

tion of the majority of members, been arranged in an amicable manner, and in a manner which will give us the continued benefit of the exertions of that Society with unlimited resources. My lords and gentlemen, next in point of seniority comes the Highland Society of Scotland. Scotland has long been noted for the advancement of its agriculture, and its farmers take the lead as well in the promotion of their art as in the organisation of the society for exhibiting its perfections. Nor were the farmers of the sister kingdom of England slow to follow; and these societies—the Royal Dublin Society, the Highland Society, and the Royal Agricultural Society of England—have always worked in most complete harmony and unanimity with the society whose meeting we are met this evening to celebrate. My lords and gentlemen, the advantages which have been directly conferred on the agricultural prosperity of the country from the exertions of these societies are manifested, not so much in the magnificent specimens of animals brought to our exhibition, as in the improvement to the practical farmers of our country in the general stock. But, gentlemen, I should fail to do justice to the claims of these societies, and kindred societies upon your confidence, if I found the claim principally on the direct advantages which they confer upon the country. If there is any one lesson which the events of the last few years have taught us more than any other, it is that to which our noble chairman has so well adverted in the course of his observations—that the dependence of the prosperity of this country rested upon its industry and commerce. You cannot stimulate the agriculture of the country, if you do it in the legitimate way, and in conformity with those great economical canons which are now enacted in our Legislature, without giving an impetus to its trade, to its commerce, and its manufactures. Gentlemen, there is another ground upon which I think the indirect tendency of these societies is entitled to your highest praise. We have all our own opinions upon religion and politics, and we all conscientiously hold them, enjoy them and God forbid it should ever be otherwise! Free discussion, in my opinion, is the life-blood of progress and advancement. In intelligent minds, conscientiously holding and energetically maintaining antagonistic opinions, are enshrined those bright principles which take their place among genius and literature, and science and art. But gentlemen, the constitution of the human mind is such as that the maintenance of antagonistic opinion is very likely to produce personal antagonism and sectarian rancor; and it appears to me that, if you can bring men who differ in politics and religion to co-operate and act in common for the attainment of any common object, you are likely to smooth down those personal asperities which may arise in the maintenance of antagonistic opinions, and, by doing so, you will be all working together for a common object, and, probably induce them, without sacrificing the strength of their opinions upon other matters, to assert these opinions with greater forbearance and moderation. Gentlemen, such an opportunity is afforded by

Societies like that which we are now met to celebrate. Here is the common platform upon which men of all creeds and parties may, for a moment, cast aside their particular differences and work harmoniously and cordially together for the promotion of the most ancient, as I believe it is the most important, interest of society; and for the advancement of their country and the prosperity of its population. To these Societies may be applied most justly the beautiful words of that great historian and poet, whose loss we have lately had reason to deplore—

Here none are for a party, here all are for the State!

Here the rich man helps the poor, and the poor man helps the great.

Our Fall Shows all over the country, with very few exceptions, have been very successful, and prove beyond doubt that a steady improvement is going forward among our agricultural population. We can well remember the time when but three or four agricultural societies existed in the whole Province, and when the Government grant was neither fixed in amount nor certain in its payment. In the *primitive times*, some half dozen farmers of means, mostly English and Scotch, formed the whole society; and their annual subscriptions, increased by donations from our merchants, and the possible grant from Government, forming altogether a very uncertain amount, constituted the premium fund which was annually divided in a pretty equal ratio among subscribing farmers. Times have since changed, and it must be admitted the change is greatly for the better. The agricultural societies are now national institutions, supported and legalized by the Government, and holding out their healthful stimulant to all classes of our rural population. The distribution of prizes only for products of the soil and superior animals doubtless did good; but it was not till a more large and enlightened policy induced the directors to employ their funds in the importation of improved breeds—horses, horned cattle, sheep, and pigs, that the full advantage of these societies began to be felt throughout the community. The shows of the present year are the best comment upon the wisdom of those directors who originated the important system. Would some of the directors of our societies in like manner take the lead in encouraging subsoil ploughing, and thereby prove themselves benefactors of our common country? The following is a list of the Officers of all the Agricultural Societies in the Lower Province: