MARYLAND GAZETTE.

[LXVth YEAR.] WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 1809. [No. 3260.

Miscellany.

From Select Reviews.

ON NAUSCOPY,

the art of discovering ships at a great distance from land.

NAUSCOPY is the art of discovering the approach of ships, or the neighbourhood of lands, at a considerable distance. This knowledge is not derived either from the undulation of waves or from the subtilty of sight; but merely from observation of the horizon, which discovers signs indicating the proximity of large objects. On the approximation of a ship towards the land, or towards another ship, there appears, in the atmosphere, a meteor of a particular nature, which, with little attention, is visible to any person.

M. Bottineau, a native of the island of Bourbon, laid this discovery before M. de Castries, in 1784. The minister sent him back to the island to continue his observations there under the inspection and superintendence of the government.

M. Bottineau engaged, that not a single ship should arrive at the island without his having sent information of it several days before. An exact register of his communications is kept in the secretary's office. All his reports were compared with the ships books as soon as they arrived, to see whether the variations of weather, calms which retarded them, &c. were such as agreed with his reports. It must be observed, that when his reports were made, the watchmen, stationed on the mountains, could never perceive any appearance of ships; for M. Bottineau announced their approach when they were more than a hundred leagues distant.

From the authenticated journal of his reports, which has been published, it appears that he was wonderfully accurate. Within eight months, and in sixty-two reports, he announced the arrival of one hundred and fifty ships of different descriptions.

Of the fact there can be no reasonable doubt; because every method was adopted to prevent deception, and his informations were not only registered, as soon as they were made, in the government office, but were also published known over the whole island. The officers of government, moreover, were far from being partial to M. Bottineau; on the contrary, they were highly displeased with him for obstinately refusing to sell them his secret, which they wanted to purchase at a high price, and that he could expect no favour from their representations. Truth, however, obliged them to give abundant testimony to the reality of his extraordinary talent, in their letter to the French minister, which is published in the "*Memoire sur la Nauscopie, par M. Bottineau.*"

The following are two of the reports extracted from this Memoire.

"On the 20th of August, 1784, I discovered some vessels at the distance of four days from the island. On the following day the number multiplied considerably to my sight. This induced me to send information of many ships. But though they were only at four days distance, I nevertheless stated in my report that no settled time could be fixed on for their arrival, as they were detained by a calm. On the 25th, the calm was so complete as to make me think, for a few hours, that the fleet had disappeared, and gone to some other place. I soon after perceived also the presence of the fleet, by the revived breeze. It was still in the same state of inaction of which I sent information. From the 20th of August to the 10th of September, I did not cease to announce, in my reports, the continuation of the calm. On the 13th I sent word that the fleet was no longer becalmed, and that it would arrive at the island in 48 hours. Accordingly, to the surprise of the whole island, M. de Regnier's fleet arrived at Port Louis on the 15th. The general astonishment was greatly increased, when it was known that this fleet had been becalmed, since the 10th of August, near Rodriguez islands, which was precisely the distance that I had marked out in my reports."

I soon had another opportunity of shewing the certainty of my observations. A few days before the arrival of M. de Reginer's fleet, I announced the appearance of another fleet, which became perceptible to me. This caused a great deal of uneasiness, because, as neither French fleet was expected, that which appeared might be English ships. I was obliged to repeat my observations with the greatest accuracy. I clearly perceived the approach of several ships, and declared that they were not bound for our island, but were taking another course. In consequence of this declaration, the Naiade frigate and the Ducouedic cutter, were suddenly dispatched to M. de Suffrein. The cutter actually saw and avoided the English fleet in the ninth degree, but unfortunately did not find M. de Suffrein in the Bay of Trincomalee. The report of the cutter effectually convinced the incredulous of the reality of my discovery."

The last circumstance of dispatching the frigate and cutter, plainly shews the confidence which the French officers must have put in the information of M. Bottineau. It shews also that he deserved their confidence.

Conjectures respecting the Phenomenon on which the preceding observations were founded.

The waters of the ocean form an immense gulf, in which substances of all kinds are swallowed up.

The innumerable multitudes of animals, fish, birds, vegetable, and minerial productions, which decay and are decomposed in that vast basin, produce a fermentation abounding in spirits, salt, oil, sulphur, &c. &c.

The existence of these is sufficiently apparent by the disagreeable smell and flavour of sea water, which can only be rendered drinkable by distillation, and by the evaporation of those heterogeneous particles which infect it.

The spirits intimately united to the sea waters, continue undisturbed, as long as those waters remain in a state of tranquillity; or, at least, they experience only an internal agitation, which is slightly manifested externally.

