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Efforts to Promote Agriculture in Indiana From 1820 to 1860

Evelyn R. Ford

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EAST TO PROMOTE AGRICULTURE IN
INDIANA FROM 1820 TO 1860

by

Evelyn Rodibaugh Ford

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
Department of History
Butler University

I. Speech on The Tariff
II. Address delivered at Indiana University
III. Address delivered at Installation of Rev. J.B.
    as President of Indiana University
IV. Speech delivered before Wayne County Agricul-
    tural Fair
V. Address delivered at Agricultural Meeting at
    Division of Graduate Instruction,
    Butler University
VI. Address at Indianapolis State Fair
1905
VII. Address delivered at New York Agricultural State
    Fair, Chicago, New York
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The purpose of this thesis is to present an account of the various efforts made to encourage the development of agriculture in Indiana from 1820 to 1860 and to alleviate and enlighten the hardships of farming as they existed in the early period of Indiana's statehood. I wish to emphasize the importance of the achievements of Governor Wright who caused agriculture to be considered by the farmers an honorable and dignified field of endeavor. Governor Wright was the real champion of the State Fair, the State Board of Agriculture, and of the county societies and fairs in Indiana.

The mould board or the plow was made from blocks of wood about twenty inches square and three inches thick. The outer surface of the mold board was hewn out in an irregular shape. The wing of the share extended high up the mould board and with it was bolted the shafting. An iron loop or socket was forged and welded inside of the bar into which the wooden share or post was rooted and in which the head of the large bolt which held down the beam was fitted. On good clean ground a man with a strong team could break about an acre and a half in a day of twelve or fifteen hours using such a plow. About 1840 the improved low-winged plow with cast-iron mould board came into use.
It is difficult for the people of today to visualize the crude methods which existed about a hundred years ago of sowing a crop and harvesting it. Previous to the year 1840 farming implements were very crude. The woodwork of the early plow was rough and was made by the farmers themselves. Bulls or oxen were first used to draw the plow and later horses were bought for that purpose. The handles were of bushes and the best of crooked roots were used for the turn in the handles. The beams were hewn with an axe from small tough oaks. The mould board of the plow was made from blocks of wood about twenty inches square and three inches thick. The outer surface of the mould board was hewn out in an irregular shape. The wing of the share extended high up the mould board and with it was bolted the sheath. An iron loop or socket was forged and welded inside of the bar into which the wooden sheath or post rested and in which the head of the large bolt which held down the beam was fitted. On good clean ground a man with a strong team could break about an acre and a half in a day of twelve or fifteen hours using such a plow. About 1840 the improved low-winged plow with cast-iron mould board came into use. This
The earliest harrow known to be used in this state was the bush harrow, but the home-made V-shaped wooden tooth harrow was still in general use in the forties. The frame was made of heavy wood. The teeth were from 10 to 12 inches long and made of hard wood sharpened at the points. The harrow covered from 4 to 6 feet of ground and was very difficult to handle. In those days, when the surface of the soil was merely scratched with the plow and harrow, the saving feature was the virgin quality of the soil.

The reaping hook, around the time 1830-1840, was used almost exclusively in harvesting wheat and other cereals. With such an implement it took an expert to cut one-half to three-fourths of an acre a day. To behold the way in which the reapers cut the grain would indeed astonish the farmers of today. The following is a good description of the way in which the grain was cut:

Each man cut 3 1/2 to 4 feet in width for his swath. The first movement was to cast the sickle into the standing grain, compelling it to lean somewhat towards the reaper, and then dexterously throwing forward the left leg, the grain was further led into the desired position, then by throwing around it the right leg and the left arm and hand, it was in position to be cut off by the sickle, 10 or 12 inches above the ground, and dropped from the left hand of the reaper into piles. On the return, the reaper bound into sheaves the grain he had cut, and then started in again. Usually 5 to 10 persons composed these bands. The best reapers were paid 37 1/2 cents a day, or a bushel of wheat.

1. Description is taken from John Conner, "Agricultural Resources and Development of the State." In Indiana Pamphlets, p. 6.

2. Ibid.

Shortly after 1840 the grain cradle came into use. The first threshing machine was introduced in the southeastern part of the state in 1839. The first threshing machine was a heavy affair of wood with wooden cylinders. It made no pretense of separating the wheat from the chaff. From four to six strong horses attached to levers were required to make them revolve rapidly enough to furnish power for the thresher. This type of a threshing machine was able to thresh from thirty to sixty bushels in a day. The next advance was a traveling thresher operated by cog wheels attached to the hubs of wagons upon which it was hauled about. This machine made a pretense of cleaning the wheat, but scattered the straw and chaff and probably fifteen to twenty per cent of the grain about the ground.

Before the introduction of the threshing machine in Indiana, the threshing was done with the flail or by tramping it out with horses. This process was very slow as the following statements indicate. "The winnowing of the chaff from the grain was accomplished by the use of a waving sheet and a hand sieve. Two men could flail out and winnow about twelve bushels a day. Two men and a boy, with horses, could tramp out and winnow about twenty bushels a day."

3. Ibid.
The scythe was used to cut grass in the meadows and a hand rake picked it up. The first hay press was a very crude affair. John Conner gives the following description of the slow method of baling hay: "Horses traveled over a mile and a half to turn the screw down to a finished bale of hay, two feet square and three to four feet long. They pressed and baled hay at the rate of two tons a day with three men and two horses." 1

It was extremely difficult to produce a good grade of grain when such implements were used to cultivate the soil. The yield of corn and wheat was small and the quality was poor. The average yield of wheat per acre was from eight to nine bushels and corn from eighteen to twenty bushels. The following is a good description of the quality of wheat which was grown in the early period:

Straw you could raise in abundance, but rust and smut so shriveled the grain that it was of little use. Besides all this, there were a few years in which several fields produced nothing but 'sick wheat.'...Mr. John Rudicell sowed a piece of wheat in the valley near the present site of Centerton about the year 1828. This wheat seemingly matured nicely with a good sized berry. Mr. Rudicell carefully harvested it and the family greatly rejoiced at the prospect of wheat bread for the next year. But lo! the very first bread baked from that flour turned every stomach topsy-turvy with an emetic. The whole crop was a loss, save for seed....There was no machinery for cleaning wheat. It was ground at the mill as you took it there. And so it was: between the horses' heels, nigger heads, and dirt floors, he who had the most wheat bread had the most sand in his gizzard. 2

Farm laborers, due to the previous described conditions, were very poorly paid and their work was a great drudgery. Before the introduction of improved implements, about the year

2. Noah Major, Pioneers of Morgan County, p. 299.
of 1840, it took one farm hand twenty-four days to plow, seed and harvest ten acres of wheat and forty-four days to plow, plant, cultivate and harvest ten acres of corn. With improved machinery it required only three days to obtain the same results it required then ten days to perform.

The pay which a farm laborer received was meagre, but it was more than the farmer could afford to pay because the income from his crops and live stock was almost nothing in the years before 1840. "In 1840 farm labor averaged per month $8.00; in 1850 it was $10.50; in 1860, $12.50."

The live stock that were within the state during this period were of inferior and indifferent breeds. Before the year 1850 or thereabouts two years were required for hogs to mature to 175 to 200 pounds and the price did not quite reach 2¢ a pound. The hogs were turned out to find their own food in the woods. Few cattle were raised except for milk and butter and these were a very poor breed. The cows were poorly cared for during the winter months as they rarely had any kind of shelter to protect them from the bitter cold. They wandered through the woods and browsed for a living and fed upon straw in the winter. Milk cows sold from $7 to $8 a head, and a cow was considered unusually good if it produced three pounds of butter a week which sold at 6¢ a pound. The horses did not receive much better care than the cows. The farmers could not afford

2. Conner, Agricultural Resources and Development of the State, p. 18.
good harness and many of the farmers were not interested in the appearance of their harness. The harness that the average farmer used was indeed crude and would cause most farmers of today to stop and gaze in astonishment. The bridle consisted of an iron bit and rope and the collar was made of corn shucks. The harness were made from oak or hickory roots while the traces were of rope and the backbands of tow cloth.

Shorthorn cattle were first introduced in Indiana in 1825 by Edward Talbott who lived near Madison in Jefferson County and the first public exhibit of this breed was made at the Marion County Fair in 1835. It was soon learned that this breed could be matured in about one-half the time required by common breeds and were of greater weight.

The first volume of the Herd Book which was published in 1846 did not contain a single pedigree of Indiana cattle, so little attention was then paid to the importance of pure breeding. The next volume of 1855 had the pedigrees of these cattle as given by thirty-five Indiana men who were particularly interested in them.

Sheep were of mongrel breeds and only enough were raised to produce the amount of wool necessary for clothing. Sheep were not raised for commercial purposes.

In spite of these handicaps the agricultural showing of the state according to the census of 1840 was not one of which

2. Conner, op. cit.
3. Ibid.
to be ashamed. Swine led all the rest of the live stock "for the reason that hogs not only could be taken in droves to the Madison, Lawrenceburg, or Cincinnati slaughter houses, or be slaughtered at home and shipped in barrels to the southern market by every stream that would float a flat boat, but they could be raised at a minimum of cost, as they fed largely on the forest mast which then abounded."

Corn was the leading crop during this period and more hogs were raised than any other animal. "Indiana has more swine," said the Census Report of 1860, "than any other state in the west, or, in fact, of the United States."

A study of the census reports of 1850 and 1860 will show the agricultural wealth of Indiana and also will show how the wealth increased from 1840 to 1860. The chart which is given on the following page gives us an idea of the agricultural wealth of Indiana from 1840 to 1860.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1840</th>
<th>1850</th>
<th>1860</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horses and mules</td>
<td>241,036</td>
<td>320,798</td>
<td>549,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk cows</td>
<td>284,554</td>
<td>363,563</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working oxen</td>
<td>40,221</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other cattle</td>
<td>389,891</td>
<td>588,144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>675,982</td>
<td>1,122,493</td>
<td>991,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swine</td>
<td>1,623,608</td>
<td>2,263,776</td>
<td>3,099,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres of improved land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres of unimproved land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of live stock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of farm machinery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>4,049,375</td>
<td>6,214,458</td>
<td>16,848,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>129,621</td>
<td>78,792</td>
<td>463,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>5,981,605</td>
<td>5,659,014</td>
<td>5,317,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
<td>28,155,887</td>
<td>52,964,963</td>
<td>71,888,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>1,525,794</td>
<td>2,285,048</td>
<td>4,177,153</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Irish, sweet)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>28,015</td>
<td>45,483</td>
<td>382,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckwheat</td>
<td>49,019</td>
<td>149,740</td>
<td>369,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay</td>
<td>178,029</td>
<td>403,230</td>
<td>119,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of orchard products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushels of flax seed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>1,820,306</td>
<td>1,044,620</td>
<td>7,993,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool</td>
<td>2,357,919</td>
<td>2,610,287</td>
<td>2,552,318</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the decade of the forties, there was a marked increase of grain production, introduction of improved machinery, and signs of increased interest in agricultural matters. In the decade of the fifties agricultural improvements were visible in every part of the state due to the initiative of Governor Joseph Wright and the actions of the General Assembly. The county fairs were common by this time and were not only a factor in stimulating greater interests in agriculture and in introducing new types of machinery, but the social life of the farming population was improved by these fairs. In the fifties Indiana was also recovering from the effects of the nation-wide economic depression of 1837 and also from the financial chaos caused by the vast program of internal improvements in the state. The development of the railroads in this period also was a great aid to agriculture.

The farmers' knowledge concerning live stock and crop cultivation was increased and a spirit for improvement was stimulated through a very important farm journal, the Indiana Farmer. This journal, devoted to agriculture, manufactures, and education, was in circulation during the forties and fifties. "The steady progression of a spirit of agricultural improvement is being witnessed by the editors and within the few weeks past have received heavy additions to the subscription list." The articles which it contained were invaluable to the farmers and were much more learned and accurate than we of today might consider them unless we had read some of the articles carefully.

1. See Appendix A.

2. *Indiana Farmer*, II, Feb. 6, 1839.
The Western Cultivator which was published at Indianapolis was another farm paper that appeared in the forties. The Indiana Farmer and Gardener, edited by Henry Ward Beecher, was a good farm magazine which was in circulation in the forties. The Western Agriculturist and General Intelligencer contained an agricultural section along with a political, moral and foreign section and was in circulation in 1829 and in the early thirties.

After all, agricultural societies and fairs did the most to increase the farmers' agricultural knowledge and to create a spirit of enthusiasm among them, but the good effects of these societies were not so noticeable until the decade of the fifties.

1. Published at Brookville, Indiana.

Resolved that the committee be and they are hereby instructed to take the most effectual means of recommending to the citizens of the county the cultivation of hemp....and that they report to the next meeting the most eligible plan for increasing the number of sheep, and improving the breed thereof. Resolved that the secretary make out a copy of the foregoing resolutions, and have them published in the Western Sun.

1. Western Sun, April 19, 1869, No. 19.
The first meeting ever to be held for the purpose of forming an agricultural association, as far as it has been possible for us to ascertain, was in 1809 at Vincennes in Knox County.

It is very interesting to know that the people in these very early days were intent upon forming some sort of an organization to encourage agriculture. A description of the first meeting for the purpose of forming an agricultural association is found in one of the newspapers of the period:

At a meeting of a number of the citizens of Knox County, April 8, 1809, for the purpose of forming an association for encouraging agriculture and manufactures, held at the Court House in Vincennes, William H. Harrison was called to the chair, John Johnson secretary; the following resolutions were adopted:

Whereas in the opinion of this meeting great advantage would arise from the establishment of a society for the purpose of encouraging agriculture and manufactures; therefore resolved that a committee of four be appointed to prepare rules and regulations for the government of a society for the object, and that they report the same to a meeting to be held at the Court House on the first Saturday in May next.

Resolved that the committee be and they are hereby instructed to take the most effectual means of recommending to the citizens of the county the cultivation of hemp,...and that they report to the next meeting the most eligible plan for increasing the number of sheep, and improving the breed thereof.

