

# MINERS' & FARMERS' JOURNAL.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY, BY THOMAS J. HOLTON...CHARLOTTE, MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NORTH-CAROLINA.

I WILL TEACH YOU TO PIERCE THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH AND BRING OUT FROM THE CAVERNS OF THE MOUNTAINS, METALS WHICH WILL GIVE STRENGTH TO OUR HANDS AND SUBJECT ALL NATURE TO OUR USE AND PLEASURE.—DR. JOHNSON.

VOL. IV. SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1834. NO. 100.

## Internal Improvement.

### AN ADDRESS

TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTH-CAROLINA, Written by the Central Committee appointed by the Convention which assembled at Raleigh in November last.

So much interest has been expressed, through the Press and otherwise, in the proceedings of the Convention which met at the Seat of Government in November last, for the purpose of deliberating on the expediency of improving the transportation of the State, that it is almost unnecessary to call to your notice the fact that by a Resolution of that body, their President was authorized to appoint a Committee of ten, to disseminate information on the subject of Internal Improvement and to publish an Address. The appointment of that Committee has been made public, and in performance of the duty given in charge to them by the Convention, they respectfully ask of their Fellow-Citizens their serious consideration to a well meant attempt to bring before them in a plain and unpretending manner the causes of the admitted depressed condition of the industry of the State, and of the remedy, from which in the opinion of the Convention (and of the Committee) relief may be expected. As this subject is of vital concern to yourselves, and as it is inconceivable that the Convention can have taken upon them the trouble and responsibility of devising and recommending a plan for the improvement of our inland transport, from any other motive than the common good, it is hoped that no apology will be necessary for the demand now made on your time and attention.

That North-Carolina, with an extensive territory, with a fine climate, with equal and just laws, with a numerous and intelligent and moral and industrious people, has neither the internal prosperity nor the political influence, which would seem to be the necessary results of these natural and social advantages, none can deny. More than a century and a half has passed away since the settlement of this Country by our ancestors, and what improvement have been made in the resources and wealth of the State? We have in the course of events, after a long and bloody war, with great glory to ourselves effected a separation from the parent country, and become a free and independent State, under a written Constitution which secures to us civil and religious freedom. Since our independence as one of the United States, we have attained in an unparalleled short time the rank of a first rate Power. We have little reason to expect a foreign war, and nothing to fear from it, and we are secure in our property and persons by our written Constitution, from any exaction or oppression under the laws, or under colour of them, and in our love of freedom and public spirit we have, we trust, a sure vindication from any attempt on our liberties in contempt of the laws. It is surely a subject of honest pride and of sober gratulation that we are a free people; and being so, we ought to be what we surely are not, a prosperous people. Apart from our political institutions and our freedom under them, and of the rapid and great increase of our population, in what do we differ from our ancestors? We have the same noble domain, the same benignant climate, but what have we done for ourselves? What monuments in the useful or fine arts; what Cities, what large Towns, what Harbours, what Canals, Roads and Bridges; what Literary or Humane Institutions; what Hospitals, what public libraries, what Colleges or Schools, what Literary or Scientific works have we to be proud of? Not only is our foreign commerce, but our very coasting trade is carried on in a great measure by Vessels owned and navigated by the citizens of our sister States. We have no mercantile marine beyond a few miserable coasters, and a few keel and steam boats of considerable tonnage and value for our inland trade, and some of these are owned in a neighboring State. We have nothing that deserves the name of manufactures. No processes for changing the value of the raw materials are in use among us, except those effected either by manual labor or by machinery of the simplest and commonest construction.

It will be understood by the Public in pressing their attention to the want of Literary Institutions, that the University of North Carolina is not forgotten by us. With all who love the State, we remember with pleasure, and acknowledge with pride, the debt of gratitude due to the Trustees and especially to the Presidents of the University for the benefits they have conferred on the State. To their praise be it mentioned, that they have manifested a devotedness worthy of the good cause in which they have been so long engaged with so little profit to themselves, and so much to their fellow-citizens. They have, not only with sympathy from our public men, but against every discouragement, accomplished much good with little means.

We refer with pain to the neglect of those who, by the Constitution, are entrusted with the sacred duty of providing for public instruction, and only for the purpose of expressing the hope and belief that, ere long, they will extend an effective patronage to the University. They may then establish a just (we would that it had been an early) claim to being the promoters of useful learning among us.