But when the waters of the sea are set into motion by storms, or by the introduction of an active mass which rides upon their surface, with violence and rapidity, the volatile vapours contained in the bosom of the sea escape, and rise up a fine mist, which forms an atmosphere round the vessel.

This atmosphere advances with the vessel, and is increased every moment by fresh emanations rising from the bottom of the water.

These emanations appear like so many small clouds, which, joining each other, form a kind of sheet projecting forward, one extremity of which touches the ship, whilst the other advances into the sea, to a considerable distance.

But this train of vapours is not visible to the sight. It escapes observation by the transparency of its particles, and is confounded with the other fluids which compose the atmosphere.

But as soon as the vessel arrives within a circumference, where it meets with other homogeneous vapours, such as those which escape from land, this sheet, which till that time had been so limpid and subtil, is suddenly seen to acquire consistence and colour, by the mixture of the two opposite columns.

This change begins at the prolonged extremities, which by their contact, are united, and acquire a colour and strength; afterwards, in proportion to the progression of the vessel, the metamorphosis increases and reaches the centre. At last the phenomenon becomes the more manifest, & the ship makes its appearance.

Produce of Wheat.

THE produce of a single grain of wheat, propagated in the garden of the Rev. Dr. Drake, rector of Amersham, Bucks, by Wm. Rebecca, gardener. "On the first day of August, I sowed, or rather set, a single grain of the red wheat; and in the latter end of September, when the plant had tillered, I took it up, and slipped or divided it into four sets or slips. Those four sets I planted, and they grew and tillered as well as the first. In the end of November, I took them up a second time, and made thirty-six plants or sets. These I again planted, which grew till March, in which month I, a third time, took up my plants, and divided them into two hundred and fifty-six plants or sets. For the remaining part of the summer, till the month of August, they had nothing done to them, except hoeing the ground clean from weeds, till the corn was ripe. When it was gathered, I had the ears counted, or numbered, and they were three thousand five hundred and eleven; a great part of which proved as good grain as ever grew out of the earth. Many of the ears measured six inches in length, some were middling grain, and some very light and thin.—This was the reason I did not number the grains; but there was better than half a bushel of corn in the whole produce of this one grain of wheat in one year.—Query, would not this practice (spring planting) be of great use where the crops miss by various accidents incidental to farming."

SLAVES.

RUSSEL, in his History of Modern Europe, states, that among the principal English exports, during the domination of the Anglo Saxons, were *Slaves*. I wish to know how long this traffic was carried on? And, in what mode were these slaves acquired?

[*Port Folio.*

Philosophical and Economical Intelligence.

A SINGULAR case of success in applying the magnet, to extract a fragment of iron out of the human eye, has been recently transmitted to the Philosophical Magazine. It seems in the course of last summer, Charles Milsted, a blacksmith, of Tuterden, received a particle of iron, about the size of a small pin's head, in the ball of his left eye, while he was striking the head of one hammer against another. Some weeks after this accident, a gentleman applied a magnet to the part injured, but could only draw out a mixture of powdered rust with the tears. This gave no relief, as the fragment of iron was yet in the eye. A surgeon endeavoured to take it out with the point of a lancet, but finding it firmly fixed very near the pupil, he concluded it was impossible to touch it with any instrument without extreme danger. The former gentleman then sent again for the young man, and examining the eye with a very powerful magnifying glass, he could see a very small particle of black iron; but covered over with the thin coating of the eye. Being satisfied of the exact situation of the piece of iron, and the impediments to be surmounted, the eyelids were held open, and he applied the north pole of a combined staple-magnet, possessing great power, at the distance of about the sixteenth part of an inch from the eye. Then he used a magnet of less power, but of more convenient construction, and continued to apply them both by turns, till he could at length perceive that the fragment had projected above the surface of the iris of the eye. Still there was a coating to cut its way thro' before the magnet could draw it out. In fact, it seemed as firmly fixed as a thorn in the flesh, and was very different from what it might have been, had it been only loosely floating on the outer surface of the eye. During this operation, the young man frequently thought he felt the fragment rush out of his eye, before it really had done so; however, after using magnets of different degrees of power for ten or fifteen minutes, the particle of iron cut its way through the thin teguments of the eye, by the power of attraction, and was taken out by the magnet. By the assistance of glasses, it appeared of an imperfect octagon shape, armed with rough, jagged edges. The eye was, notwithstanding, free from pain, the moment it was out, though for some months before, the patient had suffered night and day without intermission. A small scar still remained on the eye, but it occasioned no pain. Knowing that the magnetic fluid will make its passage even through plates of glass, when any particle of iron is within its influence, the writer is surprised, a mean so familiar and natural as the present is not more frequently recurred to in such cases.

From the Downings-town Temperate Zone.

AGRICULTURAL.

