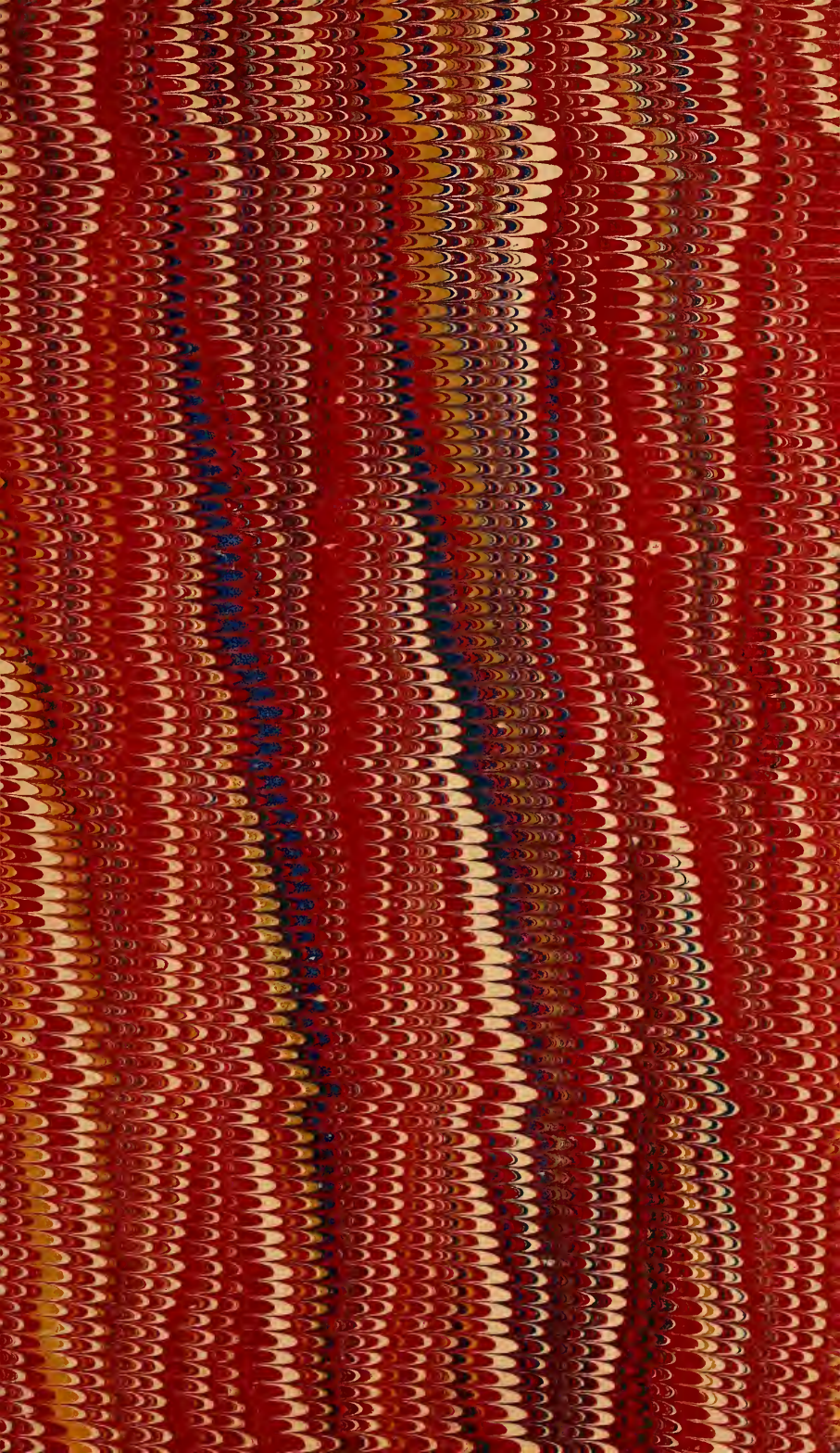
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

















To/ The Hon. Henry Clay  
with the respects of  
the Author

1840



AN

# ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

BERKSHIRE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY,

AT PITTSFIELD,

OCTOBER 8, 1840.

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BY H. A. S. DEARBORN.

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**PITTSFIELD:**

PRINTED BY PHINEHAS ALLEN AND SON.

DECEMBER, 1840.

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## ADDRESS.

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GENTLEMEN OF THE SOCIETY, AND FELLOW-CITIZENS :—

THE first act of civilization was the cultivation of the earth ; and during the progress of nations in the route of improvement, no other branch of industry has maintained such a direct, uniform, powerful and salutary influence. It has not only accomplished more than all the others, but has been the primary cause of those remarkable physical and moral developments which have been produced by the unceasing efforts of man, to ameliorate his condition and elevate his character.

Agriculture clothes and feeds nearly the whole civilized population of the globe ; rigs, spreads the sails, and supplies the great bulk of the freight of navigation, and its multifarious products constitute the chief articles of trade. It has still other and higher claims to respect ; and among the most imposing, are its magnificent achievements and wide-spread conquests ; and however inapplicable these belligerent terms may appear, when applied to that pacific pursuit, it is confidently believed that they have been more truly glorious than those of all the fleets and armies which have ever triumphed on the deep and on the land : but in such a gradual, noiseless and unobtrusive manner have they been accomplished, that they have not attracted that marked attention of the historian to which they are so pre-eminently entitled. There was no remarkable movement, which became the subject of universal speculation and comment—no splendid event—no startling incident—no dazzling pageantry, which either excited astonishment from their magnitude, or special and deep interest, from their direct or ultimate influence on the civil and military institutions of nations. Yet when attentively examined as the silent, peaceful and unostentatious, but momentous causes of human advancement, and the extent of their influence is measured by the magnitude and real value of the results, the seemingly rash assertion which has been made, instead of being in any degree extravagant, will be found, on a thorough investigation, to be fully sustained by an array of facts, which put incredulity at defiance.

If wars and battles have rendered the names of victorious chieftains memorable throughout the world, has not agriculture given an infinitely

more commendable, precious and lasting fame to those really great and good men, who have acquired distinction as the benefactors, rather than the exterminators of their race. Will not the admirable characters and eminent deeds of the latter, become more extensively known and more highly appreciated, as the bounds of human intelligence and civil liberty are enlarged, while the blood-stained laurels of the warrior will have perished, or be considered as revolting emblems of their crimes ; and their martial feats, instead of exciting respect and emulation, will be converted into subjects of indignant execration and abhorrence.

The battle-field has been the common arena of reckless and unprincipled ambition, while true glory is only to be attained in the more honorable fields of industry and intelligence. If, in the accomplishment of those arduous and long continued labors, by which the broad highway has been opened, and nations conducted onward in the majestic march of civilization, there was no individual exploit—no astounding display of genius or daring act of valor, which stood forth in bold relief and commanded universal applause, there was required and evinced as much personal bravery and moral firmness, as in the most desperate struggle of contending gladiators, or the tremendous shock of armies.

