

precise return will be, a year hence; no Secretary of the Treasury, using his best powers of judgment, can estimate within an average annual variation of twenty millions of dollars. It follows that since assurance must be made of an ample income, there will be almost certainly a considerable excess, year by year, and it is evident that to prevent this from working public injury, there must be some way provided to return it regularly and punctually to the channels of trade. It must be recalled that the country has never yet had any prolonged experience with a Protective Tariff, except when there was a large amount of redeemable debt upon which to employ the excess revenue; and it seems not too much to say, judging from the obvious circumstances of the case, that when duties are imposed with the protective purpose, there must be some permanent provision by which the redundancy resulting from them shall be employed. While the public debt remains, and there are bonds redeemable, this outlet answers the full purpose, but there will be times, as at present, when bonds are *not* redeemable.

In any transfer from the general to the separate treasuries, provision of law as to the purposes and manner of applying the funds should of course be made. The States should probably be required to, first, settle overdue interest; second, to pay overdue debt; third, to relieve taxation, in such manner as they may see fit. The excess in the national treasury, at the end of each fiscal year, should be officially ascertained and declared, and, under the general law regulating the matter, it should be apportioned upon a uniform basis, and at a fixed date paid over. The States would use these funds when received, and in any time of waiting for an appropriation act of the Legislatures, they would be, as State funds almost uniformly are, on deposit in the banks, available for the business uses of the community.

Such a process would be an accompanying safe-guard to a system of revenues derived from protective duties. It would make a surplus not objectionable but useful, and no longer a