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MISCELLANY.

AN ADDRESS,

Delivered before the South Carolina Institute, in Charleston, April 17, 1855, by HON. JAMES L. ORR.

[CONCLUDED.]

The multiplication of carriage manufactories in the State has not only diffused life and activity into many other departments of industry, but has put wealth into the pockets of the proprietors, and has added to the comforts and pleasures of the people. Twenty-five years ago, in the country where I reside, it was a rare sound to hear the rattling of carriage wheels at a country church. Occasionally, when a farmer had grown a little ambitious of display in making a "turn out," or when his children were too numerous to be conveyed even by doubling on poor Dobbin's back, an old gig or a jersey wagon was called into requisition, which always brought from his neighbors a critique on his pride or extravagance. That has passed away, and now the church yard is crowded with vehicles purchased by the owner from the manufacturer, and paid for by timber from his forest or surplus products from his farm. Both are benefited by the exchange, and society is elevated and refined by extending the personal comforts and exalting the tastes and aspirations of its members.

The extensive carriage manufactory at Greenville employs some fifty mechanics, and sells annually not less than seventy-five thousand dollars worth of work. The market which it furnishes to the various branches of industry in the district, in its consumption of lumber, materials, provisions, &c., diffuses a prosperity in the district greater than is done by all the capital expended by our friends from the middle and lower districts, in their summer excursions and residence in this beautiful mountain town. A dozen such manufactories, employed in making other articles of prime necessity now purchased abroad, would make every hill and every valley blossom with plenty, and every heart swell in happy content.

There are other branches of manufacturing industry meriting special commendation, which I must omit for want of time. Something has been done, but much, very much, remains to be consummated before that bountiful prosperity hovers over us, which it is our duty to woo and win to our embrace.

We want manufactories and machine shops—they co-exist together. We want enterprising, intelligent, inventive mechanics. We want them to increase until their labor will furnish us every machine and fabric for man's use that can be as cheaply matured here as elsewhere. How are these wants to be supplied? Let our citizens cease to expatriate themselves from the bosom and kind affections of our common mother, and devote themselves to the grateful task of fostering and warming the condition in which she now languishes. Let them not deceive themselves by the delusive hopes of sudden wealth in new and distant lands, and let them resolve that when "life's fitful fever" is over, that their bones shall repose side by side with their fathers, beneath the native soil. Take it all in all, we have the best country which I have seen in the broad expanse of this great confederacy—let us be contented to occupy, and improve, and develop it. Providence has blessed us with every variety of soil and surface, climate, production and resources, with no stinted hand—let us do something worthy of the munificence we enjoy, and bequeath to our children a heritage and country greater than we received from our fathers.

The first great step to be taken in the reformation of our habits, to re-invigorate our decaying prosperity, is for our planters and farmers to invest the whole of the net profits on agricultural capital in some species of manufacturing; the field is broad and inviting, but little has yet been occupied. With prudence and energy there can be no failure in any branch. A short experience will demonstrate, that the investment is more profitable than it would be in agriculture, and it must continue so, until the distribution of labor and capital in all branches of industry equalizes profit. It will be many years before the demands of labor and capital in manufactures will be met, and until that period arrives, manufacturing products must be predominant. Such investments must be made with bold confidence, and pressed with vigilant energy, to reimburse in the adventure. The absence of all experience in this department of industry has resulted in miscarriages in some sanguine experiments already made, and they are held up as beacons by the croakers to warn all others from venturing, but it will be found on strict scrutiny that miscarriages have been more common in agricultural investments that have been made and supervised by inactive and inexperienced men than in manufacturing enterprises.

