

# R E P O R T .

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The State Agricultural Chemist has the honor to submit to the House of Delegates of Maryland, the following REPORT :

A very brief and imperfect history of Agriculture will show what progress it has made, and what have been its means of improvement. From its present condition we may judge whether these same means are sufficient, or whether other resources should not be obtained for, and new principles be applied to it. If Agriculture at present is as perfect as from its nature it can be, then let us only follow in the paths of those who have preceded us; if it be capable of improvement, we should at once adopt means to effect that improvement.

Agriculture as an art has had the benefit of the recorded teachings of experience for three thousand years, and yet is far, very far, below perfection. Nay, more, it is but little more perfect now than at the Christian era, and its improvements are almost exclusively of a mechanical nature, owing their existence to the application of science to mechanics.

If, with empirical experience in such a length of time, it has made such little progress, should it not now invoke the aid of science, and especially of that science which, to a great extent, has contributed to perfect every art that has sought its assistance?

The literature or description of any art is generally in proportion to the degree of excellence to which that art has attained. Judging ancient and modern Agriculture by this rule, the preference is greatly due to that of ancient times, not only for beauty of description, but also for accuracy and connection in details. However beautifully and poetically Virgil may have written, his descriptions of the different modes of husbandry, and his advice as to cultivation, all bear the marks of practical knowledge, and many of them are better as general rules than some which are followed at the present day. His recommendation to burn grass, stubble and weeds on land, is good practice in many places at the present