Resolved that the secretary make out a copy of the foregoing resolutions, and have them published in the Western Sun.

1. Western Sun, April 15, 1809, No. 19.
There has not been any way to find out whether much was accomplished at Vincennes in the way of agricultural improvements between the years 1809-1822. In 1822 an account concerning a meeting to discuss agricultural problems appeared in the Western Sun. The people at this time seemed to realize the great need of doing something to improve conditions around them. A meeting was held by the citizens of Knox County and a committee of seven was appointed as a committee of general correspondence who were to appoint sub-committees in each township. These sub-committees were to call meetings of the citizens in their respective townships to take into consideration such subjects as the present revenue laws, the road laws, relief of the poor, navigation of the Wabash and White rivers, and the formation of an agricultural society. It was resolved that the committee of general correspondence solicit the adjoining counties in the western part of the state to adopt similar steps.

In the year of 1823 the following is found in regard to an agricultural society:

A meeting of the citizens of Knox County is solicited at the Court House on Saturday, the 21st day of June next, for the purpose of forming an Agricultural Society. The importance of the object contemplated, it is hoped, will induce the Farmers generally to attend.

In 1826 another call appeared in the Western Sun for a meeting to organize a new society. The fact that at different times calls were made to organize a society shows that the society was not permanently organized and that the efforts so far

1. Western Sun, Sept. 28, 1822.
2. Western Sun, May 31, 1823.
had not produced many results; however, the desire for such organization existed in the minds of a group of people living in the southwestern part of the territory. In 1835 another effort was made to organize a new society under the Act of 1835 which was passed by the General Assembly for the encouragement of agricultural interests, but nothing of a permanent nature in agricultural organization was done in Knox County until in the decade of the fifties.

The people of Wayne County are said to have held their first agricultural fair in the year of 1828, but no definite information concerning it has been furnished. One is led to believe, therefore, that the early attempts to form an organization for the betterment of agriculture were made by the people who lived in the southwestern part of the state, in Knox County.

It was not until the year 1829 that the members of the General Assembly began to think of the problems concerning the farmers. Governor Ray, in his message to the General Assembly, recommended that a law be passed to "incorporate Agricultural Societies, with the view of more effectually improving the breed of animals and of forcing that honorable branch of business into a science." Mr. Dumont from the committee of propositions and grievances made a report to the House of Representatives saying that the committee considered the establishment of Agricultural Societies highly important.

2. History of Wayne County, p. 111.
4. Ibid., p. 500.
The first act passed by the state legislature to promote the agricultural interests of the state was in 1829. This act was called "An Act to provide for the incorporation of Agricultural Societies" and was approved January 22, 1829. This act provided that whenever twenty or more citizens of any county should meet at their county seat they could organize themselves and become an agricultural society. Public notice which stated the object of the meeting was to be given by advertisements signed by three freeholders of the county and put up at three public places in the county at least three weeks before the meeting. The officers of each society were a president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary and seven directors, all of whom were elected by ballot by the citizens who had met to form the society. A tax, which was to be determined by voice, was never to exceed $5 a year or be less than $1 for each member. The president and directors of the society had the power "to make and alter by-laws, to determine on what articles, animals, mode of husbandry or other improvements of any kind connected with agriculture or domestic mechanism, they will confer prizes, and the amount thereof, to fix the days of exhibition, to fill vacancies in their own body, or in any office pertaining to the society between the times of holding annual elections, to provide for admission of other members, to direct by a by-law the mode of holding future elections." This


Note: In this thesis the dates following the various laws of Indiana indicate the session, since under the old constitution the assembly met in December and held over into the next year.
corporation was permitted to receive donations of land or other property for the use of the society, but no greater amount of real estate than $500 was to be held by the society. No money was to be appropriated except for the payment of prizes relating to agriculture and domestic manufactures and for publications on the same subjects and for the necessary expenses of the society.

Little was actually accomplished after the passage of this act except that it had a tendency to direct attention to the importance of the issues which had to be met sooner or later. This act did not give much impetus to the formation of county societies. In 1831 the legislature passed a special act to provide for semi-annual fairs in Floyd and Switzerland counties. These fairs were authorized for the sale or exchange of cattle, sheep, hogs, horses and other articles of husbandry. The trustees were given the power to levy and collect a tax on articles sold to defray the expenses of the fair. In Johnston County the justices of the peace of various townships were required to give notice of a meeting to be held in October, 1834, for the purpose of organizing a county agricultural society. Nothing of importance was done in this county until after the passage of the Agricultural Act in 1835.

In September of 1834 in Franklin County the first attempt was made to form and conduct an agricultural society and fairs were held in the county from 1837 on. In the summer of 1834

an attempt was made to organize an agricultural society in Fayette county and about forty dollars was subscribed and paid for the organization to Van Pleat, secretary, who soon died. This first attempt to organize an agricultural society came to an end with the death of the man who tried to establish it. So far all efforts at agricultural organization were confined to the counties south of the National Road, that is, the counties in the south half of the state.

In 1835 another act was passed by the General Assembly for the encouragement of county and township societies and for the creation of a State Board of Agriculture. Governor Noble was in favor of the passage of the act and cited in his message to the legislature the "fruits of the Act of 1829." He stated that a spirit of emulation and generous competition had been induced, and that their effects have been witnessed in the improved culture and stock of many of the farms. Governor Noble wanted a new act to supersede the Act of 1829.

On February 7, 1835, an act for the encouragement of agriculture was approved. The act provided that the board doing county business in each county should give notice that a meeting of the citizens of the county would be held for the purpose of organizing a society. The manner in which the notices were to be given was left up to the judgment of the board. If twenty or more of the citizens who had convened decided in favor of forming an agricultural society, election of officers was

1. History of Fayette County, p. 244.
2. George Cottman, Centennial History and Handbook of Indiana, p. 108.
then to be held and the society properly organized. The law also stated that if a smaller number than twenty assembled who thought that at some other time a larger number could be convened, the meeting should be adjourned to another time not to exceed ninety days. Section 2 of the act set forth the manner in which a township society could be formed. When five freeholders made application to the board doing county business for the formation of a society in a township, the board was to give a notice that public meeting would be held for the formation of an agricultural society. The township societies were to become auxiliaries to the county societies and were entitled to send representatives to the meetings of the county societies. If no county society had been formed in a county, the township society was to be considered the county society and other societies formed in the county were to be auxiliaries to the first one formed in the county.

The officers of each society were a president, vice-president, corresponding and recording secretary, treasurer and one or more curators for each township in the county who constituted a board of managers and were elected by the society annually. A tax, to be levied upon each member, was to be decided upon at each annual meeting of the society and the amount was not to exceed five dollars or be less than fifty cents each year.

This act gave the board of managers power "to make and alter by-laws, to determine what articles, animals, modes of husbandry, agricultural essays, crops, domestic manufactures, or other matters or improvements connected with agriculture, mechanic arts or rural and domestic economy they will confer
prizes or premiums, and the amount thereof, to fix all places of exhibitions or fairs; to appoint all subordinate officers, shall make out an annual report setting forth their number of members and the amount of money paid in their treasury; and in general the manner in which the same has been expended; also the general conditions of agriculture in their county;...they shall appoint a delegate to attend the meeting of the state society."

This act permitted a society to receive donations of land or other property for the use of the society, but a society could not hold real estate above the value of $500 for a longer period than one year unless the same be used as farms or gardens for agricultural experiments or purposes. The board doing county business was required to appropriate out of the county funds a sum not exceeding $50 in one year for the aid of the county society.

The noteworthy feature of this Act of 1835 was its provision for the formation of a state board of agriculture. Sections 13 and 14 specify the duties of this board and are as follows:

Sec. 13. There shall be formed a state board of agriculture consisting of five persons to be appointed by the governor, who shall hold their offices for five years, and until successors be duly appointed....It shall be the duty of the persons appointed as members of the state board to organize immediately by appointing one of their own body president, and by appointing a secretary and treasurer; they shall collect from county societies, and from all other sources to them accessible, such information as shall be calculated to promote the agricultural interests of the state, give such directions or instructions to county societies as may tend to produce system, uniformity, and efficiency of action on the part of said societies; prepare, procure, publish and circulate such agricultural works, and conduct such agricultural experiments as may be ordered by

1. Laws of the State of Indiana, 1835, pp. 87-89.
the legislature or county societies, they shall receive and record or file all papers of county societies committed to their care; make all necessary arrangements for the annual meetings of the state society; make an annual report to the legislature, embracing a statement of their own proceeding, an abstract of the reports from the several county societies; and such other information and recommendations in their judgment would be interesting and useful to the agricultural community; and shall perform such other duties as shall be prescribed by the legislature or the state society.

Sec. 14. There shall be held annually in Indianapolis on the second Monday in December, a meeting of the state board and of the delegates from the county societies, which shall be known as the annual meeting of the State Agricultural Society of Indiana; the object of which shall be to devise plans of operations, means of diffusing agricultural intelligence, and to give that cause the best and most efficient impulse, which may be afforded by their combined action and influence.

This act is much more detailed and more comprehensive than the Act of 1829 and the provisions, in many respects, were adequate in their scope to do a great deal in the way of making agricultural conditions better. After this law was passed little was done to actually carry out its provisions except in the formation of county societies. The State Board of Agriculture existed practically in name only. George Cottman, in writing about the State Board, said: "This institution seems not to have cut much figure, and we hear little more about it, but the local societies flourished and were stimulating in their effect."

In the Indiana Farmer the advantages of the law are mentioned and also its chief defect is pointed out in the following way:

The Act authorizing the creation of a State Board of Agriculture and inviting the formation of county and township agricultural associations has been productive of much good to the farming and manufacturing interests. In a number of coun-

1. Laws of the State of Indiana, 1835, pp. 87-89.
ties agricultural societies have been formed, and fairs instituted, at which not only the products of the farm have been brought into spirited competition, but of our workshops, and of our spinning wheels and looms, highly creditable to the industry and ingenuity of our citizens. The advantages which it anticipated have been circumscribed by the omission in the law, to make appropriations to enable the Board to discharge the duties assigned to it.

After the passage of this act new societies were formed in counties where societies had not existed before, and many of the counties were preparing to hold fairs. Warrick County was among one of the first to agitate the matter of holding fairs. As early as 1835 the people were interested in the formation of a county society for that purpose. "Early in that year the County Board ordered an election to be held for the purpose of founding a County Agricultural Society. The result of that election is not known, but the probabilities are that nothing of importance was done." Attempts were frequently made during the succeeding years to establish a Fair Association, with only partial success and it was not until 1856 that a permanent society was organized.

There were two counties in the northern part of the state who tried to carry out the provisions of the law of 1835. They were Madison and Cass counties. An agricultural society seems to be one of the first societies to be organized in Madison County. "In May, 1835, the county commissioners ordered that notice be given that a meeting for the purpose of organizing an agricultural society in Madison County would be held on the last Saturday of May. There was no record of this meeting." By

1. Indiana Farmer, Dec. 15, 1838.
2. History of Warrick and Spencer Counties, p. 57.
March 7, 1837, $25 of county funds had been appropriated to the society according to the records of the commissioners. The first fair, a private enterprise carried out by Archibald Parker and Joseph Barnes, was held in 1837. The next fair, which was held in 1839, also was promoted by private individuals. This agricultural society did not live long and was not reorganized until in the fifties.

In Cass County a meeting was held in 1835 to organize a society but nothing definite took place. In 1842 the society was reorganized and in 1854 it was again reorganized.

In Putnam County the first fair held for the exhibition of live stock was on September 7, 1837. "It was little more than a show of live stock, held on the open ground, and without fees. A committee passed judgment on the merits of the animals exhibited, but no premiums were paid." In 1838 another fair was held, but it was not until 1852 that a permanent agricultural society was organized.

In Hancock County in 1835 the sheriff was ordered to see that notices were posted that a meeting of the county citizens would be held for the purpose of organizing an agricultural society. There seems to be no record of the results of this meeting and nothing of importance was done until 1856.

Of the counties in the southern part of Indiana which attempted to organize societies to promote agricultural develop-

3. History of Hancock County, p. 137.
ment the most important were Pike, Washington, Jackson, Morgan, Monroe, and Warrick Counties. At this time there were more counties in the southern part of the state that had societies than there were in the northern part of the state; although a desire for organization had been stimulated in the counties of the northern part of Indiana.

A meeting was called at the court house in Washington County in May, 1835, to organize a society. A large delegation of farmers was present and a permanent organization was brought about. Other meetings were held, on which occasions essays and addresses were delivered on subjects of interest to farmers. It is thought that a fair was held in 1835, but there has not been any definite record of it. A few years later the society died down because of lack of funds and no other attempts at organization were made until in the early fifties.

In 1836 the first attempt to organize an agricultural society in Pike County was made, but nothing of importance was accomplished and no further efforts were made until 1857. In Jackson County the people earnestly tried for years to perfect a society, but their efforts were in vain until 1853.

"Early efforts were made to organize a society in 1835. The following year another meeting was held and for nearly twenty years constant efforts were made to create an association for holding fairs. Nothing but failure had attended such attempts up to 1853."  

1. History of Washington County, pp. 725-726.
2. History of Pike County, p. 283.
3. History of Jackson County, p. 353.
Similar attempts were made in Morgan and Monroe Counties. In Morgan County on November 20, 1837, a number of citizens met to organize a society. Officers were elected and several subscribed as stockholders, but the organization soon died. Attempts at organization of an agricultural society of a permanent nature in Monroe County likewise failed. The citizens of Monroe County held a fair in October of 1840 and the premiums were awarded in money from $1 to $5. At the first fairs of this society the majority of the people entitled to the premiums voluntarily bestowed the amounts on the society with which the society purchased a couple of Berkshire pigs "and a short time since we heard one of the members say that he thought those pigs had already benefited the members of the society in the aggregate to the amount of $1,000."

Marion County was more successful in keeping her agricultural association permanent than these other counties. In 1835 an agricultural association existed in Marion County and the first county fair was held on October 30th and 31st, 1835, and it was a success.

