AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Franklin County Agricultural Society,

Greenfield, October 4, 1855.

BY HON. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL.

PUBLISHED BY A VOTE OF THE SOCIETY.

GREENFIELD :
PRINTED BY CHARLES A. MIRICK.
1855.

AN
ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Franklin County Agricultural Society,

Greenfield, October 4, 1855.

BY HON. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL.

PUBLISHED BY A VOTE OF THE SOCIETY.

GREENFIELD :
PRINTED BY CHARLES A. MIRICK.
1855.

A D D R E S S .

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN :

Instructed, as I have been by the rich experiences of this and other similar occasions, I will not detain you long from the attractive festivities which are before you. It must be the great thought of us all, that the Author of Nature and Ruler of the Seasons has vouchsafed such an abundant harvest to this country and indeed to the whole world, as the present and coming wants of man seemed to require ; but which was only hoped for rather than expected, even by the most devoted believers in the Providence of Heaven. No one of us, it may be, has witnessed a year of such uninterrupted beauty and bounty as this. Spring preserved its ascendancy through the summer, and the fall, the decay, the death of the year, has scarcely commenced.

Some one has said that if the Pilgrims had landed in the fertile regions of the West New England would not have been settled. This may be, but it was great, though not singular, good fortune then, that immigrants by sea are compelled to land upon the coast before they

penetrate to the interior. It does sometimes appear as if travellers in the West and the inhabitants there, were a little giddy upon their great plains, lakes, and rivers. I have thought proper, then, to devote the moments of this day assigned to me, to some reflections upon the influence of hills, mountains, and the ocean, upon lakes, and prairies, the dependence of agriculture upon commerce, and the relations of the East to the West, that, if possible, some of our young men may be bound by stronger ties to the land of their nativity.

I will not, however, deceive myself nor attempt to mislead you, by assuming that the West is not a region of great fertility and abundant harvests. Equally fortunate is it for the East, as for the West, that it is so. I shall only venture to indicate that the West is not in every respect superior to the East, and that we have some compensations for the hardness of New England soil and the rigor of our northern climate. Our opinion of a foreign land does not rest so much upon its soil and climate as upon the character of its men. We well know that Egypt and Ireland are among the favored portions of the globe, yet we respect the perpetual enemies of Russia in the mountains of Caucasus more than we do the inhabitants of the Nile, and would sooner cast our lot in Sweden, Norway, or Iceland even, than cultivate the bogs of the Shannon or the moors of Donegal. One of the cultivated and useful men of Massachusetts asks me in a letter what opportunity the vicinity of my own residence furnishes for a home, when he shall be relieved from his present cares and labors. And he says, "what I most of all seek is a *home* among warm hearts and active souls, where there is pure air, pure water, and mountain scenery."

We respect hills, mountains, forests, waterfalls, and the ocean. There is not only an inspiration in these, the grandest works of nature, but there is a religion in them also. The dweller among mountains, the wanderer in the forest, or upon the shore of the ocean, is a continual worshiper. God has made him so. Nature is not the same everywhere, and what nature is, man, to a great extent, is also. Indeed, without seeking for the reason or principle of the law, we expect the mountaineer to be vigorous in body, and strong, though perhaps uncultivated, in intellect.

We associate physical indolence with great fertility of soil, and positive inability to labor with uninterrupted salubrity of climate. Switzerland is a small country, but her mountains are indicative of the greatness of her people, who, for ten centuries, by their comparative social purity and political freedom, have attracted the attention of the world far more than the populous states and principalities of Germany. Germany has, to be sure, a high rank for learning, but it is associated with a sluggish civilization, which might, under adverse circumstances, be easily exchanged for an effeminate barbarism. And the millions of the great Russian plains, if unsupported by mental or physical force from without, will too readily accept the conqueror's yoke, while the Swiss on the one hand and the Caucasian races on the other, would resist to the last extremity. A race of mountaineers may remain isolated for centuries without loss of spirit or character, though the graces of civilization might be totally effaced. But this cannot with truth be said of the inhabitants of flat countries. And we may, perchance, get a glimpse of the philosophy of this fact. Mountains are not usually

fertile, while the great plains of Europe, Asia, and America, are for the most part productive with a small expenditure of labor. Now if you separate one of these prairies, steppes, or plains from the rest of the world, what inducement to activity beyond the preservation of animal life remains? In mountainous and comparatively sterile regions, so great are the necessities of the inhabitants, that activity and labor are the common lot. The necessity for labor is the mother of what we call *enterprise*.