Flouring and Saw mills and a very few Paper mills and machines for spinning coarse cotton thread, constitute the total of our manufacturing establishments. Our Agriculture, on which the whole of our labor has been expended, is far, very far from being much distinguished for practical skill or science. The lands for the last thirty years only have been, in some parts of the State, well tilled; but no system of a rotation of crops or of manuring, by which the lands might be maintained in their original fertility and productiveness, has ever been attempted. Far less has it ever been thought of that they were capable of being rendered every year more productive.

With a total absence of commerce, of manufactures, and under a defective system of agriculture, it is surprising that there should be little accumulation of capital among us except in the increase of our Slaves? Our Lands have had forced from them a support of our white and colored population, without any view to an increased consumption, and when they would no longer support us, our fellow citizens, with their children and slaves, without waiting for the slow but certain approach of poverty, have, wisely for themselves, and, under present circumstances, fortunately for us, sought competency or wealth in the fertile and wild lands of the West and Southwest. It is confessedly the great and crying evil of the State, that our labor, (the only source of wealth) is unproductive, and that there is a consequent want of Capital for the purpose of commerce, manufactures and agriculture. A most striking proof of this is to be found in the history of our Banks. For many years we have had \$3,200,000 of Banking Capital in the hands of joint stock companies. The charters of these companies are just expiring, and one of them only has applied for a renewal of the act of incorporation, and although the legislature have granted to new Companies very favorable charters, it is doubtful whether the stock will be subscribed; so as to allow any one of them to go into operation. If the stock of the Bank of the State be taken to an amount which will entitle the subscribers to claim corporate rights, it will be the only one of the three Banks to which charters are offered, that will be able to raise a capital, and this Bank will not have more than \$600,000 of the \$1,500,000 of stock which it is at liberty to employ. Now there can be but three ways of accounting for the disappearance of so large an amount of our Banking Capital; either it has been withdrawn from the business of making loans on interest, and vested in property in this State which with the same risk will yield a larger profit than has been heretofore made by banking operations; or secondly, it must be supposed that owing to the diminished profits to be made on the cultivation of lands, that persons in safe circumstances cannot afford to pay six per cent, for loans to any large amount. And that either fewer discounts will be made, or the risk of loss on those made will be greater than heretofore, so that the net profits of Banking capital will be hereafter less; or thirdly, the capital must have gone to other States where it is expected to be more productive. It will be foreign to the purpose of this address to pursue this topic further than to show from it that capital is at once scarce and unproductive, and it is only necessary to say that there is no business now followed in this State that will give a profit at all equal to that formerly derived from Bank Stock, and therefore the first cause supposed has no effect in withholding capital from the new Banks, and it is solely ascribable to the other two, and principally to the latter. It is but one more melancholy proof of the depression of the profits of labor and capital among us.

It were alike unwise and unfeeling in us thus to expose the weakness of our native land, if it were not necessary to trace our maladies to their remote causes, that they may if possible be cured. As these causes are well understood, and generally admitted, it will be sufficient for our present argument, to omit all minor ones and to point out those only that are most important.

Our first and greatest disadvantage is without doubt the poverty of our lands. Scattered over our territory and especially on our Rivers, we have tracts of lands of surpassing fertility; but the general character of our soil, if not absolutely sterile, is at least churlish and ungrateful, making very scanty returns for the labor expended on it. The second cause of the diminished and diminishing profit of labor is the low price of our great staple cotton. The wonderful improvements made in machinery for the ginning of cotton, and converting it into thread and cloth by diminishing the price of fabrics made from it, has increased the consumption of them many thousand fold beyond what the most sanguine imagination could have anticipated thirty years since. The demand for the raw material has of course been increased in exact proportion to the consumption, but great as that is and although constantly increasing, the plant is capable of being grown in so many latitudes, and over so large a portion of the earth, that the sup-

ply has more than kept pace with the demand. The necessary consequence has been that the price although subject to many fluctuations has eventually greatly declined. This has fallen with more weight upon us because of the more limited and costly production with us than in richer soils and warmer climates, and especially in the States south and west of us. The more Southern States from the strength of their soil and the adaptation of their climate to the culture of cotton, with less labor, receive a much greater return from the acre than we do, and of finer staple; and of course are able to sell to the manufacturer at a less price, with greater profit. From the great law of exchangeable value, they can receive nothing from the manufacturer beyond a fair profit on their capital and labor, and we, who enter into competition with them, must of course be content to sell what cost us more, at less price, and must necessarily receive less profit. But as we make larger profits on the culture of cotton, than we receive on other exports, we have for a succession of years constantly increased our production. And although our skill in the culture has enabled us to lessen the cost, the little profit we are able to realize from it is the most prominent cause of the depression of our labour.