The following remarks concerning the fair appeared in the Indiana Journal:

We would, on our part, just remark, that the effort which is making on this subject is an experiment intended to awaken an interest in the public mind on the important subject of agricultural improvement....Everything has been done hastily and with the best intentions, without any claim to perfection. Hereafter, when the Society shall have more experience, their arrangements will probably be more perfect. In the meantime it is hoped all good citizens will lend their aid to promote the

2. Indiana Farmer, 1835, No. 8.
great objects which the Society has in contemplation. If there be a disproportion in the premiums, it was unavoidable. The money was raised by individual subscriptions for each article entered.

Twenty-four classes of live stock were entered for premiums, but for some reason no premiums were offered for agricultural products, although in the following year these figured liberally. Articles of home manufacture, such as flannels, jeans, linen and carpeting were entered and also essays on grasses, the culture of mulberries and the production of silk. The cash premiums awarded amounted to $169. The premium list was as follows:

$15.00 for best stallion
13.00 " mare
10.00 " jack
5.00 " mule
5.00 " bull
12.00 " yoke of oxen
12.00 " three-year old steer
10.00 " cow
11.00 " five hogs
7.00 " five sheep
2.00 " calf

Awards were also made for the second best of the above mentioned entries.

$4.00 for best piece of domestic twilled mixed cloth
5.00 " home made cheese
2.00 " home made butter

1. Indiana Journal, Oct. 9, 1835.
2. Ibid.
$1.00 for best pair of woolen socks
3.00 " " domestic flannel
3.00 " " domestic carpeting
3.00 " " domestic linen

The premium list is criticized as being very disproportionate on the ground that a mare or cow is not of immense public utility as a stallion or bull. The question is asked, "Why give as much for a mare as for a stallion, and twice as much for a cow as for a bull?"

A fair was held each year in the county during the following years and a keen interest and a spirit of emulation and competition was aroused. An interesting article by the editors of the Indiana Farmer appeared in the paper concerning the Marion County fair held in the fall of 1838:

The annual fair of the Marion County Agricultural Society was held on Friday and Saturday of last week. Although a good degree of interest was shown by our citizens, there was evidently a lack on the part of the agriculturists to render the exhibition as imposing as it might be or should be. Besides horses and other kinds of stock, there were a considerable number of cattle of the improved blood. Of these the greatest number were from Kentucky. The editors regret the apathy that prevailed among the farmers.

The fairs that were held in Marion County were much more successful than those held in other counties in these years. Thus we have noted the beginning of an attempt on the part of the farmers of the state to organize themselves and to hold fairs whereby a greater interest in their vocation might be created and their knowledge of farming increased and a spirit of improvement aroused.

1. Indiana Journal, Oct. 9, 1835.
2. Indiana Farmer, Oct. 27, 1838.
The State Board of Agriculture made some attempt to carry out the provisions as set down in the Act for the Encouragement of Agriculture, approved in 1835. The board called the following rules and regulations to the attention of the several county societies:

Act 1. The association in a said county is to be styled the County Agricultural Society.

Act 2. The Society's attention shall be directed to agriculture, domestic manufactures, and rural and agricultural affairs.

Act 3. Officers of society were named and their duties stipulated which were the power to fill vacancies, adopt measures to promote interests of agriculture, to note and report any superiority in domestic animals, domestic manufactures, crops and modes of culture, and other such matters as may be calculated to promote the objects of the society.

Act 4. Lists the duties of President of Society.

Act 5. Lists duties of Treasurer of Society.

Act 6. Lists duties of Recording Secretary.

Act 7. "Stated meetings of the Board are to be held quarterly."

Act 8. Resident members and honorary members are defined.

Act 9. Society to annually propose prizes relative to the actual improvements and experiments, shall publish collections of memoirs and observations.
Act 10. Requires resident members to pay a fee.
Act 11. Amends constitution and laws.

The Board further stated that an agricultural exhibition would be of great benefit to the farmers in inducing them to produce the best breeds of animals, best crops, and the first quality of grains and grasses. The Board said that agricultural publications, which are one of the most efficient auxiliaries to the cause of agriculture, must not be lost sight of. It recommended that the county societies should purchase a few books and agricultural periodicals to belong to the society as common property. The State Board of Agriculture declared that the County Board of Commissioners had the right to make an appropriation from the funds of the county treasury of $50 or any less sum, in the aid of the objects of the society, either for procurement of books or for premiums for agricultural products. The Board of Managers was requested to make out a report and forward it to the Secretary of the State Board and a delegate was to be appointed by each society to attend the annual meeting of the State Agricultural Society. James Blake, John Owens, Larkin Simms and Moses Henkel composed the State Board.

Governor Noble mentioned the good effects of the law:

The incentive offered to agricultural enterprise, by the law of the last session, providing for the appointment of members of a State Board of Agriculture, and for the organization of auxiliary county associations, I am glad to say, is like to accomplish all the good the advocates of the measure promised themselves. In most of the counties the agitation of the subject has excited a spirit of emulation and competition which has already caused the introduction of many fine specimens of

1. Indiana Palladium, Sept. 7, 1833.
2. Ibid.
stock, seeds, and implements of husbandry. Such examples will hardly fail to have a beneficial influence on the agricultural pursuits of the country.¹

The Agricultural Act of 1835 was productive of much good within the state, but the fact that no means were placed at the disposal of the State Board of Agriculture, not even to defray the expense of correspondence with the societies, prevented its being able to accomplish much. It did not even have the means with which to publish its annual report.²

In 1837 a meeting of the State Board was held and delegates from several societies attended and interest was manifested in the proceedings. In 1838 some effort was made to get up a meeting, but resulted in failure. In the Indiana Farmer this statement is found: "Here we have an act that is positive in its injunctions, but is already a dead letter."³

Since this was the situation there was a great need for a change in this act and there was a demand for revision. In 1838 another act was passed entitled, "An Act for the incorporation of Agricultural Societies, approved February 19, 1838." This act made different provisions for the incorporation of county societies which was in some degree an improvement, but it contained no repealing clause and did not affect societies previously formed. The greatest defect of this act was that it did not remedy the situation created by the Act of 1835 concerning the State Board. The Act of 1838 did not mention the

². Indiana Farmer, November 17, 1838.
³. Ibid., No. 7, 1840.
State Board, much less provide it with any funds.

The Act of 1838 said that when twenty or more citizens of any county met at the county seat they could organize themselves into an agricultural society. Before this meeting for organization notices were to be given by advertisements signed by three freeholders and put up at three public places three weeks previous to the meeting or these notices could be printed for three weeks in a newspaper of the county. The officers who were chosen by ballot were a president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and seven directors and such subordinate officers as the president and directors appointed for the purpose of determining between competitors for prizes and awarding them. An agricultural society, according to this act, could receive donations of land or other property for the use of the society, but no amount greater than the value of $500 was to be held for any greater length of time than six months. No money was to be appropriated except for the payment of prizes that related to agriculture and domestic manufactures and for publications on the same objects and for the necessary contingent expenses of the society.

This act differs from the one of 1835 in the minor details by which a county society could be organized. This law did not provide means for carrying the provisions into effect.

In the decade of the forties we find more counties organizing agricultural societies and holding fairs. The premiums awarded at most of these fairs were either in money or in sil-

1. Revised Statutes of 1838, pp. 61-62.
verware. The editors of the Indiana Farmer severely criticized the use of silverware as premiums and declared that such rewards did not create a desire on the part of the farmers to enter their products. They suggested the awarding of the Indiana Farmer as a premium in certain cases, the work to be forwarded by mail to those to whom it was awarded. Much agricultural information could have been disseminated throughout the community in this fashion and would have been more valuable than the silver that was awarded.

St. Joseph County, a county at the extreme northern portion of the state, organized a society after the passage of the Act of 1838. A fair was held in this county in 1841, but this was the only exhibition held by the society. Tippecanoe County, another county in the northern portion of the state, organized an association in 1838. In 1841 Allen County organized a society and held meetings for a few years afterwards.

The only other county, as far as we have been able to ascertain, to form an agricultural society at this time which was located in the northern part of the state, was White County. "A few years after the county was organized, attempts were made to organize an agricultural society pursuant to an enactment of the State Legislature approved about the year 1838. Meetings were held for that purpose, and something in the way

1. Indiana Farmer, September 22, 1838.
3. Indiana Farmer, March 9, 1839.
4. Allen County History, p. 54.
of organization was effected, but there all effort died without hope of early resurrection." Nothing further was done until in 1857.

Again, at this time, we notice that the number of counties which had agricultural societies and held fairs were more numerous in the south portion of the state. Many county societies came into being in the south portion of the state from 1840 to 1850. The farmers in Crawford County in 1840 had organized an agricultural society and held a general farmers' institute on the last Saturday in October, 1840. The following prizes were offered:

$3.00 for best horse under 1 year old
2.00 " second best horse
4.00 " best colt
3.00 " second best colt
5.00 " best bull
3.00 " best bull under 1 year
2.00 " second best bull under 1 year
2.00 " best heifer under 1 year
1.00 " second best heifer under 1 year
5.00 " best acre of corn
3.00 " second best acre of corn
5.00 " best acre of wheat
3.00 " second best acre of wheat
2.00 " best five yards of jeans
1.00 " second best five yards of jeans

No one but members of the society was permitted to send in an exhibit.

In 1841, a meeting was held by the citizens of Orange County and an organization of about forty members was formed. The meeting adjourned to meet again in September to prepare for a fair, but so far as can be learned nothing further was done until in 1852.

In Shelby County an agricultural society was formed in 1848 and forty acres of land were purchased by the association, and the first fair was held in 1849. After the enactment of February, 1851, this society was reorganized.

Vanderburg and a few other counties had societies at this time. According to the Indiana Farmer there was a great falling off in the number of county fairs held by various county societies in the year of 1840.

In 1842 the Indiana Horticultural Society was organized, thus taking the lead in the West. At this time Henry Ward Beecher was a resident of Indianapolis, engaged not only as a minister but also as editor of the Indiana Farmer and Gardener, and his influence was very extensive in the interests of horticulture, floriculture and farming. "In the autumn of 1842 the society held an exhibition, probably the first in the State, if not in the West, in the hall of the new State House. The only premium offered was a set of silver teaspoons for the best seedling apple which was won by Reuben Ragan of Putnam.

The society's operations were checked by diseases and insects that destroyed the fruit in the state and by the great distances to market. The organization became extinct.

During the decade of the forties attempts were made in various parts of the state to increase the farmers' interests in agriculture and to arouse his spirits for improvement through associations and fairs. Many suggestions as to how the agricultural interests of the country could be more efficiently organized were given by various people. Mr. R. Watt of Jefferson, Indiana, sent in several suggestions which were, first, that a United States Farmers' Magazine be published at Washington; second, monthly reports should be obtained from each state of the Union concerning the crops and these reports should be forwarded to a corresponding committee of the State Agricultural Society; third, an agricultural convention should be held composed of members appointed by each state agricultural society to discuss and adopt measures to advance agricultural interests. This shows that men were earnestly thinking of means to improve and unify agrarian activities.

The members of the General Assembly were also considering various ways to improve the situation and to bring agricultural information to all the farmers. In 1840 the members of the General Assembly of Indiana sent a joint resolution to Congress concerning the extension of franking privileges to agricultural

2. Indiana State Sentinel, Nov. 28, 1843.
societies. The resolution read as follows:

Resolved by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, That our Senators and Representatives in Congress be requested to use all honorable exertions to procure the passage of a law extending the franking privilege to the several presidents and secretaries of the several agricultural societies or associations that have or may become incorporated... and exempt from postage all papers and periodicals, the columns of which are exclusively devoted to agricultural, mechanical, or manufacturing interests.

A law was passed in 1841 with provisions which intended to change the law of 1835, but the changes are minor indeed. The act of 1841 made it lawful for agricultural societies to hold annual or semi-annual sales by auction or otherwise, of all agricultural products and farm stock and gave the societies power to make all necessary rules and regulations to carry out the sales.

A law was passed in 1847 to remedy the principal defect of the Agricultural Acts of 1835 and 1838. A sum of money was appropriated to the Indiana State Board of Agriculture, but the proper spirit was lacking to carry forth the principles of the preceding acts. The sum appropriated was not adequate enough to permit the Board to carry out its duties even if the Board had greatly desired to do so. The Act of 1847 contained the following provisions:

The sum of $50 shall be appropriated to the Indiana State Board of Agriculture for the purpose of defraying expenses necessarily incurred in carrying out the provisions of the Act under which they are constituted.

The State Board shall receive from the Commissioners of the patent office at Washington, or other officer having

charge of the same, and to distribute to county agricultural societies such seeds, plants, reports, etc., as shall be apportioned to the State of Indiana.

The auditor of the State shall audit and the treasurer shall pay to the president of the Indiana State Board all sums authorized to be paid by this Act.

This provision was made to remedy the chief defect of the previous acts, but no action was taken after this act was passed. The situation called for more than just a change in the content of the law. The spirit to carry out the law was not powerful enough in the minds of the people. The societies were poorly managed and the men in charge took little pains to do anything. They were men who desired publicity only and who were not loyal friends of improvement. The farmers at this time needed a man as their leader who had their interests at heart, who possessed a forceful personality and strong will power, who was genuinely determined to educate the farmers and to dignify their labors, and who wished to inject some purpose and vision into their tasks and to alleviate the dullness of their hard life.

A leader of this type was found in the person of Joseph A. Wright whose great interest in agriculture was proved by the time and energy which he devoted to this cause. He was ever ready to travel and to make speeches in behalf of the farmers. It was he who saw to it that not only laws in the behalf of agriculture were passed by the General Assembly but that their provisions were actually carried out. Events have proved the

wisdom of his suggestions and have also proved that his efforts were not in vain.