Our ever venerated forefathers, who colonized this holy land of Liberty, present a glorious illustration of the hazardous position which has been assumed. That noble band of fearless and high-souled Anglo-Saxons—that gallant forlorn-hope of civil and religious freedom, had no other reliance than upon God and their own unaided efforts, for the accomplishment of the grand and sacred object of their expatriation. No naval squadrons or armies preceded or accompanied them in their perilous experiment, either to herald them on their way, or inspire confidence, or afford assistance and protection: And yet those humble cultivators of the earth assumed the lofty character and responsible position of champions for the rights of man, and boldly determined to encounter the dangers of the ocean, and seek, in a far distant and savage land, an asylum from persecution, rather than slavishly submit to the tyrannical decrees of a merciless sovereign, or meanly acquiesce in the arbitrary exactions of a vindictive hierarchy.

The soldier and mariner voluntarily assume professions that involve the duty of sternly encountering those hardships and privations which are the inevitable accompaniments ; and there is besides, the constant and invigorating stimulus of anticipated rank, honors and fortune, as the certain rewards of distinguished actions. But those adventurous men who bid an eternal farewell to their native land, had no other incentive to urge them onward in that fearful moment, than an exalted spirit of liber-

ty, and a sublime conception of religious duty. Who is there that can contemplate their forlorn, anxious and desperate condition, when assembled for the last time on the beloved shores of England, without being impressed with that indomitable zeal, that grandeur of purpose, that elevation of character, and that mighty moral effort which was there evinced, when they first looked out upon that dark and wide waste of waters they were destined to cross, and then back towards the dearly cherished scenes of their childhood, which were so soon to be abandoned forever. Is there in all history a position named, or a scene described, more replete with thrilling interest, or where more of unwavering fortitude was required and displayed. It was the solemn advent of a long premeditated self-banishment, and more awful in prospect than the exodus of the Israelites. A crisis had arrived in which the highest attributes of reason, the most dignified qualities of the heart, and a conscientious obedience to the stern dictates of truth, justice and right, as well as the purest and most exalted principles of religion, were required to uphold them. How overwhelming must have been the excitement from an anticipation of the difficulties to be surmounted and the fearful uncertainty of the result ; how bewildering the thronging reminiscences of the past, and the thick coming fancies of the future. Hope in the beneficent smiles of heaven, and confidence in the integrity of their motives, were the only cheering and soul-sustaining inducements to vigorous exertion on an occasion so momentous—in an enterprize so fraught with immediate peril and prospective calamities.

The same adventurous spirit, irresistible perseverance and bold defiance of difficulties and dangers, have been conspicuously evinced in the settlement of every state and territory in the Union. Who is there that has not witnessed or heard of the sufferings which were resolutely endured by the emigrants that have successively gone forth into the interior of this vast Republic—the innumerable privations and hardships they courageously encountered during their slow and toilsome progress into the boundless wilderness, and through their diversified and never ending labor and changes of condition, from the erection of the first rude hut, to the period of becoming independent proprietors of extensive farms and commodious habitations.

Such are the efforts which the husbandman has made for the general benefit of man, and how wonderful are the results? Only fifty years since, and the whole of that broad and lengthened region which extends from the fountains of the Atlantic rivers to the western verge of the vale of the Mississippi, was one entire wilderness. Now it contains eleven states and three flourishing territories, whose aggregate population amounts to more than seven millions.

These are the glorious achievements of untiring rural industry,—the splendid triumphs of civilization,—the indisputable victories and magnificent conquests of Agriculture. Yes, of Agriculture—for by the axe and the plough were laid the immense foundations on which was reared this mighty and prosperous Republic; and its patriotic and independent yeomanry now constitute at least seven-tenths of the entire population.

From the experience of past ages, and the intelligence afforded by the diversified conditions of existing nations, it may be justly considered that the cultivation of the earth is the sure and solid basis on which empires are elevated in character, augmented in power, and rendered illustrious for their advancement in letters, science and the arts.

But agriculture must have previously made considerable progress before the arts can be introduced and established; and even then they will be chiefly confined to the fabrication of the most necessary and least expensive products of the mechanic. The increase of population and the diffusion of intelligence, gradually co-operate in exciting a spirit of rivalry with the manufacturing skill of other countries; and ingenuity and enterprize are ultimately called into vigorous and successful action, from motives of interest, and that liberal encouragement, which an enlightened patriotism finds it wise and expedient to extend towards every species of indigenous labor.

Foreign commerce and navigation have sometimes existed contemporaneously with agriculture and manufactures; and when those four grand divisions of human industry at the same time exist, in any country, and are harmoniously prosecuted, a position has been attained from whence the progress is certain, energetic and rapid towards the highest point of independence, moral excellence and grandeur, which man or nations can, or are destined to reach.

But such a fortunate and firm union of those great and powerful interests, has been seldom realized. Egypt was celebrated as the granary of the East, long before the highest of the arts were extensively cultivated; and even when they had been so far perfected as to render many of the fabrics of that country celebrated for their richness and beauty, and long after the superb cities of Thebes and Memphis were the wonder of the world, the intercourse with foreign nations by the means of commercial fleets must have been very limited; for there was not an emporium of any distinction, either on the numerous estuaries of the Nile, or the coast of the Red Sea, before the conquest of the renowned empire of the Pharaohs by Alexander, and the establishment of that splendid city which still bears his name.

The once mighty kingdoms of the Assyrians, Medes and Babylonians,



were, from their interior positions, chiefly engaged in agricultural and manufacturing pursuits ; and it was not until the Phœnicians established Tyre, Carthage and other maritime cities in Arabia and Spain, that the seas were made subservient to trade, and became the grand high-ways of nations.

Hindustan, China, Japan, and many of the other populous nations east of the Persian Gulf, had but very little reciprocal intercourse or trade with other portions of the globe ; and in fact were but imperfectly known, until the adventurous navigators of western Europe discovered the ocean route to India.

The naval expedition of Nearchus, from the Indus to the mouth of the Euphrates, for transporting one division of the Macedonian army on its return towards Greece, seems to have been the only attempt to navigate that coast, after the alledged, but still doubtful voyages of the Tyrians, in those distant regions, during the reign of Solomon ; and commercial enterprize did not extend expeditions, in that direction, even as far as the coast of Malabar, until long after that period, when the trade of the East, with the nations of western Asia and Europe, took the direction of the Euphrates and Palmyra, or through Egypt.