THERE is one particular that the farmers fail in much—that is, in cutting their WHEAT before it is perfectly dry, which is almost the only reason of the SMUT troubling them. I commonly let my wheat stand longer than my neighbours, and never have been troubled with smut, except when I have bought my seed; from which I have concluded that it was the time of harvesting that prevented smut from flour.

About thirty years since I bought a crop on the ground; it proved to be very smutty; nearly one eighth. I thought to try what would prevent its damaging the flour; so I let it stand till it was quite dry, so that when cut, in binding, the ground was checked under the sheaf. When I thrashed it there was no smut to be seen. Ever since, by the same method, have found the same good effect. Wheat that is harvested after this manner will be as good for seed as if there had been no smut among it. Farmers are of opinion if their wheat shells in binding, there is great loss, but they are mistaken, there is a greater loss in thrashing wheat that is harvested before it was dry, than is wasted in harvesting when it is over dry (so termed.) If there is any smut in wheat that sweats in the least degree in the mow, it will certainly infect the kernel, and by that means smut is propagated.

Cutting wheat with a cradle is pernicious, for it collects a great quantity of green weeds, &c. which before it is dry is put into the mow or stack, and will certainly sweat, and by that means the smut, which is light, will be carried with the steam thro' the whole mow or stack—besides the cradle cuts off that, which, if left standing, would enrich the ground.

As interest is the great spring in our actions, I hope some will be induced to pay attention to the experiments made for forty years by

A FARMER.

REPORT

Of the Committee on Foreign Relations

[*Printed by order of the Senate, June 23d, 18*

Mr. Leib reported from the committee, to whom was referred the resolution of the Senate "to inquire into the expediency of providing by law for the exclusion of foreign armed vessels from the ports and harbours of the United States—"

THAT in the opinion of the committee such an interdiction is within the just neutral rights of the United States, and, under other circumstances, would be highly expedient and proper. So long as a neutral nation shall confine itself to strict measures of impartiality, allowing no benefit to one belligerent not stipulated by treaty, which it shall refuse to another, no cause whatever is afforded for exception or complaint. The right to admit an armed force into a neutral territory belongs exclusively to the neutral, and when not guaranteed by treaty, as is often the case, such admission compromits the neutrality of the nation which permits to one belligerent alone such an indulgence.

As a measure of safety as well as of peace it is incumbent upon the United States to carry into effect such a provision. So long as we are without a competent force to protect our jurisdiction from violation, and our citizens from outrage, and our flag from insult, so long ought no asylum to be given but in distress, to the armed vessels of any nation. The committee will not bring into view the many injuries and insults which the United States have sustained from the hospitable grant of their ports and harbours to belligerents, nor the facility which has thereby been afforded to them to lay our commerce under contribution. It is sufficient to remark, that great injuries have been sustained, and that imperious duty requires arrangements at our hands to guard our country in future from similar aggressions.

The United States are, at this moment under no obligation to withhold the restraint within their power, upon the admission of foreign armed vessels into their ports, but the committee are strongly impressed with the propriety of avoiding any legislative interference at this time, which by any possibility might be construed into a desire to throw difficulties in the way of promising and pending negotiations. They are desirous that a fair experiment be made to adjust our differences with the two belligerent nations, and that no provisions be interwoven in our laws which shall furnish a pretext for delay, or a refusal to yield to our just and honourable demands.

Calculating that the overtures which have been made by Great-Britain will be executed in good faith, the committee are willing to believe, that the stipulated arrangements will be of such a character as to guard our flag from insult, our jurisdiction from aggression, our citizens from violation, and our mercantile property from spoliation. Under these impressions, which the committee have stated as briefly as possible, they beg leave to submit to the consideration of the senate the following resolution, viz.

Resolved, That the further consideration of the subject be postponed until the next session of Congress.

Extract from the Port Folio.

CASSADRA TREE.

THE contradictory qualities of the Cassadra Tree, as stated in Staunton's Embassy, are perhaps the most extraordinary of any in the whole range of natural history. The root is said to be salutary food. Yet the juice, expressed from the root, is deadly poison. And, still more to heighten our wonder, and to shew the sports of madam Nature, the sediment from the juice is said to be the Tapioca Can any of your correspondents state whether this account partakes of the traveller's privilege of rodomontading?

Remedy for a Sting.

SALT, moistened with as small a quantity of water as possible, is said to be an effectual remedy against the inflammation occasioned by the stings of bees and wasps. A wasp being swallowed unperceived, by a person while drinking a glass of beer, stung him, with all its power, inside of his throat. This simple remedy, SALT, effected his recovery, although his gullet was swelled, and his breathing was so strongly affected and interrupted from the violence of the pain, &c. as almost to suffocate him.

CUSTOM.

CUSTOM is the plague of wise men and the idol of fools.