

REPORT of the SECRETARY of the TREASURY to the HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, Jan. 9, 1790. [CONTINUATION FROM No. 89.]

THE same fact affords a security to the merchant, that he is not likely to be prejudiced by considerable duties on such articles.

To other reasons, which plead for carrying the duties upon the articles which have been mentioned, to as great an extent as they will bear, may be added these; that they are of a nature, from their extensive consumption, to be very productive, and are among the most difficult objects, of illicit introduction.

Invited by so many motives to make the best use of the resource, which these articles afford, the essential enquiry is—in what mode can the duties upon them be most effectually collected?

With regard to such of them, as will be brought from abroad, a duty on importation recommends itself by two leading considerations; one is, that meeting the object at its first entrance into the country, the collection is drawn to a point, and so far simplified; the other is, that it avoids the possibility of interference between the regulations of the United States, and those of the particular states.

But a duty, the precautions for the collection of which should terminate with the landing of the goods, as is essentially the case in the existing system, could not, with safety, be carried to the extent, which is contemplated.

In that system, the evasion of the duties, depends as it were, on a single risk. To land the goods in defiance of the vigilance of the officers of the customs, is almost, the essential difficulty. No future pursuit, is materially, to be apprehended. And where the inducement is equivalent to the risk, there will be found too many, who are willing to run it.

The only expedient which has been discovered, for conciliating high duties with a safe collection, is, the establishment of a second or interior scrutiny.

By pursuing the article, from its importation, into the hands of the dealers in it, the risk of detection is too greatly enhanced, that fewer, in comparison, will venture to incur it.

The introduction of a system, founded on this principle, in some shape or other, is, in the opinion of the Secretary, essential to the efficacy of every attempt, to render the revenues of the United States equal to their exigencies, their safety, their prosperity, their honor.

Nor is his (essential to the interest of the honest and fair trader. It might even be added, that every individual citizen, besides his share in the general weal, has a particular interest in it. The practice of smuggling never fails to have one or two effects, and sometimes unites them both.

The Secretary will not presume, that the plan, which he shall submit to the consideration of the House, is the best that could be devised. But it is the one, which has appeared to him free from objections of any, that has occurred of equal efficacy.

The Secretary accordingly proposes, That the duties heretofore laid upon wines, distilled spirits, teas and coffee, should, after the last day of May next, cease, and that instead of them, the following duties be laid—

Upon every gallon of Madeira Wine, of the quality of London particular, thirty-five cents.

Upon every gallon of other Madeira Wine, thirty cents.

Upon every gallon of Sherry, twenty-five cents.

Upon every gallon of other Wine, twenty cents.

Upon every gallon of distilled Spirits, more than ten per cent. below proof, according to Dicus's hydrometer, twenty cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits under five, and not more than ten per cent. below proof, according to the same hydrometer, twenty-one cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits of proof, and not more than five per cent. below proof, according to the same hydrometer, twenty-two cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits above proof, but not exceeding twenty per cent. according to the same hydrometer, twenty-five cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits more than twenty, and not more than forty per cent. above proof, according to the same hydrometer, thirty cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits more than forty per cent. above proof, according to the same hydrometer, forty cents.

Upon every pound of Hyson Tea, forty cents.

Upon every pound of other Green Tea, twenty-four cents.

Upon every pound of Souchong and other black Teas, except Bohea, twenty cents.

Upon every pound of Bohea Tea, twelve cents.

Upon every pound of Coffee, five cents.

That upon Spirits distilled within the United States, from Molasses, Sugar, or other foreign materials, there be paid—

Upon every gallon of those Spirits, more than ten per cent. below proof, according to Dicus's hydrometer, eleven cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits under five, and not more than ten per cent. below proof, according to the same hydrometer, twelve cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits of proof, and not more than five per cent. below proof, according to the same hydrometer, thirteen cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits, above proof, and not exceeding twenty per cent. according to the same hydrometer, fifteen cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits, more than twenty, and not more than forty per cent. above proof, according to the same hydrometer, twenty cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits more than forty per cent. above proof, according to the same hydrometer, thirty cents.