Our planters and farmers are ever too timid when invited to make outlays of capital in anything new, and yet they carry their liberality even to prodigality, in satisfying their own or the wants of friends. They spend their money in generous profusion to minister to their own, or the personal comforts of those dependent on, or attached to them, whether the attachment originates in consanguinity or friendship; but

when they invest money it must be with a certainty that it will yield seven per cent. per annum. This timidity is a barrier to enterprise, and some useful lessons might be learned by them from our northern rivals. In some particulars the population of the North and East, is misjudged in the South. They are a people full of enterprise, energy, industry, thrift and economy. In personal expenditures their economy is so rigid that we often denigrate it parsimony, and their chaffering over small sums implies a total absence of liberality. Their rule of life is to expend the smallest possible amount in purchasing ordinary comforts or pleasures, for when thus expended it is so much capital forever gone, and to invest their surplus gains, in any and every conceivable scheme promising directly or remotely to bring profit or interest. Their enterprise and adventure is so great that no new project is too chimerical to secure for experiment an investment of northern capital. Hence you see the streams of New England and some of the Middle States lined with machinery. Their railroads surmount every hill and penetrate every valley. Their other public works and all their public buildings, manifest the same indomitable enterprise and a spirit of adventure that hazards capital in every scheme. Their whole country in all its length and breadth is a monument to their industry and public spirit. They are shrewd in driving a bargain—so much so as to expose them to the imputation of disingenuousness. In their conduct they recognize the morality, and put into practice in trade, the old common law doctrine of contracts, *carcat emptor*. Their public charitable institutions are high tributes to their benevolence. They husband dimes to invest or donate dollars. The inventive genius of her sons is fostered and rewarded by their willingness to try every novelty, and if it proves useful, ample compensation is reaped by the inventor for the new thought. Their investments oftentimes are profligate, and yet it seems to be no discouragement, it rather incites to other schemes, promising reimbursement for past losses, and great gains from present risks. We transfer our surplus capital to distant States to grow more cotton and sugar, or if it is retained here, it is represented by bonds and notes bearing seven per cent. interest. This was the habit of our fathers, and any innovation upon long established usage or theory is resisted—hence reforms of old habits prove a great labor to the reformer. It is time that it should commence. Individual and State interests require us to take a "new latitude and departure." The market for agricultural labor stagnates under a superabundant supply, the market for agricultural capital is saturated; and there is active demand for manufacturing labor and capital, a wise political economy teaches the necessity of their equalization.

When our citizens shall have embarked their capital in manufactures and machinery, our State will rapidly fill up with artisans and mechanics, without whose presence and labor, I believe, no interest, even agricultural, can reach the maximum prosperity to which it is capable of ascending.

The idea was once prevalent with wrong-headed people that manual and mechanical labor was inconsistent with intelligence, gentility and dignity of character. Most happily such an absurd sentiment is exploded in the minds of all sensible men and women. Labor is the tax upon all animated existence for its preservation. The ant, the reptile, the beast of the field and the fowls of the air, all toil for food. Man, the master of them all, endowed with intellect, and created with appetites and desires to exercise and develop his capacious faculties, is bound also to labor, and to labor by the omnipotent fiat of Jehovah. When our common progenitor was expelled from the green bowers of Eden, it was under an angered though just sentence that "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground." Henceforward the spontaneous productions of the earth failed to sustain man. Can labor be disreputable since its requirements are universal and its necessities of Divine origin?

The progress of civilization is constantly multiplying and expanding the demands upon labor, and the judicious means for increasing its products, have engaged the thought and employed the invention of the wisest and best men in every age. Men are entitled to that respect and consideration from the community, which their moral worth, intelligence and usefulness justly inspire, without regard to the occupation pursued. The lawyer and physician labor; and oftentimes the foetid air of a dark dungeon, or the nauseating odor of a sick room, is more repugnant to the senses and sensibilities than any which the forge or machine shop emits. The educated youth who masters one or more branches of the mechanic arts, by study and application, has a personal independence and a prospect for the future, to be envied by the brother who has chosen a learned profession. That is an erroneous public opinion which gives to professional men rank and position of social and intellectual superiority over other occupations. The exclusive business of professional men is intellectual, and if they receive superior attainments within the line of their employment it is no more than they could accomplish. But to test the amount of intellect required in different occupations, which

would require the most comprehensive understanding, the machinist who could construct a steam engine and adjust all its nice parts and apply its power to spinning and weaving, or the lawyer who could comprehend the rule in Shelley's case and expound the statute *de donis*?

