

R E P O R T.

The Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred the order submitted by Mr. Smith, on the 27th of January, beg leave to

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That an increased production from the soil, effected by the application of lime has by no means been a discovery of modern times. As it exists in marl, it was long used by the ancient Greeks, who probably knew not that they were applying lime. The Romans were aware of the value of marl, but its existence in Italy was not known till after the fall of the Roman Empire. When they pushed their conquests into Gaul and Britain, they found the barbarian farmers, as they were considered, manuring their lands with marl, which they have continued to do to the present day. The application of calcined stone or lime to land in Europe commenced at a later period, perhaps but little before the beginning of our era. The Chinese now use it, and no doubt have been in the practice from a remote period. Since the revival of letters the attention of scientific men has been devoted to the rationale of its action upon the land. They made little progress, however, until within a few years past. The discoveries of Saussure, Davy, Chaptal, Sprengel, Boussingault and a host of other eminent enquirers into the relations of chemistry to agriculture and vegetable and animal physiology, laid before the world a mass of valuable facts, which the gigantic mind of Liebig has enabled him to generalise, and to develope light and certainty where much darkness and mystery formerly existed. The principles adopted in his investigations, brought him to conclusions which seem evidently founded upon the immutable laws of nature. We may safely assert that a new era has dawned upon agriculture and physiology.

On the continent of Europe where it is esteemed the duty of the different governments to encourage agriculture, as far as lies in their power, we find many able men under their fostering care, devoting