That upon Spirits distilled within the United States, in any city, town or village, from materials of the growth or production of the United States, there be paid—

Upon every gallon of those Spirits more than ten per cent. below proof, according to Dicus's hydrometer, nine cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits under five, and not more than ten per cent. below proof, according to the same hydrometer, ten cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits of proof, and not more than five per cent. below proof, according to the same hydrometer, eleven cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits above proof, but not exceeding twenty per cent. according to the same hydrometer, thirteen cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits more than twenty, and not more than forty per cent. above proof, according to the same hydrometer, seventeen cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits more than forty per cent. above proof, according to the same hydrometer, twenty cents.

Upon every gallon of those Spirits, more than forty per cent. above proof, according to the same hydrometer, twenty-five cents.

That upon all Stills employed in distilling Spirits from materials of the growth or production of the United States, in any other place, than a city, town or village, there be paid the yearly sum of sixty cents, for every gallon, English wine measure, of the capacity of each Still, including its head.

The Secretary does not distribute the duties on Teas into different rates, as has been done in the impost act of last session; because this distribution depends on considerations of commercial policy, not of revenue. It is sufficient, therefore, for him to remark, that the rates, above specified, are proposed with reference to the lowest class.

LETTER.—No. II.

MR. FENNO,

IN my first I believe I have shown, that the beings of animated nature have positive characters, marked out by strong colours, tints, and shadows, plain to the observing eye, and, that the established order, is incontrovertible.

Strong as this appears to be, it is but applicable, to single examples of individuals; these are of the inferior species of mankind, the diminutive Newtons, Franklins, and Rittenhouses; a more particular review of nations, will show, that it cannot be admitted as a conclusive, and general argument.

When Europe was in the state of barbarity—then China was eminent in sciences and arts. China has had few civil wars, and it was but once conquered—by the Manchoo Tartarians; except the cutting of the hair, to which the Chinese were compelled; the conquerors adopted all other laws, morals and the language of the conquered. In that empire, peace has almost constantly fostered the sciences, but notwithstanding this, and that the Chinese, were introduced several thousand years since into the temple of Apollo, they have made no progress, they stand nearly on the same ground, where Fo-ha and Confucius, their Solon, and Trip-tolemus left them—while in a few centuries, the Europeans have set their oriental models far behind them.

The origin of the never conquered Arabians, is wrapped in dark antiquity; in the remotest ages we find them acquainted with sciences, and Europe has been enlightened partly by them: but although their mind was strengthened by learning, the ordinary consequence of it, civilization, could never introduce itself among the Arabians; war is their element, and liberty their boast.

Our savage indigenous Americans, have lived, some among us, some live still next to our frontiers, treaties and trade keep the connection alive; our civilization, cultivation, and the benefits arising from it are before their eyes, yet this makes little impression upon them; the American savage is, and will remain, the devouring wolf of the woods.

The African wool hairy prince, makes war to sell his specie, and when prisoners are wanting, will sell his subjects; the man his wife and children, the mother her offspring, chiefly for spirits; want of energy, drunkenness and laziness, are the leading features in that specie of men.

Imperfect as this sketch is, I believe however that it confirms my general theory. Among us a Julius Caesar, a Washington, a Locke, a Frederic the III. of Prussia, &c. &c. show—that even in the specie avowedly the same, the differences of powers and genius are striking. In the national character of the Chinese, the Arabian, the savage American, the wool hairy negro, is exemplified, that nature has set diverse limits to the powers of mind in the different species of men; and the whole refutes the argument, that instruction is able to set the character of nations on an equal scale.

By drawing a picture of other nations, it would appear in a still stronger light, that the wool hairy African negro stands in the established order of nature, in the lowest class of mankind; but then in lieu of fugitive letters, I should write treaties; thus, except certain striking conclusions which I reserve for my next, we will therein investigate the subject of the wool hairy negro on political grounds. RUSTICUS.

THE REPUBLICAN.

No.—III.