Ambitious fathers dedicate their sons to the learned professions, and many thus sent fall far below the fond anticipations of dotting parents. They locate in a town or village, and hang their sign upon the "outer walls." Weeks and months roll on, and no patients or clients come; habits of idleness are contracted, and, with them, pleasure in dissipation, which soon ends in debauchery; then loss of self-respect—loss of hope—that last prop of the falling man—despair and ruin, crime and disgrace perhaps, till the sad finale is at length reached, when he sinks "To the low dust from whence he sprang. Unwept, unhonored and unsung!"

The educated, skillful mechanic is always employed; he receives and husbands fairly remunerating wages for his labor; he finds in his profession an ample theatre for the exercise of taste, invention, judgment, and every faculty of the proudest intellect; he crowns his house with comfort and his table with abundance. Is his domestic happiness and his usefulness to society to be compared with that of the briefless lawyer or the patientless doctor?

Young men in our State are commencing to realize that labor is reputable. When the graduates of a respectable institution, sacrificial false sentiment, and go to the machine shop to be educated in mechanism and engineering, as some have recently done, it furnishes the index of a healthful public opinion, and gives bright prospects of an increasing prosperity in the future.

The great desideratum now is to give dignity to mechanical employment by educating its members, not only in the use of tools and machines, but in physical science; teach them chemistry, mechanical philosophy, mathematics, engineering, architecture, and all knowledge necessary to prosecute all branches of their profession. This accomplished, we shall hear no more of their social and intellectual inferiority. There can be no inherent defects in any of the elements constituting the man where his labors show such varied useful triumphs, as mark the pathway of the mechanic, in ministering to the conveniences and comforts of civilized life. Their social influence has not been equal to their numbers or services in advancing the civilization of the race. Mechanics, now is the time to commence a reformation; push it on with your wonted energy; organize associations, not to regulate wages, but to buy libraries—to procure lecturers who may instruct you—to interchange thoughts during hours of leisure; and soon your influence will be as potent in the social and intellectual, as it now is in the industrial and inventive world.

Distinction is the pet of no one occupation; every useful path in life is an avenue to power, and opens doors of conquest to him who has the moral courage to knock and enter. It has been nobly won by many of our brethren. Franklin, Watt, Fulton, Arkwright, Cartwright, Adams, Morse and thousands more, have blessed mankind by their inventive genius, and given a bright page in history to their own great names. A gifted orator sums up your duties and responsibilities in the following beautiful language: "Respect your calling; respect yourselves. The cause of human improvement has no firmer or more powerful friends. In the great temple of nature, whose foundation is the earth; whose pillars are the eternal hills; whose roof is the star-lit sky; whose organ tones are the whispering breezes and the sounding storm; whose architect is God; there is no ministry more sacred than that of the intelligent mechanic." With your genius and capacity, industry, and usefulness, why may you not stand up and exact recognition of your perfect equality with the most favored and exalted class of your fellow men.

If the State cherished in its bosom intelligent mechanics in numbers equal to supplying all our necessities, as I have presented them, new fountains of wealth would be poured out on every industrial interest. The population of our cities would rapidly increase, old towns would be rejuvenated, and new ones builded, the merchant's sales and customers would be extended, real estate appreciated in value, agriculture would no longer languish; it is no idle dream, the horn of plenty would be emptied on the land, and its refreshing dews would quicken and enliven its hills and vales, mountains and plains. Let us all unite cordially in fostering a profession which will beautify the country, enrich the citizen, develop the resources and magnify the greatness, of our much loved and cherished Carolina.

The patronage of this institute is not restricted to manufactures and the mechanic arts, but wisely embraces in its purposes the promotion of agriculture, which now is and must continue the paramount industrial interest of South Carolina. It is the basis of all wealth. Its products beyond the consumption of the laborer becomes capital, a portion of which is expended in meeting the incidental outlays of production, and the remainder is the annual accumulated wealth of the husbandman.