Even at this late period, and after an uninterrupted intercourse with the ports and islands of southern Asia, for more than three centuries, Birmah, Siam, Annam and China have, with but partial exceptions, no other navigation than a few rude vessels, which are unskilfully employed in a very limited coasting trade ; so that neither of those nations are competitors with the Europeans and Americans in the commerce of the whole earth. They have ever been, as were the Hindoos, cultivators of the soil and artizans ; and when it is considered that the only mode of intercommunication throughout Asia and Africa, was, during all ancient times, and still is, to a very considerable extent, by unfrequent, dilatory and expensive lines of caravans, the amount of exports and imports, compared with the immense territory, population and wealth, must have been so very limited, that those nations cannot, with propriety, be regarded as having been commercial, any more than nautical, at any period of their existence. During and since the splendid eras of Phœnician, Greek and Roman supremacy, whenever and however the articles of oriental merchandize were exchanged for the products or treasures of the western empires, the means of transportation, whether by land or water, were furnished by the subjects of the latter, who thus secured the double advantages arising from the trade, at each extremity of the line of transit.

How different have been the results—how superior the character and condition of the people—how incomparably more imposing the attitude,

and how much more extensive the power and influence of those nations whose every department of industry and intelligence become such important subjects of individual inquiry and governmental consideration, that all are sure to be abundantly supplied with enlightened, active and zealous co-laborators; and who, in each, are only ambitious to merit equal commendation and protection, and derive like advantages, without any disposition to disparage or do wrong to either of the others.

Still, from the peculiar character and habits of the people, the form of government, or the geographical position of the country, there were but few instances in ancient times, in which such a happy combination of the industrial employments existed. While agriculture and manufactures flourished in some of the most extensive and celebrated of the oriental kingdoms, it is notorious that there was scarcely any other commercial transactions undertaken, than those which resulted from the interchange of the natural and artificial products of the different sections of each; and others, being limited in territory, or possessing an unproductive soil, devoted their attention to the arts, and also became conspicuous for their nautical skill and commercial enterprise,—upon which they almost exclusively relied for obtaining the means of subsistence, and in the acquisition of wealth.

Such were the Tyrians, Ionians and Athenæns during the most palmy periods of their existence; and in like manner did the Republics of Venice and Genoa become celebrated as the marts of the whole globe, during a long succession of ages, after a renewal of the trade with the rich and prolific East.

But it was not until a much later period, that examples were exhibited of nations, which were extensively agricultural, becoming, almost simultaneously, commercial and manufacturing. Holland, Great-Britain and Russia were among the earliest, and have been the most conspicuous of that class.

The United States present the anomalous instance of a people who are distinguished for their immense agricultural industry, commercial enterprise and nautical adventure; and, at the same time, are dependant on foreign nations for a very large portion of the products of manufactories and the mechanic arts which they consume.

Those hardy Teutonic tribes, whose fertile fields were laboriously reclaimed from the sea-laved marshes of the Netherlands, were celebrated for their woollen, linen, glass and metallic manufactures, before they boldly seized and triumphantly swayed the sceptre of the ocean, and their merchants became the princes of the earth. But it was not until the full influence of all those various and powerful incitements to action,—those alternate energetic causes and prosperous results had been recip-

roccally experienced, that the vast delta of the Rhine was made to rival that of Egypt in the luxuriance of its harvest ; that every village was rendered memorable for its mechanical ingenuity ; that each harbor was thronged with the richly laden fleets of commerce ; and that the chief cities became immense entrepots for the most valuable products of every clime.

Great-Britain was neither a manufacturing or commercial nation, until after the reign of James I., and it is the rapid and gigantic strides that have been made in those pursuits, within the last half century, which have given such an unexampled impulse to agriculture, as to render that kingdom the grand archetype of the world in all the branches of rural economy.

Russia had made but little progress in the cultivation of the earth, and had neither manufactories or navigation until after Peter the Great ascended the throne of that immense empire. Those numerous uncivilized Scandinavian and other nomadick hordes, which extended from the shores of the Baltic sea to the Euxine, had been, for all previous time, proverbial for their barbarism ; and were scarcely known to southern Europe as a distinct nation, even as late as when colonies had been successfully established on the distant coast of America. Down to the close of the seventeenth century, ignorance so generally prevailed throughout that dark Cimmerian region, that it extended not only from the serf to the noble, but from the prince to the imperial palace. In fact, the history of that country for more than eight centuries previous to the reign of Peter I. is little else than the revolting narration of the perpetual feuds and sanguinary conflicts of the ferocious and ever roving tribes of Scythians, Tartars and Cossacks. If, at times, more startling or momentous events are recounted, they are of the same savage character, and only imposing from the number and vast extent of the armies, and the augmented horrors of their devastations ; for it mattered not whether a petty chieftain of a province commanded in the battle-field, or an Alaric, an Atilla or a Zenghis Khan, with their innumerable legions, rushed like a furious tempest from the Caspian sea to the German ocean. Still it was barbarian against barbarian, and the consequences of both were alike fatally destructive to every effort and hope of civilization. While the deleterious influence of the one was local, in the other it was not merely universal, but fearfully augmented in potency and duration.

Such was the degraded and apparently irremediable condition of Russia, when the grand conception was first entertained, and the unprecedented experiment boldly undertaken to elevate it, in character and consequence, to the highest point which had been attained by the most civilized and refined nations of ~~the world~~ All the energies of that vigo-

*christendom*

rous and expansive intellect with which the youthful monarch had been so lavishly endowed, were roused into efficient action. But from the deficiency of his own education and that of his civil and military officers, as well as all the other classes of his numerous subjects, he was fully aware of the utter futility of attempting to accomplish those important objects before sufficient measures had been first taken for removing an impediment that was so fatally adverse to even the possibility of success.

For that purpose he exhibited the unprecedented phenomena of an absolute monarch descending from his throne, to travel, like the renowned Anacharsis, in foreign countries, for the express and noble purpose of acquiring knowledge, that he might propagate it among his countrymen. Successively visiting Holland, England, France, Hanover and Austria; he thoroughly examined, not only the various institutions of learning, the public works and manufacturing establishments of every denomination, but entered the workshops of the humblest mechanic, and actually labored for months as a ship carpenter in the dock-yards of Saardam and Deptford; that he might acquire that practical information, and skill which would enable him to adroitly perform the double duties of a naval architect and constructor.

Having, during a long absence from his dominions diligently observed every thing that was curious, interesting and valuable—every operation of genius and prosecution of art, he returned with his capacious mind richly stored with intelligence on all the chief subjects of his adventurous and untiring research; and was thus fully qualified to commence his glorious practical career, as the unrivalled benefactor of his country.