CHAPTER III

GOVERNOR WRIGHT AND HIS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURE IN INDIANA

Joseph A. Wright was born at crossings, Pennsylvania, on April 17, 1820, and in 1829 his parents moved to Bloomington, Indiana, where Joseph and his two brothers assisted their father in making bricks. His father died when Joseph was eleven years old and Joseph had to depend upon his own resources, as the family had been very poor. Joseph attended the seminary College at Bloomington and earned his expenses by doing the chores of a janitor such as ringing the college bell, making fires, repairing the college chimneys, and repairing the windows in the seminary building. He also obtained money for his board and clothing by gathering hickory nuts and walnuts which he sold to wealthy students. In 1829 Joseph began the practice of law at Rockville, Parke County. In 1831 he married Miss Leona Cook, daughter of a prominent farmer in Parke County. "This union was one of the most fortunate events of his life; he had only needed a wife, but one who would exert an influence on his mind and develop and bring out the sterling qualities of his heart and mind."

In 1834 he represented Parke County in the Indiana House

2. Ibid.
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Joseph A. Wright was born at Washington, Pennsylvania, on April 17, 1809, and in 1819 his parents moved to Bloomington, Indiana, where Joseph and his two brothers assisted their father in making bricks. His father died when Joseph was fourteen years old and Joseph had to depend upon his own resources, as the family had been very poor. Joseph attended the State College at Bloomington and earned his expenses by doing the chores of a janitor such as ringing the college bell, making fires, repairing the college chimneys, and repairing the arches in the seminary building. He also obtained money for his books and clothing by gathering hickory nuts and walnuts which he sold to wealthy students. In 1829 Joseph began the practice of law at Rockville, Parke County. In 1831 he married Miss Louisa Cook, daughter of a prominent farmer in Parke County. "This union was one of the most fortunate events of his life; he not only needed a wife, but one who would exert an influence on him and develop and bring out the sterling qualities of his heart and mind."

In 1834 he represented Parke County in the Indiana House

2. Ibid.
of Representatives and in 1839 he was elected to the State Senate. From 1840 to 1844 Wright was associated with General Tighlman A. Howard in the practice of law. In 1843 he was elected to the United State Congress and in 1849 he was elected on the Democratic ticket Governor of Indiana under the old constitution and in 1852 he was elected governor under the new constitution. In 1857 he was appointed minister to Prussia and served his full term of four years, and then in 1861 Governor Morton appointed Wright to the Senate to fill the unexpired term of Jessie D. Bright who had been expelled. In 1863 President Lincoln appointed him Commissioner to the Hamburg Exposition, and in 1865 President Johnson appointed him minister to Prussia again. Wright held this office at his death in Berlin on March 11, 1867.

Joseph Wright was an effective speaker mainly on account of his earnestness and simplicity and was an exceptionally good office-holder because of his sincerity and honesty. He was held in high esteem by his fellow-men. "While not the greatest man in the State, he was one of the most influential; and to his honor be it said, his influence was exercised for the public good. Economy and honesty in public life, and morality and religion in private station, had in him an advocate and an exemplar." There are not many examples of self-made men that are more worthy of study than that of Joseph A. Wright.

2. Ibid.
3. William Woolen, Biographical and Historical Sketches of Early Indiana, p. 103.
As Governor he was an important factor in shaping legislation and moulding public opinion in his state and it is this part of his career in which he rendered the best services to his state and people. He used to quote the saying of Horace Greeley that "the man who makes two blades of grass grow where but one had grown before, is a public benefactor." He carried out this idea in all of his endeavors.

The following comment upon Governor Wright's ability appeared in the Indiana State Sentinel: "In all those positions he has occupied, he has exhibited those leading traits of character so necessary in him upon whom shall fall the responsibility of discharging the duties of the highest state executive office. The more blows he receives from his enemies, the harder he fights, and the more fire he throws into the contest; and the harder and thicker they fall upon him, the more triumphant and brilliant will be his victory."

A similar article praising his character and ability appears in the Sentinel:

That Mr. Wright is an able man, well qualified to discharge the duties of any office within the gift of the People of our State, we are confident no one will deny. That he is a man of morals unblemished, we have never heard disputed. That he is popular, needs no particular proof at present, further than the fact that he was elected to Congress in a district which gave 1,100 Whig majority in 1844, and that he always carries more than his Party vote in his county and district.

Joseph Wright along with Robert D. Owen and James Whitcomb preached the ideas of a New Democracy pleading for human

rights, individual liberty and private initiative. They thought it the duty of the state to care for the unfortunate and feeble, to educate children and to foster individual development rather than to concern itself entirely with the interests of bankers and manufacturers. Governor Wright had many interests at heart, but his favorite interest and the one which received the most of his attention was agriculture and its improvement. Although he was a great champion of agriculture, he himself had never been a farmer. Governor Wright gave a great deal of attention to agriculture, even in his political speeches, and his political opponents made great sport of his farming pretensions and retaliated with various forms of ridicule.

One jest is said to have been the invention of Jessie D. Bright. "It was said that in one of his speeches before an agricultural society he advised the farmers to buy hydraulic rams to improve their sheep."

Another story is too interesting to be omitted:

Someone brought him a bunch of hog bristles, taken from the paunch of a cow. He exhibited this as a great curiosity and was wont to descant upon it for the edification of his farmer friends. At last it was discovered that the cow from which the bristles were taken was in the habit of browsing near a pork-house where hog's hair was spread to dry. While eating grass she had swallowed the bristles, and, as they were indigestible, they remained in her stomach until she died. This discovery spoiled the Governor's lecture on the cow.

Do not be misled by these little stories into thinking that Governor Wright was ignorant concerning the subject of agriculture. The ideas which he fostered were sound and scien-

2. Ibid.
tiflc and the people were greatly influenced by them. Above all things, Wright wished to dignify the work of farming in the minds of the farmers and hoped that they would realize the importance of their tasks.

In his message to the General Assembly delivered December 31, 1850, he outlined a scheme of legislation which he sincerely believed would benefit the farmers and he was very determined that his plans be carried out as well as being written into law. Governor Wright believed that the cultivation and improvement of the soil was an activity upon which all other branches of business relied and that it was the true source of all wealth. "The system that adds to the stock of information in agriculture will promote the welfare of the State, and deserves to be encouraged by the Legislative Department." Governor Wright realized the necessity of a State Board of Agriculture which would actually do the work for which it was intended and he insisted upon the creation of such a board. Wright says:

The establishment of a State Board of Agriculture, to consist, say of nine members, for the express purpose of organizing a State Agricultural Society, would be calculated to bring into existence, in the several counties of the State, County Societies, that would be auxiliaries to the State Association.

Wright was determined to make the previous efforts at such an organization a permanent and effective set-up.

In this message he introduced an idea of his which had not been advocated by his predecessors, but which was recognized in other states, namely, that of a state fair. The people

2. Ibid.
of Indiana had not thought much about such an exhibition, but other states had been holding state fairs for several years. Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania had agricultural societies and fairs before the year 1838. Governor Wright believed that many advantages would result from a state fair and a state agricultural society. He mentions the advantages of a state fair:

We are an agricultural people. Our climate, soil and situation make us so; and the adoption of a system that will bring our people together annually at some point in the State, where we can present the most valuable specimens of science and art, would no doubt create a spirit of emulation in our people and be well adapted to further the interests of our growing state. We are not aware of the amount annually expended by our people for stock, implements and productions of other States, that can be saved in a few years by the proper organization of such County and State Agricultural Societies.

In this same message Wright urged that a tax collected upon travelling circuses, menageries, and public shows in the state be set apart expressly as a fund at the disposal of the State Board of Agriculture, to pay premiums at the annual fairs. The attention of the legislature was called to the importance of providing for a thorough geological and topographical survey of the state as a means of benefiting agricultural and manufacturing interests.

The editorials which appeared in the Indiana State Journal heartily agreed with the governor's suggestions. "We trust that the recommendations of the Governor, with regard to the encouragement of agriculture, will not be unattended to, but

1. Indiana Farmer, Dec. 3, 1838.
2. Indiana Senate Journal, 1850, p. 10.
that such steps may be taken by the Legislature, as will result
in the speedy establishment of State and County societies. Once
formed the advancing state of agriculture will insure their
perpetuation."

These two main schemes advocated by Governor Wright were
embodied into a law called an "Act for the Encouragement of
Agriculture" which was approved February 14, 1851. The insti-
tutions created by this act remain active yet today and this
law was a true milestone in the history of agricultural devel-
ment. The following is a summary of the act:

Sec. I. Whenever thirty or more persons of any county or dis-
trict embracing two counties organized themselves into a society
and adopted a constitution and by-laws agreeable to the rules
of the Indiana State Board of Agriculture and when the officers
were appointed and a sum not less than $50 was paid to their
treasurer, the county auditors were to draw on the county treas-
urier for the amount received during the previous year from li-
censes issued to persons exhibiting menageries, circuses, or
theatrical performances or other shows. This order is not to
exceed the amount paid in by the county society by voluntary
subscription.

Sec. II. Societies are to offer and award premiums for the im-
provement of soils, tillage, crops, manures, stock, articles of
domestic industry, and such other articles, productions and im-
provements as deemed proper.

Sec. III. A list of awards are to be published by each society

1. Indiana State Journal, Jan. 5, 1851.
in a newspaper and a report of the proceedings of each county society is to be forwarded to the State Board.

Sec. IV. Incorporation of the State Board of Agriculture.

Sec. V. The State Board or any five of them were required to meet in Indianapolis at a time stated by the Governor, officers are to be appointed and the time to be served by each member was to be decided upon so that the term of service of one-half the members expired annually. The president could call meetings of the board whenever it was expedient.

Sec. VI. Annual meetings of the State Board to be held on first Thursday after the first Monday in January together with a delegate from each county society for the purpose of deliberation and consultation as to the wants, prospects and conditions of agricultural interests throughout the state. The county societies were to present their reports.

Sec. VII. An annual report to the General Assembly was required to be given by the State Board which stated the proceedings of the board and of the county societies, as well as a general view of the conditions of agriculture throughout the state.

Sec. VIII. A sum of $1,000 was to be appropriated from the treasury for the use of the board which was to make an account of its expenditures in its annual report to the General Assembly.

Sec. IX. The State Board was given power to hold state fairs at such times and places as they deemed proper and expedient, and entire control of the fairs was given to the board with the power to fix the amount of premiums offered. The board was given permission to employ assistants and receive donations for defraying the expenses of the state fairs.

1. General Laws of State of Indiana, 1851, pp. 6-8.
Governor Wright became President of the Board, which the law of 1851 created, and the other members were Alexander Stevenson of Putnam County, Jeremiah McBride of Martin, Rolan Willard of Kosciusko, Jacob Harris of Switzerland, Henry Ellsworth of Tippecanoe, John Ratliff of Morgan, Joseph Orr of Laporte, David Holloway of Wayne, John Kelly of Warrick, William McLain of Lawrence, Samuel Emerson of Knox, John McMahon of Washington, Thomas Sweney of Allen, George Brown of Shelby, and George Hussey of Vigo. Governor Wright was re-elected President in 1853 and again in 1854.

This act of 1851 was more simple in its provisions for organization of local societies than the act of 1835 and the duties of the societies are more clearly defined, and definite as well as adequate provisions were made to obtain funds for the board to carry out its duties. For the first time, a law was passed in which provision was made for a tax upon certain activities as a means of obtaining money for the purpose of aiding agricultural interests. Much good was accomplished as the result of this act and its influence was most beneficial. In his address to the General Assembly on December 2, 1851, Governor Wright praised the act highly:

The act of last session entitled 'An act for the encouragement of agriculture' has had a most healthy influence. About thirty county agricultural societies have been organized. Meetings, addresses, and fairs have been held in several of those counties. The proper spirit is aroused among our people. The farmers and mechanics want the benefit of each others' experience and knowledge and the trials, tests, and experiments that are elicited by county and state fairs are well calculated to bring forth this result.²

1. [Official Laws of State of Indiana, 1851, p. 6-8.]
2. Senate Journal of Indiana, 1851, p. 20.
Wright desired that a large number of the reports of the State Board of Agriculture be published so that the knowledge of each county fair be communicated to every county in the state and also that these reports be sent to sister states in exchange for their pamphlets.

Soon after the passage of the act of 1851 agricultural societies were formed in counties in both the southern and northern parts of the state and many of the counties which had previously organized societies re-organized them. Numerous counties in the southern portion of the state organized societies and fairs were successfully staged and in this period the northern part of the state was organizing societies more numerous than in previous times. In the years from 1851 to 1855 county societies had been formed in Jasper, Benton, Carroll, Howard, Montgomery, and Tipton Counties. In 1855 successful fairs were staged in Kosciusko and Dekalb Counties. The attendance at these fairs was large and the interest of the people was great. Lake and Lagrange Counties also were staging interesting fairs at this period. After the passage of the act of 1851 more counties in the northern part of the state organized themselves than had done so heretofore.

The Governor firmly believed that a large increase in the amount of aggregate wealth would follow the formation of these agricultural associations and he declared that the wisdom of the law of 1851 was already made manifest by the number of societies that had been formed. In his first President's report he declared that he was astonished that a pursuit in which more

1. *Agricultural Reports*, 1851, p. 5.
than four-fifths of the population was engaged had remained so long without a spirit of organization and emulation. Governor Wright thought that the spirit for improvement was being aroused in the minds of the Indiana farmers and he wanted to do all within his power to bring these desires to realities. He believed that the public mind was asking for the best methods of reaping the rewards of their labors and that men were becoming willing to exchange views and opinions with their neighbors. He considered fairs as the best means to bring about improvements in farm life and that pride and ambitions be built up through them. The advantages of fairs are given thus:

These fairs and associations will make labor more attractive, encourage the heart and energy of the people in the development of their resources which will add to the aggregate wealth of any community. One of the great practical results that is to follow a regular system of county and state associations, will be that of causing our people to change and diversify more their labor and pursuits.

Other advantages which Wright believed would result from fairs and associations were: a free interchange of views and opinions, the bringing together of the most distinguished mechanics of the state, a spirit of rivalry created, every branch of industry becoming acquainted with the wants and dependency of each, improvement of home life, enlighten the hard tasks through increased knowledge on the part of the people, and the saving of the considerable sum of money paid abroad by our people for stock, implements, and productions of other states.

Joseph Wright. The board planned and adopted a set of measures.

