

Hezekiah Niles (ed.), *Niles' Register*, Baltimore, October 21, 1826

---

---

## Great National Interests

DESULTORY REMARKS AND SCRAPS,

*Illustrative of the progress and present condition of manufacturers in the United States, and concerning internal improvements, aiding and assisting every branch of the national industry.*

The making of the New York canals did not really cost the people of the state the value of one cent, except so far as *foreign* materials may have been employed in the construction of them, or for that small portion of the profits on labor which the artists and laborers may have carried *out of the state*. On the contrary, they gave a large and wholesome circulation to money, and enriched many individuals; and the increased value of property, and of profit, resulting from them, must be supposed by counting up hundreds of millions of dollars, if, indeed, the benefits of them be within *supposition* at all! The rise in the value of lands and lots on their borders—at Albany, Troy, Rochester, Utica, Buffalo, and an hundred new and thrifty villages which have started into existence as if created by magic—the *new* employment of tens of thousands of persons—the *new* commodities transported to market, many of which, of great value, were hitherto as quiescent, or  
10 useless, because of the want of such market, with the *new* products of a teeming, busy, bustling and happy population—make up an aggregate of benefits that the mind cannot grasp with any degree of confidence in itself; and to all these should be added, the wealth and power caused by the increased inhabitants of the state on account of these things; perhaps directly and already, to the number of three or four hundred thousand persons! Such are the general effects of canals, roads and bridges. And besides, the revenue arising from tolls will not only pay the interest on the money expended, but speedily extinguish the debt, and then supply the chief part of all the funds required for the support of the government of New York! These canals cost \$9,123,000, but the actual debt created was only 7,771,000, the interest payable on which was 419,000—but the tolls of the present year  
20 will amount to a million!—and the business of the canals will go *on, on, on*, and increase every year, for years to come, until the utmost shore of lake Superior teems with civilized men, and cities are located where the wolf has his home, and the bear takes up his winter-quarters. . . .

Some particulars might be given about other canals; but these two cases have been referred to only to show general results, and they speak a language that cannot be mistaken—to the glory of those who have supported INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS, to the shame of some who have opposed them, and the [what shall I say?]*—the something* of others who were so much interested in *arguing* while others were employed in *digging!* But such will always be the difference between talking and doing—the talkers will become poorer and poorer, and the doers richer and richer. *One* 30 spade-full of earth removed in New York or Pennsylvania, has rendered more service, in either state, than a *ten-column essay* in the Richmond “Enquirer” has benefitted Virginia. The policy of the first, is to make even a small state a great one—of the other, to reduce a great state into a small one. Witness Vermont and New York, and Maryland and Virginia. Population and power and wealth will centre where labor is honored, and business abounds. The little rough and rugged state of Vermont, has had as great an accession of citizens, since 1790, as the mighty state of Virginia—though the capital for increase in the latter was five times greater than the former had in the year just stated; and as to Maryland, Vermont *now* contains more of the people than she does, though the first numbered 208,000, and the last only 85,000, in 1790! These things speak in most intelligible language. Maryland has done nothing, (though we have talked much), in favor of internal 40 improvements, or to encourage domestic industry, except through the public spirit of some private individuals located in Baltimore or Frederick—and, by a strange waywardness of policy, our representatives and delegates have generally, in fact, discouraged those who would have effected them, to increase the population and wealth of the state. A great field is open for improvement in Maryland—the Susquehannah and the Potomac, and the abundance of water-power adjacent to Baltimore, with our valuable mines and minerals, invite capital and enterprise—and they must be promptly exerted, or the state will retrograde yet further and further. . . .

By means of the canals made, or making, the *coal* trade will be a mighty business, and the price of fuel be much reduced in those parts where wood is becoming scarce. It abounds in the 50 immediate neighborhood of Pittsburg, and, in 1822, a million of bushels were used by 10,000 inhabitants, including the manufactories—1,500,000 bushels will probably be used in that city during the present year, because of the increased population and business. What then will the great cities require?

*Salt* may be made in New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and the western states, amply

sufficient to meet the whole consumption of the country, and will—so soon as the different canals are completed. The price at the works is about 20 cents per bushel. By the canals, salt will be furnished on the sea-board and sold so low, that a small duty upon the imported article will amount to a prohibition. Its manufacture will convert otherwise useless water and useless coal into value, employ some tens of thousands of persons, and annually save millions of money to our country.