Where the necessity for labor does not exist and press as a general rule upon all, enterprise is unknown, or is else transplanted from other less favored regions. How often is it that the children of the rich are lacking in energy and enterprise, while these qualities are quite universal among the properly educated children of less favored classes? Men will not usually labor when the customary round of wants is supplied; and this round is more likely to diminish than to increase, when all external stimulus is withdrawn. Now while mountains are favorable to animal life, they are not usually productive in the means of its support. One alternative only remains: Men must work or starve. Though disposed as our race is to idleness, most of us accept labor when presented on such stern conditions. Yet we often accept it, or flee from it to more favored climes, as though it were always and everywhere a curse; while in truth there is within us all a principle which renders labor a blessing. I do not, of course, speak of the systems of Europe, or other servile systems, which compel the laborer to delve in ignorance for a bare subsistence. The New England laborer is not subject to nor in danger of any such degradation. When labor

is regarded merely as a means of supporting life or of accumulating wealth, then it is a curse ; but it becomes a blessing when viewed as a process by which we achieve a victory over the resisting forces of nature or art. It is not the glory of Christ or of Christianity that its founder was without temptation ; but that being tempted he was without sin. Virtue, genius, plain intellect, manual labor, respects itself and is respected in proportion to the obstacles it overcomes. Marshal de St. Arnaud and Lord Raglan, though unsuccessful in the Crimea, are, after all, more distinguished than they would have been had the Russians fled precipitately beyond the isthmus of Perekop. Labor, labor of the hands merely and for a subsistence only, is and ever must be menial ; but it is dignified and ennobled, when, guided by the intellect, it overcomes the obstacles which lie in every man's path. Labor is a blessing just in proportion as it is an achievement.

A life which accomplishes nothing is nothing to the world. The labor which such a liver is obliged to perform, seems justly enough to him to be a curse. But do you not think that the labor of the astronomer, the chemist, the mathematician, the poet, is a blessing ? Indeed it is ; and his labor is as severe as any manual labor can possibly be. Why then, thou mere denizen of earth, is labor to him a blessing and to you a curse ? Plainly because you accept labor as a yoke upon your own neck, instead of seizing it as an instrument in your hands, by whose agency you will achieve a victory over the obstacles in your way. Labor, to be sure, is an instrument by which we acquire a subsistence and accumulate wealth ; but an instrument, too, by which we demonstrate the supremacy of the intellect over the in-

animate creation. Now this highest form of labor can exist only when there is enterprise, and enterprise is the child of a common necessity. And there is no reason in the nature of man why agricultural labor with us should be a struggle for a subsistence merely, and therefore to be avoided as far as possible. It is an art; it invokes and will employ a high order and great variety of learning; it develops the physical man; it cultivates and chastens all moral qualities, and it stimulates the intellect. Agriculture in Massachusetts is not on the one hand so hopeless as to leave men in despair, nor, on the other, has nature been so generous as to invite us to rely upon her spontaneous products. *Excellence* is an attainment through struggle and labor amidst the active competition of other men. We judge men, men judge themselves, not so much by their actual attainment, as by the process of the struggle and the obstacles which have been overcome. If you see a farm in the highlands of Worcester equal to the best cultivated one on the alluvial banks of the Connecticut, the Worcester farmer at once takes the highest place in your esteem. And this preference does not rest upon the superiority of the attainment, but upon the evidence which it furnishes that there has been a higher exhibition of enlightened labor, energy, enterprise, and genius in one case than in the other. And you will pardon me if I say, in illustration of a view I intend to take, that the Connecticut river farmers, though more favored in soil and climate, are not the best farmers of Massachusetts. If, in your minds, agriculture is a mere means of sustaining animal life, then no doubt you should place yourself where it can be sustained with the smallest amount of physical labor. But agriculture

