

Commission Merchant, and discharges his duty "without fear, favor or affection," as he has sworn to do. If fish are unwholesome or flour unmerchantable, the great community of consumers are guarded against imposition. It is perfectly manifest that a licensed Inspector will depend upon the caprices or selfishness of the trader for his employment and livelihood; and that the great body of the people, who are the purchasers, can never exercise a practical restraint over him. He must become the agent of the seller, rather than the protector of the consumer, or the umpire between both. This is an argument which will at once strike the apprehension of every man. Your committee believe, therefore, that licensed inspections will, in fact, in many cases prove decidedly worse than no inspections at all, as they will only tend to render fraud more easy and secure. To show that these views have a practical bearing, it may be well for the committee to call your attention to the fact, that fourteen hundred and eighty barrels and fifty-five half barrels of Mackerel, were condemned by the inspectors, in Baltimore, in 1852, all of which had been inspected in other markets, and which would have been sold to the people of Maryland, as branded in Massachusetts and other markets, had they not been detected and condemned by our State inspectors. A large number of barrels were also altered from No. 1 to No. 2, and from No. 2 to No. 3; all of which would have been so many gross impositions on the public. In 1842 there were but five thousand barrels of Mackerel sold in Baltimore; whereas, in 1851 there were over thirty thousand inspected.

Who would be likely to suffer, if the inspector depended for his daily living on the patronage of the dealer? Every reasonable man will answer, the consumer. The following table of inspections, for 1852, will show what has been saved to consumers by the faithfulness and judgment of our State inspectors.

Mackerel 22,337 barrels; 1535 condemned.

Herrings, 29,142 " ; 1224 "

Shad, 5065, " ; 121 "

The most of the spoiled fish are of the lower grades (Nos. 2 & 3,) which are principally intended for the country trade; so that consumers in the counties would be most imposed on by a repeal of the inspection laws. The committee would here also remark, upon another inevitable consequence of the adoption of the license system, which could not fail to add greatly to the discontent of the agricultural districts, if such impositions should unfortunately be practised. It is this: that the inspections would pass entirely into the hands of citizens of Baltimore, to the exclusion of all competition from the counties; and, therefore, should the new system fall into disrepute, this fact would still further exasperate those local jealousies which already exist, and which are very much to be deplored. It is to the interest of the counties, as well as of the city of Baltimore, that a cordial un-