1. Agricultural Reports, 1851, p. 5.
2. Agricultural Reports, 1861, p. 7.
3. Ibid.
Governor Wright wanted the people to become more independent and improve their own live-stock, crops and implements instead of buying them from other states for he considered no state in the Union so well situated for an advantageous application of agricultural skill and labor as Indiana. He considered that the State Board of Agriculture would be able to do a considerable amount of good along this line. This is illustrated from his talk given at the State Board meeting:

Through the operation of a thorough system of organizations over the State, the Board will be able to collect, not only general, but particular and reliable information for the farmers concerning the different soils of the State, the kind of agricultural labor that pays best, what articles are best adapted to such a soil and climate, the stock most in demand in the market, the various productions of each county in the State, different modes of farming by the best practical farmers, experiments on different soils, with various crops, redeeming wet and swamp lands, stock raising, ditching, stables, wells, springs, modes of supplying stock-water, etc.

Governor Wright requested that not less than 3,000 copies of the report of the State Board be published so that the county societies may each receive reports and that copies be exchanged with sister states, and that they be given as premiums at the state fair. The knowledge of the sister states would be communicated in this manner to nearly every county in the state. Indiana had already received documents on agriculture from New York and Ohio.

At the January session of the board in 1852 plans were discussed for a state fair, an enterprise heartily sponsored by Joseph Wright. The board planned and adopted a set of questions

1. Agricultural Reports, 1851, p. 6.
2. Ibid., p. 7.
3. Ibid., p. 11.
which the delegates from each county were to answer and give
information upon:

3. Oats, Rye, Barley: Seed per acre? Yield? Methods of sowing and harvesting?
6. Cattle: Cost of raising? Value of good dairy cows?
7. Sheep and Wool: Kinds of sheep most profitable? Cost per pound for growing? Coarse and fine wool?
9. Hemp: Yield per acre? Cost of production per pound?
11. Fruit Culture
13. Wet lands? Methods of improving?
14. Information to be given concerning each County Society.

There can be no doubt but that the advantages derived from such printed information, which was distributed throughout the state, from these meetings of farmers and from the fairs greatly

1. Agricultural Report, 1851, pp. 43-44.
stimulated progress and advancement in agricultural activity. The results obtained were up to or perhaps beyond the expectations of Governor Wright. In his report as President of the State Board to the General Assembly he stated that the agricultural spirit has been growing constantly and that organizations had been effected in fifty counties. This spirit has not only encouraged the skill and industry of the farmer and mechanic, but has in a high degree been beneficial to the growth and strength of the true moral and political interest of Indiana.

In Governor Wright commented further upon the benefits of this spirit which has been aroused during his administration:

That spirit, daily growing, has already led to the formation of many agricultural associations; it has directed the attention of agriculturists to a more careful examination of the different modes of farming; it has attracted and is attracting foreign capital and enterprise to our State; it has led to interesting investigations concerning the adaptations of different soils to different crops; it has provided means of introducing among the farmers of Indiana the most valuable and profitable kinds of live stock; it has brought to light many important facts concerning the best and cheapest methods of draining, and reclaiming wet lands; it has disseminated valuable information relating to the cultivation of best varieties of fruits and vegetables, it has directed the public attention to neat, convenient, and economical plans of farm buildings; it has brought into public notice and into more general use not only the most valuable agricultural implements; but also those agricultural improvements and inventions which,... are calculated to increase his knowledge, his usefulness, his independence, and his prosperity.

In this report Governor Wright expressed the desire that more manufacturing of raw products take place within the state as a means of improving our industries and as a more economical policy for the farmers. The surplus of live stock, grain,
and fruit values for 1852 were estimated by Wright as amounting to $25,000 and only a small proportion of the surplus was manufactured in Indiana; but such raw materials have been shipped to other states, and large quantities of manufactured goods have been shipped into Indiana and sold at a profit.

Governor Wright lamented over the fact that the farmers were ruining the soil because too much corn was being raised and by the Indiana farmers and not enough grasses were being cultivated. The surplus of hogs raised in Indiana showed this. In 1852 the surplus of pork amounted to at least $8,000,000.

"Our State," said Wright, "with only half of the quantity of improved land that Ohio has, produces almost the same quantity of corn, and exceeds her near half a million in the number of swine." Governor Wright hoped that the farmers would soon realize that it would be to their advantage to raise sheep, cultivate grasses, and improve other breeds of live stock. The following table will show that Indiana ranked second to five of the principal states of the Union in corn production, produced the greatest number of swine, and had the least of all in amount of improved acreage and ranked lowest in the number of sheep.

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 5.
4. Ibid., pp. 6-7

The "Poucch, Loss and April" was published at New York and Philadelphia. Vol. 1-3 was published from 1848 to 1859. In 1859 Solomon Robbins was its editor. In 1857 it became known as the American Farmer's Magazine and in 1859 was discontinued.

At this time an Indiana joint stock company had been formed for the purpose of importing direct from Europe some of the most improved breeds of cattle, horses, and sheep. This was an important step which helped direct the farmers' attention to other breeds of live stock than hogs.

In 1852 the State Board had distributed to the county societies more than two thousand volumes of agricultural books, mostly reports of the Indiana State Board and some from New York, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin. As a further means of educating the farmers upon raising different crops and live stock, the State Board planned to distribute as premiums at the State Fair bound copies of standard agricultural and mechanical publications such as The Plough, Loom and Anvil, Western Horticulturist, Indiana Farmer, and Western Cultivator.

The first State Fair held at Indianapolis in October, 1852, was a great success and the exhibitions were large and great enthusiasm was shown by the people. More will be said concerning this fair and the State Fairs that followed in another chapter.

In his address to the General Assembly in 1853 Governor Wright requested the legislature to continue in its aid and en-

2. Ibid., pp. 6-7
3. The Plough, Loom and Anvil was published at New York and Phila-
delphia. Vol. I-X was published from 1848 to 1857. In 1852 Solon Robinson was its editor. In 1857 it became known as the American Farmer's Magazine and in 1859 was discontinued.
couragement of the healthy and expanding spirit of improvement which was causing the farmers, mechanics, and manufacturers to consider the best means of promoting the interests of their several pursuits. "Upon the success of this improvement, the true substantial wealth and the real prosperity of the State must depend."

He told the General Assembly that since the passage of the act under which it was organized three sessions of the State Board had been held and after paying all expenses it had on hand a surplus of two thousand dollars. The State Board had been successful, financially, also. The Board reserved this surplus to be paid in premiums at the State Fair of 1853. Governor Wright believed that if the General Assembly would add to this amount, the stimulus given to various branches of home industry would return to the revenues of the state more than four-fold the amount of such an appropriation.

Indiana was receiving at this time numbers of agricultural reports from New York, Ohio, and Michigan in exchange for the reports of this state. These reports were distributed among the county agricultural societies and in this way the knowledge acquired by the sister states was dispersed to the majority of the farmers of the state.

Governor Wright was very enthusiastic over the fact that the farmers of the state were improving and making considerable progress in 1855 in spite of the fact that financial embarrassments were affecting some of the commercial and manu-

1. Indiana Senate Journal, 1853, p. 18.
2. Ibid.
facturing interests of the state. "Under the act of the General Assembly, approved February 17, 1852, about sixty agricultural associations have been established in Indiana, and a very large portion of this number hold interesting and profitable fairs, in the fall of the year 1854." This law of 1852 changed the annual meeting day of the State Board from May to January. Other than this the sections of the law were virtually the same as those in the act of February, 1851.

On March 2, 1852, a joint resolution on the subject of agriculture was approved: "Resolved that the Senators and Representatives in Congress are requested to use their exertions to have speedily established a Bureau of Agriculture."

In the message to the General Assembly of 1855, Governor Wright urged that the law under which agricultural societies are organized be so amended that these associations could be invested with the right to hold real estate, for purposes connected with the holding of annual fairs. Many of the societies had purchased valuable grounds on which they had been making improvements. An act authorizing county agricultural societies to purchase and hold real estate not to exceed twenty acres was approved February 5, 1855. This act was later amended so that societies could hold land up to eighty acres.

1. Journal of Indiana State Senate, 1855, p. 29.
2. Revised Statutes of Indiana, I, 1852, 17-3.
4. Journal of Indiana State Senate, 1855, p. 29.
6. Ibid., p. 275.
Through the operations of the Board of Agriculture during the year of 1854 more than 4,000 volumes on agricultural subjects had been distributed among the people of the state. These volumes contained not only valuable information derived from the experience of some of the best farmers in Indiana but also many useful and interesting facts in relation to the agricultural experience of the most distinguished farmers of other states of the Union. Wright repeatedly reminded the members of the General Assembly at each session of their duty to aid and encourage the efforts of the State Board and its auxiliary societies and he emphatically called this to their attention in 1855. He told the legislature that these associations had exerted a most beneficial influence in promoting agricultural interests and in increasing the amount and value of home industry through the stimulation of industry, encouragement of useful arts, and the diffusing of practical knowledge.

Governor Wright recommended to the General Assembly that they appropriate a sum of $3,000 for the permanent inclosing of the military grounds at the Capital. He states:

This sum, in addition to that which will be furnished by the citizens of Indianapolis and the Agricultural Society of Marion County, will be sufficient to provide suitable grounds for the periodical display of the most valuable stock of the State, and for the exhibition of labor and skill of our mechanics and manufacturers.\(^2\)

This sum was later granted.

At the time of Governor Wright's retirement from the office of governor, considerable progress had been made in agricultural

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1. *Indiana Senate Journal*, 1855, p. 29.
2. Ibid., p. 30.
improvement in Indiana and it may be truthfully said that it was mainly through Governor Wright's persistent efforts that these accomplishments were made. By 1857 agricultural improvements were visible in every portion of the state; the General Assembly, in making appropriations and passing laws, had exerted a good influence; a large majority of the counties had well organized agricultural societies; the State Board of Agriculture was actively engaged in beneficial pursuits; the people were improving their home life and increasing crop production and constantly learning more scientific methods of farming; fairs were becoming popular, both the county fairs and the State Fair; and a change in the moral life of the whole people was noticeable. This is a great contrast to the period before 1850. It was a source of gratification for Joseph Wright, when his term as Governor expired, to observe that his efforts to stimulate the agricultural growth of the state had been eminently successful.

The fact that Governor Wright was greatly interested in the cause of agriculture is not only indicated by the program which he sponsored as Governor of the state, but it is also evidenced by the time and energy which he devoted to travelling and making speeches throughout the country in the interests of the farmer. During the time of his governorship he was constantly in demand to make speeches before various county agricultural societies and to societies in other states. The addresses which he made at the Indiana Asbury University, at the Wayne County Fair, at the agricultural meeting at Livonia, Washington County, at the Ohio State Fair, at the New York State Fair
In 1854 he attended the Great Exhibition at Quebec, the Canadian Fair, where he made arrangements with the two provincial agricultural organizations of Lower and Upper Canada to exchange the agricultural reports of Indiana with theirs.

It was mainly through the efforts of Governor Wright

1. Daily Indiana State Sentinel, Sept. 21, 1854.

The hearty response to it showed that the time was right for such an activity. There was a relationship between the establishment of a State Fair and the existence of the railroads. By that time railroad communications were established to connect Terre Haute, Lafayette, and Peru, and with the eastern counties by the Belleville and Indiana Central roads. Railroad companies agreed to carry persons to and from the fair at half the usual price and stock and articles for the exhibition for a mere nominal price. People started from home days before the fair opened.

The first State Fair was from October 20-23, 1854, in Indianapolis on the old military reservation west of West Street which is now known as Military Park. It was an event of great popular interest and the newspapers devoted an unusual amount of space to it. It was regarded as an important forward step in the state's progress. The benefits resulting from a State Fair are given as follows:

1. Indiana Magazine of History, III, 144-145.

2. Indiana Farmer, II, Sept. 18, 1852.
INDIANA STATE FAIRS, 1852-1860

It was mainly through the efforts of Governor Wright that a State Fair in Indiana was brought into being and the hearty response to it showed that the time was right for such an activity. There was a relationship between the establishment of a State Fair and the existence of the railroads. By that time railroad communications were established to Madison, Terre Haute, Lafayette, and Peru, and with the eastern counties by the Bellefontaine and Indiana Central roads. Railroad companies agreed to carry persons to and from the fair at half the usual price and stock and articles for the exhibition for a mere nominal price. People started from home days before the fair opened.

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1. Indiana Magazine of History, III, 144-145.
To quote from a paper of the day: 'A just pride in the ability and greatness of their pursuits will be generally infused among our farmers, mechanics and manufacturers. Standards of excellence in stock, of utility in machines, and of true taste in the elegant articles of comfort and luxury will be fixed in the minds of all. Progress in their respective pursuits will take place of indifference in their minds. A laudable ambition to have the mantel decorated with a silver cup will actuate all, and thus feeling and acting, who can calculate the ultimate result?'

There was an interesting and large exhibition of fine live stock, agricultural products, domestic manufactures, farming implements, and mechanical skill. There were not less than 30,000 persons in attendance, many of whom were visitors from other states. The attendance on the first day of the Fair was perhaps 15,000 and on the second around 25,000 counting all those who were abroad in the grounds and through the streets. The behavior of the crowd was extremely orderly and quiet and no intoxicating liquor was sold on the ground. The proportion of females was very large. The enthusiasm and interest of the people was immense. "Although this large assemblage was drawn together on the eve of a Presidential election, the prevailing subjects of interest among the multitude were connected with the advancement of the cause of agriculture and the encouragement of various branches of useful labor."

There was an unusually fine exhibit of live stock. The Wayne County Stock Company was represented by two fine Durham bulls, the most famous one being the "Earl of Seaham." "This is a splendid animal, said by good judges, to be superior to

1. Cottman, Centennial History and Handbook of Indiana, p. 125.
any other bull in America, and not surpassed by any one in England. He was imported in the fall of 1850 by Messrs. Stevens and Sherwood of New York." Durham cattle were also exhibited by Mr. Hutchcraft of Kentucky. There was a fine exhibit of steers from Hendricks County. Devon cattle were also on exhibit and they were considered better milkers than the Durham breed. Marion County and other counties exhibited good cattle. These cattle showed the farmers what good stock was and gave them a standard by which to judge their own.