takes rank with the highest forms of labor and learning where and only where there is opportunity, inducement, and necessity for the highest exercise of the intellectual faculties. Now no man can pretend that agriculture in the West is the intellectual exercise that it is with us. It may indeed be true that there is as much mind employed upon the land there as in New England ; but let no one assume from existing facts that the equality will be maintained through generations and centuries. The West has no character of its own. It is a vast lake, kept constantly in motion by the number and force of its tributaries, whose currents are distinctly marked over its whole surface. When immigration into the West shall cease, that vast region will be what its own wants require, influenced in some degree, of course, by the surrounding country.

We all anticipate that the valley of the Mississippi will be the home, the happy home of millions and tens of millions of human beings. There, no doubt, the graces as well as luxuries of civilization will abound ; but it is not probable that the chief abodes of art, of science, of intellectual labor, of inventive, creative genius will be there.

But plains not only fail to nourish and strengthen the physical man by pure air and water, and an ever-pressing necessity for labor, but they lack proper food for the intellectual man. Where are the poets, born upon the plain, or the poets who have sung of the plain. The plain is destitute of inspiration. The inspiration common to all men has its root and support in the feeling that we are in the presence of God. To be sure we are in his presence always ; but there is no language of the plain, it has no voice, it utters nothing,

it reveals nothing, to the mind or soul. In a flat country, a hill, however insignificant, is a relief. A few weeks ago, a friend standing by my side in one of the level towns of the Old Colony, and no part of Massachusetts can be called a plain, pointed with zeal to the Milton hills, evidently gratified by the view, even at a distance, of so trifling an elevation of land.

It is difficult to say how far the operations of the mind are self-acting. We are influenced by what is around us. The sun, the moon, the planetary host, the myriads of stars, not only perform their parts in the great system of celestial mechanics, but they perpetually invite and attract men to the paths of science and religion. Paganism, or that form which bids men adore the sun, is sincere worship, though its proper object is unknown.

Yet it is certain from this that we are so constituted as to accept the instruction and influence of God's revelation in nature. And what is true of the influence of other worlds and systems, is in a degree true of the globe on which we dwell. A single majestic tree, a forest, a cataract, a mountain, the ocean, will often compel us to homage and adoration. So a stone, a leaf, a shell, a flower, we know not why or how, stimulates a mind so that it advances to new regions of science and heights of learning. No part of the world is destitute of these teachers and preachers of science and religion ; yet the mountains and ocean-touched portions are the most favored in this respect. Whatever is majestic, grand, sublime in nature, tends to produce the like qualities not only in the student but even in the common observer. So true is this, that a race may become distinguished for the qualities which

their native scenery seems calculated to inspire. The mountain and the ocean are specially fitted to exert an influence upon the character and physical constitution.

There are individual cases of eminent men who are of inferior physical development; but it is idle to expect a race of such men. It is not necessary to urge this view; as a general truth it is agreed to. It is not, however, to be assumed that mere greatness of body is an index of greatness of mind; but where a race is well developed, you may be sure that it possesses great original energy and is capable of cultivation and refinement. You may see in State-street, Boston, at one o'clock in the afternoon, as fine a class of merchants and men as any city can boast; but generally they are immigrants from Cape Cod, Cape Ann, Western Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire. Now a great city and a great plain are alike in one respect: they must be constantly stimulated to industry and re-invigorated by the infusion of new elements of character from the country around. It is apparent then that great plains can only be the abode of an elevated and enlightened civilization, when they are so situated as to receive new men from the mountains and shores of the ocean, and have avenues of commerce which draw away whatever is produced beyond the necessities of life. This is indeed now, and for an indefinitely long period of time to come, is likely to be the condition of the West. But the view we have taken leads me to consider what the effect upon American character would have been had it been possible to have settled the plains of the West before the Atlantic slope was occupied. It is possible that the heart of America would have been, like the south of Russia and parts of