He liberally invited the wisest and most learned men of every nation, as well as military and naval officers, mariners, mechanics and artists, to his dominions, that he might introduce all those sciences and branches of industry which could be rendered subservient to the speedy prosecution and ultimate fruition of his magnificent plans for meliorating the condition of the people, and advancing the prosperity and power of the empire.

So astonishingly rapid was the progress of improvement, that within the short period of twenty years the mechanical and fine arts were successfully cultivated, manufactories established, agriculture advanced, schools of medicine, botany and belles-lettres founded, galleries of paintings formed, armies efficiently organized, maritime cities created, and naval and commercial fleets launched on the Gulf of Finland, the ancient Boristhenes, the sea of Azof, the Caspian, and the Arctic ocean.

Thus, the modern Lycurgus of the north, was soon enabled to rely upon the abundant resources of his own dominions, to clothe and subsist



an immense population—furnish ample means for prosecuting, by land and sea, those long protracted and expensive wars in which the combined armies of Sweden, Poland and Turkey were successively routed; and the independence and power of Russia at last so completely and firmly established, by the decisive battle of Pultawa, that the formidable rival and ultimate conqueror of Charles the XII., commanded the respect and admiration of Europe and Asia, from the grandeur of the position which his empire had so triumphantly attained.

The first and second Catharine, and the emperors Alexander and Nicholas, faithfully and zealously prosecuted the vast plans which had been so wisely projected and successfully commenced by their illustrious ancestor; and the astounding results have been fully commensurate, with the unlimited resources, and original gigantic conception, of that prospective imposing attitude, which the Russian empire was destined to assume among the greatest nations of the earth.

If, therefore, the genius and capacity for achievements are to be estimated by the only decisive test,—the results, Peter I. was the most wonderful and greatest of sovereigns, if not of men, that has ever lived.

The like enlarged and enlightened policy has produced equally favorable and cheering effects, in every nation in which it has been effectually introduced and as steadily pursued. Whenever and wherever a liberal encouragement has been extended to enterprize, and a just and faithful protection afforded to national industry, the individuals, in each of its multifarious branches, have uniformly advanced in morals, intelligence and happiness, while their united labor and skill have given an immense acceleration to the improvement and prosperity of the whole country.

The grand experiment which has been so successfully made in Russia is, therefore, only astonishing, from the strong contrast which is thereby presented, between her existing position and that low and degraded state from which she has been elevated. Yet while Russia was steadily advancing towards that high level which the other nations of Europe had then attained, some of the latter, by constantly adhering to the same enlarged system of political economy, which the able monarch of that empire had so skilfully introduced, were still moving onward with a perpetually increasing momentum; and have exhibited developments much more remarkable for their grandeur and beneficent influence, not only on the people of the intelligent governments where they have occurred, but upon the whole human family.

If we look back to the condition of Great-Britain, France, the Germanic States and this country, at the period when Russia commenced her refulgent course of improvement, and compare it with the position which

they have now acquired, there will be found as much to excite astonishment and merit commendation, as has been presented in the eventful history of that nation.

The trade and navigation of England was of the humblest character, and remained nearly stationary from the time of the invasion by William the Conqueror, until the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the crown. The exports consisted chiefly of lead, tin, wool, leather and a few other products of the soil, and the kingdom was dependent on foreign countries for wheat and nearly all the manufactured articles which were then consumed. The minor art of making paper was not brought to perfection until 1713, and as late as 1740 nearly all the iron which was used, was imported from the ports of the Baltic, and most of the fabrics of wool, linen and silk, and the manufactories of glass, earthen ware, gold and silver were brought from Holland, France, Genoa and Venice.

During the reign of the British Semiramis encouragement was given to the cultivation of the cereal grains, and the exportation of wool was prohibited. Special privileges were offered to the persecuted Walloons of Holland, the Huguenots of France and the artists of other countries, to induce them to emigrate and establish woollen, silk, linen and other manufactories in England. Commercial treaties were negotiated with the Ottoman Porte and the Grand Duke of Muscovy, for opening a trade with the East Indies and the Levant. Admiral Drake was sent on a voyage of discovery round the world, and Sir Walter Raleigh, with many other adventurers, were aided in expeditions for establishing colonies and opening a trade in North and South America.

Still the progress in ship building, for commercial purposes, had been so limited, that the import and export trade was almost exclusively conducted by foreigners, until the celebrated navigation act was passed, during the ever memorable administration of Oliver Cromwell.

But it was not before the reign of William and Mary that agriculture, manufactures, foreign trade and navigation began to make a decided and vigorous onward movement. Even as late as the commencement of the eighteenth century, and during the brilliant reign of Queen Ann, the commercial fleet of the kingdom was estimated at only about 70,000 tons, and now it numbers 25,000 vessels, whose aggregate tonnage is 2,783,000. The annual consumption of grain has increased to 240,000,000 of bushels, all of which is generally raised in the country. The products of agriculture of every kind in the year 1838, have been valued at the enormous sum of \$1,250,000,000, and those of manufactories amount to \$750,000,000.

From 1792 to 1839, the population of the United Kingdom has increased, from 12,650,000 to 27,250,000; and the exports have arisen from

25,000,000 to 105,000,000, and the imports from 19,659,000 to 61,268,000 of pounds sterling.

The invention of the steam engine, and the substitution of machinery for manual labor, with the consequent development of the powers of those two grand elements of national industry, coal and iron, have been the chief causes of that tremendous impetus which has been given to the arts in Great-Britain. With the aid of machinery, one hundred persons can manufacture as much cotton, as would have required ten thousand only forty years since; and the cotton now manufactured in that country, would require, without the aid of labor-doing machinery, 10,000,000 workmen; and all the various articles which are thus made, could not be manufactured by 200,000,000 of men. This is but a faint sketch of the remarkable changes which have been produced in England; but the route of Hercules is recognized by his tracks.

It may be truly said, that Great-Britain has attained a more exalted position than has ever been reached by any other nation. In letters and science; in the useful and ornamental arts; in agriculture, trade, navigation and manufactures; in prosperity, riches and power; in eloquence and arms; in the refinements and embellishments of civilization; in the grandest efforts of genius and most brilliant displays of talent; in all that elevates man and nations, that kingdom is a glorious example for the whole globe. It may there be seen how far the human race can be advanced, when the interests and rights of the people, and the grandeur of the nation, become the main subjects of consideration on the part of the most enlightened men and of the government.

Situated on the northern frontier of the eastern continent, England is a perpetual presentation of the blessings which are derived from well directed industry, and of the potent influence of freedom of thought and of action. But what is far more important, she is a copious fountain as well as the impregnable fortress of the principles of liberty, and a glad and encouraging exemplification of what can be achieved by man, to the honest advocates of the rights of man, throughout all the nations of Europe.

