

produced, and should be faithless to my own honor if *at this time* I did not give a history of the office and show the reasons why it has not been more beneficial than it has been. In this, though speaking as a *representative* of the Agricultural interest, I claim not exemption from responsibility for any thing which I may say; if I am in error, most happy will I be to correct it; if what I say be true, then those whom the truth may condemn must blame themselves, not me.

In the Dec. Session of the Maryland Legislature of 1847, the law for the creation of the office of State Agricultural Chemist was passed, and in May following the Governor of the State sent to me a commission to discharge its duties. What the expectations were of those who passed that law, is best seen from the report of the chairman of the committee which reported the bill.

They say, "it is not expected that this measure will at once and alone cause to be diffused among the agriculturists of the State, that full and extended knowledge which, it is hoped, will be ultimately imparted. The committee regard it as an initiatory step, by which, from its partial advantages, the farmers throughout the State will be induced to place a proper estimate upon the true merits of a more enlarged system. They hope by its agency to lead those now actively engaged in cultivating the soil, to place within the reach of those who are to succeed them, and for whose interest and happiness they are chiefly stimulated to industry and exertion, the means of tilling it with greater success. It is also believed, that immediate benefits will accrue to themselves, more than sufficient to compensate them and the State, for the trivial expense necessary to be incurred.

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"Place within the reach of the agriculturalists of the State the means of being informed on these subjects, and let them be properly appreciated and used, and the decided conviction of this committee is, that the annual production of the State cannot fail to be largely increased. Let but the vast deposits of mineral, calcareous, and even vegetable materials of improvement be turned to the best advantage, and the true principles of practical agriculture thoroughly understood, and the farming interests of Maryland will be second in point of profit to none other in the Union. The varieties of our soil, our climate, and the facilities of transportation cannot be surpassed, if equaled, by any other State.

"To effect this, time is required, public sentiment must be prepared to appreciate the worth of such a system. And the measure proposed appears to the committee a proper intro-