Asia, destitute of a high civilization. Western men of this generation may well doubt whether they are not as favorably situated for developing the higher qualities of our race as any other people. They have great energy now ; but be it remembered that they have drawn from the old states and from Europe the most energetic part of the population. It would not indeed disturb the view which I have presented, resting as it does upon general principles, if the first and second and third generations should retain the characteristics of their origin ; but the census of 1850 exhibits many facts tending to prove that the West, as a producing country, is inferior to New England. Of course it is not assumed that the returns of any one census will demonstrate the truth in regard to a subject so complicated as this ; we must leave the question open as a practical one in America until a future day. I think, however, that the results which the census of 1850 furnishes, are sufficiently important in this connection to be laid before you.

Ohio is a first-class state and a representative state. It has its generation of men who were born within its limits. It compares favorably with any section in the nature of its soil and climate, and facilities for internal and external commerce. It was as fortunate as any state in the character of its settlers. They were hardy, enterprising men from New England, New York, and the states of Northern Europe. Her character was drawn from high and pure sources ; and I believe that in regard to education, internal improvements, and manufactures, no state, new or old, has been animated by a better spirit.

By the census of 1850, Ohio had a population of 1,980,329. Her products were as follows :

Slaughtered animals, valued at	-	-	-	\$ 7.439.243
Wheat, 14.487.351 bushels, at \$ 1,00	-	-	-	14.487.351
Oats, 13.472.742 " at 30c.	-	-	-	4.041.822
Corn, 59.078.695 " at 50	-	-	-	29.539.347
Potatoes, 5.245.760 " at 25	-	-	-	1.311.440
Hay, 1.443.142 tons at 7,50	-	-	-	10.823.565
Butter, 34.449.379 lbs. at 15	-	-	-	5.167.406
Cheese, 50.819.542 " at 7	-	-	-	1.457.367
Tobacco, 10.454.449 " at 10	-	-	-	1.045.444
Wool, 10.196.371 " at 40	-	-	-	4.078.548
Orchard and garden products	-	-	-	909.925
Various agricultural products not here enumerated	-	-	-	1.854.738
				<hr/>
Home manufactures	-	-	-	82.156.196
Product of manufactures, mining, and the mechanic arts, exclusive of the raw material	-	-	-	1.712.196
				<hr/>
Total product	-	-	-	111.837.714
Deduct interest at 6 per cent. on \$ 400.528.726, invested in manufactures, farms, and implements	-	-	-	24.031.723
				<hr/>
Balance	-	-	-	\$ 87.805.991

This gross product of \$87.805.991, gives an average product to each inhabitant of a trifle over forty-four dollars. If we omit to charge interest upon the capital invested in mining, manufactures, and the arts, and also upon the estimated cash value of the farms, the average returns to each person would be fifty-six dollars.

In 1850 the population of Illinois was 851.470. Its agricultural and manufacturing products were as follows, viz :

Slaughtered animals, valued at	-	-	-	4.972.286
Wheat, 9.414.575 bushels at 1,00	-	-	-	9.414.575
Oats, 10.087.241 " at 30c.	-	-	-	3.026.172
Corn, 57.646.984 " at 50	-	-	-	28.823.492
Potatoes, 2.672.295 " at 25	-	-	-	668.073
Hay, 601.952 tons at 6,00	-	-	-	3.611.712
Butter, 12.526.543 lbs. at 15	-	-	-	1.878.981
Cheese, 1.278.225 " at 07	-	-	-	89.475
Wool, 2.150.113 " at 40	-	-	-	860.045
Garden and orchard products	-	-	-	573.543
Various agricultural products not here enumerated	-	-	-	628.177
				<hr/>
Home manufactures	-	-	-	54.546.531
Product of manufactures, mining and the mechanic arts, exclusive of raw material	-	-	-	1.155.902
				<hr/>
				8.320.900

Total product	-	-	-	-	-	-	64.023.333
Deduct interest at 6 per cent. on \$ 108.924.238, invested in manufactures, farms, and implements-						-	6.535.454
Balance	-	-	-	-	-	-	57.487.879

This gross product of \$57.487.879, gives an average product to each inhabitant of sixty-seven and fifty one-hundredth dollars, or about twenty-three dollars above the average in Ohio. If we omit to charge interest upon the capital invested in agriculture, manufactures and mining, the average returns to each person will be seventy-five dollars, against fifty-six dollars in Ohio.

