

(applause)—and with which every community is irresistible and indestructible; and this society is so founded, and so combines the universal suffrages of the country, directed, as it is, to such a purpose as that of promoting the most essential and the most venerable among all the arts that furnish material for the industry of man (applause).—Whatever else may come and whatever else may go, this at least we know, that no vicissitude of time or change can displace agriculture from the position it has ever held—(Hear, hear)—from the very first state of the generations of man until the last day in the crack of doom itself (cheers). Now, my lord, as one having indeed little claim to address you, but not uninterested in agriculture and its results, I will state in a few words to this company why it is I think we ought to feel grateful to the Agricultural Society for having chosen Chester as the scene of one of its meetings, and for the general prosecution of its labours, with that energy, intelligence, and success that have ever marked its progress. In the first place I take it that it is of the utmost importance to agriculture that it should have the means of recording its ascension and its decline. We must not suppose that because it is an ancient art, and one that has been prosecuted in its simplest forms, it is therefore otherwise than an art which, of all others, perhaps, affords the most varied scope and the largest sphere of development to the powers of the human mind (Hear, Hear). And it is most essential, if, indeed, it be true, as true it is, that a large part of the national welfare hangs upon its prosperity—it is most essential that you should have the best and most efficacious means of comparing its state in one year with its state in another—of recording for future encouragement the progress that has been achieved in the past; and if perchance a time should come when in any one of its branches of enterprise some partial failure should be perceived, that that failure should be noted at the first moment when it becomes visible, in order that the sense of the defect may lead to its being at once repaired (Hear, Hear). My lord, I think it may be truly observed that this—I must say distinguished—I may say illustrious society, appears to me to supply a want which is the greatest inherent want of agriculture. If we look to the case of manufactures, it is their nature to collect themselves in enormous masses around great centres of industry. If we look to commerce, incessant communication between every part of the commercial system of the country is the very vital it breathes, and is naturally inseparable from commercial development. But with agriculture the case is different; for, on the contrary, its nature is to be gathered around local centres, which, under ordinary circumstances, have little or no connection or communication with one another. It is, in comparison, an isolated art, and therefore it might follow, under general circumstances, that agriculture was languishing in various quarters of the country, simply from the want of a knowledge of the progress achieved in other portions of the land. (Hear, hear.) Well, now, if I am right in saying that this is the besetting danger and difficulty of agriculture, is it not true and obvious that the society, whose festival we commemorate to-day, is, by the very principles of its construction, adapted effectually to supply that want—(Hear, hear)—for its business is to bring together the men and the minds of all portions of the country. The stock of Devonshire, the horses of Suffolk, the various products of England, are exhibited in the yards to-day. The agriculture of England, through the means mainly of this society, is rapidly attaining to the position to have but one heart and one mind—one common pulse that causes the circulation of the vital fluid throughout the whole system—one common stock, into which everything that skill, that industry, that intelligence, that capital had achieved in every single part of the country, made the common property of the other portion of the country (applause.) Well, again, my lord, I will venture to give another reason why myself, an uninstructed person, ventured to feel a sentiment of gratitude to those who, in this matter, give us the benefit of their instruction. If we look to the trade of the farmer, it seems to me to stand distinguished from all other trades—not in the less, but in the greater amount of the demand that it makes upon his mental powers. In point of fact, if we are to regard the farmer as an isolated man, he has got to struggle with everything. He ought to understand the whole universe in which he lives, and almost every science that belongs to the entire range of the human intellect. He ought to be profound in meteorology; he ought to be a consummate chemist; he ought to have such a knowledge of birds and animals as scarcely a life could acquire. He ought to be a machinist of the first order; and in point of fact there is no end to the accomplishments which the individual farmer, to be a good farmer, if he stand alone, ought to possess (applause). And if I take the case of two men setting out in life with a