A large number of horses were on exhibit and there were some excellent representatives of Kentucky stock. There was but one pure-blooded draft horse on the ground. "This is the excellent White Horse, Hercules, imported from England and now kept at Orleans in Orange County. He is 17 hands and 2 inches high, and in length about 7 feet 5 inches." Some fine breeds of sheep were present including Spanish Merino bucks, Saxons, and other breeds, but many of the pens did not have the breeds nor their owners labeled. Fine specimens of hogs were exhibited. A hog owned by J. Plumber of Shelby County which weighed 576 pounds at the age of fifteen months was considered a wonder. Various kinds of poultry and

2. Indiana Farmer, Nov. 1, 1852.
5. Indiana Farmer, Nov. 1, 1852.
6. Ibid.
ducks were entered. There were Bantam, Shanghai, and Poland chickens, the beautiful top-knot Poland, the white Muscovy, and Rouen ducks, and various pigeons.

The Mechanics Department was not very appropriately named for the first things to be seen were the fruits, seeds, and vegetables, while the last thing to be seen when leaving was the flowers. The exhibition of flowers, fruits, garden vegetables, and butter was not such a large one, but an exceptionally good one. There were apples of numerous varieties, pears, quinces, grapes, cherries, and plums. Mr. R. W. Todd of Madison presented some fine specimens of fruit and Mr. Allen Loyd of Lafayette exhibited over forty varieties of vegetables that could not be surpassed. The judge of the fruits was Dr. Warder of Cincinnati and editor of the Western Horticultural Review. "A better judge of fruits, flowers, and vegetables you will find nowhere." The display of the fruit and flowers was not well arranged. They were huddled together in piles or piled up in baskets. "They were numerous enough and of fine enough quality to have made the crowd stare had they but half a chance."

There were only a few samples of wheat, corn, and other grains present and it was well that this was the case because there were no boxes prepared for displaying them.

1. Indiana Farmer, Nov. 1, 1852.
3. Indiana Farmer, Nov. 1, 1852.
5. Indiana Farmer, Nov. 1, 1852.
Articles made by the women and the mechanics that were entered were: caps, ottoman covers, fancy chair work and cushions, window curtains, ruffles, lamp mat, lace collars, bonnets, head dresses, cut flowers, embroidery, quilts, jeans, stockings, and other handicraft of the ladies; paintings in water colors and mezzotint, stone cuttings, Rea's fine display of daguerreotypes, plans for buildings, gunpowder, boats, shoes, furniture, hardware, fine curlery from Connecticut, shell work, saddles, bridles and harness by G. S. Feares of Connersville. There was also a dentistry exhibit.

The Manufacturing Department had much that was excellent in it. Beard and Sine of Richmond made a fine display with their ploughs, cultivators, corn shellers, and straw cutters. "They have taken the premiums, and well do they deserve all the honors they received." Ploughs were also exhibited by Austin Seward and Sons of Bloomington. These ploughs, called by them the "Hoosier State," were very light draft ploughs and the trial of them in Monroe County gave them much popularity. They exhibited hoes and axes of great celebrity. The ploughs exhibited by H. Curtis of Albion, New York, were good ones as to workmanship, but were too unwieldy to be of service in this state.

There were also exhibited corn planters, wheat drills, reapers, mowers, and threshers which were being examined closely by the farmers. The improved Gatling wheat drill received the most at-

1. Indiana Farmer, Nov. 1, 1852.
2. Ibid.
It had teeth which could be raised to avoid roots and stones. Martin and Lane of Lafayette had on exhibit a beautifully manufactured root-cutting plough. Massachusetts had fine specimens of hoes, forks, potato diggers, and garden sprinklers. Hewitt's patent haypress, which cost about $200, was an object of interest to the farmers. There were smut and screening machines, grain separators, and also Cochran's improved Eclipse Mill. Among the greatest curiosities and one of the most interesting objects of this exhibition were Howe's patent sewing machine and Singer's machine. They were constantly surrounded by crowds of spectators. There were a few other articles on exhibit among which were a large variety of scales exhibited by Duryee and Forsyth of Rochester, New York.

The number of carriages presented was not large, "but of their workmanship our State may well be proud, for it is an honor to the mechanics of our State." These carriages were made by W. P. Applegate of Connersville, S. R. Lippencott of Richmond, and by S. W. Drew of Indianapolis. A carriage by the Applegates of Connersville obtained the silver cup. Its description is interesting:

It is faultless in workmanship, substantial; and in its arrangement the most convenient of family carriages. The body rests upon four springs with a grace and lightness that challenges admiration. The inside is lined with a cream colored silk and satin covering, neatly ornamented with satin lace.

1. Indiana Farmer, Nov. 1, 1852.
2. Ibid.
The leather work is richly embossed, and the glass is of the purest French manufacture. The lanterns are of silver and the axles full patent.

Most of the exhibits at the first State Fair were of an unusual nature and were illustrative of the genius and skill of the people of the time. The fair had many exhibits of which every Indianian could be proud.

On the last day of the fair a plowing match was held which was closely contested by the ploughs and ploughmen of Beard and Sinex and of Austin Seward and Sons. The former carried off the first premium.

There was no lack of amusement for the crowd that was in the city. In the vicinity of the Fair Ground was the "Learned Pig, California Bears, Chinese Family, Trained Sea Dogs, Nova Scotia Giant, Grand Exhibition of Panorama Paintings and moving wax Statuary including Louis Kossuth, Winfield Scott, and Queen Victoria." Inside the Fair Ground was a tent with a huge sign informing the people that "Mr. and Mrs. Randall," the celebrated Scotch Giant family, could be seen inside. In the city were other side-show attractions including Barnum's Museum and Menagerie which was well patronized.

A plan of the grounds of the first State Fair will show the buildings present and the general arrangement which is rather interesting.

1. Indiana Farmer, Nov. 1, 1852.
2. Ibid.
Plan of the grounds of the First State Fair in 1852.

Premiums to the amount of $1,026 were awarded for the best live stock, implements, domestic produce, and also for the best essays on swamp lands, hilly lands, and plans for farm buildings. This fair was a great success financially as the receipts from entrance fees were about $4,700, enough to cover all expenses and repay to the state the $2,000 advanced by the legislature.

This first State Fair infused a spirit of progress and in the future prompted thousands of farmers and mechanics to strive to surpass the excellent articles exhibited at the fair.

It was decided to hold the State Fairs at various points within the state so that the fairs would be within the reach of all the people, but this plan proved financially disastrous.

The second State Fair in Indiana was held on October 13, 14, and 15, 1853, at Lafayette, Indiana. The work for the State Fair grounds had taken a considerable amount of time, but was well worth the effort. The following passage shows how great was the interest of the people:

The whole work shows genius and liberality....Articles are arriving daily, intended for exhibition, and the prospect at present is that a competition, such as has not been expected, will present to the visitors the most magnificent collection of live stock, cultivated products, and manufactured articles ever seen in the western states.

The city, on the opening day of the fair, was crowded with people and the prices for board soared enormously. The grounds were large enough to accommodate the large crowds. The plat of ground consisting of twenty acres provided ample space for the exhibition of live stock and articles of manufacture. The grounds


were well arranged. There was a large observatory for visitors, from which a commanding view of the grounds and surrounding scenery could be obtained. Mechanics Hall was not more than half filled which showed the apathy that existed among Hoosier Mechanics. Within this hall tombstones, flour separators, apple parers, mole traps, horse shoes, hammers, a beautiful set of carriage harness made by J. Sulgrave of Indianapolis, washing machines, doors and sashes made by Lafayette factories were exhibited.  

Within Dairy Hall were tables containing cheese, butter, honey, sugar and vegetables. A. H. Vestal of Cambridge City exhibited a half cord of the largest sweet potatoes the eye ever beheld. There was an unusual display of pumpkins. One weighed 185 pounds. There were seventeen of them displayed which were raised on three vines and they weighed 1,485 pounds. Fifty pumpkins raised from one hill weighed three tons. "The farmer who raised them is peddling the seed out at a cent a piece."  

Power Hall had only one engine on exhibit. This was a six-horse engine with a portable boiler made at Auburn, New York. This department was a miserable failure.  

Manufacture's Hall contained a fair exhibit of articles. The farm implement display consisted of five straw cutters,
eleven cultivators, seven threshers, one roller, two excavators, one grain separator, three grain drills, three seed planters, five reapers and mowers, cider mill, corn sheller, harrow, garden engine, twenty-four ploughs, one corn stalk roller and cutter, one hay press, one hay rake and one ditcher.

There was a cattle ring and poultry stand, but no mention was given in the newspapers of the day concerning the live stock exhibit. There were about 1,500 entries in the fair which was a couple of hundred more than that of the first fair and about $6,300 was collected. This fair did not have exhibits as fine as the first fair had and the live stock presented could not compare with the live stock of the first State Fair.

The third State Fair was held at Madison, Indiana, in October, 1854. The first two days it rained so much as to prevent many from attending, but on the next two days a larger crowd was present. The number of entries was not so great as last year due to many causes. Among them were the failure of the crops and the time selected for the fair, the eve of an important election. The display of manufactured articles was rather meager as was the show of agricultural products. The whole number of entries was 1,075 as against 1,460 last year and 1,500 the

There was a better exhibit of horses and cattle than at the fair at Lafayette. The exhibition, on the whole, was considered inferior to the ones of the previous years. The number of entries was less and the variety and quality of the articles were behind former efforts. The fair was spoken of as a failure in this way:

The meagreness is very generally admitted, and accounted for by the heavy rain of the first two days, the hard times, and the disastrous drouth. The Fair is a failure, the show unattractive, and the effect will be felt at the Fair of 1855.

Another reason for its failure was that the location of the fair in the extreme southern part of the state discouraged many from attending and from shipping their entries such a distance.

The Indiana Farmer has the following to say concerning the Fair of 1854:

We notice a disposition upon the part of some of our contemporaries to put down the State Fair held at Madison, as a failure. Common justice demands that they should state the cause of this failure. The first two days of the Fair were extremely unpleasant from heavy rains. Many declined to go on account of the unfavorable weather. The receipts, however, will more than pay all the expenses.

The amount received for badges and tickets at the Madison State Fair was $3,623.84.

In 1855 it was decided by the State Board of Agriculture to establish a permanent location for the State Fair and permit it to be no longer a migratory affair. Indianapolis was chosen

2. Ibid.
as the site for the permanent location of a state fair grounds. This caused much rejoicing. The permanent arrangement saved heavy expenses and the central position was advantageous. The total receipts from the Fair of 1855, held at Indianapolis, were $10,823.75, a great gain over the receipts of the previous years.

The State Fair of 1856 was held in Indianapolis. It was realized that the fair grounds was too small and needed to be enlarged to give the vast crowds sufficient space. A hall or tent for ladies and a hall for men was erected for the fair. The Fair of 1856 was successful financially and also had quite a variety of noteworthy exhibits. "This exhibition was more complete and successful in its various departments than any of its predecessors." It was supposed that nearly 100,000 admissions took place during the course of the exhibition. The increasing attendance proved to the State Board of Agriculture and to the people that a permanent location for the fair was wise. The total amount of money taken in was $14,318.14. This surpassed the total receipts of the fair of 1855 by $3,536.34 and of the fair of 1854 by $10,749.50.

The fair of 1857 which was held in Indianapolis was considered a greater success than that of 1856. The number of entries exceeded those of the fair of 1856 and the total receipts amounted to $14,520.15.

3. Ibid.
The seventh state fair was also held at Indianapolis, but the eighth was held at New Albany under the auspices of the Floyd Society. On account of the Civil War the state fairs from 1861 to 1865 were little more than an adjunct of the State Sanitary Commission.

The idea of a state fair had become permanently fixed in the minds of the people during the decade of the fifties and taken as a whole these fairs had been successful and had done much to improve the farmers' methods of labor and to create a healthy spirit of emulation among them. The institution was brought into being largely through the efforts and influence of Joseph Wright and the hearty response given to it by the people showed that his efforts were rewarded and that the time was right for focusing the attention of the people to the opportunities that lay at their own thresholds.

1. Logan Earey, History of Indiana, II, 847.
Let us briefly review the steps made in the advancement of agriculture from 1820 to 1860. During the time before 1850 nothing of a permanent nature had been accomplished to organize the farmers and therefore there were not many ways of circulating information concerning improvement and there was not much of a chance to secure any legislation in their behalf. The majority of the farmers did not subscribe to the farm papers of the day. The legislature of the state was not particularly interested in the farmers, but was more concerned with politics, banking interests, and transport companies. The importance of agriculture as the true basis of other industries was not realized as yet.

The farmers vaguely realized that some sort of organization was necessary in order to benefit by the experiences of others and to obtain information concerning methods of farming. In 1809 we find the people of Vincennes making an attempt to organize for the purpose of encouraging agriculture. This was just a beginning and not much was actually accomplished. In the following years various attempts were made to bring about an organization. Only one other county had an agricultural society and held a fair before the passage of the agricultural law of 1829 and that was Wayne County.

After this act we do not that a few counties in the north-
vide for incorporation of Agricultural Societies in 1829. As a result of this act a few counties in the southern portion of the state formed societies and some attempted to hold agricultural exhibits, but most of these organizations died out or remained inactive because the farmers had not yet realized the necessity for improvement and the spirit for advancement was not yet realized to a full enough extent.

Governor Noble gave more emphasis to the subject of agriculture than had his predecessors and expressed his desire in his message to the General Assembly that an act be passed which would improve the one of 1829.

In 1835 An Act for the encouragement of Agriculture was passed. The important feature of this act was that it created a State Board of Agriculture and listed its duties. This board was to be the centralizing agency in the state and it was its duty to keep in touch with the various county societies, to gather information concerning agricultural methods and distribute the information to the societies over the state, and above all to inform the legislature of the agricultural conditions of the state. This indeed was a great step, if the letter of the law had been carried out, but the State Board did not do scarcely anything to improve conditions as the legislature had left it helpless by not appropriating funds with which to carry out its duties. The greatest reason for the failure of this act was the lack of spirit and desire on the part of the people that the act be carried out.