In 1850, the population of Wisconsin was 305.391. Its products of agriculture and manufactures were as follows, viz :

Slaughtered animals, valued at	-	-	-	-	-	920.178
Wheat, 4.286.131 bushels, at 1,00	-	-	-	-	-	4.286.131
Oats, 3.414.672 " at 30c	-	-	-	-	-	1.034.401
Corn, 1.988.979 " at 50	-	-	-	-	-	994.489
Potatoes, 1.402.956 " at 25	-	-	-	-	-	350.739
Hay, 278.662 tons at 6,00	-	-	-	-	-	1.659.972
Butter, 3.633.750 lbs. at 15	-	-	-	-	-	545.061
Cheese, 400.283 " at 07	-	-	-	-	-	28.019
Wool, 253.963 " at 40	-	-	-	-	-	101.585
Garden and orchard products	-	-	-	-	-	36.965
Various agricultural products not here enumerated	-	-	-	-	-	357.076
						10.314.616
Home manufactures	-	-	-	-	-	43.624
Product of manufactures, mining, and the mechanic arts, exclusive of raw material	-	-	-	-	-	3.878.137
Total product	-	-	-	-	-	14.236.377
Deduct interest at 6 per cent. on 33.552.279, invested in manufactures, farms, and implements	-	-	-	-	-	2.013.136
						12.223.241

This sum gives an average product to each person in the state of Wisconsin of forty dollars per year, against forty-four in Ohio, and sixty-seven and a half in Illinois. If we omit the interest on the capital invested, we have an average of forty-six dollars, to seventy-five in Illinois, and to fifty-six in Ohio.

These three States may be justly deemed a fair illustration of the productive labor of the West. Ohio, one of the oldest, Wisconsin, one of the youngest, and Illinois, intermediate between them, and all having a fertile soil, temperate climate, and superior natural advantages for external and internal commerce.

I have selected Vermont and Massachusetts as representative States of the influence of the ocean and mountains upon national character. The present generation in these States are substantially the same in their origin with the inhabitants of Ohio and Illinois. In the popular judgment they are not so blessed in soil and climate, though it is the fact, I believe, that Vermont is quite under-rated, as an agricultural State, by the public generally.

In 1850 the population of Vermont was 314,120. Its products of agriculture and manufactures were as follows, viz :

Slaughtered animals, valued at	-	-	-	1,861.336
Wheat, 535,955 bushels, at 1,50	-	-	-	803.932
Oats, 2,307,734 " at 40c.	-	-	-	923.093
Corn, 2,032,396 " at 1,00	-	-	-	2,032.396
Potatoes, 4,951,014 " at 40	-	-	-	1,980.405
Hay, 866,153 tons, at 10,00	-	-	-	8,661.530
Butter, 12,137,980 lbs. at 20	-	-	-	2,437.596
Cheese, 8,720,834 " at 08	-	-	-	697.666
Maple Sugar, 6,349,357 lbs. at 10	-	-	-	634.935
Wool, 3,400,717 lbs. at 40	-	-	-	1,360.286
Peas and beans, 104,649 bushels at 1,50	-	-	-	156.973
Gardens and orchards	-	-	-	334.108
Various agricultural products not here enumerated	-	-	-	457.567
				<hr/>
Home manufactures	-	-	-	22,341.823
Product of Manufactures, mining, and the mechanic arts, exclusive of raw material	-	-	-	267.710
Total product	-	-	-	3,569.543
Deduct interest at 6 per cent. on 71,107,886, invested in manufactures, farms, and implements	-	-	-	26,179.076
				<hr/>
				4,266.473
				<hr/>
				21,912.603

By this estimate we have an average product to each

person in Vermont of seventy dollars, while upon the same basis we obtained an average in Illinois of 67,50, in Wisconsin of \$40,00, and in Ohio of \$44,00. If we reject the item of interest, we have an average in Vermont of eighty-three dollars to each person, being eight dollars more than the average in Illinois, the highest of the three Western States named.