I have, however, consumed already too much of your time to do more than glance

at a few points in this great interest. In proportion as it was developed in conjunction with manufactures and the mechanic arts in the empires and republics of antiquity, so was their power and influence felt and exerted on surrounding nations. The most celebrated of these empires had a feature in their systems of civilization precisely the same as exists in the Southern States of this Confederation, to wit: domestic slavery.

Egypt was celebrated for her agricultural productions; a sufficiency to supply home consumption and a surplus with which to employ a foreign commerce. Her progress in the mechanic arts would do no discredit to our epoch. Dr. Wilde, in his voyage to the Mediterranean, gives an interesting account of the open linen work found covering the mummies of Egypt as similar to modern Berlin worsted. "One pattern," he says, "represented roses with four petals, shaped like hearts arranged in lozenges, composed of buds of different colors, which cross the linen obliquely, and thus present the appearance of an embroidered net of many colors; three varieties of red, two of blue, a white and a yellow. The linen ground died a nankeen color." This description almost rivals some of the beautiful specimens on exhibition here, from the work tables of our own fair countrywomen. Egypt had her coins, gold chains, signet rings, coverings of tapestry, carved work, and glassware. Her jurisprudence, skill in the medical art, and in embalming the dead, are imperishable memorials of her learning, science and advanced civilization. Her system of domestic slavery was not unlike our own—her slaves tilled the soil and performed manual services—they were bought and sold for a price in market overt. For centuries the empire flourished, and her power was recognized by the neighboring kingdoms.

Babylonia, an empire great and powerful among her cotemporaries, with fruitful agriculture flourished for a succession of ages. She too had her system of domestic slavery. Phœnicia rose rapidly in power and wealth, extended her dominions by planting colonies, tilled the soil with slaves, and carried on an extensive commerce. Tyre and Sidon, her principal cities, were the very cradles of the mechanic arts, and were, it seems, the birth-place of arithmetic, astronomy, and taste for letters which afterwards grew up into such magnitude when transplanted into Greece. Phœnicia, too, had her system of domestic slavery.

Carthage was a rich and powerful republic, engaged extensively in commerce and devoted to conquest. Her agriculture was restricted, and much of her supplies imported from Palestine. Her slaves tilled the earth and performed menial service for their masters. Free Carthage, too, had her system of domestic slavery.

Greece, the land of Plato, and Socrates, and Demosthenes—the land of philosophy, poetry and eloquence, around whose memory crowd so many classical associations— even free Greece was the home of slavery. A well informed writer describes ancient Greece as "sufficiently fertile to reward toil; it was not so prolific as to support idleness. Varied in its character, it did not stimulate its inhabitants to the branch of industry alone; it invited the culture of all. One district was best suited to produce wine, another oil, and a third corn. Arcadia supplied pasturage for cattle; Thessaly was proud of its horses; the coast, indented with numerous bays and harbors, afforded every facility to navigation and commerce. Greece was not exclusively agricultural, pastoral or commercial, but she was all three together." In the meridian splendor of her power, greatness and glory—with a refined civilization, which has excited the wonder and challenged the admiration of the world, she, too, had her system of domestic slavery.

The Romans, like ourselves, were a mixed race, which impressed on them a peculiar nationality. The power and resources of the Empire, were colossal in all their proportions. In the days of her might, her arts, her agriculture, her manufactures, her arms, her genius, philosophy and eloquence, towered high above all rivals. She was indeed the "Mistress of the World," and her name spread dismay in the countries of her enemies. In the pride and pomp of her power she too had her system of domestic slavery, and her slaves outnumbered the free citizens of Rome.

In all these Empires their slaves most generally were vanquished enemies. There was no distinction in color, features and understanding, between the master and slave, which exposed the institution to embarrassment, such as we are exempt from in the United States, Cuba and Brazil. To control ancient slaves, required more restraint, and of consequence a more vigorous discipline than we practice towards our slaves. The African slave has his status stamped by the Creator in indelible colors,—he needs no badge of uniform to assign him his place when seen. The inferiority of his intellect is not less distinctly marked, he is dull and inert in his perceptions, indolent in thought, sluggish in his movements, improvident in his habits and feeble in his reasoning,—and this inferiority, appreciated by himself, induces a prompt and cheerful submission to the authority of the master, with but little necessity to appeal to restraint and punishment. This makes the relation in modern

times more acceptable to the slave and less perplexing to the master.