After this act we do note that a few counties in the northern part of the state formed societies and this indicates that...
the desire for organization to improve conditions was spreading from the southern portion of the state to the northern section.

In 1838 another act was passed which made the incorporation of county societies a little more simple, but it did not remedy the situation in regard to the State Board of Agriculture. This defect was partially remedied by a law passed in 1847 which appropriated a sum of money to be used by the board.

In the decade of the forties improvements in transportation had become a factor in agricultural improvement. The Wabash and Erie Canal, which was opened in 1841, gave the farmers new and better facilities for reaching markets. This gave an impetus to agricultural interests and the area for farming was widened. Hogs no longer were the best paying product to be raised while wheat, oats, and other cereals began to be profitable. The attention of the farmers was directed to the profits in beef cattle. This resulted in the beginning of diversified farming which tended to halt the ruinous process of killing the soil that was taking place in this period due to the growing of too much corn and the raising of too many hogs. The railroads, by the beginning of the decade of the fifties, began to be the means of furnishing ways to markets for the farmers' surplus. Railroads were followed by manufacturing establishments and with these came a greater home demand.

The farmers, still up to the time of 1850, remained in ignorance as to how primitive some of their conditions were. Someone who had their interests at heart, was needed to awaken them and this was found in the person of Joseph A. Wright, who, through his unceasing efforts to bring about new legislation and his con-
stant travelling throughout the state to make speeches, brought to the attention of almost every farmer the needs for improvement.

It was during his governorship and largely due to his demands that the State Board of Agriculture was formed which really accomplished the tasks for which it was intended. This board continued to live through the years and still remains active today. The Act for the encouragement of Agriculture passed in 1851 was a great stride in the agricultural development of the state.

The State Board became very active, carried on correspondence with sister states, kept in constant touch with the various county societies that had been formed, and above all, was the sponsor of Indiana's first State Fair held in 1852. The beginning of state fairs in Indiana was a great step and the benefits accruing to the farmers from these fairs were immense.

Societies had been formed in over two-thirds of the counties in the state during the fifties and the farmers were becoming quite well informed through these associations, fairs, and the farm papers of the day. Agriculture was beginning to become a scientific industry.

It was Governor Wright who during these years was the crusader in the cause of agriculture in his state and he deserves much of the credit for the advancement that took place during the decade of the fifties. "Logic of events has vindicated the wisdom of his views and demonstrated the value of his suggestions. The people owe him a debt of gratitude for his labors in their behalf."

1. Seventy Five Years of Progress. "The Indiana State Fairs." Published by Indiana State Board of Agriculture.
APPENDIX A

Titles of articles in the Indiana Farmer which show the variety of subjects written upon at the time.

Indiana Farmer, Sept. 8, 1838.
Culture of Wheat.
Formation of Agricultural Society in Illinois.
Cultivation of Fruit.
Silk Culture.
Value of Lime for Manure.
Wool.

Indiana Farmer, Sept. 22, 1838.
Charcoal for Hogs.
Silk Culture.
The Strawberry.
Wool.
Value of Lime.
Rules in Husbandry.

Indiana Farmer, Oct. 6, 1838.
Diseases of Horses, Cattle, Hogs.
Agricultural Improvement.
Mulberry Trees.
Poll-Evil.
Silkworms.
Hints to Cattle breeders.
McAdam roads.

Indiana Farmer, Oct. 13, 1838.
Vegetation.
Agricultural Fairs.

Indiana Farmer, Oct. 19, 1838.
Increasing fertility of land.
Marion County Fair.

Indiana Farmer, Nov. 3, 1838.
Laws of Nature.
Internal improvements.
Pig troughs.
Dairy in Kentucky.
Silk Culture.

Indiana Farmer, Nov. 24, 1838.
Cultivation of Fruit.
Markets and Prices.
Thoughts on Farming.

The Silk worm.
Indiana Farmer, Dec. 12, 1838.
Care of the Cow.
Barley and Oats.

Indiana Farmer, Dec. 19, 1838.
Cultivation of Fruits.
Value of Manure.
Lime. (Article sent from the Yankee Farmer, Massachusetts.)
Silk Culture.

Indiana Farmer, Jan. 26, 1839.
Dutton Corn.
Rohan potatoes.

Indiana Farmer, Feb. 2, 1839.
Production of Baden Corn.
Internal improvements.

In February, 1839, the Indiana Farmer was suspended due to impossibility of procuring paper to print on.

Indiana Farmer, March 16, 1839.
Production of Silk. During the years of 1838 and 1839 there was much written in farm papers upon silk culture and the desirability of raising silk worms in Indiana.

Indiana Farmer, March 30, 1839.
To destroy vermin in sheep.
Feeding of Cows.
Rotation of Crops.
Cultivation of the Cauliflower.
Sugar beets.

Indiana Farmer, April 6, 1839.
Concerning Hogs.
Sowing grass seed.
Silk.
Experiment in feeding cattle.
Account of introduction of English cattle into Kentucky.

Indiana Farmer, May 4, 1839.
Parsnips.
 Grinding Cobs.
Soils.
Silk Culture.

Agriculture of Massachusetts.
The editors of the Indiana Farmer have received a report on the agriculture of Massachusetts and will make extracts from it as they think they will be useful to the readers. Massachusetts has set an example to her sister states which the editors hope will be speedily followed.

Indiana Farmer, May 11, 1839.
The Cocoonery. Feeding the Silkworm.
Indiana Farmer, June 1, 1839.

Cisterns.
Lice on Cattle.
Weeds.
Hogs.

Indiana Farmer, June 15, 1839.

Exhaustion of Soils.
Meadows and grass lands.
History of sugar.
Indianapolis Silk Company. A company was formed in Indianapolis in 1839.
Mulberry trees.

Indiana Farmer, June 29, 1839.

Valuable Receipts by Solon Robinson.
  a. Cure for Toll-evil.
  b. Cure for Cholera Morbus and dysentery.

Indiana Farmer, July 27, 1839.

The Crops. Article from American Farmer giving information on crops of various states.

Indiana Farmer, I, No. I, 1840.

It is now a monthly journal devoted to agriculture, manufactures, and education.
Address by Rev. McLean before the American Silk Society.
Agriculture in Europe.

Indiana Farmer, I, No. II, 1840.

Articles on Agriculture. Taken from newspapers in other states.

Indiana Farmer, I, No. III, 1840.

Grape Vines.
Proper time for Cutting timber.
How to make farming profitable.
Breeding of Cattle and Sheep.
Artichokes for hogs.

Indiana Farmer, I, No. IV, 1840.

What is the Farmer's True Policy?
Chapter on Swine.
Culture of the Pea.

Indiana Farmer, II, no. 13.


At the meeting held at the Smithsonian Institution most of the states were represented by delegates. The first number of the Society's journal had been published and distributed. Measures were recommended to secure cooperation of the kindred State Associations and obtain their reports. A resolution to memorialize Congress to establish a Department of Agriculture was taken up.
I. Speech on The Tariff. Delivered in House of Representatives, April 22, 1844.

A paragraph in this speech defends the agricultural interests of the nation:

You will perceive by the above table, that the farmer is not only compelled to pay an oppressive tax upon articles manufactured abroad, and not only compelled to foster home manufactures, but his raw material must be put into competition with raw materials raised abroad. Under this act, the agricultural labor of the country is more oppressed than any other.
II. Address delivered at the Indiana Asbury University, July 16, 1850.

A portion of this address will show that Joseph Wright desired that agriculture be taught in all our institutions of learning:

I will rejoice when the day shall arrive, that in all our institutions of learning there shall be taught a system of manual labor; when all who seek instruction shall be compelled to work certain hours in each day; when we shall have associated with the improvement of the intellect, a practical knowledge of agriculture, mechanics, arts, chemistry, botany, geology, and all those sciences, that are so intimately connected with the proper improvement of the soil. Teach your child to know the character of the soil and its adaptation to the production of each article raised for man or beast; teach him to know the proper place for each article on his farm; teach him to know how to build a comfortable house; ... teach him something of the beauty of nature.
III. Address delivered at Installation of Rev. W. M. Daily as President of Indiana University, Aug. 2, 1851.

This address clearly proves to the reader that Joseph Wright was well acquainted with the field of the classics which is indicated by his references to Roman mythical characters and Roman historical persons. In this address Mr. Wright emphasizes the importance of the love of home:

There can be no love of country, where there is no love of home. True patriotism derives its mighty strength from fountains that gush out around the hearthstone; and those who forget to cherish the household interests will soon learn to look with indifference upon the interests of their country, and science, encouragement imparted to useful inventors of labor-saving implements of husbandry, bringing together men of different views and feelings, and creation of a spirit of rivalry.

Governor Wright comments upon the intense interest shown by the people at the fair:

The way walk around and mingle with this immense crowd of fellow citizens and you will not hear a word on the subject of politics or religion, but the great struggle is being made by each man to outdo his neighbor in some branch of industry.

Governor Wright was highly pleased with the attendance at the State Fairs of New York and Ohio which he also attended. He states:

More than 100,000 attended these two exhibitions, an army greater than that with which Julius Caesar conquered Gaul, but it was an army without bloody banners, a voluntary army gathered to celebrate the triumphs of peace.
IV. Speech of Governor Wright. Delivered before Wayne County Agricultural Fair held at Richmond, October, 1851.

(Taken from Indiana Farmer, Nov. 1, 1851.)

Governor Wright regrets the fact that the farmers have neglected to form associations:

"It is very remarkable that up to the present time, to a great extent, the American Farmer and Mechanic have neglected to form associations. There is no class of men more in need of associations for mutual benefit. He speaks concerning the advantages of associations and fairs which are: bringing together of the rarest and most valuable specimens of art and science, encouragement imparted to useful inventors of labor-saving implements of husbandry, bringing together men of different views and feelings, and creation of a spirit of rivalry."

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"You may walk around and mingle with this immense crowd of fellow citizens and you will not hear a word on the subject of politics or religion, but the great struggle is being made by each man to outdo his neighbor in some branch of industry."

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"More than 100,000 attended these two exhibitions, an army greater than that with which Julius Caesar conquered Gaul, but it was an army without bloody banners, a voluntary army gathered to celebrate the triumphs of peace."
Their spoils were the richest treasures of nature, their trophies the mightiest mechanisms of art.

Wright deplores the ignorance of youth in regard to the soil and crops, and he considered that one of the greatest blessings which will follow from these exhibitions is an entire change in the character of the education of the youth of the day:

With a rich colored diploma he walks forth from college, upon the very soil from which labor is to wring the bread that must support and keep him from starving, and yet in too many cases, wholly ignorant of the character of the soil, and of the very trees of the forest, so much so, as not to be able to tell a maple from a beech tree. I was credibly informed that a few years ago, a graduate settled in one of our western towns; returning home he lost a shoe from his horse; he gathered up the handle of a skillet, that had been broken off, to take to the blacksmith to make a new shoe.

He laments over the fact that so many farmers are still ignorant concerning the uses of the soil. They think the soil will never wear out. He tells of seeing a man building a barn on a high cliff above a spring. When he asked the man why he was building here, he received the reply that the manure would thus wash away from his stables and he would not have the task of disposing of it. This horrified Governor Wright.

Governor Wright praises the farmer and says that he should be included in the term "Learned Profession." He calls him the great physician of nature. He asks the people to do honor to the farmers. His praise of the farmer is great as this passage indicates:

He who shall present, at your county and state fairs, the best model farm in Indiana, is as much entitled to office as the commander of a regiment in battle. He who will ascertain the cause of the potato rot and provide the remedy,
is as much entitled to the respect of his fellow-men, as he who manages the finances of a bank successfully.

He declares that the newspapers of the time treat agricultural subjects in a poor way:

You will rarely pick up a paper in which will be found an article on agriculture or mechanics. It there is one occasionally from the Flax, Loom and Anvil, or other agricultural work, it is placed on the fourth page, in some obscure corner, never designed to be read; while the leading editorial articles are filled with prospects of this or that man for office.

In this speech Governor Wright makes a plea to the farmers to preserve the soil so that they will not soon become waste and barren. He urges the raising of sheep as Indiana is greatly deficient in the number of sheep. He thinks a large portion of the state is well adapted to the raising of sheep and insists that it is a profitable enterprise. He also thinks that the cultivation of flax is being neglected and insists upon more flax being grown in the state. It is his wish that the farmers cultivate several kinds of crops and raise different breeds of live stock which will tend to improve the soil. Draining and ditching are both necessary for soil improvement according to Wright.

A major portion of the speech is devoted to the raising of sheep. The advantages are enumerated:

It is singular that our farmers have neglected the sheep. In some counties of Indiana there are more hogs than sheep. Sheep will pay better than any other article raised by the farmer.

The cultivation of flax is greatly desired by farmers.
V. Address of Governor Wright at the Agricultural Meeting at Livonia, Washington County.

(Taken from Agricultural Report, 1853, pp. 216-223.)

The main themes of this address are the preservation and upkeep of the soil and the teaching of youth to love farm life. He gives the following advice to the youth of his day:

It is your duty to leave this earth in as good a condition at least as it was when you found it. The worst of all robberies are those which a man commits on his mother earth, when he abuses and destroys the land, either by his ignorance or by his wilful neglect. It is a duty we owe ourselves, our children, our race, not to injure or impoverish the earth.

He states that the Indiana farmers raise year after year corn and hogs and that if this mode of farming is not changed the people shall soon be able to appreciate the force of the Belgian maxim, "No grass, no stock. No stock, no manure; no manure, no crops." He says that there is a demand for cattle, sheep, and wool and that there is no excuse for the exclusive raising of corn and hogs.

A major portion of the speech is devoted to the raising of sheep. The advantages are enumerated:

It is singular that our farmers have neglected the sheep. In some counties of Indiana there are more dogs than sheep....Sheep will pay better than any other article raised by the farmer.

