

agricultural produce, we should be compelled to receive foreign productions in return; and it might still be said, that we were encouraging the industry of other nations, and neglecting the interests of our own citizens.

The present state of our foreign relations points out the only object which ought to be kept in view in laying duties and imposts; and that is, to provide a revenue for the defence of the country. The greatest amount of revenue is derived from moderate duties, which neither give encouragement to smuggling, nor materially diminish the consumption of the articles on which they are laid. The hope is still entertained that the questions in dispute between the United States and Great Britain may be amicably adjusted; and that there will be no serious interruption of the commercial intercourse and friendly relations which are of so much importance to both nations. But the grounds of controversy are becoming so numerous and complicated, that it is impossible to tell how soon a different state of things may arise; and it is therefore the wisest course to make preparations for defence, not with the view of bringing on hostilities with any Power, but to meet aggression from whatever quarter it may come. Hitherto, we have trusted too much to the justice and moderation of other governments; and even now, while dangers appear to be thickening around us, we are forming home leagues, not to repel foreign invasion, but to raise the price of domestic goods; and the congress of the United States, having already relinquished the proceeds of the public lands which might have been applied to purposes of defence, are debating whether a bill shall be brought in for impairing the revenue from imposts, to enable the proprietors of iron-foundries, salt-works, and manufacturing establishments to make a larger profit on their investments.

Measures of defence against a naval power are perhaps of more importance to Maryland than to any other State in the union. A hostile fleet having possession of the Chesapeake Bay, might cut off the whole of our trade, destroy our villages, and lay waste a large portion of the State. It would be impossible to guard every part of our shores, and while our forces were preparing to defend some particular spot, the enemy might land in a different direction, plunder a whole neighbourhood, and return in safety to their ships. The injury would not be confined to Maryland, or to the States bordering on the Chesapeake. The inland trade between the northern and southern States would be interrupted, the produce of a large portion of the country would be deprived of its most convenient outlet, the militia of the neighbouring States would be continually called from their homes, and the enemy, after drawing the attention of the government from other points, might make an unexpected attack in some distant quarter of the union. This is not merely a supposition of what may possibly happen, but a description of what actually occurred during the last war. These evils, and the disgrace attending them, may be avoided by having,