As we are of the same Anglo-Saxon blood; speak the same language; have derived our political, municipal and economical institutions, laws, literature, science and arts; our habits, manners and customs from England, and have thus far followed in her brilliant wake, throughout the whole extent of the capacious channels of intelligence and industry, on which she has been so majestically borne—is it not certain that we shall continue in our career, until we shall have been as successful in imitating her agricultural and manufacturing skill, as we have thus far done in commercial and nautical enterprize.

The influence of precedent is infinitely more powerful than the abstract

teachings of philosophy. The one actively instructs by practical experiment, and the other vainly attempts it by inconsequential counsel. The effect of the former cannot fail of being as great, and the beneficial consequences as fully experienced on this, as they have been on the other side of the Atlantic.

The territory of the United States was an entire wilderness at the epoch when the great Russian reformer began his imperial experiment. The colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay were not established until more than a quarter of a century after that period; and at the commencement of the revolutionary war, the population of the Union did not amount to three millions. Having been arbitrarily restricted in commercial and nautical enterprize, and absolutely prohibited from establishing manufactories and many of the mechanical trades, during the whole period of our colonial vassalage, the products of the fisheries, the Indian fur trade, the forest and of agriculture, were the only articles of export; and this very limited trade was almost exclusively confined to England and her West India islands; and from that unyielding system of monopoly which has ever been rigidly observed by Great-Britain, we were compelled to depend on that nation solely, for all the articles of foreign production which were consumed in this country. England was then, in sober truth, "all the world to us"—for from her native and colonial ports alone, came the merchandize of every other clime.

It was not, therefore, until the hallowed war for National Independence, drove back the patriotic citizen upon the natural resources of his own country and the inventive energies of his own mind, that those sciences and arts were zealously cultivated, which could be rendered tributary to the increased demand of his suddenly changed condition, as well as that of the new-born nation, and the various branches of industrial labor, made to flourish, in a manner that gave promise of success.

Yet, however laborious were the habits and prolific the inventive genius of the emancipated American, under such urgent and peculiar circumstances—such powerfully impelling incitives to energetic action, it was soon discovered, after peace had been concluded, that governmental protection was required against foreign competition, to enable the farmer, the mechanic, the merchant, the manufacturer, the ship-owner and the fisherman, to successfully prosecute their various branches of industry.

From these considerations, the most enlightened and patriotic statesmen of that momentous period, were induced to earnestly recommend, and finally enabled to succeed, in the establishment of a national government, which, in the words of the constitution, would better "promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity."



It is, therefore, not surprizing, that among the most important subjects which the illustrious Washington urged upon the attention of the first Congress which assembled under the great charter of our liberties, were—

“THE ADVANCEMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE AND MANUFACTURES—THE PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND LITERATURE—THE EXPEDIENCY OF GIVING EFFECTUAL ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE EXERTIONS OF SKILL AND GENIUS, IN PRODUCING NEW AND USEFUL INVENTIONS—AND OF FACILITATING THE INTERCOURSE BETWEEN DISTANT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.”

In accordance with these enlarged views, laws were successively passed for encouraging and fostering those all-important objects ; and such has been the salutary influence of a continued protective policy, that the annual productions of woollen manufactories, amount to 40,000,000, of cotton, to 60,000,000, and including those of all other materials, to 350,000,000 of dollars ; and adding the earnings of agriculture, and every other branch of industry, the national production has been estimated, by one of the most distinguished statistical authors of our country, at \$1,200,000,000.

The navigation of the United States has been augmented in a like remarkable manner, as the vessels employed in the coasting and foreign trade and the fisheries, now exceed 2,000,000 tons ; being more than two-thirds as much as that of Great-Britain, and nearly quadruple that of France. The increase in population has been quite as extraordinary, for it must exceed, at this time, 15,000,000.

From the facts which are to be obtained from the history of those nations that have become the most distinguished for their progress in manufactures, trade and navigation, it is apparent that agriculture has ever kept in the advance, and been not only the creator and pioneer, but the foundation and perpetual support of each and all of them.

In Great-Britain, where manufactures and navigation have been the most fostered, and have flourished the most within the last century, it has been ascertained that the persons employed in agriculture, amount to over 9,000,000, while those engaged in the industrial arts were less than 4,000,000. Not half of the latter, however, were employed in producing articles for the foreign markets, while neither the number of people or the wealth acquired by them, was a fourth part of that which is produced and maintained by the agricultural industry.

Agriculture in the United States, besides supplying the demand for home consumption, furnishes three-fourths of the exports of domestic articles and, manufactures only a tenth. The disparity, however, between the exports of the raw material and of manufactures, is conclusive evidence that we have not sufficiently extended the latter, and are too much dependent upon other nations for articles, which could be as well made in our own.



Although the products of agriculture in Great-Britain so much exceed those of manufactories, nearly the whole of her exports, which amount to more than 500,000,000 of dollars, are manufactured articles; and only one-third of the exports of France are the products of agriculture; and that third chiefly consists of wine and fruits, which are in a complete state for consumption, and therefore cannot be enhanced in value, like the raw materials for mechanical industry; and of course constitute proper articles of export, as the surplus avails of indigenious labor, beyond the demand for home consumption."

But China and Japan present the most remarkable illustrations of that problem in political economy, as to how far a reliance may be reposed upon the internal industry and trade of a nation—the latter of which Adam Smith avers, in his great work on the Wealth of Nations, "to be worth all the foreign commerce put together.

Japan, although the area of its territory is double that of Great-Britain and Ireland, and the population considerably larger, yet it has no foreign trade, except through the medium of one or two Dutch ships, and a very few Chinese, which are allowed to visit the single port of Nagasaki. So rigorous are the laws for regulating the intercourse with foreign nations, that the natives are absolutely prohibited from leaving the country for any purpose, under the severe penalty of not being allowed ever again to return.

China has an area of 5,250,000 square miles, and is therefore more than forty times as large as Great-Britain, with a population of 300,000,000, and still the marine intercourse with other nations is inconsiderable, for the value of the foreign products imported, exclusive of opium, amounts to only about fifteen or twenty millions of dollars, and the exports are less than 50,000,000.

The industry of that nation must consequently depend almost entirely upon the internal market, and a limited trade with the bordering nations, for the disposal of its products; and which, if we assume as the data on which to form an estimate, the agricultural, manufacturing and mechanical labor of England, it must be truly enormous; for the value of the products of the soil would exceed \$15,000,000,000, and those of all other kinds of industry \$9,000,000,000.

China, like Japan, has but little navigation engaged in foreign trade, and that is chiefly limited to the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, and a few of the ports east of Coromandel.