The cultivation of flax is greatly desired by Wright:

There is prejudice against the cultivation of this crop, arising from the repeated story that flax exhausts the soil, but this has not been proven true by any experiments or authenticated by any man.
The concluding portion of the speech deals with patriotism, love of home life, and the education of youth to become farmers and to become interested in their home life. This is an age of great promise. Improvements are everywhere which tend to lessen the labors of man, make labor seem more attractive, and add to his comfort and happiness. He urges the people to become more interested in the activities of their own state instead of being wholly concerned with national politics. His final plea is:

We must educate our sons to be farmers, artisans, architects, geologists, in a word, practical men. Their eyes must be turned from Washington to the state, county, township, district, the home. This is true patriotism, and the only patriotism that will save the nation.

But, if properly conducted, would, in his opinion, by progressive or much good, but he had fears that the people of the West should do with these as they do in almost everything else, allow the minor men to be swallowed up in the great annual Fair of the State....He dwelt long on the importance of County Fairs and endeavored to impress upon the people the necessity of taking an interest in the success of these fairs....He would have the people care for their home government, see that the officers of their townships, their counties, and their state are properly conducted, and if they would do this, there would be no danger of their national government going astray.

Governor Wright declared that in New England every man feels that his reputation is at stake in the annual exhibition of labor in his county and Wright hopes that this feeling be true in the West.

The Ohio Statesman made the following comment concerning Wright’s speech:

For practical sense, good humor and perfect adaptation to the occasion, it cannot be excelled. It bespeaks a heartfelt interest in the West, its people, its agriculture, its virtue and its loyalty to their state.
VI. Address of Governor Wright at the Ohio State Fair.

(A summary of the speech was given in the Indiana State Sentinel, Oct. 6, 1853, which was copied by it from the Cincinnati Times.)

Governor Wright was introduced by Colonel Medary of Columbus as a working man in the cause of agriculture in the West. A great portion of the speech is devoted to the importance of fairs. The following is a paragraph taken from the Indiana Sentinel:

Fairs, if properly conducted would, in his opinion, be productive of much good, but he had fears that the people of the West should do with them as they do in almost everything else, allow the minor ones to be swallowed up by the great annual Fair of the State. He dwelt long on the importance of County Fairs and endeavored to impress upon the people the necessity of feeling an interest in the success of these fairs. He would have the people look to their home government, see that the officers of their townships, their counties, and their state are properly conducted, and if they would do this, there would be no danger of their national government going astray.

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VII. Address of Joseph A. Wright pronounced at the New York Agricultural State Fair, at Elmira, October 5, 1855.

This is perhaps the most notable and praiseworthy address that Wright ever gave before an assemblage of people interested in agriculture. Editorials in newspapers throughout the country praise both the address and the Governor.

The Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel of Nov. 26, 1855, contained many editorials from Pennsylvania newspapers. Wright was born in Pennsylvania and the state was now over-exuberant in the praise of their native son. The following is one of the newspaper comments:

Taken in a whole this address is one of the most complete summaries of the duties, responsibilities, and we may add, the social importance of the farmer and his profession that has ever come under our notice....We have great satisfaction in presenting to our readers a production in which, as we conceive, this subject is treated by one whose evidently intimate knowledge of the interests of both agriculture and the agriculturist will insure a welcome reception. Governor Wright is one of the most distinguished statesmen and orators of the Middle West.... In fact, his present address we regard as clearly portraying the man, and is evidently an outpouring of real old fashioned earnestness and enthusiasm.

Another editorial taken by the Sentinel from a Pennsylvania newspaper reads as follows:

We have seldom read an address that pleased so well for its instructive lessons and general patriotic tone.

Another editorial in the Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel:

Governor Wright alluded in beautiful language to the connection between enlightened agriculture and the development of the social and moral nature of man, between agri-
culture and the sacredness of domestic relations and endearments, between agriculture and the recognition of that Providence upon whose care the farmer more than any other man, from the nature of his pursuits, relies.

An editorial taken by the Sentinel of Nov. 27, 1855, from the Reading Virginia Gazette praises the speech:

This address at New York contains so much sound sense and practical information, and is so instructive in its moral lessons, and so patriotic in its general tone, that it has been extensively copied by newspapers throughout the Union.

The following is a copy in part of this address delivered at Elmira, New York. The speech is found in the Indiana State Library.

Such, then, being the nature of our alliance with the earth, its cultivation becomes our first duty and necessity. It is the normal employment of man; and none other is so natural and honorable. The sweet instinct and the gentle purity of the suckling nestling in the bosom of its mother, are but counterparts of the purity and dignity of the true and diligent cultivator of the earth.

In the prosecution of this work, we must understand, and act in conformity with the laws of nature. Science, in investigating and expounding these laws, appears nowhere more useful and graceful than as the hand-maid of the farmer.

Grass--grass--the great material which supports all flesh, and forms the material nature of man himself! Grass--the cultivation and perfection of which it becomes one of the first duties of the husbandman to promote.

Though this is the oldest command, and lies at the foundation of all agricultural wealth, yet, the subject to which it has relation receives from agriculturists less thought, less attention, less investigation, than is given by them to any other subject of rural interest.

Our zeal, industry, and wealth have been freely expended in the practical illustration of improved methods of cultivating grasses, fruits and vegetables; and in the improvements of our stock, farming implements, and machinery. We have imported, at great expense, all kinds of domestic animals; our state fairs and our county fairs annually furnish reports, essays, and addresses, on every branch of agricultural industry; we have books and learned treatises on horses, cattle, sheep, swine, and even poultry; and many volumes of useful essays on cotton, wheat,
corn, potatoes, fruits, rice, flax, hemp, and tobacco. All
well enough; yet, at this day, we have not a book, report,
or pamphlet, that furnishes the American farmer with even the
names of the grasses of his country, to say nothing of that
essential information which, by the tests of science, fixes
the value of each kind, and determines the question of its
adaptation to different soils, and to different sections of
the United States.

While it is impossible for me to state, with precision,
the annual value of this crop, I do not hesitate to express
the opinion that, in this country, the hay crop alone, im-
perfect as it is, and receiving so little attention, is greater
in value, at this day, than the combined crops of cotton,
rice, and tobacco....

We treat the hay crop as one of minor importance. But
little attention is paid to it: the meadow must wait till
the other crops are disposed of; then the grass is cut, too
often without any reference to its condition, or any well pre-
pared place for its reception. The value of the hay crop of
this country, however, is not equal to the value of the grass
crop appropriated to pasturage, even in the present unimproved
condition of the later crop. But if we make the values only
equal, then the total value of the annual grass crop--hay and
pasturage--of the United States, may be estimated at $300,000,000,
or an amount equal to the aggregate value of all other agri-
cultural products of our country, excepting wheat and corn.

I use the word 'grass' not in its strict botanical sig-
nification; but, according to common usage, to designate the
herbage or plants which constitute the food of cattle and other
beasts....

We should be means of scientific investigation and ju-
dicious experiments, endeavor to increase our knowledge, with
respect to this great branch of agricultural interest....

The farmer who understands the importance of bestowing
careful attention upon his stock, diligently husbunds the
grasses and grains which furnish them with food and clothe
them with flesh. But how little does he think of the fact
that these very grasses should receive attention like that
which he bestows on his cattle. Plants cannot live without
food, more easily than the ox and sheep; and hence, there is
a great sphere for study and care as to the kind of food which
is adapted to the most perfect production of grasses; and
there is a loud demand to protect them against injuries and
depredations; but many a farmer will spend money and labor,
in rendering his flocks secure from wild animals and in pro-
tecting his granaries from the pilferings of vermin, and yet
think little of the noxious influences and weeds that are
steadily stealing from his grasses the food which nature has
provided for them.
Wright continues to speak concerning grasses which exhaust the soil, grasses which build up the soil, those best suited for the support of animal life, and the variety of grasses in our country:

Nature seems to indicate the propriety of sowing more than one kind of seed for meadows and pastures; as, in the natural herbage, we rarely find the whole surface of the soil occupied by one kind of plant. The earth produces almost an infinite variety of grasses, adapted to every conceivable kind of soil and location. The cold and bleak mountain sides, the arid sand plains, the alluvial bottom lands, the marshes and the bogs, are covered with various kinds of vegetation, each differing from others in its organic structure and qualities, and each requiring certain appropriate and peculiar elements for its support. The agriculturalist who avails himself of his knowledge of these facts, may greatly increase the value of his meadows and pastures.

Wright criticizes those people who own land and do not improve it. The speedy growth of weeds is alarming. The cultivation of grasses and the improvement of the varieties furnish a large field for experiment, investigation, and useful discovery. He thinks that the people should learn something concerning the grasses at home instead of introducing foreign varieties. He says:

The worst of all depredations are those which ignorant and reckless men commit on their mother earth—the source and support of organic life—when they destroy or impair the fertility of the land, either by their ignorance, or by their neglect of the means by which it may be improved and preserved. It is our duty to leave the earth in a condition as good, at least, as it was when we found it. In many parts of our country the people seem to believe that the earth is possessed of a constitution as strong, so stout, so healthy, that no extreme of bad usage can affect it injuriously; but Time, the great instructor, is demonstrating our folly, and warning us to change our modes of farming.

He says that the complaints made by farmers concerning crop failures betrays ignorance on their part. These ills which stand around the productions of the soil are friendly
rebukes from Providence which remind us of our ignorance of the natural laws on which these things depend. The farmers have to contend with the elements of earth and air:

The farmer who understands these laws, will be more able under the favor of heaven, not only to bring forth treasure from the earth, annually, but to explain the means by which he accomplishes his great work.

He studies the nature, condition, and quality of his lands; and his fields are improved, not exhausted, by cultivation. His knowledge, experience and judgment, enable him to adapt the crop to the soil, or to prepare the soil for the crop. He reasons, he reads, he reflects, he makes experiments, and he discovers new methods of overcoming old obstacles.

Governor Wright emphasizes the great need for leaders in the cause of agriculture:

In this great work, we want for leaders, men whose examples and precepts will excite the enthusiasm, and win the confidence of their fellow-laborers in the field of agriculture. In every farming district, throughout the vast extent of our fertile domain, we want more men qualified by their knowledge, their experience, their skill, and their enterprise, to instruct and encourage their fellow-men, in the task of 'subduing the land.' When we shall have the whole body of our practical farmers engaged not merely physically, but mentally, in illustrating the power, beneficence, and dignity of the science of agriculture, the 'wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.'

Wright also devoted a part of the speech to agricultural associations and fairs and speaks on the objectives of these associations:

The object of these associations, in our townships, counties, and states, is not solely to enable the farmer to improve his stock and increase his products. This end is highly important, and very desirable; but it is not one which should absorb all others. Man has a moral nature, of vastly greater value than his material and physical one. The increase of material wealth and prosperity, without a proportional increase of morals and intelligence, is not merely of doubtful advantage— it may justly be regarded as a curse rather than a blessing.
It is wisely ordered, therefore, that in order to attain to the greatest degree of material prosperity, learning and science must be united with muscular labor and material economy. The man whose life is devoted to the sciences may prove a very poor practical farmer—while the farmer who despises ‘book-learning’ will fall far behind his wiser neighbor, who seeks to blend with practical skill the discoveries and suggestions of the man of science.

It is on occasions, and at places like the present, that hints and suggestions should be freely given and received, which may lead to the most successful blending of speculative discoveries with practical knowledge. One great object of these assemblages should, therefore, be to diffuse general intelligence and scientific truths among agricultural communities; thereby aiding, not only in the increase of their material thrift, but in the development of the mighty resources of the earth.

A large portion of the speech is devoted to the connection between agriculture and the social and moral nature of man; between agriculture and the sacredness of domestic relations; between agriculture and Providence upon whom the farmer should rely. Agricultural pursuits should give strength to home influences. His praise of the family is sincere:

At the base of all lies the divinely appointed institution of the Family.... It is here that the influence of woman--man’s first, last, best comforter on earth--is felt and recognized....Mother! The sweetest word in all the babbling languages of men! It is the mission of woman--it is the holy mission of the mother--to impress upon the young mind, the first lessons of truth, virtue, wisdom, and courage.

On the right regulation of these independent households, depends the welfare of the larger communities, which, with powers more limited, are composed of these smaller ones. And, so far as the influences of these Associations and Fairs are calculated to enable, dignify, and enrich the occupation of the farmer, just so far will they tend to increase the attractiveness, and the wholesome influences of his home--making him and the members of his household, better citizens of the larger communities.

He further speaks concerning home education and praises home life:

That spirit of inquiry, investigation, and enterprise, that has been awakened, at your township, county,
The base of the prosperity of any people lies in this great principle—Make labor fashionable at home. Educate, instruct, encourage; and offer all the incentives you can offer, to give interest and dignity to labor at home. Enlist the heart and the intellect of the family in the support of a domestic system that will make labor attractive at the homestead. By means of the powerful influences of early home education, endeavor to invest practical labor with an interest that will cheer the heart of each member of the family; and thereby you will give to your household the grace, peace, refinement, and attraction which God designed a home should possess.

The truth is, we must talk more, think more, work more, and act more, in reference to questions relating to home.

It is Wright's firm belief that the training of youth requires more than the school-house and that it should receive training in the home. He says:

There can be no love of country where there is no love of home. We must cultivate the roots—not the tops. We must make the family government, the School, the Farm, the Church, the Shop, the Agricultural Fairs, the laboratories of our future greatness....Their eyes must be turned from Washington to their states, counties, townships, districts, homes. This is true patriotism; and the only patriotism that will perpetually preserve the nation.

Wright believes that the prosperity of agriculture and mechanism indicate the prosperity of the nation. The farmer should be respected as well as the bankers and military leaders.

The concluding part of the address is devoted to the progress that has taken place in the country. In this year 1/4 of the whole nation will have assembled at the state and county fairs. Governor Wright rejoices because the public mind is awakening to the realization of something practical. Agricultural schools are being organized in many parts of the Union.
The people are anxious and willing to become acquainted with modes of labor, productions of the earth, and the best ways of reaping his labors.

In conclusion Governor Wright lauds the activities of the state of New York in the steps that it has taken to improve agricultural conditions. He makes a final plea to continue the efforts to advance the agricultural, mechanical, and manufacturing interests of the Union, and to teach the rising generation to love their country—especially their own hearth-stones—
their own homes.
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