



University of Colorado at Boulder

Sewall Residential Academic Program

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Re: Common Reading to Complete BEFORE classes start

Dear Sewall Student:

We're excited to welcome you back to Sewall for the second semester!! This letter includes a brief common reading that all Sewall students are asked to read and write about before the start of classes.

You will remember that the first common reading this year was a selection from Thomas Jefferson's 1785 *Notes on the State of Virginia*, in which he responds to a question about the importance of producing manufactured goods in America and contrasts an industrial economy with an agricultural economy. Jefferson's text forms the core of what became known as the "Jeffersonian Ideal," a belief that democracy would flourish under an agrarian economy, and that individual freedom would be best expressed and maintained through private ownership and husbandry of property.

For the second common reading, please read the attached selection from Alexander Hamilton's 1791 "Report on Manufactures," which provides a contrasting viewpoint to Jefferson's. Like Jefferson, Hamilton was pondering the importance of producing manufactured goods in America, but he comes to different conclusions.

Step 1: Write down your initial thoughts

Before you pick up the enclosed reading, first brainstorm about the role you think manufacturing plays in the United States by writing down your responses to the following questions.

- When you hear of manufacturing, what comes to mind?
- What do you consider to be "useful" labor or work? How would you define "useful" work?
- To what extent is your image of the United States tied to the US economy? In other words, do you feel that a country's economy is a defining factor in that country's self-image? Why or why not?
- What are the *sources* for your responses to the above questions?

Step 2: Read the handout

Step 3: Write down your reflection

After you finish the reading, please write down your responses to these questions:

1. What do you notice about Hamilton's commentary? What catches your attention? What do you find most interesting, strange, significant or revealing? Write down a list of *anything you* notice about this reading.
2. Look back over the list you wrote down and choose one or two items that you noticed which you find *most* interesting or revealing.
3. Write out a brief commentary analyzing *why* you find the items you chose most interesting or revealing.

Thank you! Please bring your reflections with you to your first Sewall class. We look forward to seeing you in a few weeks!

7-5 Opposing Visions for the New Nation (1791)

As Secretary of the Treasury during the Washington Administration, Alexander Hamilton released on December 5, 1791, what in essence was the capstone of his comprehensive economic program—the "Report on Manufactures." His plan included the establishment of a program of protective tariffs and the use of government revenue to support new industries. The result, he believed, would be the development of an industrial economy in the United States. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, on the other hand, espoused the virtues of the yeoman farmer. Twelve years Hamilton's senior, Jefferson wrote in his *Notes on Virginia* that "Those that labor in the earth are the chosen people of God...." The opposing ideologies of these two men still resonate today.

Source: The Works of Alexander Hamilton, ed. H.C. Lodge (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904). [Http://www/multied.com/documents/Manufactures.html](http://www.multied.com/documents/Manufactures.html)
The Avalon Project at the Yale Law School
<http://www.yale.edu/avalonweb/avalgn/jevifram.htm>

REPORT ON MANUFACTURES (1791)

The expediency of encouraging manufactures in the United States...appears at this time to be pretty generally admitted. The embarrassments which have obstructed the progress of our external trade, have led to serious reflections on the necessity of enlarging the sphere of our domestic commerce. The restrictive regulations, which, in foreign markets, abridge the vent of the increasing surplus of our agricultural produce...beget an earnest desire that a more extensive demand for that surplus may be created at home....

To affirm that the labor of the manufacturer is unproductive, because he consumes as much of the produce of land as he adds value to the raw material which he manufactures, is not better founded than it would be to affirm that the labor of the farmer, which furnishes materials to the manufacturer, is unproductive, because he consumes an equal value of manufactured articles. Each furnishes a certain portion of the produce of his labor to the other, and each destroys a corresponding portion of the produce of the labor of the other. In the meantime, the maintenance of two citizens, instead of one, is going on; the State has two members instead of one; and they, together, consume twice the value of what is produced from the land....

It is now proper to proceed a step further, and to enumerate the principal circumstances from which it may be inferred that manufacturing establishments not only occasion a positive augmentation of the produce and revenue of the society, but that they contribute essentially to rendering them greater than they could possibly be without such establishments. These circumstances are:

1. The division of labor.
2. An extension of the use of machinery.
3. Additional employment to classes of the community not ordinarily engaged in the business.
4. The promoting of emigration from foreign countries.
5. The furnishing greater scope for the diversity of talents and dispositions, which discriminate men from each other.
6. The affording a more ample and various field for enterprise.
7. The creating, in some instances, a new, and securing, in all, a more certain and steady demand for the surplus produce of the soil.

Each of these circumstances has a considerable influence upon the total mass of industrious effort in a community; together, they add to it a degree of energy and effect which is not easily conceived...