Massachusetts is not an agricultural State, though about one-fifth of her whole male population are employed upon the land. The number of inhabitants, according to the census of 1850, was 994,514. The products of agriculture and manufactures were as follows, viz :

Animals slaughtered, valued at	-	-	-	2,500.924
Rye, 481.021 bushels, at 1,00	-	-	-	481.021
Oats, 1.165.146 " at 50c.	-	-	-	582.573
Corn, 2.345.490 " at 1,00	-	-	-	2,345.490
Potatoes, 3 585.384 " at 50	-	-	-	1,792.692
Barley, 112.385 " at 70	-	-	-	78.669
Hay, 651.807 tons at 10,00	-	-	-	6,518.070
Butter, 8 071.370 lbs. at 20	-	-	-	1,614.274
Cheese, 7.088.142 " at 09	-	-	-	637.932
Beans and Peas 43.709 bushels at 1,50	-	-	-	65.563
Maple sugar, 795.525 lbs. at 10c.	-	-	-	79.552
Tobacco, 138.246 lbs. at 12½c.	-	-	-	16.589
Wool, 585.136 lbs. at 40c.	-	-	-	234.054
Garden and orchard products	-	-	-	1,064.015
Various articles not enumerated	-	-	-	153.953
				<hr/> 18,165.371
Home manufactures	-	-	-	205.333
Product of manufactures, mining, and the mechanic arts, exclusive of raw material	-	-	-	65,280.374
				<hr/> 83,651.078
Deduct interest at 6 per cent. on 195,643,573, invested in manufactures, farms, and implements	-	-	-	11,738.614
				<hr/> 71,912.464

This amount yields an average of seventy-two dollars, against forty dollars in Wisconsin, and forty-four in Ohio.

If we disregard the interest account, Massachusetts exhibits an average return upon all her inhabitants of eighty-three dollars.

We have then this general result :

Computing interest on the capital invested, we find the production in Wisconsin to be forty dollars, in Ohio forty-four dollars, in Illinois sixty-seven and a half dollars, in Vermont seventy dollars, and in Massachusetts seventy-two dollars, to each person.

If we omit the item of interest, the average production is forty-six dollars in Wisconsin, fifty-six in Ohio, seventy-five in Illinois, eighty-three in Vermont and eighty-three in Massachusetts.

It is not assumed that these statistics are accurate and complete in all their particulars ; but they are sufficiently so to give confidence in the general result. The prices named may be high, but it will appear by comparison that they are favorable to the West. Interest is computed at six per cent., which is considerably below the actual interest in Ohio and Illinois. Again, I have enumerated only the products of the land, and the products of manufactures and the mechanic arts, although Massachusetts had, in 1850, 19,598 men employed in navigation and the fisheries, while Ohio had only 4,109, Illinois 1,644, Wisconsin 561, and Vermont 159.

If we divide the entire agricultural production of each State among the men employed in that department of labor, regardless of the item of interest, we have the following result : In Wisconsin 251 dollars, in Ohio 303 dollars, in Massachusetts 326 dollars, in Illinois 386 dollars, and in Vermont 462 dollars to each man. Let it not, however, be hastily assumed that labor upon the land is better rewarded in Vermont than in Ohio ; there

is no probability that such is the fact, and these apparently strange results must be explained in some other way.

The theory which I presented in the first part of this address, that large plains, unless subject to strong external influences, are not favorable to an active, vigorous, progressive civilization, is not a theory of my own, nor by any means a new theory; but the statistical illustration which I have laid before you, was suggested by a remark of a stranger, whom I met in a railway car, that the inhabitants of Caledonia county, Vermont, produced more than any other equal population on the globe. This seems to be an exaggerated statement, and I feel bound, in justice to my unknown collocutor, to give you the result of an analysis of the industrial power of that county, upon the plan heretofore pursued.