The third cause arises from the cost of transporting our products to a market. The great rivers which flow from the West to the Sea, throughout the State, are interrupted in their courses by falls and other obstructions, so that they do not admit of inland transport for any distance from their mouths. This evil is the greater, as the staples of the country are generally of great weight and bulk, and when they are brought to market a considerable part of their value consists in the cost of their transportation; and in very many of them, (for instance, wheat and Indian-corn made in the middle and western counties,) the cost of import, from the same cause, it is apparent, bears heavily on many of the bulky articles necessary to a successful cultivation of the soil. An exorbitant price is paid for salt in some counties, and even for iron, the most necessary of all the gifts of nature to the prosecution of agriculture and the other useful arts. Gypsum and lime, so essential as manures, are altogether out of our power, from the high price of carriage. This third cause, the great expense of transportation, as it is very obvious, is one of the greatest obstacles to the creation of wealth in this State.

The fourth and last to be mentioned is the want of one or more safe sea ports within our limits.—The mouths of our sounds and rivers are in almost every instance obstructed by sand-bars and shoals. It is admitted that good ports would be of great advantage to us, and yet, with deference to those of our citizens who hold this to be the prime obstacle to our improvement, we apprehend that more importance has been attached to this want than belongs to it. It is not doubted that a sea-port is always of value to a country, and that it is of the greatest consequence where it forms the access to a fertile country; but that it is not of the highest value in itself, without a back country to support it, is, we think, very apparent from the present state of the town of Norfolk, Virginia. It is undoubtedly one of the finest harbors on the Continent, if not under all circumstances, the very best—and yet, though Norfolk is as old as most of the large cities in the Union, and has of late years received a great deal of patronage from the General Government, it is a town of not very high rank in point of population, and does not, we believe, much abound in capital. A little attention to the history of the large commercial cities at home and abroad, will show that they are the concomitants of a successful state of manufactures and agriculture, or that they have been consequent on them; and that, unless in a few instances, where they have enjoyed a carrying trade, or been connected with fisheries, they have never preceded agriculture and manufactures. These causes are, without doubt, sufficient for the effects ascribed to them, whichever of them be most important. The want of a foreign trade and of manufactures, and the existence of an unskilful husbandry, are sufficient to depress the industry of any people, and must continue to keep it depressed unless they can be removed or counterbalanced.

Though difficult, it is by no means impossible, to find a remedy for all these evils. During the century and a half we have been a political community, we have done something for ourselves under the weight of all these disadvantages, and we can, if we will but resolve on an united and continued effort, triumph over them. We are not without the means of making a complete change in our agriculture, which, as it is the natural occupation for our capital and industry, should be our first and chief care. If we have the will, we have, very certainly, abundant ability to make this change. We have, as has already been said, an extensive territory, which, though heretofore it has not afforded much spare wealth, has supported a large population in comfort. Our lands, if not rich, are not so hopelessly sterile but that, by labor and capital judiciously applied, they may be made productive. If once we can improve our soil to an equality with that of our neighbors, we may counterbalance their advantages in the growing of cotton and other staples, by lessening the cost of our transport to market. If we can thus greatly increase the value and amount of our agricultural products, we will acquire a capital in lands and money, and at no very remote period be able to commence manufactures, for which we have great aptitude, especially in the mildness of our climate, the cheapness of provisions, and the water-power which is afforded by our rivers and their tributary streams. Our agriculture being freed from its embarrassments, we may, even attempt, with a fair prospect of success, the improvement of our ports, and the commencement of a foreign commerce from them, or perhaps, what will be more feasible and equally profitable, an active coasting trade. Our first step to improve the resources of the State—to increase our profits, and thereby to create or to enlarge our capital—must be made in bettering our agriculture. Our extent of territory, a large portion of it yet covered with the native forests, invites to the cultivation of the soil. The predilections of our people are for a farming life; their skill and capital, ever since the settlement of the country, have been turned to it; our interests, our inclination, and our habits, have made us farmers, and will keep us so. It is alike the result of our natural situation and the dictates of sound sense, that our whole energies should be directed to the subduing our wild lands to the dominion of the Plough. When we have a greater capital, acquired from a successful cultivation of our lands, than can be profitably re-invested in their improvement—when our population begins to grow larger than can find room for a gainful industry upon their native fields—if we are a prosperous community our excess of capital and labor will be turned, under individual enterprise, towards me-

chanical employments and foreign trade for advantageous occupation. But assuredly, if any thing may be affirmed as being beyond contradiction, in regard to our present condition or future prospects, it is that we are, and must continue for not less than a century, chiefly if not exclusively an agricultural people. Nor let it be forgotten, that, of all the employments by which man earns a subsistence, or looks for profit, it is the most primitive, and (notwithstanding much misrepresentation to the contrary) among the most profitable and peculiarly favorable to health, to innocence, and to happiness—to the cultivation of the domestic and public virtues—to make us good men and disinterested patriots.

