

argument sake, that it was proper in our commercial conduct, to forget the benefits we had received from one nation, and the injuries we had suffered from the other, and that interest alone ought to be our governing principle, experience, will perhaps teach us, that even in that view, the trade we commenced with Great-Britain, will not stand the test.

It was one of the great oppressions that we formerly laboured under that we were obliged to trade with Great-Britain alone, under all the disadvantages, which that power thought proper to impose.

Hence arose the consignment business, the most ruinous that could be devised for the people of this State:—Yet the very moment that we had become free, while the traces of our past sufferings must have been fresh in our minds, we eagerly adopted the same mode of traffic, and involved ourselves in a situation, which it will now be difficult to change or amend.

This conduct was, doubtless, highly conducive to the interest of those, who, by their connections, could get on the right side of the business, and it was not surprising to find them declaiming on the advantages of it.

A popular and forcible argument in its favor, was, that those who made the first essays in consignments, received a greater price than those who sold in the country.

Supposing the fact to be generally true, several reasons might be assigned for it, the force of which are probably felt by the people at present.

From the general eagerness of the planters to consign their tobacco, little encouragement was given to purchasers, who were sure in almost every instance, to get tobacco of the most inferior quality, while the best crops, were shipped to the English merchants. It was the interest of those merchants to give such prices in the beginning, as would encourage liberal consignments, and secure a sufficient run of business.—That once established—the cause was removed,—the planters became in the power of the merchants,—and were treated as they deserved.

As an instance to shew how far the balance of trade is against us, let us advert to the payment of the duties, which the planter will find, whether for the tobacco he exports, or the goods he receives, fall on him alone.

The present act, by promoting a proper degree of care in the preparation of tobacco, and guarding against the imposi-  
tions,