IN a former number it was incidentally remarked that government is an art rather than a science. This remark is so obvious, that it needs neither explanation nor argument to support it. Government is well known to be in its nature more practical than speculative; and even its improvement and perfection depends not so much on theory as experiment. The same is true of almost all the several branches of knowledge. In the common affairs of life experience is acknowledged to be the surest guide. He who relies upon the abstract speculations of the closet, to govern his conduct, makes frequent mistakes, and meets with a thousand mortifying disappointments, which are avoided by another, who has no better natural talents, but has been educated in the school of experience. Those writers too, who have been real speculators or actors in the scenes, which they describe, easily command our attention and belief. Who does not give more credit to Chesterfield's observations on men and manners, altho he is justly condemned for the licentiousness of his principles, than to the dry precepts contained in the writings of metaphysicians and moralists, or the fanciful inventions, that are to be found in romances and novels? Why are Cicero's writings on oratory read with so much eagerness; unless it is, because they are believed to be the result of his own experience? We feel a peculiar satisfaction in attending to Mr. Locke's directions concerning the right conduct of the understanding, not only for their solidity and good sense, but also, because they are recommended by the experience of a man, who conducted his own understanding so judiciously, and so greatly enlarged the circumference of knowledge by his researches into the powers of the human mind. For a similar reason, we derive a double pleasure from Sir Isaac Newton's rules of philosophy, from Sully's memoirs of the art of negotiation, or Necker's maxims and calculations of finance. A respectful attention is no more than is due to experience. For its dictates are infallible. They stand the test of examination, and never vanish before the light of new discoveries. But the systems of mere theorists are in general little better than ingenious castles in the air. A historical review of the celebrated theories of philosophy and government, which have successively had their day of admiration and been exploded one after another, would afford matter of amusement, and would not be entirely barren of instruction. Plato could discourse like an angel on truth, virtue, sentimental love and other moral subjects; but he seems to have been crazy, or certainly in a dream, when he projected his ideal republic. So wild is the most enlightened genius, when it is not guided by experience! The Utopia of Sir Thomas More, who was a man of letters and virtue too, is nevertheless so romantic that it has long been proverbial for its impracticability. The learned Vice-President of the United States has by historical deductions fully demonstrated the absurdity of several other more modern systems formed without any practical acquaintance with the subject. But perhaps there never was a more egregious example of the impotence of speculation unassisted by practice, than the justly celebrated Mr. Locke. That great and good man, who was confessedly the subtle logician of his age, and the ablest champion of civil liberty, having boldly fought and fairly slain the giant of divine her-

editary right; afterwards, at the request of the proprietors, undertook to construct a Constitution for Carolina. For this purpose he retired to his study, and following the ignis fatuus of abstract speculation, instead of consulting the oracles of history, and human nature, produced from his own brain a chimerical scheme, which in its operation tended to the opposite points of tyranny and anarchy. The Carolinians struggled with its imperfections, until their patience was spent; and at length were impelled by the necessity of their situation to resist. A revolution ensued: and a royal government, with all its train of oppression, was preferred to their fine-spun proprietary form. A plain American Farmer, of common education and abilities, who has read the numerous publications contained in news-papers and pamphlets for ten years past in this country, and has attended and assisted in legislative assemblies and conventions for forming or adopting constitutions, might be more safely entrusted with the important business of framing a government, than the illustrious Locke, with all his logic and learning, but void of experience.

PRICE CURRENT.—NEW-YORK.

FEBRUARY 24.—DOLLARS at 8s.

Table listing various commodities and their prices in New York. Items include Jamaica Spirits, Antigua Rum, St. Croix, Country, Molasses, Brandy, Geneva, Do. in casks, Muscovado Sugar, Loaf, Lump, Pepper, Pimento, Coffee, Indigo (Carolina), Do. French, Rice, Superfine Flour, Common do., Rye do., Indian Meal, Rye, Wheat, Corn (Southern), Do. (Northern), Beef, Pork, Oats, Flax-seed, Ship-board, Country refined, Do. bloomery, Swedes do., Ruffia do., Pig-iron, German steel, Nails American, Do. do. do., Do. do. do., Do. do. do., Do. do. do., Pot ash, Pearl ash, Bees-wax, Mackerel per barr., Herrings, Mahogany, per foot, Honduras, Do., Logwood unchipped, Do. chipped, 2 inch white oak plank, 1 inch do., 1 1/2 inch do., 2 inch do., 2 inch pitch pine do., 1 1/2 inch do., 1 inch do., Pitch pine scantling, Cyprus 2 feet shingles, Cedar 2 inch do.

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