All premature attempts to make us either foreign traders, or mechanics, will not only certainly fail, as we have neither acquired capital or natural fitness for these occupations, but are not even desirable, as nothing is to be gained, either in point of wealth or happiness, by abandoning our present pursuits. Foreign trade, mechanical industry, and the cultivation of the soil, as sources of national wealth have each found, at different periods and in different countries, its advocates, who have extolled the favourite pursuit, at the expense of the other two; and on account of its supposed pre-eminence, have claimed from Government bounties for its encouragement or duties for its protection. We must not be understood so to advocate agriculture. All these three sources of wealth are looked upon by us as being in themselves on a perfect equality; and that one or the other, or all of them at once, are to be followed by any people, according to the means they have by nature or art, for a successful pursuit of them. We are of the number of those who believe it best that individuals should be left by Government to follow their own interests, and that in general nothing more is necessary for the protection of industry, than equal laws and an economical public expenditure. An exception is of necessity to be made to the doctrine of non-interference on part of the Government, where there is some enterprise for the public welfare, of such magnitude that it requires the wealth and credit of the State to carry it into effect, or some obstacle of such difficulty that it is obviously not within the power of individual capital, or that of private association to remove it. Such, we think, is the case with us at present. We believe that nothing less than the wealth and credit of the whole State, at the disposal of the people themselves, through the General Assembly, can so improve our inland transport throughout our whole limits, as to place our industry on a level with our competitors in other States.

It has been the practice of all wise Rulers, to make works of National importance, at the common expense. Fortifications, Navies, Ports and Public ways and many other things, in their nature of general interest, have ever been supposed to be within the proper care of the Government. Even our imperfect system for making and repairing Roads, has been, and now is, strictly of public concern. Our highways have been for their more convenient administration, considered as part of the Country police, and placed under the care of the County Courts; but thus, under the direction of public functionaries, they are as much subjects of sovereign care, as if they were directly controlled by the General Assembly.

We will now inquire, how far our industry would be benefited by the adoption of a system of Internal Improvement; for it is by no means assumed by us, that National wealth will follow, under all circumstances, from the making of Canals or Rail Roads. Gain or loss will flow from an expenditure of labour on these works, as in all other cases; as the work themselves may be needed or not, and may be well or ill planned and executed. Nor do the Public, as has been sometimes erroneously imagined, venture upon a public work on other terms than an individual does on a private one. It has been thought by some, that as the citizen is paid for his labor and materials on the Public work, that even if the work does not repay, that there has been only a transfer of capital from the Government to the citizen, and no loss. But this is a very manifest error. There is an absolute loss of labor and materials to just the amount that is not repaid; for the labor and materials might have been applied to a work that would have reimbursed them by its profits, with interest; and the public having paid for them and misapplied them, has lost them. It is not otherwise, with an individual. If he has worked done, he pays for the labor and materials, and he who does the labor and sells the materials, being paid, is no loser. So if the proprietor has in the work something that will repay his expenditure with a reasonable profit, he is safe; but otherwise, if he has not, he has incurred an absolute loss.

It is impossible, from the want of statistical information, to make any estimate of the amount paid by the citizens of North Carolina, or of any particular district in the State, in money or labor, for inland transport; and therefore, it cannot be shown what will be the saving effected by any Rail Road or Canal that has been proposed. Nor can it be conjectured, what will be the increase of production from such Road or Canal. This important information can only be obtained from Surveys and Reports made under legislative enactments, and at the public expense. But in the absence of such useful knowledge, actually denied us by our last Assembly, we are not without facts, both as to the effect of improved ways in other countries and in this, to show that we may expect the greatest advantages from the improvement of our means of transport. We know that almost the whole of our produce from the middle and western counties, is carried by wagons from the farms on which it is grown, to some town in this State, or more generally in another State, accessible to river boats or sea vessels—that it is sold there or delivered to a Commission merchant, to be sent to a more favorable market. This carriage over land is exceedingly expensive because only very light weight can be drawn at a very slow pace over our ill made roads. The cost of the wagons and teams employed in transportation in our western and middle counties is not a light sum, but it is a mere trifle to what is expended in the support of the horses and the hire and support of the men employed on our inland carriage. If an estimate could be made of expenses, we do not hesitate to believe, that the saving which might be effected in it for a few years, on an improved system of Public ways, would be sufficient to make all the Rail-Roads that have been projected. Our Eastern people are better off; they have very generally water carriage, and yet it has been shown by calculation, the industry of a few Eastern Counties is taxed, annually, to the large sum of \$335,000, in delays and in overcoming by lighterage, &c. a single obstruction. In speculating on the expediency of improving our country by making land and water carriage, quick and easy, it has been usual to make a comparison between this State and New-York, since the cutting of her grand canal, and between this State and England, in the pres-