60           It is probable that the domestic consumption of cotton in the present year, [in 1816, 90,000 bales], will amount to about or more than one hundred and fifty thousand bales—possibly, to 175,000. Next year, unless because of some unlooked-for events, to 200,000! Suppose this were thrown into the European market! The price of cotton, paid to our planters, by our own manufacturers, had been greater, on the average, than they have received of the British purchasers of their staple. About 30,000 bales annually arrive at Providence, R. I. for the mills in the neighborhood. Many single establishments at other places use 1,000—some 1,500, some 2,000! The consumption at Baltimore is 4,000.

70           We have applied cotton to the manufacture of several new articles of great importance to the American growers of the article. Among them are canvass, for the sails of ships, and many sorts of ropes. It answers excellently well.

          The average export of our cotton for seven years, has been equal to about 380,000 bales—so that the present home consumption may nearly amount to *one third of the whole quantity raised*, and we think that is does. . . .

80           There are between 50 and 60 cotton and woollen factories in New Hampshire, and it is supposed that they make 33,000,000 yards of cloth per annum. In 1810, the quantity made was only 4,274,135 yards. At Dover, 21,000 spindles and 750 power looms were lately at work, or preparing. At Salmon Falls, a village with 1,600 inhabitants has *jumped* up. Many mills are building with brick—one finished is 390 by 49, another 220 by 49, and six stories high! At New Market there is also a new village with 1,000 inhabitants—the capital of this last company is \$600,000. This establishment now makes, or speedily will make, 3,600 yards of cloth, daily—though it has only just started, as it were. When the works are completed, a million and a half of yards of cloth will be made in a year, at New Market.

          The capital vested in manufactures in Massachusetts, including the new works, may be estimated at between twenty-five and thirty millions of dollars—the factories, in 1824, were 16!

At Lowell, 1,700,000 dollars have been recently employed. At Waltham, about the same sum; its stock has been sold at 40 per cent. above par. At Merrimack 1,200,000, all paid in; the Hamilton company has 600,000. At Taunton, 250 pieces of calico are made daily—employing 1,000 persons!  
90 —The furnaces at Wareham make 4,000 tons of metal annually, and there are two rolling and slitting mills and three forges at the same place, with large cotton mills, fulling mills, &c. Several villages, with with [sic] from 1,000 to 1,500 inhabitants have been built within a few years, all whose inhabitants were employed or subsisted by the factories. A busy, healthful population teems on spots over which a rabbit, a little while since, could hardly have made his way—7,000 lbs. of powder were expended at one place in one year, in blowing rocks! The annual product of the glass works in the vicinity of Boston, is 450,000 dollars, and there are large establishments in other parts of the state. [To give an idea of the magnitude of some of these establishments, we shall observe, that five great mills have already been erected at Merrimack, only three of which are yet in full operation—but each of these make 2,500 yards of cloth daily! In one machine-making shop a *ton of*  
100 *castings* is used up every day! Some of the woollen factories are also very large.]

The manufactories of Rhode Island, Connecticut and Vermont make up a large amount of capital—In Rhode Island there are about ninety cotton mills, and new ones are building! We venture to assert that the *surplus* product of the people of Rhode Island, aided as they are by scientific power, is of greater value than the surplus products of the whole state of Virginia, in which that power is not much used. By “surplus” I mean a value beyond what is required for the subsistence of the people. One person, assisted by machinery, is equal to from 100 to 200 without it. One hundred and fifty persons are employed in making lace at Newport, R. I. It is made at several other places, splendid, and as good, and at a less price than the imported. Providence is, perhaps, the richest town of its size in the world—and its population rapidly increases. . . .

110 [Mr. Webster,\* at a late public dinner, gave the following appropriate and veritable sentiment: “The mechanics and manufacturers of New England—Men who teach us how a little country is to be made a great one.”

The females employed in the factories are remarkable for the propriety of their conduct—to be suspected of bad behaviour is to be dismissed.]

---

\*probably Daniel Webster [NHC note; not in original text].