I have collated this brief epitome of the history of some of the most celebrated empires and republics of antiquity, and noted specially their system of slavery to prove from the record of history, that the modern opinion held by many persons in the North and East that slavery is a political evil by reason of the weakness in a military aspect grafted on the State, and that it is incompatible with the personal and mental development of the white man, is founded in the most palpable error. I need only point to this epitome to establish the fact, that slavery presents no barrier whatever to the highest development and the civilization of the master race. What would an old Roman have replied to the charge that slavery was an element of weakness? He would have said that while Roman citizens were fighting the battles of the republic, Roman slaves were tilling the soil to support her armies and people, or if at peace, that she slave labored to give the owner leisure and means to cultivate philosophy, poetry, letters and eloquence. So we say for Southern slavery. With all her prating of philanthropy, has England, now an old empire, in her poetry obscured the genius of Virgil and Horace, or in her oratory equaled the splendid eloquence of Cicero. All the ancient precedents establish the fact, that slaveholding States are not only capable, but that they actually do attain the most exalted civilization enjoyed by their most favored and accomplished cotemporaries. Does our experience confirm the truth of these precedents? We have in the South more wealth per capita than the population of the North possesses; we have as much virtue and as little crime; we, with a third less population, furnish more than a moiety of all exports; and when our sons have met theirs in the camp, in the cabinet, in the senate, or on the bench, have they not nobly maintained themselves and borne to their countrymen as many trophies from all these theatres as the men of the North?

We have only to improve the means, which the God of nature has showered in copious profusion all over this State, to make our population affluent, independent, refined and intelligent, prosperous and powerful.

In late years, new interest has been awakened in improving our agriculture. It is fortunate that apathy has at last been discarded, and that our planters have commenced to repair the breaches of former years. Our lands are growing old, cleared hills have been pierced with deep gullies, and many exhausted fields surrendered to the sedge and pine; and still there is no sensible diminution in production, and yet but for the improvements in husbandry in modern years, our agriculture would have sadly languished.—Something has been done, but much remains for the planter to do.

In former years the strength of a rich virgin soil supplied to some extent the failure of good seasons and careful culture, but now that soil is washed off or has tired in the constant drafts on its strength. We must practice liberality to the earth, our most generous benefactress. If she is grown surly and yielded to our labor proportion to the ailment we have bestowed her, how many long years ago would we have been pinched with want and stricken with famine? She has in the generosity of her nature disdained to retaliate our parsimony, but with a noble benevolence, has tasked her utmost energies to fill our granaries and enrich our coffers. How can we, guided by the impulses of grateful hearts, longer neglect to minister to the modest wants of this disinterested friend, who so steadfastly toils for our happiness? Nourish her with the food her appetite craves, and she will reimburse you with no stinted interest. When she has grown weary, enfeebled by long and faithful service, let her rest. She will soon acquire new strength and vigor and bear you on her generous bosom a teeming harvest. The enlightened donor is never forgotten when she scatters her bounties. Try it.

The pecuniary and personal comfort of the parties would be greatly promoted if the planters of this State were all transformed into farmers. That policy is most pernicious which prompts the planter to swell the number of his cotton bales, and sends him into the provision market to buy his provisions, and into the live stock market to buy the animals used and consumed on the plantation. It makes him merely the supervisor of cotton fields, to produce profits for the stock and provision dealers; for how little of the roll of cotton money is left to the planter, when he has paid his merchant, his grocer and the stock drover.

How much more to his interest, then, to produce all the articles of consumption which may be grown in his own climate and on his own soil? The provisions consumed in this State may be successfully grown in every District, and the first great care of the planter should be to raise his own bread stuffs, pork, beef, and mutton, and with equal care he should rear his own horses and mules for plantation use. System and personal supervision will render the task one of easy accomplishment, and it will be an immense saving of the money drain for plantation expenses. His cattle will furnish him milk and butter, and his

flocks of sheep with mutton, as well as the fleece to clothe his workers. This policy would require a reduction in the number of acres planted in cotton, but if the policy could become uniform throughout the planting States, the reduction would entail no loss; the reduced crop yielding as large an aggregate as is now brought, by full crops; but if loss should follow, it will be more than re-imbursed in the falling off of plantation expenses.