How great and striking is the difference of the industrial condition of the United States, when contrasted with that of the two last nations which have been named, as well as with that of some of the most flourishing kingdoms of Europe. If the former nations have carried their re-

strictions on foreign trades too far, is it not possible that a still greater error has been committed in this, by opening too wide the gates of commerce, and giving a greater freedom to the introduction of the products of foreign industry, than is warranted by a just regard to the interests of our own citizens, or is consistent with those great conservative principles of national policy, by which the most enlightened nations of Europe are governed.

The manufactured articles imported into this country in 1838, amounted to \$80,000,000; and although the value of our manufactures of wool and cotton is at least \$100,000,000, yet the imported fabrics of those materials, exceed 20,000,000, and including those of silk, the metals and other substances, the amount received during the last ten years, has been more than \$700,000,000.

With a population only one-fifth less, and an actually settled territory fifteen times larger than that of Great-Britain, the wool annually produced in the United States is only 30,000,000 of pounds, while in the former it amounts to 160,000,000, or more than five times as much.

The nations of the Eastern continent have pursued a much more restricted system than has been ever adopted in this, in relation to foreign intercourse; and very generally given to their own subjects, almost the exclusive privilege of furnishing, not only such products of the soil and of manufactories as are required for home consumption, but an amount of both sufficient to pay for the raw material to import from other countries, as well as for all such other articles of merchandize, as are not indigenous, and do not come in competition with those that can be supplied by native industry and skill.

The statistical statements which are occasionally published by this and the European governments, in relation to those subjects, furnish the most ample elements for ascertaining the practical operation of the systems of political economy, which have been adopted on both sides of the Atlantic.

The exports of Great-Britain to France in 1838, were valued at only 1,500,000, to Russia 1,700,000, and to all Europe but 24,000,000 pounds sterling; while to the United States they exceeded \$62,000,000. Thus it appears that with less than a sixth of the population of Russia, the exports to this country are more than seven times the value of those sent to that empire, and amount to more than half of the shipments to all the other continental nations, whose aggregate population is 210,000,000, or fourteen times that of the United States; and when the value of British manufactures which are consumed in Russia, is but ten cents per head, it amounts to at least five dollars for every soul in this country.

The cotton exported from this republic amounts to 596,000,000 of

pounds, and is valued at \$61,556,000; but if it was manufactured previously to its being shipped, the products would be worth \$440,000,000; and thus give an additional income to the industry of the country of \$378,000,000, which would be nearly quadruple the amount of our whole exports of domestic products.

Whether it is expedient that a different policy should be adopted, and more efficient encouragement extended to native industry—or that it should be left entirely to its own unaided efforts to more successfully compete with that of other nations, not only in the attempt to supply the demand for home consumption, but also in foreign markets—or that it is better, our reliance on foreign, rather than native industrial labor, should be still greater than it ever has been and now is, are grave and highly important questions which cannot fail to excite the profound attention of every intelligent citizen, as well as that of the state and national governments.

It would not be proper, on an occasion like this, to attempt their solution, even if I were capable; or to advance an opinion, however well founded it might be deemed, as to the decision which should be made. The investigation opens a wide field of inquiry, and the rights and interests of all classes of society, and of every section of the country, are to be seriously considered, when subjects so deeply interesting to each are to be definitely acted upon.

The facts which have a bearing on those momentous questions, may and should be carefully examined, and such inquiries prosecuted as will best tend to enlighten and direct the understanding, and designate the course, which, after the most mature deliberation, justice and wisdom shall recommend as the most expedient to be pursued. Relying, therefore, on the intelligence of the people and the rectitude of those statesmen and legislators whose duty it is to decide, it is confidently believed; when the period arrives, that it shall be deemed necessary this great question in political economy should be definitely settled, such measures will be adopted as are honestly considered to be indispensably necessary, and are the best calculated to advance the interests of every American citizen, and the most certainly promote the general weal.

From the geographical position of this county, its citizens cannot be immediately concerned in navigation or foreign commerce; but the direct influence which those pursuits have upon their own, being continually experienced, they cannot fail of feeling a deep interest in them; for whatever tends to increase or diminish the amount of the former, must inevitably affect the farmer and manufacturer. In fact, so intimately connected are all the branches of national industry, and so dependent are they upon each other, that the reciprocal benefits are ever found to be

the greatest when the whole are prosperous ; and the depression of any one is invariably injurious to all the others.

But as the main reliance of the people of Berkshire for obtaining the means of subsistence, and the advancement of their prosperity, comfort and affluence, must be reposed upon their agricultural labors and skill in the useful arts, they will ever be the chief subjects of anxious and profound consideration. It is to the inexhaustible treasures of the well tilled and teeming earth, that a large majority have directed the unre-mitted attention and unwearied labor of their lives. If their prospect of rapid accumulation and ultimate wealth is not as alluring—if the wings of hope do not appear as resplendent in the iridescent tints of future success, as in some of the other more attractive vocations of their countrymen, they have the more certain and cheering consolation, that their paths will be strewn with those amaranthine flowers, whose rich fragrance is the balmy breath of virtue and piety ; that they are not subject to that sudden decadence, and those awful precipitations, from the giddy heights of prosperity, which are so fearfully common in the more hazardous pursuits of the merchant, navigator and manufacturer; and the yet more perilous course of ambition, for the acquisition of honorable distinction, and the temporary and unstable power of official exaltation.

Unexposed to the appalling storms of adversity, from the quietude of their retired and secure position, the sun-shine of perpetual peace illumines and gilds the present, and lights them onward in the full enjoyment of contented hearts, and the confident anticipation of still more substantial and exalted fruitions in the vast and glorious future.

May it not then be firmly asserted, has it not been verified by centuries of experience ; illustrated by the practical examples of the most enlightened and distinguished men, and sanctioned by the governments of the most civilized and powerful nations in all ages, that the cultivation of the earth is the most manly pursuit of man ; the most beneficent to his species ; the most important to his country ; the most conducive to physical energy, intellectual development, moral improvement and excellence of character, and the most certain route to all those sources of impeccable enjoyment in which he has been destined to participate ; and at the same time to render him worthy of that eternal felicity to which his immortal spirit unceasingly aspires, and with such an irresistible ardor, that even scepticism ceases to doubt, and infidelity stands rebuked, by the ever warning voice of that divinity within us, which appeals in such thrilling and commanding accents, to the roused soul of every man, however humble or exalted.

An ardent attachment to the country, and an admiration of forests, mountains and picturesque scenery, are the results of early education—

of high intellectual attainments—of fostered sentiment and encouraged fancy—of a vivid perception of the beautiful and grand—the true and the sublime, in the innumerable and infinitely diversified and wondrous realms of creation. This is not an imaginary assumption, or a dreary, insubstantial and speculative hypothesis; but a well founded and long recognized truth, which has been fully confirmed by the literature and eloquence of all nations, and the united testimony of erudition and genius, from the days of Homer to those of Cicero, Shakespeare, Milton, Chatham and Scott. Yes, their transcendently grand and imperishable moral efforts and practical illustrations are conclusive, that a taste for the sublime and beautiful, in the works of nature and of art, is induced, enlarged and matured, in proportion to the extension of knowledge. It is then that the wisdom, omnipotence and bounty of the Almighty, become apparent in the boundless immensity of their scope.