The cotton and woollen cloths made in New York are valued at from 15 to 18,000,000  
120 dollars per ann. There are large manufactories of iron, wool, cotton, leather, glass, paper, &c. &c.  
One brewery at Newburg covers 7,500 square feet of ground. Hudson teems with manufacturing  
establishments, and the splendid cotton and woollen works at Matteawan are famous—they support  
a large population. Dutchess, Oneida and many other counties, are *filled* with factories.

At Jersey city, opposite New York, there are several great factories—among them one of  
glass, employs 100 persons, and a capital of \$200,000—one of *beautiful porcelain* about the same  
number; one of wool which has a capital of \$400,000, and turns out 2,500 yards of carpeting  
weekly! [These are New York establishments.]

At Paterson, N.Y. there are 15 cotton mills requiring 1,500,000 lbs. of cotton annually to  
supply them, with 700 power and hand looms—58,831 yards of cotton are made weekly. The flax  
130 factories consume 460,000 lbs. of flax, annually, (chiefly *imported!*) and make 406,560 yards of  
duck. There are other great works of iron, &c. The weekly wages of persons in the factories is  
3,680 dollars, and to the weavers out of the factories 970—together 4,650. Paterson is a large and  
thrifty town, and wealthy, because of the products of the labor of the people, who are very  
industrious.

A bleaching establishment was lately made at Belleville. The house is of hewn stone, 263  
feet long and three stories high!

A grand display of manufactures has just been made at the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia.  
It was estimated that the rooms were visited by seven thousand persons in one day, and the crowd  
was great during the whole time of the exhibition. Cloths, cottons, glass-wares, porcelain, silks,  
140 works in wood, in metals, and of almost every description of materials, many of the very best and  
most beautiful kinds, were shewn and in astonishing variety and quantity. A piece of black cloth  
was rapidly sold off at 12 ½ dollars a yard. All these things were, of course, of American  
manufacture.

In the little county of Delaware, there are 157 mills and factories—five of the factories  
employ 1,038 persons—one of them has 200 power looms.

Four thousand weavers find employment in Philadelphia—and several new villages of  
manufacturers have been built in the neighborhood. Among them Manyunk, with 2,000 inhabitants.  
The furnaces of Huntingdon county, only, make 6,000 tons of iron, annually. There are 165 hatters  
in the small town of Reading. . . .

Delaware has many valuable cotton mills—several important woollen factories, and of paper, &c. The powder works of Mr. Dupont are said to be the largest in the world; and there are few more extensive establishments for making paper than one of those on the Brandywine.

In Maryland, there are various large and respectable factories in Cecil, Baltimore, Frederick and Washington counties—but we cannot give many particulars, just now.

All advances on the value of the raw materials are profits to individuals, or exhibit amounts paid for labor and subsistence, which are as profits to the nation. A friend has furnished the following estimate of *increased* values produced at Baltimore, and its immediate neighborhood—

Of cotton	\$296,000
Wool	40,000
Chemicals	190,000*
Iron, (exclusive of castings)	200,000
Copper	130,000†
	856,000

160 And we have the sum of eight hundred and fifty-six thousand dollars, which are as if annually *created* by these few manufactures, and thrown into rapid and wholesome circulation, and which, as the greater part of it is paid for wages, may be said to be perpetually changing hands, and this is the life of trade. I ask, what would be the condition of Baltimore, if instead of the *creation* of almost a million a year, it was required that we should pay that sum to others for *their* manufacturers, through labor applied to *other* purposes than in manufactures? *What other labor should we resort to?* As heretofore supposed, I esteem it very nearly the truth, to say—that the *increased* value of commodities caused by the manufacturers of Baltimore, annually amounts to *two millions of dollars a year*. What would Baltimore, at this time, be without this employment and profit of labor, these two millions of *earnings* to pay expenses? Small as our manufactures are compared with what they *ought* to be, they are, at present, of greater importance to us than any other  
170 business that we do—and without them, we should be “*flat*” indeed.

When the new establishment at Baltimore is fairly and fully at work, it is thought our

---

\* The gross amount of sales of these articles is about 220,000—so that only 30,000 dollars is the cost of the foreign materials: all else is profit on capital, or money paid for labor.