It had, in 1850, a population of 23,595. Adopting the prices before named for Vermont, and charging interest upon the capital employed, its net product would be seventy-three dollars for each person; and omitting interest, it would be eighty-six dollars; thus placing the county somewhat above the average of the State. For the purpose of comparison, I will give you the result of a similar analysis of the county of Worcester, Mass.

By the census of 1850, Worcester had 130,152 inhabitants. Its agricultural and manufacturing products, allowing interest on the capital invested, and excluding raw materials, amount to \$9,925,445, or seventy-six dollars for each person, against seventy-three dollars in the county of Caledonia; and omitting the item of interest, we have eighty-six in Caledonia, against ninety-one in Worcester.

Now these facts, so favorable to New England, do

not by any means lead to the conclusion that labor is better rewarded here than in the West, but that we are, as a people, more industrious. Industry with us is a matter of necessity; with them it is a matter of convenience, or even of pleasure. It is not likely that they have a greater proportion of idlers, but that the mass are not so diligent as are the same classes with us. Men may indeed doubt whether this necessity for labor is a blessing or a curse; most of us would make the question a personal one. For ourselves, we seek what we call ease,—relief from labor.

But is this a wise social and national view? There may be, we know there are, systems of labor so oppressive that all manly aspirations and efforts for progress are destroyed. But such is not a necessary result of our New England system. Men may, if they choose, avail themselves of many opportunities for self-improvement. Our farmers, our mechanics, our laborers in every department, have leisure. But leisure is nothing without the habit of industry first formed. It is important to the industrial classes that they have leisure; but without the habit of industry, the love of labor, leisure becomes a mere name for idleness. A lover of idleness has not the first manly quality in him. Variety in labor, recreation, are necessary; but positive and systematic idleness, is a degrading vice. Now ought any man to flee from New England, that he may be idle elsewhere? Admit what is probably true, that the inhabitants of the West perform less labor than the inhabitants of the East,—does it by any means follow that we are more burdened than they? The burden of labor is not determined by the amount of work performed, but by the measure of strength of body, buoyancy of spirit, and

the ability we have to make the task take the place of a servant, rather than allow it to become our master.

There are but few days in New England, when abstinence from labor is a physical necessity ; and three hundred days service would be no more of a burden here than two hundred and fifty would be in some parts of the West, north even of the river Ohio. I say, then, with great confidence, that a man should not leave New England to avoid the *burden* of labor. Idle men should be where the necessity for labor presses the hardest. But it is not to be denied that a young man of small means in money, but of fixed habits of industry, may wisely emigrate to the West in search of a *home*. Every man very properly desires to possess land and secure a home. This may be done even in New England ; but it often requires several years of labor and economical life. A man of energy need not despair ; yet he can advance to that position more readily in the West than here.

But ought farmers to emigrate who have land, homes, fixed habits of industry, and the opportunity to render their labor year by year more and more intelligent and productive ? And would it not be well for many of our young men of moderate means to accept the position of independent, though small, proprietors in the valleys or on the hill-sides of New England ?

It may well be doubted whether, for a life of labor, any part of the world offers a better return than Massachusetts. And there are few States less likely to deteriorate in character. The ocean, the hills, the mountains, the climate, the soil, all contribute to produce a hardy race of men. The presence and keen sagacity of an extensive and constantly increasing commerce,

will open new and perfect old channels of trade, so that no product of our industry shall want a compensating market. We have a civilization as solid and progressive, a religion as free, a system of education as popular and perfect, a body of laborers in the mills and shops, on the land and sea, as intelligent as can be found in any State of America or Europe.

And to all the farmers of Massachusetts, it is a matter of special interest that agriculture has been ennobled. Not, indeed, by any condescension or care of individual men or the State, but by the general intelligence and spirit of progress among the farmers themselves. While farmers failed to respect their own profession, the profession itself, whatever its intrinsic merits, must have been menial ; now, however, it is pursued with more of the spirit which animates the student, the painter, the poet, and the astronomer.

But let us all, whether we be of New England or the West, respect labor, not as our master, whose law makes us slaves, but as an instrument of civilization, an educator and benefactor of the whole family of man.