But it is not the physical elements, the external aspect, the palpable consistence and perceptible qualities of the objects of nature, which are alone admirable. Besides an acquaintance with those scientific laws which regulate and explain the phenomena peculiar to each, and those curious and interesting researches which are required to ascertain how far any of them may be rendered useful to man, there are other inquiries which, if not as important, are still sufficiently consequential, to merit the attention of the learned and grave benefactors of mankind.

In the vegetable kingdom alone, how numerous are the subjects of investigation, either from their immediate connexion with the labors and interests of every department of rural economy, or their direct bearing on the other numerous branches of industry. The zeal which is awakened, from a minute examination of the humblest details, in the wide-spreading domain of agriculture, who has not experienced, that can be excited on any occasion, or stimulated into action for any purpose.

But there are yet other views, which if not so valuable, are most worthy of observation. The history of agriculture reveals some of the most extraordinary facts which are associated with the civilization of the human race; and if not of a miraculous character, they are evincive of an indomitable propensity in man, or an eternal ~~law~~ of his nature, to preserve and transmit, from generation to generation, the most precious of the gifts which were conferred upon him, when first “sent forth to till the ground from whence he was taken.”

It is not more remarkable than true, that all the cereal grains, and most of the esculant plants, fruits and flowers, as well as all domestic animals, which have been and still are appropriated for administering to the subsistence, comfort and pleasure of man, are not now to be found in a state



of nature, as indigenous to any particular clime, or were they ever, at any period of the world, as far back as the record of nations extend; but they appear to have been specially selected by the Almighty, and presented to the first family of our race, when excluded from Eden, and commanded to till the earth. They are named as the products of the field, and the inseparable companions of man, in the primitive book of the Old Testament. Pliny, the encyclopædist of antiquity, accurately describes them in his great work on natural history, as objects that were as universally known and appreciated, and as indispensable to nations as at the present period; and notwithstanding the extensive researches which botanists and zoologists have made, within the last century, and to whom the whole earth has been exposed for examination, by the discoveries and explorations of commercial enterprize and nautical adventure, who has seen, in any region, wherever man did not transport them, the camel or the horse, the ox or sheep, the ever faithful dog, or the invaluable and child-petted birds of the farm-yard, and which have been the constant associate of the husbandman, since the days of Jubal.

Who has gathered wheat, barley, rye or maize, or any of the most common culinary vegetables or fruits, where they have not been propagated by man? If the original types of some of those different species of animals and plants, are presumed to still exist, and that each has been brought to the state in which it is now seen, by a long continued process of culture and amelioration, it must be considered as an hypothesis, which neither facts or philosophy will verify or support—for some of them are not only anomalous in genus or species, but the varieties are as peculiar and marked, as at the earliest period of their known existence. But what is still more confirmatory of their singular history and indicated origin, and especially in respect to the grains and many of the garden vegetables—they absolutely require artificial aid to be reared and perpetuated; so that the decree, “in the sweat of his face man should eat bread,” is to be literally understood, since the materials of which it is formed require to be laboriously cultivated, for neither wheat or corn perpetuate themselves in any climate, but must be scattered in the earth, and tilled by the hand of man, or they perish.

There is another remarkable phenomenon connected with this very interesting subject. As nations have declined in prosperity and civilization, or the people have sought a refuge from adversity in more inviting regions, there appears to have been designated, as by a super-human power, even among the poorest and least enlightened colonists, some patriarch, some rural Noah, who rescued the most valuable and beautiful of the variety of animals and plants, from the universal devastation, and bore them successively onward, across the great ocean of time; and as

*judith*

the green hills of intelligence and human improvement appeared above the boundless waste, each in succession became an Arrarat to some of the chosen families of rustic industry, where luxurient gardens and well tilled fields—"the lowing herd" and "drowsy tinklings of the distant fold," as emphatically announced the preservation and perpetuity of husbandry and the attendant arts, as did the bow which was set in the heavens by the hand of omnipotence, "that seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night should never cease."

Thus have they passed from empire to empire—from isle to isle, and from continent to continent, until they are scattered over every portion of the globe where civilized man has appeared.

It is equally as extraordinary, that during the protracted decadence of those once flourishing and mighty kingdoms of western Asia, and the shores of the Mediterranean, a taste for the ornamental, as well as the useful, in cultivation, should have been cherished and survived their final destruction, and was perpetuated even during that dark and gloomy night of ignorance and barbarism, which for centuries enveloped the earth. As nation after nation went down, there was selected from among the innumerable varieties of plants which had successively embellished the superb garden of Ninevah, Babylon, Jerusalem and Carthage, and the sumptuous villas of the Ptolomies and the Cæsars, the most precious and beautiful; and wherever civilized man has since wandered, they have as invariably been his companions as his house-hold gods, and as dearly prized. They are to be seen in every cottage enclosure of the European peasant and of the American citizen, however humble, from the borders of the ocean to the western confines of the Union.

Thus, they are not only the emblems, but the trophies and conclusive evidence of an antecedent and exalted state of civilization, as well as the certain indications of the progress which has been made in moral improvement and intellectual cultivation; for who is there that has travelled in foreign countries or their own, that has not been enabled to estimate the relative condition of entire communities and of families, from the greater or less attention which has been bestowed upon ornamental cultivation. It is the crowning wreath of individual and national exaltation; and a single vase of flowers in the window, or a rare plant beside the door-way, as distinctly indicate the character of the inmates of each habitation, whether it be conspicuous for an ostentatious magnificence or rude simplicity of structure, as does a beacon-light the certainty of an approach to land, to the far-off mariner.

Such are the pleasing effects and proof of those numerous combined causes, which have been and still are in successful operation, to urge

forward the noble work of reformation and improvement in man and nations.

It was to induce a more correct and higher estimate of the paramount advantages of husbandry; to excite and foster a sincere respect and ardent attachment to rural pursuits, to encourage native industry and genius, to collect and diffuse practical information among the whole people, to reward experiment, and thus to elevate to their just level the cultivators of the soil and their meritorious co-laborators in the arts; that your society was established; and the exhibition of the numerous products of the earth and of house-hold, mechanical and manufacturing skill which have been witnessed on this occasion, are honorable testimonials of the advantages which have been derived from the institution.

