

was to illuminate the path hitherto obscured by "shadows, clouds, and darkness." Had this science been so applied as to have utterly failed in its object;—had all felt that no benefit could have been derived from it;—that it was powerless for good:—as would have inevitably been the case had the letter of the law only been observed—Agriculture would have received a severe check. The ardor of those foremost in the march of improvement, would have been dampened, and the only oracle of truth to the anxious enquirer after the philosophy of Agriculture, would have been contemptuously spurned. Then would have followed a retrograde movement in the farming community, bearing it back beyond the point from which the present progress commenced. Other States, too, were looking on the experiment in Maryland with an anxious eye, ready to follow her example, if successful, but not able to profit by her errors, had the present law failed,—as it must have done, had the strict letter of it been observed. The State of Virginia, at the last session of her legislature, had a bill under consideration for the general application of Chemistry to her Agriculture; which did not then pass, doubtless because she wished to see the result of the law of Maryland. One of the southern States, Mississippi, has a similar law in contemplation, and all will follow the example so worthily begun by our State. When, therefore, the future application of Chemistry to Agriculture, not only in our State, but in others, depended upon a *demonstration* of its utility, every motive of patriotism, and the plain demands, of duty alike required, that the demonstration should be effected.

When I became the humble Minister of Chemistry in its application to Agriculture, justice to the one and duty to the other alike demanded, that I should only speak its precepts, only give utterance to its oracles, which could be done only, by laboring in each county, for a longer period than the law allowed. Its oracles would, with true inspiration only speak, after a more protracted devotion at its shrine than that contemplated by the law. Appointed to speak the truths of Chemistry for the benefit of Agriculture, I was obliged, either to speak those truths, which by its immutable laws are attainable with great labor and time—or to have submitted to the public, mere fictions of the imagination, and thus have been a traitor to the science—faithless to the Art—false to myself, and to those whose influence placed me in my present position. The choice was not difficult. I have discharged my duties in a way capable of doing the greatest amount of good. The results are before the public—and to the judgment of enlightened and instructed public opinion, I am content to submit. By its decision I willingly abide.

At the present time it may seem almost a matter of supererogation, to speak of the utility of Chemistry to Agriculture. The State has made provision for its application, and favorable testimony from those who are too sincere to flatter and too intelligent to be deceived, has been given to its efficacy.