

To the Honourable the General Assembly of the State
of Delaware

In General Assembly met

The memorial and Petition of the Subscribers, Manufacturers
in the State of Delaware -

Respectfully sheweth

That they have with great labour, and considerable expense
improved their respective water powers, so far as to employ a
considerable number of mechanics constantly, which yields a
Revenue to the State, tenfold to what it did, or possibly could do,
if improved only for the Purposes of Agricultural labour, to encourage
and protect Manufactories we conceive as worthy the attention of
the Legislature -

It is well known, that the Present state of Population renders it
difficult to obtain the number of Workmen required, and that
they are paid at a rate, unequalled in any Country - where
Manufactories have been productive - It is equally obvious
that the very limited extent of Soil of this State, prevents the increase
of Population and national wealth from Agricultural Pursuits, where
our waters, hold forth unequalled advantages for Manufactories.

But the irregularity of Workmen has long been matter of complaint
and discouragement, while the causes of such irregularity have
been partly overlooked, One of these we presume comes under the
regulation of the Legislature viz the frequent calls upon Mechanics
to Militia duty, and the heavy fines on those absenting themselves
furnish our men with new arguments for neglecting their business
and entering into courses of dissipation, which frequently do not
terminate until their money, health, strength, and credit are exhausted
and the employers work brought to a stand, his customers dis-
appointed, his funds curtailed, and the means of complying
with his lawful engagements frequently frustrated, for it unfor-
tunately happens, that some of our Manufactories are carried on by
what is termed a Screw, Set, or Gang of hands, and any one of the
Screw, Set, or Gang is absent, all the rest are unavoidably idle who
belong to that Screw, Set, or Gang of Workmen, and when again collected,
it is sometime before their attention can be gained to render their work
worthy

worthy of a Market.

It is presumed that the Legislature will cherish every measure suggested for the increase of her Citizens by Manufactories. which open and increase the Channel by which Citizens and wealth are introduced. and likewise Provides a Market for the Farmer at the edge of his own field for the whole produce of his farm. when the Mechanics become mutually tributary and helpfull to one another under these and other considerations, we cordly hope, that the Assembly will devise some method to eradicate the evils complained of, and extend life to the Manufactories already partially in operation within their boundaries.

It is with due respect, that we mention that the exemption of such workmen from militia duties, fines and taxation. would have the most beneficial effects, in extirpating the evils complained of, and encouraging persons of steady habits to settle amongst us. The suggestion does not appear unreasonable. when it is demonstrable, that ten persons are employed in the same spot of ground, where one would be competent for the common purposes of farming it. If then the Owner or renter shall be subject to the militia duties, fines, and taxes, while his workmen are exempted.

The State will lose none of its natural sources of wealth or military power. while her funds and respectability are greatly increased. This will readily appear to any one, who examines the duplicates of the Annual tax list. before and since the establishment of the respective Manufactories. It is not necessary to add that if the Manufactories are filled with men of steady habits, the employes may on safe calculation extend this. Operations, and there is no ground to doubt that the income of the State will progress with equal pace. But if on the other hand these grievances are continued, the growth of Manufactories will be checked, if not diminished, and the streams arising therefrom dried up.

We shall also state another grievance under which we have suffered considerably. Persons about to engage in similar Manufactories in other places have not only entered our Mills for the purpose of profiting by our improvements, at our expence. but have likewise

seduced

seduced our Workmen to Taverns, for the Purpose of intrapping them by signing bonds and covenants to them for certain Periods of time - all this is done with impunity, and while the Workmen are under the influence of Liquor. It is not with us to say how far the State shall Prudentially interdict such Practices, by Peculiar laws. she has certainly Power to form laws, to subject to fine or imprisonment equivalent to the injury, if found within the State each and every person, or persons, who shall attempt or actually seduce directly or indirectly by tender of money or other ways Perfidiously to deprive the State of her Citizens and her Manufacturers of their Workmen - by such practices as are at war with good faith, and the rights of civilized society. It may be further stated, that such exemptions as those contemplated, have already been granted in other States, and such Precautionary regulations have been enacted by other Legislatures to protect and secure their Citizens and subjects from being traitorously seduced, corrupted or misled.

Your Memorialists and Petitioners further add - that the raising of fine wool - is of the first importance to some of our Infant Manufactories, Merinos, have been imported by individuals at an inconsiderable expence, the Flocks have greatly increased and produce wool of the finest quality, and while their exemption from taxation is duly appreciated, it is at same time suggested, that premiums for the further introduction of fine Sheep, into this State merits the aid of her Representatives we therefore Pray the Assembly to take the Premises under their immediate Consideration, and grant such exemptions at Manufactories as shall Animate Workmen of steady habits, and as shall equally secure the employer, and employed, from the perfidious attempts of unprincipled Persons, who by seduction endeavor to prostrate the Manufacturing interest in this Commonwealth - and that such Premiums shall be Offered as shall Promote the further introduction of the best Sheep, to increase the number

numbers. and quality of ^{the} flocks throughout the
State —

Your Memorialists and Petitioners as in
duty bound most respectfully submit the
Premises to Your deliberation & Legislation

January 1810 —

Rumford Dawes, Manufacturer Rolling & Slitting Iron &c
Thomas Gilpin &c — Manufacturers of Paper —

Wm Young Manufacturer of papers.

E. J. Dubout & Neveux & Co Gun Powder Manufacturers.

E. J. Dubout & P. Boudry Woolen cloth Manufacturers.

Caleb Kirk Manufacturer of Pearl & Shells Barley

Caleb & Saml. Kirk Manufacturers of Woolen & Cotton

Tho Massie Manufacturer of Cotton Yarn

Horatio G. Garrett Manufacturer of paper

Thomas & Samuel Meeteers Manufacturing paper

Ex Libris
18 Jan 1810. recd
and
Petition of manu-
facturers praying
that their workmen
should be exempted
from militia duty.