There seems to have here been, in full action, that spirit of enterprize, zeal for advancement and power of execution, which now pervade the old and new world; and so surprisingly great have already been the results—so mighty the impulse which has been given to intellect and industry, and so perpetually is it being augmented, that the possible realizations of the future may well be considered as far beyond the power of calculation.

So extraordinary have been the times in which we have lived—so wonderful the events which have occurred—so numerous and astonishing the discoveries of science—so momentous and various the revolutions in the condition of man and of nations, that, compared with by-gone ages, the whole appear like the unsubstantial creations of a fervid imagination.

Why and how is it, that such an universal excitement prevails throughout the earth, in relation to the improvement of the moral and physical condition of man? What is the incipient cause and propulsive motive that has induced such an intense interest and directed such an eager attention to the rights, wants, comforts and general welfare of the people? Whence is it, that for the first time since the organization of empires, we now behold the most eminent men in every department of human knowledge, in every rank and station of society, instituting inquiries which have for their object the reformation of government, the diffusion of instruction, the encouragement of industry, the promotion of individual happiness, the development of the resources, and the extension of the power and glory of nations?

This is the answer to all these interrogations. Truth and fact have become the only objects which are deemed worthy of research, or entitled to consideration. Principle has assumed the place of hypothesis, utility established as the standard of thought and invention, and progression recognized as the only proper aim and test of well directed personal exertion and wise national administration. Speculation and theory have

ceased to excite attention and respect ; and when discoveries are announced, they are subjected to the stern scrutinies of talent and erudition, and the rigorous ordeal of practical experiment. This is not all, for it is not sufficient that they have been demonstrated to be correct in principle and certain in application ; but they must also be clearly proved to be advantageous, beneficial, profitable and useful, or they are pronounced worthless. This, therefore, may be emphatically called the age of UTILITY.

Truth alone now holds the sceptre of power, and aided by principle and fact, wages a war of extermination against the delusions of ignorance, the follies of custom, the corruptions of error and the wrongs of oppression.

Science and the arts have been practically united for the first time since they were known, and become powerful auxiliaries in the glorious cause of civilization. By their harmonious and vigorous co-operation, the facilities of inter-communication have been so astonishingly extended, that oceans are crossed, and the length of continents traversed with such celerity, that it appears as if an arch had been thrown across the broad abyss of space and time, and thus approximated the most distant regions and events.

The physical and moral worlds are beheld from numerous commanding points of view, which are the acquisitions of modern discovery. Their summits have been gained by the long and laborious efforts of genius and learning, and there they have reared the lofty watch-towers of intelligence, from whence the eagle-eye of philosophy ranges over the infinite expanse of the universe ; beholds from afar the grand movements of the material and intellectual creation ; looks back upon the past for the elements of inductive wisdom ; examines the present to be instructed by its revelations, and with a prescient amplitude of vision, descries the looming future in all its sublime immensity, and thronged, swift-~~coming~~ consequences.

*coming*



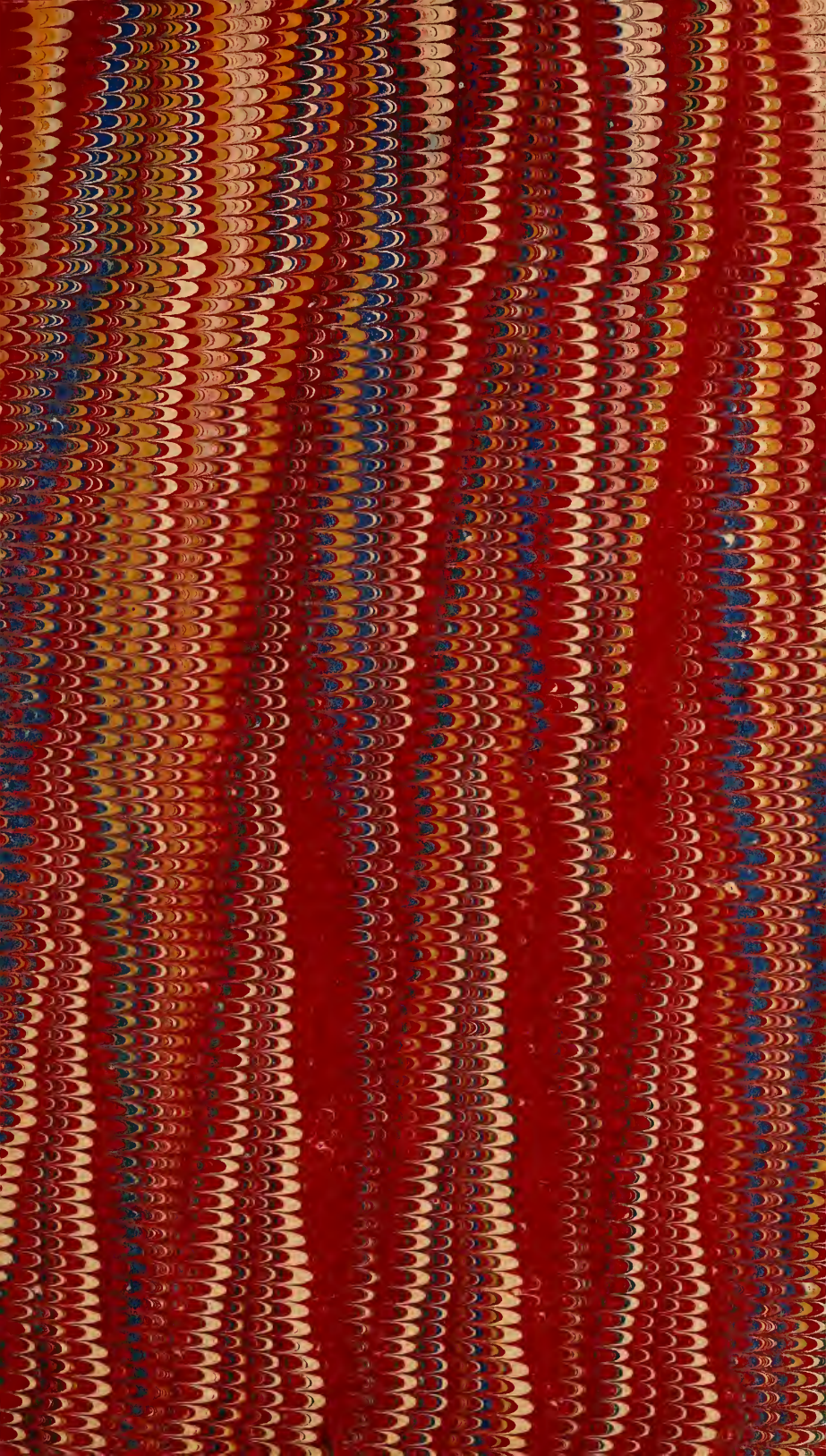














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