

needs be so? Do we not see how many commodities which are not inspected at all? Do we not buy in the same way? Many articles that we import, take their value from the place of growth, or production, and so of our exports. We have no inspection of coffee, tea, sugar, molasses and thousands of other things that are sold by the bale, box or hoghead. In all these transactions the judgment of the dealers is the only guarantee of quality or soundness. Each man in business has a reputation to achieve or maintain—and his own interest indicates how this can be best done. He must be honest and command the confidence of the trading community. There are many articles that require inspection as well for determining the quality as well as the quantity. For all this, let the judgment and the integrity of a licensed inspector, selected by the parties, be the surest protection against mistake as well as fraud. We have commissioned gaugers, measurers, wood corders, and inspectors generally. But do they afford any security against artificial evaporation, or against a long or short measure? When they shall have honestly done their duty, the same frauds may be perpetrated by the dealer that could occur after a licensed inspector. If this business be left to individual merit and competition, it will be quite as well done as now. Persons from the counties, too, might go to Baltimore and obtain licenses, and get plenty of work, because none will go who are incompetent, and the trust worthy alone will be employed. If it be said that combinations may be formed between the dealers and inspectors, I ask who can say that they do not exist under the present system? We know that such things are loudly complained of. The new plan may remedy this evil.

This plan need not diminish the State revenue. The Legislature can regulate this, so as to make the system a source of greater revenue to the State. We derive a large amount now from auctioneers and other dealers, and I cannot perceive any good reason for not embracing our inspections within the same revenue system. The measure as proposed, except tobacco, live stock, and hay and straw, because the State has already extensive buildings devoted to this business from which revenue is derived, and private individuals could not afford to purchase or rent lots, and put up the necessary fixtures on them, on account and risk.

[The hammer fell.]

I regret that time does not allow a more particular discussion of this important question. I commend the measure to the attention of the Convention, as well worthy of their approval, and I believe that the interest of all classes, except the office seekers, will be promoted by its adoption.

Mr. SPENCER made some remarks which will be published hereafter.

Mr. JOHNSON said:

That he had a memorial in his hand, signed by millers and merchants, dealers in flour, who were extremely anxious that the present grade which made flour so highly esteemed at home

and abroad, should be continued under the present regulations. The memorial was very short, and was signed by men of the highest character in the State, to the number of eighty. He hoped the clerk would read the memorial, to see how these gentlemen discussed this question.

The petition was accordingly read by the clerk.

The gentleman from Prince George's had been kind enough to incorporate into his proposition the very idea that he had rose to advocate, the continuance of the flour inspections, leaving them as they now existed. Whether the amendment should be adopted or rejected, he was not prepared to say it would be wise or unwise, because he was not familiar with the subject, and he was, therefore, left very much under the control of these gentlemen who had more knowledge and judgment than he had. He would, however, say that the present inspections brought a revenue of four hundred dollars into the Treasury, and therefore it was a matter of State revenue.

Mr. SPENCER made a few further remarks.

Mr. GWINN confessed that he was extremely anxious with regard to this matter, and for the simple reason, that during his recent visits home he had been asked more questions with relation to the policy of the inspection laws than in reference to many other questions of apparently more importance, which this House had seen proper to agitate. If there would be no reason for abolishing inspections upon tobacco, there could be none for abolishing other inspections fixed by law. He could not perceive with what justice gentlemen claimed that tobacco should be protected by such a system, and that every other commodity now inspected by law should be freed from the protection of the inspection laws. He thought that there was but one opinion in the city of Baltimore as to the propriety of continuing this system. The gentleman from Frederick, (Mr. Johnson,) had brought forward a memorial in reference to flour. The price of this article would be seriously affected by the abolition of the inspection. Mr. G. here referred to the Liverpool prices current, and showed that there was four shillings difference per barrel in favor of the commodity brought from ports where the laws of inspection existed. He did not attribute this to the fact that Maryland flour was better than Ohio or New York flour. It was merely because the general character of the Maryland flour by the law of inspection, was superior to that grade of flour which was not inspected at all.

How was it with reference to lumber? We had been told by the master-builders that they required inspection for lumber. They were not willing to rely upon private inspection, because the whole system was radically corrupt. The system of common fees had not been resorted to for the reasons given by the gentleman from Prince George's, but because the opinion grew up in Baltimore, that inspectors might become too much under the influence of the employers, and were not doing their duty to the State. That was the reason why the offices