1. As to the Division of Labor

It has justly been observed, that there is scarcely any thing of greater moment in the economy of a nation than the proper division of labor. The separation of occupations causes each to be carried to a much greater perfection than it could possibly acquire if they were blended. This arises principally from three circumstances:

- 1st. The greater skill and dexterity naturally resulting from a constant and undivided application to a single object....
- 2^d. The economy of time, by avoiding the loss of it, incident to a frequent transition from one operation to another of a different nature....
- 3^d. An extension of the use of machinery. A man occupied on a single object will have it more in his power, and will be more naturally led to exert his imagination, in devising methods to facilitate and abridge labor, than if he were perplexed by a variety of independent and dissimilar operations....

2. As to an Extension of the Use of Machinery, a Point Which, Though Partly Anticipated, Requires to be Placed in One or Two Additional Lights

The employment of machinery forms an item of great importance in the general mass of national industry. It is an artificial force brought in aid of the natural force of man; and, to all the purposes of labor, is an increase of hands, an accession of strength, unencumbered too by the expense of maintaining the laborer. May it not, therefore, be fairly inferred, that those

occupations which give greatest scope to the use of this auxiliary, contribute most to the general stock of industrious effort, and, in consequence, to the general product of industry?....

3. As to the Additional Employment of Classes of the Community not Originally Engaged in the Particular Business

This is not among the least valuable of the means by which manufacturing institutions contribute to augment the general stock of industry and production. In places where those institutions prevail, besides the persons regularly engaged in them, they afford occasional and extra employment to industrious individuals and families, who are willing to devote the leisure resulting from the intermissions of their ordinary pursuits to collateral labors, as a resource for multiplying their acquisitions or their enjoyments. The husbandman himself experiences a new source of profit and support from the increased industry of his wife and daughters, invited and stimulated by the demands of the neighboring manufactories.

It is worthy of particular remark that, in general, women and children are rendered more useful, and the latter more early useful, by manufacturing establishments, than they would otherwise be. Of the number of persons employed in the cotton manufactories of Great Britain, it is computed that four sevenths, nearly, are women and children, of whom the greatest proportion are children, and many of them of a very tender age....

4. As to Promoting of Emigration from Foreign Countries

Men reluctantly quit one course of occupation and livelihood for another, unless invited to it by very apparent and proximate advantages. Many who would go from one country to another, if they had a prospect of continuing with more benefit the callings to which they have been educated, will often not be tempted to change their situation by the hope of doing better in some other way. Manufacturers who, listening to the powerful invitations of a better price for their fabrics or their labor, of greater cheapness of provisions and raw materials, of an exemption from the chief part of the taxes, burdens, and restraints which they endure in the Old World, of greater personal independence and consequence, under the operation of a more equal government, and of what is far more precious than mere religious toleration, a perfect equality of religious privileges, would probably flock from Europe to the United States, to pursue their own trades or professions, if they were once made sensible of the advantages they would enjoy, and were inspired with an assurance of encouragement and employment, will, with difficulty, be induced to transplant themselves, with a view to becoming cultivators of land....

5. As to the Furnishing Greater Scope for the Diversity of Talents and Dispositions, Which Discriminate Men from Each Other

If there be any thing in a remark often to be met with, namely, that there is, in the genius of the people of this country, a peculiar aptitude for mechanic improvements, it would operate as a forcible reason for giving opportunities to the exercise of that species of talent, by the propagation of manufactures.

6. As to the Affording a More Ample and Various Field for Enterprise

The spirit of enterprise, useful and prolific as it is, must necessarily be contracted or expanded, in proportion to the simplicity or variety of the occupations and productions which are to be found in a society. It must be less in a nation of mere cultivators, than in a nation of cultivators and merchants; less in a nation of cultivators and merchants, than in a nation of cultivators, artificers, and merchants.

7. As to the Creating, In Some Instances, A New, and Securing, in all, a More Certain and Steady Demand for the Surplus Produce of the Soil

This is among the most important of the circumstances which have been indicated. It is a principal means by which the establishment of manufactures contributes to an augmentation of the produce or revenue of a country, and has an immediate and direct relation to the prosperity of agriculture.

It is evident that the exertions of the husbandman will be steady or fluctuating, vigorous or feeble, in proportion to the steadiness or fluctuation, adequateness or inadequateness, of the markets on which he must depend for the vent of the surplus which may be produced by his labor; and that such surplus, in the ordinary course of things, will be greater or less in the same proportion....

This idea of an extensive domestic market for the surplus produce of the soil, is of the first consequence. It is, of all things, that which most effectually conduces to a flourishing state of agriculture. If the effect of manufactories should be to detach a portion of the lands which would otherwise be engaged in tillage, it might possibly cause a smaller quantity of lands to be under cultivation; but, by their tendency to procure a more certain demand for the surplus produce of the soil, they would, at the same time, cause the lands which were in cultivation to be better improved and more productive. And while, by their influence, the condition of each individual farmer would be meliorated, the total mass of agricultural production would be probably increased. For this must evidently depend as much upon the degree of improvement, if not more, than upon the number of acres under culture....

The foregoing considerations seem sufficient to establish, as general propositions, that it is the interest of nations to diversify, the industrious pursuits of the individuals who compose them; that the establishment of manufactures is calculated not only to increase the general stock of useful and productive labor, but even to improve the state of agriculture in particular, - certainly to advance the interests of those who are engaged in it....