

"THE SPIRIT OF MANUFACTURE"

To P. S. Dupont de Nemours

Monticello, June 28, 1809

DEAR SIR,—The interruption of our commerce with England, produced by our embargo and non-intercourse law, and the general indignation excited by her barefaced attempts to make us accessories and tributaries to her usurpations on the high seas, have generated in this country an universal spirit for manufacturing for ourselves, and of reducing to a minimum the number of articles for which we are dependent on her. The advantages, too, of lessening the occasions of risking our peace on the ocean, and of planting the consumer in our own soil by the side of the grower of produce, are so palpable, that no temporary suspension of injuries on her part, or agreements founded on that, will now prevent our continuing in what we have begun. The spirit of manufacture has taken deep root among us, and its foundations are laid in too great expense to be abandoned. The bearer of this, Mr. Ronaldson, will be able to inform you of the extent and perfection of the works produced here by the late state of things; and to his information, which is greatest as to what is doing in the cities, I can add my own as to the country, where the principal articles wanted in every family are now fabricated within itself. This mass of *household* manufacture, unseen by the public eye, and so much greater than what is seen, is such at present, that let our intercourse with England be opened when it may, not one half the amount of what we have heretofore taken from her will ever again be demanded. The great call from the country has hitherto been of coarse goods. These are now made in our families, and the advantage is too sensible ever to be relinquished. It is one of those obvious improvements in our condition which needed only to be once forced on our attention, never again to be abandoned. . . .