† The gross product of these five articles named, in which the cost of materials used is added, is about as follows—cottons 428,000, woollens 70,000, chemicals 220,000, iron 350,000, copper 200,000—in all \$1,268,000.

chemical preparations will produce about 500,000 dollars a year. There are large factories at other  
180 places, especially in and near Philadelphia. It is believed that of chemical preparations, including  
paints, and other things sold by apothecaries, druggists and colormen, *we export about as great a  
value as we import. . . .*

In 1815, in a congressional report, it was estimated that 200,000 persons were employed in  
the cotton and woollen manufactories of the United States! The present number engaged in *all* sorts  
of manufactories cannot be less than *two millions*. What a market do they *create* We shall attempt  
to *calculate* it hereafter.

The hats, caps and bonnets, of straw or grass, manufactured in the United States, employ  
about 25,000 persons, chiefly females, and produce \$325,000, in Massachusetts, only! The whole  
190 value of this manufacture is, probably, about a million and a half yearly.

The quantity of flannel now made in the United States is considerably greater than the whole  
importation ever amounted to—as reported at the custom houses.

Silk begins to be extensively cultivated in several of the states. The silk raised and  
manufactured in the town of Mansfield, Con. in 1825, was 3,000 lbs. worth \$15,000, and in  
Windham county, in the same state, silk worth 54,000 dollars a year. We have seen fine specimens  
from North Carolina and one from Missouri. It is a very profitable cultivation, and nearly the whole  
business is done by women and children, who would otherwise be idle, and so it is pretty nearly a  
clear gain. One acre of land planted with mulberry trees, will feed as many worms as will make silk  
worth \$200, in a good season.

200 The consumption of silks in the United States is valued at nearly eight millions per annum.  
The chief part of this might be procured at home, and prepared for the market, without any  
considerable dimunition (and perhaps, without any dimunition at all) of labor given to other  
purposes. One acre of mulberry trees will feed as many worms as will yield 40 *lbs.* of silk, worth  
\$5 per lb. or \$200—the *whole* labor of attending to and preparing it, being estimated at 114-dollars.

. . .

What then would be the state of our country, if our work-shops were in Europe? We should  
have, as it were, to live in caves and be clothed in skins. But we shall speak of these things  
hereafter—the whole intent of my present undertaking being to afford some faint idea of the

210

importance of the manufacturing interest, and to show the people what has been done by the encouragement of the national industry, that they may more and more attend to the subject, and resolve that their public agents, whether of the general government or of the states, *shall* rather accelerate than impede the progress of things so indispensable to the general welfare—so inseparably connected with the employment and profit of every citizen of the United States.

The *export* of American manufactured goods amounts to several millions. The Salem Register thus neatly and briefly sums up certain important and well established facts—

220 “We learn that an intelligent foreign gentleman, who brought samples of such of our domestic goods from the West Coast of South America as are saleable there, took them to Waltham, and ascertained the prices at which they could be made. He afterwards took them to Manchester, in England, and found that goods of the same quality could not be afforded there at the prices they are now selling for in this country. They told him they could make goods resembling them, but the quality of the cotton would not be so good. We understand that it has been recommended to send our domestics to Java. We know the English are enabled to come in competition with us in the South American markets only by making goods resembling ours, and that they are in the habit of sending them to this country with the stamps of American factories on them, so that the most experienced are hardly able to discover the fraud. . . .”

230 In Europe more than a million of persons\* are estimated to be dependent in various ways on the commerce and manufacture of the article. The wealth which is thus produced by a business unknown thirty years ago, is three times as great as the revenue derived by the emperor of Russia from his fifty millions of subjects, and five times that of the house of Austria. The cotton imported into the single port of Havre in 1824, equalled in value the whole revenue of the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily; and when manufactured far exceeded that of all the resources of the Spanish monarchy!

[Now, if the manufacture of the United States be, at present, 175,000 bales, or say, 52 millions of lbs. and we use about that quantity, it will appear that already we nearly rival France, and manufacture about one *sixth part as much cotton as all Europe imports!* Who would have thought this? . . . ]

240

---

\*Many more than a million. But what is their *effective force* through scientific power! ED. REG.