ent highly improved and improving condition of her highways by land and water. The great wealth derived by New-York and England from improvements by Roads and Canals, is very encouraging to us, who wish to enter upon similar enterprises. But our physical and social condition, and that of New-York and England, are so dissimilar, that any reasoning derived from their example has only a general application to us. Every one knows, what an immense and rapid increase of wealth has been the result of the great Canal in New-York, and we need not dwell on it. There are facts connected with the improvement of the Roads and Canals in England, not so generally known, that hold out to us the most animating encouragement. It may not be known, that in England, all roads were repaired by contribution in labor to the Reign of Charles 2d (1650) and that not until 1767, (just sixty seven years ago,) was the system of improving the great roads in that Kingdom, by tolls taken for carriage and travelling on them, made general. It is more remarkable, that as late as in the year 1763, there was but one Coach running between Edinburg and London; it set out once a month and was from 12 to 14 days on the journey. In 1825, there were six or seven Daily Coaches, and they take forty hours between the two cities—distance 400 miles. All the provinces are now traversed by Stage Coaches, on Turnpike Roads, averaging a speed of ten miles per hour. In 1755, the first act passed in England for a public Canal, and in 1759, the Duke of Bridgewater obtained his first act; and the complete success of his canal led to the general adoption of Canals in England. Now the whole Kingdom is intersected by Canals for trade and passage, the details of which would be foreign to this Address; and since the invention, or rather the perfecting of Rail-ways and the application of steam power to the traction of loaded carriages on them, they are every where erected and erecting, and passengers are carried on them at a speed of from 20 to 30 miles, and merchandize at an average of 15 miles per hour.

Wonderful and interesting as these facts are, they are equalled by what has been brought to pass in our own country, and even in our own State. The fact that our Post office system began in 1764, has not, perhaps, attracted the attention it deserves. In that year, the sum of £133 6s. was allowed by our General Assembly to the Postmaster General of the Provinces, for establishing a mail for twelve months from Suffolk to the Southern boundary of this Province; probably, the only mail then within our limits. In 1765, the following year, a Committee of the Assembly was raised to contract with the Postmaster-General for a mail from Suffolk to South Carolina. As late as the year 1804 or 1805, the mail was transported from Petersburg to the South, in a sulky or gig, twice a week. Now, Daily Post Coaches ply between Petersburg and Raleigh, for the conveyance of letters and passengers, and a Rail Road extends part of the route from Petersburg to the Roanoke river, on which there is a transit at an average speed of fifteen miles per hour. And, inclusive of the route through Raleigh, there is no less than six lines of Post Coaches crossing the State from North to South three times a week, two to the eastward of Raleigh, and three to the westward. Besides, there are several lines of Post Coaches running East and West from Raleigh, and one running from the head of the Petersburg Railway West; and there are lateral lines connected with these great routes. By the Northern lines, the passengers reach Washington City in three days, Philadelphia four, and New York in less than five days from Raleigh. It must be, that a system of conveyance which has sprung into such consequence as a public convenience, and on which such an amount of capital has found profitable investment in the short space of thirty years, demands that it should be further improved by adopting the best roads and machines for locomotion which the genius of man has devised. If, in this short period, we have passed from the humble conveyance of a gig on a single road, bringing a few antiquated letters at a rate (stoppages included) perhaps not averaging a mile an hour, to having every considerable town in the State visited daily, or at most in every two or three days, by Fourhorse Coaches, loaded with persons and news from every quarter of the globe, we may (nay must, we should say,) venture upon an expense necessary to construct Rail Roads, travelled by steam power, which would not only carry us and bring our letters and periodical literature at a speed of from 240 to 360 miles in the 24 hours, but would transport hundreds of tons of our products and of our imports in foreign necessities and luxuries at the same rate, with perfect safety, and with the most delicate certainty as to time. Such an amount of Stage Coach travelling conducted in the State, on one or more Railways from and to proper points on our Northern and Southern, Eastern and Western boundaries, would surely pay tolls on passengers and letters and papers at so high a rate that our