The system, order, personal supervision and care for small matters, which this change would initiate, will beget economy—a personal virtue which our planters do not, in an eminent degree, possess. The cultivation of a great staple, which can be readily converted into cash, disciplines the planter to look after the details of minor interests, which, being neglected, must be supplied by contributions levied on the staple crop. This being true, whilst the market value of the labor producing only a great staple, is greater than the same amount employed in farming, the farmer amasses wealth more rapidly than the planter, and for this reason, in thirty years, the State of Kentucky and Tennessee—farming States—will be the wealthiest in the Union, not excepting Mississippi or Louisiana.

They send their surplus products to the South, growing staples, and receive the cash. A portion of it is expended by them with the Foreign or Eastern merchant and manufacturer, the balance, which is by no means inconsiderable, remains with them and is invested in public improvements, in building and decorating mansions, and in multiplying personal comforts. What disposition is made of the proceeds of the staple crop by the planter? The Foreign and Eastern merchant and manufacturer receives, in any event, as large a sum as the Kentuckian expends, but the planter's outlay does not stop there. All the pork and bacon, and much of the beef to support his workers for the year, must be bought and paid for, and not unfrequently the corn and flour, aids in swelling the bill. His horses and mules are worn out or have died during the year, and their number is to be replenished for the next crop. How much of the proceeds of the staple crop remain to be invested in public improvements and personal comforts after this depleting, eastward and westward.

Our planters neglect the education of their sons in the business of planting, and too often have occasion to indulge in bitter regrets for this omission. How few of them on attaining their majority and being presented by a kind father with a plantation and hands are qualified for its judicious supervision? They know nothing of the culture of a crop—of what constitutes a day's labor—of seed time and harvest—of the feeding and caring for of their stock. They are deceived by their workers and duped by their overseers. A few years reveal to them the prospect of bankruptcy, and the overseer becomes the owner of the estates which he lately supervised. The original owner, the untrained and uneducated son, is less censurable than the overkind father who neglected to teach him in his youth the practical duties of the business of life which was appointed to pursue.

But I cannot longer detain you, in pointing out amendments to the domestic policy of South Carolina. I should have been gratified to have given some thoughts on the culture of the vine, and the manufacture of wines in the middle and upper districts, a new department in husbandry, which will certainly at no distant day absorb profitably much of the agricultural labor of the State, and also some thoughts on leveeing and draining the swamp lands of the lower districts, which would open to cultivation a vast area of lands whose fertility would compare with the valley of the Nile. I leave these and other topics to those whose experience and greater wisdom will enable them to entertain and instruct you more thoroughly than I can hope to do.

Mr. President and gentlemen of the Institute, my task is nearly ended. You have my contribution to this Institute, over which you preside—"would it were worthier." I have attempted to enforce the conviction that our prosperity is absolutely dependent upon the judicious distribution of labor and capital—upon its diversion from agriculture to manufactures and the mechanic arts. My ambition on this interesting occasion has been not to indulge in the rhetoric of the orator, but to turn the attention of my countrymen by practical suggestions to the best means of stimulating and developing a new and vigorous prosperity.—Examine these suggestions with critical caution; accept such as are founded on wisdom; reject those based on error; and do something to make Charleston, the pride of every true hearted Carolinian—a great city—great in her commerce—great in her tonnage—great in her mechanic arts—great in her manufactures, and great in the number and enterprise of her inhabitants.

Do something to make South Carolina a successful rival to all her competing associates in the mechanic arts and manufactures, and build up for her a fame, as honorable and enduring to the skill and genius of her sons, in the industrial records of the Nation, as that intellectual and patriotic fame which our fathers reared for her, and which now lights up so brilliantly every page of her history.